

Case Study

production

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Allegro Copy + Print

Switch to Ricoh Promises to Give Print Provider a Timely Advantage over the Competition

"It's easy to be confident when you know you'll be able to produce quality work on time, every time. We have all the confidence in the world working with Ricoh."

– Peter S. Smyth
President
Allegro Copy + Print
Lafayette, CA



ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

For nearly three decades, Allegro Copy + Print has provided production print services for clients throughout Northern California. With most of its clients being in the real estate industry, this copying, printing and direct mail service provider has committed itself to completing projects as quickly as possible — preferably the same day. To realize its ambitious goal consistently, the company sought a new production printer and service provider that could maximize uptime while delivering exceptional results.

CHALLENGE

It's easy to make promises. It's hard work to keep them.

It's an adage that rings true in the business world, where almost every company has struggled to make good on a promise at one time or another. Sometimes, it's poor planning, a misguided strategy, an oversight — or simply bad luck — that causes an earnest promise to go awry.

As Allegro Copy + Print discovered, it can also be caused by aging, unreliable equipment. Over the past 27 years, the commercial printer promised fast, reliable service and high-quality printing. This was especially important for its clients in the real estate market where timing is everything, and where a potential sale can be won or lost within moments.

CHALLENGE

- Aging equipment with deteriorating performance
- Excessive service calls
- Critical color requirements for real estate market customers

SOLUTION

- RICOH Pro C901s Color Production Printer
- Fiery print controllers for variable data printing (VDP) workflows
- Robust finishing capabilities

RESULTS

- Fewer service calls
- Consistent image quality
- More uptime
- Minimal missed deadlines

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Real estate professionals relied on Allegro Copy + Print for flyers, postcards, brochures and other collateral. Many of the deliverables were high-end prints, including glossy or UV-coated items that required rich colors and precise lines. The company had used several different production printers and providers over the years. Some devices were more reliable than others, but traditionally, quality began to deteriorate after about three years.

Service issues were an even larger concern. When the large production printer went offline, deadlines went out the window.

"We were averaging about one service call every week," said Pete Smyth, owner of Allegro Copy + Print. "Our print provider would get us back online, but just barely. We were like a football player trying to play with a chronically bad knee. It was never quite right, and never quite as good as it once was."

Smyth felt compelled to make good on his promises to customers. After all, meeting tight deadlines was always one of the greatest differentiators for Allegro Copy + Print. He began to search for a new high-volume production printer that could combine high-quality output with reliable performance.

He reviewed prominent industry newsletters with performance rankings of all leading manufacturers. He listened to representatives champion their devices. He spoke with other commercial printers. And, he used his business instincts, honed over the years, to make his decision.

Allegro Copy + Print chose the RICOH Pro C901s Color Production Printer even though it was brand-new to the market. Suddenly, things started looking a lot more promising.

SOLUTION

Owner Pete Smyth had thought he'd seen it all.

"Every new high-volume production printer offers a promise," said Smyth. "Richer colors, more uptime, faster service. But I had never experienced anything like the RICOH Pro C901s before. It not only met my expectations, it blew them away."



The RICOH Pro C901s
Color Production Printer

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Ricoh offers an impressive legacy of providing quality imaging devices to companies across the globe. But Smyth was impressed that Ricoh representatives didn't arrive thinking that they had everything already figured out. The team wanted to understand the intricacies of how Allegro Copy + Print conducts business. It studied workflows and identified the best ways to integrate the RICOH Pro C901s Color Production Printer without compromising production.

"We were impressed that Ricoh reached out to understand where our problems and concerns were," said Smyth. "More importantly, the team wanted to know where our vision was. They went beyond trying to solve our problems, and helped us identify where there were opportunities for growth."

For example, with real estate professionals comprising a significant share of the existing client base, Ricoh introduced powerful features of Fiery print controllers to help realtors differentiate themselves. With the controllers, Allegro Copy + Print can simplify variable data printing (VDP) workflows, so jobs can be completed quickly with

unprecedented precision. Customers end up with offset-like quality from a digital solution that offers more versatility for less money. Ricoh also showed technicians how to use the controllers to maximize the number of prints on a sheet to speed production and reduce costs even more.

Print technicians can take advantage of more uniform toner particles to match and reproduce brilliant colors in moments to improve production times. Plus, automation simplifies UV coating, binding and other finishing tasks so the commercial printer can use fewer employees to complete more jobs in less time.

RESULTS

Success builds confidence. So, it's no surprise that Smyth is optimistic about the future of Allegro Copy + Print.

"It's easy to be confident when you know you'll be able to produce quality work on time, every time," said Smyth. "We have all the confidence in the world working with Ricoh."

So much so that the company has transitioned from promises to guarantees.

Reliable, everyday performance

The company offers a same-day service guarantee for flyers and postcards. And, it's able to back up its claims. The company has completed more than 12,000 flyers and postcard jobs this year. It missed its deadline on only one of them.

Smyth said they can meet deadlines consistently because the printer is running consistently. With a previous printer, the company averaged only about 7,000 clicks on the device before maintenance was needed. Production was shut down almost every week as technicians repaired the

Ricoh met with key decision-makers to discuss existing print problems — and to identify new opportunities for Allegro Copy + Print to grow revenue.

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printer. Allegro Copy + Print has used the the RICOH Pro C901s Color Production Printer for three years, and the company is averaging 90,000 clicks between service calls.

In fact, the company is averaging only about 90 minutes of service-related maintenance per month. And, it's usually able to schedule it around downtimes to ensure projects are still completed and delivered on time.

Impressive color output

For many years, Allegro Copy + Print met its customers' demands with quality work. With the RICOH Pro C901s Color Production Printer, they've upped the ante moving forward.

"Customers noticed the color difference immediately," said Smyth. "We had longtime customers who couldn't stop raving about the machine's ability to print bright, bold colors on solids. Usually, quality tapers off after the first year. But, we're three years in and haven't seen a detectable difference. Neither have our customers."

Adding more business — and revenue

Business is booming for Allegro Copy + Print. Before the RICOH Pro C901s Color Production Printer was installed, the company averaged between 35k and 50k prints per month. Now, because it can offer consistently excellent color, faster turnarounds and consistent service, the company averages about 125k prints per month.

Ricoh technicians have worked closely with the company to ensure uptime is maintained and that the company is taking advantage of the device's capabilities to capture new revenue-generating opportunities via VDP printing, automated robust finishing and other features.

"You can't succeed in the print industry without great equipment," said Smyth "We gambled on the Ricoh production printer even though it was on the market for less than a year. It's everything we were told it would be, and more. It's a great machine. The support may be even better."

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