

Press Briefing

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MBA invest over £5m in two Xerox 980 Colour Continuous presses

The market is ready

MBA have invested over £5m in two Xerox 980 high-speed, 4 colour, digital continuous-feed lasers in response to market demands. As more and more companies realise the increased return on investment (ROI) that individualised mailings can achieve there has been greater demand to make precision, full colour 'high-volume' mailings a reality.

Bachar Aintaoui, Chairman of MBA explained, "Colour continuous-feed digital print is not new. What's new is the real desire of clients to use it. Their data is much better managed making data-driven mailings easier to implement, and they have seen the increased ROI that individualised colour print can bring."

The investment comes as MBA celebrate their 25th Anniversary and takes the company into a leading role within the colour digital marketplace.

Greater return on investment

Industry commentators are seeing individualised mailings generate a 50% increase on ROI in many cases so the advantage is clear. Kevin Stewart, DM Sales Director at MBA, feels there are many clients who will want to upgrade from relatively short-run digital mailings on Igen and Indigo presses to the 980. "The business model for individualised mailings has been proven with our existing kit. The 980 enables us to reproduce that model on a much larger scale and at much reduced cost, with additional efficiencies from in-line finishing."

Quality continuous colour print

The 980 runs at speeds of 900 impressions per minute on an A4 sheet and MBA are building an integrated production line that will measure almost 40m long and include in-line perforation. Printed items will be ready for enclosure and mailing, making the entire production process one of the most efficient in the UK.

For Richard Hooper, Laser Department Manager, the 980 ticked a number of boxes. He commented, "We have looked at a number of continuous colour presses over the last two years and the 980 scored well in key areas. The colour reproduction at high speeds is excellent, and the flash fusing technology makes in-line finishing much easier."

The in-line finishing includes a personalised perforation system that can be applied to coupons, vouchers, subscription forms and response mechanisms on coated stocks up to 170gsm.

Environmentally sound

Environmental concerns are a major issue, particularly for big brands that need to protect their reputation. The challenge for customers is to move towards more targeted mailings (reducing waste), and at the same time use stock that is environmentally sound.

The Xerox 980 tackles both issues. It is ideal for precision mailing, capable of incorporating individualised data and images at high speed on large volumes. Waste is reduced and response improved.

MBA was also mindful that finished print needed to be recyclable to ensure it complemented their clients' environmental best practise programmes. Richard Hooper commented, "We investigated the issue of ink jet versus laser and decided that toner based technology suited our customers environmental objectives. The saturation of ink on ink jet means the finished article cannot easily be recycled."

MBA take environmental issues seriously, currently ISO14001 accredited we are aiming for full carbon neutrality in the near future and support the new PAS2020 initiative. In the last year alone we recycled 1,466 tonnes of paper that helped save over 35,000 trees*.

Transactional and Direct Mail

Having investigated the digital market over a two-year period, it was important that we could facilitate our transactional clients with the opportunities trans-promo is now presenting, whilst at the same time offering the clarity and quality for our often highly creative direct mail campaigns.

Jarrold Green, Head of Corporate Sales, feels the 980 is just what his clients have been looking for, "Transactional mailings for store cards, utility companies and many financial institutions are core to MBA's business. These clients are now keen to use redundant 'white space' on billing material to print dynamic messaging and imagery relevant to the recipient."

Armed with knowledge gained through genuine insight led data integrity, generic inserts can be replaced with relevant marketing information, cross selling and customer retention messages. The opportunities are endless, paper content reduced and customer ROI improved.

MBA are also one of the few digital printers in the UK to have both ISO27001 for data security and CCCC (APACS) accreditation for the secure production of cheques. This gives clients the opportunity to consider large volume cheque runs in a secure environment.

Similar ambitions are sought in the ever-creative direct mail environment. However with a cut sheet solution, costs for longer runs have in the past made larger campaigns price prohibitive. With the quality of the new Xerox 980 and its ability to print onto coated stocks up to 160gsm, the DM market can now be fully engaged in longer run highly individualised colour digital campaigns.

Multi-channel capability

Over recent years MBA has embraced the opportunities that new digital channels have presented within our market place. In addition to investing in Igen 3 presses some time ago, we have also invested in skilled personnel, an XMpie platform and data insight tools to position ourselves as a leading multi-channel communications company.

We now have the ability to produce individualised high-volume, full colour mail with personalised web pages and all supported by email and SMS campaigns. MBA are ready for an audience that has finally warmed to the advantages of highly personalised print and cross media marketing campaigns.

Right decision, right time

MBA's total investment in the two Xerox 980's is over £5 million. As a privately owned company making an investment of this magnitude, particularly in the current economic climate, required the decision to be right for all three parties involved – the client, MBA and Xerox.

MBA are in no doubt this bold decision is the right one, "The market is ready for high-volume, digital colour print. Our clients have had a culture change, they have put everything in place to be able to take advantage of the benefits of continuous colour" said Bachar Aintaoui.

Xerox endorses Bachar's claims that the time is right. Peter Taylor, Director & GM Production & Graphic Arts UKIR, Director Ireland, commented "We have worked closely with MBA for the last 25 years, and wanted to partner with a firm that was financially sound and who had experience of both transactional and direct mail printing. Their in-depth knowledge of the market is testimony to the idea that the time is right for colour continuous print."

Is the time right for clients? In difficult economic conditions clients need to increase their return on investment, and to be able to achieve that aim while at the same time reducing waste and meeting environmental goals, MBA argue there has never been a better time for the Xerox 980.

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* Figure based on 24 trees per ton of paper.

Editors Notes

MBA were established in 1984 and celebrate our 25th Anniversary in 2009. The company provides fully integrated print and mailing solutions for transactional and direct mail, from planning to finished product. Our principle site is in North London where we operate from a purpose built factory with 12,100 sq.m (130,000 sq.ft) of production capacity.

These facilities are supported by operations throughout the UK, including a disaster recovery site in Warrington, Cheshire and envelope production in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire.

The company holds ISO9001, ISO14001 and ISO27001 accreditations as well as FSC Certification. We also have CCCC (APACS) accreditation for the production of cheques and are a Xerox Premier Partner, one of only 39 printers in the UK invited to join this exclusive club.

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