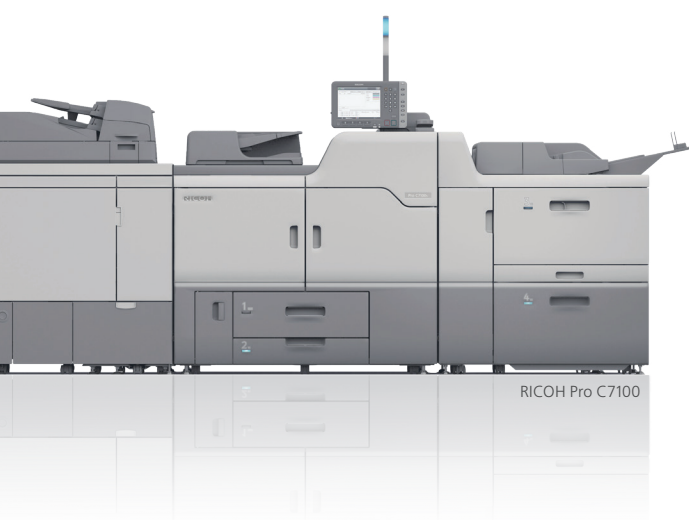


A shift to Ricoh digital production

Case Study — Commercial Printing

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20% growth and faster
turnarounds for this
full-service, multi-location
print service provider.



Shifting from 100% offset work three years ago to a high majority of digital printing today, Allegra, Aurora & Boulder, CO, has been able to achieve its mission and grow the business.

Referencing one client in particular, Allegra has been able to grow their existing business roughly five-fold, "We've grown that simply by being able to be their marketing services provider, and partner. Having the (Ricoh) digital machines has really helped in that effort."

About the Customer

In 2016, Joe Mullan acquired two long-standing businesses and brought them under the Allegra franchise brand umbrella. His Allegra locations in Aurora and Boulder, Colorado, have established a clear mission in their marketplace.

"We offer one-stop marketing services," explains Mullan. "Our goal is to make life simpler for the harried business person. We do everything from printing to developing websites, to developing copy, to putting together their story, to helping them put up signage, and basically tell the story about their brand. So, we're there to help them out — to be their marketing arm."

To help build that reputation, Allegra has taken an active role in the communities they serve, through the Chambers of Commerce, business associations and local groups. While Mullan knew that there would surely be a challenge or two in growing their reputation and bottom line, having a crucial 5-color offset press rendered inoperable put increased pressure on the business. Finding a replacement that would not only serve Allegra's immediate needs, but provide the bandwidth for future growth was essential.



"We partnered with Ricoh for the trust and relationship we established. They are a forward-looking organization and we can build relationships that matter, long-term."

—Joe Mullan,
President

Challenges

- Replacing an existing 5-color offset device that failed and created urgency to meet existing customer needs effectively
- Providing short-run, fast-turnaround jobs at a high quality level to a growing customer base
- Working to grow a core customer base looking for expanded services versus those paying for one-off print jobs
- Establishing the value of Allegra's brand in the area after replacing a local brand with a 40-year legacy in the market

After researching and evaluating equipment and meeting with a variety of companies, Mullan found the right combination of technology and trust with Ricoh.

While there were multiple factors in determining the right fit for his Allegra locations, Joe had the capabilities of his staff top of mind, and how the technology he would eventually choose could prove a fit for their skillsets.

"We partnered with Ricoh for the trust and the relationship we established. They are a forward-looking organization and we can build relationships that matter, long-term," he says in explaining his choice.



Results

- Like sales up 20% in 2018
- Eliminated the need to outsource larger jobs at the Boulder facility by running them on the RICOH Pro C9100 in their Aurora location
- Exceeded customer expectations for color quality
- Faster, more cost-effective turnaround for books with an inline digital process that does not require pauses in the workflow to outsource for bindery work
- New abilities to provide proofs quickly and accommodate last-minute client revisions
- Better able to serve as a true marketing service provider, and partner



"We have six designers. They're very talented people. They love experimenting with colors, shapes...that's just who they are. So I wanted people who approached printing that way. The case for us was made convincingly by Ricoh."

After discussing the challenges Allegra, Aurora and Boulder, were facing and evaluating the different types of jobs and turnarounds the business dealt with on a daily basis, Ricoh provided strategic recommendations. To streamline operations and improve operating efficiency, these included digital sheet-fed equipment and finishing options that could measurably speed their workflows and reduce outsourcing.

With the implementation of their new RICOH Pro C9100 Sheet-fed Digital Color Press, the Aurora location was able to handle their previous offset volume. In addition, longer runs from the Boulder location could now be run on the press, eliminating their previous need to outsource the work due to offset turnaround times.

"The nice thing about it is, pretty much anybody in the shop, once they get some training, they can run the 9100. That flexibility is a cost-saving, and it also puts out as good a quality of product as the offset," says Mullan.

To serve the demand for high-quality, short-run color work in the Boulder location, a RICOH Pro C7100 was installed and operators were trained on the platform. “The 7100 is a perfect match for the Boulder clients. Very reliable. It puts out good quality, and we do a lot of great short-turn runs. That thing is just humming most days... and that’s about as simple as it gets.”

Strategic finishing investments were made in both locations, including equipment to make end-to-end book production possible in-house. While this is not a new revenue stream for Allegra, it is now a more profitable one. Customers have also been impressed. "The first thing people tell us is, boy you guys are a lot faster, and we really like your color output," comments Mullan.



How We Did It

- Replaced the existing offset 5-color press that was broken with the high-volume RICOH Pro C9100 in the Aurora location to accommodate longer-run jobs
- Installed the RICOH Pro C7100 in the Boulder location to service high-quality, short-run, fast turnaround needs
- Increased productivity for short-run book production with advanced finishing solutions including the GBC StreamPunch Ultra and the Plockmatic inline booklet maker
- Expanded capabilities for creasing, cutting and folding with Duplo solutions



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