



Case In Point

SERVER & CONTROLLER SOLUTIONS

Kwik Kopy Design & Print Centres Across Canada Rely on Splash Color Quality to Win Corporate Customers



Company Profile

Kwik Kopy Printing Canada Corporation, part of the worldwide Kwik Kopy network, has been serving the business community with superior professional imaging and services for three decades. Corporate offices in Richmond Hill, Ontario, oversee 72 Kwik Kopy Design & Print Centres employing about 400 people nationwide and earning revenue of \$40 million annually. The Kwik Kopy centers offer graphic arts quality printing along with commodity color printing. Services include creative graphic design, state-of-the-art digital black-and-white and color imaging, offset and digital printing services, large format printing and complete finishing services.

Challenge

Meet the exacting demands of corporate Canada for graphic arts quality, short-run, digital color print materials. That means producing high-concept materials on painfully tight deadlines with brilliantly clear photographs and flawless fidelity to corporate signature colors.

Solution

Kwik Kopy has installed 48 EFI Splash™ G640 servers paired with Xerox® DocuColor® 12 copier/printers throughout Canada. It's Kwik Kopy's single solution for graphic arts quality, short-run digital print production.

Results

Brilliant photographs with amazing clarity and depth of color; accurate PANTONE® matching that yields premium color quality and precise fidelity to corporate colors. Streamlined design and production; shorter job turnaround times; consistency; increased profit margins.



Rigorous testing

Kwik Kopy Printing Canada Corporation provides marketing and operational support to the Kwik Kopy Design & Print Centre franchisees in Canada. Ninety-five percent of work at its 72 centers nationwide is business-to-business. A slim 5 percent of Kwik Kopy's work caters to the retail market. In the high-stakes enterprise, any failure to meet exacting corporate requirements is unacceptable.

That's why the corporate staff at Kwik Kopy Printing Canada Corporation continually test new printing solutions.

"If we want to be a leader in the market, we need to have the best available product in market," says Brian O'Leary, Vice President. "We test pretty much every machine that comes out in the print-for-pay market. We use the identical files on every color machine and on every RIP that we test and, in our opinion, based on the research that we did for color management, Splash is the best unit when compared to others."

Four years ago, after exhausting eliminations, Kwik Kopy adopted EFI's Splash server and Xerox DocuColor 12 copier/printer. "The Splash/DocuColor 12 combination is our choice for graphic arts color – the high-end color. It's our only solution for that market. The Splash RIP far out-performed the other RIPs in color management. Some of the other RIPs may have been faster, but the color RIP on the Splash was premium."

Kwik Kopy tests continue today. "There are machines out there now with a higher speed but none with the color and quality of the Splash/DocuColor12 combination."

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A standard of perfection

In today's market, superior color performance is essential, O'Leary says. "Quite simply, color copying has gone from printers' reproducing a poor image to a customer requirement of perfection. The customer expects the same level of quality and clarity from a copying machine as they would get from a printing press. There's no margin of error – we're competing against press quality and we have to match it. With print-on-demand and just-in-time printing, we're offering the short run services of digital color printing rather than the volume of a press. That's what print-on-demand and just-in-time printing is about. Where traditionally you had 10,000 or 20,000 of something, we can now offer you 5 or 500 of that product. That's where our niche market is."

How does Splash meet corporate requirements for color perfection? "It comes down to Pantone matching. It's critical. With the Splash, matching is pretty much PMS perfect. The lesser units produce color quality that might be customer pleasing but

“It’s the superior quality that we get from the Splash that allows us to charge more and thus get a higher profit margin on our work.”

— Brian O’Leary, Vice President, Kwik Kopy Printing Canada Corporation



it’s not color matching. There’s a big difference. Some people may let you get away with that but a professional print buyer rarely will.”

Splash also creates brilliant photographs, says Tony DeMeo, new product analyst. “Splash gives the depth of color and the detail of the photograph – detail that lesser systems don’t pick up.”

Saving time and labor

In the corporate world, just-in-time means squeaky tight deadlines. At Kwik Kopy production of 100 copies of a 50-page color document on the Splash/DocuColor 12 takes about 7 hours, compared to two days of turnaround time on a 4-color press.

Splash’s superior color management helps Kwik Kopy centers meet tight corporate deadlines, DeMeo says. “It’s just a question of getting the file and sending it to the Splash. The Splash breaks down the ingredients of the color to create the proper output. With other units you can try to tweak the color but I’ve found that a lot of times they can’t even match the color, so it would be very time-consuming to build colour profiles and try to match the right color.”

The simplicity of Splash operation adds labor savings. “Operators don’t need the assistance of a graphic designer to get the right colors,” DeMeo says. “It’s operator friendly,” adds O’Leary. “Once the machine is calibrated, it’s automatically going to determine the color and output it. The Splash needs very little human intervention. It reduces the chance for human error.”

“And the consistency and accuracy are exceptional and that’s very, very important to us. When our centers produce a job for a customer and a month

later they output that job for them again, it has to be identical. In the past, that often didn’t happen.”

Jobs that are regularly repeated are often kept in the job queue on the Splash at Kwik Kopy centers. “It’s just a case of dragging and dropping it to print,” DeMeo says. “There’s no guess work. The settings will be the same as on the previous order. That saves a lot of time.”

“Splash integrates easily into a workflow. It’s very straightforward and easy to use.”

— **Tony DeMeo, New Product Analyst,
Kwik Kopy Printing Canada Corporation**

Four years ago, installation of the first Splash units at Kwik Kopy centers went smoothly. The same is true with upgrades. “We frequently change and upgrade our Splash servers here,” O’Leary says. “At this stage it’s just plug and play. The set-up time is minimal.” DeMeo agrees, “Splash integrates easily into a workflow. It’s very straightforward and easy to use.”

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Higher profit margins

And it's provided an excellent return on investment. "We're looking at a machine here that may be two or, in some cases, three times the price of an alternative. Yet we've chosen it," O'Leary says. "That's because the kind of work it can produce is the kind of work for which we can charge a premium because we're emulating press work. We can go after the jobs where the print buyers are looking for perfection and we can produce them in a short run and charge a large premium. It's the superior quality that we get from the Splash that allows us to charge more and thus get a higher profit margin on our work. I don't believe we could get the quality of work and hence the type of work that we produce if we were using a lesser RIP"

Particular features add savings. "The fact that the colors come out right the first time is one of the biggest time savers," DeMeo says. However, in one out of nine jobs where last-minute changes have to be made, say to adjust color for particular paper stocks, Splash ColorTuner enhancements save time, he says. Kwik Kopy designers can make adjustments at the Splash G640 without going back to the source files – they can edit the output color of RIPped pages before printing.

Owners at Kwik Kopy centers are looking forward to taking advantage of Splash's ability to handle variable data. "The marketing industry really hasn't embraced it yet so we're not seeing the volumes. I'd be very pleased to see the marketing industry embrace variable data – very soon."

Would O'Leary recommend the Splash? "Absolutely. We're four years down the road with this machine and it's still the top color machine in our marketplace. It's probably been the highest profit center unit since the advent of the quick printing industry."

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