The Offset House was founded in Essex, Vermont, as a small print shop in the early 1970s by John and Mary McGrath. It has expanded to a full service sheetfed and web commercial printing operation with 110 employees operating in approximately 70,000 square feet and generating about $19 million in annual revenues. The company recently launched a digital division featuring both short-run full color and superwide format indoor and outdoor applications.

The Offset House added wide format printing several years ago, primarily for proofing. When customers began asking for posters and other wide format applications, the company realized it could leverage wide format for multiple purposes. From there, the next logical step was to increase the size of output that could be produced as customers began asking for larger prints on a wider variety of materials, including rigid substrates. “We also believed that adding superwide format printing would enable us to acquire new customers and draw additional offset printing volume into the shop as well.” McGrath visited Graphics of the Americas in Florida to look at options.

CHALLENGE:
“We realized that we were leaving work on the table by not offering digital services. Often the same files and digital assets are used for offset, digital and superwide format products.”

– John McGrath, President
After looking at various superwide format options, McGrath selected EFI’s VUTEk® QS2000. He says, “The quality of the QS2000 is excellent. I was specifically looking for a UV curable solution because of our outdoor printing requirements, and the QS2000 seemed to offer the best bang for the buck. We liked the fact that the EFI VUTEk QS2000 is manufactured locally, in New Hampshire, and we were pleased with the quality and ease of operation we saw from the machine.”

McGrath points out that customers for whom he is printing brochures and other marketing materials are often using those materials at trade shows and other events. He says, “The QS2000, blended with our offset and other digital offerings, allows us to produce all of the display graphics and other event materials a customer needs as a turnkey solution provider. We increase our share of customer print spend, and we build more customer loyalty by making the buying process extremely convenient for them.”
The Offset House has been making good use of its VUTEk QS2000, producing indoor and outdoor display graphics using both rigid and flexible substrates.

McGrath cites one exciting project where a wood laminate core is imaged as part of the manufacturing process for a specialized piece of sporting equipment. He says, “We image the wood laminate base, which is the core, and then build over that with clear-coat materials so that the imaging is visible.”

McGrath reports that the company has done several projects on wood, including doors, since the VUTEk QS2000 can accept rigid materials up to two inches thick. In addition, McGrath has found that new customers taking advantage of superwide format production often end up bringing in offset work as well, especially for projects that require both. “Now when we produce brochures, we can also offer to produce signs, banners, and a wide range of other materials for our customers in a single-source approach.”

RESULTS:
“With printing widths of up to two meters and the ability to quickly change from flexible to rigid substrates, I found the VUTEk QS2000 to be an amazing product.

We have been very profitable with the VUTEk QS2000. Add to that the extra offset work it pulls through, and it has been a terrific investment for us.”
 EFI (www.efi.com) is the world leader in color digital print servers, superwide format printers and inks, industrial inkjet printing systems and print management, Web-to-print and proofing solutions. EFI is dedicated to giving customers a competitive edge with award-winning, scalable solutions from creation to print that maximize productivity and increase profits. EFI maintains 23 offices worldwide.

Visit www.efi.com or call 734-641-3062 (International); 800-875-7117 (US only)