Case In Point
SERVER & CONTROLER SOLUTIONS

Fiery EXP6000 and DocuColor 6060 Help ImageKing Thrive in a Competitive Market

Company Profile
ImageKing Visual Solutions is a digital graphic service bureau and a major player on the New York printing scene. Providing photo lab services, print production, and grand format printing from two facilities in Manhattan and Long Island City, ImageKing is highly respected for its stunning and precise color work. ImageKing processes images for Sports Illustrated and counts ABC, Atlantic Records, and Sony, among its prestigious clients. Its print production portfolio includes public relations communications for image-conscious clients like Estee Lauder and Smith Barney.

Challenge
The tough economic climate hit New York area printing companies hard. Advances in corporate printing technology led many of ImageKing’s clients to handle small jobs themselves. ImageKing needed to diversify its print production services to capture new business and be even more competitive.

Solution
EFI®’s Fiery® EXP6000 server paired with a Xerox® DocuColor™ 6060 Digital Color Press.

Results
The Fiery EXP6000 and DocuColor 6060 have delivered outstanding efficiency improvements to ImageKing’s print production business, producing color quality that impresses discriminating corporate clients and providing production controls that reduce time and costs.
A challenging marketplace

ImageKing is a survivor. Despite New York’s devastating post 9/11 economy, ImageKing has emerged a stronger company with a powerful growth strategy. While many other area printing companies were forced to close or merge, ImageKing is thriving, creating new income streams, cementing relationships with corporate clients and opening new markets.

Integral to ImageKing’s success has been the acquisition of EFI’s Fiery EXP6000 server and Xerox DocuColor 6060 Digital Color Press – a powerhouse combination. It has delivered staggering improvements in productivity to their print production business, producing color quality that impresses discriminating corporate clients and providing production controls that make their staff more efficient than ever before.

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— Tim Evans, Digital Services Manager, ImageKing

“The economic changes associated with the tragedy of 9/11 have had a profound effect on the market,” Evans says. And advances in low-end printing technology have allowed customers to handle many small jobs themselves. In response, ImageKing has diversified its print production services. “The Fiery EXP6000 and DocuColor 6060 have given us the chance to enter the market for short-run, on-demand, quality output,” he says. “They’ve allowed us to move ahead in leaps and bounds – in speed, turnaround time, in quality, productivity and production time.”

Quality, speed, reliability

The Fiery/DocuColor combination has also allowed ImageKing to bring in-house the large profitable projects it once was unable to produce on a timely basis. The new technology has improved document quality while reducing turnaround time, making ImageKing more competitive.

Speed is a hallmark of the powerful Fiery EXP6000 from EFI. The server processes documents at speeds double and triple that of other high-speed printing systems by combining an extremely fast dual processor architecture with color management, production technology, and workflow features optimized to that architecture. The Xerox DocuColor 6060 produces brilliant color documents at the rate of 60 sheets per minute. “The speed is absolutely critical to us,” Evans says. So is reliability. His print production department routinely prepares and produces several 30,000-page jobs each week. “In the six months we’ve had this system, it’s been down maybe 18 hours. That’s something!”

ImageKing’s corporate clients want on-demand delivery of short-run materials with the brilliant color they’re used to, even in mixed media publications. The Fiery ColorWise® software and Graphic Arts Package deliver on all those requirements – with ease and precision.
“We work with a digital file that has to mimic a PMS color representation,” Evans says. “We’ve always challenged ourselves to push color to the 100 percent (color accuracy) ratio. We’ve found that the Fiery/DocuColor solution gives 97 percent color representation. We’re very happy with it and it has helped us cement relationships with corporate clients.”

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Working smarter

To deal with the economic repercussions of 9/11, ImageKing staff learned to work smarter. Technicians were trained in new technologies as the company expanded its business offerings. Efficiency and productivity became the company’s watchwords. The Fiery Command WorkStation™, which sets the standard for convenient job management and maximum control, has been a big help in that area. Evans was familiar with the advanced functionality of the Command WorkStation and easy-to-use interface, which provides a gateway to an array of sophisticated, powerful tools. He had used the Command WorkStation on the company’s Fiery Z5 server paired with a Canon printer. In fact, with 20 years of experience in the printing business, Evans calls the Command WorkStation “the easiest interface for an output device that I’ve encountered.”

“The Fiery has made my staff much more productive.” The Command WorkStation cut staff training time, and allows errors to be corrected early in the production process, instead of at the end, saving additional time and resources.

Evans is particularly impressed with the Fiery’s powerful imposition software, DocBuilder™ Pro™, which allows his staff to fully preview the actual page content in its imposition template before printing. Evans says DocBuilder Pro saves ImageKing hours, and sometimes days, on big jobs, even when last-minute changes are involved.

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New markets

Now, ImageKing is looking to offer variable data services and it will look to the Fiery’s powerful VDP software to enable them to deliver cost-effective personalized printing to their customers.

“For our client base, variable data is an incredible option. It’s a multi-million dollar market that’s now controlled by full-press houses. However, I can reduce a client’s costs by 60 percent using the Fiery’s PrintShop Mail™ software. And I can do it faster. We expect variable printing to be a growth area and we’ll be depending on the Fiery/DocuColor to make it happen for us.”

Print production may be just one segment of ImageKing’s array of prestige services, but the Fiery/DocuColor team is making it an expanding segment. Evans, who has compared the Fiery/DocuColor to digital printing systems made by other manufacturers, isn’t shy about giving credit where credit is due:

“The Fiery/DocuColor combination is a workhorse. It hits that 97 percent color (accuracy) ratio to meet the exacting color requirements of our customers. It does mixed media. The imposition and ColorWise software associated with the device excel. As far as production capabilities, it can allow a company to explode by as much as 60 to 80 percent. I mean it’s incredible.”