Lamcom: Making Images Come Alive

Company Profile
For the past 30 years, Lamcom has been helping clients shape their image. An expert printer, installer and manipulator of visual concepts, Lamcom works hard to help its customers meet their display graphics needs with leading edge technology and its expertise in applying concepts to a wide variety of media. Located in Montréal (Québec), Canada, the company has 50 employees.

Challenge
Lamcom was an early adopter of EFI’s VUTEk superwide format printing, acquiring its first PressVu digital printer in 2001 and quickly adding a second one. Although the company’s business was growing rapidly, and its president, Daniel Lefebvre, was looking at adding a third VUTEk printer, he was also looking for the ability to produce the same high level of VUTEk quality but at faster throughput speeds and directly onto rigid substrates so he could compete in new business areas and on run lengths longer than 100 prints.

Solution
When Lefebvre learned about VUTEk QS2000 from EFI and was offered the opportunity to beta test the product, he had no hesitation at all. With its faster throughput speeds, ability to print directly to rigid substrates, and exceptional quality, he saw the opportunity to outpace the competition and remain the leading producer of visual display graphics in Quebec.

Results
With High Definition Print capabilities, Lamcom’s new VUTEk QS2000 from EFI allowed the company to print directly to rigid substrates at new levels of image quality and higher speeds than ever before. Now Lamcom can competitively produce rigid posters and other display materials in run lengths up to 1,000, significantly expanding its capabilities and ensuring continued growth.
Lamcom: Leading the Market

Lamcom was established in 1975 as Laminage Lamcom to meet a growing market need for the production of rigid posters and other display materials. The company quickly became a leading provider due to its ability to adapt to new market demands by diversifying its offerings. By 1984, Lamcom had introduced an innovative process that combined high quality lamination, adherence, glare management, exceptional color, durability and maintenance friendliness to deliver unique rigid display graphics solutions. The company continued to grow, and by 1988 when current president and shareholder, Daniel Lefebvre, joined the team, Lamcom was ready to move into a larger facility.

With approach of a new century, Lefebvre was determined to continue the company’s innovation and began looking at options for a new digital production process that he believed was necessary to stay ahead of the competition and to meet the escalating needs of his client base. Lefebvre says, “My company embodies a one-stop shopping concept. Customers typically must use three or four different resources to produce visual display graphics projects from start to finish. We are a complete, turnkey source for production, lamination, framing, substrate and ink selection, as well as installation of visual display graphics, which makes our customers’ jobs easier. The next logical step for us was to introduce superwide format digital printing to the Montreal market to address an increasing demand for printed pieces up to ten feet wide, and I was excited about the opportunities it would bring.”

With that in mind, Lefebvre investigated a number of options, deciding to proceed with a VUTEk printer. He acquired his first VUTEk PressVu digital printer in 2001, and added a second shortly thereafter. He says, “The VUTEk printer clearly offered the best quality at the time, and I also liked the fact that the manufacturing operation was a short drive away in Meredith, New Hampshire.

“With the introduction of the EFI’s VUTEk QS2000, conventional screen printers are definitely going to face increased competition. While they may still secure the longer run jobs, we can now compete very effectively with runs up to 1,000 at higher print quality than even our PressVu printers can produce, which constitutes the bulk of the business in this fast-paced market. As for Lamcom, we will continue to grow thanks to our VUTEk products and our highly talented team. It is an exciting time to be in this business.”

– Daniel Lefebvre, President, Lamcom
Evolving Requirements—Evolving Growth

Lefebvre reports that prior to acquiring his first VUTEk superwide format printer, his company had experienced little growth for the previous four to five years, maintaining about $2 million in annual revenues. He says, “The digital production process was a tremendous improvement over our previous process, which required a considerable amount of set-up and job change-over time. Roll changes were required as substrates changed from job to job, and there was still a significant cost of labor and materials associated with mounting and laminating vinyl or paper on rigid substrates. Additionally, over time, adhesives could loosen, resulting in peeling edges, particularly on pieces mounted outdoors.” Because of Lefebvre’s vision and team of experts combined with the new capabilities offered by VUTEk digital superwide format printing, Lamcom has consistently grown by an additional $1 million annually, and is expected to reach $7 million in revenues by the end of 2006.

But market conditions are never static, and neither were Lefebvre’s plans for his company. Lefebvre was receiving an increasing number of requests for longer run lengths, and he was ready to step up to the challenge of producing them. When he heard about the VUTEk QS2000, he knew it was the right device for his needs.

In late 2004, Lamcom was approached about beta testing a new, faster direct-to-rigid-substrate superwide format printer which was ultimately brought to market in 2006 as the VUTEk QS2000. Lefebvre jumped at the opportunity. He says, “Among other things, we had begun building a business around producing corporate identity signage for buildings on tile, aluminum and other rigid substrates. I could see that with the QS2000, business would really take off, while my existing business would benefit as well. And I was delighted to continue working with this terrific partner.”

Lamcom has enjoyed a number of benefits from its new VUTEk QS2000 from EFI. Lefebvre comments, “Even with a digital production process, a two-stage manufacturing process that includes printing and then mounting on rigid substrates limited economic order quantity for rigid posters and other display graphics to about 100 pieces. Now with the higher throughput, I can easily be competitive in quantities up to 1,000 pieces.” Lamcom also produces a wide range of banners, vehicle and building signage, murals and other special projects, many of which can now be produced in longer runs as well.

With three of EFI’s VUTEk digital superwide format printers online, Lamcom’s business has continued to grow, and Lefebvre reports that all three printers are running 24/7. His PressVu’s are dedicated to shorter runs, while the QS2000 handles the longer runs. He says, “It won’t be long before I add my next VUTEk printer. My customers don’t want to concern themselves with my problems, and that means I need to ensure I have adequate capacity to keep up with their demands.”

Direct Benefits of Direct to Rigid Substrate
Customers Buy In

“Customers are delighted with our single-source approach to their visual display graphics projects,” says Lefebvre. “And they are extremely happy with the quality and color fidelity we can produce with our VUTEk superwide format printers. As a result, we are getting more and larger projects, and our business is growing rapidly. Now that we are the first firm in Montreal to have the capability of digitally printing direct to rigid substrates at higher speeds and in longer runs, we are also finding that our customers are coming to us with even more new ideas.”

Lefebvre adds, “With the introduction of the EFI’s VUTEk QS2000, conventional screen printers are definitely going to face increased competition. While they may still secure the longer run jobs, we can now compete very effectively with runs up to 1,000 at higher print quality than even our PressVu printers can produce, which constitutes the bulk of the business in this fast-paced market. As for Lamcom, we will continue to grow thanks to our VUTEk products and our highly talented team. It is an exciting time to be in this business.”

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