

Ask the Technical Experts!

One of the benefits of membership is the technical expertise provided by Printing Industries of America. Our technical experts from the Center for Technology and Research discuss common production problems and issues. The Center for Technology and Research helps members with environmental, health, and safety concerns; consulting and on-site technical assistance; Technical Association of the Graphic Arts; and technology training.

Q. A customer has submitted a file with text made up of all four process colors on almost every page. What's the best course of action?

A. Twice in the last few months we've been asked to offer our opinion on whether jobs that had four-color type were commercially acceptable. If the text is gray, and the gray is made up of all four process colors, misregistration can become noticeable even on large text and very obvious on small text—even if registration is held within the tightest of tolerances on press. The best course of action here is to alert the customer and encourage them to convert the text to black (or a tint of black) only. In the case of a job that has an abundance of colored text made up of all four process colors, the customer also needs to know that there could be potential for misregistration that will affect printed quality. If the customer insists on leaving the four-color type, then it should be acknowledged in writing that the customer has been made aware of the potential problems that can ensue.

Q. I am considering purchasing a production inkjet press. Should I use a 3-5 ROI return model or 7-10 year model on production inkjet, since many of these devices tout the fact that they can be upgraded in the field?

A. Although with offset presses 7-10 years is generally the norm, production inkjet presses are still digital devices and should be treated as such, thus we recommend you use the shorter ROI model. With today's rapid technology changes and advancements, how many digital devices do you have on your facility floors that are older than five years? Even if the production inkjet solution you select is field-upgradeable, you'll probably want to do this within five years post-purchase. As with any upgrade, there will be costs associated with this process and you will have to factor this into your ROI considerations.

Q. My business neighbor is complaining about solvent odors drifting into his building. What can I do to reduce the solvent odors associated with my plant?

A. Consider switching to low VOC (volatile organic compounds) cleaning solvents. Many parts of the country limit VOC emissions by printers. In order to stay within the VOC permit limits in those areas, many printers have had to switch to low VOC solvents. The low VOC solvents generally have much less odor and evaporate more slowly so not as much of the solvents go into the air.

Printing Industries Resources:

Offering unbiased and confidential results, Printing Industries of America provides a range of testing and laboratory services to help solve printing-related problems. For more information, please contact Jim Workman at 800-910-4283, ext. 710 (direct 412-259-1710), visit www.printing.org/labservices or email labservices@printing.org or jworkman@printing.org.
