

FALL 2025

# Press Forward

INSPIRING PROGRESSIVE PRINT OPERATIONS

# THE INKJET EQUATION

Why it all adds up





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# Opportunity Abounds

If there's one phrase that captures the spirit of today's print industry, it's this: opportunity abounds.

Everywhere you look, there's a new door opening—new technologies, new formats, new markets. But no single advancement has reshaped the landscape quite like inkjet production. What was once considered a “next big thing” has now become the big thing. And for those ready to invest, it's not just about securing your own future—it's about ensuring the success of your clients.

Inkjet today is not a gamble. It's a proven growth engine. The technology has matured to the point where quality rivals offset, speed rivals traditional production, and flexibility outpaces nearly every alternative. What makes it especially compelling is the ecosystem around it. Companies like Ricoh, Konica Minolta, and Screen USA aren't just selling presses, they're delivering fully integrated solutions: printheads, inks, workflow software, and support systems that allow printers to offer their customers something truly unique.

That uniqueness translates directly into value. For your clients, it means vivid, high-quality print that communicates their brand at the highest level. It means flexibility—short runs, on-demand jobs, personalized campaigns—that would have been prohibitively expensive or technically impossible a decade ago. It means sustainability, as aqueous inks and smarter production workflows reduce waste. In short, investing in inkjet is an investment in helping your clients stand out in a world of sameness.

And here's the deeper truth: Standing still is not an option. The brands you serve are competing in markets where

every touchpoint matters. They need their printed materials—whether direct mail, packaging, signage, or publications—to cut through the noise and build trust. If you can deliver that with the precision and flexibility of inkjet, you're not just a supplier. You're a partner in their growth.

Opportunity abounds when you think beyond the press itself. Inkjet opens doors to new revenue streams, from customized packaging runs to data-driven marketing campaigns. It allows you to reimagine what your shop can be—not just a producer of print, but an enabler of brand experiences. The shops making these moves now are positioning themselves not just for today's wins, but for tomorrow's relevance.

So the question isn't whether inkjet is the future—it's whether you'll seize that future before your competitors do. The technology is here. The economics make sense. The demand from your clients is real. What remains is the decision: to step forward, to invest, to embrace the opportunities that abound.

As you read this issue of Press Forward, I encourage you to see these not just as stories about machines or markets, but as stories about possibility. Because that's what inkjet represents—the possibility to invest in your future by investing in your clients' success.

After all, when your clients thrive, so do you. And that's an opportunity worth seizing.



**ADAM SILK**  
CEO,  
Digital Print Solutions

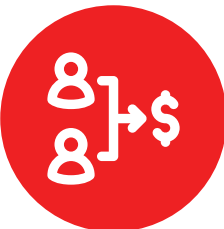
# Print vs Digital Marketing: Value & Impact

Print may just matter more than ever. The most enthusiastic and progressive print companies need to share the good news with their brand owners and marketing clients. And in the day of AI, print allows your clients to uniquely stand out. Here's why:



### RECALL & TRUST

Print marketing delivers a **70–80%** higher recall rate than digital ads (ElectrolQ, 2025). Consumers also tend to trust print ads more when making purchase decisions—approximately **82%** trust print, compared to just **61%** who trust online ads (Passive Secrets, 2025).



### CONVERSION & ENGAGEMENT

Around **80%** of consumers take action (e.g., redeem, respond) from direct-mail print ads, whereas only **45%** act on electronic ads (SFGate Marketing, 2025). Campaigns that combine both print and digital outperform single-channel efforts—delivering up to a **400%** higher response rate (The Print Barn, 2025).



### ADVERTISING MARKET LANDSCAPE

While digital advertising is projected to account for **73%** of global ad revenue by 2025, helping push the overall ad industry beyond **\$1 trillion** (Financial Times, 2024), print is carving out a powerful role in multi-channel strategies.





# Gaining Ground

## TRENDS THAT LEAN INTO PRINT'S STRENGTHS

### 1 INTERACTIVE & DIGITALLY-ENHANCED PRINT

**Interactive paper** is emerging—print enriched with NFC (near-field communication) or conductive ink that allows users to tap their phones to launch digital experiences (AR, video, web) without QR codes or apps (Artisan Colour, 2025). More broadly, **interactive print media**—such as AR overlays, QR codes, and video-in-print—bridges offline and online experiences, extending the shelf life of print through linked digital content (*Marketing.com*, 2025).

### 2 PERSONALIZATION & ON-DEMAND CUSTOMIZATION

**Small-batch and on-demand printing** is replacing outdated bulk runs, enabling updated messaging, regional or individual customization, and faster response times through web-to-print portals (Artisan Colour, 2025; Conquest Graphics, 2025). **Variable Data Printing** takes personalization further—mailers or print materials tailored by name, offer, or audience segment consistently drive higher engagement and ROI (*Conquest Graphics*, 2025; *Printivity*, 2025).

### 3 STREAMLINED WORKFLOWS & AUTOMATION

**AI, cloud-based platforms, and automation tools** are accelerating catalog production, proofing, and version control—reducing errors and time-to-market (Comosoft, 2025). **Web-to-print storefronts** also centralize branding and ordering, allowing team members or franchises to self-serve preapproved materials—boosting efficiency and consistency (*Conquest Graphics*, 2025).

### 4 SUSTAINABILITY & CRAFT AUTHENTICITY

**Eco-conscious practices**—such as recyclable substrates, sustainable inks, UV curing, and clean production—are gaining traction, particularly among brands looking to reinforce responsible values (*Conquest Graphics*, 2025; *Marketing.com*, 2025).

### 5 NOSTALGIA, TANGIBILITY & BRAND STORYTELLING

Major brands like **Microsoft, Hinge, and Costco** are launching or relaunching print magazines as storytelling tools that feel authentic and tactile—especially in an era saturated with AI-generated or ephemeral digital content (Axios, 2025). Analysts note this **print revival taps into engagement and prestige**, offering a sensory experience that digital simply can't replicate (*Printing Impressions*, 2025; *Axios*, 2025).



# THE INKJET EQUATION

Why it all adds up





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**F**or the Fotorecord Print Center, the tipping point for taking the inkjet leap wasn't just about cost—it was about control. Just how serious that tipping point was can be seen in the fact that the Pittsburgh-based printer is inkjet/toner now. It does not operate any offset equipment.

Paul Nickoloff says the biggest reason for Fotorecord's decision to move away from the offset press was coverage, consistency and no plates or setup. And if you ask the owner and President, you wouldn't be surprised to find that prospects often are surprised at the proofing advantages. "The inkjet is its own proofing unit. When we do pocket folders, brochures or packaging proofs, customers can see exactly what they'll get."

That shift reflects a larger story unfolding across the industry. As modern production inkjet technology continues to mature, today's print providers are finding new economic and strategic reasons to embrace it. Unlike offset, inkjet requires no plates or lengthy setup, making it economical for short to medium runs and personalized campaigns.

But the real story goes beyond acquisition cost. To build a compelling business case, providers must evaluate the total cost of ownership (TCO)—including consumables, energy, labor, maintenance and workflow

efficiency—while also weighing the qualitative benefits of agility, personalization and customer engagement.

One of the most pressing questions for any print provider is when it makes sense to move a job from offset to inkjet. Nickoloff has learned to draw the line at around 5,000 to 6,000 sheets. "Anything static over that we outsource to one of our 40-inch offset partners. Below that, inkjet is the sweet spot."

Nickoloff says the transition away from offset didn't just reduce costs; it reshaped his entire workflow. Without the plates, chemicals and downtime associated with traditional presses, his team found new efficiencies. "We can run front and back in smaller lifts—750, 1,500, 2,000 sheets—which lets us get into bindery quicker. We're often finishing a job while part of it is still printing. That overlap means a 10-hour job effectively feels like five."

That flexibility has become a competitive advantage for

**“ The inkjet is its own proofing unit. When we do pocket folders, brochures or packaging proofs, customers can see exactly what they'll get.”**

**—Paul Nickoloff, Owner/President, Fotorecord Print Center**

Fotorecord. By packaging production time differently, Fotorecord can deliver projects faster than offset ever allowed. "We might run 2,000 sheets, trim them and get the signatures into the booklet maker while the rest is still printing," Nickoloff says. "The customer sees a speed to completion that we simply couldn't offer before."

Nickoloff says offset still has a role for long runs, metallic inks and larger sheet sizes. But as drying times improve and roll-to-roll options with inline sheeting become more common, he sees inkjet pushing even deeper into offset territory.



## EXPANDING THE EQUATION

For Kevin Oakes, the economics of inkjet hinge on fixed costs. Offset presses carry unavoidable expenses—plates, make-ready, washups, setups and waste—while inkjet strips away much of that overhead. While run length is the primary factor in the company's calculations, project type often tips the balance as well.

"Multi-page booklets, for example, can be collated in-line," says Oakes, President of Columbus, Ohio, printer Citicom Capitol. "Personalized or versioned jobs flow seamlessly through the press in a single run. Those are situations where inkjet tends to win outright over traditional offset. It's not just the length of the run—it's the complexity of the work and the efficiency gains you can unlock."

When Citicom Capitol calculates TCO, the lens is broader than the purchase price of the press, including cost of capital, depreciation and tax advantages, as well as the ongoing expenses of ink, consumables and service agreements. Labor also plays a critical role. "You have to consider the speed of the device, the expertise required to run it and the margin improvements that come from new applications the technology opens up," Oakes says.

Transitioning from production toner to inkjet required a new way of thinking for the Citicom Capitol team. Paper stock, in particular, demanded attention. "Instead of multiple paper trays, we now had to optimize a single sheet size," Oakes says. "That meant learning how to maximize imposition, sourcing larger formats, and adjusting workflows and automation to fit the new press."

The effort paid off by driving efficiencies across layout, finishing

and scheduling. Those efficiencies extend into the marketplace. Citicom Capitol has used inkjet to expand its value proposition, offering on-demand printing, short runs and highly personalized campaigns. "Our customers appreciate the reduced waste and the ability to run jobs just in time," Oakes says. "It allows us to capture revenue that offset simply can't."

**“ Our customers appreciate the reduced waste and the ability to run jobs just in time. It allows us to capture revenue that offset simply can't.”**

—Kevin Oakes, President, Citicom Capitol

Still, Oakes says offset remains relevant for certain scenarios, particularly where speed, make-ready efficiency and ink costs tilt the balance. Down the road, Oakes sees the competitive landscape moving further toward inkjet. "Manufacturers across offset, toner and new entrants are pouring resources into inkjet R&D. That competition is going to accelerate improvements in speed, capability and cost efficiency."

For today's print service providers, Oakes says the message remains clear: "Keep a close eye on the market. Position yourself to make the right investment at the right time, so you're ready to capture growth, profitability and continued success."

## UNDERSTANDING THE ECONOMICS OF INKJET

The way Steven Poland views it, the economics of inkjet came down to rigorous cost analysis. For printers, it is a matter of breaking down the equation into fixed and variable costs. "Determining the fixed costs of the press is one thing," says

Poland, President of Digital Print Solutions. "But the variable costs—ink, paper, labor—are what really determine the crossover from offset to inkjet."

Fixed costs include the equipment itself, plant utilization, utilities and labor. Variable costs range from paper and waste to production hours and ink usage. "When you put the two together, you arrive at a per-piece cost that guides your decision," Poland says. "The analysis reveals where inkjet becomes the stronger play—particularly in markets where agility is critical."

Operationally, finishing often sets the pace. Poland says evaluating finishing is the most time-consuming part of the process. Printers must decide whether inline solutions deliver the most automation or whether near-line systems offer broader flexibility. Either way, most bottlenecks occur in the bindery. "Don't let them slow you down. Having two operators printing and finishing immediately allows work to move out and get invoiced faster."

Poland also has seen inkjet open fresh opportunities, particularly in book printing. "Short-run books used to be done on toner devices—slower and more expensive. Inkjet delivers the best of both worlds, letting providers gang multiple titles together regardless of run length. Offset continues to play a role in longer runs, but inkjet now bridges the gap and helps printers compete more effectively on price."

Looking ahead, Poland cites Digital Print Solutions's buying consortium, which gives printers collective purchasing power to lower lease rates and hardware costs, as an advantage. "It's a way to accelerate adoption and give more providers access to inkjet's benefits."

# 5 KEYS TO THE INKJET EQUATION

- 1 KNOW YOUR CROSSOVER POINT**  
Identify the run lengths, coverage and media types where inkjet beats offset economics.
- 2 CALCULATE TRUE TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP**  
Factor in consumables, labor, waste, energy and maintenance—not just acquisition cost.

- 3 STREAMLINE FINISHING**  
Address bottlenecks with inline or near-line solutions to maximize throughput.
- 4 LEVERAGE FLEXIBILITY**  
Use inkjet for personalization just-in-time runs and eliminating warehousing.
- 5 PLAN FOR THE FUTURE**  
Monitor innovations in drying, duplexing and cost models to stay competitive.



Source: DPS America

Brandon Skinner views inkjet from both a business and workforce perspective. For him, the sweet spot is defined by more than run length. “Quantity is No. 1. Page size, ink coverage, and finishing time all factor in. Heavy coverage might favor offset, but inkjet wins when speed to finishing is critical. Jobs come off the press ready to go.”

Skinner, COO of Digital Print Solutions, believes labor is a decisive part of the TCO equation. “It takes years to train a skilled offset operator, but days to train someone on inkjet. The ease of training makes staffing more flexible and reduces the cost of rework. If you want to change a color on an inkjet, you hit a couple buttons. On a press, you’re adding ink and recalibrating—it’s time and materials you never get back.”

The transition can be cultural as well. While some veteran operators are hesitant at first, younger workers tend to embrace digital quickly. “For the next generation, it feels more high-tech,” Skinner says. “It’s a sexier job—you’re running digital, not mixing inks.” That generational shift, he believes, will play a role in how quickly the industry adopts inkjet.

Waste reduction is another advantage. The elimination of plates and warehousing of shells also enables full personalization—every sheet can carry a different name, barcode or message. “Offset needs three to four hundred sheets just to get up to color,” Skinner says. “With inkjet, you print one, check it, and go.”

Rather than replacing offset or toner, Skinner views inkjet as the technology bridge. “Most people won’t get rid of their toner or their press—but inkjet fills that middle ground perfectly. As equipment becomes smaller and more affordable, inkjet will take over more applications. Start learning now. The device that fits your business is coming.”

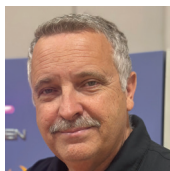
In the end, the inkjet equation isn’t just about reducing costs; it’s about reshaping how work gets done and how quickly providers can deliver value. For printers willing to do the math, the technology adds up to greater agility, stronger economics and a clear path to future growth. 📈



# A Clear Path Forward



## HOW SOUTHEAST MAIL BUILDS OPPORTUNITY FOR ITS CLIENTS



**It started with a small job—just a few hundred pieces for a local nonprofit. Nothing flashy or massive. It was the kind of project that could easily get lost in the shuffle for any printer with a to-do list begging for priorities. But for SouthEast Printing & Mailing Service (SMS), the job was no less important than the larger campaigns the Lexington, Kentucky, print and mail shop produces for large clients.**

As owner Jeff Fraley recalls, the nonprofit client needed precision: correct names, correct addresses and personalized touches that could turn a simple mailing into a fundraising lifeline. So Fraley and his team did what they always do; they treated the project with the same level of care and sophistication they would apply to a 200,000-piece run.

The result wasn't just a successful campaign, but a relationship that continues to this day.

The story is one Fraley says sets SMS apart from the competition, mainly its ability to "right size" its services for any client. "Our clients come in all shapes and sizes. We must be able to run a 200,000-piece job for one client today and a 200-piece job for a different one tomorrow. We regularly forecast our equipment needs to make sure we can provide the highest quality products and service. Our equipment, and our future investments, must line up with the needs and volumes of our clients."

That philosophy is what drove SMS to enter the inkjet world with the purchase of a Screen Americas 520 roll inkjet printer. "It has proven to be the best piece of equipment I've ever bought—both in terms of uptime and profitability," Fraley says.

Before, a 100,000-piece letter job required offset printing, trimming, perfining, toner box overprinting and folding—a process that took three to four days. With the Screen inkjet, partnered with inline MBO finishing, the first finished piece to the mail inserting area is about 30 minutes. Today, SMS prints about 80 million pages per year with Screen technology. "It truly revolutionized our business," Fraley says.

Fraley calls technology SMS's biggest strength. While he admits people are critical, technology is what allows talent to flourish. "You can have the most talented, hard-working team, but if you don't have the technology, your business will stay stagnant."

That's why SMS has built a diverse portfolio of production capabilities, including UV inkjet technology, offset and toner. Each is combined with finishing processes like collating, folding and personalization, as well as delivering flexibility and quality.

### Client-First Philosophy

For Fraley and his team, every decision the company makes comes back to a simple question: What's best for the client? Typically, if something is good for the client, Fraley believes it also is good for the company. That philosophy extends to the way

SouthEast Mail handles the inevitable challenges that come with complex print and mail projects.

"Mistakes happen; it's not an if, it's a when," Fraley says. "Our clients love our complex variable data, quick turnaround times and stunning graphics, but where do we stand when a job goes south? Our priority is to ensure our client's job is fixed in a timely manner. We can worry about why the mistake happened later."

This dedicated approach has earned SouthEast Mail longstanding trust across industries where accuracy and timing matter most: education, nonprofits and professional associations. "What material and message must a recipient receive to invoke an emotion that leads to a response? This is what drives our brainstorming sessions with clients and keeps them coming back. Inkjet technology along with deep variable messaging is where the future of print and mail is."

The perspective not only positions SouthEast Mail as a vendor, but as a strategic partner. By blending data-driven insight with technical capability, it is helping its clients create mailings that resonate on a personal level. "We are not only positioned to move forward in the industries we serve, but I see opportunities everywhere. That's what excites me every day."

From that first small nonprofit job to the data-driven campaigns it runs today, SouthEast Mail has built a reputation on providing the right tools, the right philosophy and the right commitment to its clients. 🍷

# THE QUESTION ISN'T IF YOU'LL SWITCH TO INKJET, IT'S WHEN.

SCREEN Americas has helped countless printers seamlessly switch from conventional offset operations to high-speed digital inkjet. Many printers have offloaded their offset presses and toner devices entirely and replaced them with SCREEN technology. With variable capabilities ideal for commercial, direct mail and publishing applications, SCREEN technology can transition your entire pressroom based on your individual needs. Because we know that the future—your future—is undoubtedly with inkjet. **Just tell us when.**

## Truepress JET 560HDX



Inkjet technology that rivals  
offset on paper up to 560 mm wide.

## Truepress JET 520HD Series



Variable production on coated or  
uncoated paper that need not be pretreated.

## Truepress JET 520NX AD



Quality personalization at  
speeds up to 225 meters per minute.

CREATING **YOUR** FUTURE IN PRINT

**SCREEN**

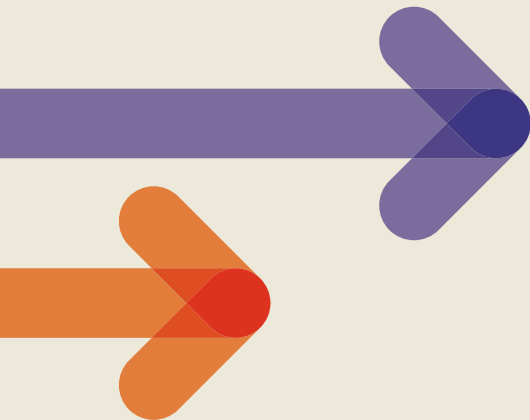
[SCREENamericas.com](http://SCREENamericas.com)





Best practices for  
formulating your  
inkjet strategy

# Proven Pathways



**I**t started with a proof. A longtime print buyer—a client who'd seen everything from letterpress to laser—walked into Edison Press and reviewed the sample sheet that had just come off the Sanford, Maine's new inkjet press. She turned it over. Held it to the light. Then looked back at the team in disbelief. "This is what the industry has always wanted." The twist came when she asked if the Edison team could put it back on toner because the client was so used to seeing sheen.

**“ On the operations side, inkjet isn't a plug-and-play addition—it's a transformation. Unlike sheets, you're locked into finishing decisions from the planning stage rather than adapting during production.”**

—Ross Gormley, COO,  
Wallace Graphics

If you're looking for that iconic moment that captures both the irony and opportunity of inkjet, welcome to the show. The inkjet technology delivers the consistency, speed and quality today's printers and buyers crave. It's just that it requires a shift in perception.

Selling and running inkjet isn't about the machine. What printers using inkjet will tell you is that it's about connecting capabilities to outcomes, mapping workflows to customer needs and ensuring your entire team—from the front of

the house to the back. It's about maximizing potential.

This is something Joe Rosenfield, President of Edison Press, sees every day. When it comes to inkjet, Rosenfield says the sales pitch starts and ends with the sheet. "We don't have a traditional sales team. The press sells the work. From the front of the house to the back, everyone plays a part in making sure the job is done right and the client keeps coming back. When prospects see the proof, they want it."



Inkjet is no longer emerging; it's here. That means figuring out how to win business, run equipment and keep promises. When Jake Wallace talks to clients about inkjet at Wallace Graphics, the word "inkjet" rarely enters the conversation. "Our clients don't come to us asking for inkjet. They come asking for faster turnarounds, more personalized content or ways to lower acquisition costs."

Wallace and his team don't position inkjet as hardware, but as a problem-solver—one that connects capabilities to metrics clients already track: response rates, cost per lead and campaign ROI. In direct mail, it's showing how personalization at scale boosts engagement. In printing, it's highlighting reduced waste and faster speed-to-market.

For Wallace Graphics, the shift came from needing to support healthcare clients and publishers with shorter run lengths and dynamic content. The Duluth, Georgia, printer historically was a commercial offset printer. But as client needs changed—variable data, tighter SLAs, targeted content—it saw an opportunity.

Today, Wallace and his team work to shift the culture from selling "print" to selling "solutions." "Investing in the HP A2200 allowed us to pivot from being just a commercial printer to a true inkjet-driven solutions provider. It's become a big part of our business now."

Long-time industry sales strategist Linda Bishop believes relevancy is the ultimate closer. Her process begins with a deceptively simple exercise: Create a chart for each prospect that connects their problems to inkjet benefits, and

then to the specific features that support those benefits. For example, an insurance marketing director may struggle with personalized policyholder communication. Inkjet's benefit? High-quality personalization at scale. The features? Variable data printing, inline personalization, seamless CRM integration.

"I tried this using AI to build the charts, and it took three minutes," says Bishop, President of Thought Transformation. "Now, instead of talking specs, I'm speaking the client's language."

Bishop says that together, these approaches highlight the key sales principles of inkjet: Frame the conversation around outcomes, not hardware; train and empower your team to sell solutions; and use proof—whether a sheet, a demo or a chart—to make the case tangible.

#### OPERATIONS: BUILDING WORKFLOWS THAT WORK

On the operations side, inkjet isn't a plug-and-play addition—it's a transformation. Ross Gormley, COO at Wallace Graphics, says the biggest challenge transitioning to inkjet was learning rolled material workflows. "Unlike sheets, you're locked into finishing decisions from the planning stage rather than adapting during production."

For the Wallace Graphics team, that required new processes, from cross-training teams to upgrading front-end workflows. Gormley emphasizes the importance of communication across departments. Prepress, production and finishing teams had to work in sync, planning every decision upstream. Proof-of-concept projects with key clients helped demonstrate value while ironing out internal kinks. "Samples and demos were far more effective than explanations."

At Edison Press, Rosenfield frames operations as a cycle of continuous learning. "Every new machine comes with growing pains. With inkjet, it started with the basics: learning the press, figuring out estimating and understanding how to compare it to offset without losing margin."

**“Consistency is what clients want most. They don't care what press the job runs on. They want the first sheet to match the last.”**

—Joe Rosenfield, President, Edison Press

Solutions came through trial and error—like adding IR dryers to solve finishing challenges—and through investment in bindery equipment that could keep pace with faster output.

When it comes to quality, Rosenfield sees inkjet as its own safety net. "The beauty of inkjet is that the press itself handles most of the quality. Our main focus is keeping the printheads in top shape. Beyond that, there's very little maintenance needed. Consistency is what clients want most. They don't care what press the job runs on. They want the first sheet to match the last."

His final lesson is not to obsess over uptime. "Uptime is really a sales term. What matters most is how quickly you can get back up when something goes down. That's where the right service partner makes all the difference."

#### THE STRATEGY PLAYBOOK

On the sales side, the best practices are clear:

- Sell outcomes like ROI, speed-to-market and consistency.
- Train continuously, using real-world examples to build confidence.

# 5 Steps to Inkjet Success

## 1 Lead with Outcomes

Lead with outcomes  
Show ROI, engagement and speed-to-market.

## 2 Train Relentlessly

Arm sales with case studies and proof-of-concepts.

## 3 Align Culture

Reward solution selling, not just print volumes.

## 4 Plan Workflows

Cross-train staff and map finishing up front.

## 5 Prove It

Win clients with samples, demos and hard proofs.

Sources: Jake Wallace, Wallace Graphics; Joe Rosenfield, Edison Press; Linda Bishop, Thought Transformation

- Use tools like proofs, demos and AI-generated charts to speak the client's language.
- Align compensation and culture around solution selling, not just print volumes.

On the operational side, the essentials include:

- Prepare teams with cross-training and clear communication channels.
- Map press capabilities to client

needs through proofs and targeted education.

- Invest in workflow upgrades and finishing integration early.
- Focus on consistency and rapid recovery, not just uptime.

Printers using inkjet are quick to say that it is not a silver bullet. You won't win business simply because you bought a new piece of equipment. And you won't succeed if you treat it as just another press on the floor. With the

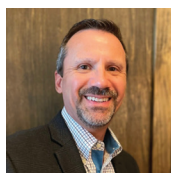
right strategy—grounded in client outcomes, operational readiness and continuous education—inkjet becomes more than technology; it becomes a lever for growth.

"When people see it, they want it," Rosenfield says. "The trick is making sure you're ready to deliver it, every single time."❖



# Leading the Inkjet Printing Revolution

**FUJIFILM**  
Value from Innovation



**The print industry is undergoing one of the most dynamic transformations in its history. Shorter**

**runs, personalized campaigns, sustainability requirements, and customer expectations for higher quality are all converging to reshape how printers operate. Fujifilm, long recognized as a global imaging innovator, is taking a leadership role in this evolution with a vision that is as bold as it is practical.**

“Fujifilm’s leadership goes beyond technology,” says Michael Poulin, Sr. Product Manager – Inkjet Press Solutions, FUJIFILM North America Corporation. “It embodies a deep understanding of the challenges and opportunities shaping production print today.”

## **Vertical Integration for Real-World Advantage**

Unlike many competitors, Fujifilm controls the entire inkjet ecosystem, from printheads to inks and press integration. This vertical integration provides customers with a unique advantage: optimized performance, predictable results, and long-term reliability. It also accelerates innovation cycles, ensuring that new inks, substrates, and press technologies work seamlessly together. “By owning the full platform, we’re giving customers confidence that every component is designed to maximize quality, efficiency, and profitability,” Poulin notes.

**The Benchmark:**  
**Offset Quality in Digital**  
Fujifilm’s J Press series has

become synonymous with offset-quality in a digital environment. By eliminating traditional plate-making and make-ready bottlenecks, the J Press delivers consistent fidelity at production speeds. The result is freedom for print providers to pursue growth markets across commercial print, direct mail, and packaging.

“The ability to run variable data at full speed on a wide range of substrates opens up entirely new business models,” Poulin explains. “From localized marketing to customized packaging, printers can now deliver personalization at scale.”

## **Driving Sustainability and Efficiency**

Sustainability is a competitive mandate. Fujifilm has made environmental stewardship a cornerstone of its R&D, investing heavily in aqueous pigment inks, energy-efficient systems, and digital workflows that reduce waste. Shorter runs, fewer make-ready sheets, and reduced chemical use all contribute to a significantly smaller ecological footprint.

“Environmental responsibility aligns directly with profitability,” says Poulin. “Our solutions help printers meet regulatory and brand expectations while also reducing waste and inventory costs.”

## **Enabling Transformation Without Disruption**

For legacy print operations, Fujifilm’s inkjet imprinting systems provide an incremental path to modernization. By enabling digital enhancements on existing analog

lines, printers can adopt new capabilities without wholesale disruption of their workflows. This hybrid approach allows companies to expand into digital while maximizing the value of their current investments.

**“Focus on agility, invest in technology that balances quality and efficiency, and partner with companies that are committed to your long-term success.”**

– Michael Poulin, Sr. Product Manager – Inkjet Press Solutions, FUJIFILM North America Corporation

## **The Road Ahead**

Looking forward, Poulin sees inkjet continuing to expand its role as the dominant technology in production print. “Inkjet won’t just replace other processes, it will complement and enhance them. The key is flexibility, and that’s where Fujifilm excels.”

His advice to printers and marketers navigating this rapidly changing landscape is clear: “Focus on agility, invest in technology that balances quality and efficiency, and partner with companies that are committed to your long-term success.”

With its combination of vertical integration, groundbreaking technology, and unwavering commitment to sustainability, Fujifilm is shaping the future of the industry. 🌱

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# The Millcraft Story Just Keeps Getting Better





# Travis Mlakar

PRESIDENT & CEO,  
MILLCRAFT

**F**or more than a century, Millcraft has been more than a paper and packaging distributor—it's been a family story built on honesty, loyalty, and integrity. From its humble beginnings in 1920 to its position today as a dynamic, innovation-driven company, Millcraft has never wavered from its founding philosophy: honor the customer relationship. Under the leadership of President and CEO Travis Mlakar, the company continues to evolve while staying true to its roots. In this conversation, Travis shares his perspective on the forces reshaping the paper industry, Millcraft's role in driving innovation, and why family values remain at the heart of everything the company does.

**What are the current major trends reshaping the paper industry and how is Millcraft positioning itself to lead?**

The paper industry is in flux, with sustainability, digital transformation, and evolving customer expectations at the forefront. Sustainability is increasingly a driving factor for print buyers when choosing a supplier. This aligns with increased regulatory pressure—such as the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR)—which requires origin traceability for all wood fiber, and industry certifications like EcoVadis, now held by over 100,000 companies worldwide.

Trade dynamics further impact the market. With this year's imposed

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**Over the past five years, this platform has facilitated a tenfold increase in our wide-format substrates and equipment sales.”**

tariffs of 50% on Brazilian paper imports and 15% on European products, the competitive landscape has dramatically changed. When we add the new tariffs into the dynamics of a rapidly consolidating North American paper manufacturing base, you feel the shifting supply base. Given that the United States must import paper to meet current demands, we anticipate rising prices in both

coated and uncoated paper over the next 12 months.

Through the diversification of our supplier base and the pursuit of advanced sustainability certifications, Millcraft ensures that our customers receive access to rigorously evaluated products and the assurances necessary to remain competitive and successful as industry trends continue to evolve.



### How are substrate innovations for inkjet printing reshaping how your customers work?

While the market for digital print is expanding, evolving technology is reshaping the landscape for printers—particularly those using older inkjet presses that rely on pre-treated or specially treated substrates. As manufacturers increasingly focus on substrates compatible with the latest inkjet equipment, the range of options for legacy presses is narrowing. This leaves some printers confined to just one or two substrate choices, often at significantly higher prices than the broader selection—at lower cost—available to competitors with newer technology. As a result, printers operating older equipment may find themselves at a disadvantage, both in terms of cost and flexibility, compared to those who have upgraded to more versatile inkjet solutions.

The rise of production inkjet presses is fundamentally transforming substrate usage driven by applications in retail, events, fashion and décor. Many of these applications, however, require a broader set of substrates to print on. That is why Millcraft has had to triple the number of digital sheets and rolls we inventory in the last five years. It has also driven us to acquire an inkjet equipment dealership, giving clients access to certified technical support and the latest substrate advancements. Whether fulfilling orders of a few cartons or full truckloads, we are structured to support customers of all sizes as they adapt to these new market realities.

### How do you foresee the paper and substrate market evolving in the next 5 to 10 years?

The supply landscape is set to change dramatically. With ongoing domestic mill closures and

international trade issues pushing up the cost of imports, printers and their distribution partners will increasingly need to strike a careful balance among cost, availability (especially U.S.-based inventory), and quality—including not only production standards but also environmental certifications. As the global manufacturing base contracts, printers may find themselves with fewer options for compatible substrates.

Compounding this, only a few mills are currently investing in new digital sheeting or smaller roll conversion capabilities, which could result in supply chain bottlenecks. Navigating these shifts will require deeper more aligned partnerships, improved forecasting and a willingness from some supply chain partners to carry higher inventory levels, ensuring the flexibility needed to weather production volatility.

Yet, despite these challenges, digital print and specialty substrates are on a rapid ascent with the projections that specialty digital substrates—such as synthetics, pressure-sensitives, and wide-format media—will see annual growth rates of 6-8%, outpacing traditional coated and uncoated stocks. This growth opportunity will get the attention of merchants like Millcraft as well as manufacturers looking for markets to expand into. That should result in the willingness to invest in new products and inventory for the right partners.

### What makes Millcraft not just a supplier, but a strategic partner?

Millcraft's approach is data-driven and customer-centric. We represent mills across four continents and maintain multiple suppliers for every product line we carry. That gives our customers resilience in a volatile market. Our strategic acquisition of an inkjet equipment dealer

ensures that customers benefit from certified expertise on the latest OEM hardware and best-in-class technical support. Over the past five years, this platform has facilitated a tenfold increase in our wide-format substrates and equipment sales.

Our service model scales to any customer—from those ordering a few cartons to large-scale roll deliveries. In the past five years, we have increased digital inventory by more than 300% to keep pace with market demand. Additionally, we use technology, now augmented by AI helping to predict demand and inventory requirements, to ensure we have the right products on the floor. We continue to work with partners to provide customer-specific supply agreements that come with guaranteed inventory, pricing and service level commitments.

### How does your community-centric approach inform the way Millcraft connects with customers and plans for future innovation in the industry?

Since our founding in 1920, Millcraft has continuously adapted to technological shifts, from letterpress to offset, digital, and now inkjet. Today, we offer not only commercial printing paper but also synthetics, plastics, vinyl, wide-format media, and direct-to-garment and direct-to-film printers—reflecting our commitment to innovation and the evolving needs of the print community.

Our business has always been focused not on the products we sell but on the customers we serve. We set our company strategy based on the direction our customers are headed. Supporting their growth ensures ours. 🍷

## Take Control of Your Business Future

The graphic paper industry is facing some tough challenges. Tariffs are pushing costs higher, and supply chain disruptions are making it harder to get the materials you need, when you need them. At Millcraft, we understand these changes can be a challenge—and we're here to help you navigate them.

**Our Quarterly Graphic Paper Industry Webinar will provide practical insights to help you stay ahead:**

- » **Understanding Tariffs' Impact:** Learn how tariffs are affecting costs and supply chains, and how to adjust your strategy to stay competitive.
- » **Diversification for Stability:** We'll explain why expanding your product offerings is key to protecting your business from market volatility.
- » **Strengthening Your Supply Chain:**  
Find out how to build a resilient supply chain that can handle disruptions without hurting your bottom line.

# TARIFFS



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# Driving Digital Forward



KONICA MINOLTA

## HOW KONICA MINOLTA IS PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE OF INDUSTRIAL PRINT



**Frank Mallozzi doesn't like to dwell on conversations about the decline of print. After more**

**than 30 years in the imaging technology industry, he's heard the theory before. Instead, he talks about how digital technologies are transforming what's possible for today's printers.**

From where Mallozzi sits, a major transition is underway. While print may be declining in analog environments, digital is opening new possibilities. In a market driven by shorter runs, personalization and unique touchpoints, digital is all the talk. "We're looking forward to taking digital to a true production level—moving work off offset presses into digital presses and achieving lights-out production."

Mallozzi, who became President of Konica Minolta Business Solutions U.S.A. Inc.'s Konica Minolta Industrial Print Channel (IPP) in April 2024, is bullish on the company's high-speed inkjet, labeling and embellishment businesses. "What excited me most was our industrial print portfolio. The recently launched AJ30000—our B2 UV inkjet press—operates very similarly to an offset press, so for customers considering digital, it's a seamless transition."

The AccurioJet 30000 represents the next generation of full-color UV inkjet printing, featuring a redesigned inking system that delivers sharper image quality while reducing maintenance demands. The press achieves output speeds of 3,000 sheets per hour single-sided and 1,500 double-sided, accommodating media sizes up to 585 x 750 mm. Its HD mode supports FM screening with precise dot placement, while the HS UV ink enables compatibility with a wide range of media.

Konica Minolta's patented Dot Freeze technology further elevates image and text clarity, achieving results that rival—and even surpass—offset quality. To

ensure customers get the most from their investment, Konica Minolta also provides White Glove support, delivering a premium service experience at every step.

**“Digital has become more mainstream. We now have a very successful population of production inkjet presses in the marketplace. There are plenty of case studies proving the value.”**

**— Frank Mallozzi, President, Konica Minolta's Industrial Print Channel (IPP)**

In a landscape where printers are confronting shorter runs and faster turnarounds, products like the AccurioJet 30000 are lowering the barrier. "Digital has become more mainstream," Mallozzi says. "Five to eight years ago, customers didn't want to be guinea pigs. But today, commercial printers are more data-savvy. They have strong MIS systems that help them understand costs and inefficiencies. That makes the transition conversation easier."

Also on the horizon, you may recall Konica Minolta, Inc. unveiled imagery of the AccurioJet 60000 at drupa 2024, further supporting the ongoing growth and expansion of its portfolio. The AccurioJet 60000 will offer output speeds of 6,000 sheets per hour single-sided and 3,000 double-sided.

### A PLAYBOOK FOR TRANSITION

For many commercial printers, moving from offset to digital requires more than just a new press. It requires a new way of thinking. That's why Konica Minolta has developed a consultative approach that maps out the whole process and provides a total cost of ownership report.

"This helps identify pain points and inefficiencies in their current workflow," Mallozzi says. "What jobs do they need to run profitably? What could move from offset to digital? The process is critical... Digital is generational. A new wave of

printers has grown up with expectations for personalization, versioning and fast turnaround."

With advances in inkjet inks and head technology, digital presses are meeting these expectations across applications once thought impractical. As Konica Minolta eyes the road ahead, Mallozzi and his team are focused on three primary areas:

- Labels – Helping converters and commercial printers move from analog to digital, especially in markets like microbreweries, cannabis, nutraceuticals, wine and candles.
- Embellishment – Enhancing existing work for higher margins, such as premium invitations with foiling.
- Production Inkjet (KM-1 platform) – Short-run B2 work in commercial print, book publishing, in-plants and even display graphics.

"Quality, once a concern, is no longer an issue," Mallozzi says. "Our devices rival offset and customers are blown away. The next push is speed. As devices get faster, more work will shift from analog to digital. We [recently] announced a platform extension that will continue to expand our inkjet, embellishment and label offerings."

For printers wanting to invest in inkjet, Mallozzi says the process is three-fold:

1. Invest in technology and data—the steppingstone into AI.
2. Spend time up front—discovery is key to finding efficiencies.
3. Focus on details—from site surveys to installation, smooth implementation ensures full value.

"With all the emphasis on equipment, equipping customers with the tools and knowledge to grow their businesses is equally important," Mallozzi says. "Our role is to help printers find the right fit, capture opportunities and thrive in a marketplace that increasingly values speed, personalization and quality." 🚀



KONICA MINOLTA

Accurio*Jet* 30000

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