13.11.2018 / Andy Fetherman

What happens, if you only think about your new digital printing technology – and forget about finishing?

Here in the United States, digital printing established itself over the past years faster than in other countries, taking root in many of our customers' business segments. For fifteen years as Director of Digital Solutions at Muller Martini, I had the chance to work on various projects regarding the investment in new digital printing technologies. While working on these projects, I have seen many operation and production managers spend countless hours combing through print engine specifications and running samples after samples on various competitive technologies. At the end they proudly choose the printer that rises to the top as a result of their analysis. However, this sense of achievement is short-lived, when they realize that they ignored the most important aspect of a digitally printed product – how will they finish it! That's when I usually get a call for help.

The above short story is very true and has been repeated too many times. Most printers don't realize the obvious during their intense digital print engine research that a roll of printed paper is basically worthless, until it is finished. Upon this realization, they begin the mad dash to understand the various finishing options available to make their products sellable. Unfortunately, time is usually of the essence at this point, so everyone feels extra pressure to make the right decision in a relatively short period of time. Pressure that could have been minimized by focusing on the complete solution right from the beginning.

What makes it worse is that the digital finishing solution analysis can be rather complex. There are many steps in this process that begins with an analysis of their job mix to see what basic type of finishing is required. In most cases they aren't sure if a near-line or in-line work-flow is better for their new digital initiative, so we must analyze both near-line and in-line configurations in order to ensure that they have a certain level of investment protection for future growth. This flexibility is important due to the somewhat uncertain nature of the evolution of this paradigm shift to digital. This discovery usually continues on for many weeks or even months, before we find the right solution to meet their needs.

So don't forget the moral of this story – digital print is only valuable after it's "finished." Therefore, remember to include finishing solutions in your analysis from day one.

Download 10 Points List here   〉

Don't forget about these 10 key factors for choosing a new digital finishing solution!

Herzlichst,
Andy Fetherman
Vice President of Sales and Technology
Müller Martini North America

https://www.mullermartini.com/blog/digitaldruck