

Variable Data

“dip you toe in the water..... spending less than £1000 on software”

According to the Print On Demand Initiative (PODi), Variable Data printing is one of the largest growth sectors in printing and is forecast to continue growing over the coming years. However, the cost of a large digital press and associated IT overhead can be a barrier to entering this market. It wouldn't be hard to spend over £300,000 on an HP Indigo or Xerox iGen system, and you could spend a lot more. A massive investment for most small printers, but there are other options for getting involved.

You could spend less than £30,000 on a low volume SRA3 Xerox or Canon digital device, with something like a Creo Spire RIP for processing variable data, and produce some surprisingly impressive results. Alternatively, if you already have an underused digital colour device, even without a variable data RIP, you could dip you toe in the water by spending less than £1000 on software, providing you're prepared to spend a bit of time in setting it all up yourself.

Over the next few issues of CSN we'll look at some low cost Variable Data projects that you could work on with your existing clients, as well as using the technology to gain access to new clients. The two main areas that we will be covering are Versioning and Mixed Media Marketing, and how they can link together to provide an integrated solution for your customers. The example of Versioning is a customer's price list with personalized pricing for each customer type, and reseller branding of these price lists for the customer's resellers to use. The Mixed Media Marketing campaign example consists of email and digitally printed postal items, both personalized with relevant text and images.

All examples are based on real life Electronic Document Company Case Studies, often with simplification to provide viable low cost production alternatives, but still elegant and practical solutions. Over the coming weeks, the complete real life Case Studies that these examples are based on will be made available on our website http://www.electrodoc.co.uk/065_05-0506.htm

Versioning

So let's look at the Versioning project in more detail. It's a great starting point for getting involved with variable data, as it's probably the simplest and least expensive to implement. When we eventually look at Mixed Media Marketing you'll see how neatly it dovetails as a complete solution, although it is a very powerful stand-alone solution and revenue generator.

The Customer is a leading Manufacturer/importer of door entry systems – swipe card, video entry phone systems etc. They sell their products through Resellers, mainly electrical wholesalers, and wanted to work with these Resellers to help them to sell more of their products. Currently, the Resellers were provided with a generic litho printed brochure with the Manufacturer's branding. The first problem with this was that the Resellers didn't like to use the brochure with their End-users as it promoted

