



Dave Birley, prepress manager, b2b1 Print Solutions

## Case study – b2b1 Print Solutions

**b2b1 brings prepress in-house with Brillia HD LH-PJE plates and FLH-Z processor from Fujifilm.**

A packaging and commercial printer's business has increased flexibility, reduced costs and improved turnaround by bringing its prepress in-house with FUJIFILM.



- ▶ Minimal maintenance
- ▶ Huge reductions in chemistry usage
- ▶ Increased efficiency and quality of prepress installation

When the company sharing its building in Stockport went out of business in 2006, b2b1 Print Solutions seized the opportunity to bring prepress in-house to increase its flexibility, reduce external costs and improve turnaround. Recruiting prepress manager Dave Birley, who had previously run successful repro house Principal Image in Old Trafford, Manchester, to run the operation, b2b1 installed a Screen PlateRite 8600E B1 thermal platesetter and FLH-Z plate processor to run Fujifilm's Brillia HD LH-PJE plates.

b2b1 produces high quality and sometimes complex folded packaging and point-of-sale materials for upmarket consumer goods, in addition to a range of general commercial print. It's the company's ability to add value that has been the source of its success since the new prepress facility opened for business in January 2007, according to Dave Birley:

"We're not just producing flat sheets," he explains. "We cut, bond and laminate in-house to provide a finished product."

Working 24-hours, turnaround and quality are crucial for b2b1: "A job can come in via the ftp server at 8.45am and be on the press the same morning," Birley adds.

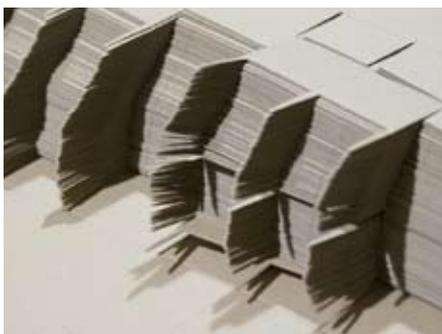
When selecting equipment for the new prepress studio, Birley relied not only on his own 30-year experience in repro but also on the press expertise of b2b1 director Tony Coleshill.

"The plate's got to be right," says Coleshill. "We'd worked with all the major brands and we liked Fujifilm plates."

"We did look into the possibility of going

**"We're processing between 750 and 1000 B1 plates a month and there's still very little developer being used."**

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processless," adds Birley, "but Fujifilm recommended that we should go the thermal CTP route with the Brillia HD LH-PJE plate. Because it didn't need baking, had a good visible image after processing and would give us UV capability, it sold itself."

### Clean machine

The Screen platesetter with Trueflow workflow, Epson 9800 proofer and GMG RIP together with a Fujifilm FLH-Z intelligent plate processor were installed by Fujifilm at the beginning of 2007 in purpose-prepared rooms and moved smoothly into production. "Once you've got the right kit, you've got to run it correctly," adds Birley. This means the platesetter and processor are operated in a clean and dust-free room, and any maintenance alerts from either platesetter or processor are responded to promptly.

"The system has been completely trouble-free," reports Birley. "After some initial fine-tuning within the first week of installation, there has been no requirement to recalibrate the platesetter or to adjust the processor as the plates have been so consistent."

### Processor power

The low chemistry usage of the FLH-Z processor with its ZAC controller that intelligently meters out replenisher to exactly match time and usage has also been impressive in its economy, as Birley explains:

"I don't know how it does it. When we started up the prepress studio I thought the low chemistry usage was just because we weren't putting that many plates through, but now we're processing between 750 and 1000 B1 plates a month and there's still very

little developer being used."

This minimal usage of plate processing chemistry has both environmental and cost benefits for b2b1, and Birley is also impressed with the processor's degree of automation and self-diagnosis. "We clean it out thoroughly when the developer exhaustion warning comes on and only minimal maintenance is then required between cleans, just cleaning the output rollers once a week; if anything does come up, it will hold the plates and raise an alarm."



The efficiency and quality of the prepress installation has been noticed in the pressroom too: "The CTP system has been a godsend," reports Tony Coleshill. "We had one trade job where we had to produce 128 plates in 11 hours; we couldn't have done that before. Also, we used to have to bake all our plates and store them for re-runs. Now we dispose of them and run new ones when there's a reprint, saving the time it took to clean and store them."

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