

Explore new frontiers

Katrin Hoffmann of DTM talks about at how converters and print service providers (PSPs) can benefit from entry-level digital solutions.



Why might a converter invest in a desktop printer as an entry-level digital option?

Converters all across the globe realised that only relying on typical long runs of analogue and digital label prints are no guarantee to keep or expand their business, even though these types of jobs still can comprise a large portion of their production.

Customer requirements changed and evolved, including sampling, shorter run lengths, personalisation, more substrate variety and increased SKUs. Blocking of large machinery to produce such small jobs makes economically no sense. Two other aspects growing more and more in importance are environment and sustainability. In the past customers just ordered a large quantity of (mostly) generic labels, stored and then used them until they were out of stock or worse became out of date. Those out-of-date labels were just thrown away. These days customers want to order exact quantities in time, rather than a percentage of 'overs'.

All of the customer requirements mentioned above can be fulfilled with digital printing. Converters can produce labels in the amount customers need, can offer personalisation, a large variety of label substrates and do all that with a technology that is more environmentally friendly than other technologies as it reduces print wastage and uses no chemicals, water, or plate making.

What are the big advantages digital printing technology offers?

With digital printing the main advantages are on-demand printing, no lead times, no need to order cutting dies. You can produce labels exactly in the quantity you need – no matter if you need one label, a couple of hundred or thousands. And by only producing the amount you need, you also have less wastage. That's environmentally much better.

Another plus: label personalisation and customisation for similar products (different types of jams for example). Personalisation of products through individual labels is and will be very important in B2C markets. To be able to offer that extra value of personalised products to customers not only improves the shopping experience, but it also increases the loyalty of customers to a specific brand and business.

Last but not least, digital label printers can print on a wide range of paper, synthetic or special label materials. Our Genuine DTM Label Stock includes many different substrates, fitting for all kinds of applications from cosmetics, food, drinks, pharmaceutical, durables and industrial chemicals to logistics, packaging and many more.

What are DTM Print's entry-level printing options?

DTM Print offers several full-colour label printers that vary in label run capacity and print technology. We offer solutions either using inkjet or dry toner. A lot of converters find that inkjet technology makes it easier and faster to produce labels. Moreover, inkjet lets PSPs quickly produce short-run, personalised labels with the level of quality that rivals offset. Depending

on the application the customer needs its labels for you can switch between dye- and pigment-based ink. Dye-based ink prints bright and vibrant colours that are perfect for prime label applications. Pigment-based ink prints labels, that are slightly less bright but stand up to sunlight and water for years. They also more closely match the output you'd get from flexo inks.

DTM Print offers the LX-Series of full-colour label printers. The LX printers utilise the latest in inkjet technology using dye- or pigment-based inks. Within that series depending on the maximum print width you need, you can choose between different models including the LX610e Pro.

The LX610e Pro Color Label Printer enables the printing and cutting of any label shape with just one device in seconds. It combines colour label printing with a built-in digital die-cutting mechanism. The desktop-sized printer comes complete with intuitive, easy-to-use software for laying out print and cut files. Just like any other desktop colour label printer standard pre die-cut labels and tags can also be used with this device for just printing.

Second option would be label printers based on LED technology with dry toner. The printing process is similar to laser printers: fusing dry toner to the label material through a heat unit (fuser). LED technology delivers high resolution with more accurate, striking printed labels. It requires less space so the printer is compact, environmentally friendly and energy efficient, using significantly less raw materials in the manufacturing process and consuming less energy.

DTM Print offers different dry toner label printers. One of them is OKI's Pro1050 that can print in five colours (CMYK and white) and handles medium to large runs of colour labels on demand. The Pro1050 uses static LED lines which means lower maintenance and longer lifetime cycles. LED printheads have no moving parts, making them robust and ultra-reliable. They deliver a precise pixel setting for crisp and brilliant labels that are waterproof, UV resistant and highly durable.

In regards of sustainability desktop label printers have a huge advantage over large systems: No matter if they print 1, 10 or 100 labels, desktop solutions like the LX-Series and the Pro1050 do not have a lot of pre- and post-press waste, which is the case with large label printing systems.

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