



The premier resource for insight, analysis and technology integration in newspaper, magazine, digital and hybrid production.

QuickSet eyes papers for ink presetting system

BY CHUCK MOOZAKIS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

QuickSet Corp., the suburban Seattle supplier whose ink levers are installed on newspaper presses worldwide, is now targeting newspapers with an ink presetting system it contends will help users cut makeready waste by more than half.

The firm's QuickSet Ink Pre-Setting system has been installed on more than three dozen presses since 2003, said company President Steve Surbrook.

"It's not registration that's the main culprit," he said about the issues that thwart press operators from producing good copies quickly, "it's ink that isn't being set correctly across the page."

The system, a combination of software and a printer, can be used across a variety of single and doublewide presses, both ink-levered and remote console-controlled.

The system uses the actual image on the plate and translates the coverage to values in accordance with the exact characteristics measured on the press, Surbrook said.

Surbrook said presses equipped with the technology generate fewer than 500 waste copies before meeting quality targets.

Surbrook maintains QuickSet Ink Pre-Setting eclipses the performance of more expensive and elaborate closed-loop systems, in the process providing an ROI that's measured in months.

"Since we have a complete mapping of the press, we know exactly how much ink needs to be delivered," he said, adding that the system relies on hard targets rather than algorithms.

Ed Ciambone, production director at The Lawrence (Kan.) Journal-World, in 2009 installed QuickSet Ink Pre-Setting

across two late 1980s-vintage Goss Urbanite presses, one used for USA Today and the other for The Journal-World and related products.

Consistency

The system, he said, performed as advertised, allowing the paper to reduce its startup waste by more than a third. "What I like is that the first copy coming off is consistent," he said.

"The reliability is another benefit," he said. "QuickSet gives you a consistent operating environment, so if we need to test consumables, we have a good place to start" as far as having accurate performance data.

The Yuma (Ariz.) Sun migrated to QuickSet Ink Pre-Setting after it installed QuickSet's levers across its 11-unit Urbanite press.

"The system paid for itself within six to nine months," said Production Director David Fornof. "The beauty of the system is that it gets you to 95 percent of the color ink laydown you need to be, and if you're already at 95 percent, all you have to do is worry about registration."

Commercial and newspaper printer Nowata Printing Co. in Nowata, Okla., meantime, has the system installed across three presses, including a Goss Magnum and a Harris heatset machine.

"We heard good things about it, so we made a few visits, installed it and it paid for itself in about four months," said General Manager Gary Hensley.

"We run lots of grocery accounts and we have a lot of plate changes and startups. Our waste was about 18 percent before putting the system in; we're at about 9 percent now, so that's a signifi-

cant reduction," he said.

"Once you get the calibration done, you get repeatable results. It seems simple, and it is, but the bottom line is that it works."

Surbrook said the ink presetting system costs from \$40,000 to \$45,000 including consulting, the printer, the software and setup, for a typical 12-unit press. ▲