

Six months later, I-TECH system humming at Tribune Publishing

When Tribune Publishing Co. of Columbia, Mo., agreed to buy register control system technology from Imaging Technologies Inc., the goal was to improve print quality and reduce waste on its Goss International Corp. Universal 45 press.

Installation was complete in March, and the system now monitors the 12 four-color towers used to print the Columbia Daily Tribune, the national edition of the New York Times and dozens of commercial jobs.

So how has the I-TECH system performed over the past six months? "Very well," said Dan Griffith, pressroom manager at Tribune Publishing, noting that he's seen faster good-copy marks with less waste.

Even the company's business office has taken notice. "The I-TECH is showing savings in getting good copies quickly," said Jeff Moe, Tribune Publishing's controller.

Managers at the family owned newspaper publishing and commercial printing company took time out to answer a few questions about the start-up:

Why did you purchase the I-TECH system?

"Auto register has always been a core press control component in our minds yet was out of reach financially when we purchased our press 10 years ago," said Jack Waters, the company's general manager. "Today, the price is much more attractive and technologically superior."

Customer Service Manager Susan Currier added that the company's competitive edge in the marketplace was at stake. "Customers were becoming more sophisticated with their use of color and had higher expectations," she said. "We needed to be able to meet their challenges with good outcomes."

Describe the installation process and how it went.

What did you like?

"The installation process was very simple," said Doug Embree, plant and equipment manager. "That's one of the reasons we chose the system — its simplicity."

To save money, Tribune Publishing opted to use its own personnel to complete the installation, and I-TECH provided detailed documentation and CAD design support to make it happen. I-TECH engineers worked hard to integrate their controls, wiring and camera components into Tribune

Publishing's press cabinets, resulting in a clean, factory-original appearance. Compact, adaptable components made custom mounting and installation a simple process.

"We experienced no negative surprises along the way," Waters said.

Installation started on one tower and was perfected before moving to the other towers. "It was a very controlled start-up," Currier said.

How has the system performed?

"We've been very pleased with the results the system has given us," Waters said. "Quality is much more consistent throughout the run, and we've seen dramatic waste reduction. The controls are very intuitive and our pressmen have adapted quickly to the touch-screen interface."

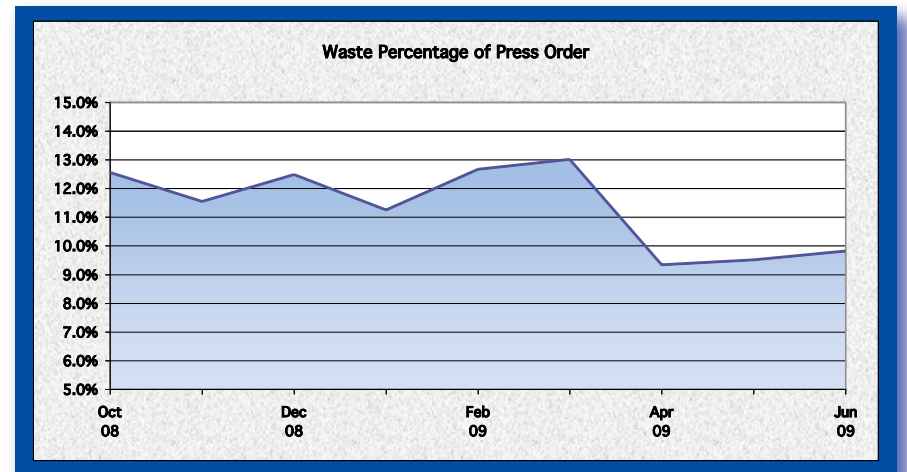
Waters said waste has dropped by about 26 percent.

Embree has been impressed with I-TECH's responsiveness during the start-up period. "They've been outstanding people to work with," he said. "Overall, I don't have any regrets with the system at all, especially after seeing their competitors; they were so complex and not user friendly."

Describe the features you think are most significant.

"The accuracy and viewing range of the camera allows the I-TECH system to work with microscopic register marks and perform consistently," Waters said.

"Cameras are able to capture the marks very early in the startup sequence,



Waste results for Tribune Publishing Company - the I-TECH Auto Register System went live March 16, 2009.

optimizing quality and minimizing waste."

A Skype-based support system puts the I-TECH support team directly in touch with Tribune Publishing press operators and has been an essential aide to launching the system, Waters said.

How does the system impact press operations?

The system has resulted in reduced waste and better quality throughout the press run, Griffith said, freeing press operators to focus on ink and water balance.

Additional reporting functionality in the works will give operators more information to track job performance measures such as registration and waste. "Rather than rely on what the customer tells us, we can look at the press performance and say, 'I don't see that happening,'" Embree said.

How has the system impacted quality?

"We are able to get the piece in register and hold," Currier said. "This is especially important with splices when the web tends to wander. The system moves it back very quickly. The quality is consistent throughout the product."

And the changes haven't been lost on the customer, she said.

"The impact of I-TECH has been a positive one," Currier said. "The fact that we are able to get a piece in register and hold it consistently through a long printing is valuable."