

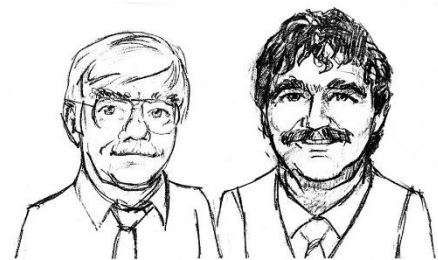
Family-Owned Print Company Wins Lucrative Contract with Freedom Series Print Modules



“DDS is a valued partner that was able to work under a very tight timeline to help us get the first job done. Their ability to provide custom hardware, software and mechanical solutions proved to be invaluable when we had to meet our customer commitments.”

Mike Amidon
VP Production
Amidon Graphics

Amidon Graphics is a family-owned print service provider in Minnesota, started by Paul Amidon in 1951. The company, now run by the second and third generations of the family, originally published educational materials. Before starting the printing business, the company’s founder was a superintendent for the St. Paul Minnesota School District, so he knew the education marketplace. Besides educational institutions and school photographers, the company today lists non-profit organizations, insurance companies, online retailers, restaurants, catalogs, magazines, and government agencies among the many customers they serve.



Amidon Graphics prides itself on its inline, single pass production workflow. They can perform multiple folds, perforations, glued pockets, fragrance, affixed cards, and many other finishing operations immediately after imaging on their half-web presses. Customers can choose from several innovative finishing options.

A specialty of the company are perf and peek panels. This innovative approach encourages interactivity and piques the curiosity of document recipients as they lift the panels and reveal the content underneath.

Replacing an Aging Inkjet Solution

An early adopter of continuous inkjet technology, Amidon Graphics was looking to replace their twenty-year-old inkjet solution with something with better print quality. Their existing inkjet solution was nearing end of life and demand for inkjet was increasing. Some of Amidon’s clients had commented they were not satisfied with the print resolution the old inkjet heads produced. Old technology was costing them.

Amidon's management had been aware of the Fuji-Samba technology for some time and when it was time to shop for a new inkjet solution, they went looking for a supplier. After an extensive search, they decided the DDS Freedom Series print modules from Document Data Solutions were the best choice.

Amidon Graphics invested in a 10 inch, a 6.7 inch, and two 3.3 inch DDS FS-1200 inkjet print modules, with *iDataPrint™* high speed controllers that allow them to fulfill their current customer requirements and handle a wide variety of future requests. The multiple modules will allow Amidon to spread future work across multiple presses.



Big Improvement in Print Quality

Once DDS installed the FS-1200 print systems, Amidon's operations supervisor Tom Krupka modified some plates for an existing offset job by removing some portions of the image. To test the print quality of the new equipment, he added the missing content with the new inkjet print modules and ran the job through both the offset and digital print engines.

"I showed Amidon employees samples of the full offset version and the hybrid version and asked them to tell me which was the hybrid product," says Krupka, "Everyone was amazed at the quality. They found it difficult to tell the difference."

A New Opportunity

A major factor driving Amidon's interest in new inkjet technology was a government balloting application the company was pursuing. This tight timeline job would require great image resolution and critical quality control. High volumes combined with variable data made the DDS inkjet modules a perfect match for this job. Had they won the bid and not upgraded their equipment, Amidon would have been forced to outsource the job. They would have lost control over quality and faced lower profit margins.

"The quality of the print from our old printheads did not meet the government standards. We couldn't fulfill the ballot contract ourselves had we not upgraded to the DDS inkjet modules."

Tom Krupka
Amidon Graphics

Amidon Processes Their Ballot Job In A Single Pass

First Amidon prints the offset portions of the documents then three types of glue are applied, and a piggy-back label is affixed. The DDS FS-1200 inkjet module images the variable portion of the documents before the material is folded and cut to size. Having presorted the data in advance, the mailers exit the production line in mailing sequence, ready to be trayed and delivered to the USPS. The inline production workflow allows Amidon to feed plain paper at the beginning of the line and collect finished mailpieces at the end thus automating the entire process down to one touchpoint.

The company believes ballots are a niche market with significant growth potential. Based on their performance and the quality of the product, Amidon Graphics was awarded the contract to repeat the balloting job. Amidon's sales force is working on securing similar work from new and existing clients.

Since running the ballot job, Amidon Graphics has applied variable barcodes and other personalization techniques to jobs for their clients, using their DDS FS-1200 inkjet modules. The new technology helps Amidon clients communicate, track, and follow-up with their customers more effectively.

According to Tom Krupka, choosing Document Data Solutions as the source for the new printing technology was easy.

“DDS seemed to be the company that had it all together when it came to Fuji-Samba printheads. We’ve been very happy with our experience with the company,” he says.

Poised for the Future

Mr. Krupka believes the future of the print industry is in digital, which makes Amidon Graphics’ investment in the DDS Freedom Series inkjet modules even more strategic. He’s had conversations with clients about the marketing pieces they want to create, and they are all looking towards personalization, which of course, requires a robust digital imaging solution.

As many DDS customers have discovered, the hybrid inkjet solutions they bought years ago cannot deliver the quality and efficiency necessary for today’s demanding applications. Failing to update to modern, low-maintenance print modules can cause missed opportunities, competitive disadvantages, and lower profits. Technology such as the DDS inkjet modules can bring new life to legacy printing equipment.

About the Freedom Series Platform

DDS Freedom Series print modules feature printhead technologies from Kyocera, Ricoh, and FUJIFILM Dimatix, Inc. SAMBA®; all driven by the DDS iDataPrint™ Universal Controller. When companies invest in the Freedom Series they enjoy:

- Freedom from click charges
- Freedom from never-ending, costly, printhead refurbishment
- Freedom to choose their desired print width
- Freedom to choose from a wide variety of available inks
- Freedom to select different drop sizes and print resolution



FUJIFILM is a registered trademark of FUJIFILM Corporation. SAMBA is a registered trademark of FUJIFILM Dimatix, Inc.

More information about the Freedom Series and other products from Document Data Solutions is available at www.dds-usa.com/products.



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