

Media Movers

Slashing the time and cost of CD/DVD printing



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Owner and Managing Director
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The world of digital media production is growing at almost breakneck speed; and the introduction of affordable DVD and CD print and burn solutions has removed one of the last barriers confronting independent musicians, film makers and content producers. A multi-award-winning company at the heart of the industry is Sydney-based Media Movers.

Challenge: Mitigate risk

DVD and CD surface printing has long been a major part of Sydney-based Media Mover's portfolio, but the lack of a cost-effective solution designed for short-run and quick turnaround jobs was a hindrance to meeting the growth in customer demand.

"We had purchased a French-built unit that cost us around \$15,000," says Greg McDonald, Media Movers' owner and managing director. "And while it performed well enough, there was always the problem that when it went off-line for any reason, our entire short-run production line ground to a halt."

Solution: The Epson Discproducer® PP-100AP

Rather than purchase additional units at \$15,000 each, Greg researched the market and discovered the recently launched Epson Discproducer® PP-100AP.

According to Greg, one of the most interesting aspects of the Discproducer – aside from being less than one-seventh of the cost – was that the French unit was actually using an early version of Epson's award winning Micro Piezo inkjet technology as used in the Discproducer.

Quick to recognise a possible solution, Greg installed a single Discproducer for a four month pilot program to evaluate its print quality, colour consistency and, importantly, reliability under pressure. Even before the pilot program was complete, the company had ordered a second Discproducer and was transitioning all short-run production over to the Epson-based solution.

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100 per cent return on investment

From a financial perspective, the company's change to the three Epson Discproducer units has resulted in a 100 per cent return on investment in just three months. According to Greg, this is due primarily to the reliability and virtually non-stop operational performance of the units.

"Each of the printers is operating non-stop for 12 hours every day," Greg says. "And across the three, we are outputting over 40,000 DVDs and CDs every month. Yet regardless of the high demand we place on them and a total in excess of a third of a million prints, each of the printers has continued to operate without any problem at all."

With that level of reliability, Greg estimates the company is saving \$1,000 per month in support costs when compared to the previous DVD/CD printing system, and an additional \$500 per month saved in wasted labour costs. "Add to that other costs savings we achieve by means of more economical ink usage by the printers, and we're easily saving around \$2,000 per month, which is the purchase price of a new unit.

"For the cost of only one of the previous printers, we could just as easily have brought in seven of the Discproducers."

But by bringing in only three of the Epson printers, the company essentially achieved an immediate capital outlay saving of approximately \$9,000. This also gave Media Movers a greater level of production risk mitigation, with the ability to maintain production even if one of the Discproducers were to go offline for any reason.

Production times slashed by 50 per cent

Even with a 100 per cent return on investment in only three months, Greg is quick to point out that the Discproducers' print quality, reliability and colour consistency are far more important to the company. "Increasingly, we are finding the market moving towards a just-in-time [JIT] model," he says.

"This means we are receiving a growing number of short-run projects required by the client in a quick turnaround – and this is where the Epson printers are proving to be invaluable."

Where clients were typically quoted a 4-5 day turnaround on projects, the non-stop performance of the Discproducers has resulted in a 50 per cent reduction in turnaround times.

"The only reason we haven't been able to reduce times even further is the sheer volume of work we are now receiving," Greg explains. "And with that volume, we are already looking to bring on more of the printers to deal with that volume and cut turnaround times even more."

While the reliability and print quality of the Discproducers is definitely making life easier for Media Movers' production personnel, it is also having a significant impact on the sales team.



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"The success of our business relies just as much on adherence to production deadlines as it does to quality," Greg states. "When our sales people commit to a deadline for a project, they need to know that deadline will be met by the production staff."

An interesting result of the cost savings and increased movement towards JIT DVD/CD production in the market is that the price disparity that used to exist between high volume and short volume per unit production is now decreasing quite rapidly.

"For our clients, it means they have greater choice, and are no longer forced to print excessive numbers of discs just to make it financially feasible," Greg says. "With the Discproducers we are reaching the point of being able to provide clients with a totally consistent pricing model regardless of volume."

Scalability of the business

Low cost, reliable operation and ease of use all add up to provide Media Movers with a DVD/CD print solution that is easily and economically scalable.

"It's extremely easy and straightforward to add more Discproducers into the production line to meet growing client demands," Greg says. "In fact, within a matter of hours we could easily scale up our production capabilities to meet absolutely any volume requirements our clients throw at us."

This is due in large part to the sophisticated Epson driver and printer management software that supports multiple Discproducers connected to a single PC. With all the print job and device management handled from a central user interface, even a 100 per cent increase in printers and throughput would have little impact on the personnel overheads.

"While we have one person who is responsible for the Epson-based short-run production," Greg says, "it's nowhere near a full-time job. That same person is also working on digital prints at the same time, so even a large volume increase can be managed by that person without impacting on their other duties."

"Ultimately, what it boils down to is a highly effective – at both cost and production levels – DVD/CD print solution that gives us a definite edge in what is a rapidly growing and high demand market."

For more information about Epson Discproducers, please call 1300 655 723 or visit www.epson.com.au



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