

CASE STUDY

Indy Imaging Streamlines Production with EFI UltraClear Coat

Founded in November of 2003 with just two employees, Indy Imaging started out with older printing equipment and a warehouse. Owner Robbie Gordon believed that from that start, he would be able to build the business, add more people, and modernize the operation. And that's exactly what happened. Today, the company has over 100 employees, 70,000 square feet of manufacturing space, and a robust production environment consisting of the very latest EFI™ VUTEk® roll-to-roll and hybrid flatbed/roll-fed, VUTEk FabriVU® soft signage, and Reggiani textile printers to support its trade business. Indy Imaging produces banners, soft signage, point-of-purchase displays, and more with its modern fleet of production printers.

According to Gordon, the company first operated with printers that were no longer being supported from another supplier. "That incentivized us to move to EFI," he says, "and over the years we have bought several EFI printers across many generations. We stick with EFI because we know how their printers operate and what the improvements are from generation to generation."



CHALLENGE
Printed rolls were offloaded to a secondary press for liquid lamination, a time consuming process with a high failure rate.



Indy Imaging has four EFI VUTEk Q5r roll-to-roll printers, two VUTEk h5 hybrid printers, and two Reggiani COLORS digital textile printers.



Established in 2003, Indy Imaging is a marketing and advertising business that today has over 100 employees. With a modern production fleet, it produces banners, soft signage, point-of-purchase displays, and more for a wide variety of verticals.

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EFI's UltraClear Coat installed on Indy Imaging's VUTEk Q5r printers print inline, simultaneously with the image, and can be used for decorative, high-quality effects on prints or as a final coating to help protect graphics.

Today, Indy Imaging operates four EFI VUTEk Q5r roll-to-roll printers with EFI - 3M™ SuperRange ink and UltraClear Coat, two VUTEk h5 hybrid printers, and two Reggiani COLORS digital textile printers that have enabled the company to add direct-to-fabric printing to the mix.

The UltraClear Coat story

Released in 2022, EFI's UltraClear Coat option, available for EFI roll-to-roll printers, is a versatile spot or full clear ink that can be used for decorative, high-quality effects on prints or as a final coating to help protect graphics against abrasion, chemicals and fading. UltraClear Coat prints inline, simultaneously with the image – without slowing down production speeds of the VUTEk Q5r printers – in gloss or matte finishes.

Gordon notes that he had the VUTEk Q5r printers installed for about a year when UltraClear Coat became available. “We typically operate on a four-year cadence with respect to upgrading our production

SOLUTION

Printing EFI's UltraClear Coat – for both flood and spot coating – reduces labor, time and waste.

platform,” he explains. “In this business, the printers are kind of like semi-trucks. You drive them 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and you will eventually wear them out. So, keeping a printer for four or five years and fully depreciating it, upgrades make sense.”

But the UltraClear Coat offering changed the cadence for the team’s upgrade strategy, Gordon says, accelerating the investment in upgrades so that Indy Imaging could add UltraClear Coat to its VUTEK Q5r printers. “We did this because we felt that the benefit outweighed any raw cost factors,” he explains. Before upgrading to UltraClear Coat, printed rolls were offloaded to a secondary process for liquid lamination. “It’s an older method,” Gordon says. “It is slow, and the failure rate is high. So, for us, it was about spending money to save money, and it has been beneficial to the business.”

Gordon explains that for some applications, he still uses liquid lamination, but for many products, especially those that will be installed outdoors, he now uses UltraClear Coat. Its inline process – for both flood and spot coating – reduces labor, time, and waste.

“We can take the print directly from the printer to the cutter, and there is no intermediary step,” Gordon says, “And the quality of the final product is exceptional with virtually no failure rate. This allows us to offer a longer warranty to customers, especially for highway signs and other outdoor applications. We can do this because we are getting a better clear coat, and we can vary the thickness which we couldn’t do before. There is less waste, and we have a faster time to market as well.”

EFI UltraClear Coat, which is UV-cured as opposed to the water-based process used by Indy Imaging previously, is formulated by EFI chemists to help graphics endure exterior/outdoor exposure for up to five years.

RESULT

Indy Imaging can now take prints directly from the printer to the cutter with no intermediary step. And the quality of the final product is exceptional with virtually no failure rate.



Working with EFI

Gordon says, “What we have found with EFI is not only do they support us, but they back up what they said they were going to do. I have many concrete examples of that in action, and that stems from a two-way dialogue about the condition of the machines, how they are running post-installation, and more – a proactive sales and post-sales approach.”

Gordon points out that with some suppliers, there is a lack of communication between sales and support; but with EFI, they have broken down those barriers and work together to bring required resources into play from around the world if problems need to be resolved. “In our experience, EFI has been great to work with, helping us solve any problems that come up so we can keep the printers running. Our customers don’t really care which machines we produce their work on, and they don’t care how it gets done as long as it gets done – on time and with the expected quality. EFI has been our biggest partner in making sure we continue to meet those customer expectations.”

Let’s be brilliant. Together.

We understand you want breakthrough technologies to lead you through your digital journey. That’s why we’re passionate about driving your business growth with a scalable portfolio of products, solutions, services, support, and world-class partnerships for the manufacturing of signage, packaging, textiles, ceramic tiles, and building materials with a wide range of printers and inks. Our unwavering commitment is to increase your profits, cut costs, improve productivity, and optimize efficiency — job after job, year after year. We’re obsessed with your success. And we definitely believe we have the right people, technology and experience to help your business achieve its goals. Visit www.efi.com or send an email to info@efi.com for more information.



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