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Your Partner in Print Finishing

## **Bill's Printing Masters the Art of Turnaround Time**

Michael Habingreither has witnessed tremendous changes during his 18-year career at Bill's Printing. Among them are the rise of digital printing, the decline of offset and the added stress of steadily decreasing turnaround times.

Before he bought a versatile, new BME Booklet Maker from C.P. Bourg, Mike would be concerned when jobs for multi-page full-bleed booklets came in the door. Now he refers to tight turnaround times as opportunities to watch the new equipment make short work of what used to be long and often difficult jobs.

Bill's Printing began in 1964 on South Broad Street in Trenton as a family owned print shop doing racing programs and novelties and grew into a full-service print shop during the 1970s.

When Mike joined them in 1996, a typical job that came in on a Monday was ready on Friday, says Mike, now Bill's Printing General Manager and who, with his wife Kim, took control of the business when Kim's father, Bill Mason retired in 2011. Bigger jobs often required 10 days for prepress, printing, and finishing before they could be shipped. And rush jobs were turned around in three or four days.

Today, the firm provides printing and document finishing services to a number of school districts, many county and township offices. It also does work for the State of New Jersey, national church organizations, pharmaceutical companies, hospitals, churches, doctor and lawyer offices and many non-profit organizations and commercial businesses, in addition to some work for other printers.

Production runs the gamut, from business cards and forms to saddle-stitched program books for conventions, galas, graduations and parades, to oversized calendars and wide-format work.

### **Taking the Headache out of Hands-On**

One constant Bill's Printing has relied on through the years – aside from their intensely loyal customer base – is shrinking turnaround time.

"In today's digital environment, customers want big jobs in a couple of days, small jobs the same day, and rush jobs often within hours," says Mike, almost enthusiastically.

To get the jobs done, Bill's Printing relies on an assortment of print engines. An automated Heidelberg Quickmaster two-color and an Itech two-color offset are used for longer-run jobs, while a Xerox® DocuColor® 8000 press and Xerox DocuTech® 4110 and 4112 monochrome printers deliver digital speed. A Sterling Digibinder, Morgana creaser, Baum folder and a Challenge cutter help provide basic finishing.

The shop also does mailings and fulfillment in house, and they have wide-format equipment to handle specialty jobs.

“Our hands are in a little bit of everything,” says Mike.

But some jobs coming in were becoming too hands-on, like when the job called for stapled sets on a full-bleed and had to be stapled off line. That was tedious enough for small jobs, but it was more stressful for digitally-produced materials that needed to be finished the next day and sometimes within hours.

A representative with xpedx, a distributor that carries C.P. Bourg finishing products, suggested Mike take a look at the Bourg BSF Sheet Feeder and BME Booklet Maker at the supplier’s headquarters in New Bedford, Massachusetts. For the demonstration, Mike had materials pre-shipped, to see the equipment run on familiar work.

### **Putting a Dynamic Duo to Work**

After weighing the benefits of the Bourg finishers over competitor's equipment, Mike gave the Bourg BSF-BME production line the thumbs up in October 2011. Now, having had the two products for several months, he calls the finishing production duo a “great success at reducing waste and increasing productivity.”

The Bourg BSF is the first high-pile sheet feeder designed for near-line production workflows that allows automatic loading of the paper stack from printer to feeder. This innovative “plug-and-play” auto loading capability, coupled with its unique ability to accommodate the largest-size digital output, allows the Bourg BSF Sheet Feeder to accept collated output from any number or type of print engines while maintaining total print set integrity.

The Bourg BME is the first digital finisher able to stitch, fold and trim sheets up to 14.5 x 23.5 inches (370 x 600 mm) – the largest format currently output by most digital printers. Highly automated, the device can produce up to 5,000 booklets per hour from two to 120 finished pages ranging in size from 4.7 x 2.8 inches to 14.5 x 11.75 inches in landscape format – or be used to just fold or trim, with or without top, corner, side or saddle stitches.

Perfect for making thousands of booklets or booklets of one by the thousands, all with zero waste, the BME offers a variety of unique features and innovations that improve near-line finishing speed, efficiency and flexibility. These include tool-less job size changeovers, a totally visible and straight paper path, and an adaptive paper folding mechanism that gauges set thickness to prevent marking, scuffing or scratching even delicate digital prints.

The C.P. Bourg finishers fit perfectly into the firm’s tight quarters, as well as with its somewhat eclectic workflow. The finishing duo speeds the workflow, combining jobs from offset and digital engines to produce beautifully finished booklets, folded newsletters and much more.

The BME operator has total control of the finishing process through a color touch-screen console mounted on a swivel-arm that allows the operator to rotate it in a 300-degree arc for easy access from either side of the BME. The touch screen facilitates the entire process, from making adjustments on the fly to performing repeat jobs under program control.

### **Exceeding Expectations**

“We just love the BSF and BME. We’ve run offset and digital, coated and non-coated stocks without a problem, and they have really exceeded our expectations,” says Mike, adding he uses the finishers in some unusual ways, in addition to production booklet-making.

“For one client, we use the BSF to collate three, four and five-part NCR forms,” says Mike. “We just load the top and bottom trays with 1,000 sheets each, and the BSF is so fast, we get a job off in a matter of minutes.”

The shop takes advantage of that same flexibility to produce newsletters and even invitations produced on 120 to 130-pound cover stock.

“With the BME, there’s no need to stuff 12, 16 or 20-page newsletters any more because we can print them, run them through the BME once without stitching to just fold and trim, then put them through the back of the machine to score and quarter-fold,” says Mike. This process saves on labor, and the final newsletters are nicely trimmed and square edged in one-third the time.

“For invitations, we want the fold to be just right, so we use the BME to fold the stock, and to do a face trim. The BME usually applies just the right amount of pressure, and it allows us to adjust it as well. So the cards come out perfectly.”

### **Saving Two Days in Two Hours**

Of course, the primary use of the BSF and BME is in producing saddle-stitched booklets. Many of the booklets Bill’s Printing produces are up to 120 pages with full color. The BME’s ability to produce high-quality booklets with up to 40 sheets is just what they needed, and one of the many features that competing booklet makers were unable to match, says Mike.

“For example, each year we print a booklet on heavyweight coated stock that has a glossy cover, uses color throughout and is upwards of 100 pages. Folded in half, the booklet is over a quarter-inch thick. This year the job was done in two hours!”

The BME has also eliminated the need to stitch booklets on the monochrome printers. “Before, we would print, cut and crease the color covers ahead of time, use the interposer on the printer to saddle stitch it, and face-trim off line. It’s a tedious task putting 10 or 12 books at a time into the cutter and manually cutting them.

“Now we box the finished books straight from the BME 10 or 12 at a time, and we’re done!”

When Mike bought the system, he also opted for a reject-tray with manual feed bypass between the BSF and BME, which relies on an ultrasonic sheet detector to ensure set integrity by diverting doubled sheets to the reject tray.

“We’ve used the feature only once in five months of production, and it was our fault, rather than the BSF’s,” says Mike. “In the cutting process, something got in between two sheets of paper causing them to stick together, and the BSF sent the sheets to the reject tray.”

That same level of innovation and flexibility allows the BME operator to interrupt a job to produce high-priority short-run jobs in a hurry.

With the addition of the BME, the quality of booklets Bill’s Printing produces is better than ever and jobs are produced faster – without the stress.

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