

# Inkjet Press: Total Cost of Ownership Checklist

These questions will guide your search for the right inkjet press for your business.

## CAPITAL EQUIPMENT COSTS

- What hardware does the estimate include?
- What are the available lease terms?
- What are the buyout options at the end of the term?
- Are there annual price escalations, or is the price fixed for the term of the lease?
- Is there additional controller, hardware, memory or features required to run my jobs at the speeds promised?
- Will the system run all of my data streams natively, or will a transform need to be installed to make it work?
- Are additional hardware modules, like priming stations and dryer assemblies, required to run my jobs or papers?

## SERVICE CONTRACTS

- How much will I pay per page?
- Is there a monthly base charge — if so, what does that cover; if not, how much do I pay per page?
- Is installation and training included — if so, how many hours of training is quoted?
- What are the implications of using paper not on the vendor-approved list?
- Will I be held liable if a non-approved substrate causes issues?
- What will be the expected service response time?
- What if the local service person cannot fix the issue — what is the escalation process for additional help and where do those people reside?
- Are the service technicians all factory trained?
- Can we do any self-service — if so, how much training is required to do so?
- Are there additional charges for extended coverage and for third party software/hardware?
- Are print heads included in the service contract?
- What is the life of the print head?

## VARIABLE CHARGES

- How is the billing meter defined — is there a minimum monthly volume that needs to be maintained, or will I only pay for what I print?
- What trips the 'oversized' meter?
- How are the meters calculated?
- Does the inkjet press being quoted offer a pure K-only mode for mono jobs, or are small droplets of CMY always jetted? (That can drive up ink consumption and cost.)
- Are charges for waste sheets accounted for and included in the estimate?
- Does the press print waste / diagnostic sheets — if so, are they counted in the billing meters?
- How long can your inkjet press sit idle before the heads are capped?
- How does the inkjet press handle missing jet detection?

## CONSUMABLES

- Are consumables (ink) included in the proposal?
- In what unit of measurement is the ink priced (i.e. - liters or kilograms)?
- What type of ink is used (pigmented, dye, aqueous)?
- Are customer-replaceable units (parts) included in the cost or are they charged separately?
- What are the maintenance costs associated with ink usage (i.e. purge, background and jet cleaning)?
- What are the maintenance procedures associated with each supply item and who performs those activities?
- What is the shelf-life of the ink?
- Is there a tool to calculate ink usage for jobs?

**SUBSTRATES**

- Is a pre-treatment required on select papers — if so, how much treatment will be needed per sheet and what is that cost implication?
- Does the inkjet press require special papers — if so, what are the costs of those papers?
- What impact will the types of ink and paper used by your press have on overall ink consumption?
- How much waste paper is provided at startup?

**APPLICATION COSTS**

- How is ink consumption estimated — through a generic AP Fill algorithm or by actual ink usage?
- What resolution, IQ level and drop size was scoped in the proposal?
- Will the level of quality specifications quoted adequately satisfy my customers?
- Do you offer an accurate ink estimation tool to assess estimated ink consumption on a job-by-job basis, in advance of the job being printed? *(Consider the potential cost-implications and profit losses from pricing a job too low based on unreliable ink estimation.)*
- How many microliters are estimated in the proposal?
- How much ink will be consumed during purging and/or analytics?
- If a change is required to modify a destination profile for a particular job, can the operator make that change on the press or does it need to go back to the press vendor — if so, how much does that cost?

**FACILITY/SITE PREPARATION COSTS**

- How much will delivery and installation cost?
- Does the inkjet press require venting, compressed air, water lines or drainage, and are they included in the proposal?
- What are the electrical requirements and power consumption of the press?
- How much floor space will the press occupy? *(Space requirements may deter you from having other valuable equipment in your facility.)*
- What is the required floor load of the press? *(Can your facility handle it?)*
- Does the proposed inkjet press use rolls of paper?\*

\*If so, consider the costs associated with storing and transporting the rolls around your facility. Also confirm the associated costs for positioning rolls in the proper configuration for printing? Most mills ship rolls upright. Reorienting the roll for printing will require either having a roll flipper in-house or paying an upcharge to have the mill ship the roll in the correct orientation.

**OPERATOR COSTS**

- Will the proposed inkjet press require specially-trained and skilled personnel to run, or can my organization share operator resources across technologies?
- What is the cost to get an operator trained and competent on the machine?
- How many staff personnel is required to run and service the machine?
- How much operator maintenance is required — daily, weekly, monthly?
- What is the productivity of the press — how much volume can it produce on a daily, weekly, monthly basis?

**PRODUCTION CONSIDERATIONS**

- What is the print speed (pages or feet per minute) of the press when printing critical applications?
- If multiple stocks are involved, will the press slow down when printing different papers within the same job?
- What is the expected uptime or utilization rate of the press?
- How much time is required to get the proposed inkjet press into production? *(Being in production and getting to production are two different things.)*
- How much time is required to maintain the machine, and how regularly is it required?
- Does the proposed inkjet press offer automated processes to calibrate color, registration and image quality? *(If not, these manual processes can be timely, labor-intensive and costly, often resulting in guesswork, decreased levels of productivity, error and waste.)*
- How much energy does the press require to produce my expected volume?
- Are there any 'dead cycles' where the press will clutch or slow down to accommodate unique jobs?