

KP LLC doubles perfect binding output with new Horizon Perfect Binder.

Founded over 95 years ago as a general commercial printer, KP LLC has shifted its focus over the past decade to data-driven critical communications in healthcare, banking, financial services, legal breach, and government.

Today, KP has about 400 employees operating out of nine facilities across four states with its headquarters in San Leandro, California. The company generates annual revenues between \$80 and \$100 million and provides a wide range of services within its target industries. According to Brett Birky, the company's Chief Operating Officer, "The bulk of the work we do has compliance and regulatory components, is highly personalized, printed on demand, delivers through the mail, and demands an extremely high level of accuracy, since most of it contains highly sensitive personal information."

The transition to more data-driven applications required a reconfiguration of KP's operations. For example, at its Sacramento facility, KP transitioned the bulk of its printing to roll-fed production inkjet presses, while maintaining some cut-sheet toner-based presses for specialty work, including book covers. Chris Howton, the Vice President of Operations for KP's Sacramento Division, notes, "In 2007, we onboarded a new client and helped them migrate from a pick-and-pack fulfillment operation to print on demand, with fewer touch points and less inventory obsolescence. To accomplish this, we worked with our Horizon dealer partner, Print & Finishing Solutions, and made several investments with Standard Finishing, bringing in two Horizon BQ-470 Perfect Binders with integrated camera matching systems that ensure covers are perfectly matched to book blocks. We also invested in two HT-70 Three-knife Trimmers. We wanted two of everything for redundancy, and that equipment is still in service today. As we and our client base grew, we've put in additional equipment over the years to accommodate a variety of peaks, including a third BQ-470 and a BQ-460 which has since been transferred over to the San Leandro facility. We also run a Horizon SPF-200A Bookletmaker in San Leandro."



Chris Howton, Vice President of Operations for KP's Sacramento Division, stands with their newest Horizon investment.

Howton explains that it can be hard to predict peak activity in advance because it depends heavily on state and federal healthcare rules. "This year, however," he says, "we did get advance notice regarding some changes to one of our programs that will drive the volume up by a factor of 10, with basically the same timelines. That caused us to take a good look at our throughput. In the past, we could throw bodies and hours at the work, which is how we got through peaks. But clearly, with that kind of increase, that simply was not going to work anymore."

To meet the projected demand, KP invested in a new Horizon SB-09V Perfect Binder inline with an HT-1000V Three-knife Trimmer. "With this new configuration," Howton explains, "we are able to run at 3,000 books per hour. This is double the throughput of all our other perfect binders combined, and we are running it with two operators instead of seven, so we have much higher throughput, less labor cost, and we still have the older perfect binders if we need them for redundancy."

Both the installation and operator training, done at the Standard Finishing demo center in Boston and on-site, were complete before the anticipated volume increase. According to Howton, "Our focus is on cross-training as many employees as possible to stay dynamic and flexible in shifting people around as needed, and Standard and PFS helped us get our team ready to run the new equipment." He concludes, "We'll be utilizing our new Horizon solutions to their full potential for the next few years, but as we think about future investments, Standard will continue to be high on our list due to the proven reliability of their systems and their excellent partnership."



The Horizon SB-09V Perfect Binder runs inline with the HT-1000V Three-knife Trimmer at 3,000 books per hour to seamlessly handle the increased volume required by KP's client.



"What took 7 employees and two perfect binders to achieve in the past now has reached 2X output with only 2 operators!"

— Chris Howton, Vice President, Sacramento Operations

KP
HORIZON

