Named for its location in the once-rustic Brandywine neighborhood 30 miles north of Atlanta, Brandywine Printing Inc. has been family-owned and -operated for over 25 years. The company offers a superior commitment to service and quality, delivering excellent products that are central to businesses' marketing and promotional needs.

Keeping up with technology is part of Brandywine's commitment to customer service. The company offers the best combination of high-quality, quick turnaround times and personalisation, with full-service web-to-print tools for convenient ordering on all types of projects. Brandywine's growing large-format print offering meets customers' high-impact marketing needs for trade show signage and other products.

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EFI Fiery DFE Workflow Helps Make Brandywine's Offset-to-Digital Transition a Success

Challenge:

"*Up until five years ago, we were an all-offset shop, but we were losing accounts to businesses selling low-quality digital printing. Once we decided to bring digital printing in-house, we knew we needed a system that could meet our quality standards.*"

*– Derek Brooks, General Manager,
Brandywine Printing*

After it was established as an offset business in 1982, Brandywine Printing took measured investments to ensure it stayed stable, and profitable. The company evolved from one- and two-colour offset to four-colour printing in 2001, when founder Derrell Brooks and his son Derek felt assured they could make the leap without assuming a level of debt that would compromise financial flexibility at the family business.

By 2007 Brandywine had moved to its current facility near one of metro Atlanta's major highways. The company had grown significantly and, even with digital printing on the rise, Brandywine could largely beat digital at its own game. The quality on Brandywine's 14x20-inch,

four-colour press could outshine just about any digital production device available at the time. Plus, Derrell Brooks — an industry veteran with decades of experience as an offset press technician — ensured his staff had the technical proficiency to turn short-run jobs on a dime.

But, after the economic collapse in 2008, the Brooks family found that fewer customers could afford print — at least not high-quality offset. Sales slowed and eventually, "we found a trade printer to outsource some of the digital work we weren't getting," Derek Brooks says. "When we saw how fast the amount of outsourced digital work was growing, we started looking to bring it in-house."

Solution:
In the spring of 2010, Brandywine bought a Canon imagePRESS C6000, based on the higher-end print capabilities it offered. "It was a lucky accident for us that the system we specified for our quality requirements came with a Fiery server because, at the time, we did not know all the things that went into establishing a good digital printing workflow," says Brooks.

Brooks says the advantages the Fiery® digital front end (DFE) offers became more apparent over time. "First, the imposition plug-in with the Fiery helped because it made the transition from offset easier," he notes.

Brooks, who by this time was assuming more of the day-to-day responsibilities for the business as his father prepared to retire, became a diligent student of digital technology.

"I started taking advantage of every learning opportunity I could," says Brooks — a practice he continues to this day by attending the free World of Fiery webinars EFI conducts. "We all think we're doing things the correct way," Brooks says when describing the benefits of the webinar series, "but sometimes a different perspective pays dividends."

Soon after installing the Canon imagePRESS, the company's accelerated growth in digital and its continued strong, financial stewardship put Brandywine in the position to absorb a local competitor, a business that had a Xerox 700 Digital Color Press and a Xerox 4110 monochrome printer. "The 4110 came with a Fiery DFE," Brooks says. "The 700 had a DFE from another vendor, but we replaced that with a Fiery."

The consistent DFE platform across all three machines, and the advanced features on the DFEs such as Fiery Command WorkStation®, helped Brandywine establish a level of service and quality consistent with the company's legacy as a high-quality, reliable supplier.

Solution:
"Having the Fiery DFE on our first device made it exponentially easier to learn digital and establish our digital printing business."

– Derek Brooks,
General Manager,
Brandywine Printing

"Maintaining consistent colour across the pressroom is one of the biggest challenges with digital printing," he adds, "but with the Fiery Command WorkStation, we can take settings from one of our colour machines and apply them to the other."

Results:

Surviving the recession took dedication and effort, but Brooks realised he has one major advantage: with digital, he is selling high-quality printing that people want, as opposed to getting customers to conform to the higher cost structure offset usually required. "I looked at several of our offset competitors who had gone out of business or were headed that way, and realised it was all because they were selling the type of printing no one was buying in a very tough market," Brooks says.

After some soul-searching about what was best for the business, Brandywine sold off all its analogue printing equipment in 2012. It marked a turning point for Brandywine — and, it was the adjustment the company needed to make it in a market that has permanently shifted. Short run had become the norm, rather than the exception, and success hinged on greater immediacy and more value for a larger customer base.

"People who are buying printing now were not buying it before. With digital, full-colour printing has become more affordable," Brooks explains. "In 2008, when we were all offset, I had 400 customers and an average invoice was $1,200. Now, I have more than 1,000 customers but my average order is $300."

Results:

"Digital printing with our Fiery DFEs brought a lot of efficiencies. It became the most profitable part of the business, and it wasn't because digital printing had a higher markup."

– Derek Brooks,
General Manager,
Brandywine Printing

With the increase in jobs, automation and a common Fiery workflow have become important. And, with so many more customers to serve, Brooks, his wife Kathy, who works in production at Brandywine, and the rest of the company's six-person staff now place more emphasis on customer relationships and personal service.

Brandywine Printing stays up to the challenge in part because the streamlined workflow of its Fiery Driven™ printers gets jobs on press faster, and completed correctly.

Beat the competition and profit with EFI's integrated Fiery®, VUTEk®, Jetrion®, EFI Wide Format, Print MIS and Web-to-Print solutions. Visit www.efi.com to learn more.

Why EFI?

EFI™ (www.efi.com) helps businesses worldwide bring their visions and goals to life with a scalable, digital product portfolio. Our powerful servers; controllers; RIPs; inkjet printers, and precise colour and imaging solutions help companies increase their brand recognition and market reach on signs, buildings, bus wraps, graphic displays and more. Our business automation software helps companies work faster and more cost-effectively. Our office, enterprise and mobile cloud solutions help companies create, access, and communicate impactful information that can win them more business.