



CASE STUDY:

HG Media maximises print on demand opportunities with Ricoh print and automation



One of Norway's leading print houses improves productivity, cuts errors, and boosts capacity with integrated workflows and digital print solutions from Ricoh.

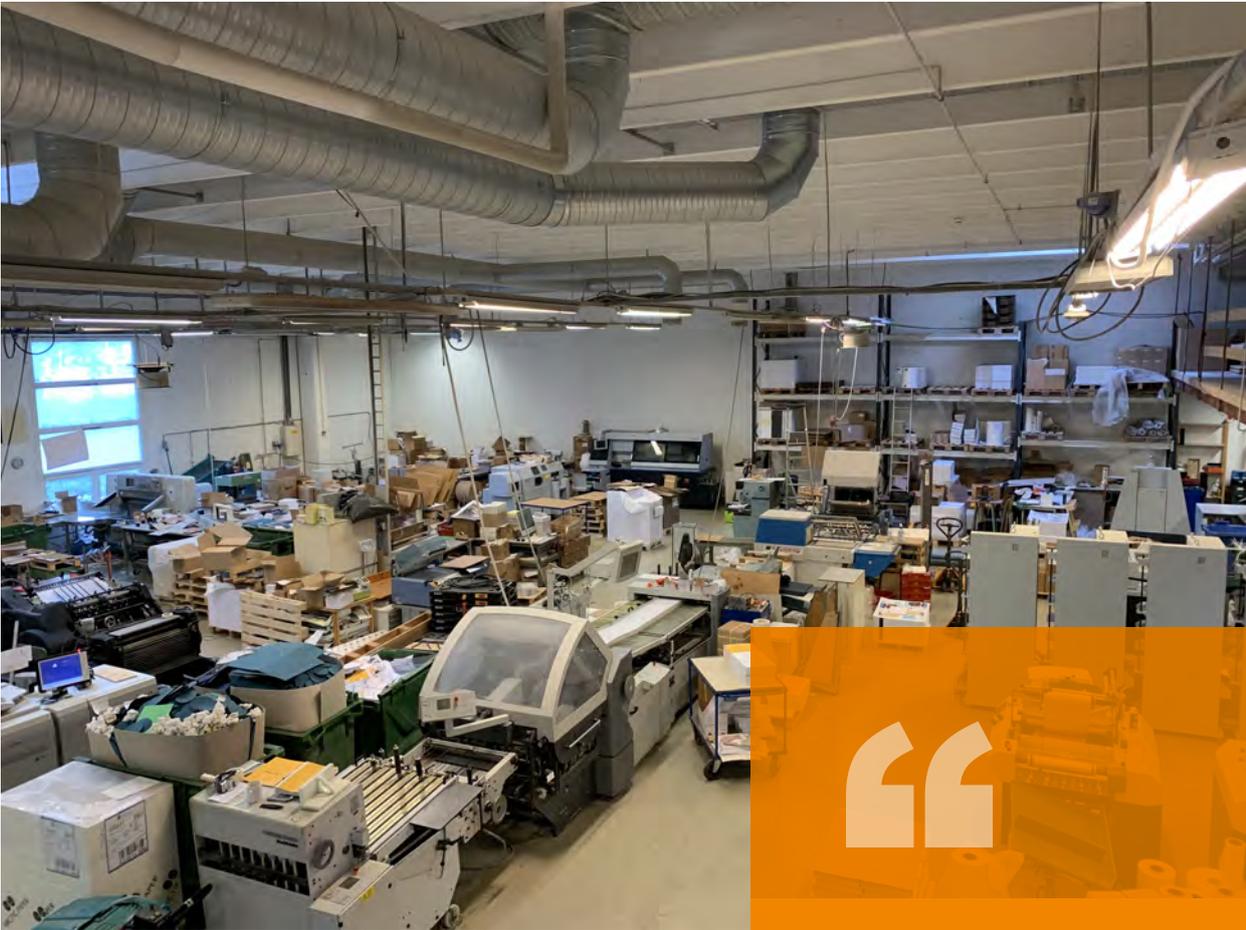
COMPANY & CHALLENGE

Based just outside Oslo, Norway, HG Media offers design and consultancy, and offset, digital, large format, and special effect printing services. Listed on Norway's public register of Master Craftsmen, the company employs more than 20 people with a combined experience of over 100 years in printing and graphic design. HG Media products carry the Nordic Ecolabel, certifying the use of environmentally friendly production methods.

HG Media has a rich history as a commercial printer, creating booklets, brochures, flyers, posters, and more for businesses and public sector organisations. With prestigious clients including The Office of the Prime Minister in Norway, the company encourages a culture of continuous improvement.

Jørn Våraker, CEO at HG Media, explains: "The commercial print world generates a constant stream of fresh challenges. Client expectations have never been greater: they want higher quality products with shorter delivery times, while demand for large format and garment printing is on the rise."

The most recent market shift has been the rise of web-to-print services and global Print on Demand (POD) that enable online retailers and graphic designers to submit jobs for production via APIs. POD providers rely on local partners to handle printing and shipping, carefully selected, and monitored for their capacity to deliver consistent output on time, every time. To become a POD supplier and maximise the revenue available from a growing market, HG Media realised that streamlining its production and removing manual processes were essential steps.



“To meet client expectations and take on additional volumes, we wanted to scale our operations while staying as lean as possible to maintain profitability,” continues Jørn Våraker. “Cutting out inefficiencies and creating more productive workflows were key objectives, and to support our aims we looked to invest in new print equipment and digital innovation.”

SOLUTION

In the first stage of its transformation, HG Media aimed to accelerate brochure production for real estate clients, one of its core business lines. The company opted to move workloads from its traditional offset print machines onto new digital sheetfed devices from Ricoh. Initially, HG Media implemented a RICOH Pro™ C9110 system, followed soon after by a RICOH Pro™ C9210 solution, with integrated Plockmatic finishing capabilities.

To streamline workflows, HG Media chose to deploy Ricoh TotalFlow Production Manager software. The solution automates pre-press work, analyses job tickets, and sends the correct media settings to the print devices and eliminates manual sorting and distribution.

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We ran a test job of 17,000 SRA3 sheets in our demo room, and the Ricoh solution ran overnight non-stop, delivering exactly the speed and quality that we wanted. The digital sheetfed devices from Ricoh give us beautifully consistent colour, automatic calibration, and duplex printing capabilities to help meet very fast turnaround and work volumes.

Jørn Våraker, CEO

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Jørn Våraker, CEO



With optimised print processes, HG Media began working to become an approved Print on Demand partner, and approached Gelato, one of the leading brands in Norway. After working together to show that the Pro C9210 met or exceeded Gelato's stringent quality standards, HG Media started its first POD work with Gelato.

To handle the rise in volumes, HG Media invested in three more Pro C9210 devices, plus a RICOH Pro™ C7210X with fifth colour capabilities, including white toner for speciality jobs, and other jobs such as envelopes. The company also purchased a RICOH Ri 2000 Direct to Garment printer for creating customised clothing for Gelato users, and recently added a RICOH Pro™ T7210 UV flatbed printer and a RICOH Pro™ L5160e large format device.

HG Media also extended its use of Ricoh TotalFlow Production Manager across all Gelato work. The software automatically processes incoming files and email orders from Gelato, and distributes jobs appropriately to the sheetfed, Direct to Garment, large format, and to its gold and silver foiling machines, including the print specifications, volumes, and finishing instructions.

Jørn Våraker continues: “The automation provided by Ricoh TotalFlow Production Manager and the quality, speed, and performance of the Ricoh devices have collectively given HG Media the ability to take maximum advantage of the opportunities of the Print on Demand marketplace.”

BENEFITS

Working with Ricoh, HG Media is going from strength to strength as a business. The company has expanded its product portfolio, and is winning business from a wider array of clients. Around 70 percent of all orders now come via the web, and HG Media plans to soon go live with its own web-to-print service, with jobs feeding directly into its automated workflows.

In addition, Ricoh TotalFlow Production Manager has transformed everyday working. Rather than manually checking job files, operators now authorise work packages waiting on the devices each morning. Staff are now free to speak with clients, handle complex packaging and shipping tasks, and manage greater work volumes.

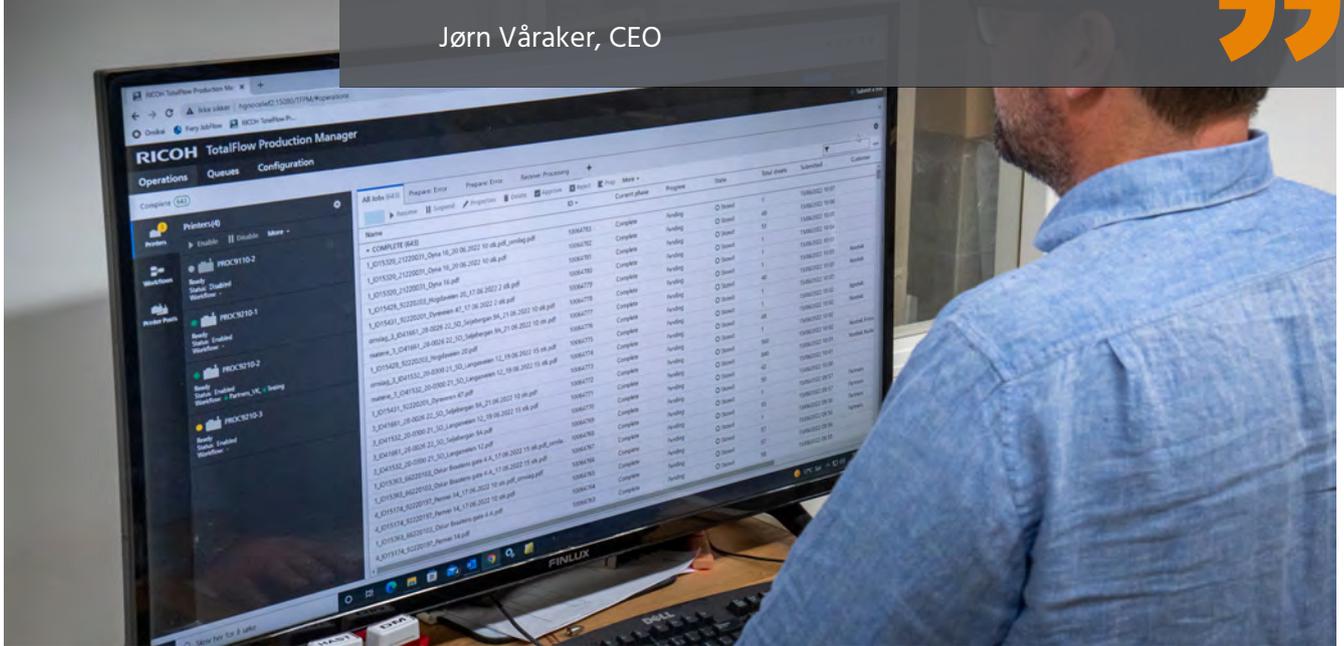
“By eliminating manual work, the new automated processes have reduced error rates, too, and HG Media now achieves an exceptionally high quality score for all print work,” continues Jørn Våraker.

The combination of Ricoh software and print equipment is also enabling HG Media to meet demanding delivery timescales. For POD work, the company can receive as many as 10,000 jobs daily, some of which are printed, dispatched, and delivered to clients on the same day.



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Jørn Våraker, CEO



“The Ricoh solutions enable us to manage soaring production workloads without increasing our headcount, helping us to improve cost efficiency and protect profit margins,” remarks Jørn Våraker. “Even during peak periods, such as the runup to Christmas, our Ricoh automation software and production printers enable us to manage surges in demand seamlessly.”

Jørn Våraker concludes: “Supported by Ricoh, HG Media has enhanced its competitive edge, with leading-edge digital and print technologies. Our service portfolio, production efficiency, and reputation for high quality sets us apart, and will help us to continue to attract new clients. With Ricoh as a partner, HG Media is beautifully positioned to grow our brand as one of the leading commercial printers in Norway.”

ABOUT RICOH

Ricoh is empowering digital workplaces using innovative technologies and services that enable individuals to work smarter from anywhere. With cultivated knowledge and organisational capabilities nurtured over its 85 year history, Ricoh is a leading provider of digital services, information management, and print and imaging solutions designed to support digital transformation and optimise business performance.

Headquartered in Tokyo, Ricoh Group has major operations throughout the world and its products and services now reach customers in approximately 200 countries and regions. In the financial year ended March 2022, Ricoh Group had worldwide sales of 1,758 billion yen (approx. 14.5 billion USD).

For further information, please visit www.ricoh-europe.com

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