

TechLines

Technical Information Sheet

M6

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Questions and Answers...

So you're considering inkjet imaging...

Inkjet imaging is a powerful tool that can be used to personalize your printed pieces. Addresses can be printed right on booklets, order forms filled in, numbering can be added, as well as personalized/constant messages and graphics. There is no need for paper labels that can be damaged or removed, and there is much greater flexibility in what and how much can be printed.

Q. How does inkjet work?

A. Inkjet printing is done by spraying a pattern of ink droplets on the printed piece as it moves past a print head. Ink is pumped through a row of closely spaced and very small orifices. The plate containing the orifices is vibrated at a high frequency, chopping the streams of ink into droplets. An electrostatic charge is applied to any droplet that is not supposed to print. This charge causes the droplet to be deflected into a suction return system and the non-charged droplets are allowed to travel to the paper. As many as 15 million drops are generated every second and each one is tracked and controlled.

Q. What kind of equipment is used at Ripon Printers?

A. There are two types of systems used to drive the printers in-line and off-line.

The *in-line* process refers to the printers being controlled by a Prism binding line controller. This is a computer that monitors the production of a saddle stitcher and controls the operation of several printers and the automated stacking equipment. The in-line process allows images printed in different locations in the book to be coordinated – for example filling in the address portion of an order form to match the address printed in the mailing label area.

The *off-line* equipment is a stand-alone printer that is used with a conveyor of some type to inkjet on the outside only. There is no “controller” so the image can only be printed in a single location.

Q. What do I have to do?

A. There are two issues that must be “addressed” in order to reap the benefits of inkjet imaging. First, there must be a suitable area on your piece for the inkjet image to be printed in. Not only must the area be appropriate for the type of information to be printed, it must be in a location accessible to our printers.

The other consideration is that the data to be printed must be properly formatted for our equipment and supplied on one of several types of magnetic media.



Q. What are the design considerations?

A. For an address, there needs to be a white area large enough to hold the desired image plus a margin allowance. Typically, this is a box 1-1/2" tall by 4-1/2" wide. The white background will ensure that the barcode is readable by the U.S. Postal Service sorting equipment. There are some limitations as to where we can print with the in-line equipment, especially how close to the spine of the book. In addition, there may be requirements by the Post Office for print orientation and placement. It is suggested that you request a copy of the TechLines Sheet **Designing Your Mailpiece for Inkjet (M7)** as well as the TechLines Sheet for the appropriate class of mail before you begin designing your piece.

Q. Tell me about the data concerns...

A. Any print information needs to be supplied in digital files. If you wish to inkjet address, we offer a list processing service that will convert your customer database list into a formatted mailing file.

If you are using our list processing services, you will need to supply addresses in a database-type structure. Most programs will allow exporting data in a text format, such as comma delimited or fixed length records. To find out more about our list services, request the TechLines Sheet **Mail Sortation Services Available (M2)**.

If you are sending pre-sorted files, the addresses, messages or graphics have to be supplied to the printer in a format the machine can recognize. Address lists must be pre-sorted to postal regulations. We use a 35-character wide label image file as our standard format, but can accept a variety of formats as long as the required fields are present. The TechLines Sheet **Supplying Data Files for Mailing (M3)** lists all the specifications for sending pre-sorted files.

Files can be sent over the Internet through our Web site. Please request the TechLines Sheet **Using our FTP Site to transfer Electronic Composition or Mail List Processing Files (EPPI/MI)** or go to our Web site at www.riponprinters.com.

OTHER MAILING TECHLINES SHEETS AVAILABLE

First Class Mail & Standard Mail Overviews

Includes charts comparing letter-size and flats, nonautomation and automation; Zip Code accuracy requirements.

Mail Sortation Services available

Information on our in-house CASS-certified mailing list preparation. Includes special services available and details the different formats of magnetic media you can submit.

Supplying Data Files for Mailing

Guide to our standard data format if you are supplying USPS pre-sorted files.

USPS Endorsements for Standard & Package Services Mail

Explanations of the four services available.

Q. What about postal barcoding?

A. Yes! We are eager to help you attain the best possible postal rates for your mailing. Your data will have to contain a numeric representation of the barcode. For a flat-size mailpiece, this means the ZIP+4 plus a check digit. For a letter-size mailpiece, a delivery point barcode is required, ZIP+4 plus two, plus the check digit. This must also be in a constant location within each record and records containing different length barcodes must be separated into separate files. Check out the TechLines Sheet **Supplying Data Files for Mailing (M3)**. If you are using our list processing services, barcodes will be added to all qualifying mail.

Q. *What if a file is bad?*

A. Supplied data is expected to arrive properly formatted. All mailing files are loaded into our mail list server before the job gets to the inkjet printer. Although this provides a check of data integrity, it does not check content. If any problems are encountered, we will contact you and offer possible alternatives. This may include holding the machine open to wait for new files or taking the job off to go on to the next one. Any time lost in production or analyzing the problem is chargeable to the customer and may jeopardize scheduling.

Q. *How do you know that the proper inkjet messages are being printed?*

A. ALL jobs that inkjet at Ripon Printers must have a mock up of the images to be printed. The mock up needs to show both placement and representative content of the desired image. If there is more than one location for imaging, such as cover and order form, a separate mock up is required for each. In most cases, we will be faxing a mock up to you for your signed approval or corrections. Please check this carefully. A timely response will keep your job on schedule.

This mock up is then used by our inkjet operators to properly set up the job and proof the printing, helping to ensure that we are correctly printing what you intend.

Q. *I need to know more...*

A. TechLines Sheets are available covering most topics and are available upon request. If you have additional questions please feel free to contact your customer service representative.