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Press Release

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North Carolina Community Newspaper Turns to Southern Lithoplate for CtP Solution

WAKE FOREST, N.C. — Like many newspapers that have abandoned manual plate making in favor of a totally digital workflow, the *Hickory Daily Record* in Hickory, N.C., has seen the benefits of thermal imaging accrue virtually overnight.

“All of our papers have been looking great since we went to computer-to-plate (CtP),” said Jim Lillagore, regional production director for the North Carolina community newspaper group of Media General, Inc. “The color jumps off the sheet. It’s terrific.”

The *Hickory Daily Record* purchased the digital front end, thermal platesetter, punch/bend system and thermal lithoplates directly from Southern Lithoplate, Inc. The newspaper implemented ProImage’s NewsWay workflow software to drive a Screen PlateRite News 2000 CtP platesetter. The NELA H-VCP automatic optical punch/bender is vision-registering the exposed Southern Lithoplate VIPER 830® thermal lithoplates.

“Because we planned to install a single system, the reliability of individual components was the first thing we considered,” Lillagore said. “Cost was second. Third was support as expected from the primary vendor. Even though we are operating equipment manufactured by different vendors, any problem can be resolved with one call to Southern Lithoplate. That’s important to us.”

The *Hickory Daily Record* publishes seven days a week. Daily circulation is 25,000, and Sunday circulation is 27,500. The newspaper also prints a six-day paper, a five-day paper and a twice-weekly paper in Media General’s North Carolina community newspaper group, with circulations ranging from 6,200 to 12,500 copies.

The company’s double-width MAN Roland Uniman 4/2 newspaper press with seven printing units can deliver 24 pages of full color. On average, the pressroom utilizes 7,000 plates per month. The PlateRite News 2000 is capable of imaging 41 doublewide plates per hour or 84 broadsheet plates hour.

“Moving to CtP saved us money immediately,” Lillagore said. “The elimination of film reduced our cost per plate. Production is so streamlined that we also eliminated by attrition and retirement two permanent full-time positions and one temporary part-time position.”

The effects of thermal imaging on the VIPER 830 plates are being seen on press and in finished products.

“We previously had problems printing 27.6 basis weight paper,” Lillagore said. “It’s like printing on tissue. Now we are having great luck with it.”

Lillagore said registration is vastly improved, and ink and water usage have been “dramatically” reduced.

“We’re almost using a ‘dry offset’ process,” he joked. “Water usage is nearly nonexistent.”

Looking back on the purchase, Lillagore has no doubts the right decision was made.

“I’ve been in this business 47 years, and this is probably the best thing I have ever done in my career,” he said. “It was the easiest installation with the biggest number of benefits for the amount of work involved.”

About Southern Lithoplate, Inc.

Southern Lithoplate, Inc., headquartered in North Carolina, specializes in the manufacture, distribution and service of analog and digital lithoplates and associated products for targeted print markets. Southern Lithoplate enjoys a reputation for Quality, Value & Performance throughout the world. Southern Lithoplate provides our customer markets a full array of high-quality value-priced products. Southern Lithoplate's service infrastructure is designed to exceed the needs of their customer markets. Our state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities are located in Jackson, Tennessee, and near the world-renowned Research Triangle Park in North Carolina USA. . For more information, call 800-638-7990 or visit the Southern Lithoplate website at www.slp.com. For more information, call 800-638-7990 or visit the Southern Lithoplate website at www.slp.com.

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