

A/E Graphics puts stand-alone scanners and MFPs to the test



CHALLENGE

When A/E Graphics started to see an increase in demand for scanning color documents and intricate originals, the team wanted to make sure that their in-house scanning equipment could deliver. Their MFP equipment, widely considered a sufficient solution for most copying and scanning projects, had been showing limitations with color documents and fine graphics.

SOLUTION

After conducting thorough testing of the top scanners in the market, A/E Graphics knew it was time to invest in stand-alone scanners. The reprographics shop chose the Contex HD Ultra X large format scanners, facilitated by U.S. distributor National/AZON, which enable them to deliver the quality scans that customers have come to expect.

RESULTS

With the new scanners, A/E Graphics can cater to a wider audience by accommodating a broader range of originals than ever before. Customers now bring in a wider array of items to scan, such as movie posters, old newspapers, detailed, original line drawings, and more.



“Everything in the color space has grown since we’ve installed the Contex scanners.”

*Tim Davis, Partner
A/E Graphics*

Investing in new scanners with existing MFP in-house might seem redundant – until you see the side-by-side scan comparisons. Tim Davis, Partner in A/E Graphics, explains:

“We decided to put the top scanners in the market to the test, including our MFPs. When we saw scans that were two to three times better than the MFPs, we knew it was time to make a change to stand-alone scanners.”

CHALLENGE

Ensuring the highest-quality reproductions

A/E Graphics has a century-long history of serving customers with document reproduction solutions and exceptional service. In recent years, the company started seeing an increasing trend toward the digitization of color documents and intricate originals, in addition to the architectural and engineering

drawings, maps, legal documents, and more that continue to be the core of their business. While their all-in-one MFP scan/print/copy solutions got these new jobs done, the company wanted to ensure they offered the highest-quality reproduction for their customers' valuable originals.

SOLUTION

Surge in scanning

During the pandemic, A/E Graphics experienced a surge in requests for scanning services, from customers wishing to scan their warehouses of documents to artists looking to digitize their intricate artwork.

In 2021, A/E Graphics switched from using an MFP scanning solution that came with its large format printer and purchased two Contex HD Ultra X 42-inch large format scanners, one for each location. The scanners

were facilitated by U.S. distributor National/AZON.

HD Ultra X is a versatile large format scanner that can capture technical documents, color graphics, and archival materials, among others.

A helpful scanning feature of the HD Ultra X is the Optimized Thickness Adjustment Control (OTAC), which lets users scan documents up to 0.6" (15 mm) thick. Other features that appeal to A/E Graphics are the scanners' LED lights and low maintenance demands in comparison to other scanners. The glass is also highly resistant to scratches, and its paper-handling design prolongs the life of consumables.

"The difference in the scanning was night and day. As we receive more color originals, the Contex scanner provides greater range. It's a huge step

up," comments Davis. "The product that we're providing to our customers is two to three times better than before."

The demand for scanning services is still high, and the Contex scanners are delivering results that live up to A/E Graphics' high standards.

Some notable projects that A/E Graphics has scanned include a newspaper from 1945 declaring that the war is over. Andy Trudell, the Contex scanner operator, has also scanned motorcycle and movie posters, which were scaled down to print as postcards. One artist comes to A/E Graphics monthly to have their pencil artwork scanned and enlarged to make it more legible.

"The line work is much better with the Contex scanner. Our other scanners also picked up more shading and background. With the Contex scanner, it was clearer," notes Andy Trudell. "Everything in the color space has grown since we've installed the Contex scanners," notes Davis. "For color scans, you want an aggressive scanner. Other scanners struggle as soon as you challenge them with complex originals."

RESULTS

An expanding customer base

With the addition of the Contex scanners, A/E Graphics is now poised to become the top resource for large format scanning, adding to its accolades as Wisconsin's number-one printing company by *The Daily Reporter*. Being nestled in a prominent art community makes it easy for artists to use their walk-up counters to archive or create print-ready files of their valuable originals.



Scanner operator: Dan Stelpflug, A/E Milwaukee branch

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