

Higher Education Case Study

Francis Combe Academy



Francis Combe Academy embarks on journey with Canon to commercialise in-house print department



Company Name

Francis Combe Academy

Industry

Higher Education (In- house Print Department)

Founded

1954 (established as an academy in 2009)

Location

Garston, UK

Services

In-house print environment, monochrome digital printing, reprography, wide format printing, basic finishing

Website

www.franciscombeacademy.org.uk

Objective

To grow in-house print environment by offering a broader range of products, while operating more cost and time efficiently to increase profitability.

Challenges

- The development of the print production department was being hindered by an outdated light production workflow.

Approach

- In 1995, an initial investment in office printing devices was made by Francis Combe.
- This partnership progressed after Francis Combe was established as an academy in 2009 and it looked to Canon to offer strong business consultancy on how to centralise and streamline its print workflow. In addition to an investment in hardware and software, the customer participated in Essential Business Builder Programme (EBBP) modules and Canon events.
- By 2014, Francis Combe was suitably impressed with its progress and Canon's technology and consultancy services that additional investment was made in VarioPrint technology. Francis Combe also has plans to add colour print technology and more advanced finishing in the future.

The Canon Solution

- Essential Business Builder Programme
 - Selling Digital Print
 - Building your future with Print - CRD
- Canon imageRUNNER
- Canon imagePROGRAF
- Canon VarioPrint 120
- uniFLOW

Results



Increased volumes - producing 70% of academy's monochrome print



Production of new high quality applications in-house



Cut wastage costs - 7% drop in paper consumption and click charges



Saved £7,000 per year by printing in-house

Further plans to cut £12,000 outsourcing costs and introduce colour printing and advanced finishing in 2016 to strengthen external offering

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Canon

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The challenge

Walking the busy halls of the Messe Düsseldorf during drupa 2012, Chris Turton - e-manager at Francis Combe Academy in the UK - had a clear purpose: to find a partner that could help commercialise the reprographic department.

Reopening as an academy in 2009, Francis Combe - based in Garston - was focused on equipping its departments with the right tools and resources to provide students with the best education possible, including its printing operations.

Since 1995, Francis Combe had been using Canon's desktop printers and copiers as part of a procurement agreement between Canon and the local council. While this arrangement had served its purpose over the years, by 2009 Chris Turton knew this set-up was outdated and hindering profitability. "There was no formal system or procedure in place to monitor printing costs or define individual print requirements across the academy," explains Chris Turton.

With over 30 years' experience in the print industry - including the development of a highly successful

in-house print department at a global bank based in London - Chris Turton knew there was an easier and more cost-effective alternative. "We had two objectives: to streamline operations by centralising everything through the reprographics department, and to identify ways to turn the department into a revenue stream in its own right by producing more products in house for internal purposes and to sell externally."



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The solution

Two years before drupa 2012, Chris Turton had spoken to Canon and other suppliers about introducing a more manageable print workflow. "Implementing a new way of working is always a challenging process that takes time, so we needed a strategic approach and a partner who could help us devise a long-term plan," explains Chris Turton.

"While we had enjoyed a positive relationship with Canon since 1995, we had to be certain we were selecting the right partner for this new venture. I spoke to leading suppliers and many contacts within the print industry, but Canon shone through with its combination of quality technology and accompanying business support."

Chris Turton, with the support of Canon, put forward a strong business case to the academy to invest in a number of Canon monochrome printers and print management software. The machines would replace the desktop devices across the academy to consolidate the monochrome printing set-up.

"Canon's representatives went above and beyond during the installation phase, carefully explaining how we would be able to easily monitor all printing and associated costs and create transparency across the organisation," continues Chris Turton. "It was a significant step in the right direction. However, this was only the first step of many. The next stage was to commercialise the reprographics department."

At drupa 2012 with its some 1,850 exhibitors, Chris Turton held in-depth discussions with relevant suppliers about making this next step in developing a more profitable department. "Naturally the halls were packed with new technologies, solutions and supplier promises," recalls Chris Turton. "But the conversation with Canon was the only one that really centred on our needs, and put forward clear measures that could be taken to realise our long-term vision."

Chris Turton continues: "The high standard of Canon's technology was never in question; it was how, as a

partner, Canon was going to help us create a printing department that benefited the students and staff, while simultaneously contributing to the school's bottom line. We were drawn towards its consultancy services such as the Essential Business Builder Programme (EBBP) and its customer events."

Over the next three years, Turton and his team benefited from attending a number of 'Inspiration Days' held by Canon at its customer experience centre in Brentwood in the UK, in addition to a holistic pan-European event in Munich, 'Canon For Business'. They also participated in EBBP modules on selling digital print and how in-house print environments can build a stronger future.

"These sessions were invaluable, both in terms of the expert presentations and the one-on-one advice we received," elaborates Chris Turton. "We also benefited from being able to speak to other Canon customers, who had either overcome similar business issues to those we faced, or who sparked a great new ideas that we had never considered before."

Encouraged by what could be achieved, in 2014 the academy invested in a new mid to high volume monochrome device, a Canon VarioPrint, to produce educational materials in-house such as school prospectuses and student and staff planners. The VarioPrint joined a production line that included a Canon imagePROGRAF wide format printer that was purchased in 2013 for poster, banner and pop-up work. The department was now able to produce a broad range of applications for other departments across the academy, products that were previously bought in.



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The results

The reprographics department is gradually beginning to see tangible business benefits, producing over 70 per cent of academy's monochrome requirements with the VarioPrint alone.

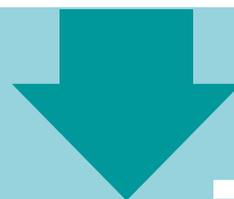
As a result of consolidating its monochrome production and gaining better control over costs, the department has also seen a seven per cent drop in paper consumption and corresponding click charges, estimating financial savings of around £7,000 a year. "This is money that is directly reinvested into the department to stimulate growth," stresses Chris Turton.

Meanwhile the department's broader portfolio of products and services is beginning to attract attention beyond the walls of the academy. "The signs are good – we've caught the attention of other campus partners, as well as local schools, and conversations are on-going to extend our print services to them, as well as expanding our team to support this growth," adds Chris Turton.

There are also internal conversations to cut outsourcing costs further – which currently stand at around £12,000 per year – by producing even more products on-site. Chris Turton concludes: "We plan to do this by working with Canon and investing in digital colour printing technology, as well as more advanced finishing capabilities such as perfect binding. Canon has helped us on the first steps of this journey, and with them we know we can make the reprographics department a viable commercial outfit that not only serves the academy, but brings in additional revenue from other educational institutions in the area."

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7%

drop in paper consumption, saving around **£7,000** a year



Discover more

canon-europe.com/ebbp

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Canon Europe Ltd

3 The Square
Stockley Park
Uxbridge
Middlesex
United Kingdom
UB11 1ET
Tel: +44 208 588 8000
Fax: +44 208 588 8001
www.canon-europe.com

Canon (UK) Ltd

Woodhatch
Reigate
Surrey
United Kingdom
RH2 8BF
Tel: +44 1737 220 000
Fax: +44 1737 220 022
www.canon.co.uk

Canon Ireland

3006 Lake Drive
Citywest
Saggart
Co Dublin
Ireland
Tel: +353 1205 2400
Fax: +353 1205 2525
www.canon.ie

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