

Roll-to-Fold solutions deliver faster turnaround

Direct Mail Solutions has two off-line Roll-to-Cut/Fold lines with Horizon folders. One line has the Hunkeler CS6-I Cutter, which is ideal for standard cut-and-fold jobs. The other features a CS6-II Cutter for more complex jobs where gutter and chip-out are needed. Both of these new lines are delivering quality products and beating previous turnarounds.



Bindery Operators Wanda Morman (left) and Maria McCain (right) work with the Hunkeler/Horizon Roll-to-Cut/Fold lines at Direct Mail Solutions. The new solutions together process a remarkable 45 million mail pieces per month.

New lines key to 15 million pieces per month production growth

Direct Mail Solutions Nearly Doubles Throughput.



Discovering the production advantages of Hunkeler and Horizon in-line solutions.

Direct Mail Solutions, located in Richmond, VA, was founded in a garage 20 years ago. This 24/7 operation employs nearly 400 people and has both a production facility and a presort shop where mail produced in-house is commingled with third-party mail and prepared in accordance with USPS requirements.

As the business has grown, Direct Mail Solutions is in the process of migrating from roll-fed toner-based printing to roll-fed production inkjet, according to Randy Toney, Operations Manager, who has been with the company for 18 years. "We had eight toner lines," he says, "and now we are down to four, having added two Screen Truepress Jet520EX inkjet presses in 2017."

Toney states that the primary drivers for moving to production inkjet were to increase cost savings and reduce the amount of floor space required for production. Each Screen Truepress line features Standard Hunkeler unwinders and rewinders. "We were interested in looking at Hunkeler because we knew they were one of the leaders in the industry," Toney explains. "We had seen their products at many shows, and finally made the leap when we acquired the Screen presses. We were running out of floor space, and it didn't make sense to add more toner devices with the inkjet technology now available."

In making the decision, the team at Direct Mail Solutions visited Standard's showroom in the Boston area. "This visit was a great help in the decision-making process," Toney says. "I have never been exposed to any other vendors that handle the sales process the way Standard does. We were on-site with them and had their undivided attention for the entire time we were there, enabling us to have an in-depth first-hand look at everything they had to offer. Many vendors miss that aspect during the sales process. It made us feel comfortable with the investment that they were able to spend that amount of time and explain exactly what we were getting."

In addition to the unwinders/rewinders for their Screen Truepress lines, Direct Mail Solutions has two off-line Roll-to-Cut/Fold lines with Horizon folders. "One line has the Hunkeler CS6-I Cutter," Toney states. "This is ideal for standard cut-and-



The team at Direct Mail Solutions plans to add two more Screen Truepress lines with Hunkeler Roll-to-Roll systems and another off-line cut-and-fold unit. The new installations will more than triple throughput.

fold jobs. The other line features the CS6-II Cutter for more complex jobs. For example, we run a 2-up 14-inch letter for a customer that also contains a gutter and a chip-out. This is a monthly job with more than 10 million pieces and a 10-day turnaround time. With this new equipment, we are able to beat that 10-day turnaround time, which we have never been able to do in the past."

But the company is not stopping there. "Both to replace the remainder of our toner devices and to accommodate growth," Toney says, "we will be adding two more Screen Truepress lines in the fall with Hunkeler unwinder/rewinder systems, and another off-line cut-and-fold unit. This one will have the CS6-II as well as a web merge line that will allow us to do slit/merge, wrap/fold, and a number of other complex applications. We have a



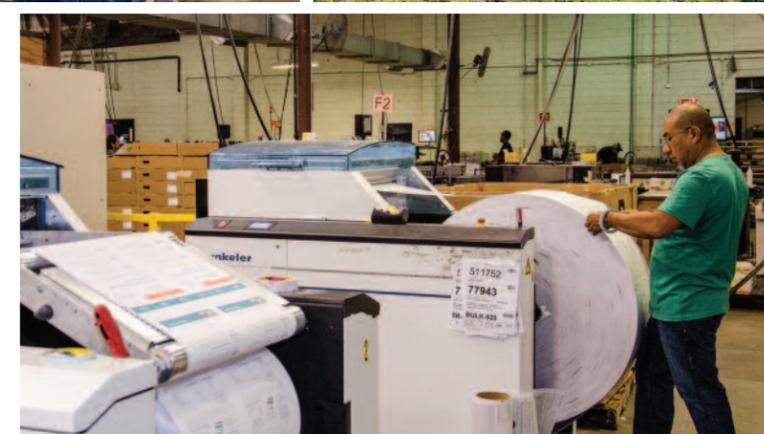
The high-speed Hunkeler unwinders and rewinders provide constant web tension for uniformly tight and straight rolls to ensure efficient, productive downstream processing on the Hunkeler Roll-to-Cut/Fold systems.

slit/merge operation now, but our speed is at about 8,000 mail pieces per hour. With this third line, we will be able to bump that up to about 27,000 per hour, more than tripling throughput. This will add a lot more variety and speed to the services we can offer our customers."

In addition to the pre-sales visit to Standard's National Demonstration and Training Center, Direct Mail Solutions sent Toney and two other employees back to the showroom for a week of training. "We learned everything we needed to know to operate and maintain the systems," he says. "And we can do most, if not all, of that maintenance ourselves."

Toney is extremely pleased with the results the company has achieved with its new equipment. "Uptime has been about 95% or higher," he says, "which is outstanding. Any downtime we have experienced has typically been a result of something we were doing wrong, not the equipment, and the support from Standard has been exceptional in helping us work through those few issues."

Prior to putting in the new lines, the company was producing in the neighborhood of 28 to 32 million mail pieces per month, according to Toney.



Rolls are printed on the Truepress Jet520EX in-line with the Hunkeler Roll-to-Roll solution and then seamlessly transferred to the off-line Roll-to-Cut/Fold system. Pictured above, Sly Castillo, Laser Operator, loads a pre-printed roll for final finishing.

"Now that volume is in excess of 45 million," he reports. "We gained 15 million pieces in capacity, and that is gigantic. With the addition of the two new printers and the additional finishing equipment, we expect to be able to add another 10 to 15 million on top of that."

By migrating from toner to inkjet and adding Hunkeler/Horizon finishing, Direct Mail Solutions is positioning itself for continued growth and the ability to create even more types of applications for its customers. "Our goal was to increase throughput while reducing both space requirements and labor while still producing a great quality product for our customers. By partnering with Standard, we have exceeded our expectations with regard to both of these objectives. We're getting more work out faster, more cost-effectively, and with less labor. Once we have our new lines in place, the picture will be even better. Our future is bright, and our partnership with Standard is a key factor in our success."

