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Geoff Reid, Managing Consultant,  
Trafford Publishing

## An Innovative Publisher Gets Up to Speed with Lasermax Roll

### Industry

Book Printing

### Application

On-demand books,  
2-up, 3-up, 2-up merged

### Printers

Xerox 495

### Solution

RS Stack:  
RS52 Unwind  
RSC7 Cutter  
RSM2 Merger  
RSD1 Descending Stacker  
310 Processor

In 1995, when less than one-percent of the world used the Internet and print-on-demand publishing was a brand-new notion, Trafford Publishing was breaking ground on both fronts.

“When we started our operation, on-demand meant printing short runs between 300 and 500 books,” said Geoff Reid, managing consultant for Trafford Publishing. “We wanted the ability to print books one copy at a time.”

Located in Victoria, British Columbia, Trafford began their operation by selling self-published books on the Internet, which was something rarely done in the mid-1990s. Very few e-commerce websites existed then, and authors who weren't willing to wait around for a big publisher had only two expensive and laborious options: do-it-yourself printing and vanity presses.

Trafford took advantage of modern technology and became

a pioneer in the print-on-demand industry. Currently, the books they publish come from authors in over 120 countries and make up over two-percent of all new titles released in North America.

“We started offering on-demand books purely as a publisher,” explained Reid. “Up until eight years ago we outsourced the printing, but now everything is done in-house.”

“We're one of the first companies to offer both the publishing and printing side of creating books.”

This year alone, Trafford will print and sell 700,000 books, ranging in size from 5-by-5 to 8.5-by-11 inches, and created in quantities from one to 15,000.

“We don't print anything for stock, and we only print a book after an order is placed,” Reid said. “On an average day, we typically print a couple hundred books in the quantity of one.”



“In the end, it’s a matter of keeping up with volume so our customers stay happy. The RS Stack runs up to 500 sheets per minute without stopping.”

Trafford started off as a cut-sheet print operation, but as their volume increased they knew they needed to make a change in order to keep up with the demand.

“We needed to go bigger and faster, all while cutting costs,” said Reid. “We knew the only way to do that was to purchase a digital printer and get a web-fed solution.”

After researching the digital print marketplace, Trafford found their fit with a Xerox 495 continuous printer, which not only runs at fast speeds but also handles a wide variety of applications. The next step was to secure the right inline finishing solution.

“We had seen Lasermax Roll Systems in the marketplace and knew they had a good reputation,” Reid explained. “Once Xerox Canada explained the benefits of using the Lasermax Roll solution, we made our decision.”

Trafford decided to purchase a Lasermax Roll Systems RS Stack system, including an RS52 Unwind, RSC7 Cutter, RSM2 Merger and RSD1 Descending Stacker, along with a 310 Processor. This solution allows them to unwind paper directly into the digital printer and then cut, slit and neatly stack sheets 2-up, 3-up, or 2-up merged for single-copy books. Books are then perfect- or coil-bound offline.

“Compared to the cut sheet solution we were using before, the RS Stack allows us to save time and money,” Reid said. “Our operators don’t have to manually load sheets into the printer

anymore, which cuts labor significantly, and roll-fed paper is considerably less expensive than cut-sheet.”

Another cost-saving feature of the system is the 310 Processor, which gives Trafford the ability to punch tractor feed holes into unprocessed paper, all inline with the RS Stack.

“The decision to purchase the 310 Processor came down to cost,” explained Reid. “Purchasing a roll of paper that’s pre-punched [with tractor holes] costs quite a bit more than buying plain paper and punching it inline.

“Now that we have the Processor, we are very happy with it. I don’t think it’s been down once and it’s boosted productivity overall.”

Because of the high-speed and automation of the RS Stack and 310 Processor, Trafford has no problems keeping up with their increasing demands.

“In the end, it’s a matter of keeping up with volume so our customers stay happy,” said Reid. “The RS Stack runs up to 500, 8.5-inch sheets per minute without stopping.”

Now that today’s digital revolution has finally caught up to Trafford’s initial vision, Reid hopes that their volume and success keep growing.

“We will likely expand our operation in the future,” he said. “And if we do, we would definitely continue to use web-fed solutions from Lasermax Roll Systems.

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