



“:Apogee Portal allows us to increase customer satisfaction”

Hirakawa-Kogyosha was founded in 1950. Since they introduced the first printing press in 1950, they bought already 160 Heidelberg printing units of which they still use 80 units today. The company mainly provides monochrome and double tone booklet printing for other printing companies.

:Apogee Portal at Hirakawa-Kogyosha in Japan



In 2006, they introduced a 4-color and 8-color press to expand their business to the color printing market. Now they have five 8-up platesetters, including an :Avalon N8-50XT and an :Avalon N8-50S with Multi Auto loader.

From 2009, they have started environmental friendly printing with the :Azura TS plate.

In 2011, with the introduction of :Apogee Portal, they built a system that enables customer satisfaction in an eco friendly way.

Hirakawa-Kogyosha employs 330 persons and has eight offices and factories in Tokyo, with a total building area of 30,000 square meters.

We spoke to Mr. Yushi Wada, Executive Director and Sales-Production Manager of Hirakawa-Kogyosha.

Customer Testimonial



Mr. Wada, what type of work does your company offer?

Books are the foundation of our culture. We always try to get long lasting titles such as literary books, academic books, children's books, specialized books, and commercial printings. But also translation and electronic publishing services. We also provide multi-job short run printing for other printing companies.

What are the strong points of your company?

The technological flexibility that we have in house to meet with a variety of customer demands. Also the digital management of job processing from prepress to print. And of course the economics of scale due to the size of our company.



Since the digital revolution, we have invested heavily to change our way of business. We put great emphasis on the use of recycled papers and eco-friendly bindings. Customers are willing to pay more for eco-friendly printings.

We always try to increase quality, to lower energy consumption, and to reduce maintenance costs.

As concerns our operators, we train them in such a way that they are able to do a variety of tasks. The Agfa Graphics systems with their easy user interface are a great help in this regard.

What is your experience with :Apogee Portal?

In the beginning we were skeptical about the web proof system. But if you think about the ease of use for our customers, there are no other ways to take advantages of the web.

:Apogee Portal allows us to achieve our goal of increasing customer satisfaction by offering a web based self proofing system. This system will help create a reliable infrastructure for customers to proof correctly without causing mistakes. We always deliver the printings without defects as fast as possible. It requires a tedious interaction with our customers. Our users appreciate the availability of web proofing system 24 hours a day, every day. And it gives us eco-friendly results by reducing proof papers and car travels.

What was the reason why you choose :Apogee Portal?

Although there are several other web data entry/proofing systems, we evaluated :Apogee Portal in terms of proven technology as a first runner in the market, and its ability to evaluate the bitmap data by our customers. Compared to other systems , :Apogee Portal is very user friendly. The reason why Hirakawa choose :Apogee Portal is because of the total solution provided by Agfa Graphics, including :Apogee 7, :Azura TS and :Sublima. And we should not forget our reliable experience with Agfa Graphics that started more than 20 years ago with our Supermaster Plus, and the professional support of Agfa Japan. We already have several customers using :Apogee Portal, and plan further expansion.

Customer Testimonial



What is your experience with the :Azura TS plate?

In 2009 we started working with this plate. The plate is very easy and stable to work with. And on top of that it is a very eco-friendly plate. In 2012 our plate consumption is about 150,000 sqm/year.



You also print in :Sublima screening, can you tell us something about that?

When we introduced :Azura TS, we were about to start the production of hi-def printings by :Sublima. Consumers have recently been placing greater emphasis on more beauty, more strength, more reality in printing. We have been studying high-definition printing for a long time, but we hesitated to use the technology because it has pros and cons for the printing results. But :Sublima has brought a variety of benefits such as better print resolution and saturation, moiré reduction, more eye-catching prints etc.

What is your vision of the future?

More and more information with a short life span will be consumed directly within the web, but long life information still needs to be printed to give it around. And people need to see more product detail in printed catalogues, so the demand for hi-def printings will increase. We believe now is the time to break the 175-line standard, and prepare the future of hi-def print service by :Sublima. We also have plans to introduce InkSave and Web Growth in the future.

Want to share your Apogee experience with others? Contact us: Apogee@agfa.com

More customer testimonials can be found on the AgfaGraphics website:

http://www.agfagraphics.com/gs/global/en/internet/maings/products_solutions/customers_experience/index.jsp