



Matrix is key to
advanced automation at
Keys Printing

FOUNDED IN 1869, KEYS PRINTING IS THE OLDEST CONTINUOUSLY OPERATING COMMERCIAL SHEET FED PRINTER IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Keys Printing, a Consolidated Graphics Company, attributes its history of success to applying innovative technologies to dynamic business solutions for its customers. When Keys Printing selected LithoTechnics' Metrix as a central component of its planning and prepress workflow, they were able to reach new levels of automation, saving significant time and materials, and reducing labor in prepress by an astounding **58%**.

The Vision

1

Chris George knows that in order to stay competitive, Keys Printing must run a lean and highly automated workflow. Metrix is a key enabler of this mission.



“Automation is my main focus at Keys Printing, so we honestly love Metrix. I don’t know what we would do without it.”



REPORTS CHRIS GEORGE,
PREPRESS AND IT MANAGER OF
KEYS PRINTING

In 2005, Chris George was hired as Prepress and IT Manager at Keys Printing. With 20 years of print industry experience, Chris knew the importance of continually innovating in order to thrive in a highly competitive environment.

“I am all about automation,” says Chris George. “My ultimate goal is ‘lights out prepress,’ where a job will run through the shop with as few human touches as possible.” He knew this would speed project turnaround, improve accuracy and reduce material waste.

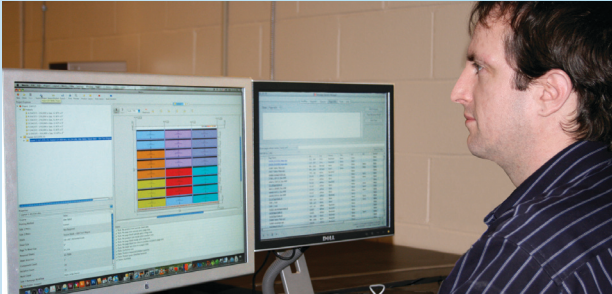
When Chris saw Metrix demonstrated in 2007, he knew he had found the ideal solution to support his mission.

“With Metrix, we’re able to turn jobs a lot more quickly with much more accuracy – **it’s actually made us very lean because of the automation and efficiency**,” reports Chris George. “Before, the planning department would figure out the layouts then draw them up on paper. Once prepress got them, we’d have to spend more time figuring out all the details while inputting all the information into Preps.” George continued, “With Preps, if there were any changes it would really be better to start over. **But with Metrix, you can easily change things and reconfigure the whole job with a couple of mouse clicks.**”

The Implementation

2

With Metrix, we are able to drastically reduce our label reprinting process – from one hour to three minutes.



The Impact

3

The savings and efficiencies that resulted from using Metrix were immediate. Looking ahead, it will help Keys Printing reach its future automation goals.



Keys Printing specializes in printing labels for packaging clients from the food and pharmaceutical industries. These projects involve frequent label reprints in various combinations and quantities, making each reprint job unique. “With our old workflow and Preps, this was a highly manual, tedious, and unpopular job assignment,” explains Chris George. “Now, each time we do a label reprint job, we use Metrix to gang up the FPOs from Rampage and click a button to export the new layout. Metrix and Rampage drastically reduced the human intervention and turnaround time – what used to be a dreaded, painful task became a 3-minute exercise.”

Metrix has taken Keys Printing’s monthly publication production to the next level of automation, as well. “We export a JDF imposition from Metrix, and 30 seconds later our customer can review and approve the completed publication using Rampage Remote,” reports George. “We’ve seen fantastic savings from this Metrix/Rampage integration, which works very, very well.”

“My planning and prepress teams were proficient with Metrix after one week,” explains George. “My guys love it. Everyone used to stay away from the food labels since they were so difficult and take so long, but now they breeze right through it. Every week, one of my team asks me, ‘What did we do before we had Metrix?’”

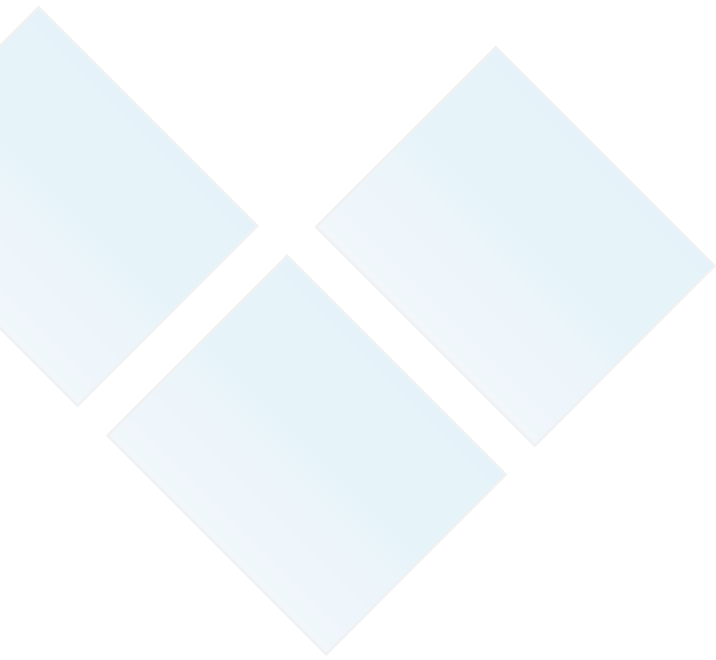
Metrix is also an invaluable tool that Key’s estimators use even prior to working up job quotes. Metrix identifies opportunities for efficiency, enabling the operators to quickly and easily try different combinations and printing options. Having this fast and intuitive tool in the estimators’ and planners’ arsenals opens new avenues for profitability, and virtually eliminates surprises after a project estimate is submitted.

“For years, we had been printing a particular label job 25-up,” says George. “With as little effort as the click of a mouse, Metrix found that we could print 30-up, saving time, money, and consumables.”

Delighted with the impact that Metrix software has already had on Keys Printing, Chris George looks forward to continuing to automate his processes by introducing more JDF integration with his MIS and finishing departments, and applying Metrix to the digital printing side of their business. He feels confident that the LithoTechnics team will be a solid partner in this quest.

I have worked with the most of the industry’s providers of major systems,” concludes Chris George. “The customer service, support and knowledge base at LithoTechnics have been spectacular. In an industry where it’s so important to respond and evolve, this type of partner is crucial. I can’t wait to see where we will go next.”

“I can’t wait to see where we’ll go next”



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