

PRODUCTION
PRINT REPORT:

Revitalize
Your University
In-Plant



Revitalize Your University In-Plant

Green & silver. Red & gold. Purple & orange. University team colors differ and field rivalries are fierce, but off the field, in the corners of tucked-away campus buildings, university print shops embrace one another as members of the same team, so much so that collaboration among in-plants is legendary. These cooperating shops all struggle with the same challenges, trying to reduce cost while increasing productivity and quality — and staving off the threat of outsourcing.

Because a lot is happening in this space, sometimes it is hard to make decisions as to where to invest to grow the business and improve the customer's experience. That is why this trend report will highlight hot trends that may help bolster your in-plant's success and add value to your organization.

1 Unleashing eye-catching substrates' potential with wide format

Wide format printers can create incredible effects on all types of roll-fed, sheet-fed or flatbed rigid substrates. These machines print on glass, wood, paper, canvas, metal, textiles, flexible plastics, 3D surfaces like balls and doors — you name it, and they print on it. Imagine the outstanding applications your university can devise with wide format.

One university turned wide format into a major revenue stream by offering promotional products and specialties, a far cry from its traditional print comfort zone. One went a step further, purchasing the promotional items to print on directly from the manufacturer, thus cutting out the middleman for substantial savings.



"It's a no-brainer for departments to buy squeeze balls, T-shirts and trinkets from us. All universities should look into this. There's big money in it."

— John Sarantakos, Director, Printing, Mailing & Document Services, University of Oklahoma

Wide format definitely has found a home with in-plants. According to a recent study presented by In-plant Graphics¹, an astounding 84% of university in-plants offer wide format printing, as do 65.3% of all in-plants surveyed. As in-plants see returns on those investments, those numbers are only set to grow.

The popularity of wide format was also evident last November at the Specialty Graphics & Imaging Technology (SGIA) show, which was packed with wide format printers. At the show, it became evident that wide format is big and getting bigger — literally — with grand-format printers and carousel-style screen presses on display as print service providers continue to look for new and exciting ways to convey their messages.²

¹ <http://www.inplantgraphics.com/article/in-plant-research-highlighted-at-digigov-conference/>

² <http://www.inplantgraphics.com/article/sgia-expo-a-wide-format-lovers-delight/>

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Another university printed full-size cutouts of all the deans to place in their buildings. It wasn't cheap, but the gesture paid off in good will and exposure to key people making print decisions.

Transit messaging has proven a solid revenue builder. Not only are universities producing vehicle wraps for their schools' own buses and trucks that circulate through campus and across town, but they are designing and printing wraps for city buses, creating a source of revenue that had never existed.

Look for innovative ways to put your wide format to work: Signs, posters, décor, pop-up banners, backlit films, window displays, textiles and clothing, point-of-purchase displays. With all the hoop-la created by such print extravaganza, in-plant perception and visibility issues may well vanish. When conferences, workshops and athletic events roll around, many departments look to purchase branded plaques, T-shirts, soft rubber balls or other mementoes. By embracing wide format, you can help ensure that revenue goes to you.

2

Making "we do that" your catchphrase

"Know where your university is going. Be part of it," advises Lora Connaughton, Director, Printing & Distribution Solutions, University of North Texas. "What are you going to add that will help your school's ROI?"

The following trends may jumpstart your thinking about additional services you could add to your portfolio.

- **Mail fulfillment** is becoming a boon area for universities. In spite of email, 92% of U.S. adults contend that college students still like receiving packages and letters.³ A digital printer and variable data capabilities enable in-plants to handle short-run, four-color jobs that require personalized envelopes, such as mailings for student recruiting, fund-raising, event publicity. One university processes outgoing mail from its medical center and hospital and splits the postage discounts.⁴

"Weave yourself into the fabric of the university. Make yourself more valuable and higher profile. We're expanding our trans-messaging program and generating new revenue." "

— Frank Davis, Director, Creative Communications, University of Washington

- **Package delivery.** With the growth of e-commerce, package volume has jumped from 3.3 billion pieces in 2008 to 4.5 billion in 2015, according to the U.S. Postal Service — a change most evident at colleges and universities.⁵ Rather than the "Wild West" environment with UPS and FedEx trucks all over campus, one in-plant is working on a program to take over the delivery of packages to the departments and the dorms for those companies.⁶
- **Distributed printing.** As the student population turns to mobile aps, universities are installing printers in residence halls and libraries so students can print from iPads and smart phones. Cost effectiveness hasn't been proven, but the convenience factor for students is significant. Another highly visible way of advertising your in-plant.⁷
- **Website development.** Often university in-plants use students to design and develop websites. Be sure to market these offerings. Even though folks know that you offer print services, they may not know you are in the website development business.
- **Photo kiosk, passport and notary services.** These services helped one university increase the number of visitors during the year from 42,000 to 60,000.⁸

³ <https://www.workintelligent.ly/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Final-Nov-Trend-Report-Auxiliary-Services-11-25-15.pdf>

⁴ <http://rpp.ricoh-usa.com/services-solutions/mail-integrity>

⁵ <https://about.usps.com/who-we-are/postal-facts/decade-of-facts-and-figures.htm>

⁶ <http://solutions.ricoh-usa.com/solutions/campus-mail-solutions-for-universities>

⁷ <http://solutions.ricoh-usa.com/solutions/cloud-for-education>

⁸ <http://www.ricoh-usa.com/about/docs/pdf/NECS/CS/2015/10/CS-216-RIC%20FIU.pdf>

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3 Spreading the insourcing word to the outside

Insourcing is all about creativity and energetic marketing. Bringing work into the building pumps up revenue, a good way to eliminate outsourcing threats. But how do you go about insourcing?

Obviously, you have to get the word out. Attend conferences and workshops and let people know you are willing to take on more work. Advertise with signs on buses and trucks. Market yourself with email blasts. Send out flyers to neighboring schools and non-profits. "If you're not screaming from the mountaintops, you're missing the boat," says Sarantakos.

Want your in-plant to stay relevant?

These trends should stir your imagination about opportunities that can increase your value. You have a vested interest in the success of your organization. Understand the issues on the horizon, and position yourself well with solutions for when the need arises. If you don't stay up to date on your organization's evolving needs, you won't be able to serve much better than a third-party option. Use your "insider knowledge" wisely, to benefit both your in-plant and your organization as a whole. Don't be afraid to team with outside experts to make your insource option the best it can be, so tackling jobs in-house becomes an easy choice for your organization's decision makers.



"We look for any place where we can insource, primarily state universities and not-for-profits. When a sister school in-plant closed, we convinced the administration that we could print orange as well as red. By bringing in new revenue streams, we've been able to purchase new equipment and add resources."

— John Sarantakos, Director, Printing, Mailing & Document Services, University of Oklahoma