



Case Study: Hutchings College and Career Academy

Building the next generation of skilled workers to join the Commercial and Industrial Print industry



About our customer

Hutchings College and Career Academy (CCA) offers the Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) track to give students the option to pursue 17 career and vocational opportunities through their dual-enrolment program with Central Georgia Technical College. The academy serves seven high schools in Macon, Georgia, and some additional schools in neighbouring districts.

Hutchings helps students save up to a year's worth of time and money in preparation for their future by offering college credits, industry certifications, and work experiences before they've even graduated from high school. The school offers specific pathway programs and internship opportunities for careers that are currently in high demand, putting students on a fast track to greater career readiness and academic success. Students can earn up to 30 college credits (equivalent to a year of college), intern with top organizations, and even become certified as nursing assistants, emergency medical responders, and more.

Challenge

- Expand existing Graphic Communications Pathway to include Sign and Graphics Wide Format printing
- Upgrade print and finishing infrastructure to better serve students, the Bibb County School System, and local business community
- Design curriculum to train and certify students in the Sign and Graphics Wide Format print discipline

Hutchings CCA was granted chartership in 2016. At that time, the school's renovations led them to seek a managed services partner for their print shop and they chose to work with Ricoh. Hutchings' leaders were introduced to Ricoh team members to upgrade equipment, and later began ideating a graphics program that would incorporate hands-on experience to enhance the curriculum.

After a series of meetings and discussions with their Ricoh team, Hutchings' leaders determined they wanted a way to further bridge the gap between the in-class graphic design lessons students were learning and the technical skills required to create a finished product across all disciplines of the commercial and industrial print industry. They wanted their students to leave the program trained and equipped to pursue either college or career opportunities in any field of their choice in the industry.

Solution

- Ricoh's Advanced Career Education (ACE) for Sign and Graphics Curriculum, which provides the training and Ricoh Certification on core wide format print and finishing technologies
- Wide Format Flatbed Printer, Roll-to-Roll Wide Format Printer, Production Flatbed Cutter/Router, Wide Format Bubble Free Laminator Table, and Unified RIP Software
- ACE instructor/operator training and certification

After spending time with Hutchings' leadership team, Ricoh developed and proposed a comprehensive expansion to their current program — and Ricoh's ACE Curriculum was a perfect fit — as an industry-first training program, educators are Ricoh-certified to prepare students with the knowledge and skills they need to effectively become employed in the commercial and industrial print industry.

As part of the program, Ricoh's print experts provide hands-on experience with core wide format print and finishing technologies as well as technical and business management processes, fundamentals and career readiness training. Students are also trained in graphic design, specialty software, production automation, and workflow best practices.

To expand their existing Graphic Communications pathway and power the hands-on learning from the ACE Curriculum, Hutchings CCA acquired multiple production-level wide format print and finishing solutions, along with industry leading software and a strategic program of professional services to ensure a successful launch of their new capabilities. Students now have access to the most cutting-edge technology across all commercial and industrial print and finishing platforms to learn new skills and become trained and certified, all while growing the Bibb County WiSH Print Center's business capabilities.

“The graphic design pathway we built with Ricoh has allowed us to truly prepare these young adults with multiple opportunities to reach their fullest potential with confidence.”

Dr. Cassandra Washington, Executive Director of CTAE/CEO of Hutchings College and Career Academy

Results

- Six-figure revenues re-invested into other solutions and technologies for the school system, Hutchings CCA, and WiSH Print Center
- Exclusive printing privileges for Bibb County Schools and a growing list of repeat customers from the Bibb County, GA business community
- Student workforce capable of running, managing and operating a print center of any size or equipment, software, and services mix
- Graphic communications enrolment increased by 50%

After nearly 10 years as their managed services partner, helping Hutchings launch and operate their in-house print center, Ricoh has been able to help the school transition those responsibilities to newly trained students and Ricoh-certified instructors. As the first in the state to adopt the ACE Curriculum Program, Hutchings is able to offer hands-on technical experience on a variety of production machines and create advanced work-based learning opportunities for their students.

By expanding their graphic communications pathway and upgrading their equipment, Hutchings has become the first school in Georgia to offer this level of wide format in both education and service provision, ensuring their investments are double leveraged while creating a sustainable student workforce and career-ready candidates for the commercial and industrial print industry at large.

With students now capable of running, managing and operating WiSH Printing, their in-house print shop, Hutchings is uniquely positioned to bring in new revenue for the Bibb County School System which can then be reinvested back into other initiatives.

In fact, this expansion has been so successful that WiSH Printing now has all printing privileges for the Bibb County School System as well as first right of refusal and outsourcing. Thanks to this, they're generating new revenue for the school and giving students real-world business experience and hands-on opportunities with complex print equipment.

Students on the graphic design and communications pathway are trained in the Adobe design suite and are able to see their designs unfold in the print shop, preparing them with highly marketable skills to enter college or a career with confidence. Furthermore, students that earn a certificate in this pathway are guaranteed an interview with up to a dozen companies, many of which come from Ricoh's network.

There are about 100 students currently in the graphic design pathway, and the ACE curriculum has already empowered many more with real-world experience and skills for further career or college applications. In fact, Dr. Washington, Executive Director of the academy, proudly speaks of many students that have gone on to pave their own way as entrepreneurs thanks to these programs.

“We want our graduating students to leave college and career ready. I truly believe that this partnership with Ricoh has helped nurture our students to excel in the workforce and beyond as global citizens.”

— Dr. Cassandra Washington,
Executive Director of CTAE/CEO of Hutchings College and Career Academy



Discover how Ricoh's [ACE curriculum](#) can unlock the potential in your school or print shop.

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