Stop The Presses! Lantronix and Link-Tech Enable Commercial Printing Transformation

"The commercial print industry is much in need of an improved system for managing time and resources and providing accurate quotes to customers. Lantronix provided us with right technology to enable the device intelligence necessary for remote monitoring in these systems."

—Dick Zablocki
Vise President of Engineering, Link-Tech

CHALLENGE To convert to a "time and materials" business model, commercial printers needed the ability to accurately track and monitor all operations and material costs.

SOLUTION Lantronix XPort® enabled Link-Tech to add network connectivity to its next-generation printing providing real-time monitoring and maintenance for a more accurate solution.

BENEFIT Real-time monitoring benefits provide improved system efficiencies that increase the ROI for commercial printing companies.

A transformation is taking place in the commercial printing industry from a project quote structure to a time and materials business model. For this transformation to take place, printers need to be able to accurately monitor all operations, ink, paper and materials usage, utilities and other costs associated with each printing job.

Remote monitoring is becoming a business necessity for any organization that relies on a variety of operational equipment and values cost-efficiency. At its most basic, remote monitoring allows various equipment to work together and be managed from anywhere at any time. Beyond the obvious machine-to-machine connection it provides, remote monitoring technology actually adds value to a user's existing equipment, providing an enhanced return on investment (ROI).

The Situation: Effect Change To Commercial Printing Business Model

Responding to growing customer demand for greater accountability and to keep pace with rising resource costs, commercial printers needed the ability to accurately monitor all operations, materials and utilities used to quote, track and invoice customers based upon time and materials. Laboriously, print companies first attempts to track time and materials used a flow meter, similar to a water meter, to calculate ink, paper and other costs over the course of a month. At the end of that month, they would then divide that figure by the number of days a print job lasted to determine the cost of that job.

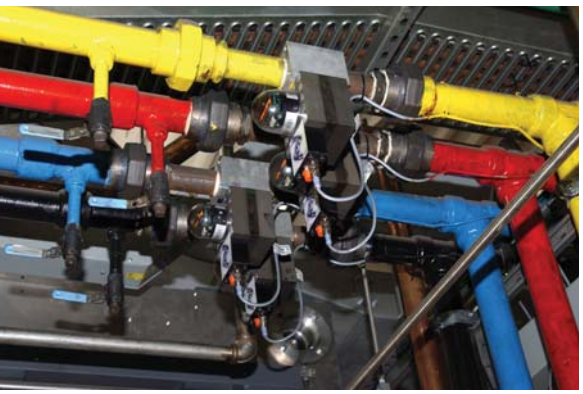
Productivity technology supplier, Link-Tech set out to provide printers with a better, more efficient solution. Link-Tech knew that a network-enabled monitor would provide printers with access to real-time materials and operational data, giving

their customers more accurate print estimates. The company, however, required a compact and highly integrated solution to connect both IT and non-IT devices to either a network or the Internet so they can be more efficiently managed.

THE SOLUTION: A More Accurate Print Meter with Real-Time Remote Monitoring Advantages

Link-Tech refined ink monitoring technology by integrating a user-friendly touch panel with its Ranger R3000 CAN bus Flowmeter to measure ink usage, providing printers with a measurement system that is both easy to operate and maintain. With accuracy of .1% and absolute linearity, it has become a leading solution for commercial printers.

A key component to Link-Tech's success is the XPort embedded device server from Lantronix. Smaller than a thumb, XPort removes the complexity of designing network connectivity into a product by incorporating all of the required hardware and software inside a single, compact, easy-to-integrate embedded solution.



The collaboration of Link-Tech and Lantronix device server technology provides accurate data in real time directly to the commercial printer's IT center, enabling a printer to monitor all jobs in process. This next-generation solution alerts printers to maintenance needs before there is a real problem and can even schedule maintenance downtime as it best suits the printer's schedule. The solution's "lights-out" operation allows monitoring to be accomplished without anyone being onsite.

Link-Tech's Flowmeter with touch screen mounts directly onto a print press and measures only five inches. By incorporating the compact XPort into its product design, Link-Tech can offer network connectivity as a standard feature of its Flowmeter.

THE RESULT: Enhancing the Bottom Line For Commercial Printers

With a meter that is 100 times more accurate than the old meter approach and can track ink by the dot, commercial printers can now monitor and have access to crucial data in real time. With information at the fingertips, printing companies have the means to precisely track costs that truly make the time and materials business model a reality. These tangible improvements are easy to use, eliminate recording errors, and allow more accurate customer quotes which ultimately benefit a commercial printer's bottom line.

"The commercial print industry is much in need of an improved system for managing time and resources and providing accurate quotes to customers," said Dick Zablocki, vice president of engineering for Link-Tech. "Lantronix provided us with right technology to enable the device intelligence necessary for remote monitoring in these systems."

The XPort Advantage

- **Everything you need in a tiny package –** The XPort embedded device server provides the most complete integrated solution available to network-enable devices with serial interfaces.
- **Accelerate time-to-market –** XPort is so easy to integrate that it seldom requires any changes to your design and can give your products full network connectivity within weeks.
- **Advanced device networking features –** The XPort offers 10Base-T/100Base-TX Ethernet connectivity, robust operating system, embedded web server, full TCP/IP stack, and optional 256-bit AES Rijndael encryption for secure communications.

LANTRONIX®

Network anything. Network everything.

15353 Barranca Parkway | Irvine, CA 92618 | USA | Tel: 800.526.8764 | Fax: 949.450.7249 | www.lantronix.com