

# Gannett concludes digital inking upgrade at 8 sites

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By Chuck Moozakis,  
Editor in Chief

Gannett Co. Inc. added digital ink control technology across eight print sites as the publisher continues to take steps to further automate its press operations.

The publisher tapped GMI Inc. to install its Microcolor II-N system at Gannett Offset sites in Atlanta, suburban Phoenix, St. Louis and suburban Boston, said Kelly Cline, director of field operations at USA Today.

Additionally, presses at The Advocate in Newark, Ohio, The Spectrum in St. George, Utah, Times Herald in Port Huron, Mich., and The Daily Press Argus in Howell, Mich., were upgraded to digital inking. All of the sites but one are anchored by Goss International Corp. Urbanite presses.

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"Labor savings are what drove this project, but we are also seeing some other savings as well as quality improvement," he said.

The project also met Gannett's requirements for quick ROI, although Cline said he couldn't comment on the specific timeline.

Brian Fisher, general manager at Gannett Offset's plant in Phoenix, said converting to digital ink control reduced start-up waste and eliminated the need for operators to manually adjust ink levers. The plant prints USA Today as well as a number of jobs for The (Phoenix) Arizona Republic and other commercial clients.



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“The system gives us good ink levels within a few hundred copies,” he said. “This allows us to focus on quality control and other components of running the machine.”

The Microcolor software, meantime, lets operators switch between workflows and prepress systems governing the production of USA Today and other products. “All of the USA Today data comes via (Prolmage) NewsWay and Barco (platesetters) but on the commercial size it needs to go to a Kodak Trendsetter News 100 (computer-to-plate system). GMI installed software that translates the data to go either way so we don’t lose any flexibility,” Fisher said.

The GMI software also remembers changes operators make, “so as presets come over and are modified, the software remembers that in subsequent jobs,” Fisher said. “It improves our performance as we continue to use it.”

## “Adding a Microcolor II-N digital ink control system with digital presetting enhances the performance of existing presses”

GMI introduced Microcolor II-N in 2002. The system, aimed specifically at newspapers, allows press operators to select inkers by section, page or color and can support presetting to up to 128 inkers from any of four control consoles.

“Adding a Microcolor II-N digital ink control system with digital presetting enhances the performance of existing presses,” said Timothy A. Cassell, GMI’s vice president of newspapers sales. “This allows

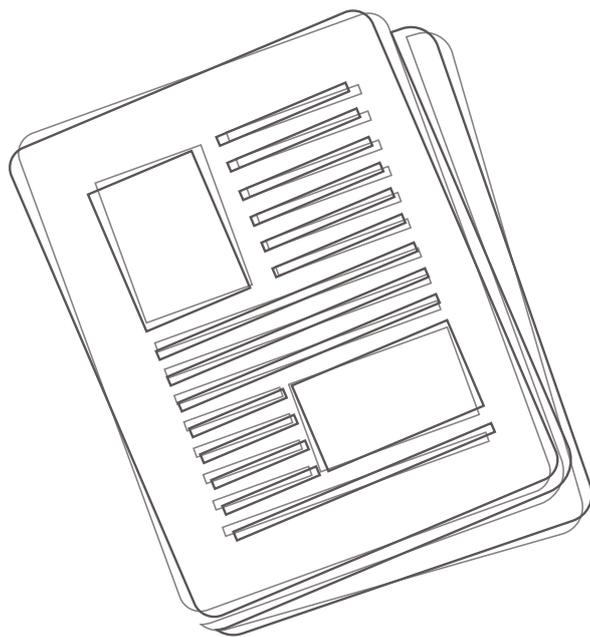
our customers to improve their print quality while having substantial savings in start-up waste and run waste.”

At GO Phoenix, the installation of the GMI system follows the placement of color registration equipment from CC1 Inc. (see News & Tech, April 2009).

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Gannett also installed the CC1 and GMI systems at

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its offset plants in Atlanta and suburban Boston. Meantime, Gannett announced that it wrapped up its project to install GMG Americas’ InkOptimizer ink reduction software at all of its major dailies.

“We have a worldwide commitment to our readers to produce the best, most consistent product possible,” said Austin Ryan, vice president of production, of the upgrades.

## Who got what

- Atlanta Offset: 2 presses, 18 units, 36 inkers
  - Phoenix Offset: 1 press, 18 units, 36 inkers
  - St. Louis Offset: 11 2-highs, 44 inkers
  - Boston Offset: 2 presses, 18 units, 36 inkers
  - The Advocate, Newark, Ohio: 1 press, 18 units, 36 inkers
  - The Spectrum, St. George, Utah: 1 press, 11 units, 22 inkers\*
  - Times Herald, Port Huron, Mich.: 1 press, 18 units, 36 inkers\*
  - The Daily Press Argus, Howell, Mich.: 1 Community press, 17 units, 34 inkers\*
- \*Not a USAT press site