Emma's Country Cakes slices order sheet production time by over 150 minutes with Printronix printers

Whether you're an artisan bread maker or large-scale commercial bakery you need robust, reliable printers capable of producing documents like invoices, delivery notes, and barcode labels in conditions that are quite often floury and humid. Given the relatively short shelf-life of many freshly baked products, speed of printing is also another important consideration to ensure goods are despatched quickly into the supply chain.

When Emma Davies, of Emma's Country Cakes visited a supplier's site and saw the speed of its industrial printer she soon realised that she needed to upgrade her existing machine to cope with her fast expanding enterprise

Transitioning from local to national delivery

Emma's dream of owning her own business began in a small cottage in the Forest of Dean in 1992 when, aged just 21, she was inspired by the tasty, home-made cakes of her childhood years. When she started out, she had to bake, sell and deliver all the cakes herself, primarily to local outlets. But more than two decades on, Emma is now supplying national brands like Sainsbury's, Ocado and Asda as well as independent retailers and garden centres across the country.

Her 'cottage industry' moved to a Gloucestershire industrial park in 2006 and it's where she has been trading from ever since. The business employs around 40 people. Emma has remained true to her old-fashioned cake-making roots and uses no artificial preservatives or flavours when producing her range of cupcakes, rock buns, sponges and pastries. She gave careful thought to her packaging and not only is it recyclable but it has also been designed specifically to prevent the delicate cakes being damaged in transit from bakery to the table.

Speed and durability important criteria

Printing out all of Emma's Country Cakes daily order sheets on an old Epson LQ300 dot matrix printer was taking office staff three hours. It was a random visit to a supplier's site that provided Emma with the impetus she needed to convince her to replace the old device. She contemplated laser and other impact print devices in her search but finally chose the reliable, fast performance of the TallyGenicom C6815 line printer, capable of producing 1500 lines per minute.

It now takes just 15-20 minutes to produce the daily order sheets, a saving of over 150 minutes a day in processing time. The printer is located in the offices at Emma's Country Cakes where its fully enclosed sound reduction cabinet means noise intrusion is minimised. It is used primarily for generating standard multi-part invoicing/order sheets but could also produce barcode labels and other tractor-feed reports, if required.

Try before you buy option

When Emma Davies first enquired about printers through Datatrade she was looking for a sturdy replacement that offered a long lifespan. Given the reputation of Printronix/TallyGenicom devices for working in demanding environments, Emma chose to do a 7-day 'try before you buy' option.

Datatrade installed the TallyGenicom C6815 machine on site and the huge advance in print speed alone was enough to persuade Emma to purchase one. An expected lifespan of 7-10 years further convinced her, as did the prospect of less consumables waste and lower energy consumption than the laser printers she had initially considered. Emma also signed up for a managed print service (MPS) contract through Datatrade, which enables her to save costs on both maintenance and consumables.

Being a relatively small enterprise, Emma's Country Cakes outsources its IT function and enlisted Datatrade to install the C6815 printer. The device is connected to the baker's home area network (HAN) by Ethernet and uses a standard Tally emulation for printing. The business uses Windows 7 as its operating system and runs SAGE software to generate its back office paperwork.

"While there's no robots or conveyor belts producing our delicious cakes we do recognise the need to become more efficient in our supply chain processes if we're to continue to expand at the rate we are doing," says Maria Thomas, Emma's Country Cakes. "By significantly slicing the time it takes to print out our order sheets we effectively regain some 80 days more a year of extra productivity and that's a sweet solution."

The solution in summary
One TallyGenicom C6815
Multi-part order sheets
Print volume: 62,400 to 93,600 sheets/year

About Printronix
Founded in 1974, Printronix is a leader in mission critical printing solutions, offering the most reliable range of industrial printers, supplies and associated spare parts in the industry. The company provides two of the most trusted brands in industrial and supply chain printing, Printronix and TallyGenicom, known by manufacturing, distribution and retail enterprises across the globe. The combined brand portfolio comprises high quality line matrix printers delivering verifiable printing outputs and world-class use and ruggedness

About Datatrade
For over 30 years, Datatrade has supported manufacturers, retailers and logistics providers, supplying, repairing and maintaining their mission critical printers and reducing warehouse and storage hub downtime. As supply chain processes have evolved, no UK provider is better placed to provide true managed print services (MPS), including mobile devices, for back office functions. Datatrade supports a range of printer brands including Printronix and TallyGenicom.