

Printware

PlateStream Boosts Performance and Cuts Cost at West End Litho



West End Litho Managing Director Peter Watling

The famously intricate and precise rules of English cricket are kept up to date using a PlateStream computer-to-plate system.

When West End Litho of London, England, installed their dual-cassette PlateStream 46, one of its first tasks was to speed production of publications printed for the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB). Included in the work that West End Litho does for the ECB are directories and the Rules and Regulations of the game. In some cases, these can run to 200-plus pages. The ability to paginate and go straight to plate using the PlateStream has meant a huge improvement in turnaround times; quite important in this cricket-mad country.

Like many British printers, West End Litho is called upon to produce a great variety of work, 60% in colour, on its Heidelberg presses. The dual cassette capability of the PlateStream 46, with its 85 metre (280-foot) roll length, can easily cope with the demand, ensuring hours of continuous running on plate material of the same or different widths or, indeed, plate and film if required. This versatility is further enhanced by the ability to spool work for overnight production.

The PlateStream 46 was installed at West End Litho after Managing Director Peter Watling saw it at an exhibition and tested and evaluated it against all similarly priced

systems on the market. PlateStream came out well on the key criteria of productivity, flexibility, and quality of output and it also produced dramatic savings, as Peter Watling describes.

“Prior to the installation of the CTP system, we were spending anything between £2,000 and £4,000 (\$3,500 to \$5,200) on film from outside suppliers” he says. “Taking the higher figure, and allowing for the cost of the polyester material, we are making savings of up to 62% and eliminating the need for film, and that is without any allowance for savings on metal plates or labour.” With the savings experienced to date, the PlateStream 46 will have recovered its cost in less than 18 months.

“The PlateStream gives us control of our business,” Peter Watling says, “as well as saving time and enabling us to maintain high standards of quality.”