



California College of the Arts and Spectraflow

Summary

The California College of Arts, with campuses in both Oakland and San Francisco, is one of the nation's leading fine arts instructional institutions. Students in the Photography, Design, and Print Making departments make extensive use of Epson large format printers, where they are an integral part of the curriculum. CCA owns a total of eleven Epson large format inkjet printers, ranging in size from the 17-inch SP4900 to the 44-inch SP9900.

Under Spectraflow's "Productivity for Educators" initiative, we were able to provide CCA with EFI's Fiery XF software at no charge, allowing them to drive all of their inkjet printers, and even a Xerox Phaser. Under this initiative, EFI provides educators a free 180-day license for their RIP software (a \$10,000 value) which can be easily renewed on a semi-annual basis.

Color Management

In an academic environment like CCA, students experiment with a wide variety of media, and naturally expect each paper to produce similar results. Spectraflow configured the EFI RIP to deliver good color automatically, without the need to worry about choosing the proper ICC profile or driver settings for each print. This has resulted in the students feeling more comfortable experimenting with a wider variety of papers and has improved overall satisfaction with the printer labs.

Integration with Cost Accounting Software

The IT department had been tasked with integrating cost accounting software into the print labs so that students could be appropriately charged for the ink and papers they used. This was a challenge for them since the cost accounting software chosen, PCounter, did not integrate well with the Epson printer drivers. Since the underlying architecture of both the cost accounting software and the EFI Fiery XF RIP is hotfolder based, Fiery XF and PCounter integrated seamlessly with one another, allowing CCA to roll out their cost accounting solution.

Hands Off Usage

In the past, each of the print labs needed to be staffed by a trained CCA employee, to help resolve the many problems students encounter as they made prints. However, many of the students wanted to do their work late at night when the labs were not staffed. The challenge was to create a workflow that would be robust enough to allow the students to print without a CCA employee in attendance. The EFI RIP was able to fulfill this goal by providing a simple interface for job submission and job monitoring, allowing CCA to now offer self-service printer labs.

