



## Printing versatility expands product portfolio and applications for solid revenue growth



HP customer case study: Tot.rètol

Industry: Graphic Services/Printing

The year 2009 marked twenty years of business for tot.rètol, a sign printing shop based in Igualada, outside Barcelona in Spain. Joan Torrents, General Manager and owner, has successfully exploited his business experience and know-how as a printing professional to steer tot.rètol through the economic downturn that came with the credit crisis, perhaps the most challenging period since tot.rètol started business in 1989. tot.rètol use "hard" solvent printing technology, a term commonly used among printing business professionals to distinguish it from eco-solvent printing technology. They print on PVC, banner and transparent vinyl for tradeshows banners, point of sale displays and outdoor store signs.

### Eliminating outsourcing to double profit margins

Joan Torrents describes the business scenario that drove them to explore alternative printing technology to solvent-ink printing. "tot.rètol until recently was a solvent-only technology sign making business. Our solvent printers were adequate for our standard signage orders but customer orders sometimes include a portion of prints demanding higher quality. To ensure a single supplier solution and achieve greater customer loyalty we satisfied all their needs by outsourcing what we couldn't print on solvent. The problem is our profit margins were halved when we outsourced. The second problem is that reduced profit margins meant we could not compete for jobs that demanded only, or principally, high image quality. Also, turnaround times can double with outsourcing,

excluding tot.rètol from competing for business with tight deadlines," states Joan, concluding, "The economic crisis meant print volumes from core solvent-ink applications were down 40%. The HP Designjet L25500 Printer has allowed us to expand our applications and products and still serve our core business for robust, durable output. We are seeing our printing volumes grow strongly and we believe we can still do much more."

### Making new profits

Joan Torrents explains how the HP Designjet L25500 Printer allowed tot.rètol to successfully compete for new business. "We recently bid for a high image quality job that demanded 150 sq meters (492 sq ft) of in-store signage up to 2 x 4 m (6.6 x 13.1 ft) on vinyl. The viewing distance was short so our solvent printer was not an option due to the low image quality it offers and possible banding. It was an important opportunity as the job was for an advertising agency - an ideal customer in terms of return business. By using the HP Designjet L25500 Printer, as opposed to outsourcing, we were able to make an extremely competitive offer to acquire the new agency as a customer and still make a profit. Delivery time was halved from 6 days to 3 by printing in-house. Without in-house printing it is very unlikely that we could have beaten the competition to win the job. The customer was satisfied with our printing service and we have become their first choice supplier," Joan states.



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- Joan Torrents, General Manager and owner, tot.rètol

## At a glance

**Industry sector:**  
Graphic Services/Printing

**Business name:**  
Tot.rètol

**Number of staff:**  
9

**Headquarters:**  
Igualada, Spain

**Telephone:**  
+34 0859461310

**Web site:**  
www.totretol.com

**e-mail via:**  
info@totretol.com

### Versatility offers more sellable applications

Joan believes printed output with a lower environmental impact will give them an extra competitive edge for certain applications. "Printed output using solvent inks may be perceived as unsuitable in certain types of activities, particularly those widely used by the public. The health service sector, restaurants, fresh food stores or kids' toy shops are a few examples where environmental health and safety are of paramount importance. Printed displays in these "sensitive" environments represent an ideal application for Latex output from the HP Designjet L25500."

HP Latex Printing Technology represents a no-compromise alternative over tot.rètol's solvent ink technology. "A regular client requested some attractive 60 x 60 sq cm (23 x 23 sq in) coffee table tops for their outdoor terrace bar. Output needed to be tough and weather resistant. In the past we would have used our solvent printer and then laminated the output. We printed the job on white vinyl at a higher quality and more quickly on our new HP Latex printer and laminated output to avoid scratching," Joan says delightedly.

### Innovation without complication

As a new, unfamiliar technology to tot.rètol, any initial concerns they had about its implementation were soon dispelled. "Our operator has lots of experience with large format solvent and the HP Designjet L25500 Printer was extremely easy to manage in comparison. It was very, very easy to learn without any special training. Media loading is easy even on your own. It is very clean and maintenance is automated. The printer adopts convenient, user-replaceable cartridges instead of the bottles and tubes used for solvent. You have to be careful not to leave marks with solvent," Joan says, adding, "The print speed is great and prints are dry when they come off the printer so you can finish and laminate immediately. Ink usage is more efficient than solvent – up to 30% less per square meter. To avoid clogging, solvent technology has bigger printheads and regular cleaning and purging is required. Solvent ink is not absorbed so well on certain types of media. We've noticed poor adhesion on Backlit media so ink can run and print results are less reliable," Joan claims. The embedded spectrophotometer and advanced close loop color calibration are highly appreciated. "You get reliable results on any media you need to use. Automatic color

calibration and creation of ICC profiles is easy," Joan adds, concluding, "Although this technology was new to us, HP is a prestigious brand with reliable, quality products and HP has offered us a qualified and professional post sales service whenever we have needed it. That gives you peace of mind."



### Challenges:

- Grow printing business by offering new products and applications while continuing to supply the robust output demanded for its core business applications
- Eliminate outsourcing to save 2-3,000 Euro/month and increase profit margins by 50%
- Offer printed output with lower environmental impact in "sensitive" environments

### Solutions:

- HP Designjet L25500 Printer using HP Latex Inks and HP Embedded Spectrophotometer with Advanced Close Loop Color Calibration

### Results:

- Versatility from single printing solution to successfully compete for higher image quality business to grow revenue streams while still serving established customer demands
- Profit margins on outsourced printing increased by 50% by bringing printing in-house
- Increased customer satisfaction, faster turnaround and higher quality signage
- Sell HP Latex printed output for "sensitive" environment applications such as health service sector, restaurants, fresh food stores or kids' toy shops

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4AA2-8453ENW, September 2009

