



**Increasing Value with Expanded  
Services: In-plant Opportunities  
to Become a Turnkey  
Communications Partner**

**RICOH**

# Increasing Value with Expanded Services: In-plant Opportunities to Become a Turnkey Communications Partner

As organizations' communications needs evolve, the role of the traditional in-plant printing department is transforming. What were once providers of primarily printed applications, many in-plants have transitioned into turnkey communications providers, still offering a variety of print services, but extending their capabilities to supplement print with high-value services that enhance their standing within their parent organization. This report will demonstrate how in-plants are diversifying their offerings in print and beyond, highlighting these key services and strategies to consider for a successful transition. The findings in this report are backed by *In-plant Impressions* and NAPCO Research data, as well as examples reported on by *In-plant Impressions*.

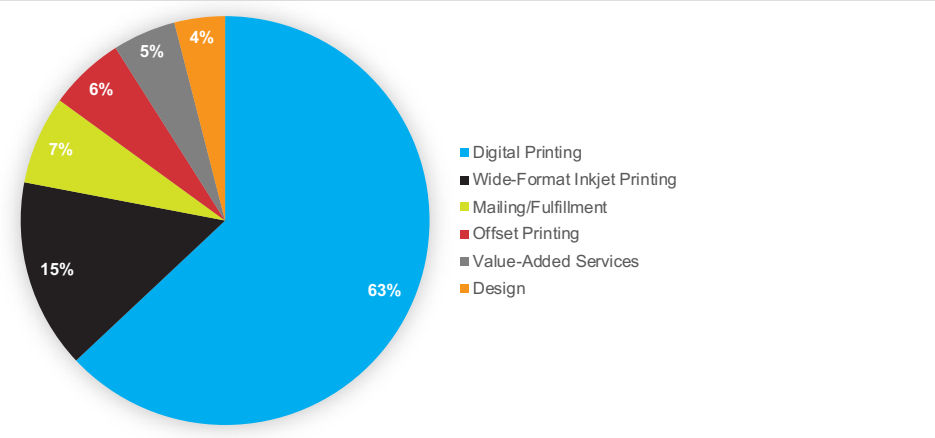
## BUILDING ON A FOUNDATION OF PRINT

While in-plants are continuously diversifying their product and service offerings, print has remained their primary focus. In fact, according to the 2024 *In-plant Impressions* and NAPCO Research [Trends and Services in the In-plant Industry](#) report, all respondents surveyed offer digital toner-based printing. Additionally, 85% offer roll-fed inkjet wide-format printing. Other print technologies used by in-plants include offset printing (22%) and production inkjet (20%), however, it is important to note that offset is declining at in-plants with 36% of respondents stating they offered offset technology in 2022. Meanwhile, inkjet has remained comparable to 2022, with 21% of respondents indicating they offered inkjet two years ago.

In-plant revenue is also demonstrative of the industry's longstanding foundation in print (Figure 1). As reported in *Trends and Services in the In-plant Industry*, 84% of in-plant revenue is driven by print, with the remainder being comprised of mailing/fulfillment services, value-added services, and design. Digital print is the primary revenue source for in-plants, with 63% of revenue coming from production electrophotographic and inkjet equipment. An additional 15% of revenue is being driven by wide-format printing, which has seen a sizable increase in recent years, as wide-format represented just 9% of in-plant revenue in 2020.

**Figure 1: In-plant Revenue by Services**

**Q: What percent of your revenue comes from the following services?**



Source: *In-plant Impressions, Trends and Services in the In-plant Industry* (2024)  
N=118

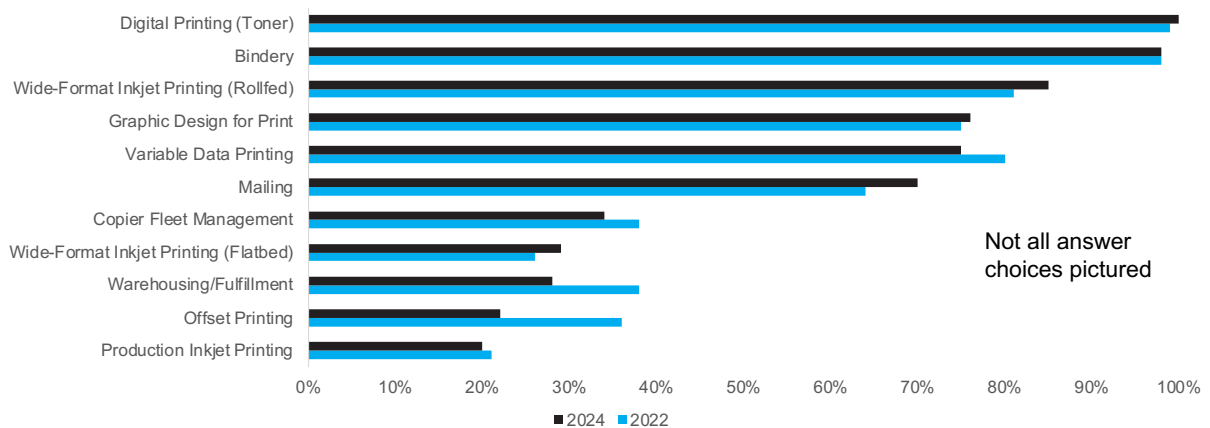


When looking at the services in-plants offer beyond print, it is evident that in-plants are leveraging their print expertise to determine how they can diversify with ancillary services (Figure 2). For example, 98% of in-plants provide bindery services, ensuring their parent companies receive end-to-end production including the finishing processes of printed pieces. More than three-quarters of respondents (76%) offer graphic design services for print, which allows for collaboration between the in-plant and parent organization before a print job ever hits the press and helps to ensure customer satisfaction once the job is finalized.

Mailing services are also on the rise at in-plants, with 70% offering mailing, up from 64% in 2022. Mail and print being highly intertwined, it makes sense that in-plants would add mailing services, removing additional touchpoints from the process when putting a printed piece into the mail stream. For example, as reported in a December 2022 [article in \*In-plant Impressions\*](#), Document Solutions, the in-plant serving the State of Tennessee as part of its Department of General Services, provides several mailing solutions. These services include delivery of physical mail, scanning mail, warehousing, and postage services.

## Figure 2: Print and Related Services Offered at In-plants

Q: Which of these services does your in-plant provide internally? Check all that apply



Source: *In-plant Impressions, Trends and Services in the In-plant Industry (2024)*  
N=129



In addition to the consolidation of printing and mailing services allowing for improved processes and turnaround times, the in-plant cross-trained employees across both areas to ensure coverage if problems arise.

“If there is a problem in printing, we can be flexible with time and staffing to buffer the process and keep things running smoothly,” Kathy Fontana, director of customer support, says.

## THINKING OUTSIDE OF PRINT

Beyond print adjacent services, in-plants have ventured into other realms to benefit their parent companies including logistics and various management roles (Figure 3). For example, more than one-third of respondents (34%) offer copier fleet management services to their organizations, extending their reach beyond just the four walls of their own departments. For organizations spanning a variety of markets including education, health care, manufacturing, and financial services, basic printing and copying occurs every day and is needed by multiple stakeholders. Oftentimes, these smaller-scale printers and copiers are acquired by organizations on a contractual basis, which includes maintenance and service.

Managing these contracts and ensuring the various departments that use copiers get exactly what they need can be challenging. But with in-plants' ingrained knowledge of printing and copying, these departments are often best suited to handle the overall management of an organization's copier fleet. Additionally, [advancements in fleet management software](#) have helped in-plants take control of their organization's equipment and ensure they are limiting waste, as they understand the printing and copying needs of individual departments with the assistance of data collection, and can charge back departments appropriately based on their equipment usage.

Warehousing and fulfillment are other common in-plant services, though they are on the decline compared to 2022. While 28% of respondents offer warehousing and fulfillment, this statistic is down from 38% from two years prior. Fulfillment can still be a valuable service however, as it takes often complicated steps in the production and delivery of a print job from the customer to the print provider. For example, if a university in-plant is producing acceptance letters for prospective students, those letters are often delivered in a folder that includes several print pieces including the actual letter, a school brochure, department-specific information, housing details, and beyond. In addition to printing all of this content, an in-plant can save its parent organization time and money by assembling these packages, warehousing them as needed, and handling the distribution process.

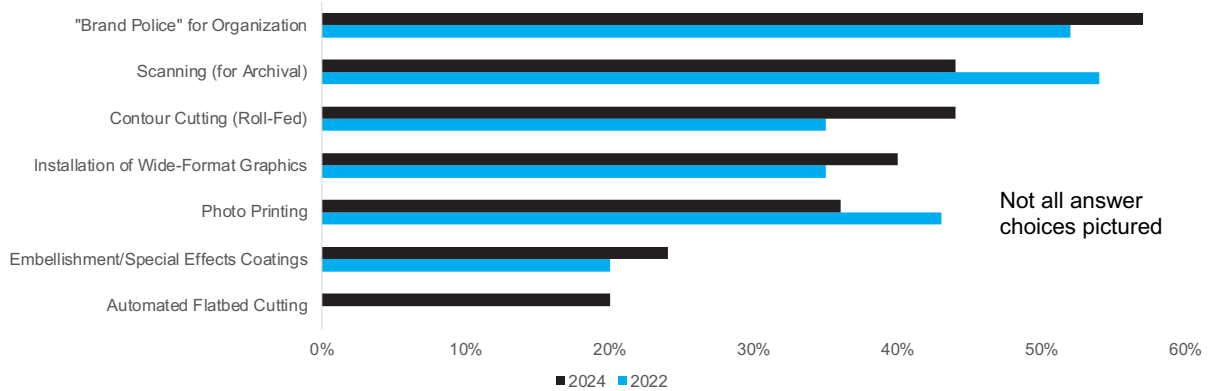
While copier fleet management and fulfillment have long been part of in-plants' offerings, other value-added services are rising to the forefront. In the Trends and Services report, it is revealed that in-plants are taking on an authoritative role in their organizations, as 57% of respondents offer "brand policing" services. As organizations become increasingly conscious and protective of their brand identity, especially in a digital age where copyrighted images are exposed and easily manipulated, protection of proprietary assets is essential.

For in-plants, overseeing any print job, whether produced internally or externally, can be a beneficial service for parent organizations. With the internal knowledge of brand specifications, an in-plant can ensure that any logos or identifying brand components are set to be produced accurately, maintaining the integrity of the brand and avoiding the need for reprints.

Other non-print services commonly provided by in-plants include scanning for archival purposes (44%), contour cutting (44%), and installation of wide-format graphics (40%).

### Figure 3: Value-Added Services at In-plants

Q: Which of these value-added services does your in-plant provide internally?



Source: *In-plant Impressions, Trends and Services in the In-plant Industry (2024)*  
N=115



## IN-PLANT DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGIES REVEALED

Beyond collecting data on in-plants’ expanding their communication services to better serve their parent companies, *In-plant Impressions* has reported on several examples of in-plants that have successfully diversified their offerings. The following are examples of in-plants spanning health care, finance, and higher education organizations that have added to their services.

### Intermountain Healthcare Design & Print Center, Salt Lake City, Utah

The Design & Print Center at Intermountain Healthcare has an established history of providing value and a variety of services to its parent organization, the largest nonprofit health system in the Intermountain West region of the United States. Based in Salt Lake City, the in-plant serves the print and communications needs for Intermountain’s locations spanning Utah, Colorado, Nevada, Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana.

As reported by *In-plant Impressions*, the Design & Print Center was built from the ground up and recently expanded from an 8,000 sq. ft. facility into one more than twice the size at 20,000 sq. ft. The in-plant has also invested in production inkjet printing, installing a RICOH Pro VC60000 continuous feed inkjet press to supplement its existing toner-based digital print solutions. In addition to insourcing and brand policing, the Design & Print Center has expanded into additional areas including embroidery and wide-format printing.

Through its many services spanning print and beyond, the Design & Print Center has been able to save Intermountain Healthcare more than \$4 million in 2023, *In-plant Impressions* reports. As an in-plant serving such a large organization, demonstrating and showcasing its capabilities has been important for the department. As Tami Reese, operations manager for the Design & Print Center shared with *In-plant Impressions*, a recent open house at the facility saw approximately 200 visitors who were impressed by the department’s capabilities.

“I don’t think people realized how much we can do,” Reese told *In-plant Impressions*. “It was a proud moment, for sure.”

## World Bank Group, Landover, Maryland

Prior to acquiring a flatbed cutter, the in-plant at the World Bank Group in Landover, Maryland, just outside of Washington, D.C., provided traditional wide-format applications including banners, posters, and pop-up stands. However, since bringing a Colex Sharpcut CNC flatbed cutter on board, the in-plant has expanded into a wide variety of signage.

[As reported in \*In-plant Impressions\*](#), the cutter was acquired through Ricoh and has helped enhance the in-plant's wide-format services. Wes Troup, business solutions associate for the World Bank's Print and Interactive Media program, explains that the in-plant had been considering a flatbed cutter for years, but the need had not risen to a level to justify a purchase. However, as wide-format application demand grew during the pandemic, it became clear that the versatility of applications the cutter could help provide would be beneficial to the in-plant and the World Bank.

"We went through the early part of the pandemic, and we saw how much the Bank really relied on wide-format at that point," Troup told *In-plant Impressions*. "We did stickers and floor decals and all the COVID signage, and printing on plexiglass and all that. We said, 'Well, if we had a flatbed cutter, we could do this more efficiently. We could do it better.'"

Automated flatbed cutting is on the rise at in-plants, with 20% of respondents in the Trends and Services survey stating they offer the service. Contour cutting for roll-fed applications is also on the rise having jumped from 35% in 2022 to 44% in 2024.

Since installing the cutter, the in-plant has produced several new applications, including three-dimensional acrylic awards, along with ADA compliant signage.

## Southern University Mail, Copier, and Production Center, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

In addition to handling print needs for the university, the in-plant at Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, also provides mail services, which were recently improved with the help of Ricoh. [As reported by \*In-plant Impressions\*](#), prior to the transition to high-density mailboxes that provide automated delivery notifications, the school's Mail, Copier, and Production Center required manual checking of P.O. boxes.

Beyond improving the school's mail services, Southern University also overhauled its printing operations, installing three Ricoh digital presses, including two sheetfed toner printers in the RICOH Pro C7110SX and RICOH Pro 8110SE, and the wide-format RICOH Pro L4130. *In-plant Impressions* reports that prior to adding the equipment Southern University had outsourced several of its high-end print jobs, such as flyers, business cards, and recruitment materials. The new Ricoh printing equipment has allowed the in-plant to bring that work in-house, leading to cost savings, faster turn times, and higher print quality. Additionally, signage applications have become a new opportunity for the in-plant.

"RicoH did a phenomenal job, starting with its initial analysis," Benjamin Pugh, vice chancellor for Finance and Administration, Southern University and A&M College, said. "Right off the bat, it was clear Ricoh was not coming to us with a one-size-fits-all solution. They wanted to work with us to understand our processes and show us how they could help us improve. Ricoh focuses on your needs, designs solutions around them, and executes, reliably and effectively."

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Print is at the foundation of an in-plant's value to its parent organization, and when exploring opportunities to expand into new services, it is important for in-plants to build on their print expertise. For many in-plants, diversifying their services to their parent companies often starts by expanding on their print capabilities with new applications beyond traditional commercial type work. For example, as wide-format print applications increase in demand, being able to produce them in house can further advance the value of an in-plant. In-plants are catching on to this growth opportunity, as 85% of respondents in the In-plant Trends and Services study currently offer continuous feed and wide-format printing.

While adding on new print services can enhance an in-plant's value, opportunities abound in services that are print adjacent and can be folded into an in-plant's offerings. Mailing services, for example, are an ideal expansion area for in-plants, as in many cases, they are already printing the materials being mailed. Again, mail services are becoming increasingly common at in-plants, with 70% of respondents stating they offer mail services, up from 64% two years ago.

Beyond print however, in-plants can provide additional value to their parent companies through additional communications-related activities. For example, brand policing services are popular for in-plants to pursue, allowing them to be at the forefront of their organizations' external branding and ensuring any branding communications follow the parent organization's requirements. Copier fleet management and fulfillment are other increasingly common in-plant services, adding value by helping other company departments manage their own printing and copying equipment and on the fulfillment side, taking on the assembly, warehousing, and distribution components of a print job.

The key, however, for in-plants adding value through expanded services, is to communicate and demonstrate any new capabilities to the parent organization and the departments that will be served. Whether through open houses, internal newsletters, or samples of new communications capabilities, in-plants must be vocal about their advantages. There are external print and communications providers that companies can utilize. But to stay competitive, in-plants should be preemptive in promoting their capabilities while stressing the time and cost savings their in-house advantages provide.

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