

VENUS ALBUM COMPANY BRINGS MEMORIES TO LIFE WITH HP INDIGO PRESSES



Venus
PHOTO BOOK

A tradition to trust

Founded in 1976, Venus Album Company. P. Ltd is a leading Indian photographic publisher and exporter, serving millions of customers in India and abroad. Based in Amritsar, with additional production facilities in Chandigarh, it delivers upwards of 125,000 photo albums and photo books every month, prepared by a technical team of over 250 people. The company has its roots in a traditional bookbinding business which has over the years been combined with the latest in photographic and printing technology.

At Venus, the founder Mr. Harmit Singh prides himself on this fine blend of heritage craftsmanship with cutting edge technological innovation, so it was natural that he sought to exploit the benefits offered by digital printing. Digital printing would also help the company address some of the challenges facing the traditional silver halide photographic industry.

The digital advance

The business model for photo printing was changing dramatically as users switched in increasing numbers to digital imaging, leading to an annual decline of between 30 and 40 percent for silver halide development. Combined with the rising price of silver, this made digital printing look an attractive and economical alternative. That's one of the reasons why Venus made the decision to invest in the HP Indigo press 5500.

"The needs of the business were changing and we needed to change with it," explains Mr. Harmit Singh, founder and Chairman of Venus Album Company P. Ltd. "Digital Presses give us much more flexibility but until recently the quality of the printing just wasn't good enough for our customers who are usually capturing and commemorating landmark events such as weddings. For those occasions, the print quality must be second to none."

Matching offset printing quality

After looking at several other brands, Venus decided that HP offered the best quality printing at the most economical price. The first press proved so successful that the company invested in a second HP Indigo press 5500 the following year. The HP Indigo press 5500 combines the look and feel of traditional offset with genuine photo quality for unsurpassable results.

"We had looked at Xerox presses but we decided that HP has the world's best technology. I could not believe the difference when I saw the quality of its prints," adds Mr. Singh. "The skin tone consistency, for example, was outstanding. You simply couldn't tell the difference between the digital prints and traditional silver halide prints."

More albums, less time

The Indigo presses have enabled Venus to produce albums at more competitive rates without compromising on quality. They have also allowed the company to produce higher quantities. A new, full bound album can be created from scratch – including the bookbinding – less than three hours after the digital files have been delivered. This process used to take weeks to complete. Now, a new album rolls off the presses every two minutes. In addition, the Indigo presses' flexibility allows Venus to incorporate new materials, such as non-tearable or textured media, and opens up new avenues of potential revenue including miniature albums.

"We usually receive hard copies of data and files from our customers by hand or courier but we have installed an internet server uploader in both branches which customers can use and is also linked with our website. Combined with the Indigo press, these have transformed the way we do business, meaning we can deliver our luxury albums within a matter of hours – for the customer



PROGRESSIVE
PROFITABLE
PRINTING



“The HP Indigo press 5500 allows Venus Album Co. P. Ltd to produce luxury albums with outstanding print quality in a matter of hours, rather than weeks.”

Mr Harmit Singh
Chairman, Venus Album Company P. Ltd

that is a huge difference,” says Mr. Singh. “And the presses are very reliable so we have yet to have any issues with them.”

Albums are either picked up by the customer on completion or distributed via courier direct or through Venus’ network of eleven regional agents or 1,200 wholesalers across India. The company also works directly with several thousand commercial photographers who constitute a large proportion of its sales.

Furthermore, to ensure that they can meet clients’ deadlines, Venus are relying more than ever on Indigo-enabled Digital Front Ends to handle the lion’s share of job processing and automated workflow tasks, ensuring that print products are not only shipped out the door on time, but produced to the highest quality possible.

Continuous evolution

As Venus continues to bring memories to life for thousands of customers, it will also continue exploring new technologies to improve the process. As a result, the company is already considering the next stage in its evolution.

“The next step is to install another HP Indigo Digital Press that will allow us to incorporate web-based printing as well as automate the binding process,” adds Mr. Singh. “It will also enable us to print large formats of up to 36”, meaning we can produce more photos per page, thus improving the turnaround time even further.”

HP has helped Venus evolve its business and meet the changing demands of the photographic market through its world leading technology. As the company continues to pioneer photographic publishing, this will continue to be the case.

“HP is a fantastic company to work with. We don’t see ourselves as customers but as partners – it’s a genuine collaboration,” concludes Mr. Singh. “We showcase HP’s Indigo Digital Presses for the Indian market, HP provides the technology, support and vision. We look forward to working with HP Indigo presses for a long time to come.”

AT A GLANCE	CHALLENGE	SOLUTIONS	RESULTS
<p>Industry sector: Photographic Publishing</p> <p>Business name: VENUS ALBUM CO.(P) LTD</p> <p>Address: B-12, New Indl. Focal Point (Phase 3) Mehta Road, Amritsar-143501 (Punjab) India</p> <p>Tel: +91 183-3226000-04</p> <p>Fax: +91 183-2583004</p> <p>Email: admin@venusalbum.com</p> <p>Web: www.venusalbum.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venus wanted to address the impact that digital photography was having on the traditional album printing industry and embrace new technology • Venus wanted to be able to produce fully bound albums quickly without compromising on print quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 x HP Indigo press 5500 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venus can now produce an entire album within three hours, rather than the weeks it would previously take • Every two minutes, a new album rolls off the digital presses • Choice of designs, layouts and specialty paper rather than just Matte and Gloss

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