

# Fast response

**Danielle Jerschefske** attends an open house at Digital Print to look at the company's latest thermal inkjet digital printing system

**J**ack Farr, president of Digital Print Inc. in Ft. Worth, Texas, uses the four letter f-word both on the track and off (no not that one; the one that helps build a thriving business, FAST). He thinks the f-word is quite apropos for his country club-like racetrack and his variable data printing systems that now reach speeds up to 850 feet per minute. 'Here at our facility at the MotorSport Ranch, we print fast and drive fast,' he says.

Farr started his digital printing company back in 1986 when Microsoft was barely a twinkle in Mr Gate's eye, back when it took a knowledgeable software engineer to complete simple numbering jobs for any high speed system. It was back then that Farr realized, through his computer programming experience, that there was a problem to be solved. 'I knew there must be an easier way to set up and run a fast, variable data printing system,' Farr says. 'I just bootstrapped the company from nothing; it all started in the third bedroom of my house. By 1991 we had bought a large, old dance club to use as our shop. It needed to be gutted as it still had disco balls inside. We stayed there until a fire in 2004 and then finally moved out here to the Ranch.'

Both Farr and his general manager, Bryan Bell, get to know their printing customers and prospectives quickly. 'At the March Open House, we wanted to celebrate DPi's 20 years with our primary manufacturers, existing customers and potential ones. We also had the new HP TIJ series to show people. Afterwards, the group entrusted their lives to Jack and I behind the wheel driving at 100 miles per hour on the track. After that, one feels a little bit better about closing a deal on a piece of printing equipment,' recall Bell and Farr with a laugh.

The Digital Print system was developed by Farr to allow non-technical people to run an electronic print system. Continued development of different kinds of barcodes and sizes eventually led to high speed word wrapping. 'At the time, it was very high tech,' explains Farr. 'It was way ahead of its time.' The original EBI (electron beam imaging) system DPi started with moved 1-200 feet per minute at 240 dots per inch. Now, the new TIJ system series (thermal inkjet) prints variable data including

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numbers, barcodes and text at speeds up to 850 feet per minute at up to 600 dots per inch.

Many printers want to have a big customer closed before they invest in a system. DPi thinks that is a classic chicken or the egg scenario. What really comes first, the capability or the customers? Current DPi users have had jobs fly into their shops like crazy once they tell their customers what they are capable of. 'Everyone wants some personalization in printing. Variable data capability gives an emerging value to commercial printing. It is the greatest way for a printer to add profit and value in house,' explains Bell.

DPi distinguishes itself by listening to its customers carefully and tailoring solutions to fit their applications and needs. Strong support from DPi's printhead OEMs Spectra Dimatix, HP, Inc.jet, Kodak/Scitex and Delphax gives the manufacturer the gas to fuel its users' engines around the globe. These tailored systems offer printers more flexibility and modularity. 'The system is an open system and, therefore, will do what you need it to do,' says Bell.

People go to DPi for the special technology and advanced programming the company has to offer. Software can be developed quickly for new customer innovations. For example, some DPi users print promotional gaming tickets, lottery tickets and such. The company has software designed especially for this. 'We are print technology agnostic,' says Farr. 'We have a bigger toy box and systems to utilize in order to meet printers' needs. We fit the right variable print technology to the customer's needs.' ■