



Fabulously Focused

Kristen Hollar on how grit, drive, and new ideas can turn humble beginnings into something fabulous.

Preferred Direct
Kristen Hollar, Director of Operations
Country: US
Segment: Direct Mail



If Preferred Direct can be described in one word, it's surely passionate.

As an industry-leading print, direct mail, and digital communications company, the Norfolk, Virginia company thrives on an innovative spirit — something their Director of Operations carries in abundance. Kristen Hollar has worked at Preferred Direct for 18 years, standing ready to meet the marketing and communications needs of any commercial organization in direct mail, digital or, mixed media. She continually looks for new ways to help her customers succeed on all marketing fronts with the help of the HP PageWide Web Press T240 HD. But forward thinking has been Preferred Direct's hallmark for 34 years.

The company was started as a mail shop by owner Bill Nee's parents out of a spare bedroom in 1986. Bill Nee, Sr. spearheaded the company's entrepreneurial drive, having worked for years with different mailing, printing and software firms. He determined to write his company's own software and streamline as

many processes as possible. By 1992, the Nees had expanded their offerings into printing, as they found themselves waiting constantly for printers to deliver, which impacted drop dates.

In the ensuing years, as has been their history, Preferred Direct kept innovating, quickly adopting personalization and incorporating variable data processing into production. That dedication to forward thinking served the printer well in a challenging economy. Kristen saw how the 2007 recession impacted competitors that had not yet transitioned to digital printing. Kristen kept fulfilling orders, handling runs of any size on short deadlines, and helped her company get through tough times. She believes strongly that customers will always choose vendors with newer ideas, lower costs and speedier turnarounds.

As digital printing came of age, Preferred Direct's next step was the installation of the HP PageWide Web Press T240 HD. Of its speed and versatility, Kristen

says, "It allows us to print on a much larger scale, the color is tremendous, and we can print roll-to-roll on different substrates. When someone comes to us with a need for 100,000 pieces in two days, the HP press makes all the difference."

Today, with the T240 HD at hand, customers can bring in complete integrated campaigns. With the advent of email, display ads, and SMS, Preferred Direct has watched digital communications grow to 40 percent of their business. But direct mail will remain the heart and soul of their operations. As Kristen says, "Our evolution into digital marketing happened because we're always staying on top of technology as it comes to market — always reinvesting in the company and our processes, procedures, and equipment. We believe it's important to have everything under one roof."

To learn more about HP PageWide Web Presses and introducing the new HP PageWide Web Press T250 HD with HP Brilliant Ink, please visit hp.com/pagewidewebpressT250.

