PROFILE

Name: Selman & Associates

Location: Midland, Texas

CHALLENGE

Equipping drill sites with high performance, low cost printers to output high-quality, real-time well logs.

SOLUTION

Epson's WGT 8.5 printer produces well logs with speed, accuracy and flexibility for a fraction of the cost.

Data Acquisition Provider Invests in Durable Tractor Feed Printers for a Stable Future

Epson's WGT 8.5 Inkjet Printer Rapidly Produces Continuous Well Logs for a Fraction of the Cost

Well logs play a critical role in the oil and gas industry, as they offer a detailed record of a well's complete composition and help enhance drilling efficiency. Data, either recorded at the surface or in the actual hole, is usually transferred in real-time to the operating company to facilitate on-site or remote decision-making about the well. The log's graph charts vertically the depth reached while measurement is plotted on the horizontal axis. Given the critical nature—and the amount—of data produced, well logs are printed in oversize format so geologists can get an accurate and readable representation of the information.

Selman & Associates, a geological consultant and provider of surface logging services across the United States, uses printers to output physical well logs for drill site managers to take with them for further analysis. Traditionally, there have been only a few options for printing these logs in demanding environments like drill sites, with laser printers serving as the industry standard for a long period of time. However, drawbacks to the technology, including its composition of many parts, made it expensive to purchase, operate and maintain. The printers were also not user-friendly and operated at slow speeds.

Today, inkjet printers have been reconfigured to be able to replace laser printers and serve as an alternative for the oil and gas sector. Selman invested in inkjet technology several years ago, but recently ran into issues since the printers they used were dated and no longer serviced by the solution provider. They were slow to process print jobs, inline switches took several minutes and quality of printed well logs was below the company's high standards. In short, the printers were unpredictable, and therefore, unreliable. The final decision for investing in new printers was made when the operating system platform for the obsolete printers could no longer handle the required updates to manage modern processors.

Matthew Jennings, Software Architect at Selman, knew the time had come to look for a new solution. He had three major criteria for the new printers: high performance, low total cost of ownership and excellent warranty options. Once Jennings conducted some preliminary research online, Selman contacted Dave Heughan, President/Director at Well Green Tech—an industry provider of well log and data management hardware, software and service solutions – to inquire about a wide format printer. After the initial consultation, Well Green Tech identified Epson's WGT 8.5 printer as the ideal solution to Selman's printing issues.

"Our relationship with Epson began a few years ago when we identified that the core capabilities of its new ColorWorks® C831 printer were not just applicable to the labeling segment," commented Heughan. "The printer's speed, accuracy, flexibility, and low total cost of ownership translated perfectly for our customers in the oil and gas industry."

The two companies collaborated to create the WGT 8.5 printer, a customized version of the C831 printer. With its modified firmware, driver and ink cartridges, the printer can accurately produce well logs in full scale for one fourth of the cost per page compared to laser printers, at an average speed of about five inches per second. The tractor feed allows for continuous printing and there is no limitation in print length, giving operators a great deal of flexibility. The rugged C831 printer frame ensures that the WGT 8.5 printer maintains its durability and performs consistently even in demanding environments like drill sites. Added durability comes in the form of the printer's pigment-based inks, which are resistant to water, chemicals and fading.

In a demo of the WGT 8.5, the printer cut a job that once took 45 minutes on a laser down to a fifth of that time and completed inline switches in seconds. Those results spurred Selman to initiate a multi-month, in-house testing period to aid final decision-making. When testing was complete, Selman ordered 50 WGT 8.5 printers from Epson for its logging units across the United States. The deployment process took nine months and was completed in phases by region. Delivery and implementation for the printers went seamlessly despite the large geographic ground that had to be covered. During deployment, Epson provided detailed training for site supervisors, who, in turn, trained the printer operators.

> ***"The printer's speed, accuracy, flexibility, and low total cost of ownership translated perfectly for our customers in the oil and gas industry."***

"Working with the new printers came naturally to our employees," says Tom Selman, Owner of Selman & Associates. "Although it has only been 11 months since we deployed, it seems like we have always had them. Our teams were up and running in no time since the printers are so easy to use."

> ***"Selman can rely on its Epson printers to produce accurate and high quality logs."***

"We don't even think about printing anymore. I have no reservation about any team member printing log reports with our new fleet of printers," stated Selman. "We've increased our capabilities to over 10 times what we could have done before. Customer satisfaction and employee morale have also improved because the new printers are so quick and effective."

In addition to purchasing the printers, Selman invested in Epson's Spare-In-The-Air Plan, part of Epson's ExpressCareSM Service Program. This quick, overnight replacement program bridges the gap between the turnaround time of depot repair and the higher cost of on-site service. Epson overnights Selman a replacement, and Selman in return sends the damaged unit back to Epson. As a bonus, costs for shipping both ways are paid for by Epson. This investment allows Selman to minimize downtime in data acquisition to its customers in case printing issues occur.

"Now we are ready for the next decade! We have the right printing solution and technology for whatever happens," Selman concludes.

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