

Uganda's oldest university uses Xerox X700 to secure certificates

Uganda's oldest and largest institution of higher learning, Makerere University, has acquired a Xerox X700 Digital Color Press together with Xerox's advanced security software, FreeFlow Specialty Imaging Suite.

The system will be used to securely print tamper-proof graduation certificates locally for Makerere as well as other universities, which obviates the need to ship them from the UK at great expense.

It will be used to print tickets for international sports matches involving Uganda's national teams. It will also fill a niche in the Ugandan market by supplying secure documents such as coupons, trade licences, land title certificates, environmental-related certificates, and invitation cards for VIP events.

"Consumer behaviour has changed and they now want shorter run print jobs compared with the past five to ten years, and firms have been cutting their budgets of late," says Joseph Kirabo Edmond, manager at Makerere University Printery.

"The move to buy the X700 has reduced the cost of doing business for our customers, but increased the cost of doing business for the managers of conventional, sheet-fed printing technology.

"This has been attributed to the emergence of e-books, e-stationery and more, which have made digital printing the number one choice for any print shop wishing to remain competitive."

"Employing the Xerox X700 at Makerere University delivers three key benefits," says Abhay Agarwal, MD of Service and Computer Industries (SCI) in Uganda, an authorised Xerox distributor appointed by Bytes Document Solutions. Bytes Document Solutions is the authorised Xerox distributor to 26 African countries.

"It significantly reduces the costs of creating the certificates, it builds local, Ugandan capacity, and the university will improve return on investment (ROI) further by developing new lines of business through digital printing."

The university expects to print up to 30 000 certificates each year and an additional 45 000 certificates for other universities in Uganda, such as Mbarara University, Gulu University, and MUBS University, among others, and total ROI is expected within 15 months.

The X700 Digital Color Press is a small footprint, production-capable printer with speed, paper handling and inline finishing capabilities that enable a wide range of high-value applications, such as coated brochures, newsletters, presentations, direct mail, booklets and more.

The system includes device security features such as password protection, data encryption, application of rights and privileges by user, IP filtering and more.

Creating tamper-proof certificates is achieved through Xerox's FreeFlow Specialty Imaging Suite that includes Glossmark Text, Correlation Text, Fluorescent Mark Text, Micro Text, and Infrared Text. Variable information also improves security by encrypting unique information on each certificate.

"The text effects are applied to static and variable data, and the university will apply multiple effects to individual certificates," says Hennie Du Plessis, CEO of Bytes Document Solutions.

"The combined capabilities will make it almost impossible for anyone to forge certificates." The print room is also physically secured with closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras and access control facilities that restrict access.

The physical environment that existed contained adequate air conditioning and lighting, and a 15KV_a stabiliser was installed to ensure clean power for the X700. Deploying the X700 took two weeks; there are only three operators, and this enhances security, and they are employed by the university.

Wage strike threatened at Bidvest import and export unit Monday, 12 December 2011 07:09 Bidvest Group may face a strike by up to 4 000 workers over pay at its SA Container Depots Freight (SACD) logistics unit, an import and export management company, after the SA Transport and Allied Workers' Union (Satawu) said talks had deadlocked on Thursday.

The union is seeking a 12% wage increase across the board, while the company is offering 6%.

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