

# Inkjet for All!

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## INTRODUCTION

In the early days of production inkjet press adoption, equipment was big, expensive, and limited to webfed presses. These factors presented significant entry barriers that initially limited wider-spread adoption.

Early production inkjet presses were substantial investments, both in terms of physical space and financial outlay. In addition, initial focus on webfed presses meant that the technology was primarily suited for high-volume, continuous printing applications. This limited its appeal to print providers who needed more flexibility or were focused on shorter runs and varied media types.

Today, there are more format and size options available, enabling more print providers to invest in production inkjet presses and the migration of more applications to them. A key innovation in removing entry barriers was the introduction of sheetfed inkjet presses. These presses expanded the inkjet opportunity for print service providers by offering affordable high-quality color printing, attractive running costs, smaller footprints, substrate flexibility, and enhanced productivity.

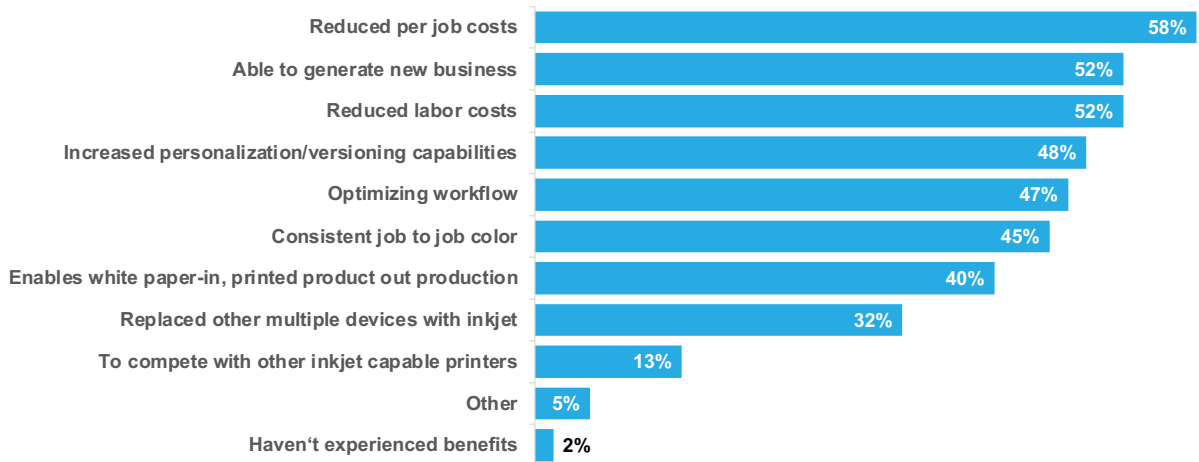
A key technology for lowering inkjet entry barriers is the Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c. This special report combines NAPCO Research survey data, industry media coverage of production inkjet, and Kyocera customer case studies that examine how the TASKalfa Pro 15000c has lowered entry barriers and enabled more organizations to add inkjet to their operations.

## THE APPEAL OF PRODUCTION INKJET

Production inkjet presses are an attractive investment for print providers because they can play an essential role in increasing profitability. According to NAPCO Research's most recent Commercial Print Trends and Strategy Service survey, print providers identified increasing labor costs (83%), maintaining profitability (78%), and hiring production staff (72%) as key challenges. As market forces squeeze profit margins, production inkjet presses offer benefits that offset costs and boost revenue. Findings from NAPCO Research's study, [The Production Inkjet Application Revolution](#), indicate that inkjet presses can help print providers overcome profitability challenges. Figure 1 highlights the benefits of production inkjet presses for organizations that use them. Survey respondents reported lower per job costs, the ability to generate new business, reduced labor costs, and enhanced personalization/versioning capabilities — all of which support profitability.

## Figure 1: Inkjet Offers Benefits

**Q. What benefits, if any, have you seen as a result of adding production inkjet as compared to the systems it was replacing or complementing?**



Multiple Responses Permitted

*n= 62 Print Providers that Operate Production Inkjet Press(es)*

*Source: The Production Inkjet Application Revolution, NAPCO Research 2024*



## PRODUCTION INKJET: A STORY OF ONGOING INNOVATION

The first high-speed production inkjet presses were roll-fed systems, primarily targeted at large-scale commercial printing companies. These presses were designed to handle high-volume printing needs, making them ideal for businesses involved in transactional printing, direct mail, book publishing, and newspaper production. The introduction of sheetfed inkjet presses expanded opportunities for print service providers by offering affordable high-quality color printing, attractive running costs, smaller footprints, substrate flexibility, and enhanced productivity.

When sheetfed inkjet solutions hit the market, they bridged the gap between electrophotographic devices and roll-fed inkjet, leveraging their inkjet productivity and the media and application flexibility of sheetfed production.

The 2019 launch of the sheetfed inkjet Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c was key to lowering entry barriers for printers looking to add inkjet. The press offered an accessible entry point for organizations of all sizes, whereas other inkjet devices were more suited to larger print providers. The press can be described as a game-changer because it features a compact footprint — dimensions are approximately 18.5 inches (W) x 28.7 inches (D) x 39.4 inches (H) — and it runs on standard 100 volt power, simplifying installation

**The launch of the sheetfed inkjet Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c was key to lowering entry barriers for printers looking to add inkjet.**

and reducing energy consumption. This relatively small size makes it suitable for various business environments, offering high productivity without requiring a large amount of space. This efficient power usage helps keep operational costs low while maintaining high productivity.

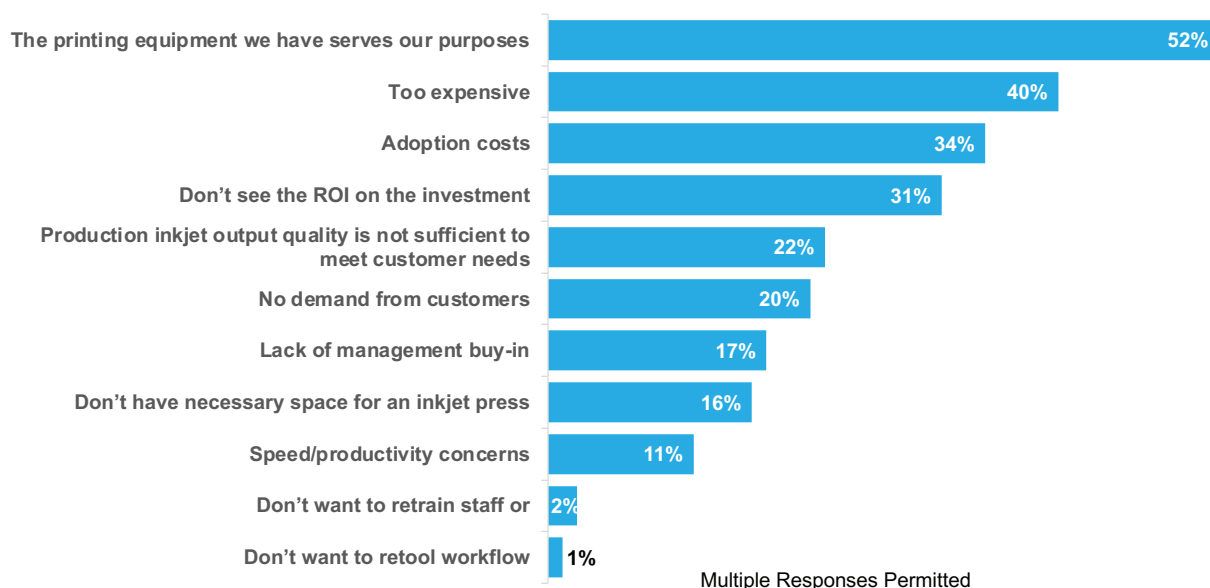
The Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c's relatively small size and high productivity make it suitable for various business environments. Key press features include:

- Running at a speed of up to 172 images per minute
- Offers variable data and personalization at production rates above toner-based systems.
- Print resolution of 600 dpi or 600x1200 at reduced speed
- Accommodates uncoated, inkjet-treated, or inkjet-coated stocks up to 13" x 19.2" in weights of up to 12 point or 360 gsm
- Duty cycle up to 3 million images per month

These features address many of the barriers to inkjet investment. As shown in **Figure 2**, survey participants (both commercial printers and in-plants) in NAPCO Research's *The Production Inkjet Application Revolution* study identified costs, quality, and space requirements as key obstacles in production inkjet investment.

## Figure 2: Reasons for Not Investing in Production Inkjet

Q. Why haven't you invested in production inkjet devices?



n= 62 Print Providers that Operate Production Inkjet Press(es)  
Source: The Production Inkjet Application Revolution, NAPCO Research 2024

 **NAPCO RESEARCH**

These barriers are gradually diminishing and the Kyocera's TASKalfa Pro 15000c has played a part. Since Kyocera's TASKalfa Pro 15000c became commercially available in 2020, the company has installed hundreds of presses in direct mail printing, publishing, transactional printing, education, and in-plant sectors.

## REAL-WORLD SUCCESS WITH THE TASKALFA PRO 15000C

The TASKalfa Pro 15000c press is empowering print providers of all sizes to add inkjet capabilities. Users of the press report the following compelling benefits:

- Significantly lower operating costs
- Exceptional reliability
- Ability to print color at nearly the cost of black and white
- Versatility across different print applications

The following profiles of customer experiences using the press illustrate how these benefits are being realized in real-world scenarios.

### Lead Concepts Expands Color Offering

For Irving, Texas-based commercial printer Lead Concepts, the Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c is a game-changer for direct mail printing. The cut-sheet inkjet press has enabled the company to cost-effectively expand its color offerings.

[According to a \*Printing Impressions\* article<sup>1</sup>](#), the production cost structure of the company's toner-based systems would price them out of printing certain color work, leaving them little choice but to print in black-only. Chris Weir, founder and CEO, reports that the addition of the TASKalfa Pro 15000c enables the company to offer more products to clients in a cost-effective manner, maximizing profitability. He said, "This machine allows us to be more competitive in the market."

The success of the first TASKalfa Pro 15000c purchase in 2023 led to the acquisition of a second machine shortly after. Weir explains that the production cost savings experienced with inkjet led to more work. About the TASKalfa Pro 15000c, he says, "I can count on it to run and run without breaking down. Rarely is there



*Chris Weir, founder and CEO of Lead Concepts*

**Lead Concepts purchased its second TASKalfa Pro 15000c because the production cost savings were leading to more work.**

<sup>1</sup>"Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c: An Essential Tool for Profitable Printing", *Printing Impressions*, April 18, 2024

any downtime.” When asked about the second machine, he clarified that it was not purchased for redundancy but because the production cost savings were leading to more work.

## Brio Direct Improves Throughput

Fort Worth, Texas-based Brio Direct, a print production and mail distribution facility producing roughly 3,000,000 pieces of mail each month, added its first Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c in June 2021 and has since added two more.

In a [Printing Impressions article](#)<sup>2</sup>, Brio Vice President Michael Wills said the goal of adding the sheetfed inkjet presses was to reduce digital print operating cost, improve throughput, and profitably support larger mail volume production without investing in continuous feed (web-fed). The results of the press investment led the company to add a second and now a third unit. The company went from empty floor space to full production on the machine in two days. Regarding productivity, he estimates one TASKalfa Pro 15000c can replace 1.5 toner units at a much lower cost.

The inkjet press has enabled Brio Direct to move jobs requiring overprinting preprinted shells with variable information to white paper production, where white paper goes in and color print comes out. In addition, he said the press features low electrical use, high uptime, and offers offset-quality output of variable data printing at a highly competitive price point.



Michael Wills vice president of Brio Direct

## JHL Digital Direct Running Complex VDP

When direct mail printer JHL Digital Direct in Stevens Point, Wisconsin, was investigating production inkjet sheetfed options, it initially faced challenges. As company president John Leek explained in a [Kyocera case study](#), while great things were happening in webfed production inkjet, sheetfed production developments lagged. He said, “When the TASKalfa Pro 15000c entered the market, things changed. Suddenly you had an affordable device that came with Kyocera’s reputation for reliable products.”

Commenting on why he chose the TASKalfa Pro 15000c, Leek said, “The reason is best reflected in the simple adage: ‘faster, better, cheaper.’” Kyocera’s inkjet device has been an asset to JHL Digital Direct, and Leek reported, “We’re seeing substantial savings, anywhere between 30%-50% over what we would normally run.”

The variety of jobs run on the machine is making full use of its VDP capabilities. “We’re running a lot of membership development pieces through it right now. Letters, invitations, all of which utilize heavily integrated variable data and complex variable data workflows,” he says. “The device is handling these jobs with ease and we’re not seeing any degradation in machine performance.”

**Kyocera’s inkjet device has been an asset to JHL Digital Direct, and company president John Leek reported, “We’re seeing substantial savings, anywhere between 30%-50% over what we would normally run.”**

<sup>2</sup>“Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c Delivers Transformative Benefits”, *Printing Impressions*, March 7, 2024

The TASKalfa Pro 15000c is also opening doors to new business. “It’s been very effective in the political fundraising industry,” says Leek. “It’s a new area for us and we’re in a better position to excel there with this machine.”

## CyberCopy Expanding Business and Products

CyberCopy, a digital print and copy shop in Portland, Maine, invested in sheetfed production inkjet to address challenges with inconsistent color on larger print jobs that resulted in having to reprint entire jobs. [A case study on the company's investment in Kyocera's TASKalfa Pro 15000c](#) reports that while CyberCopy initially chose the press for its color consistency, it gave the company the flexibility to aggressively seek new business and bring projects it had previously outsourced in-house. In addition, the inkjet presses enabled the company to capture more jobs, deliver cost savings to customers, and retain clients.

General Manager Brian McGinley reported the press offered customers more print options. “With the Pro 15000c, we can offer color printing at nearly black-and-white prices. This is huge for customers who previously couldn’t afford color.”

According to McGinley, “The biggest thing the Pro 15000c has done for us is provide a cost-saving option to offer customers. That and the consistency of output have made it a key asset in our continued growth.”

## Graphcom Accommodating SLAS

Multi-channel marketing firm Graphcom, in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, added inkjet to accommodate growing print volumes, shorter customer service level agreements, and the upcoming renewal of toner contracts.

[An article in Inkjet Insights<sup>3</sup>](#) reports that when the Graphcom team wanted a sheetfed inkjet option to replace an older five-color toner machine, it invested in three Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c presses and close to 60% of the company’s volume is run on those presses. Graphcom Director of Operations Mike Beatty said in the article, “The other inkjet presses we were looking at probably cost about four times what the Kyocera does, and the running cost is close to eight times what the Kyocera is. My boss looked at the speed and the cost of the TASKalfa Pro 15000c and had the insight about the work that was coming at us to know that this was a great fit.”

The company added its first TASKalfa Pro 15000c in May 2021 to test the waters and purchased a second press five months later, and a third press four months after that. The company’s transition to inkjet has increased revenue and profit margin.

**At Graphcom, three Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c presses are running close to 60% of volume. The transition to inkjet has increased the company’s revenue and profit margin.**

<sup>3</sup>“Don’t let your equipment keep you up at night”, Inkjet Insight, June 11, 2024

## My Father's World Improved Margins

[In a Printing Impressions article<sup>4</sup>](#), Jon Dalton, lead printer at My Father's World, a Rolla, Missouri-based printer of curriculum primarily focused on home-schooling, has seen the benefits cut-sheet inkjet can deliver firsthand. His shop's direct experience with the Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c inkjet printer has enabled it to gain a greater margin on the curriculum it produces — a vast majority of which is sold directly to the consumer — add more to color printing jobs, and achieve a higher perceived value for its products.

For My Father's World, the goal of adding the Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c was to replace two toner-based printing units — one color and one black-and-white. "The idea was to lower the cost of color printing," Dalton says.

Dalton notes that not only did the Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c "take over more of the printing than we thought it would," but that the print quality was better than he expected. The quality was so good, in fact, that "we've taken quite a few books that are full color throughout off the toner and put them onto the Kyocera." About that system, he proudly adds, "It's a workhorse — we run it almost constantly."



Jon Dalton. Lead printer of My Father's World

## Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District Saves Big Money

The decision to add an inkjet press at Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District in Placentia, California, was based on the need to print curriculum materials.

[According to an In-Plant Impressions article<sup>5</sup>](#), the 2.5-employee in-plant's impressions were decreasing, and printing curriculum would not only boost impressions but save the 24,000-student district a lot of money.

The opportunity arose when a science teacher approached the in-plant's supervisor, Robert Arauz, about the high cost of student workbooks. The district had purchased digital files of the workbooks from the publisher, and then teachers would print black-and-white copies on their walk-up devices, incurring high costs and overworking the machines.



The Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c inkjet press at Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District.

Arauz determined that if the in-plant added an inkjet press and printed about 34,000 workbooks in the first year, the cost would be about 90 cents per book, compared to buying them from a publisher for \$3.95 each.

<sup>4</sup>"Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 1500c Adds Value to My Father's World Product Line," *Printing Impressions*, March 15, 2024

<sup>5</sup>"Small In-plant Saving Big Money with Inkjet", *In-plant Impressions*, November 21, 2023

Besides saving money, one huge advantage of printing workbooks with inkjet is the ability to add low-cost color to pages, aiding the learning process. Arauz took his calculations to administrators, explained the benefits, savings, and future growth potential of printing workbooks in-house, and eventually received approval to get a Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c inkjet press.

The shop has also printed theater programs on the TASKalfa Pro 15000c. In addition to printing for the district, the in-plant serves customers at booster clubs, the PTA, the Chamber of Commerce, the Rotary Club, the Placentia Library District, and other nonprofit groups. All are excited about the low-cost color capabilities of inkjet, he says.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Initially reserved for large-scale commercial printers, inkjet technology has evolved into a versatile and efficient solution for print service providers (PSPs) of all sizes. The advancement of production inkjet technology, especially with the introduction of sheetfed inkjet presses like the Kyocera TASKalfa Pro 15000c, has significantly lowered the barriers to entry for print providers. This innovation has enabled a wider range of organizations to benefit from high-quality, cost-effective color printing. The TASKalfa Pro 15000c is notable for its compact size, efficient power usage, and versatile capabilities, making it a valuable asset for businesses of all sizes.

Real-world success stories demonstrate how the TASKalfa Pro 15000c has empowered print providers to enhance their profitability, expand their service offerings, and meet the evolving demands of their clients. From expanding color offerings and improving throughput to running complex variable data printing and streamlining operations, the TASKalfa Pro 15000c has delivered significant cost savings, enhanced productivity, and opened new business opportunities. By addressing key challenges such as cost, quality, and space requirements, this press has paved the way for more widespread adoption of production inkjet technology.

# WHO WE ARE

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NAPCO Research crafts custom data-centric solutions that leverage our highly engaged audiences across the markets in which we operate, our industry subject matter experts and in-house research expertise. We partner with our clients to identify their unique business problem and create solutions that enable deeply informed decision-making.

NAPCO Research can help with:

- Business goal prioritization
- Opportunity discovery
- Market segmentation
- Landscape insight
- User needs and wants
- Product features and functionality
- Content marketing strategy
- Sales strategy and tactics
- Market conditions
- Benchmarking
- Industry trends
- Brand awareness

Contact [research@napco.com](mailto:research@napco.com) to talk with our analysts to find out how we can help you with your research needs.



### **At Kyocera, we believe in Inkjet For All!**

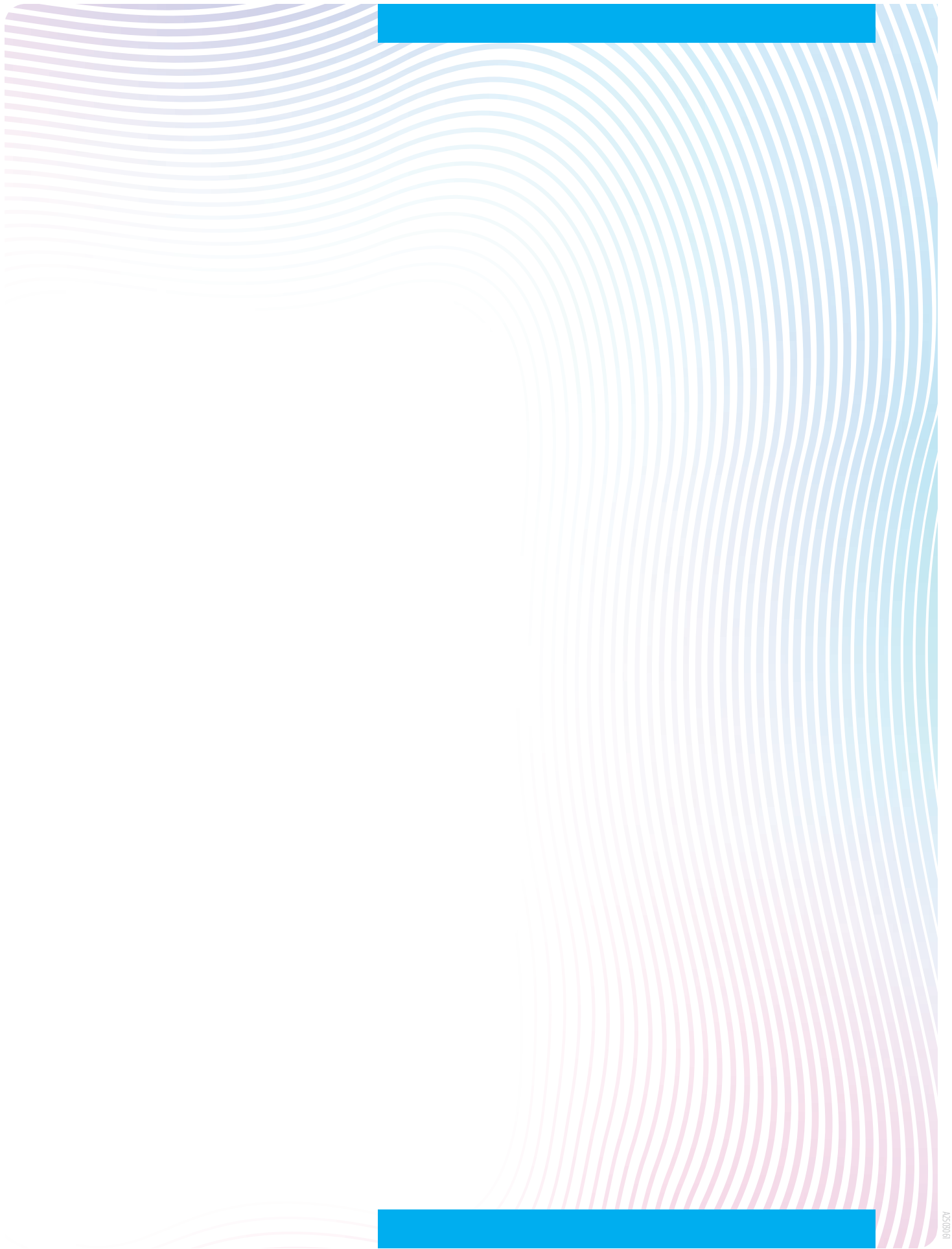
We're not just another supplier—we're your partner for business transformation, and the market leader in cutsheet inkjet technology for four years running.

Our journey to the top began decades ago. Since the early 2000s, our inkjet printheads have powered the production print industry, helping other OEMs succeed.

Then, we listened to industry demands and created a high-speed, high-quality cut-sheet inkjet solution accessible to all. Our proven printheads power our market-leading solution, TASKalfa Pro 15000c, providing businesses with a flexible, high-quality, and long-lasting solution. With hundreds of installations in the US, businesses already experiencing the power of our inkjet technology. We work with multiple distribution partners to give customers a choice—become an industry leader with Kyocera inkjet technology or remain stuck with outdated solutions.

If you want to learn more about Kyocera, want to request a sample, are interested in a demo, or simply want to speak with one of our experts, you can contact us via our [website](#) or [LinkedIn channel](#).





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