

## Maine Today Media, "Crossing the Rubicon"

In mid-2016 the wheels were set in motion to transform print production at Maine Today Media's Portland facility by converting their operation from flexo to offset. Under the leadership of Chris Miles, a DGM 850 press was selected and for prepress MTM decided on a pair of fully automated Accelero News CTPs from alfa CTP, outputting "develop on press" thermal plates to a vision punch and bend system from NELA.

Fast Forward to mid-2017 and the transformation is complete, including removal of the old flexo press, freeing the space needed to house the entire Portland Press Herald staff under the same roof.

Today, the operation handles all its own titles, plus numerous contract jobs for other publishers in the region; the site consumes around 5,000 plates a



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**Production Director: Rob Bauwens**

month with lots of capacity for future expansion.

According to Production Director Rob Bauwens, the conversion had three main effects. First, the cost of plate production was considerably reduced by removing the need to import expensive flexo plates, or use post-imaging chemical processors. Secondly, the Accelero CTPs are each able to output 55+, 23 x 35 in. plates an hour reducing plate making time by at least a factor of four and finally, reproduction quality, particularly of color, improved significantly, offering advertisers and contract customers more attractive and compelling services.

The CTP system at Portland was sold by Eastern Litho Products, Inc. which is a trusted supplier to the industry and a long-time partner of alfa CTP. Sue McHale, Eastern Litho's President commented that modern thermal CTP and plate technology has made it affordable and practical for newspapers to adopt "develop on press" technology which is environmentally safer and operationally much simpler than other technologies.

alfa CTP Systems Inc. has offices in Chelmsford MA and Chicago IL and has served the newspaper industry since the 1970's. It is a leading supplier of CTP and production workflow systems, offering comprehensive 24/7 service on all of its products.

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