“The TCRUs address a lot of programmed maintenance and service issues,” Peter states. “Whether it’s a filter, toner or the fuser system, replacement is easy. TCRUs shorten programmed maintenance to half an hour, rather than losing half a day or more with a technician. We can also schedule maintenance for times that best suit us. None of the other vendors we approached were able to offer us a system like it.

“If we need to put through a support call, a Ricoh business partner technician is here in under two hours,” Peter says. “And if there is ever anything they can’t handle, I know they can quickly escalate the issue back to Ricoh’s Head Office team in Sydney. So we get the best of both worlds.”

**High quality, low costs**

Other benefits the Pro C901s provide CCP include the quality of the printer’s output and its economical operation. “The output of the Pro C901s is as close as I’ve seen to offset-quality reproduction,” Peter says. “Our customers are very impressed that they can get jobs that look so good, finished so quickly.”

On the cost side, CCP reaps substantial financial benefits compared to other digital production printers. Peter says that compared to the nearest competing vendor he investigated, costs per page for the Pro C901s are 16 per cent less for A4 printing and 39 per cent less for A3. “When you’re doing hundreds of thousands of prints a month, that adds up to a massive saving very quickly!” he states.

“At the end of the day, with the Pro C901s and the service we receive, Ricoh has demonstrated that it really understands what commercial printers want,” Peter concludes. “And that is fast, high quality, reliable printers, quick turnaround on service and low costs so that we can stay competitive. With the Ricoh Pro C901s, we get it all.”

**Outstanding regional-area support**

With this additional work coming in, another vital benefit for CCP is that the Ricoh Pro C901s is reliable, quick and easy to maintain, and fully supported by both CCP’s local Ricoh business partner and Ricoh. These factors all combine to ensure uptime of the printer is maximised.

Peter says support from Ricoh has been invaluable from the outset. He and his operators received extensive on-site training after installation, which was backed up by a further two days at Ricoh’s Education Centre within the Printing Innovation Centre in Sydney.

Among the Pro C901s features demonstrated to the CCP team at the Education Centre were the Ricoh Trained Customer Replacement Units (TCRUs). These modular units allow operators to replace parts of the printer without needing a service technician on site. Ricoh collects the units removed from the printer, then refurbishes and recycles them at the next scheduled service.

"...Ricoh has demonstrated that it really understands what commercial printers want. And that is fast, high quality, reliable printers, quick turnaround on service and low costs so that we can stay competitive.

With the Ricoh Pro C901s, we get it all."
“Customers are blown away by how quickly we can work now, and that’s a massive competitive advantage for us.”

Founded in 1974, Central Commercial Printers (CCP) has grown to be one of the largest printers in the Bathurst, New South Wales region. The business employs 13 people and has built a large, loyal client base on the back of its reputation for outstanding service and excellent print quality. A digital printing solution from Ricoh is now helping CCP take its offering to an even higher level.

**Challenge: Reactive to customer demands**

“The print market is changing significantly,” says Peter Wright, CCP Director. “Customers still want high quality printing, but they want jobs completed quicker. We’re also seeing an increase in customers ordering shorter runs. In the past they might have ordered thousands of copies, but now print runs of only a few hundred are common.”

With a labour-intensive, almost exclusively offset printing set-up, short runs and quick turnarounds were a challenge for CCP. This led the company to seek a new solution – one that could support long and short print runs quickly, economically and without compromising quality.

The solution’s vendor would also have to provide excellent support because, as Peter points out: “Being in a country area, it’s no good having a device that’s crucial to your business if someone has to travel from Sydney to service it!”

**Solution: Proactive with the Ricoh Pro C901s**

According to Peter, the solution needed to be one that had at its core a high performance production printer that would complement the company’s existing offset printers.

Peter’s mind was made up after getting hands-on with the printers of several major vendors at Sydney’s PrintEx 11 – generally regarded as one of Australia’s premier print and design exhibitions. “We took a test file that we knew would be hard to reproduce, and passed it over to representatives of just about all the large printer vendors who were at the expo,” he says.

“When it came around to Ricoh and the Pro C901s, it was almost a done deal. The Pro C901s was fast, had no issues with paper stretch or skew, and had print production features well beyond those of competing machines.”

Regardless of the Ricoh Pro C901s’ performance, the decision rested ultimately on the service and support CCP would be afforded with its production printer purchase. With full support from Ricoh, CCP’s local Ricoh business partner provided a rapid response service agreement that, according to Peter, sealed the deal.

Now, a Pro C901s with inline collating, trimming, folding, stitching and a built-in high-speed scanner sits proudly in CCP’s print room, providing customers with everything from business cards to finished full-colour booklets in runs of all sizes.

**Economical short runs in one third of the time**

Fast job turnarounds and the ability to complete short runs economically are among the biggest benefits CCP is realising with the Ricoh Pro C901s. The company is now taking on print jobs that previously had to be declined and, as a direct result, levels of customer satisfaction are on a definite rise.

“That the catalogues we print for local bull sales are a good example,” Peter explains. “The customer may order 500 copies, but often they’ll need an additional 50 or 100 a day or so before the sale. Using the Pro C901s we’re able to print them almost on the spot. With offset, printing a run that small was uneconomical and we could never finish in time, meaning we were unable to take on the job. The Pro C901s is adding value to jobs and giving us a whole new market in quick turnaround and short run jobs.”

That new capability of CCP is a result of the Pro C901s being able to turn around many print jobs in about a third of the time it would take to finish on an offset machine. Regardless of whether the job is black-and-white or full colour, and even when printing double-sided on stocks up to 350 gsm, the 90 page per minute output remains constant.

The Pro C901s is also bringing in new work to CCP as a result of its built-in high-speed scanner. The machine can scan a 300-page hard copy manuscript in just a couple of minutes, making it ready either for printing or for the customer to take away in electronic format.

According to Peter though, the biggest bonus is the reaction from his customers. “The other day a customer brought in a 32-page book, wanting 400 copies, bound and in full colour,” he recalls.

“When I told him ‘you can have them tomorrow’, he looked at me as though I was joking! Customers are blown away by how quickly we can work now, and that’s a massive competitive advantage for us.”

“The output of the Pro C901s is as close as I’ve seen to offset-quality reproduction. Our customers are very impressed that they can get jobs that look so good, finished so quickly.”