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Horizon International Inc.
Konica Minolta, Inc.

Horizon and Konica Minolta Sign Business Collaboration Agreement to Advance Automation of Printing and Postpress Processes

Production Workflow Connecting Printing, In-plant Transport, and Postpress Showcased at Horizon Smart Factory 2026

Horizon International Inc. (hereinafter "Horizon") and Konica Minolta, Inc. (hereinafter "Konica Minolta") announce that they have signed a business collaboration agreement to develop a new production workflow integrating their respective solutions. The collaboration aims to seamlessly connect digital printing with postpress operations, advancing automation and reducing manual workloads at print production sites.

The two companies will integrate Horizon's bookbinding workflow system, "iCE LiNK," with Konica Minolta's print workflow solution, "AccurioPro Flux." By using job information, postpress instructions, and data on printing-process progress, they aim to create an integrated production flow linking printing, in-plant transport, and postpress.

Details of this collaboration will be presented during the international week of "Horizon Smart Factory 2026," held from November 4 to 6, 2026, at Horizon Innovation Park in Takashima, Shiga Prefecture, Japan.

During the event, the two companies will demonstrate a production flow that integrates their workflows using actual equipment. Drawing on visitor feedback, they will continue to promote digital transformation (DX) and workflow automation in the printing industry.Details regarding the commercialization and availability of the individual integration features will be announced by the two companies once finalized.

■ Comment from Seiji Nakashima, Executive Officer and Head of Professional Print Business, Konica Minolta, Inc.

"Print production sites face a shortage of skilled personnel and a shift toward shorter print runs, making productivity across the entire process, including postpress, a key challenge. Building on The Intelligent Press™ concept of detecting, assessing, and adapting to printing conditions, Konica Minolta has advanced autonomous printing to reduce reliance on operators' experience and skills while achieving stable quality and high productivity. Through our business collaboration with Horizon, we will extend this approach beyond printing to include in-plant transport and postpress, helping minimize production interruptions throughout the workflow ."

Comment from Ryuji Kinugawa, President and Representative Director, Horizon International Inc.

“Many tasks between printing and postpress still require human involvement, including handing over job information, selecting equipment for the next process, and preparing for changeovers. Through iCE LiNK, our workflow system designed to optimize production as a whole, Horizon has worked to connect these processes seamlessly. Through our business collaboration with Konica Minolta, we will use data to connect every stage from printing through final finishing, contributing to higher productivity through data analysis and more flexible production environments for our customers.”

Background of the Collaboration

As the printing industry shifts toward shorter print runs, greater product variety, and shorter turnaround times, addressing labor shortages and improving productivity have become major challenges.

Although digital presses and postpress equipment have each become increasingly automated, further productivity gains require not just automating individual machines but also using data to connect printing, in-plant transport, and postpress and optimize production as a whole.

Workflow Integration between AccurioPro Flux and iCE LiNK

The two companies will integrate Konica Minolta’s “AccurioPro Flux” with Horizon’s “iCE LiNK.”

“AccurioPro Flux” is Konica Minolta’s print workflow software for production printing. It helps streamline prepress operations and improve productivity through imposition, print data editing and preparation, job management and progress tracking, and automation of repetitive tasks. It also provides integration capabilities through APIs and other interfaces, enabling bidirectional job data exchange with external systems such as MIS (Management Information Systems for the printing industry) and Web-to-Print.

“iCE LiNK” is a bookbinding workflow system that centrally connects job information across printing and postpress, visualizes production progress, and links with postpress equipment. By utilizing standardized job information such as JDF, it supports efficient production flows from printing to postpress.

By integrating the two software solutions, the companies will digitally connect printing and postpress using job-management and imposition information, together with JDF data required for postpress operations.

The companies are also exploring automation of the entire production process, including in-plant transporting printed materials and their transferring them to the postpress stage

, by using process information such as print completion as a signal to trigger the next stage.

The goal is to enable postpress preparation to be completed in advance, allowing the next process to begin promptly once printing is finished.

For customers, reduced waiting times between processes and fewer manual information-transfer and material-handling tasks
are expected to free operators to focus on higher-value tasks and help maintain stable production with limited staff.

Inter-process Transport Using AMRs

In addition to software-based workflow integration, the two companies are exploring the in-plant transport of printed materials between production stages by combining Horizon's AMRs (autonomous mobile robots) and hand lifters with Konica Minolta's high-capacity stacker, the "LS-507."

By in-plant transporting output from the press to the next postpress process in coordination with the progress of production jobs, they aim to reduce manual in-plant transport work an enable a flexible automation environment

that can adapt more easily to changes in equipment layouts and production requirements.

Integrated Workflow Demonstration at Horizon Smart Factory 2026

At Horizon Smart Factory 2026, the two companies will demonstrate a workflow linking printing, in-plant transport, and postpress.

Using actual equipment, they will demonstrate how job information connects printing and postpress by combining Konica Minolta's digital press, "AccurioPress C14010S," and "AccurioPro Flux" with Horizon's "iCE LiNK" and postpress systems.

The exhibit will also demonstrate practical automation solutions

in printing and postpress, including in-plant transport between production stages using AMRs and hand lifters.

Printer-inline Robotized Perfect Binding System on Display

The venue will feature a "Printer-inline Robotized Perfect Binding System" that connects Konica Minolta's digital press, "AccurioPress C8100," to Horizon's perfect binder, "BQ-300," via a robotic arm.

The new "AccurioPress C8100" is equipped with "The Intelligent Press™," an autonomous printing function that detects printing conditions and automatically updates settings The printed sheets are assembled into book blocks and automatically transferred by a robotic arm to the perfect binder.

This creates a continuous flow from printing to bookbinding, reducing setup and in-plant transport work for short-run booklet production.

Future Developments

Horizon and Konica Minolta will continue to test and refine the integrated workflow through demonstrations at Horizon Smart Factory 2026 and feedback from visitors.

By connecting printing equipment, in-plant transport systems, and postpress equipment with data and combining their respective technologies and expertise, the companies aim to realize flexible, scalable smart factories that improve productivity, s reduce reliance on manual labor, and ease operator workloads

at print production sites.

- **Horizon Smart Factory 2026 — Event Overview**

  Dates: November 4 (Wed) – 6 (Fri), 2026
  Venue: Horizon Innovation Park (Takashima, Shiga Prefecture, Japan)
  Details: https://www.horizon.co.jp/en/exhibition/2026/hsf_2026/index.html



Horizon Innovation Park

Horizon Smart Factory 2026 will showcase integrated production workflows connecting printing and postpress equipment with MIS/ERP, prepress, print workflow systems, in-plant transport, automation, and data utilization across the entire print factory.

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