



## News & Events

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### **Cal Poly Graphic Communication Department To Hold Industry-Changing Experiment in Digital Printing**

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Cal Poly's Graphic Communication Department will conduct a three-day experiment starting Tuesday, April 6, in digital printing that could have a dramatic impact on the print and one-on-one marketing industries, according to Department Head Harvey Levenson.

Using satellite aerial photography and the sophisticated technology of a Xeikon full-color variable data digital printing press, students will individualize 40,000 covers for an upcoming edition of Reason Magazine, a publication that focuses on issues of free enterprise, marketing and entrepreneurship.

The cover of each individual magazine will have a satellite aerial map of the subscriber's neighborhood. Beneath the map will be, in large type, the subscriber's name followed by, "They Know Where You Live! -- The benefits of a database nation."

The inside front cover will have a personalized message to the subscriber with information specific to them and their neighborhood, including a street map of the neighborhood and related demographics. The back cover will have additional personalized text.

"In the course of one press run, without stopping the press, 40,000 covers will be produced, and each cover will be different," Levenson said. "No film or printing plates are involved in this process. Ultimately each magazine will be targeted to a 'market of one.' The building of a file and the individualized printing of satellite aerial photography is unique and original in this first-time attempt.

"This is a concept demonstrating how mass print media can become personalized for each individual recipient of the media," Levenson said.

The experiment will be conducted by University Graphic Systems, a student-run and student-managed printing and publishing enterprise run by the university's Graphic Communication Department, and will conclude Thursday, April 8.

The digital file of the names, addresses and satellite aerial neighborhood maps of the approximately 40,000 subscribers to Reason Magazine also includes population, median income, median age, people per household and neighborhood type for each subscriber's neighborhood.

"This experiment epitomizes the Cal Poly 'learning-by-doing' philosophy in which students are exposed to some of the latest thinking that forms the basis for the future of the printing and publishing profession," Levenson said. "Building a digital file of satellite aerial maps has never been done before for direct-marketing, variable-data printing applications. Students participating in this experiment will be versed in the latest processes and applications of digital imaging in the production of personalized mass media.

“They will be ahead of the curve as compared to students studying graphic communication at other universities and also ahead of those already in industry,” Levenson said.

“Cal Poly owes it to Xeikon America for donating the press having the capability to do this. Xeikon is a leading manufacturer of digital web printing presses. The color quality is superior and the technology represents the future of the printing and publishing industry,” according to Levenson.

More information about the Graphic Communication Department can be found on the Web at [www.grc.calpoly.edu](http://www.grc.calpoly.edu) and [www.grci.calpoly.edu](http://www.grci.calpoly.edu).

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