

Calibre Audio Library - Case Study

The History

"Calibre Audio Library is a national charity providing a free postal service of unabridged audio books for adults and children with sight problems, dyslexia or other disabilities, who cannot read print."



Calibre Audio Library are a registered UK charity, set up in 1974, known then as Calibre Cassette Library. Calibre feels passionately that having poor sight or other difficulties should not act as barriers to the pleasures of reading.

As a national charity, Calibre lends audio books to around 20,000 members across the UK, the Republic of Ireland and other EU countries. Their members range in age from five to 105 and they pride themselves in offering a wide choice of unabridged books for all ages and all tastes.

One of their guiding principles has always been to supply books in a format that can be played on ordinary household equipment. This means that members can select a machine that suits their needs. For example they can listen to Calibre's audio books on portable equipment (like a Walkman), so that they can take books into the garden, on holiday or on long journeys.

In addition to providing a lending service, Calibre also campaign with other charities to press the government to do more to end discrimination against people who have a sight problem or other disability. Calibre is a member of the **Right to Read Alliance.**

The Challenge

With advancements in technology, the demand for Calibre to supply mp3 CDs was increasing at a rapid rate. With the cassette format already well liked, it was important for the inclusion of CDs to work just as well. Each audio book, is posted to the end user, returned once finished with and then re-used. Each and every disc supplied by Calibre is checked for damage or loss of playback quality, to ensure their customers are receiving the highest quality audio book.

Calibre required a reliable CD duplication and printing system, that was fully automated (to be able to produce CDs, 24 hours a day, unattended) to print and duplicate the mp3 CD audio books in a timely and cost effective manner.

The Solution

Handisc met with Calibre onsite to assess their current method of production and how this could be improved. Their current demands and possible future requirements were also discussed. The outcome was Handisc recommending the Microtech Xpress CD/DVD Duplicator, with inclusion of the Xstreamjet full colour, bulk ink, inkjet printer. The Microtech Xpress is a professional disc publisher (duplicates and prints discs), with disc capacity ranging from 200 discs to 600 discs, providing a fully automated, 24 hour duplicating and printing system. To ensure Calibre never experienced any down time, a 3 year Service and Support Agreement with Handisc, was also recommended, providing onsite technical assistance from a certified Microtech Engineer.

The Result

Handisc installed two Microtech Xpress XE's plus XstreamJet Printers. To ensure that Calibre's old system was not made redundant, Handisc also upgraded (replaced drives, software updates etc) their old duplicator to bring it in line with their new systems. The XstreamJet printer is one of the few bulk ink (Continuous Ink Supply), inkjet printing systems that allows the team to print 24 hours a day. The bulk ink, ideal for such a production environment, provides low cost printing and allows Calibre to print unattended, as there is no requirement for cartridge changes.

Handisc, delivered and installed Calibre's two new machines, and provided staff training on how to use the Xpress's. Handisc continues to remain in contact with Calibre, ensuring their equipment is always running to its best ability and to answer any user queries, or to provide any software upgrades.

The Outcome

Calibre last year produced approximately 700 audio books, ranging from 4 to 10 copies of each book. They also replace damaged or lost discs daily as well as 16,000 promotional discs per year. As the demand for mp3 CDs is ever increasing as new members join and older members make the switch from cassette to CD, it is likely that this will increase significantly year on year.

Handisc continues to support the Microtech duplication equipment with regular servicing & upgrades when necessary, to ensure Calibre are producing and supplying audio books on time and of the highest quality to their members.



Left: [Microtech Xpress XE](#) - Click for more info

Below: Team Member removing a completed disc



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