

## Woodmansterne's Sustainable Evolution: Advancing Quality and Efficiency with Komori

**UK, Woodmansterne Publications Ltd. | Lithrone GX40RP advance [GLX-640RP-A]**

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Woodmansterne, a third-generation family-owned business, is the foremost supplier of greeting cards to independent retailers in Britain. Founded in 1953 as a specialist in color slides, Woodmansterne evolved under the leadership of its founder Graham Woodmansterne, his son Paul, and now his grandson Seth. Today, Woodmansterne is a leader in producing high-quality, sustainable greeting cards that bring joy to millions. In a recent transformative step, the company partnered with Komori to invest in cutting-edge printing technology, marking a pivotal chapter in its journey toward efficiency, sustainability, and innovation.

Adam Osborne, Director of Operation & IT of Woodmansterne; Steve Turner, from Komori UK; Seth Woodmansterne, CEO of Woodmansterne; Chris Ridgden, from Komori UK; and James Henry, Head of Production of Woodmansterne

## **A legacy of craftsmanship and quality**

Woodmansterne's history is steeped in quality and a passion for excellence. The company transitioned from producing color slides to greeting cards in the 1980s, crafting unique designs that resonate with customers across the UK. With production of more than 40 million cards annually, Woodmansterne stands as one of the largest greeting card producers in a nation renowned for its card-giving tradition.

Unlike most of the greeting card industry, Woodmansterne has its own in-house production, ensuring fantastic quality. This commitment to quality extends to its materials; all cards are made from FSC-certified paper, envelopes are made from 100 percent recycled luxury paper, and the finishing processes employ high-precision techniques. This meticulous attention to detail is key to the company's reputation as a premium card producer.

## **The Komori partnership: Elevating technology and efficiency**

Faced with growing demand and the need for technological advancement, Woodmansterne turned to Komori for their latest printing solution: the Komori six-color Lithrone GX40RP advance. This decision followed an extensive evaluation of their needs, focusing on production efficiency, quality, and sustainability.

The Komori Lithrone GX40RP advance's standout feature is its revolutionary gripper technology, which ensures that paper remains perfectly aligned throughout the printing process. This precision is expected to eliminate downstream errors, reduce waste, and enhance the quality of each card. Additionally, the inline coater and H-UV drying system are set to dramatically shorten production times by eliminating the need for conventional drying methods and extra handling.

For Adam Osborne, Director of Operations & IT, Komori's ability to customize solutions was critical. "Komori really took the time to understand our challenges," Adam explained. "Their team wasn't just selling us a machine; they were partnering with us to create a solution that fits our unique business model."





Chris Ridgden, Adam Osborne, Steve Turner and Seth Woodmansterne shaking hands on the deal inside the Woodmansterne Warehouse

## A seamless transition and a vision for growth

The preparation for installation of the Komori press in their Milton Keynes facility was no small feat. The project involved extensive preparation, including laying a reinforced slab for the press and creating a dedicated, insulated room for ancillary equipment. With Komori's support, the installation is progressing smoothly.

The shift to a larger B1 format is projected to triple print production efficiency. By increasing the average number of cards printed per sheet from six to twelve, Woodmansterne



anticipates meeting growing demand without sacrificing quality. "Efficiency isn't just about speed. It's about reducing waste, improving precision, and optimizing workflows," Adam highlighted. "We're confident the Komori Lithrone GX40RP advance will deliver on all fronts, from error detection to automated plate changing."

Woodmansterne's visit to Komori's factories in Japan further cemented their confidence in the partnership. Witnessing the blend of cutting-edge technology and traditional craftsmanship, particularly in the gear manufacturing process, left a lasting impression. "Seeing the precision and care that Komori puts into every detail was extraordinary," Adam recalled. "It's reassuring to know we're working with a partner who values quality as much as we do."

## A sustainable future

Sustainability is not just a business strategy at Woodmansterne--it is a core value. Recognizing the environmental impact of plastic, the company pioneered the elimination of plastic packaging in 2018, replacing it with paper Smart-Seal labels. From advent calendars to card packs, Woodmansterne continually innovates to reduce plastic use while maintaining product integrity.



This commitment extends to operational efficiency. A new warehouse in Milton Keynes, a net-zero carbon facility, features LED lighting, rainwater recovery systems, and solar arrays, highlighting their investment in green infrastructure. With the new Komori press, Woodmansterne aims to reinforce its ethos of sustainability. The H-UV drying system is anticipated to significantly reduce energy consumption, while the flexibility to adapt to LED technology in the future ensures that the press remains environmentally conscious.

"Our partnership with Komori reflects our values as a company," Adam concluded. "We're not just making cards; we're creating moments of joy sustainably and efficiently. This investment ensures that we can continue to do so for decades to come."



MK Solar Array

### **Crafting the future with Komori**

Woodmansterne's journey is a testament to the power of tradition, innovation, and collaboration. By partnering with Komori, they are poised to reinforce their commitment to quality, sustainability, and efficiency, ensuring that their greeting cards remain symbols of joy for generations. As the first sheets prepare to roll off the Komori six-color Lithrone GX40RP advance, they mark not just the beginning of a new chapter for Woodmansterne but a celebration of what's possible when craftsmanship meets cutting-edge technology.





View from the M1