



Innovation isn't easy or without risk. If it were, everyone would be doing it—and you couldn't call it innovation.



—Vince Balistrieri

## Developing New Technological Innovations

Vince Balistrieri, QuadTech General Manager Commercial and Newspaper, Director of Engineering

*The most successful engineering efforts don't occur in a corporate vacuum. Vince Balistrieri discusses how QuadTech and Newsprinters (U.K.) are cooperating to develop and test new innovative technology for newspaper printers.*

**TT**—Tell us about Newsprinters, and what sort of relationship you've developed. What are you working on?

**VB**—Newsprinters is one of the most technologically advanced newspaper printers in the world. They have a high degree of automation and standardization, which keeps their operational costs down and print quality up. They've agreed to be a Beta test site for the initial release of AccuCam™—our advanced color control system for newspaper printers. The initial release of AccuCam provides closed loop image-based color control using our proprietary spectral sensor technology. It also gives us a platform on which we'll continue to expand, looking to provide more automation value. Newsprinters has agreed to be our development partner to help define and test features and functions that bring the most value to their operations. This doesn't obligate them to buy the finished product, but they are an essential part of the product development. If you're looking to develop innovative technology, it's incredibly helpful to collaborate with a partner who is accustomed to leading their industry in the most advanced technology and processes. It's really a huge advantage for both parties.

**TT**—Are there any drawbacks to working with partners who have the most advanced presses and processes? Will your solutions tend to ignore printers who don't have the resources of a company like Newsprinters?

**VB**—As valuable as it is to have a top-shelf development partner, it's important that we don't restrict our input to one source. QuadTech has a long and successful track record of providing solutions to newspaper printers all over the world—of every type and description. We have a rigorous new product development process where “voice of the customer” methods are used to establish market requirements. We carry that knowledge forward to ensure that we build a solution that provides tangible, substantial value to the broader newspaper market. Newsprinters is helping us understand new ways to create value. Our goal is that any newspaper printer concerned with reducing waste, improving print quality and minimizing labor will see benefit in this technology.

For more information about QuadTech, visit

[www.quadtechworld.com](http://www.quadtechworld.com)

Related articles (click):

Newspapers & Technology:  
[Leaders Urge Technology Innovation at WOA Meet](#)

Northwestern University:  
[Innovating Through Recession](#)

Quality In Print:  
[Product Development—How Vendors Develop Products for the Graphic Arts Industry](#)

[www.quadtechworld.com news: QuadTech Announces Its 2009 Innovation Award Recipients](#)

**TT**—Obtaining customer/user input when you're developing new products is nothing new. What's different about the project you have going with Newsprinters?

**VB**—We apply a very structured approach to our new product development efforts, and our “voice of the customer” techniques are critical in establishing requirements for the solutions we develop. We also leverage Quad/Graphics, our parent company—and one of the most technologically advanced commercial printing companies in the world—for their tremendous insights into what printers value. We have the unique advantage of access to Quad/Graphics as our “test lab,” in addition to partnerships with customers and potential customers, such as Newsprinters. Typically, customer input occurs at the beginning of the project. In this case, we'll remain engaged with the users from the requirements stage through testing and deployment. That constant feedback throughout the entire product development process will ensure that our value proposition aligns with Newsprinters' needs. I believe that QuadTech and Newsprinters share a common vision about the newspaper pressroom of the future.

**TT**—Newsprinters obviously has to make some investment in terms of materials, labor and resources to do this sort of development and testing. What do they get out of it?

**VB**—With this global recession, few companies are increasing their investment in Research & Development, in fact, many are cutting back. QuadTech's vision is to be the innovation leader in the industry, and we have remained committed to this vision, even in these tough times. It helps both us and Newsprinters to have a coming-together of some of the brightest minds in the industry. It can help to shape a solution that delivers superior value to their operation, without having to make a significant investment in the research and development of the enabling technology. Beyond the technology itself, any time you have a collaborative effort to produce game-changing innovations, a natural people-to-people relationship grows. Newsprinters' people are informed by their experiences, processes and company culture. The same goes for QuadTech's people. There's an exchange of innovative ideas and understanding that is very beneficial to both organizations.

**TT**—Is there any risk to letting development partners or customers in on your development process? Do you lose credibility with them if the testing doesn't go well?

**VB**—Innovation isn't easy or without risk. If it were, everyone would be doing it—and you couldn't call it innovation. Any potential customer who sees how our engineering teams approach a problem or a need will be impressed with our people and our methods. In Beta test sites like Newsprinters, we aren't bringing them a product that is ready for the market. We're bringing them an idea, and they're partnering with us to provide a solution. Both parties understand that and share a common goal. They go with us through the obstacles and setbacks that are inherent in the development process, and also share in the ultimate success. I think that there's very little risk of losing credibility when you've traveled that road together. You only lose credibility if you're not credible. If you're investing resources and working diligently to bring innovative products to the market, that can only enhance your relationship with customers. ❖

“

If you're looking to develop innovative technology, it's incredibly helpful to collaborate with a partner who is accustomed to leading their industry.

”

---

QuadTech, Inc., is a worldwide leader and innovator of performance proven press control technology. Founded in 1979, QuadTech sells its automated auxiliary control systems in more than 100 countries to the web offset newspaper and commercial markets, packaging market and publication gravure market. Headquartered in Sussex, WI, USA, QuadTech maintains a worldwide network of sales and service operations, including facilities strategically located throughout Europe, and in Japan, China, Singapore, India, and North and South America. QuadTech is proud to be registered ISO 9001:2008 DNV. QuadTech is a subsidiary of Quad/Graphics, the largest privately held printer in the Western Hemisphere.