

Recession doesn't deter printer from rolling the presses

By **TERRY SCOTT REED**
Business Journal Correspondent

Don't tell Gary and Elaine Brown that a recession is the wrong time to start a business:

The pair actually began their printing business on a part-time basis in their basement five years ago. The Browns made a move toward full-time when they purchased a building on Hampden Boulevard, Reading, in May 2007. The building was formerly an auto repair shop and parts house, and the Browns opened there informally in March 2008 while continuing to remodel.

"I believe that if you wait to act until you can see the turnaround, you missed it."

~ Gary Brown, partner
Berks Digital Inc.
Reading

To celebrate the completion of the remodeling, Berks Digital Inc. held a formal ribbon cutting and belated grand opening earlier this month.

Gary Brown has 30 years of experience in the printing industry, and was a supervisor at the time he left to go full time. Elaine was an administrator, and she is continuing in that role with

Business basics

BERKS DIGITAL INC.

- **Principals:** Gary Brown and Elaine Brown
- **Address:** 2620 Hampden Blvd., Reading, PA 19604
- **Telephone:** (610) 929-1200
- **Fax:** (610) 929-1255
- **Website:** www.berksdigital.com
- **Email:** gbrown@berksdigital.com
- **Number of employees:**
3 full-time
3 to 5 part-time
- **Locations:** 1
- **Years operating:** 5

Berks Digital.

Gary Brown said the company specializes in high-end short run color work, which he characterized as 5,000 pieces and under; and large format color printing for in-store signage, trade show displays, decals, and banners.

"But 5,000 pieces is not a limit. We will happily do more," he said.

The company also operates offset equipment for items such as letterheads.

The Browns said they are marketing their services primarily to businesses within Berks County, using direct mail, email, and web-based marketing. They also network through the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Gary Brown said he also makes personal sales calls to businesses.



Gary Brown, a principal in Berks Digital Inc., Hampden Boulevard, Reading, looks over a job in progress with print shop staffer Samantha Thompson.

Photo by Terry Scott Reed

"I think this is the best time to be in business, and we are prepared for the economic turnaround we are already seeing," Brown said. "The economy

tanked shortly after we began in business. I believe that if you wait to act until you can see the turnaround, you missed it."