

## Credit equips Canvera for success

By leveraging HP Financial Services, Indian start-up preserves capital while funding the high-quality printing devices at the core of its strategic vision

**HP customer case study:**  
HP Financial Services provides a start-up with flexible funding options to back its successful market launch

**Industry:** Commercial and photo finishing

“HP Financial Services allowed Canvera to execute on its business plan in two ways. We were able to acquire the equipment we need to deliver consistent, high-quality printing services. And we were able to allocate our venture capital money more strategically.”

—Dhiraj Kacker, CEO, Canvera



### Objective

Optimize available funding options to support the launch of a promising start up company

### Approach

Leverage HP Financial Services to fund the purchase of the required high-quality equipment while preserving capital for other purposes

### IT improvements

- Photo print output meets requirements for quality, consistency

### Business benefits

- Capital reserved for strategic purposes, enabling successful execution of initiatives critical to launch, such as sales and marketing programs
- High quality equipment enables execution of strategic goals of differentiation from competition via print quality and consistency



The demand for professional photography in India is enormous with weddings driving more than half the industry. One factor is the demographics. India has over 1.1 billion people and is a young country—half of its population is under 25 years of age. Around 10 million couples get married every year. In addition, there is a well-established tradition of families establishing generous budgets for professional photography as part of the weddings' cost.



As an industry, the country's wedding photography business is also young. The vast majority of professional photography processors are small "mom and pop"-style shops. The wedding albums they produce are typically handmade and produced on traditional, silver halide paper. The quality varies widely from shop to shop, or even from job to job. This puts professional wedding photographers at a disadvantage. Their reputation depends on their ability to please their clients. When processing quality is poor or inconsistent, it doesn't matter how much care they have exercised to set up and capture their wedding images—the final products can undoubtedly disappoint their clients.

Several years ago, Dhiraj Kacker, CEO of Canvera, recognized these factors added up to a compelling business opportunity. At the time, Kacker, who holds a PhD in Electrical Engineering with specialization in Image & Signal Processing, resided in the United States. There, he accumulated 10-plus years of experience in digital imaging. This included a 4.5 year stint at one of the country's leading online digital imaging service providers Shutterfly.com, where he worked as a core R&D engineer integrating HP Indigo digital presses into the company's imaging workflows.

Then, he returned to his home country and founded Canvera. Today, the company is India's first nationally-branded professional imaging service provider. And it relies on HP: Canvera uses HP hardware for everything from its server architecture to its photography output platform, and also leverages HP Financial Services as a key funding resource.

## A credit line to complement venture capital

With a background in imaging and an understanding of the Indian culture, Kacker was confident, when he founded Canvera, that it would address a previously unmet market need of high-quality professional photo processing services.

But founding a business requires more than technology and marketing—it also requires funding. And that presented Kacker with some stumbling blocks: when he re-located to India, he quickly learned that Indian banks were not interested in backing Canvera. It wasn't that he couldn't present a compelling business case for the company. He even had the backing of venture capitalists. It's that banks in India simply

## Customer solution at a glance

### Primary applications

Photo printing

### Primary hardware

- HP Indigo press 3500
- HP Designjet Z6100 printers
- HP ProLiant DL380 G6 servers
- HP ProLiant DL380 G5 servers
- HP ProLiant DL180 G5 servers
- HP ProLiant ML110 servers
- HP ProLiant ML150 servers
- HP business desktop PCs
- HP notebook PCs

### HP Services

- HP Financial Services

don't fund start-ups. "Getting credit in India is virtually impossible for companies that have not been in business for at least three years," Kacker explains.

The inability to get a bank loan wasn't the end of the line for Canvera. But it did limit Kacker's choices. "Ideally, I wanted to allocate my capital to sales and marketing," he says. "I didn't want to spend it on equipment."

---

**"Thanks to HP Financial Services, we have been able to support our growth without having to expend our cash reserves on equipment purchases, and without having to compromise on hardware quality. HP Financial Services has been of tremendous value to Canvera."**

**Dhiraj Kacker, CEO, Canvera**

---

Fortunately, there was another option: HP Financial Services. Because he was familiar with HP Indigo digital presses—he'd coded the imaging algorithms and color management software for them in his previous job—Kacker wanted to use HP equipment as Canvera's imaging output devices. When he began working with an HP sales rep in India, the rep told Kacker about HP Financial Services.



It was the solution Kacker needed. He immediately engaged with HP Financial Services, and obtained a line of credit sufficient to cover the hardware he needed to launch Canvera. Today, all of the company's HP equipment has been funded by HP Financial Services, including two HP Indigo press 3500s; three HP Designjet Z6100 printers; a large number of HP ProLiant servers (including DL380 G6 and G5, DL180 G5, ML110 and ML150) that run the company's website and business infrastructure; and HP business desktop PCs and notebook PCs for use by Canvera's 500-plus employees.

It was very easy to work with HP Financial Services. Unlike the Indian banks Kacker had approached previously, which didn't have lending programs in place to accommodate start-ups, HP Financial Services was able to determine that extending credit to Canvera was a reasonable risk. They took into account Canvera's strengths, such as its venture capital financing and Kacker's background.

Kacker also appreciates that his HP rep worked closely with HP Financial Services to streamline paperwork. "The rep helped a great deal with the application process," Kacker notes. This freed Kacker to focus on launching his business.

## Quality output, reliable hardware

Today, Canvera is winning customers and market share, just as Kacker anticipated. Its success has resulted in international acclaim: it was selected as one of India's hottest start-ups by Business Today and has been featured in Entrepreneur magazine. It attributes much of its success to its relationship to HP.

---

**"Ideally, I wanted to allocate my capital to sales and marketing. I didn't want to spend it on equipment."**

**Dhiraj Kacker, CEO, Canvera**

---

Canvera's HP Indigo digital presses enable the company to achieve its core strategic goal: to produce high-quality, consistent photographic output for India's professional photographers.

Canvera uses its HP Designjet Z6100 printer to generate wedding album covers, including the 12x18-inch books that are most popular with its customers. Wedding albums are designed by Canvera's team of more than 120 in-house designers, who are equipped with HP business desktop PCs and HP notebook PCs.

Canvera backs these print services with a warranty. This further differentiates the company from its competitors, builds customers' trust, and generates positive word-of-mouth.

As Canvera has executed on its business plan, it has expanded its operations significantly. It started as a single office in Bangalore. Today, it operates out of eight locations. Throughout this expansion, HP Financial Services repeatedly extended Canvera's line of credit, allowing it to fund the additional HP hardware it requires.

"Whenever we have a choice, we purchase HP equipment," Kacker notes. "Thanks to HP Financial Services, we have been able to support our growth without having to expend our cash reserves on equipment purchases, and without having to compromise on hardware quality. HP Financial Services has been of tremendous value to Canvera."

---

Share with colleagues

