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on page 20**



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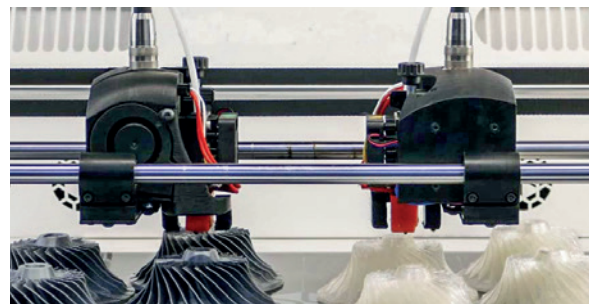
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Comment



February Fast Start

Time to wind your customers up ready to spring into this new year proper. Play cupid to their Valentine's plans and get busy with your own promotions to lead by example. Being positive in print is very contagious.

Please continue to visit the new 2022 Print Trade Expo to aid your research into where and what we will be printing with in the near future.

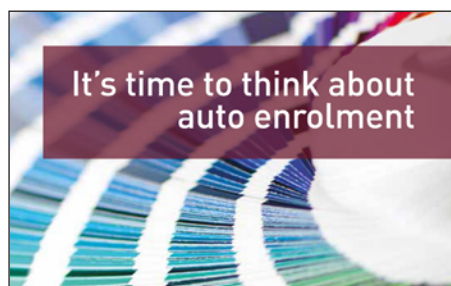
Peter, ready for spring, Foulkes

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The law on workplace pensions has changed and every employer in the UK must put certain staff into a pension scheme and contribute towards it.

This is called 'automatic enrolment'.

It's important that you understand what you need to do — and when you need to do it. This will depend on your circumstances and those of your employees. To work out what you need to do and when you need to do it contact our auto enrolment scheme advisers on:

0800 132100 or email alan.hudson@meridan.co.uk

Help is on hand from the Printing Industry Pension Scheme which has been running since 1986.

Meridan Financial LLP is the appointed advisers for the Printing Industry Pension Scheme (PIPS) and are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). Not all Auto Enrolment services are regulated by the FCA.



PREMIER DISPLAY PRODUCTS LOYALTY SCHEME

Print media supplier Premier has developed a brand-new loyalty scheme for their customers who purchase display graphic roll media. Premier Club is the new loyalty scheme that has been developed by Premier, for their display graphic roll media customers. This new incentive is a points based reward system that allows customers to accrue points based on their roll media purchases.

Customers who sign up to the promotion can view and redeem their points at their own leisure from a secure and easy to use web based platform. Users can see an up to date running total of their points as well as the prizes available to them from the latest technology to weekends away and much more.

Brad West, Director of Wide Format Media at Premier comments, "The Premier Club adds another element to the "Premier Service" and offers recognition to our customers for their valued business; this is a great way to thank our customers for choosing Premier for their display graphic roll media." West continues, "It is so simple too; all the customer has to do is register online to start collecting their points. The website is quick and easy to use with a great choice of rewards to pick from or if the customer prefers, turn those points into charitable donations to an organisation of their choosing."

Premier's portfolio of display graphic roll media has been developed to meet the needs of the sign and display market. The range consists of high quality, reliable brands including Contra Vision, Ritrama, KernowJet, eTEC and Neschen; a wide choice of products for engaging and eye-catching displays. Premier supply products with a "Premier Service", a next day delivery throughout the UK on stock items; delivered by Premier drivers on their own fleet of vehicles.

Signing up to the Premier Club is quick and easy to do, if you're an existing Premier customer simply visit www.mypremierclub.co.uk enter your details and start collecting those points today.



Premier is part of the OVOL Japan Pulp & Paper Group, comprising of 112 companies, operating in 21 countries. The Group is the world's leading specialist paper trading company which also has interests in other diverse sectors such as ICT systems, real estate and power generation.

For more information about the Premier Club or Premier's range of products and services contact your local branch or visit www.paper.co.uk

SUSTAINABILITY ADVOCATE AWARD FOR ANTALIS

Antalis has announced it has recently been awarded the reputable Sustainability Advocate Award at the Independent Print Industries Association (IPIA)'s recent Expo event and Recognition Excellence Awards. The IPIA is a not for profit trade association focused on helping its members grow and develop their print related businesses. It delivers on-going value, support and counsel to members through a comprehensive range of benefits, services, events and publications. In particular, the IPIA assumes a crucial role as an industry ambassador championing print, both at Government level and to major print buying sectors.

"This award endorses our systematic work to achieve a sustainable substrate offering and corresponding practices which enable customers, and their clients, to meet their own environmental objectives. Sustainability is key to Antalis' business and is central to our continued developments in broadening our environmental portfolio to offer a choice when choosing substrates. Antalis has also developed the Green Star System™ to aid the selection of sustainable media. The system categorises our portfolio with a rating approach to rank products based upon their environmental credentials, which can also be complemented by



our innovative carbon offsetting schemes," said Simon Fisher, Commercial Director for Antalis Print, Publishing, Office and Visual Communications.

"We were honoured to be part of the awards

ceremony and to meet so many talented industry friends and experts all celebrating the print industry," added Simon.

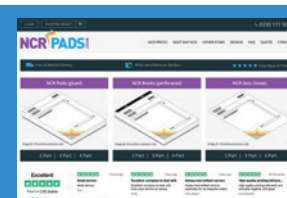
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PROFILE OF THE MONTH: NCR PADS

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STICKERSHOP INSTALLS NEW TITANIUM CUTTER



Established in 2017, Stickershop are a Web to Print self-adhesive labels and sticker manufacturer based in Bristol. The company has been growing steadily since it began and now employs eight people. Stickershop plant list includes an impressive array of seven Roland Wide Format Print and Cut Printers, (five VG640 Solvent ink, two LEC2-640 UV ink) and a Ricoh Digital Production Colour Printer.

They have recently invested in an International Graphics Supplies (IGS) Titanium 2.5 x 1.6 metre cutting table, to eliminate a manual cutting and finishing bottleneck arising from their huge demand.

Shane Pritchard, Director of Stickershop said "We had looked at a range of cutting machines but after thorough testing, and visiting an existing Titanium user, the Titanium 2516 stood out for us. It is robust, adaptable and very competitively priced. Our seven Roland Printers and IGS Titanium 2516 combination has enabled us to offer a varied range of self-adhesive labels and stickers in a variety of ink

options, any size or shape and any quantity.

Our customers expect quality and they want fast turnaround times at affordable pricing. The Titanium 2516 has been integrated into our work flow using bespoke software, developed in-house by fellow Director, Callum Baker. This takes all our jobs from order to dispatch via proof approval, imposition, printer selection and cutting by simply using a barcode scanning system. This level of automation makes us very efficient in processing large amounts of daily orders.

The IGS team managed the installation with ease and their efficiency meant we were in production within hours of delivery".

The Titanium series offers an impressive range of cutting tables with automatic precision cutting tools meaning the exact cutting depth can be achieved quickly, precisely and efficiently. Supplied as standard with all Titanium cutters, is a high resolution registration camera which ensures cutting printed jobs accurately to register and QR

code recognition to locate the correct cutting file for each job automatically.

A range of speciality tools are also supplied with each cutter. These tools offer speed, power and flexibility to handle a wide variety of materials, such as Dibond, corrugated, folding carton, solid board, foam, coating blankets, textiles, wood and a long list of plastics.

Peter Flynn, Managing Director IGS comments on the installation "I'm very pleased to see Stickershop are already enjoying the many benefits of moving to a Titanium cutter. As Shane has identified, our price and performance is hard to match and this powerful combination is allowing us to building a very impressive portfolio of customers.

Our showroom is also busy with demonstrations for prospects looking to invest in Digital Cutters and UV Flatbed Printers to meet their customers' requirements for short run packaging and social distancing signage".

www.igs-digital.com • www.stickershop.co.uk

GOLD AWARD FOR SNAP PRODUCTS

Snap Products has announced that their Mood® Gift Set 2.0 has been awarded BPMA's Gold Award in the 'Award & Gift Product of the Year' category for 2022!

The Mood® Gift Set 2.0 allows you to mix and match your items and create a unique gift that includes a Mood® coffee cup, Mood® A6 or A5 notebook, Mood® motivation cards or a Mood® hot chocolate sachet.

The chosen products are available for personalisation, including the robust UK manufactured, FSC® certified card box.

Monica Malfa, Marketing Programme Manager at Snap Products commented, "We are constantly listening to our distributors and the Mood® Gift Set 2.0 was developed in response to customer requirements. The team are so proud that the set has received recognition for its uniqueness and brandability, and is established as another firm favourite from the best-selling Mood® Collection." She added, "It is a great start to 2022 and sets us on great footing for an exciting year ahead."

www.snapproducts.co.uk



COLOURFAST ELEVATES EFFICIENCY WITH HORIZON HT-80

Colourfast Financial Limited, Brentwood, has elevated its post press efficiency and productivity following investment in an Horizon HT-80 three knife trimmer from IFS.

The specialist in all aspects of financial printing, from complex Initial Public Offerings to fast turnaround business compliance documents for global financial markets, has more than 100 years' experience in the financial printing sector. It operates a Konica Minolta suite of digital presses 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

"We have had Horizon systems for many years," states Managing Director Darren Bacon. "They have grown as our business has grown. We started with a single clamp Horizon BQ-270 perfect binder following advice from a customer. We later added an Horizon HT-30 three side trimmer and second Horizon BQ-270 before expanding capacity with a Horizon BQ-470 four clamp perfect binder and an Horizon HT-70 three knife trimmer. As we are a 24 hour operation we kept one of the BQ-270s just in case we needed it but we never have. Our Horizon systems have never let us down."



He adds: "When we first invested in Horizon we were told that the systems would never break down. I thought that was a nice line because everything breaks down eventually, but it has turned out to be completely correct."

"Return on Investment was not the key driver for choosing the HT-80," states Darren. "We know that before we have earned back on our investment

with our Horizon systems so we are confident in the HT-80's ability to do the same. More important was choosing a system with a high level of safety functions that also allowed us to ensure socially distanced operation. We have quite a small production space and with the automated Horizon HT-80 less people are required to complete the work. We also know what it would be able to do and how it would support greater efficiency and productivity."

The Horizon HT-80 automated three knife trimmer can be used off-line or in-line for fast, efficient book production. Most sections can be set up automatically by inputting the untrimmed size and finished size into the intuitive colour touch screen for quick and accurate change over. It can run at up to 1,000 cycles per hour and trim blocks up to 51mm thick.

Darren concludes: "Our relationship with IFS is very important. We are very loyal to our suppliers but we know we can trust in the quality of the Horizon systems."

www.ifsl.uk.com

A3M DESIGNS INVEST IN A VIVID VELOBLADE NEXUS



Established in 1986, A3M Designs are based in Farlington near Portsmouth with local, national and international clients. The company design, print and manufacture innovative and impactful marketing materials and exhibition stands. A3M Designs continue to grow by keeping ahead of trends, anticipating and identifying market changes and by investing in new hardware at just the right time.

This strategy has enabled them to stay ahead of their competitors and continue to deliver innovative display solutions for businesses across all sectors both at home and abroad.

A3M Designs had an existing cutter which was nine years old, but it was a little limited in its function and efficiency. They've enjoyed sustained growth and have looked to their machinery to ensure it would support this growth. They wanted something faster and with improved workflow management to enable more efficient workload throughout.

Chris Windust, Managing Director at A3M Designs Ltd, had this to say:

"We looked at a number of manufacturers over the past 12 months and saw some good machines however each had at least one downside. The Vivid Laminating Technologies Veloblade Nexus seemed to tick all of our boxes and at a price point that made sense for us to invest in."

"We are planning to use the Veloblade Nexus wide format digital die cutting



system for cutting foam board, vinyl, acrylic, dibond and other composite panel medias. This new investment will enable us to produce signage, header boards, POS, display materials, vinyls and stickers."

"We are delighted with the Veloblade Nexus and the support that we have received from Vivid so far. The install was excellent, everything happened as it was planned to happen."

"The interaction that we've had with Vivid's Sales Director Richard Marlow has been easy, straight forward and transparent. We're really pleased with the new partnership with Vivid Laminating Technologies Ltd and would look to them first for our next purchase for sure!"

"On a personal and professional level, I would be delighted to recommend Vivid to other potential buyers without hesitation."

Have a look at their website www.a3m.co.uk for more information.



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VITAL CONCEPT ACCELERATES WITH JETRIX LXI8

The arrival of the newest addition to Vital Concept, based in Perivale in London, has led to a significant increase in production capacity. Largely led by the new printer enabling the business to save time and media which in turn has resulted in increased revenues. Building on the positive experience of purchasing a JETRIX KX7 Flatbed printer back in 2018, Vital Concept needed to upgrade their kit. They were seeking greater speeds and the ability to print on a multitude of different media types with even better quality. So, while they took the time exploring various other large format printer brands with the help of Perfect Colours, they kept coming back to a JETRIX. Particularly, as their overall experience with the KX7 was that it was very effective at doing what they needed it to do. Plus, they found the follow up care and support by the JETRIX engineers was fantastic; from being easy to get hold of, responsive and very approachable.

Now after owning the JETRIX LXI8 for a few months they are finding that the capacity of the printer means they can offer a lot more. While about 60% of their production is board printing for the construction and exhibition trade, they are now working a lot more with exhibition designers, space designers and retail. The biggest benefit being the speed of the printer combined with the lack of heat from the LED UV technology. Whereas much of their corrugated board jobs had to previously be taped down to avoid head crashing due to the heat, now because of the vacuum bed they simply don't have to do this — saving time, money, and media wastage. Equally they are actively increasing capacity to produce jobs involving glass, PVC, foam, and corrugated board for a broad spectrum of POS and window display signage. This has also enabled them to work more sustainability both with the materials they use, the minimising of wastage and



the energy consumed producing jobs.

This is reinforced by Ravi Patel, Managing Director at Vital Concept who said:

"We loved our KX7, but the JETRIX LXI8 has taken everything to a completely new level. It is great to invest in a bit of kit like this and it actually lives up to the expectation. It has an amazing white, which has significantly improved the clarity and quality of what we now produce. And the printer just ploughs through the jobs and takes on whatever we throw at it. One minute it can be producing a construction hoarding and the next it might be tackling some glass signage."

As Ben Woodruff, Head of JETRIX Sales said, "It is interesting how once a business has experienced a JETRIX printer and just as importantly our after care service, how often they come back to get the latest version when they are looking to upgrade. This is also largely down to the combination of the quality of the South Korean technology and the value for money. People are becoming loyal to the brand that has done them well before and therefore keen to seek a modern JETRIX replacement."

www.inktec-europe.com

WORLD'S FIRST FASHION 'DRESS RELEASE'

Roland DG has created the world's first 'dress release' — a press release printed onto a dress — using its latest cutting edge textile printer, the Texart XT-640S-F. In a first for the fashion, textiles and printing industry, the dress acts as a medium to showcase the benefits of XT-640S-F, a printer that excels at short run garment printing for the 'fashion drop' generation. It also shows off the cutting edge white ink and bright colour capabilities of the new machine, alongside text which reveals its benefits and unique qualities.

The dress, which pays homage to the world of fashion design, was created in two fashion capitals of the world: designed and sewn in London, UK, and printed using a Roland Texart XT-640S-F in Milan, Italy.

Stephen Davis, EMEA Marketing Director at Roland DG commented, "We were so excited to immerse ourselves in the world of fashion design to create this one of a kind dress which shows off the capabilities of the Texart XT-640S-F. We worked with our Italian textile customers to design the machine, purpose built for the 'fashion drop' generation, so it only felt right to continue our collaboration with industry creatives to bring the "dress release" to life."

"We hugely enjoyed working with talented designers, seamstresses, photographers and models to help turn our vision into reality, and we hope our customers feel inspired to make their own unique garments as a result."

The company collaborated with designer, Fabia Goff, who has previously worked with top UK brands such as John Lewis and Laura Ashley, to create the pattern. It incorporates textual elements of a press release alongside a stunning design inspired by current fashion trends and Japanese art and culture to celebrate Roland DG's Japanese heritage.

Fabia commented, "The brief from Roland to 'show off' the printer's capabilities through the pattern design and creation of a garment was not only



fascinating but a career first for me. I specialise in lino printing, a traditional hand carving technique similar to woodcut. Combined with my love of watercolour and graphic design I have developed towards pattern design in my career as a product designer and this brief allowed me to bring these two passions together."

"Right from the start of the project," continues Fabia, "I wanted the pattern to be on trend, incorporating the bright colours we will be seeing on catwalks throughout 2022". Pantone's 'Very Peri' Lilac was my chosen feature colour and inspired my floral focus.

The contrasting white against the pattern and colour blocks creates focus on the text, highlighting the colour capabilities of the printer. It was important to reference Roland DG's Japanese roots within the pattern, which is why I chose lilies and ginkgo leaves as the central motifs and used free flowing brush strokes. "Press release" quotes were placed to echo newspaper like headlines of the printer's capabilities."

The XT-640S-F is aimed at apparel print houses and garment manufacturers, and is perfect for fashion houses looking to build prototype versions of a clothing item or create a one off piece for a show.

The flexible, hybrid Direct-to-Textile and Direct-to-Garment solution is designed to meet the growing demand for short run printing in the apparel and textile industry. It also helps to boost company sustainability by enabling print on demand and reducing waste left over garments.

"The Texart XT-640S-F, our most flexible textile printer to date," continued Stephen Davis, "and a product that will help garment manufacturers to capitalise on the demand for short run printing and incorporate it into their workflows."

www.rolanddg.eu



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INNOTECH RECYCLED PVC-FREE BANNER RANGE



Innotech Digital, has announced the expansion of its Vertex Marine range of PVC-free fabric display products made from fully recycled PET yarns, with two brand new products. Having been the first company to launch fully recycled PVC-free materials to market, the availability of these new products means Innotech now supplies fabrics made from recycled PET yarns for the majority of large format printing applications.

Kieran Dallow, Marketing Manager for Innotech Digital, says, "Using PVC-free products made from recycled materials has become an essential requirement for many more businesses and applications. Over five years ago Innotech saw the signs that PVC-free medias would eventually take over PVC materials and were the first to launch a comprehensive PVC-free media range. Two years ago, we also saw the increasing demand for materials made of recycled yarns, and were the first to launch a range made from recycled PET. We are continuing this innovation with an exciting new range of products that makes us the obvious choice for anyone looking for the best possible PVC-free

materials for their graphic display projects."

The new products are part of the Vertex Marine range of 100% polyester fabric made entirely from recycled plastic bottles. This means the Innotech Vertex Marine efficiently conserves natural resources and reduces the burden of single use plastics on nature — especially marine life. They do this without losing any of the qualities of a virgin polyester yarn, to ensure there is no compromise to a quality print finish when using dye-sublimation, UV-C or Latex printers.

Dallow adds, "We believe Vertex Marine is one of the most eco-friendly print materials the wide and grand format print trade has ever seen. These products are ideal for large tension displays, promotional textiles, such as table cloths and flags, exhibition and stage backdrops and a range of frontlit applications."

The Vertex Marine range currently includes the R-PET Display Textile, which is a 100% recycled polyester fabric that is fire rated to both B1 and M1. It is ideal for display frames, pop-up systems or table clothes. It was recently complemented with the addition of the Vertex Marine R-PET Recycled Flag

Textile is a 110g/m2 material that is fire rated to B1 and is ideal for flags applications.

The latest to arrive includes Vertex Glacier R-PET Backlit Display Textile, which is a 180g/m2 material designed for backlit tension fabric displays. Fire rated for B1, it is ideal for high traffic areas where point of sale of information signage is required, such as retail spaces, airports car showrooms and museums. It is completely crease free for easy application and provides a consistent diffusion making it an excellent option for backlit applications.

Vertex Texture R-PET PVC-free Coated Polyester Grey Back is a 240g/m2 is another addition that is fire rated to B1 and ideal for one piece wall coverings, hanging displays, exhibitions and canvas frames.

Kieran Dallow concludes, "All of our Vertex Marine products are made using recycled plastics. It takes approximately 10 plastic bottles to produce one square metre of fabric. With width availability up to 3.2m, that's an awful lot of plastic being recycled thanks to Innotech."

www.innotechdigital.com

GIBSON LED UV FLATBED: 2022 YEAR START SPECIAL



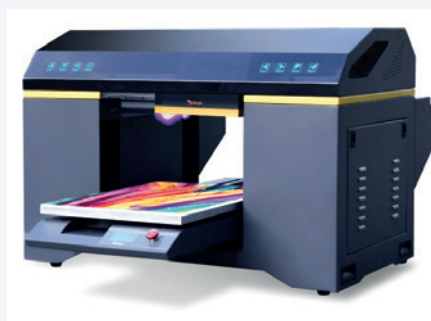
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ADDITION TO DTFMAGIC PRINTER RANGE



TheMagicTouch in the UK and Ireland, under their DTFMagic brand, has confirmed the arrival of an additional printer option to their DTF (Direct to Film) transfer portfolio with the introduction of the new Mutoh/STS VJ-628D printer. The 630mm wide compact desktop printer, manufactured by Mutoh in Japan, is based on Mutoh's proven Valuejet 628 eight channel printer chassis and Epson industrial print head. The solution offered is a global collaboration with leading ink manufacturers STS who have configured the best entry level option for those looking to investigate the many opportunities DTF transfer technology offers.

Jim Nicol, Managing Director commented "Having considered over the past 12 months the great response and uptake of DTF technology, combined with the success of those now using the process in production environments, we must ensure we are able to offer the right solution for specific customer needs. The existing DTF600 printer is truly fantastic and offers real transfer production capabilities up to 15 sqm per hour but we strongly feel the size and space requirement is restrictive for many potential users. This new desktop option is

perfect despite the slower production speed".

The VJ-628D printer easily fits onto an office table or rolling stand option and prints directly to the coated PET film. The printed image then has a powder adhesive applied using an automatic "Shake and Bake" unit or alternatively, for auto cut sheet or roll to sheet prints, the film can be cured at up to 95°C in a unique desktop curing oven.

Additionally, DTF works equally well on white or dark textiles and allows users to choose a matt or gloss finish, whilst requiring no pre-treatment, no cutting or weeding, creates crisp and defined edges and images, does not require advanced technical printing knowledge, and produces less waste. STS based in Florida, USA, has manufactured inks for over 20 years and offer DTF inks with superb elasticity and durability onto most garments and textiles regardless of

composition or colour. The CMYK and white inks are supplied in bulk bag options and are all fully certified.

The printer is driven by bespoke RIP software to ensure fast processing speeds, enhanced printing while ripping and user defined custom cut line names and colours. The "pre-production cost per transfer" feature is also very useful as the user is able to price each transfer to an exact cost. A good example being where 24 x 60mm transfers are produced in just over six minutes at a cost of less than 4p each and applied in this case to a black pique polo shirt.

The expected arrival of stock in the UK is mid January and in the meantime the system can be demonstrated via Zoom or in person at the Dunstable showroom. Printed samples and transfers are also available for evaluation. All pricing is inclusive of delivery, installation and

training combined with a one year warranty.

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DRYTAC VIZIPRINT DECO +

Drytac has expanded its high quality portfolio of printable media solutions with the launch of ViziPrint Deco +, a 50µ (2 mil) optically clear gloss PET film with a permanent acrylic adhesive.

Designed to adhere to virtually any smooth flat or curved surface, including glass, plastic and metal, ViziPrint Deco + scratch resistant window film is ideal for high end architectural and building requirements and custom decorating applications. It has also been designed for the creation of stunning graphics and window decals with vibrantly rich colours for retail storefronts and POP or backlit displays.

Replacing the existing ViziPrint Deco SR product, ViziPrint Deco + has been upgraded to be compatible with a wider range of printers and offers users greater flexibility when producing work for a host of markets. The film has been certified for use with HP Latex 300, HP Latex 500, HP Latex 700 and HP Latex 800 Series printers running HP Latex Ink — including white ink — and is also compatible with other resin inks from the likes of Ricoh and Epson.

In addition, the release liner has been changed from clear to opaque, enabling the media to be registered on a wider range of devices.

Professionally applied, the printable film delivers stunning crystal clear graphics. ViziPrint Deco + is



very durable and has been designed to remain in place for up to seven years, making it ideal for long term indoor and/or outdoor window and building graphics.

On the introduction of the product, Shaun Holdom, Global Product Manager at Drytac, comments: "ViziPrint Deco + is a very versatile product that can be used for many applications. It

is particularly suitable for creating powerful long term image displays and window decals within a building space — for example, in conference and meeting rooms with glass walls, which require more privacy — and can also be used to create stunning graphics for retail storefronts and POP or backlit displays."

www.drytac.com

The NEW Morgana DigiFold Pro XL

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The **NEW Morgana DigiFold Pro XL**, with its cost efficient vacuum top feeder, is an easy to use automatic paper creasing and folding system that eliminates unsightly cracking on digital stock.

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Running efficiently to fold up to **6,000** A4 sheets per hours and in crease only mode up to **7,500** sheets per hour, making this is our most productive creaser/ folder to date.

PIXEL PROPHET CLEAR, ALT, DELETE

So we start a new year with the literary equivalent of a factory reset. **Martin Christie** usually rambles on at the start of this column with things that are going on that are more indirectly relevant to the print industry and draw comparisons with what is happening at the shop counter.

We don't live in a bubble, as the last year has made us all too aware. External events and trends tend to have an impact one way or another. So just for a change, I thought I'd go straight into helpful tips on preparing digital images for print on demand, and we might slip a few more philosophical notes in later. That's why we might grab the attention of many of you who are relatively new to the industry rather than indulge old dinosaurs like me who have been there, done it, blah blah.

If you are relatively new to printing images for customers, then you will face the challenge of matching what the customer sees on their phone or a file downloaded from the internet with what you actually print. This is nothing new and has been a digital challenge for over twenty years now, and the solutions haven't got any easier for reasons I shall sum up later.

Before images were portable, people had to rely on what we produced: now they have a direct comparison in their hands and can question the results immediately. The simple explanation, however technically correct, that's the difference between a backlit projected image and a solid print, isn't really satisfactory because you are the experts; you are supposed to know that, not them. That's why they have come to a professional printer.

Think about how many times you have to tell a customer that it's not ready for print, and rather than bounce the issue back at them, consider ways you can make it easier, or at least more positive. Think: if you ran a shoe shop, you really don't want to tell customers their feet are just the wrong size for your shoes, especially if they want a style that doesn't match the shape of their plates of meat.

It's all about customer expectation and satisfaction. Both have been raised to such a degree that the slightest disappointment can become a significant issue on social media, even if you have done your best to sort it. It's not fair, but that is the reality. And the opposite is that a lot of recommendations can go a long way. As the search engines become increasingly clogged with pseudo advertisements, the public has wised up much more and prefers



to ask friends or members of joined groups online.

So the issue for print on demand remains the same — how to make the best of what you're given and do it efficiently to suit a price that the customer can afford or would expect to pay. In that, you have a number of things to your advantage. First, you should have a good idea, through experience, of how what you see on your screen will look when it's committed to paper. Secondly, you are likely to have much better software on your computer system than a customer has on their phone, therefore able to make any adjustments needed for printing rather than just making it look good on a little screen.

That's why the best advice to a customer is that unless they know what they are doing, best leave the editing to those that know and have the tools to do the job. And that applies to graphics as much as digital images now that we have so many web-based design toys often causing more issues than they solve.

BRIDGING THE GAP

If you are using the Adobe Creative Cloud, you obviously have the graphic options of Illustrator and InDesign and, for images, Photoshop and Lightroom. But hidden in between is one of the most useful pieces of the package, Bridge. If you are not using it, then it's about time you did because you are already paying for it as part of the subscription plan, and as it has been developed has become a much more useful program in its own right.

As the name implies, it is a pathway that links all the other Adobe applications, and you can move from it into any one of them, depending on which task you require. But it's more than a gateway; it's a major resource as it collects the information about

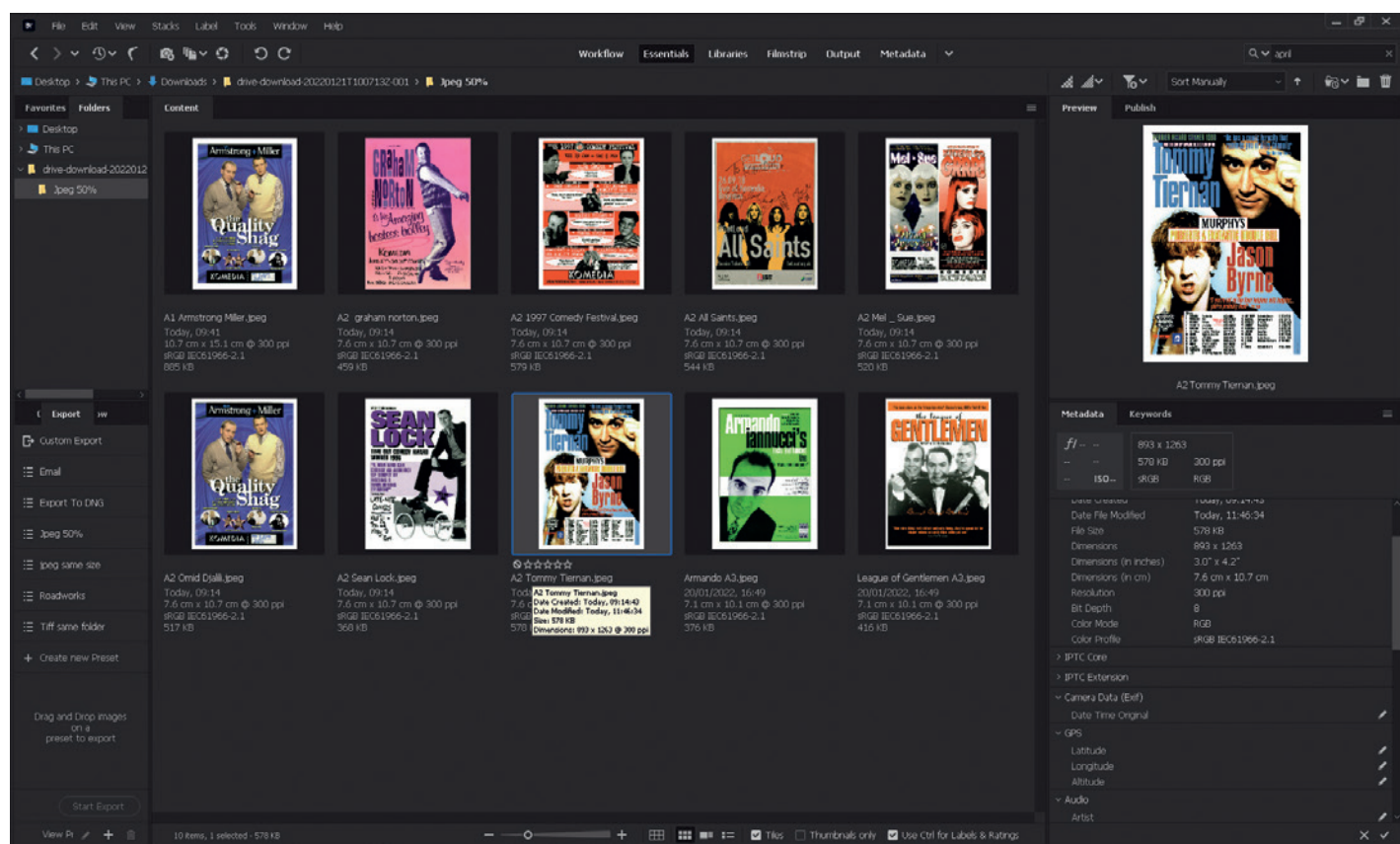
your jobs for the record.

As I do all the large format printing, I mostly deal with images that have come in from unknown sources, so I use Bridge to give them a pre-flight check before I even start opening them to check their clarity and how big they can be printed. All digital cameras, including phones, record date and time and settings used for their capture. If this data is missing, it's a sure sign an additional piece of software has modified the file. It is a warning there may be other issues buried in the file.

If the information is there, you can see what it was taken with and how it was taken, and it is usually a pretty good guide to what it's going to look like. Just because it was taken on a phone doesn't mean it will be rubbish, and even if it was taken 'on a very good camera', it doesn't guarantee the operator had a clue what they were doing. I've looked at photos taken by so-called professional photographers that were out of focus and/or poorly exposed. That's quite an achievement, given all that technology at their fingertips. I started when you had to do all of that manually, including loading the film.

But Bridge now does so much more than act as a browser. It is effectively a stand-alone program in its own right. You can use it to archive and organise files, share them with work colleagues, and perform a number of other tasks directly from it. So it's worth spending a bit of time discovering how useful it can be. It also has far more features than I can cover in this column, but all of them are available in numerous tutorial videos online. A visual tour is much easier to follow as long as you can cope with some of the more enthusiastic presenters and their jargon. Digital Asset Management, for example, just means where you want to put your files and how you will be able to find them again.

Adobe's promotional video claims that it is the only browser that uses pictures to sort its archives. Actually, Extensis, a small West Coast IT developer, started that twenty years ago. They discovered some interesting facts about human behaviour in memory experiments. For example, choosing a good place to store something may likely change from the morning to



the afternoon. That's why you can never find your car keys later in the day when you know you put them somewhere safe or that important bit of paper. So it's not just getting old and senile; it's built into human DNA, apparently.

Computers, on the contrary, are capable of remembering everything; the problem for mere humans is remembering what you told them to do with it.

Of course, Artificial Intelligence is increasingly taking over the task of anticipating what we want, particularly if we have chosen it before. But that is not infallible and may result in some dead ends. For example, while electronic logic works straightforwardly from A to B, a mortal brain can leap sideways to an entirely different character without an apparent reason.

The Extensis solution was to use a visual reference — a thumbnail — as a guide but then also linked to key digital words in the title, file type, date of creation and the like, and adding directions to link similar. This means you can have a virtual copy of a particular file in several different places without having to copy them into separate folders.

Bridge has extended this network, and of course, because it shakes hands with all the other Adobe programs, it will also automatically record any changes that have been made and when they were done.

When Extensis introduced their system, it was obvious to them that the sheer volume of digital information would far outstrip the capacity of a human brain to

cope with it, and that was before mobile phones became such a popular provider of communication.

Fortunately, the very fact that customers now store most of their data on their phones reduces the obligation to keep track of it on archive in the print shop, especially for one-off items. However, for repeat customers, some sort of system is essential, especially as they are unlikely to have any comprehensive archive facility of their own. The 'I know it's here somewhere' syndrome is a familiar scrolling scenario. How professional do you look if you can just type in a couple of keywords and go straight to it?

So make sure you have downloaded and installed Bridge; you may not have got it automatically from the Creative Cloud menu. By default, you have a workspace with a central box containing files and folders, with either side panels listing folders favourites, as well as a preview and any new information about any particular file. How much information is displayed and the size and content of the panels is entirely adjustable to suit.

And you can add extra details as you wish, which may help future searches.

Along the top row, apart from the usual File, Edit, View list, there are six separate functions, including Output which enables you to create a custom PDF. A recent addition is Workflow which, to be honest, I haven't thoroughly explored yet, but I'm sure it will be advantageous if I can get my work colleagues to use it!

The bottom left panel, which has Filter,

Collections and Export, is very useful.

You can select some criteria in the files displayed, add files to a collection and, most usefully, create some export functions, like saving large files as smaller JPGs for email. Of course, this could always be done through Photoshop, but as an action in Bridge interface itself, it is much handier and faster. You can use any standard pixel-based format to export, JPG, PNG, TIFF or digital negative, as you will whatever you save a file as a customer always wants something else.

With multi-page PDFs, you can view the individual pages in the Preview box, which is helpful as you don't often spot large files from a customer's original. You can also see transparency where files contain layers.

You can also add information to the caption space of the main thumbnails so you can clearly see size and resolution. For example, it's not always immediately apparent without checking the sidebar or going into Photoshop. You can move the thumbnails around with the cursor and then rename them (under Tools or right-click options), so they are saved in a different order. So it's pretty comprehensive for checking and organising files in a folder.

The Library module in Lightroom does very similar tasks, but you can't move the thumbnails around, and of course, it doesn't do PDFs, strictly pixels only. That's why Bridge is so beneficial for all types of files other than Word and the like, but who would want to use them?

Have a good look around, and I'll talk more magic in the next issue.

NEIL WILLIAMS JOINS DURST



Durst has appointed Neil Williams as UK & Ireland Business Development Manager for the Northern region. He is replacing industry veteran Richard Bates, who retires at the end of the year after almost a decade with Durst and 46 years in the printing industry.

Neil brings a wealth of experience from more than 30 years in the printing and packaging industries, working for companies such as Sericol, Fujifilm, Inca and more recently EFL. He will be working closely

with local sales, service, supply and logistics teams as well as Durst Group headquarters staff at Brixen, Italy, and at its other major manufacturing location in Lienz, Austria.

Living in north-west England, Neil's responsibility covers the extensive Durst portfolio, as well as Durst software, support service and other integration packages. He has already been visiting customers and has undergone extensive

training at both manufacturing locations.

Peter Bray, Managing Director of Durst UK and Ireland, said: "Neil will be an integral part of our team that provides customers with everything they need – from pixel to output – to be successful in the printing and packaging industry. With a wealth of experience in the packaging and print sectors, we are delighted to welcome him to the Durst family. At the same time, I want to put on record our sincere thanks for Richard's significant contribution to the UK & Ireland business for almost a decade. We wish him a long and happy retirement."

Neil said: "Durst is a recognised market leader and I look forward to introducing its broad product portfolio, software and support services to new clients, as well as continuing to build relationships with its impressive customer base. I work on the ethos of giving full support to the customer. When that is done successfully, they come back again for a second, third or even more machines and services. Durst's brand sells itself and I am looking forward to the opportunities ahead with a company that is constantly pushing the boundaries in terms of solutions."

www.durst-group.com

RICHARD BOWLES PROMOTED TO NAZDAR CEO



Nazdar has announced the promotion of Richard Bowles to the role of Chief Executive Officer.

Richard took up his new position with the business on January 1, 2022, and will combine this with his current role as President, which he has held since January 2018.

During his time as President, Richard has played a major role in the growth of the business, with his solid and exemplary leadership helping Nazdar to maintain

its leading position, despite the recent challenges of the global pandemic.

Richard has been with Nazdar for more than 19 years, having joined the business in December 2002 as Vice President of Marketing. In total, he brings more than 36 years of experience to the role of Chief Executive Officer.

As CEO, Richard will continue to drive further expansion and success at Nazdar as the business seeks new growth opportunities in markets all around the world. His appointment coincides with the announcement that Jeff Thrall will step down as President and Chief Executive Officer of Thrall Enterprises (TEI), the parent company of Nazdar, to become Executive Chairman.

Dan Potts will take up the combined role of President and Chief Executive Officer at TEI and will work with both Jeff and Richard to oversee long term growth plans across the wider business.

"Both Dan and I have every confidence in Nazdar's continued success under Richard Bowles' solid and exemplary leadership as President," Jeff Thrall said. "We will all continue to work together in various capacities, and I look forward to our continued success in the future."

www.Nazdar.com

SPANDEX GROUP APPOINTS NEW CEO



Spandex has appointed Alessandro Lanfranconi to the position of CEO of Berger Textiles and Tectex, the group's specialist providers of complete textiles solutions and services.

Berger Textiles is headquartered in Krefeld, Germany, and offers a broad portfolio of fabrics optimised for diverse textile applications including light boxes and backlights; display graphics; flags, banners and tents; flooring; art canvases; household

textiles and sportswear. Tectex, based in eastern France, has a 20 year heritage in the design and manufacture of textile media and accessories for digital print, décor and event professionals, offering expertise in different printing technologies and framing systems. Alessandro Lanfranconi has headed Spandex Italy for seven years, prior to which he spent 16 years in senior sales, customer service and logistics management roles with professional construction brand Hilti. He holds a qualification in management engineering from the Politecnico di

Milano and a Masters in Digital Transformation & Business Strategy.

Spandex Group CEO Andrew Coulsen comments: "Textiles have emerged as one of the most fascinating and dynamic areas of visual communication, as well as making inroads into retail décor and interior architecture. With Alessandro's deep commercial expertise, we can drive closer integration between Berger, Tectex and the wider Spandex organisation, realising the full potential of these businesses and guiding our customers as they embrace the creative and performance opportunities offered by textile substrates."

Alessandro Lanfranconi comments: "I'm delighted to be able to progress into this role, which I see as a fantastic opportunity to channel the technical know how and materials innovation of our specialist textile businesses to support the many customers worldwide who are actively pursuing growth by developing their capabilities around textile applications."

Lanfranconi previously held the position of Country Manager for Spandex Italy, where he will be replaced by Claudio Fabbri, formerly Sales Manager.

www.bergertextiles.com

BOBST UK & IRELAND HEAD OF CUSTOMER CARE



BOBST, a supplier of substrate processing, printing and converting equipment and services for the label, flexible packaging, folding carton and corrugated board industries, has appointed Helen Reaney-Jerome as the new Head of Customer Care for the UK & Ireland.

In the role, Helen will be responsible for leading a strategic review of customer care operations and processes to ensure continued excellence at BOBST.

She will liaise with customers on a daily basis and oversee the day to day running of the customer care team.





Neil Jones, Managing Director of Bobst UK & Ireland, said: "We are delighted to welcome Helen to our team. Helen's experience in customer service is invaluable as we continue to support existing customers and make inroads into the label and flexible packaging markets in the UK. We're looking forward to seeing Helen making her mark on the business and supporting colleagues deliver a superb standard of care."

www.bobst.com

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LAMINATORS: WHICH ONE IS RIGHT FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

Art Systems share a blog from Neschen's **Matt Manteit**...

Whether it is new or existing customers, we often hear the same thing when it comes to lamination: “if laminators are in fact just two rollers and a motor, then why are some of them so much more expensive than others?”

The answer is quite simple; they are just like cars. All of them have four wheels and a motor, but the price difference can be huge. Everybody recognises the differences between a Mercedes and a Skoda or a Dacia, but all of these cars will still take you from A to B.

Unlike these cars, the difference between laminating machines is not always visible from the outside, which can make it difficult to pick the right model. This is perhaps

more like when you are trying to decide whether you need a van or perhaps a small pick-up truck for your company.

Many of the machines on the market are presented as a “professional tool for an affordable price”, but the expression “professional” has many different meanings in term of lamination. To use the car analogy again, all of the Mercedes, Skoda or Dacia vehicles are being manufactured in a professional way, but the differences are big.

So, how do you pick the right laminating machine for your company? What are the differences and how do you differentiate between marketing spin and recommended features? The following points will help you find the most suitable laminating machine for your business.

WISH LIST & DEMONSTRATION

First, create a list of the applications you would like to process on the laminator. Specify the needs as much as possible and make a note of these requirements, including the specific materials you will be using on these jobs, while also keeping in mind non-standard projects. Take this list with you as every good supplier should be able to explain what is and what is not realistic to the end user.

When you visit your supplier, make sure you request a demonstration of the machine. A technical data sheet gives vital information, but without touching the machine, it means nothing – especially on a machine that requires manual operation like a laminator. To use the car analogy once again, think of this as a test drive.

PARTS OF A LAMINATOR — WHAT TO FOCUS ON

ROLLERS: The rollers are the most important part of a laminator; their properties and behaviour have a crucial influence on the operator's efficiency and the quality of the final product.

First off, make sure you check the diameter. As a general rule, bigger is better, as rollers with a bigger diameter tend to bend less, provide equal pressure and during operation apply less tension on the laminating film, which is beneficial when working with cast vinyls or standard laminating films.



A laminator with a bigger roller diameter has a positive impact on the possible amount of shrinkage of the over stretched laminating film at the latter stage. Shrinkage, caused by over stretching during the laminating process, usually leads to bleed at the end of a graphic, as well as bending of the laminated boards, lifting corners and edges of the graphic or lifting the graphic from the corrugation.

In addition, a roller with a bigger diameter is better when it comes to laminating onto soft substrates. A bigger roller distributes pressure equally and over a wider area and, therefore, the substrates have less of a tendency to twist.

When considering the roller parameters, also check the thickness of the material. Thicker metal will provide much better stability than thinner steel, even with the same roller diameter. For this reason, stronger and more stable rollers are important for laminating onto harder substrates like MDF and glass.

Another useful parameter to check is the weight of the roller. Good and reliable rollers have a weight of approximately 40kg, meaning two rollers in the machine will weigh about 80kg in total. So, when you see a laminator datasheet and the total weight of the machine is 150kg including the frame, you know what to expect – a less than robust machine.

The last part of the roller you should focus on is the soft coating. This should be thick enough to resist possible grinding of the coating in the future, while the rubber coating should also provide perfect geometry, ideally with a crown shape on one of the two rollers.

HEATING: Next up, you should consider the heating of the roller. Even for pressure sensitive adhesives – or so called cold laminating films – we suggest using a machine with a heated top roller. The temperature should be up to 70°C, with the option to make continual adjustments in small steps. Heated rollers allow the adhesive to flow and, depending on the materials being used, this can have a big influence on the quality of the lamination results.

As heat helps the adhesive to flow, this also helps to prevent or reduce silvering. Typically, a quite difficult application is laminating onto acrylic sheets, but having heat assistance helps a lot. You will appreciate the higher temperatures above 50°C, either when running thicker laminating films or already laminated graphics through the laminator a second time, in order to improve the silvering.

During the second run, you can afford temperatures much higher than during the first run because the material has already been laminated. Therefore, you can run the material through the machine even faster.

PRESSURE SETUP: Each material you work with needs a different pressure setup. For example, laminating cardboard will mean you will minimise the pressure, whereas for laminating thick floor graphic films, this will require as much pressure as possible

Most of the machines on the market offer manual pressure setup, which can cause many problems with pressure distribution and when laminating longer runs.

Pressure settings and the achieved work results, for most of the machines with a mechanical setup, are very inaccurate. This means that if there is a pressure measurement available, it is not always reliable.

Neschen laminators offer a pneumatic pressure system, allowing for both repeatable and exact pressure adjustments. The pressure you see on the manometer display is the actual pressure the rollers are delivering to your graphic, meaning much more accurate results.

CONTROLS AND ERGONOMICS: The control panel on the machine should allow for rotation, changing of speed and direction of the rollers from both sides of the device. This holds especially true if only one operator works with the laminator, as the machine can be easily operated without having to walk around to the other side to reach parts of the control panel.

COAXIAL AND TORSIONAL STIFFNESS: All of the rollers and axes have to be exactly parallel on a laminator. This, together with high torsion stiffness of the machine chassis, ensures accurate guidance of the material, even for full roll to roll jobs at high speed. If you expect your next machine to run full roll laminating jobs, make sure to test it on your new laminator before making a purchase.

When discussing chassis strength, there are numerous machines on the market – usually very low-budget machines – which will provide the necessary construction stiffness for the first few months of ownership, but in time, the chassis weakens.



It is for this reason that Neschen offers machines with a sturdy and robust construction. Keep in mind, a laminator is a tool to enhance your business' profit and it should never be an afterthought to buying a new printer.

To provide a stable, robust and reliable machine construction, Neschen builds its range of laminators with sidewalls made of heavy steel plates instead of a thin metal plate.

UNWINDING AND REELING OF THE MATERIAL:

Brakes on the unwind and wind-up shafts must be easy to access and to handle, as well as resistant. Inserting the shafts into the machine has to be an easy and smooth process, so consider the weight of the shaft, including the full roll, and ensure that the material slides into the machine quickly.

The measuring scale on each shaft, with the "0" being in the middle of the shaft, is a very helpful tool for setting-up the media and the alignment to the windup shaft.

READY FOR TESTING?: Last but not least, once you are ready for the testing of your laminator, you should focus on a series of key criteria during the demonstration to ensure it matches your requirements.

First, use greyscale pictures for the test and let the operator laminate at least 20 linear metres. Ask the operator to stop the machine in the middle of the laminating process and check the line on the graphic afterwards; there should be only a light stripe visible – or better still – nothing visible.

NOTE: For a roll to roll full length test, you can use and laminate standard coloured vinyl, ideally in black.

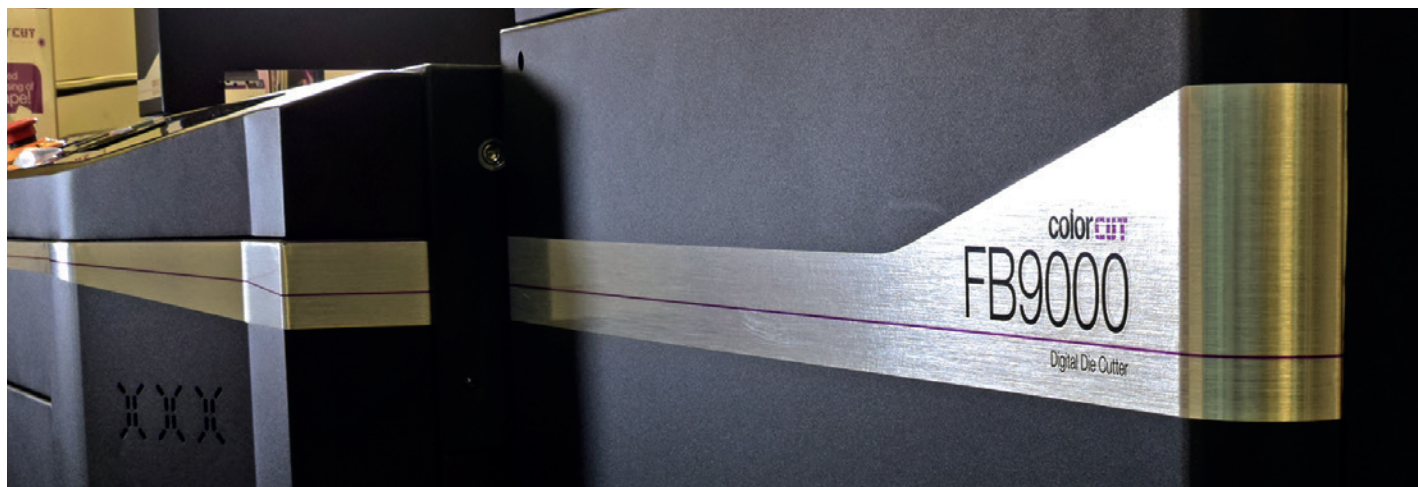
Next, watch the speed of alignment, accuracy and efficiency of the demonstrated machine, and also be sure to test paper together with lamination. Paper is more inclined to wave than self-adhesive vinyl and remember that this effect will disappear during the day, but some will occur within a few days later, so take your time to evaluate the laminated material.

For machines with a working width in excess of 160cm, you should test laminating onto sheet material, ideally onto PVC foamed boards that are more than 800mm wide. With these formats, you will realise the advantages of a stiff crown being on the top roller as, otherwise, bubbles may occur on the board, even up to a few days after application.

Finally, you should check the safety system. Does it work properly? Are the light-bar, the snail mode and foot switch, as well as other features, working in favour of the operator? Keep in mind, the safety system is there to protect the employee and your business

www.artsystems.co.uk





INTEC DIGITAL DIE-LESS FLATBED CUTTER

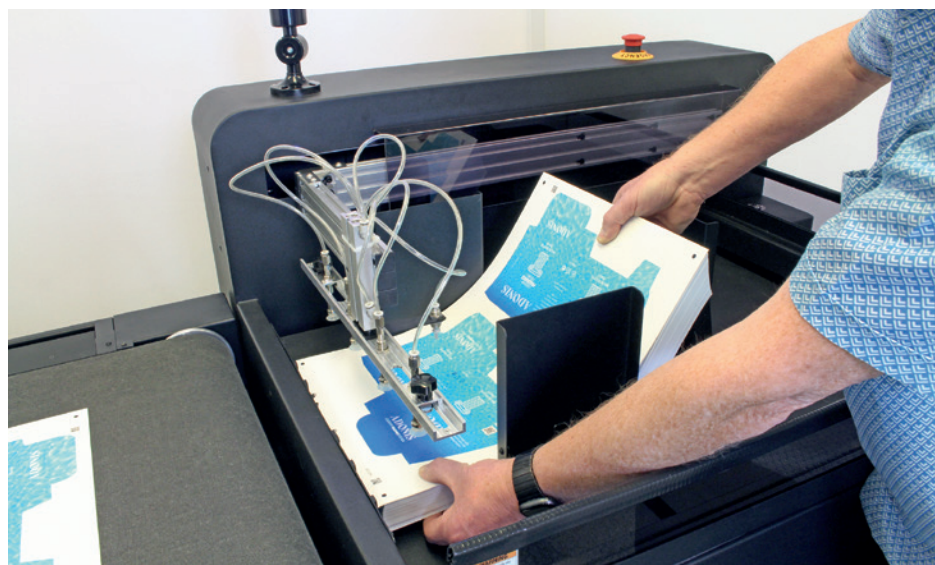
Known for its innovative auto feed cutting solutions, Intec Printing Solutions Limited, releases the ColorCut FB9000PRO Automatic Digital Die Cutter as its flagship flatbed cutting model.

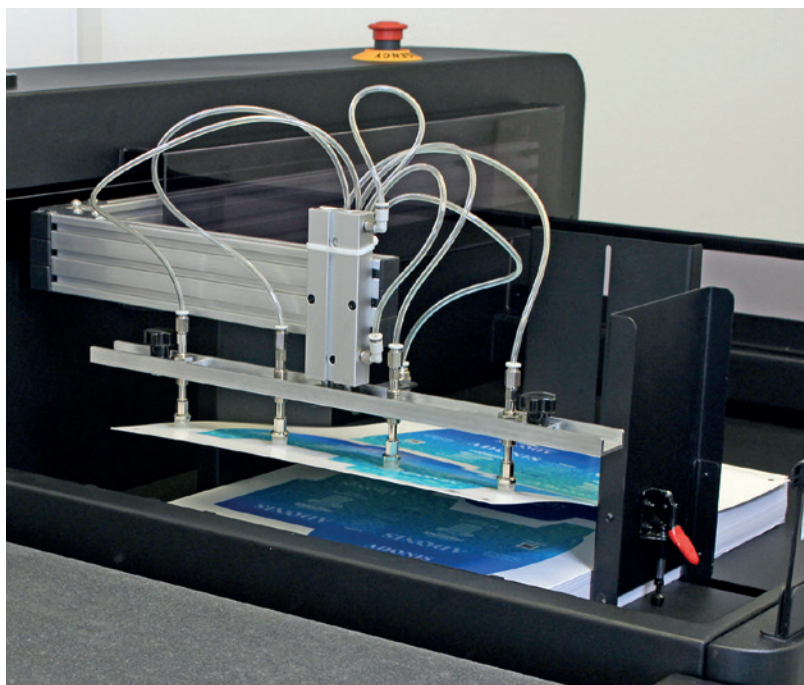
Bigger and faster – the new FB9000PRO lands itself right at the top of Intec's ColorCut product offering and becomes the new flagship model through its impressive new features! Combining cutting, creasing, perforating and scoring in a single pass ensures that the FB9000PRO offers rapid, automated and unattended production for the creation of packaging and P.O.S, paper, synthetic projects and kiss-cut sheet label production. The system is completed with a 2,000 auto feeder/stacker, vacuum suction conveyor belt cutting table and media collection tray to offer true unattended capability.

Mark Baker-Homes, director of business development states, "We are incredibly excited to introduce the FB9000PRO into our very successful ColorCut flatbed cutter range. This product offers a quantum leap in speed and functionality, as well as bringing new styling cues that will permeate across our ColorCut range over the coming year. Our new flagship model ensures any business, that wants to bring unattended quality cutting automation in-house, can do so with confidence."

THE FB9000PRO CUTTER

Rapidly processing jobs at speeds of up to 1,200mm/s with an SRA3 sheet cut in 15-45 seconds (depending on file complexity), the FB9000PRO can handle a variety of media types up to 1,000 micron thick including folding box board, card, paper, synthetics, soft boards, vinyl and label stocks and large sheet sizes up to 550mm x 850mm.





Its dual tool head provides separate cutting and creasing tools that operate independently of each other to reduce operation time and improve productivity. The cutting tool applies a class leading 1.2kg of cutting pressure to achieve crisp cuts on up to 1,000 micron media and an industry first for this type of cutter of 1.5kg creasing pressure, to achieve deep, clean creases. Productivity is further enhanced with the ability to specify different speed modes for 'blended' or multi speed cut and crease operations on the same job.

Using QR codes for cut file recognition, the cutters CCD camera quickly reads the code to retrieve the printed sheets associated cut file, and four corner marks to ensure accuracy of cut and crease with the printed artwork and compensate for any sheet placement skew or print stretch. This function also enables the operator to instantly view the job on screen and set the desired cutting features from the systems material database. This means that different aspects of the file can have different treatments applied to them and also predetermine the order they are worked on.

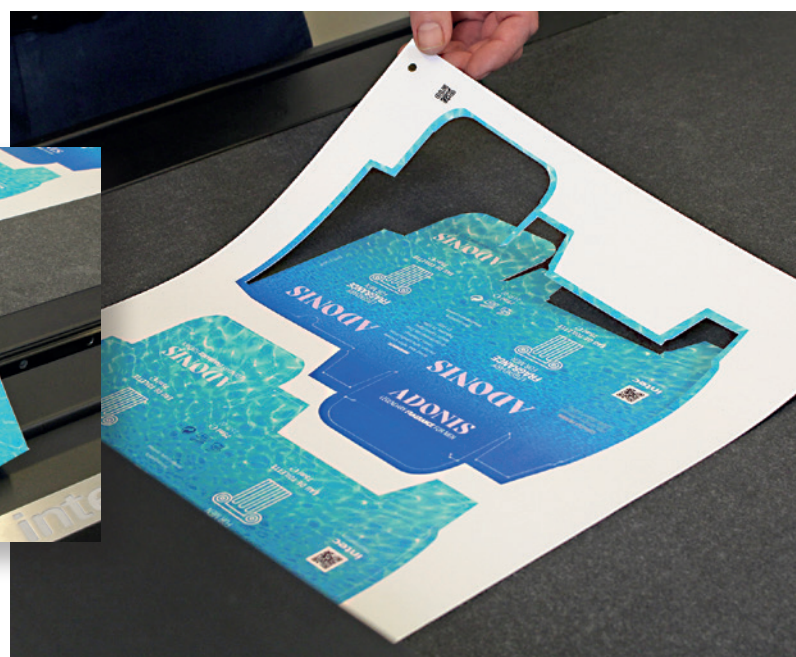
The cutter is driven using the Production Studio package (included with the system), which is part of Intec's acclaimed ColorCut Pro software suite. This can be used as a stand alone application with the cutter or as part of a networked solution when used in conjunction with Intec's ColorCut Pro Server Station. The ColorCut Pro software suite offers sophisticated features with Job Library Manager workflow application and the new Template Maker application for producing vector box templates, to load into Adobe Illustrator or CorelDRAW, for use with the cutter.



HIGH SPEED SHEET FEEDING

The auto sheet feeder provides exceptional pneumatic efficiency and material handling to deliver a solution which is perfectly synchronised with the FB9000's continuous conveyor cutting belt. Accommodating both landscape and portrait feed orientations, the feeders pick-up arm is easily adjusted to accommodate wide or narrow media.

The cavernous media stacker is easily lowered to load up to 2,000 SRA3 sheets (25Kg) or a stack height of up to 22.5cm and raises simultaneously as each sheet is fed, from the top of the stack, to offer true unattended production.



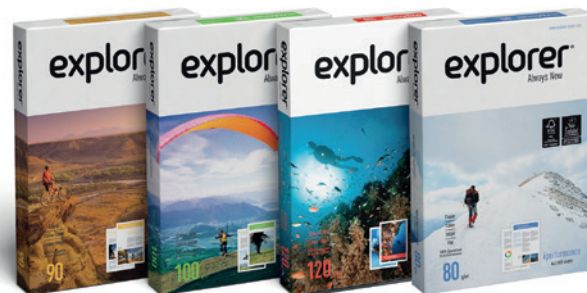
EXPLORER PAPER AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY FROM PREMIER

Premier, one of the UK's leading suppliers of paper, packaging, sign and display products and other printable media has announced the addition of the Explorer range to their cut size paper offering.

Explorer is a genuine 'A grade' paper, produced by the Navigator Company using FSC® certified eucalyptus globulus fibres, a natural, auto-regenerative resource. The use of eucalyptus globulus fibres ensures the perfect combination of thicker cell walls and more fibres per weight unit, creating Explorer's trademark excellent sheet formation.

Matt Fisher, Premier's Sales Director for Office Papers, comments "We are delighted to announce the addition of the Explorer range to our product offering. Explorer is a well established, well recognised brand across Europe that has a big visual impact and a strong branding identity."

Explorer is one of the whitest papers on the



market, its optimised thickness and stiffness offer great printing definition and print performance whilst its smooth surface means that toner and ink consumption is reduced significantly. The Explorer paper range has been specially developed for use on ink-jet, laser and copier printers.

Fisher continues "Explorer is a top performing cut size paper that delivers reliable, high quality results time and again."

Throughout their network of nationwide branches Premier offer a choice of over 5,500 product items. Explorer is available in A4 and A3 across a choice of weights, from 75gsm through to 120gsm; exclusively in the UK from Premier's nationwide network of branches, for a next day delivery by a team of trained and experienced paper professionals, on Premier's own fleet of vehicles.

www.paper.co.uk

NAVIGATOR LAUNCHES GKRAFT PRODUCTS

The Navigator Company has launched a new line of packaging products, the gKraft brand, to help accelerate the transition from plastic to the use of natural, sustainable, recyclable and biodegradable fibres, once again demonstrating its commitment to sustainability and preserving the environment.

Forest based products, particularly those obtained from planted forests, are essential in the transition away from a linear fossil economy — based on finite, environmentally unfriendly resources with no future — to a sustainable circular bioeconomy which is nature friendly and climate neutral.

These new packaging solutions created by The Navigator Company were developed to meet the specific needs of the packaging market, particularly the industrial and retail segments: food, catering, pharmaceutical, apparel and cosmetics.

The brand name, gKraft, uses the term "Kraft", which means "strength" and "power" in reference to the company's manufacturing process, in which the fibres obtained have better mechanical properties and greater resistance. In addition, the meaning of the letter "g" in gKraft refers to globulus (the species of eucalyptus used in paper production), as well as the various characteristics that define this new product — good, green, game changer, guaranteed results, growth — and that make this packaging solution meet all sustainability requirements.

By using short eucalyptus fibres in the packaging segment, the company is taking another step forward in the innovation of its products. Despite having produced packaging paper for almost twenty years, The Navigator Company capitalised on the pandemic period to carry out extensive research, development and innovation, led by a multidisciplinary team and supported by RAIZ — Forest and Paper



Research Institute, which took advantage of the specific molecular structure and morphology of Eucalyptus globulus fibres to develop resistant and sustainable paper materials, as alternatives to single-use plastic, which are safer and healthier for the food industry. The project is now generating a new portfolio of patents, one of which has already been submitted for publication in June. In addition, two other patents are being developed, one in an advanced preparation phase and the other still in the trial phase.

Based on the "From Fossil to Forest" concept, which reflects the company's strategy aligned with the proposition of creating sustainable value for its shareholders and for society at large, The Navigator Company, by launching the new gKraft line, is taking a step forward in providing packaging alternatives that support other organisations in meeting their environmental and food safety and hygiene goals.

EUCALYPTUS GLOBULUS — THE STARTING POINT FOR PACKAGING INNOVATION

Contrary to previous knowledge, Eucalyptus globulus now also appears to be a very suitable raw material for different types of paper packaging, thus offering an alternative both to long fibres from northern Europe and to the use of



packaging plastic.

Like Eucalyptus globulus, there are few forest species, if any, with the versatility and ability to enhance the quality of things so diverse as toilet, printing and writing paper, decor paper, special paper for use in filters, tea bags, and now in the packaging segment as well.

The use of virgin Eucalyptus globulus fibre, obtained from responsibly managed and duly certified forests, enables the efficient use of resources from a "More with Less" standpoint, allowing the same square metres of forest area to produce more square metres of paper bags or boxes. This is possible not only because the forest productivity of eucalyptus is five to seven times higher than that of Nordic Pine, but also because it requires less eucalyptus wood for the same amount of paper, in addition to having higher turnover, thus helping to fully leverage carbon dioxide capture in the same area.

Due to its morphology, this species of eucalyptus is also recognised for allowing more recycling cycles, with a much higher recyclability rate compared to other paper fibres, thus making it more sustainable, as demonstrated in several laboratory studies at Japanese and Portuguese universities and at RAIZ — Forest and Paper Research Institute.

www.thenavigatorcompany.com



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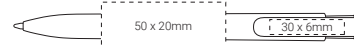


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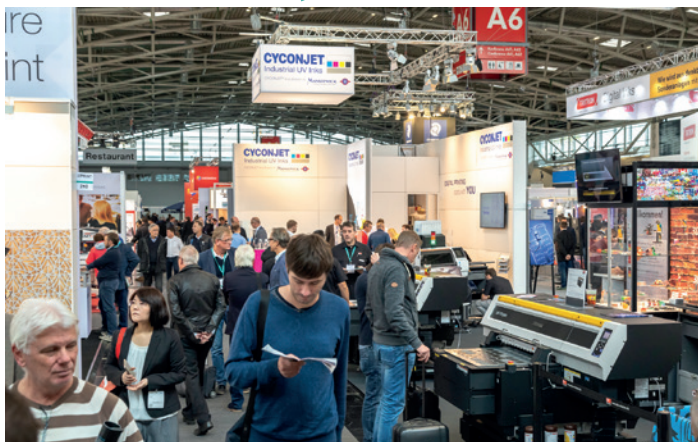
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ICE EUROPE, CCE INTERNATIONAL AND INPRINT MUNICH



After a compulsory break in 2021, preparations are well underway for the collective of converting, paper and print exhibitions. Organiser Mack-Brooks Exhibitions is confident to hold the shows from 15 to 17 March 2022 at the Munich Trade Fair Centre in Germany. Visitor registration is already open.

"Finally, our live events can continue their critical role in bringing the global converting, paper and print industry together. As of today, a total of 467 exhibitors will be presenting their latest technologies on a combined net exhibition space of more than 13,500m²", explained Patrick Herman, Event Director of the Converting, Paper and Print Events at Mack-Brooks Exhibitions. "For the first time, the three shows will take place at the same time and the same venue creating an all-round experience with increased opportunities and synergies for all trade visitors on-site. With InPrint Munich covering the print technology for industrial manufacturing we are now able to offer an almost comprehensive overview of the value chain.", concluded Patrick Herman.

Line-up and programme: Amongst exhibiting companies are: (ICE Europe) Kroenert, Kampf, Polytype, Davis Standard, Erhardt + Leimer, CMC / (CCE International) Lamina System, Baysek Machiners, Solarco Machinery, Kolbus, Bahmüller, Emmepi, Sun Automation / (InPrint Munich) XAAR, Agfa, Seiko Instruments, Inkatronik, Meteor Inkjet, Siegwark, Afford Inks and many more.

Furthermore, visitors can expect an extensive and diverse supporting programme. At ICE Europe, best practices, excellence, innovation and extraordinary achievements in the converting industry will be honoured with the popular ICE Awards. Four winners, selected by industry professionals, will be presented during an official ceremony in the following categories: Digital Converting Solutions/ Sustainable Products and Manufacturing Processes/ Efficient Production Solutions/ Special Film Innovations.

The comprehensive and specialised conference programme at InPrint Munich offers exciting insight into market developments and innovative projects. The presentations focus on technology trends, new applications and the latest print



technology solutions for industrial manufacturing, with Q&A sessions after each presentation. The open seminar programme at CCE International covers the latest trends and topics in corrugated and folding carton production and processing.

Health and safety: Increased hygiene measures, social distancing management and medical safeguarding will be part of the robust programme on-site and published in due course. More information about the framework for the health and safety measures is available here.

Important visitor information: Tickets for ICE Europe, CCE International and InPrint Munich 2022 are now available in the show's online ticket shop. Day tickets are available for €26 online and €40 on-site, season tickets are available for €36 online and €52 on-site. The tickets grant access to the co-located events. All three shows will be open on Tuesday, 15th March 2022, and Wednesday, 16th March 2022, from 9.00 – 17.00 and on Thursday, 17th March 2022, from 9.00 – 16.00.

About ICE Europe: ICE Europe, the International Exhibition for Paper, Film & Foil Converting, is the world's leading exhibition for the conversion of flexible, web-based materials, such as paper, film, foil and nonwovens. The show attracts industry experts from a wide range of sectors, including packaging, printing, plastics, textiles and nonwovens, paper, engineering, chemical, medical and pharma, automotive, aviation, food and electronics.

About CCE International: CCE International is Europe's key event for the corrugated and folding carton industry, covering the entire supply chain in the production and processing of corrugated and carton material. The show addresses technology buyers and users from the corrugated and carton board industry and their target markets, such as carton and boxes manufacturers, tubes and cores suppliers, packaging designers, plant managers, technical engineers and company leaders.

About InPrint Munich: InPrint Munich is Europe's flagship event of the highly successful InPrint brand for the emerging community of printing professionals and manufacturers who want to maximise on new business potential for print applications in the industrial production sector. The exhibition is targeted at high level trade professionals from the printing industry and from various industry sectors, such as aeronautics and aerospace, packaging and containers printing, architecture and design, automotive, consumer goods manufacturers, medical equipment and many more.

www.ice-x.com/europe • www.cce-international.com
www.inprintmunich.com

SIGN & DIGITAL UK FLOORPLAN EXPANDED FOR 2022

Sign & Digital UK (SDUK) has announced registration is open for its much anticipated return to the NEC, Birmingham, with Roland DG, Epson, Premier Paper, Hybrid Services/Mimaki, Hexis, The Magic Touch, Trotec Laser, PrintMAX, William Smith Group 1832, Grafityp, Zund Plotting Systems, Signwaves, Inktec Europe, Perspex Distribution and Your Print Specialists amongst the brands confirmed for the show.

The exhibition, taking place 22-24 March 2022, will also welcome many first time exhibitors. Companies include SwissQPrint, Brunel Engraving, Advin Beach Flag, Mr Clipart, DNX Design, OneVision Software, IQ Australia, and Unify Office Group.

Other exhibitors already confirmed to exhibit at



SDUK include Eurobond Adhesives, Sign Making Tools, Award Crafters, RA Smart, Soyang Europe, Very Displays, Trade Etching Direct, Arken POP, Doro Tape and many more.

Jenny Matthew, Sign & Digital UK event director said: "The floorplan is packed! We are thrilled such a large number of exhibitors have returned for 2022; that so many of those have increased their presence, with stand upgrades, and that we have welcomed so many new exhibitors. It really

is testament to the industry's confidence in SDUK and the show's continued role in bringing the industry together to do business".

"We have recently conducted an extensive research campaign to gain greater insight into our visitors' needs and plans for the event – the results have been overwhelmingly positive; new features are being developed and we expect a big turnout in March".

Sign & Digital UK will take place at the NEC, Birmingham from 22-24 March 2022.

To enquire about exhibiting please contact the show team on 01342 332 100, email signanddigitaluk@fav-house.com

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NEW:



InPrint Munich 2022 will be co-located with **ICE Europe**, the world's leading Exhibition for the Converting Industry and **CCE International**, the International Exhibition for the Corrugated and Folding Carton Industry.

www.ice-x.com/europe
www.cce-international.com

BAMBOO CREATIONS SECURES ENVIRONMENTAL CREDENTIALS

Family run large format print specialist Bamboo Creations has invested in a new HP Latex 800W printer to improve its productivity and further enhance its environmental credentials.

Based in Banbury in Oxfordshire, Bamboo Creations offers a range of wide format print services, specialising in events, theming and corporate companies. As well as working directly for the likes of CenterParcs, Bamboo Creations also counts Royal Ascot, Warwick Castle, The Jockey Club, Sea Life and Emirates among its end user customers through its strong partnerships with leading creative agencies Natural Green and T3.

Working with these prestigious brands means Bamboo Creations is always ensuring it delivers print to the highest quality, but is also constantly aware of its environmental impact to meet the incredibly strict criteria set by these customers.

Boasting a whole host of environmental credentials, including its GREENGUARD GOLD-certified water based inks, the HP Latex 800W fits in perfectly with Bamboo Creations' eco-conscious approach to production, while also allowing the company to widen its service offering.

According to Bamboo Creations' Director Emma Dixon: "We decided that it was time to upgrade our printers and enhance our capabilities, enabling greater productivity while maintaining the sustainable benefits and print quality."

"We already had an HP printer, and its performance and quality — combined with our own high level of service and quality control — has helped us stand out from the crowd. It was critical that



the new printer met our needs to enhance capability, increase speed without impacting quality and to continue to deliver against our sustainability promise."

While the HP Latex 800W printer will offer Bamboo Creations a raft of sustainable benefits, Emma Dixon said the machine will also help to open up new markets for the company. The flexibility of the machine allows it to print onto a wider range of materials.

www.hp.com

HOW MICROFACTORIES CAN CHANGE THE FACE OF FASHION



Mark Sollman, Product Manager EMEA, Mimaki Europe says with the all important COP26 Climate Change Conference having taken centre stage in November, there is no time like the present for the fashion world to rally together in stepping up sustainability efforts and getting carbon emissions under control. Globally, the fashion industry is now estimated to account for around 10 percent of greenhouse gas emissions and 20 percent of wastewater, making the pursuit of greener production methods more pertinent than ever before. Thankfully, we are seeing a new era of production enter the fashion arena, with the increasing emergence of technologically advanced, highly automated microfactories.

Along with reducing unnecessary waste through on-demand production, microfactories have a smaller ecological footprint than traditional garment production and require no water use during the production process, making it not only a faster solution, but a greener one too.

Last year's FESPA saw Mimaki team up with fashion designer Carolina Guzman to bring her designs to life in real time at the show, setting up its own working microfactory live on-site to take her designs from screen to garment within just a day. Guzman's designs were created using Mimaki's TS100-1600 Sublimation Printer, before being transferred to textile, digitally cut and finally pieced together. Devised with a string of ethical and environmental objectives threaded throughout, the microfactory

also exclusively utilised eco-friendly Greentex fabric, and any remaining material was donated to Sheltersuit: a wind and waterproof coat that can be transformed into a sleeping bag, which is provided free of charge to homeless people and refugees.

Through working with a number of strategic partners — including transfer printing expert, Klieverik; paper solutions specialist, Neenah Coldenhove; and digital cutting equipment provider, Summa — Mimaki was able to produce a collection of unique, high quality garments live on the stand during the tradeshow, demonstrating to visitors from more than 100 countries some of the key reasons that microfactories seem set to change the future of fashion...

UNPARALLELED SPEED AND VERSATILITY

Where traditionally, apparel manufacturing has centred on a production chain model of sourcing materials and producing garments in bulk, microfactories are now enabling on-demand, on-location production, making it possible to create everything from unique, one off pieces and samples right through to entire product lines — all at unprecedented speeds. This means greater flexibility and customisation, enabling designers to modify or update designs and respond to market trends as they occur.

SIMPLIFIED SUPPLY CHAINS AND MINIMISED RISK

The microfactory setup brings production in-house and on-demand, minimising the cost of not only storing stock, but also of shipping it and responsibly disposing of unsold items. Where recent geopolitical events have highlighted the fragility of global supply chains, microfactories offer a unique independence from these systems, empowering garment manufacturers to future proof their businesses, become less reliant on external systems and suppliers, and reduce the risk of disruptions.

A BOOSTED BOTTOM LINE AND A GREENER FUTURE

Facilitating savings in a whole line of resources, from physical storage and production space to time and energy, microfactories ultimately have the potential to significantly increase profitability for garment manufacturers, with the additional benefit of being easily scalable as production increases. Perhaps even more compelling however, are the environmental considerations. Demonstrated on a small scale through Mimaki's recent project, the environmental benefits inherent to microfactory production will have an even greater impact as it becomes more prolific and commonplace throughout the fashion world, with the potential to effect meaningful environmental change as adoption increases in the years to come. In short, watch this space!

www.mimakieurope.com

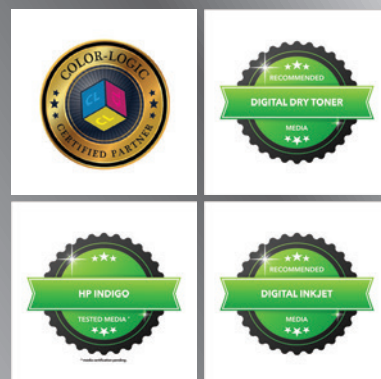


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AGFA ANAPURNA H2500i LED HELPS FREESTYLE DESIGNS

Bath based branding and signage business

Freestyle Designs has been established for 14 years, specialising in a range of services from standard shop signage projects to large rebrands, vehicle graphics, wallcoverings and vinyl graphics, and more. Founder and Managing Director Jayson Godridge loves to keep the business moving forward, whether that's staying up to date with the latest technology and investing in new kit, or targeting larger scale, higher volume work. "We knew we weren't going to be able to achieve that with our current machinery," explains Jayson.

The search was on for the right piece of equipment to help Freestyle eliminate bottlenecks and pursue those higher volume projects. They were after something faster, higher quality, with increased output. With a machine size and a couple of manufacturers in mind, after a special summer event at the Agfa showroom in Rugby, Jayson soon ended up setting his sights on a larger model – the Agfa Anapurna H2500i LED.

"It was bigger than the machines we were originally looking at," says Jayson, "but when I went to see it in action at Agfa it was clear that it would fit just fine, and that it was definitely the machine that would help us grow and push into different areas and different types of work. As soon as I walked in and saw it printing, I knew I wanted to go for it!"

Freestyle had a longstanding, trusted relationship with the Josero team, purchasing their first roll to roll application table from Josero and having known Consumables Sales Manager Mitch Anstey for many years. Jayson explains: "We were initially talking to another company about the same machine, but having had a good experience with Josero in the past, the trust was there and I felt much more comfortable working with them on the purchase than anybody else." The final sway for Jayson was perhaps the fantastic price point on the model, which he describes as a 'bargain'.

The Agfa Anapurna H2500i LED is now up and running at Freestyle Designs, following a smooth installation process from Josero. "The installation was great. Steve, the engineer, was very



knowledgeable, and the fitting went without a hitch. Josero even helped us with a part exchange on our machine, the team came within one day, took our machine away and replaced it with the new one, with very little downtime. The whole process was seamless."

Jayson is satisfied that support from Josero doesn't end there: "When we wanted a bit more training they were happy to come and help, bringing support from Agfa with them as well. It's quite a lot to learn when you get a new machine and the RIP is different and everything, but Josero are just at the other end of the phone whenever we needed them, and always very helpful."

The machine is already earning its keep and helping Freestyle meet its goals, as Jayson says: "The bottleneck doesn't exist at all anymore. The machine is a beast, and is just churning through the work. It's very reliable and working really well." The work going through the Agfa Anapurna H2500i LED includes exhibition graphics, display boards and POS projects, and it's helping Freestyle to promote their eco-friendly range of products as well.

New possibilities are also opening up to Freestyle thanks to the Agfa Anapurna H2500i LED, as Jayson explains: "We're using different media, and we're able to work with wider media because it's a hybrid machine. We can print rolls, which we couldn't do before on our flatbed, so we're now printing rolls up to 2.5 metres wide which has massively increased our output."

There are also other new opportunities brought about by the new kit that have pleasantly surprised Jayson and the Freestyle team, as detailed by Jayson: "We've been approached by other sign companies that have heard we have the machine, and we've been producing work for them when they're over capacity themselves, so we're seeing unexpected advantages. I really wasn't expecting trade work to be coming off the back of this new machine, especially so quickly. We've done a few decent sized jobs from it, and those companies were really impressed by how quickly we could turn it around."

For Jayson Godridge and the Freestyle Designs team, the investment in the Agfa Anapurna H2500i LED from Josero has exceeded expectations by delivering on their original requirements and delivering unanticipated business benefits as well. Would Jayson work with Josero again for any future equipment needs? "Definitely," he says. "I'd be happy to work with Josero again – they've been so easy to deal with."

www.josero.com

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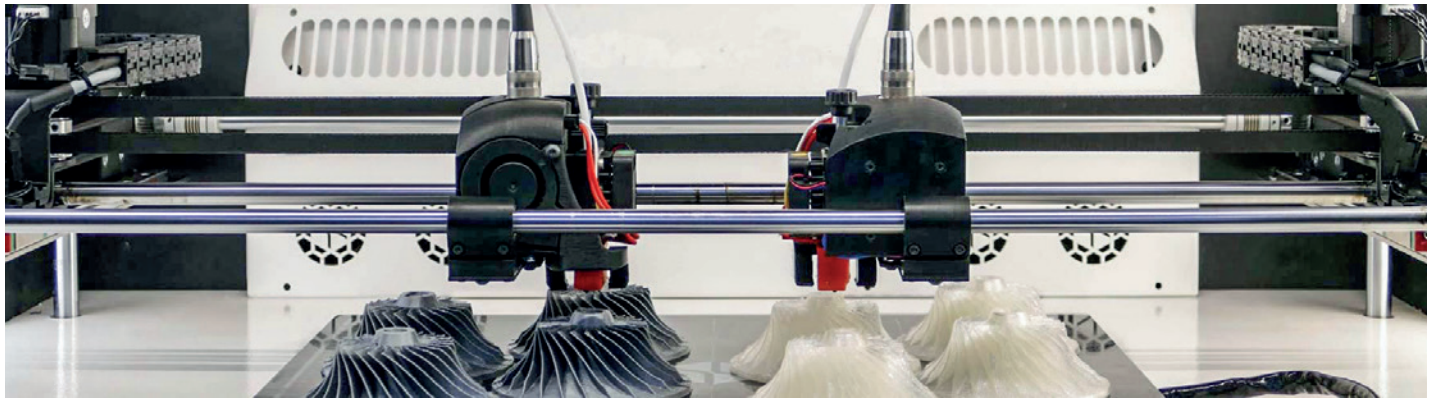
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AUTENTICA TO BECOME 'THE AMAZON OF 3D PRINTING'



A disruptive tech start-up has raised over £150,000 of investment — and is set to make 20 key hires by the end of 2022 — in a bid to become the 'Amazon of the global additive manufacturing sector' and transform the archaic spare parts industry.

Autentica has developed the first blockchain powered, AI-based digital supply chain for spare parts and — with private investors matching a £76,000 Innovate UK grant — is set to move from proof of concept to full launch by March 2022.

Following three years of intensive R&D, Blackpool based Autentica's 3D printing marketplace will sell certified digital design files of spare parts — increasing efficiencies in the traditional supply chain by up to 90%.

And, to support ambitious growth targets — which include £5m turnover by the end of 2023 — Autentica plans to make 20 key hires across sales, software development, customer service, and technical support.

"I've been working towards this moment for the past 11 years — but my vision relied on investment from those who could take us from concept to reality," explained Irma Vitoriano, founder of Autentica. "We're now in a financial position where we can build the platform quickly and hire colleagues that can help to bring the product to market — a major step in our efforts to shake up a vastly antiquated spare parts arena."

"The beauty of Autentica is that we can connect parts designers with customers and 3D printers across all



Autentica Founders, George Gilbert and Irma Vitoriano

sectors and continents — and that needs to be the direction of travel for industry. By eliminating the need for a warehouse to store products, our on demand 3D printing system optimises logistics, speeds up delivery times, and — crucially, as the world aims to reach Net Zero — reduces the CO₂ emissions generated through

traditional practices."

Servicing a wide range of sectors — including automotive, medical, and utilities — Autentica already has 156 UK based 3D printing companies preparing to come online, 130 parts distributors signed up across Chile, Singapore, and Angola.

Speaking of her ambitions for the future, Irma concluded: "Autentica exists to transform supply chains, reduce environmental impact, and build a sustainable future for the global additive manufacturing sector. By providing a platform for the 3D printing of parts, we've created a global network of designers, manufacturers, and customers seeking a fast, efficient, and streamlined experience."

www.autenticaparts.com

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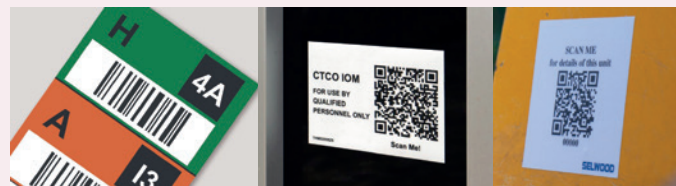
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An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves.

NEW YEAR VOW

I was going to quit all my bad habits for the new year, but then I remembered, nobody likes a quitter!

WHAT EXACTLY IS JUNK?

Junk is something you throw away three weeks before you need it.

FUNNY TRIO

My mate's just moved so I went round his new gaff last night with a complete central heating system. It was a house-warming present.

I went to the double glazing showroom yesterday. When a member of staff asked if I needed any help, I told him, "no thanks, I'm just window-shopping"

I asked to borrow a ladder from my neighbour, he said 'only got a step ladder' I don't know my real ladder!

BAD GRAMMAR

I wanted to marry an English teacher when she got out of jail. But you can't end a sentence with a proposition.

BEST BID WINS

One day a man went to an auction. While there, he bid on a parrot. One day a man went to an auction. While there, he bid on a parrot. Sorry, that's not the joke, just couldn't resist. Anyway, he really wanted this bird, so he got caught up in the bidding. He kept on bidding but kept getting outbid, so he bid higher and higher and higher.

Finally, after he bid way more than he intended, he won the bid — the parrot was his at last!

As he was paying for the parrot, he said to the auctioneer, "I sure hope this parrot can talk. I would hate to have paid this much for it, only to find out that he can't talk!"

"Don't worry," said the auctioneer. "Who do you think kept bidding against you?"

GREEN FINGERS

I can't tell the difference between a rose and a dandelion. So, when it came time to tidy up my garden, I had no clue which plants to keep and which ones to dig up. Until, that is, my mother gave me this handy tip: "Pull them all up. If it comes back, it's a weed."

IN CONTROL AT WORK

I was in a taxi today and the driver said, "I love my job. I'm my own boss. Nobody tells me what to do." "Cool, turn left here mate"

JOB INTERVIEW

A guy goes in for a job interview and sits down with the boss.

The boss asks him, "What do you think is your worst quality?"

The salesman says, "I'm probably too honest."

The boss says, "That's not a bad thing, I think being honest is a good quality."

The salesman replies, "I don't care about what you think!"

HI OLIVE

A fellow came into a bar and ordered a martini. Before drinking it, he removed the olive and carefully put it into a glass jar. Then he ordered another martini and did the same thing. After an hour, when he was full of martinis and the jar was full of olives, he staggered out.

"Well," said a customer, "I never saw anything as peculiar as that!"

"What's so peculiar about it?" the bartender said. "His wife sent him out for a jar of olives"

THE SHOW MUST GO ON

One morning over breakfast, a husband was complaining to his wife. "I've been with the circus for over 25 years, and every performance I follow behind the elephants and clean up their poop. Twenty-five years, 'Scoop the poop! Scoop the poop!' I'm tired of it."

His wife calmly said, "If you're so unhappy, why don't you quit?"

"What! And leave show business?!"

WHAT WOMAN WANT

A salesman and his wife were lying in bed the other night when he noticed she had bought a new book entitled, "What 10 Million British Women Want."

He grabbed the book out of her hands and started thumbing through the pages.

His wife was a little annoyed. "Hey, what do you think you're doing?"

He calmly replied, "I just wanted to see if they spelled my name right."

LONG SPEECH

A salesman giving a long-winded speech finally says, "I'm sorry I talked so long. I left my watch at home."

A voice from the crowd says, "There's a calendar behind you."

THE EIGHT IRON

Off the seventh tee, Joe sliced his shot deep into a wooded ravine. He took his eight iron and clambered down the embankment in search of his lost ball. After many long minutes of hacking at the underbrush, he spotted something glistening in the leaves. As he drew nearer, he discovered that it was an eight iron in hands of a skeleton!

Joe immediately called out to his friend, "Jack, I've got trouble down here!"

"What's the matter?" Jack asked from the edge of the ravine.

"Bring me my wedge," Joe shouted. "You can't get out of here with an eight iron!"

SHORTS! IN THIS WEATHER?

I can't believe I was arrested for impersonating a politician. I was just sitting there doing nothing.

What's the most regrettable means of communication? Remorse code.

Bono and The Edge walk into a bar. The barman says, "Oh no, not U2 again!"

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