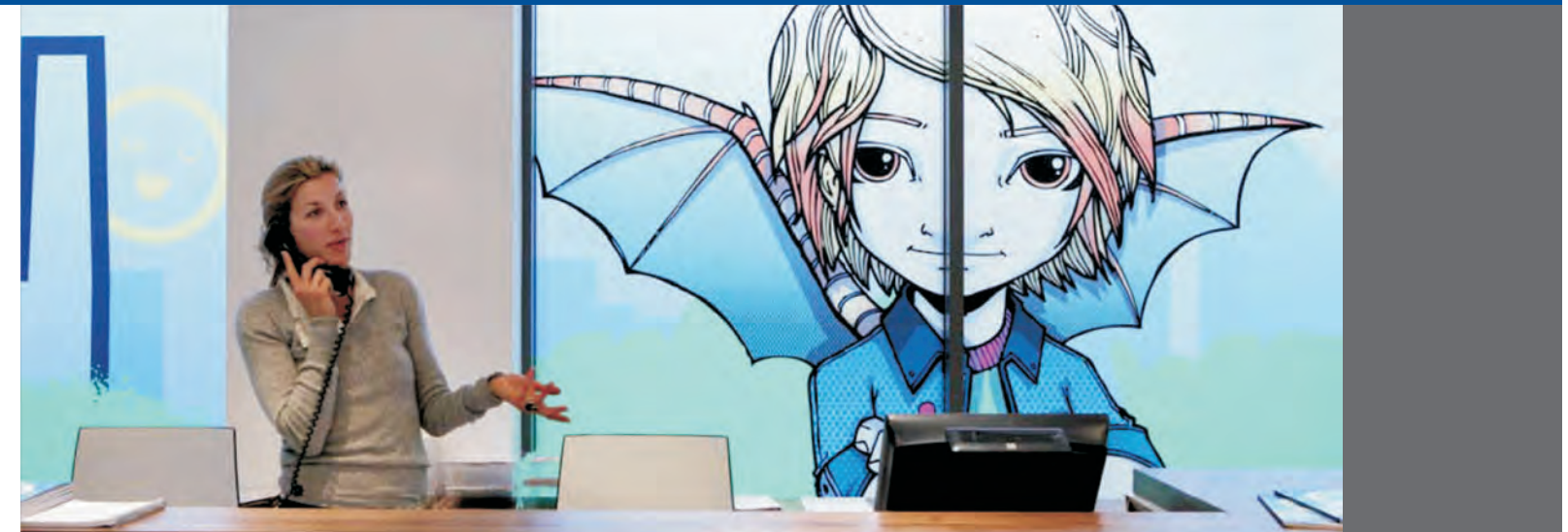


It's as easy as ABC...

With a back-ground steeped in full-colour screen-printing, Lewisham-based ABC Graphics was very particular about its choice of machines when it made the transition to wide-format digital printing.



The capabilities of the EFI-VUTEk PressVu 200/600 have been paramount in enabling ABC Graphics to increase the amount of digitally printed work it does to rigid material.

Andrews also praises the set-up of the machine as one of the advantages of the EFI-VUTEk PressVu 200/600. "Our production team finds this is a printer which is simple to use, only needing one person to operate it, and this means that we can spend more time preparing the next job instead of labouring over the system while it's working," he comments. "Actual printing rates are often erroneous in real speed times if you have to factor in the set-up, loading and off-loading the material; the true throughput is how quickly you can send a job to be printed to the point where it is fully cured, ready for finishing or stacking. The UV-curable inks of the PressVu 200/600 are dry immediately and this also saves considerable amounts of time and man-power."

The capabilities of the EFI-VUTEk 200/600 have been paramount in enabling ABC Graphics to increase the amount of digitally printed work it does to rigid materials. However, the machine has also proved to be invaluable for producing a wide range of applications onto all kinds of flexible media, including many which traditionally aren't printed with UV-curable inks. There's the additional benefit that output using these inks don't require additional lamination or protection and, thus, time and money are both saved which is a benefit the company can pass on to its customers.

The quality of the EFI-VUTEk 200/600 has also meant that many interior jobs can now be produced using the printer, including banners for use in stands, such as roll-up transportable units, as well as pop-up displays which can be used time and time again. Other areas where the flat-bed printer plays an important role is in the production of stand builds for exhibitions where simple and elaborate configurations are available from basic walls and desks, through to elaborate multi-layered constructions. All of these conform to the strictest of health, safety and fire regulations and are assisted by having been printed using non-hazardous UV-curable inks.

Andrews says ABC Graphics hasn't looked back since the day it installed its EFI-VUTEk PressVu 200/600. As an existing customer of CMYUK Digital it meant that this supplier was the company's first port of call when looking for another printer. "Dealing with a company which not only understands the machinery it's selling but, also, has a thorough and deep-seated knowledge of the wide-format digital printing industry is a huge benefit," he concludes. "We were on a tight learning curve when we took on the flat-bed printer but everything was arranged for our work-force to receive the right level of training over a week-end so that any disruption was minimised. The printer itself was installed without a hitch, and has worked faithfully for our business since the day it produced its first print in our building."

When the business decided to upgrade its original flat-bed UV curable printer three years ago, it opted for an EFI-VUTEk PressVu 200/600 to bring additional flexibility for producing direct to rigid and flexible materials. The machine was purchased from specialist distributor, CMYUK Digital, and has performed faultlessly since day one.

"Having evolved from being a screen-print specialist, the move to digital, and how the machines interact with the type of jobs we produce, gives us the ability to get the very best of out of our equipment," states Gary Andrews, one of the co-owners of ABC Graphics. "Yes, there are newer flat-bed printers available now but, as the PressVu 200/600 has proved to be a consistent work-horse and absolutely ideal for the work we output, we haven't any intention of upgrading it for the foreseeable future."

One of the reasons why ABC Graphics has proved to be such a popular source of wide-format display print is through its highly skilled team which concentrates on making sure colours are correct and that all types of input is catered for accurately. Although many jobs are supplied digitally, the company still handles scanning and typesetting, where required, with the integrity of the end output being exactly to the clients specification.

Another important factor for the company's success lies in its innovative approach to display print. This can combine technologies and bring in features, such as cardboard engineering for automated finishing which can cut and crease rigid materials such as corrugateds, popular for use in three-dimensional free-standing retail units, such as dump bins at the point-of-sale.

Although the company has a wealth of roll-fed printers, an increasing amount of work is now carried out using UV-curable materials and, for these jobs, the EFI-VUTEk PressVu 200/600 has come into its own. "Our former flat-bed printer was a very early example of what this technology could do," continues Andrews. "However, although it was one of the first ever to be installed in the UK, it was a great introduction to UV-curable ink technology and its versatility, giving us a clearer idea and indication of the type of machine we would progress to in order to increase our production throughput and improve overall quality and consistency of prints."

ABC Graphics still uses its screen-printing facilities for longer run print runs where there is no variable content. However, its digital printing capabilities are ever increasing as customers learn to appreciate the flexibility of the process and the types of output which can be produced. Much of the company's work is in point-of-sale and retail, although it also specialises in billboards and outdoor advertising as well as specialist applications such as window graphics, banners, hoardings, exhibition and event displays, and branding projects.

Since installing the EFI-VUTEk PressVu, ABC Graphics has also experimented with different substrates for more unusual applications, such as louvred doors, perforated one-way window graphics, fabrics and textured media. As demand increases for output which doesn't produce emissions or VOCs (volatile organic compounds) in its inks, so UV-curable options are becoming more popular thanks to the fact that this ink contains no hazardous substances or threats to the environment.



Printer showcased in this study:
EFI-VUTEK PressVu 200/600