

## The Enigma variations...

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Eighteen years of producing high quality displays has seen Maidenhead based Enigma move steadily from traditional sign-making techniques through early ink-jet printers to full-colour wide-format digital production solutions. Today the company is involved in the origination and manufacture of a large range of products including exhibition graphics, interior and exterior applications, banner stands and pop-up displays, hoardings, vehicle graphics and fine art printing.

Having become well versed in the types of production possible from wide-format ink-jet machines using various different ink formulations, two years ago Enigma extended its capabilities with the addition of an EFI-VUTEK PressVu 200/600 UV-curable printer which was supplied by UK distributor, CMYUK Digital. The company was already working with aqueous- and solvent-based systems from Canon and Mutoh respectively, with wide experience using earlier machines, and the additional ability to be able to print direct to rigid substrates was deemed to be advantageous for many of the applications being produced.

Reno Macri, managing director at Enigma, has worked his way up the scale since first starting the company in his mother's spare room back in 1991. "I started the business as a sign manufacturer, using a poly-cutter and an epidiascope so that we could resize images onto a wall and cut them out by hand," he explains. "By 1998 Enigma had moved forward to the point where it was time to invest in digital production, and we were using aqueous-based printers before moving to solvent-based inks and, ultimately, UV-curable with the addition of an early flat-bed."

When Macri decided the time had come to increase quality and throughput on the UV-curable side, his experience in the types of printers available on the market made him realise that, in order to produce the best, this meant investing in the best. "I'd learned the lesson in the past that buying cheaper machines often resulted in higher running costs," he continues. "Service and reliability are also major issues and, having decided to opt for the highest quality which was available at the time, my opinion was the VUTEK Press Vu 200/600 flat-bed printer which was purchased from specialist UK distributor, CMYUK Digital."

One of Enigma's strengths has always been its attention to detail, and this has become increasingly important when working with branding projects for leading companies and agencies who expect colours to be consistent across all materials and ink types within the production process. Roy Campbell, production manager at Enigma, is a firm believer that the additional time and care put into correct profiling at the start pays dividends in the longer term. And, as the company has always specialised in photographic quality output, the principles applied to precision in that market sector have been extended to all of its wide-format printing machines.

Visually the standards of print which Enigma produces on its PressVu 200/600 is little short of stunning, and Campbell explains that this is due, in part, to understanding the colour process, the RIP and the materials being used. "We experiment on different medias because we know how important it is to get the right profiles across all of our printers and ink types," he states. "However, successful results are based on good design and origination, too. You can't get more out of your machine than you put into the job at the initial stages but knowing about colour is a huge benefit when working with ink-jet."



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"Our experience with other ink types has also helped Enigma to get the best results from the UV-curable inks in the PressVu 200/600," Campbell continues. "This might not be the newest machine out on today's market, but the results we're able to output are solid proof that even established technology can be blended with design, ink and colour knowledge to produce superlative print quality."

Enigma is currently very busy on the production front but Macri is all too aware that the general economic downturn can cause problems for companies who might inadvertently have over-invested before the global recession started. "Fortunately we're very happy with the performance of our EFI VUTEK 200/600 as it is and we have no plans to supersede it," he states. "This means we're currently able to spend in other areas, making sure we keep our existing clients and winning new business, rather than having to invest in expensive new machines."

Since it was installed two years ago, the EFI-VUTEK PressVu 200/600 has been used to produce a wide range of applications for interior and exterior use. Although it is probably best known for its ability to print direct to rigid substrates, at Enigma around 50 percent of the applications being output is on a variety of flexible media, including self-adhesive vinyl films, scrims and banners, plus specialist materials.

Because of the attention paid to every detail, colour accuracy between different machines and materials is precise and without variation. "Continuity is essential — our end clients aren't usually interested in how a job's been printed or the machine which has been used to produce it," states Campbell. "What our customers need is absolute consistency and high quality, and we're able to supply this every time."

With increased pressure to search out more environmentally friendly alternatives, Enigma is now offering its eco-aware portfolio which is featured in the company's "Green box" which demonstrates how the company works with recyclable or recycled materials.

"We're working with a few new innovative products which give us new ideas and are extremely exciting," concludes Macri. "But we're also becoming very aware of green issues and are continually striving to reduce the environmental impact of our operations, as well as using product ranges with sound eco-aware credentials. One of the ways we aim to do this is to use a variety of materials which are recyclable and we pride ourselves on being a step ahead by presenting these to our clients." He stresses that, this way, Enigma is doing its bit towards helping the environment.

Summing up Enigma's main strengths, Macri is keen to put forward attitude, service and hard work — and the rewards to be gained from the combination of all three. As he points out: "The only time that 'work' comes after 'success' is in the dictionary!"



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

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