

## Allprint Display finds the EFI-VUTEK QS2000 an easy choice for quality and reliability

This enterprising Northamptonshire-based display specialist realised it needed to make a serious transition into digital production if it was going to grow its customer base, remain competitive and extend the range of services which it could supply.



It was the result of reading a variety of EFI-VUTEK testimonials such as these that led Allprint Display straight to UK distributor CMYUK Digital, when they realised that an investment was needed in a versatile, cost-effective wide-format solution.

Having started as a screen-printing company 18 years ago, concentrating primarily on trade work, Allprint Display still produces a considerable percentage of analogue jobs. But although the company hasn't yet experienced a significant slow-down in this area, its directors realised that digital alternatives would become an essential part of business growth. Thus, four years ago the decision was made to invest in an entry-level UV-curable machine.

However, whilst Allprint Display's first digital wide-format printer provided the company with a valuable introduction to flat-bed capabilities and associated technology, its limitations soon manifested themselves. Not only was the unit slow but it presented constant problems with handling and substrate hold-down, with poor ink adhesion being another major disadvantage. Subsequently, for roll-fed work, the company invested in two solvent-based printers but, inevitably, the time came for investment to be made into a quality solution which could work with both rigid and flexible materials.

"We knew we would have to purchase a machine which could provide the standards and service we wanted," says James Daldy, one of the three directors of Allprint Display. "Fortunately, this didn't prove to be a very difficult decision. Having read about so many positive experiences from users of EFI-VUTEK printers, we decided to investigate further and contacted CMYUK Digital. Following discussions and a meeting with Robin East, we were interested immediately in the QS2000's versatility and speed. We were also keen to take advantage of the new generation of UV-curable inks which had just been introduced."

East arranged for the Allprint Display team to visit EFI-VUTEK's European head-quarters in Brussels to see the machine working. "I appreciated the fact that the entire pre-purchasing process was so simple, even down to the fact that we were able to take our own files for testing," Daldy continues. "To be honest, when we saw the samples they were absolutely spot-on in terms of quality; we were completely blown away with them – so we ordered the QS2000 without any further delay."

Since the EFI-VUTEK QS2000 was installed and configured at Allprint Display, it has been working non-stop faultlessly and cost-effectively. While the printer itself was being set-up, the company received training on the EFI Fiery XF RIP, enabling even the earliest prints to be output in real time on actual jobs. From the start, on a day-to-day basis, the machine is pushed to its absolute limits, with new materials being tried constantly, and it has never faltered.

Daldy and his fellow directors opted for the six-colour UV-curable QS2000 without the white ink addition. The company's experience in screen-printing means that, when this extra capability is needed, it has successfully formulated a method to incorporate analogue elements as an under-, over-print or spot-colour on digital output. Unusually, this involves mixing ink types as the Svecia units at Allprint Display use solvent-based chemistry, but knowledge and experimentation have paid off to produce the right results.

The timing for the purchase and installation of the EFI-VUTEK QS2000 was fortuitous and coincided with the company's expanding customer base asking for higher volumes of wide-format digital print. These numbers would not have been unachievable had Allprint Display not made its investment in a high-end UV-curable solution and, as a result, it has won many new orders.



**The types of order carried out by Allprint Display include a large amount of point-of-sale work for its trade clients which need additional cutting and creasing on the company's Zünd flat-bed machine. One of the immediate benefits of the output produced on the QS2000 has been the stability of the ink when the print is being finished.**

"With run-lengths increasing, and greater demand for work on rigid substrates, it was critical that our machine choice was right for the future as well as the present," states Daldy. "It was also vital that the adhesion of the UV-curable ink formulation meant that it didn't have problems with flaking and cracking, unlike with our earlier printer where wastage was high because of poor, inconsistent performance."

Clean edges and flexibility on jobs which need to be cut and creased are features which are complemented by the inks' excellent adhesion on all materials. This has eliminated the waste factor and allowed the company to remove the margin for error which had to be considered when its older system was used.

The ink capabilities have also proved themselves on roll-fed materials as well as rigid substrates, with no glazing and absolutely consistent results throughout the print run. Although a large amount of flexible media still tends to be handled on Allprint Display's solvent-based printers, leaving the QS2000 for flat-bed applications, some work is now being moved across to the UV-curable alternative.

With its 2 m wide print area, fast speeds and high resolution, one of the benefits gained by QS2000 users is the ability to change easily from rigid and flexible materials and back again. Despite their rugged construction, the flat-bed tables can be rolled away by a single operator to enable roll-to-roll production, and replaced just as quickly when rigid substrates need to be output.

The versatile EFI-VUTEK QS2000 has proved to be the ideal complement for a company which is accustomed to, and expects, the rich colours which can be achieved as standard when using the screen process. Allprint Display has always placed great emphasis on quality and didn't want its standards to be affected adversely when moving jobs to a digital machine. In fact, the company has been particularly impressed by the extremely high standards achieved on graduated areas, such as skin tones, as well as with strong solid colours that are commonplace in many applications.

CMYUK Digital's Robin East comments: "Allprint Display is a classic example of a company which has years of experience in screen-printing and understands the demands of working to tight dead-lines. But the need to bring versatile digital print on-board is essential for this type of business when outputting variable run lengths onto a wide variety of different display materials."

Now a two-family business, Allprint Display was formed in 1992 by Wally Marsden and Pat Daldy. Their respective sons joined the business and, when the founders retired, they have continued to drive the company forward. James and Paul Daldy took over from their mother, along with Bob Marsden who stepped into the shoes of his father. All three are now directors, with a staff of 15.

The company's consensus is that the EFI-VUTEK QS2000 has been the perfect addition to its business and will help it on its growth path. James Daldy concludes: "Not only does this printer run full-pelt, every day, non-stop, its continued reliability has been another outstanding feature. We've no regrets whatsoever about this investment, and its running costs are as cheap as chips."



Printer showcased in this study:  
**EFI VUTEK QS2000**

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