

Screaming Colour moves into a wider digital world with EFI-VUTEK QS2000

For award-winning central London-based Screaming Colour, **printweek** Digital Printer of the year for 2008 and 2009, its ethos has always been to produce high quality digital print to tight deadlines for a broad range of discerning customers.



Since the day the company was formed, the objective at Screaming Colour has been to match its jobs with those normally accomplished via analogue processes and, thus, to exceed the finest standards of expectation from one-offs through to high volumes.

Concentrating originally on the production of full-colour applications which benefited from digital technology, such as personalisation and very low volumes, Screaming Colour typically offers brochures, newsletter and other jobs normally still associated with offset litho printing. Add into the mix proofing for packaging and customised presentation literature, plus comprehensive finishing capabilities, the only element missing was the provision of wide-format facilities.

Having made its mark by guaranteeing the best quality possible in the fastest turn-round times using its HP Indigo and KBA 74 Karat digital systems, Screaming Colour had an increasing desire to add wider format output to its broad portfolio of services. However, wanting to maintain its reputation for the combination of perfection and speed, the company's managing director Iain Moring was quick to realise that moving into this market sector needed careful scrutiny in order to maintain his existing exacting standards.

Investigating the different types of wide-format digital ink-jet machine available took time and careful assessment. Moring and his team acknowledged that UV-curable technology would suit the company's needs because of its versatility on different substrates. But the choice also necessitated finding a solution which provided the quality needed and the short turn-round times essential to maintain Screaming Colour's reputation. The resulting purchase of an EFI VUTEK QS2000 from UK distributor CMYUK Digital succeeded in fulfilling the criteria needed and is now being used to produce an ever diversifying range of larger-sized applications, including posters, banners, point-of-sale, retail advertising and exhibition graphics.

The decision to invest in the QS2000 relied on careful scrutiny of the wide-format market and the burgeoning numbers of options which all promised to achieve the same results. But Moring's canny approach led him to discount those printers which had no track record or which, in his view, wouldn't be certain to offer him a good return on his investment. EFI VUTEK's longevity in the digital sector was an added benefit, as was the realisation that by working closely with UK distributor CMYUK every element was treated with the same importance, from the choice of the system through to colour management, installation and set-up, and technical support.

Unusually, the purchase of the EFI VUTEK QS2000 was the first wide-format printer to be adopted by Screaming Colour, apart from aqueous-based models used for proofing. Although the company has only ever worked with digital technologies, its key equipment has been the HP Indigo machines which have been at the core of its business for the past 14 years. Although these capabilities are as busy as ever, with market requirements changing Moring recognised that the time was right to adopt larger options in-line with the year-on-year growth he was experiencing.

Screaming Colour's long standing experience with its Indigo systems has given the company a deep-rooted understanding of colour accuracy, high quality and the fast turn-round times available via digital platforms. Matching the standards of the company's smaller format work with a larger display printer might have proved to be difficult but, with the addition of the QS2000, the same strict criteria can be applied in terms of quality and throughput speeds.



As an environmentally responsible company, Screaming Colour also needed to ensure that its wide-format investment would sit within its green credentials, which include ISO14001 in conjunction with ISO9001, plus FSC and PEFC accreditations.

"We were one of the first companies to adopt Indigo printers," states Moring. "Having the ability to produce the type of versatility and quality only available from digital technology, this gave people the opportunity to benefit from our high standards and extremely fast turn-round times on all run lengths. We made the decision to move straight up to the EFI VUTEK QS2000 because it means that we can add value to existing projects and move into new areas without compromising on our existing strategy."

As an environmentally responsible company, Screaming Colour also needed to ensure that its wide-format investment would sit within its green credentials, which include ISO14001 in conjunction with ISO9001, plus FSC and PEFC accreditations. The EFI VUTEK QS2000 uses UV-curable ink which produces no VOCs and has the advantage of being able to print direct to recycled and recyclable materials, both rigid and flexible.

In the autumn of 2009 Phil Phillips was brought in to head up the retail communications' division at Screaming Colour. He is enthusiastic about the capabilities of the QS2000 and the potential it gives the company to add to its product portfolio. "The addition of a wide-format printer which uses UV-curable ink now means we can output to a vast range of flexible and rigid materials," he explains. "And, as we handle a considerable amount of work for agencies, we have the added versatility of being able to produce creative applications as well as more traditional posters and banner graphics."

"Working with rigid materials has also led us into the field of cardboard engineering and three-dimensional applications being used increasingly in point-of-sale," continues Phillips. "We now have the benefit of a full wide-format print-and-cut workflow which is valuable for production runs as well as for prototyping."

Colour management is crucial to Screaming Colour which prides itself on getting every job right first time, no matter the material or finish required. CMYUK Digital's Robin East and Jon Price both believe that this company is a prime example of a business wanting to move into wide-format digital production and which is insistent that its new processes function seamlessly with existing practices.

"For Screaming Colour, working with full-colour print is not a new technique and this has meant that a wide-format machine not only needs to be able to operate at good speeds but, also, at the quality standards to which the company was accustomed," states East. "The expectations of a company are high when adding a UV-curable system to an existing armoury of high speed digital capabilities for the smaller format market. Whilst all CMYUK's clients expect the best results, what was critical in this instance was being able to supply a solution which was, at the very least, comparable to Screaming Colour's existing quality and speed expectations."

The QS2000 is designed to combine high definition printed output with fast production, with a maximum resolution of 1080 dpi and a choice of four- and six-colour print. Screaming Colour chose to include the white ink option which opens up a raft of options including under- and over-printing and is beneficial when using non-white substrates. With a maximum printing width of 2 m, this machine is designed to work with both rigid and flexible materials, with easily removable tables when the latter option is used.

Price adds: "One of the areas in which we specialise at CMYUK is colour management and profiling, both vital aspects to any customer needing to work to exacting specifications where accuracy and fidelity are essential. As quality control is a vital element to Screaming Colour we were pleased to be able to provide the necessary skills to ensure that their production standards were maintained."



Printer showcased in this study:
EFI VUTEK QS2000

CMYUK Ltd, Unit 12, The Metro Centre, Toutley Road, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 1QW. Tel: 0118 989 2929 Email: info@cmyukdigital.com

