

Epson printers open up new options

Expanding the possibilities for print means thinking outside the box and Epson has done just that with its latest venture using its dye sublimation printers

DIGITAL printing on textiles offers sign and print companies opportunities to break into new markets and broaden their range of business.

Last year, Epson launched new F-Series Dye-sublimation printers: the SureColor SC-F9200, SC-F7200 and SC-F6200 models.

Recently, to illustrate the capabilities of the new models, Epson enlisted award-winning fine art portrait photographer and couture artist Vicky Papas, who worked with Ryan Warby, national business development manager for sign and display at Epson and Nika Osbourne, marketing manager.

Papas, who created the brand name Vergara, works in a studio filled with dressed mannequins, camera paraphernalia, and artistic backdrops, combining intricate couture pieces and styling to bring her images to life. She says, "I am also a qualified hair dresser. I create wearable art and I photograph women modelling it. I also do the hair and the make-up for a lot of my shoots. It becomes quite involved."

She jumped at the chance to try something different, saying "They asked me if I would be interested in making a gown with some fabric that was printed with my images. I sent them a few images to choose from and we came down to using the one for the gown."

The project gave Epson an opportunity to prove how its printers could expand applications using its technology. Ryan Warby says, "We printed the initial transfers on the Epson SC-F9200 on to Epson's sublimation paper. We then transferred them, using a calendaring unit, to a sheer fabric from Charles Parsons."

Papas used the fabric in creating a gown, which she took to the New Zealand Institute of Professional Photography Conference. She says, "It was really nice fabric. I used it up on stage at the In Focus conference. The NZIPP had asked me to make a presentation. I dressed a burlesque dancer from Wellington. I usually use models or dancers for my photography."

"The demo lasted two hours. I already had my demo and talk



Application: Vicky Papas created this gown using print work from Epson's SC-F9200 dye sublimation printer photo: Vicky Papas, Vergara

sorted so it was straightforward to incorporate the Epson job into the presentation. On stage, I had the dancer on the podium. Two pieces on the gown we had printed up, they sort of flew independently, so you could see the print as she threw it in the air."

Quality and detail

THE Epson colour quality and detail impressed her. "The printing was amazing from the colour quality to the detail from the files I gave them. The colours came up true. I have had images printed on canvas for a gallery exhibition before. I think this comes up better than the canvas."

"As a photographer, I know that even printing on paper can be quite difficult. You can often face different results with the same substrate. So I was amazed at how the print came out on the fabric. It was true to the actual image, which surprised me. With this job there was so much detail, it was

fine work. Also, it is really tricky when you are shopping for fabric to find something different, so this was really nice to do."

New markets ahead

SHE sees opportunities in the nascent market for this kind of work. She says, "Since I did this job, a lot of women I have spoken with have asked for something like this. There is definitely a market for it and definite interest from women who have seen the gown."

Epson also sees the possibilities and wants to promote future events to highlight its technological capabilities. Warby says, "In regards to future promotions, it would be great to see this technology utilised in this manner and in other ways."

Papas agrees but adds that it helps when you understand which part of the market you are moving into and the best way to take advantage of the application. She says, "Of course, you

Textile printing presents a vivid opportunity

EPSON wants its clients to take advantage of the opportunities inherent in the textile printing technology it offers. The company has invested heavily in research and development and has made a big commitment to driving this sector of wide format printing forward.

Ryan Warby says, "Epson has shown its commitment to the digital textile industry not only through its research and development into the OEM sublimation and DTG solutions but also in its investment into acquiring Robustelli digital textile printers in Italy."

Epson says it has designed its latest three dye-sublimation printers to help users produce superior-quality textiles and promotional goods simply, reliably and cost effectively.

Warby says, "As you can see, the range enables any number of applications such as production of interior décor with imaging onto hard surfaces. Epson backs the SureColor SC-F9200, SC-F7200 and SC-F6200 printers with full factory warranty and service support."

"It's about offering our customers the chance to expand their production capabilities with enhanced production flexibility, improved colour and lower running costs."

The SC-F6200 replaced the SC-F6000 with support for a new high density black ink, a new high quality print mode and a new bulk waste system. Designed for sheet based production, it



The high speed SC-F9200 uses dual print heads and dual high-capacity continuous ink supply systems

particularly suits custom clothing, merchandise, and hard surface work. It can print custom graphics and high resolution photos onto substrates that include metal and wood.

The SC-F7200 replaced the SC-F7100 with support for the new high density black ink and HQ Print mode. Designed for roll based production, it is particularly suitable for custom fabric and soft signage work with an adjustable output heater and precision auto take-up.

The high speed SC-F9200 offers almost twice the performance of the previous model, using dual print heads, dual high-capacity continuous ink supply systems and a maximum print speed of just over 100sqm/hr.

Warby says, "All three printers

use Epson's PrecisionCore TFP print head to produce outstanding, accurate prints with superb colours and clarity. These work in tandem with the UltraChrome DS ink-set to achieve the best-possible results. Epson developed the high density black ink to enable deep, neutral blacks and dense colour for intense images with reduced ink consumption.

He adds, "The hardware, software, print head and ink have been made and are supported by one manufacturer to ensure everything works together seamlessly. The printers are offered with optional ErgoSoft software that has been customised for Epson meaning users are ready to start printing straight away, without the need for further investment."

Other features include high-capacity ink systems for a low printing cost per square metre; Epson's genuine inks for less cleaning and fewer print head replacements; and easier disposal of waste. Using Epson's technological advancements, these printers deliver outstanding colour, precision and performance. They open up a range of new possibilities across different markets ranging from merchandise, home, and office decor markets; to soft signage markets with scalable, cost-effective production.

"For more information about these products or where to buy them in New Zealand please contact Avinash Patel on 09 366 6855."



Celebration, from left: Russel Fuller, from Epson; Model Bailey McCormack; Paul Smith, business development manager for Aarque; Vicky Papas, Vergara; and Avinash Patel, business development manager for Professional Print at Epson