

Motionlink

Total reliance on Epson Discproducer for disc quality



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Grant Salinger
Founder and Managing Director
Motionlink

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Over the past 15 years, Sydney-based Motionlink has established a name and reputation that, in the Region, has seen it grow to be a leader in the production of digital deliverables. Its leadership is such that it is able to claim: "We can ingest virtually any tape or file format and output to our clients' requirements." The company lives up to that claim by remaining at the forefront of digital media technology; and the Epson Discproducer has been fundamental to this for several years.

Situation: Embrace rather than chase

At the hub of Motionlink's business is the production of master discs for local and international movie production houses and distributors. In any given month, the company will master up to 80 titles.

Grant Salinger, Motionlink founder and Managing Director, says: "We receive a lot of raw content material from the client via secure, high-speed Fibre, then prepare it all for Blu-Ray, Digital Cinema Package and on-demand. Along with the masters we often need to create several hundred preview discs.

"The challenge was to identify and implement a disc duplication solution we could use to burn and print master and preview discs that were of the highest standard. It had to be one that didn't require much in the way of support and maintenance and could be used across our network.

Solution: Epson Discproducers

According to Grant, it was only when Epson released the Epson Discproducer family of disc publishers and printers that the ideal solution emerged. "We had been using a number of different technologies prior to the Discproducer, but problems with enormous footprints along with poor disc feed mechanisms and print quality made them impractical for the long term.

"When I saw and 'played' with the Epson Discproducer, though, I knew we had the solution I'd been looking for."

The result was the introduction of two units: an Epson Discproducer PP-100N (Network) and an Epson Discproducer PP-100. Grant is quick to point out that the latter of the two is still in full operation four years after its installation. "And we've never had one problem with it in all that time!"

Top of the list - reliability!

When asked what he considers to be the number one feature of the Discproducer, Grant states without hesitation: "Reliability! I have been in this industry for a lot of years and have purchased, operated – and often been disappointed in – a variety of disc publisher and printer units.

"The Epson units are the only ones I've come across that have worked faultlessly from day one; and considering we have had them for several years, that's a pretty outstanding track record. There's a total absence of ink bleeding, jamming or ink blockages. Both of them work precisely how they should."

In contrast to other non-Epson units Motionlink has used over the years, when a Discproducer ink cartridge runs out, the unit provides a visual and audio alert, halting operations between disc prints.

It's on the issue of ink that Grant stands firm in his policy of "only Epson original".

"I run a business where downtime is expensive," Grant states. "And when it comes to using the right media for the job, I can't afford to save a few dollars on ink cartridges. I have had damaged nozzles on other printers due to using third-party ink, and it simply isn't worth the risk, and considering we have always used original Epson ink and never had an ink blockage or leakage, that's proof enough for me."

Having been a heavy user of disc production technology for 15 years, Grant recognises that reliability and quality requires more than the standard inkjet printing technologies. In precision disc duplication/production, it also demands state-of-the-art robotics.

"Accuracy of disc placement and feeding is crucial," he says. "We don't have time to correct misfeeds and media jams, which is where the Discproducers are proving to be invaluable. I've known for a long time that Epson is a leader in the field of micro-robotics, and it's that leadership they have obviously utilised in these units. They're faultless.

"Even though we haven't gone down the path of gearing up for mass production – we leave that to the specialists – on any day we can be asked by one of our clients to produce anywhere up to 400 preview DVDs. They have to be done on time and they have to be the best quality. The reliability of the Epson units gives us the advantage of being able to meet those demands from our clients."

The demand for quality

With clients such as Disney and Roadshow, Motionlink knows all too well that quality is critical. They are clients that expect nothing less than the best.

This is where the advanced Epson inkjet printing technologies – the same as those used in high performance large format printers – come into play. Featuring six separate ink cartridges – Cyan, Light Cyan, Magenta, Light Magenta, Yellow and Black – the Epson Discproducers



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are able to generate an incredibly wide gamut of colours. This is particularly important when matching client corporate colours.

In addition, with the Epson Micro Piezo print head technology, print accuracy is widely regarded as best-in-class. "It's important for us that when we deliver master and preview DVDs to our clients, they look totally professional," Grant explains. "The images and text on the disc surfaces have to be nothing short of outstanding."

Network flexibility

In the purpose-built Motionlink offices, a team of video production specialists often work under incredibly tight deadlines to meet the requirements of some of the world's most high profile movie industry names. Time is a precious commodity, and the Epson Discproducers play their part in protecting that commodity.

With both units stocked with single- and dual-layer DVDs, and the Discproducer PP-100N sitting on the company's network, DVDs can be produced and printed without anyone having to leave their seat. "It may seem like a small thing," Grant says, "but it saves our team members having to queue up to use the producer and removes the need for a dedicated computer."

Using the bundled Epson Disc Maker software, Motionlink staff carry out a few simple drag-and-drop operations to create master and preview DVDs. According to Grant, it takes barely a minute to drop in the already prepared label image, specify the disc image or files then send it to the print queue.

Everywhere you walk throughout the Motionlink offices, technology abounds. From the climate-controlled server room through video production suites and out into the open encoding/transcoding room where around 15 computers are in operation around the clock, the latest technology takes pride of place.

The Epson Discproducer units, though, are tucked away in a small alcove. "The size is actually one of the beauties of the units," Grant says. "I have one unit stacked on top of the other, and it takes less room than a microwave."

Beyond the quality

Every year, Grant travels to Las Vegas to attend the NAB Show, the world's largest electronic media show that covers filmed entertainment and the development, management and delivering of content across all mediums. Every year, he makes his way to the stands where vendors are demonstrating their CD/DVD/Blu-Ray producers; and every year for the past four years he has come away with a renewed knowledge that the Epson Discproducer family is still at the leading edge.

"I go to all the relevant trade show," Grant says. "I'm always looking for a solution that gives me a better product at a better price. I have yet to find anything from any of the vendors that beats what I have with the Epson Discproducer units."

For more information about Epson Discproducers, please call 1300 655 723 or visit www.epson.com.au



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