

Positive Negatives: Improving quality and saving money

EPSON
EXCEED YOUR VISION

CASE STUDY



Challenge

- ◆ Streamline and improve photo production
- ◆ Remove quality inconsistencies resulting from traditional development processes
- ◆ Reduce manual labour involved in the production of over 50,000 prints per year

Solution

Three Epson Stylus Pro 4800 Large Format Printers

Benefits

- ◆ \$60,000 saved in first six months
- ◆ 200-300 per cent reduction in turnaround during normal demand periods
- ◆ Absolute consistency in photo print quality
- ◆ Extended business opportunities through range of Epson print media

“The amount of money we saved in those first six months by avoiding overtime and additional wages that were required to maintain the old operations enabled us to more than recoup fully the initial purchase price of the three printers nearly six times over.”

Tracy Chapman - Positive Negatives, Co-Founder and Partner

Established in the mid-1990s, Auckland-based Positive Negatives provides high quality colour and black-and-white professional photography services throughout New Zealand's North and South islands. Having started as a two-person operation, the company's commitment to quality has underpinned a consistent growth, which has seen its staff number grow to as high as 25 photographers and studio persons during peak periods. And, with consistent high quality output being the company's credo, the move to a 100 per cent digital workflow, including three Epson Stylus Pro 4800 printers, is setting the way for even greater success.

Challenge: Improve quality and save costs

When Positive Negatives co-founder and partner, Tracy Chapman first examined the feasibility of moving to a digital workflow for the company's operations, the quality of print was yet to reach the exacting standards set by her and her business partner.

“We recognised the inherent benefits of moving from film to digital,” Chapman says, “but with most of our work being in black-and-white, we were looking for a level of quality that simply wasn't available even a couple of years ago. Even though we could have 'gone digital' back then and saved quite a bit of money, we simply weren't prepared to compromise on quality.”

Solution: Epson Stylus Pro 4800

In early 2005, when meeting with a consultant at Epson professional graphics specialist, Aarque Graphics Ltd, Chapman and business partner, Tina Haresnape, were given a demonstration of the newly launched Epson Stylus Pro 4800 printer. After evaluating the photo print quality of the high-performance 17-inch printer, which features the advanced Epson UltraChrome K3 Ink Set – incorporating three shades of black ink – Chapman and Haresnape purchased one almost immediately.

“Once we saw the brilliant black-and-white *and* colour print quality of the printer, we knew straight away that this was precisely what we'd been waiting for,” Chapman says. “Then, within a couple of months, we bought two more and made the move over to a 100 per cent digital workflow environment.”

Maintaining consistently high quality

With the move to a complete digital workflow, Positive Negatives reaped the immediate benefit of establishing a level of quality print consistency that was

POSITIVE NEGATIVES
PHOTOGRAPHY

EPSON AUSTRALIA
Tel: 1300 131 928

VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.epson.com.au

HEAD OFFICE
SYDNEY
3 Talavera Road
North Ryde NSW 2113
Tel: (02) 8899 3666

ABN 91 002 625 783

virtually impossible to achieve previously. Chapman explains: "Film developing isn't an exact art, and unless you're prepared to spend literally enormous amounts of money on fully automated developing and printing machines, absolute consistency is pretty well unachievable.

"Once we introduced the Stylus Pro 4800s, we gained absolute consistent results with every print. This means that if a client orders reprints months or even years after receiving their initial order, the quality and colour will be precisely the same as

around-the-clock operation, it's strictly business hours only.

"The amount of money we saved in those first six months by avoiding overtime and additional wages that were required to maintain the old operations enabled us to more than recoup fully the initial purchase price of the three printers nearly six times over."

Reliability for business continuity

Along with delivering an improved and more cost-effective workflow for Positive Negatives, the Stylus Pro 4800s have shown themselves to be machines that support greater business continuity.

"Including proofs, the printers are generating around 50,000 prints per year," Chapman says. "The speed of the printers and a standard of reliability that often sees them printing all day without a hitch, means we are in the marvellous position of being able to increase our throughput while *reducing* delivery times."

Extended business opportunities

With the broad range of available Epson specialty media coupled with the Stylus Pro 4800's extensive media handling capabilities, Positive Negatives is now exploring additional revenue streams through adding distinct value to an already impressive product offering.

"Canvas prints increasingly popular, and we've already started providing these to our clients," Chapman says. "From a production perspective, a major benefit is that there's virtually no difference between printing a photograph on the standard Epson Premium Lustre and printing it on the Epson Canvas rolls. This is another area in which the versatility of using the Stylus Pro 4800s becomes totally apparent.

"We're now able to expand our product offerings and gain a unique and definite advantage over our competitors who are still relying on the age-old traditional photo developing and printing methods."

their first prints. Even *trying* to obtain that with traditional developing and printing methods would be an exercise in futility."

\$60,000 saved in six months

By making the move from the labour- and time-intensive film development practice to a high performance digital printing model, Positive Negatives made a saving of \$60,000 in the first six months.

"It used to be a case of having three people working throughout the day on enlargements and another couple on wet-benching operations," Chapman explains. "What really made it even more expensive was that the darkroom – especially during high demand periods – was operating 24-hours a day. Now, rather than an

