



The space invader

CPN and Sureprint have teamed up to launch the new Imprint large format, small footprint screen printing press. CPN's **Paul Brook** shares the details...

It's often said that 'time is money'. For many printshops the same could be said of 'space'. Taking into consideration the cost of commercial property in the UK – whether you buy, lease or rent it – and adding in the often onerous business rates, it is clear that garment decorators must think carefully about how they use their space and aim to squeeze the most out of every square centimetre of their printshop.

Therein lies the rub; modern automatic carousels occupy a large amount of space in any printshop and, due to their circular format, often render other areas redundant – strips of shopfloor alongside walls and narrow areas between pillars are classic examples of unutilised space.

A new solution

Now, there is a solution. Screen printing consultants CPN, working with Sureprint of Nottingham, have developed the Imprint – a large format press that occupies a surprisingly small footprint.

CPN's Paul Brook explains that the new machine was born out of an enquiry from Terry and Nick Guyton, of Norfolk China. "Terry and Nick approached CPN for help in acquiring a large format printer that didn't occupy a large footprint, for printing tea towels. From meeting and talking to customers across the whole country we realised that many other clients were also keen to invest in new production equipment which took into account the fact that space is at a premium," he comments.

As mentioned, the original machine was developed for printing onto tea towels; however, the Imprint is equally adept at printing onto bags, garments, and other popular textile products by simply swapping the platens. "And because the machines are manufactured bespoke the final configuration is down to the imagination of the customer and can be tailored to their individual needs," says Paul Brook.

The Imprint is available in one- to six-colour models, with the five-colour machine occupying 11.05 square metres – 6.5 m (length) x 1.7 m (width). These dimensions mean that the Imprint can be easily fitted into unused strips or corners of a printshop, bringing unutilised space back into play. CPN suggests.

Cost-effective configurations

Paul explains that CPN and Sureprint have restricted the Imprint to a maximum of six colours for good reason. "Extensive discussions with printers throughout the country revealed that very few of them used the ten colours available on their large autos; in fact, three colours was the average. It just isn't cost effective to pay for 10-colours on a large screen printing press if you're never going to need to use all those colours," Paul explains.

Built on wheels, the Imprint can be moved around the factory quickly and easily. Then it's just a case of plugging it into the mains, plugging in



The Imprint press installed in a corner of the Norfolk China printshop; the machine's relatively small footprint makes it possible to bring unutilised shopfloor space back into play.

the air, and starting printing. "The Imprint also benefits from really low energy consumption and operates on single-phase 240 volts and less than 3 amps," Paul adds.

He continues: "The machine is manufactured in the UK, in Nottingham, so help and back-up are just a call away. Full warranties are available and maintenance of the Imprint machine is really low. Just one person is needed to operate the machine safely, which offers great financial savings and, of course, the Imprint is very affordable considering the huge range of benefits it offers."

The press's flood and print bar are pneumatically operated and an electric drive motor enables smooth operation of the printhead and base carriage. Other features include touch screen operation, print stroke adjustment, double stroke capability with the head operating front to back and the flood coat up and down, plus micro registration is also available. The Imprint has a single platen PLC with programmable multifunction controller to automatically run the entire print process, and has a maximum print area of 80 cm x 48 cm. The maximum screen size is 120 cm x 82 cm.

High volume output

The machine can produce single or twin prints and individual stations enable one

to five colours to be used with the functionality to do test prints on each station. The estimated output volumes for a single-platen water-based print per hour are: up to 300 impressions in one-colour, 160 in two-colours, 120 in three-colours, 105 in four-colours, and 95 in five-colours.

"Using a double platen machine will almost double the output as load times are the same per item, but the unit will print two products simultaneously," Paul Brook advises. "These maximum volumes per hour need to allow for screen set-up and print management and so on, but are nevertheless highly impressive. The Imprint machine is especially geared up for water-based wet-on-wet printing, and can incorporate a flash cure unit for use with plastisol inks."

Summing up the new press, Paul Brook says, "CPN understands that individual companies have individual requirements and the Imprint machine gives the versatility of being virtually a bespoke item that can be tailored to specific needs at an affordable price. Its affordability, small footprint, and versatility will allow many more companies to invest in new equipment and develop productivity, capacity and range for the future."

CPN and Sureprint are exhibiting jointly at Fespa 2013 where they will be showing the large format Imprint machine alongside a small format version on stand E44N. ■

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