



Scarab Graphics: Company Profile



Introduction

Over the years many FLAAR readers have asked us to recommend places to shop for digital imaging hardware and software.

We have found that the most dependable companies are those that have brick-and-mortar offices or showrooms, and a team of trained technicians to back up their web sites. Low-bid P.O. Box places, in contrast, seldom turn out to be “deals” in the long run. They can’t afford to offer personal assistance in selecting the right products, or technical support and service after the sale. If they stock color management products at all, they aren’t experts on using them, and therefore can’t explain to customers how many problems they will avoid by investing in good software upfront. And too often they disappear from the web as quickly as they arrived.

Our profiles are designed to introduce you to companies with whom we have had successful relationships. They are not the only companies offering these services, and you should rely on your own research to determine which business best suits your needs.



Dr Ken Stokes, left; Dr Nicholas Hellmuth, center; Steve Stokes, right

Company Profile: Scarab Graphics

Scarab Graphics is a privately-held family-owned company, purchased in February 2003, by Ken Stokes and his wife Joyce. The company was started in 1975, and originally focused on printing and prepress operations. During the 1980s, Scarab Graphics moved into selling printers and media, and now also offers software, inks, and technical support for wide and grand format printers. The company sells nationally, with a concentration of customers in the Santa Barbara, California, area. Its customers include print shops, architects, engineers and others with wide-format printing needs.

The company sells mostly Hewlett-Packard printers, which Ken believes are among the best in the industry. Ken also has high regard for the German RIP software PosterJet, which is available for HP and Canon printers, and operates on either a PC or a Mac. He says the company sells a copy with almost every HP printer it delivers.

One of Scarab Graphics’ most prominent clients is NASA. The space agency consulted with Scarab specialists when selecting the large format printing system it would use to produce the images beamed back to Earth during its Mars exploration project, and decided on HP printers with PosterJet software for the historic assignment. Ken proudly remembers seeing these prints on the national news.

Harvard Medical School has also recently selected a PosterJet high performance RIP solution from Scarab Graphics for its exacting imaging needs.

Another high-profile client is Final Films. The signmaker recently purchased a Tiara solvent printer from Scarab for producing vinyl wraps for Las Vegas monorail trains. The project has been mentioned in a number of trade publications, and both the train wraps and coordinated station displays are expected to be viewed by millions of visitors to the U.S. convention capital.

Ken speaks very highly of the Scarab Graphics staff, saying they are not only excellent and well-trained employees, but that they are fun to work with. According to him, they can “fix any printer, as long as they can order the parts.”

National Sales Manager Precy Correos uses the listening and problem-solving skills she developed as a communications professional to help potential printer and software users across the country select the best hardware and software to meet their needs.

Scarab’s technicians provide warranty service for HP and Tiara printers, as well as repairs for printers not covered by warranties. Engineer David Champlin has 25 years of experience and has completed the Hewlett-Packard Platinum Service Training. He performs hardware and software installations nationwide, and provides extraordinary telephone support for any customers who encounter “bumps” along the way.

One of Steven Stokes’ responsibilities as supervisor of administration is ensuring that the company’s website contains the most current information of interest to customers. He is also knowledgeable about the company’s products and can provide technical support where necessary.

Ken holds a Master of Business Administration degree, with a concentration in Human Resources, and a PhD in Business Administration. Prior to buying Scarab Graphics, he was a principal in a successful 3000-unit school bus operation owned by his family. According to Ken he “tried retirement, but it only lasted three months.” When Scarab Graphics became available, he decided to put his business and human resources skills to use there.

As CEO, Ken’s responsibilities include coordinating activities, researching quality products to sell, assisting the sales team, and ensuring that his company provides excellent service. He has already expanded the enterprise by building on its strengths in quality and responsiveness, and successfully increased sales by 50% from 2003 to 2004. Now he plans to continue expanding Scarab’s scope through research on new technologies and new applications.

For example, Scarab is one of the few U.S. companies experimenting with Seiko solvent ink printers. The company has purchased demo units and is researching applications for solvent ink technology. Ken says that, while purchasing the demo units was a new venture for



the company, investment in new technology is critical to ensuring that the company can continue to provide excellent service. He is planning to use solvent ink printing technology to create a wrap for his boat, featuring the phoenix from Harry Potter.

He also recently invested in a leading company that designs and builds convenience store interiors, and is excited about exploring the application of improved graphics in the stores. A third company has been set up to provide the convenience stores with merchandising supplies.

It is the desire to learn and grow that drives Ken and the team at Scarab Graphics to continue researching, learning, and expanding their knowledge and ultimately the business.

Acknowledgements

We thank ColorSpan, Hewlett-Packard, Parrot Digigraphic, Canon, Scarab Graphics, and ColorDNA for providing funding for technology training for the FLAAR staff and our colleagues at Bowling Green State University and Universidad Francisco Marroquin. Contributions, grants, sponsorships, and project funds from these companies are also used to improve the design and appearance of the web sites of the FLAAR Information Network. We thank Canon, ColorSpan, HP, ITNH, and Mimaki for providing wide format printers, inks, and media to the two universities where FLAAR does research on wide format digital imaging. We thank Epson America for providing a printer to our facilities at Francisco Marroquin University and Parrot Digigraphic for providing two different models of Epson inkjet printers to our facilities at BGSU. We thank Mimaki USA for providing a JV4 and then a Mimaki TX-1600s textile printer and Improved Technologies (ITNH) providing their Ixia model of the Iris 3047 giclee printer.

We thank 3P Inkjet Textiles and HP for providing inkjet textiles so we could learn about the different results on the various textiles. IJ Technologies, 3P Inkjet Textiles, ColorSpan, Encad, HP, Nan Ya Pepa, Oracal, Tara and other companies have provided inkjet media so we can try it out and see how it works (or not as the case may be; several inkjet media failed miserably, one from Taiwan, the other evidently from Germany!). We thank Aurelon, Canon, ColorGate, ColorSpan, ErgoSoft, HP, PerfectProof, PosterJet, Onyx, Ilford, CSE ColorBurst, Scanvec Amiable, Wasatch and many other RIP companies for providing their hardware and software RIPs.

We thank Creo, Leaf America, and Mamiya America for providing a Leaf Valeo 22-megapixel digital camera system so we could test the printers with high-quality images. We thank BetterLight for providing two 48-megapixel digital camera systems for our archaeological photography programs. We thank Cruse GmbH for providing an 80-megapixel digital camera / reprographic copy stand system for digitizing paintings for giclee. We thank Creo for providing a substantial amount of high-end scanners to further our program of scanning the FLAAR Photo Archive of pre-Columbian archaeology, art history, and related topics. We thank Lowel Light Manufacturing, Calumet Photographic, and Bogen Photo for helping to equip our archaeological photo studios at the university and its archaeology museum in Guatemala. We also appreciate scanners provided by Heidelberg, Germany, for our anthropology research facilities at Universidad Francisco Marroquin in Guatemala. You can see our research center on www.CTPID.ufm.edu.gt.

We thank Dell Computers for providing five workstations for testing RIP software and content creation with Adobe Photoshop and other programs. We also appreciate the substantial amount of software provided by Adobe.



Canon has the best printheads in the terms of reliability, speed, and nozzle count. Canon does an excellent job of designing their wide format inkjet printers, just as they do with their digital cameras and copiers. Scarab Graphics offers Canon wide format inkjet printers. PosterJet RIP also runs this brand of printer.



This is the HP 130nr, currently one of the most popular printers for high quality photographs, fine art photos, commercial photos, and graphic design.



This is the workhorse of the HP Designjet line, the HP 5500. FLAAR has three of these (two of the 5000, one of the 5500; the chassis and system of both models are very similar; the 5500 and 5500ps are the current models. Here in the HP booth at Graphics of the Americas trade show 2003, they are printing panoramic photos from Nicholas Hellmuth; at GoA trade show 2004 they were printing Nicholas's other photographs from Guatemala.



Scarab Graphics Solutions

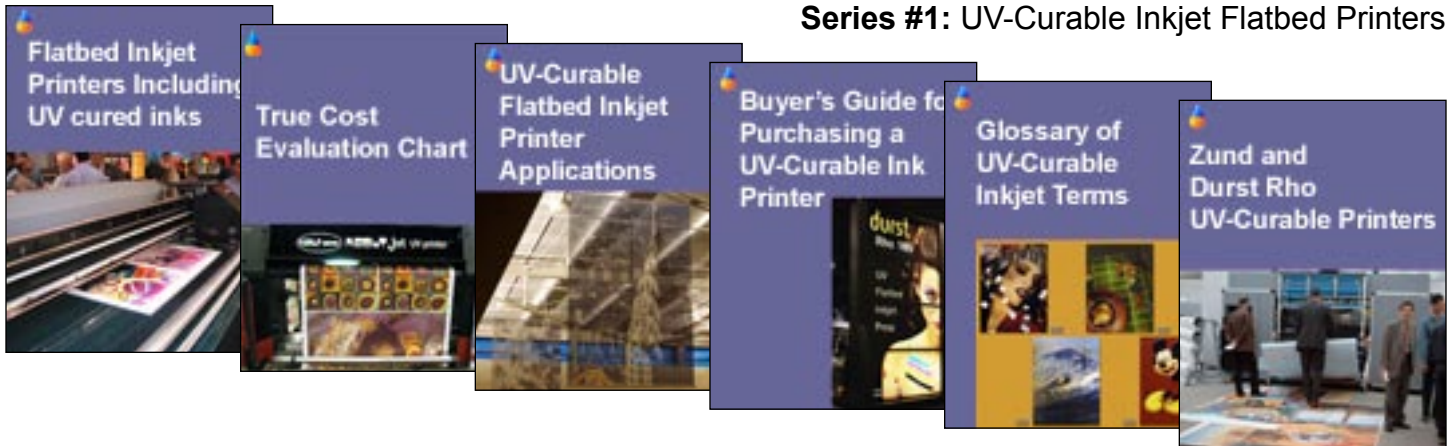
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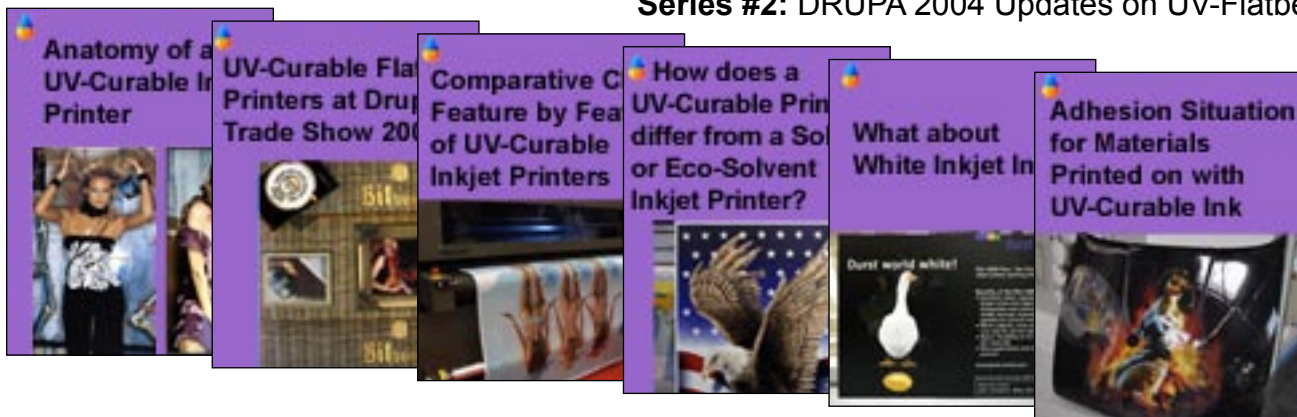
Fax: (805) 684-7090

FLAAR Reports of UV Curable Series

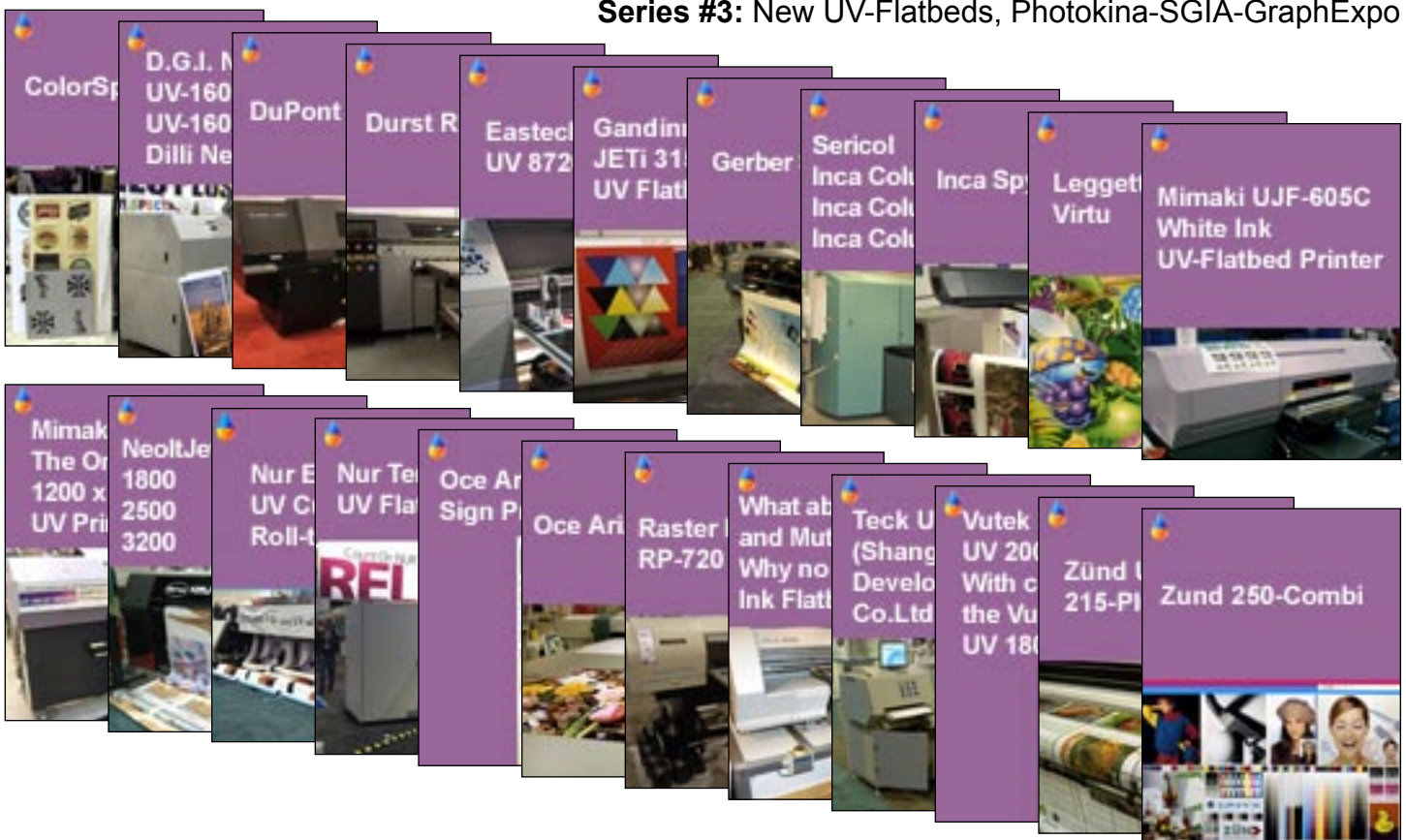
Series #1: UV-Curable Inkjet Flatbed Printers



Series #2: DRUPA 2004 Updates on UV-Flatbed Printers



Series #3: New UV-Flatbeds, Photokina-SGIA-GraphExpo



DP 101 : Achieving Quality in Digital Photography

SLR 35mm Digital Cameras



Aperture and Shutter Speed



Nikon D100 Digital Camera



Evaluation & Review of the Canon Digital Rebel



Sigma SD9 Foveon



Lens Reduction Factors: Chart



Hybrid Digital Cameras to hold Medium Format Digital Backs



Lenses and Filters



Professional Results from Budget-Priced Cameras



Practice & Critique



Pros and Cons of Digital and Film Photography



CCD and CMOS Image Sensors



History and Timeline of Digital Photography



Composition The Key to Prizewinning Photography



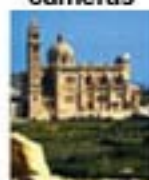
Nature Photography



Portrait Photography with 35mm SLR Digital Cameras



Architectural Photography with digital cameras



Lighting Digital Photography



Quicktime Virtual Object Movies



Shooting on Location with Digital Camera Equipment



How to Organize an Exhibit of Your Own Photographs



Computer Equipment for Digital Imaging



Camera and Computer Memory Storing Digital Files



Adobe Photoshop for Photographers



Additional Software for Digital Imaging



File Formats for Digital Images



Worthwhile Tradeshows for Digital Photographers



Digital Cameras at the Photokina Tradeshaw in Germany, 2004



New Photography Equipment at the PhotoPlus Tradeshaw in New York, 2004



FLAAR Reviews: Photo & Camera Magazines



DP 201 : Taking Digital Photography to the Next Level

Digital Image Resolution



Pros and Cons of Digital vs Film Photography (Medium and Large Format)



Digital Backs for Medium Format Cameras



Cameras to hold Medium Format Digital Backs



Recommended Equipment for Creating a Digital Studio



Lighting Modifiers for Portrait Photography



Lighting for Profitable Portrait Photography



Nature Photography with Medium and Large Format Cameras



Landscape Photography with Medium and Large Format Cameras



Panoramic Photography for Digital Cameras



Digital Panoramic Cameras



Architectural Photography with Medium and Large Format Cameras



Product Photography with Professional Digital Cameras



Computer Workstations for Digital Photography



Color Management for Digital Photography



Bit Depth and Dynamic Range



Workflow Summary for Medium and Large Format Digital Photography



Glossary of Digital Photography Terms



History of Panorama Photography: Circa 1840-1980



Photography of Art: Sculptures, Artifacts & other 3-Dimensional Works of Art



Taking Photographs with a Reprographic Copy Stand



History of Rollout Photography



Lighting for Product Photography



Gray Balance for Professional Digital Photography



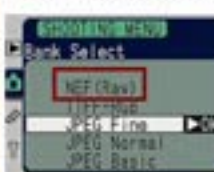
Shooting On-location with Medium and Large Format Cameras



Portability: Which Digital Camera is best for Out on Location?



Professional Software for Working with RAW File Formats



FLAAR Book Reviews: Adobe Photoshop



FLAAR Book Reviews: Medium and Large Format Cameras



Trade Shows for New Camera and Printing Technologies

