FLAAR Reports

Nicholas Hellmuth

February 2009

Fabrics & Soft Signage

for Wide-Format Inkjet Printing

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Your only assurance that you have a complete and authentic evaluation which describes all aspects of the product under consideration, benefits as well as deficiencies, is to obtain these reports directly from FLAAR, via www.wide-format-printers.NET.

Introduction

This year the network of FLAAR websites on wide-format inkjet printing will expand to offer more discussion of substrates, materials, media, and printable textiles. A first step is to discuss printable textiles, especially silk, cotton, and polyester.

The reason is due to a growing transition of sign makers from vinyl to soft signage. Gone are the days of billboard installers with their broom-like applications of glue to stick the sheets of stiff billboard material or vinyl to the billboard structure. Now it is so much less cost to ship a billboard made of any number of textile or textile-like materials. Industry analysts comment that it is so much easier to roll or even fold a textile banner than try to ship a long rolled section of vinyl.

For indoor use vinyl stinks, and combined with solvent ink the combination is unpleasant. With most fabrics you can use water-based inks or textile inks (most of which are also water-based). Soft signage is increasingly popular from eco-solvent, mild-solvent, lite-solvent, and full-solvent printers.

Fine art giclee artists have used cotton for decades. But you can also use silk. Guatemalan artist Violeta paints on silk and is now exploring options for creating limited edition giclee prints on silk.

UV-curing printers can also print well on many textiles or fabric like synthetic materials. On several occasions I have tested roll-to-roll printing on the Durst Rho 351R and Rho 320R in Brixen, South Tirol (northern Italy).

FLAAR covers fine art giclee on an appropriately titled web site, www.FineArtGicleePrinters.org.

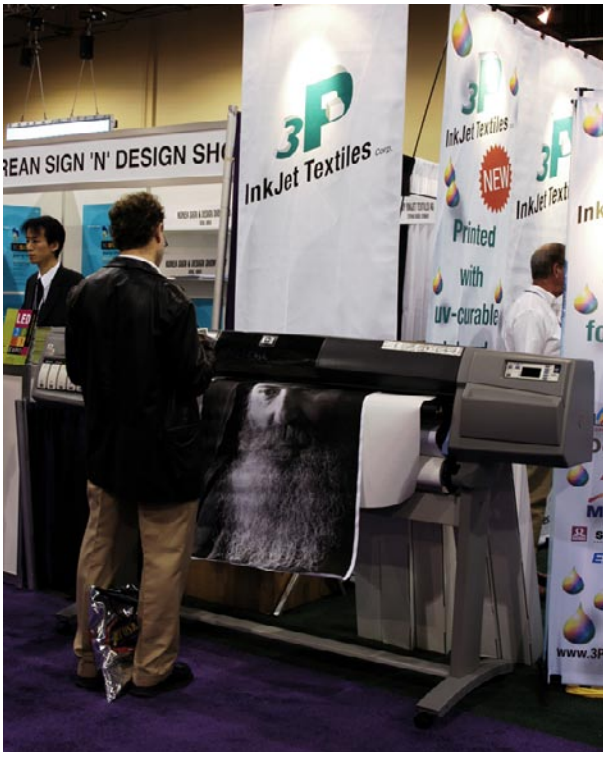
We cover digital photography on www.digital-photography.org. Many photographers like to experiment by printing their images on canvas.

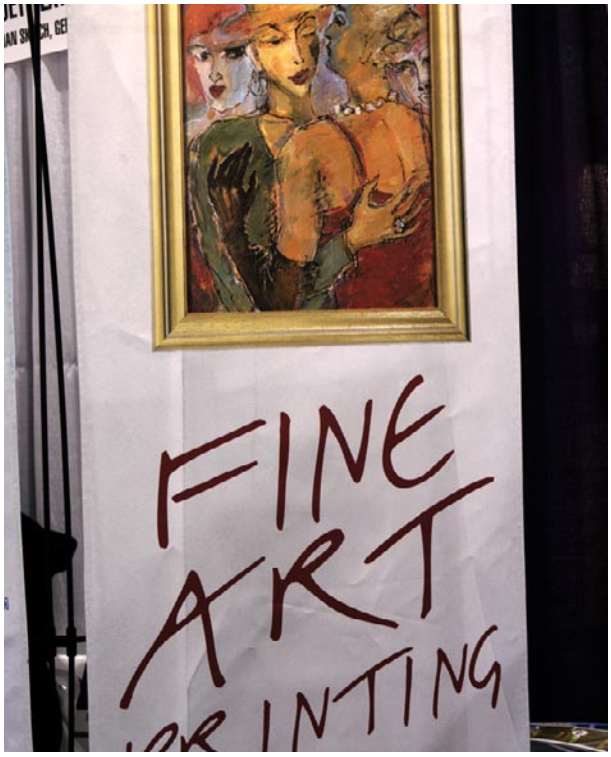
Solvent and UV-curable ink grand format printers we cover on www.large-format-printers.org.

Water-based and textile printers are read by almost one million people a year on www.wide-format-printers.org.

Over the next several months we will increase our coverage of printable textiles for each ink chemistry on each pertinent web site. But to get started now, in late January and early February, I decided it would be good to issue this initial full-color PDF to document the success in our industry of a good example of market success in printable fabrics, namely 3P Inkjet Textiles. As you can see in the following pages, FLAAR has been visiting their trade show displays for many years (photographs from earlier trade shows have not always survived meltdown of hard drives or deterioration of old CDs).

ISA 2003





In the beginning, many of the printable textiles were developed for fine art printing.

Although back in 2003 most solvent ink printing was on vinyl and traditional materials, banners and soft signage did exist then, and 3P InkJet company was already exhibiting inkjet textiles for solvent inks: NUR, VUTEk, Oce Arizona, Mimaki, Mutoh, Scitex Vision, and Eastech. Although not all these companies listed for 2003 has survived, 3P is still a leading brand in 2009.

PMA 2003

Polyester is an essential material for flags and banners with disperse dye and dye sublimation inks.

SGIA 2003

SGIA started as a screen printing trade show, but increasingly switched to inkjet printing processes, as has FESPA (a counterpart for screen printing in Europe).

Photokina 2004

Since FLAAR itself is an institute that comes from the world of both traditional and digital photography, we like to experiment by printing fine art photographs onto canvas and silk.

As you notice here, 3P is a company large and successful enough to have a significant presence at key trade shows around the world.

Additional views from the history book of 3P at major trade shows.

PMA 2004

SGIA 2004

Thomas Poetz (left) and US manager (above and right) during 2004.

Thomas Poetz at far left, owner and CEO. Behind the printer you can see Markus Fortmeier.

You can print onto 3P fabrics with almost any brand and model, here a "Gator" from ColorSpan (solvent ink, before they went to UV).

FESPA 2005

FESPA is the largest individual signage trade show in Europe (other than DRUPA but DRUPA is only every four years and frankly three days at FESPA Digital 2008 was more worthwhile visiting than 14 days of DRUPA 2008. And FESPA was much better organized.


3P
InkJet Textiles
AKTIENGESELLSCHAFT
IQ-IJ 435
TruColor
Fine Art Canvas
Printed on
Durst Rho 205 with UV-curable ink
3P
InkJet Textiles
AKTIENGESELLSCHAFT
IQ-IJ 417/418
TruColor
Voile
Printed on

ISA 2005

At far left, Markus Fortmeier.

SGIA 2005

The HP Designjet 5000 and nearly identical HP 5500.

Viscom 2005

We prefer to photograph the booths before the trade show doors open, because once thousands of people arrive, they are blurred when we take digital photographs. So this is why you do not see many people. It is before the main doors are open.

ISA 2006

PHOTOKINA 2006

SGIA 2006

There are two ways to sublimate: direct on the fabric inside your printer, or send your image on transfer paper to a heat press calendering machine. One process uses disperse dye ink, the other uses similar but slightly different dye sublimation ink (dye-sub ink is low energy; disperse dye is high energy; I thank Dr Tim McCraw of DTP Link, Yuhan-Kimberly for pointers from his years of experience in textile inks). 3P can assist you to learn all this also: namely to understand which ink, which printer, and which fabrics are best for your needs and the preferences of your clients. So be sure to visit their stand at a trade show in your part of the world.

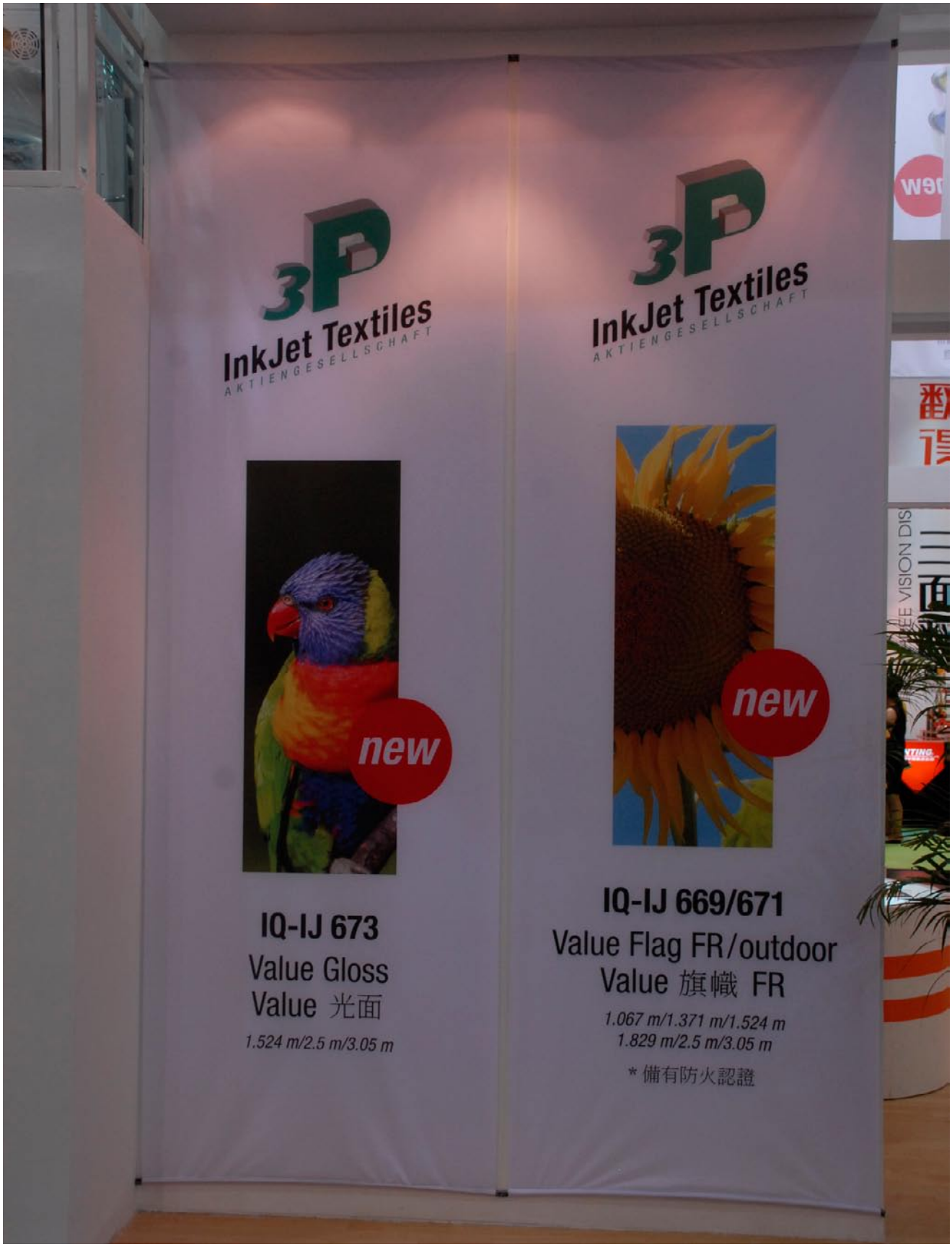
ISA 2007

Here is Nicholas two years ago at ISA 2007 in the 3P booth.

Nicholas and Thomas Poetz.

Nicholas Hellmuth and Markus Fortmeier.

Shanghai 2007




3P InkJet Textiles
3P InkJet Textiles
IQ-IJ 667
Value Voile FR
http://www.cheerarthl.com
new
new
IQ-IJ 673
Value Gloss
Value 光面
IQ-IJ 669/671
Value Flag FR/outdoor
Value 旗幟 FR
http://www.cheerarthl.com

FESPA 2008


3P InkJet Textiles
Value Fabrics
TruColor Fabrics
Premium Print Quality
Solvent, Eco-Solvent
UV-curable
new

Shanghai 2008

ISA 2008


3F
InkJet Textiles Corp.
TruColor Fabrics
Premium Print Quality for Solvent,
Eco-Solvent, UV-curable
AISLE
100
3P
InkJet Textiles Corp.


InkJet Textiles
TruColor
Premium Print
Eco-Solvent, UV
Fabrics
Sust
MDI


3P
InkJet Textiles
IQ-IJ101 Universal Heavy FR
WWW.3P-INKTEXTILES.COM
IQ-NW911 EVO FR
WWW.3P-INKTEXTILES.COM

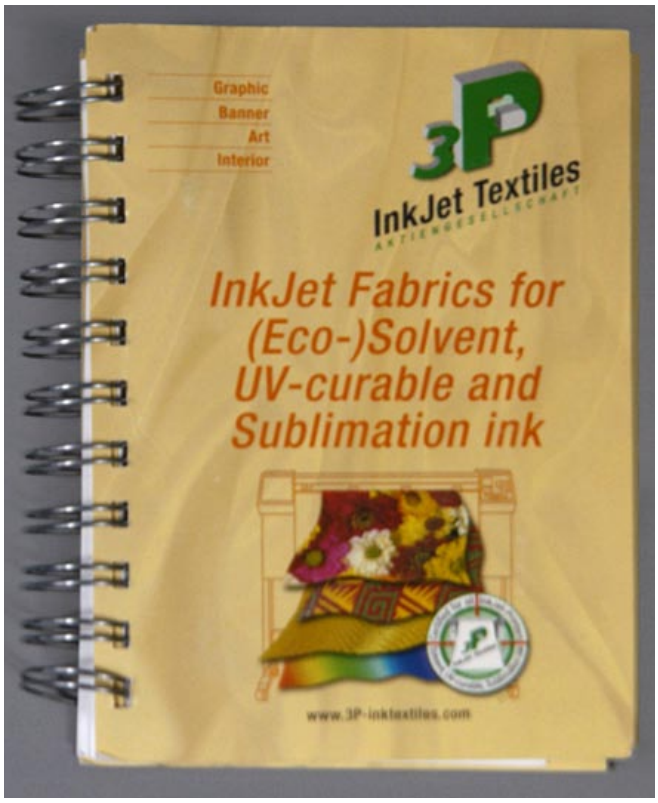
Nicholas Hellmuth and Markus Fortmeier at ISA 2008.

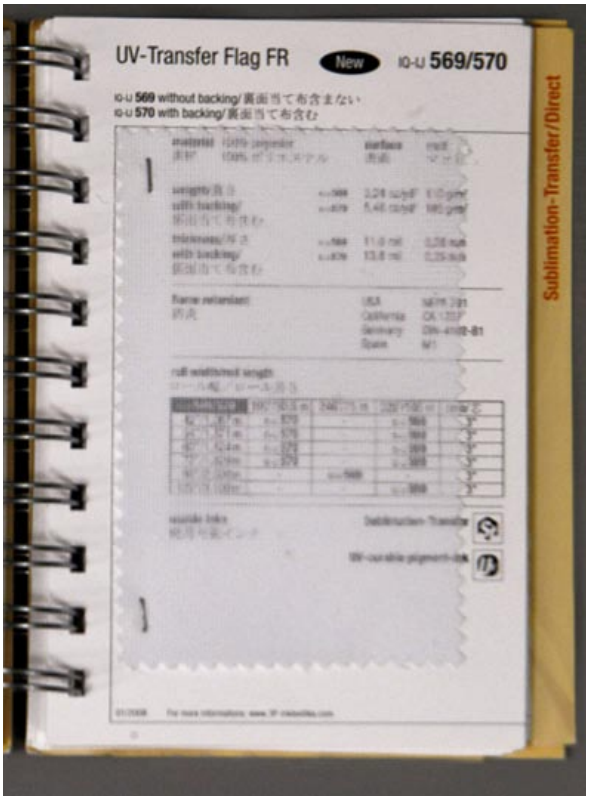
If you are in the USA, there are two capable and experienced representatives for 3P Inkjet Textiles:
Mr. Tom King
Phone: (1) 203-245-2509, Fax : (1) 203 245-9009,
Mobile: (1) 203 494-7787
E-mail: tomking@3p-inktextiles.com if you do not get an answer within 24 hours, write king@madisonct.com

Harry Brebaugh
Phone (1) 941 761-4578 Fax: 795-6552
email: NAMktng@aol.com

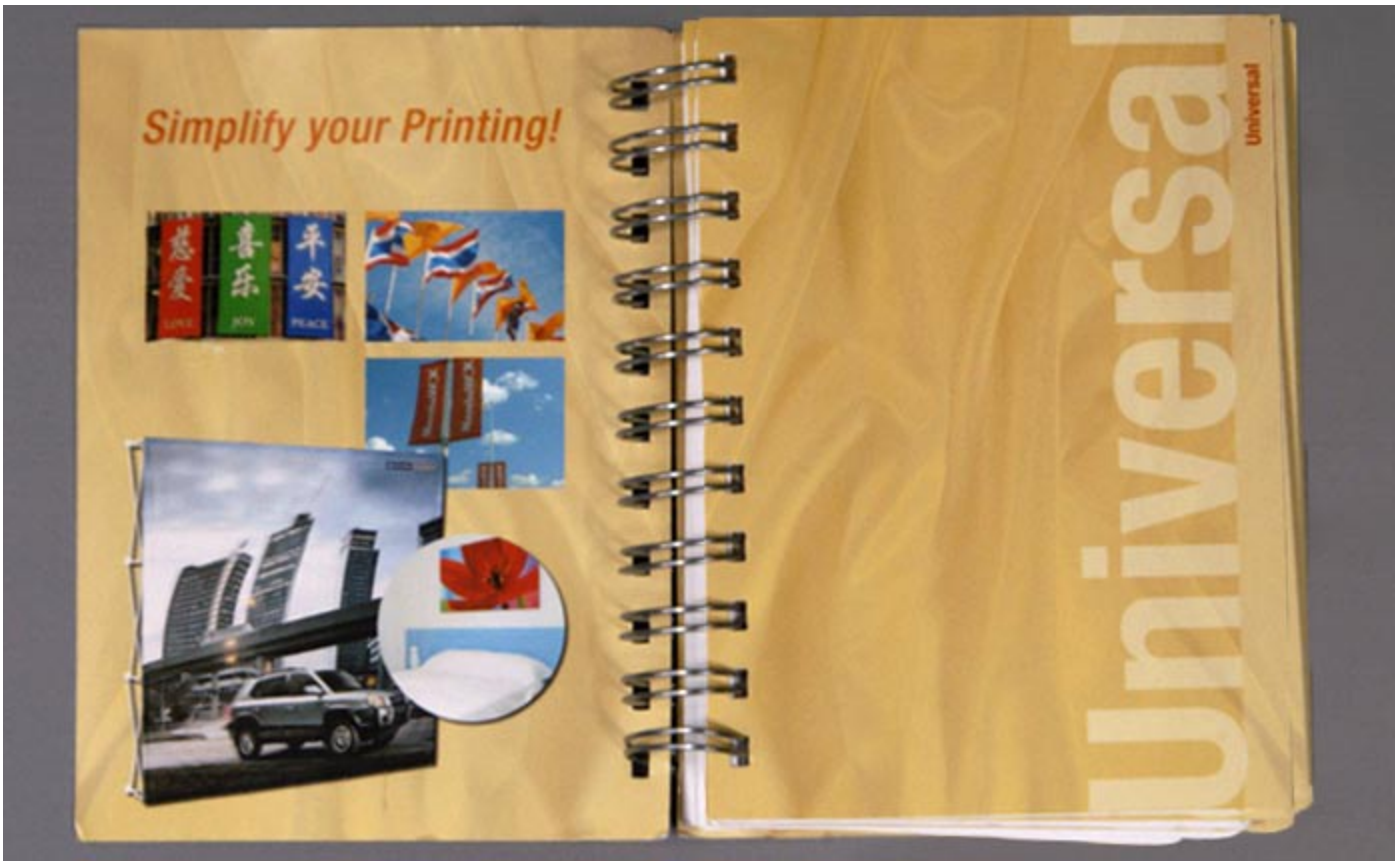
If you have general questions about 3P company and its textiles, contact the company headquarters in Germany
Markus Fortmeier
Phone: +49 8036 905110
Fax: +49 8036 905132
E-mail: markusfortmeier@3p-inktextiles.com

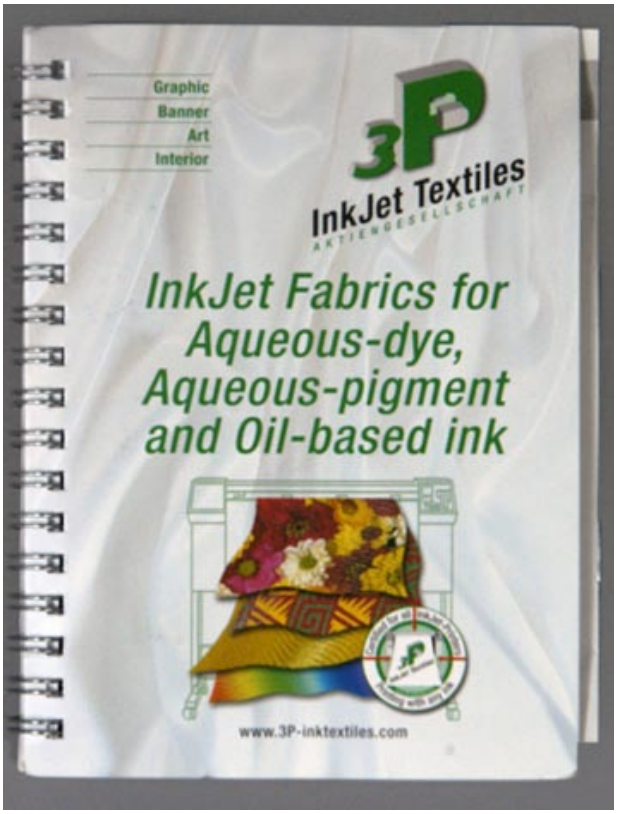
If you need to correspond directly with Thomas Poetz because only he can answer your question, it is best to use his Skype.

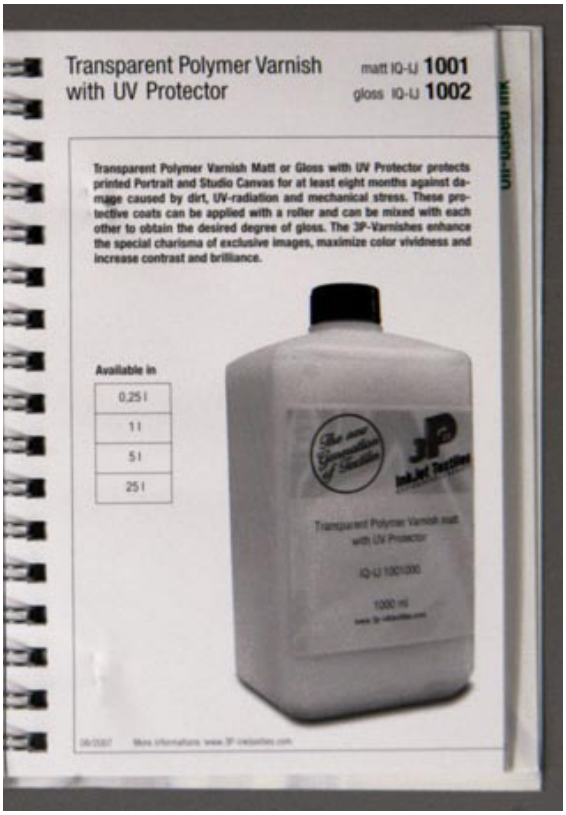




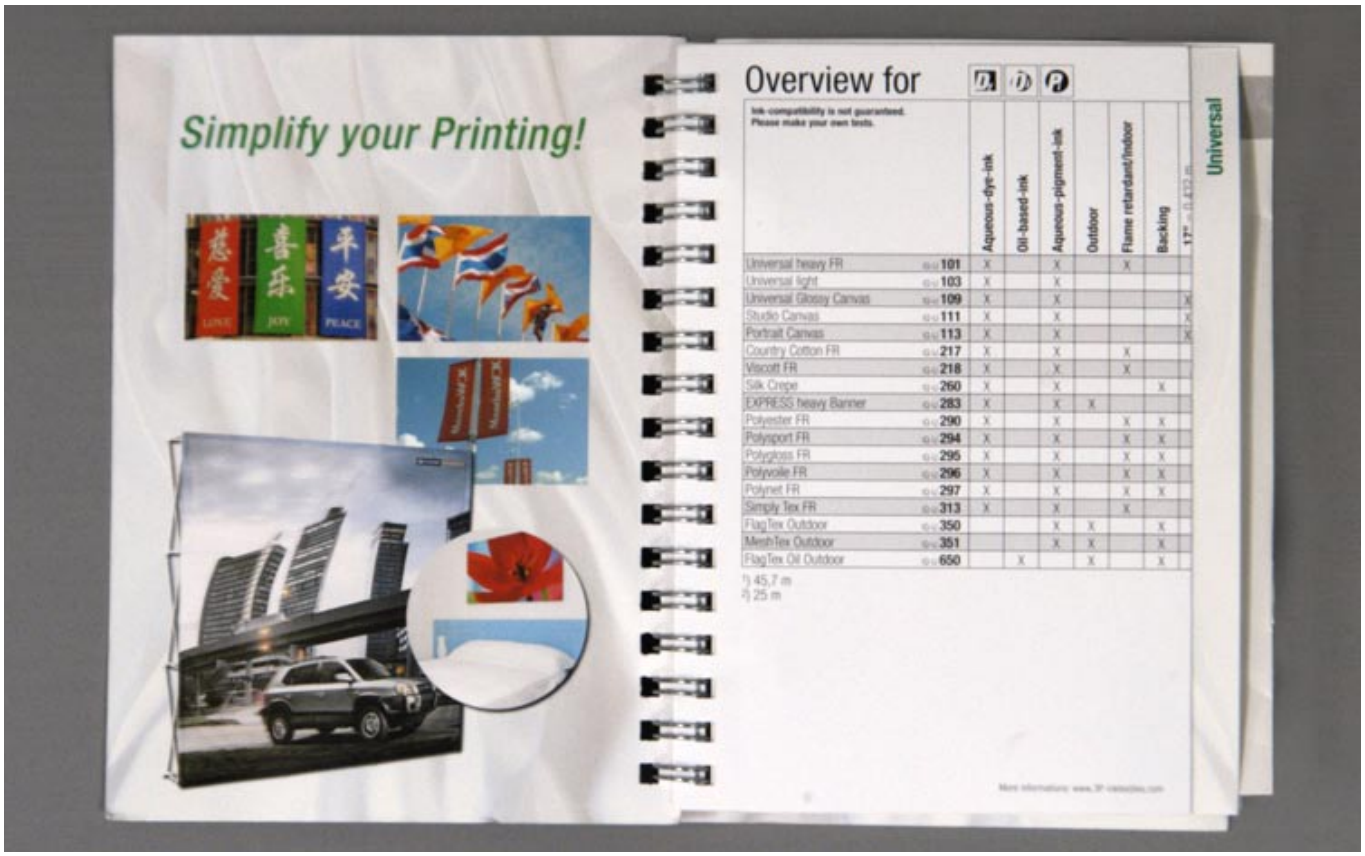
Ask for a swatch book by contacting info@3P-inkTextiles.com. If no answer call 1 866 3PIJTEX (1 866-374-5839).







We show here only a fraction of the swatch books. 3P offers printable textiles for just about all major kinds of inkjet inks.



FLAAR Reports

Coming During 2009

Dye-Sub Calendering heat presses	Oil-Based Dye Sublimation	Solvent-Based Dye Sublimation	Water-Based Dye Sublimation	Direct to Textile Printers	Dye Sub via Transfer Paper	Transfer Papers	Textile RIP
Acid Dye Textile Ink	Reactive dye textile inks	Pigmented textile ink	Hybrid UV Textile ink (Sensient)	UV-cured ink for Textiles (Durst)	UV solutions via L&P Virtu	Spectro-phtometer ICC profiles for textile printing	Printable fabrics, such as from 3P
Major Textile printers	DigiFab	ATP Color	Sensient	Seiko	Mimaki Textile printers	Mutoh Textile printers	Roland Textile printers

D-Gen	MS	A-Tex
Monna Lisa	KonicaMinolta	Practika
Zimmer	Shima Seiki	Keundo
Ichinose	Sensient	Hollanders
Robustelli	TexPress	Reggiani

In 2007 it was possible to begin a long-range sponsored research project on inkjet printing of textiles. This began with a visit to Yuhan-Kimberly in winter 2007 and was followed up by a second longer visit to their DTP Link inkjet textile facilities in 2008. So now it has been possible to test all three of their printers.

The next stage is to inspect Yuhan-Kimberly MC3 Extreme printers in-situ in printshops and write site-visit case studies. This is being planned for later in 2009.

At SGIA 2008 it was possible to finalize discussions with DigiFab for a second project on inkjet textiles. I had been noticing their success in the wide-format textile world for several years and have visited their DigiFab headquarters in Los Angeles. I especially am impressed by their own in-house textile RIP, Evolution RIP.

Presently I am in discussions for possible future projects on hybrid UV curing of textile inks. These are special inks from Sensient that I first saw in action at VISCOM Italy. As soon as it is possible to visit the ink company and visit the separate company that is manufacturing the actual printers we will launch this new project.

Every several months during 2009 look for addition web pages on dye sublimation and additional FLAAR Reports on wide-format digital inkjet printing of textiles.

Printable Fabrics

About five years ago it was possible to visit the headquarters of 3P Inkjet Textiles (while I had been flown to Germany as a consultant for a large paper mill that wanted to switch from traditional paper to making media for wide-format inkjet). 3P was not far away, so I visited them.

I have also inspected the printable textiles of 3P for over seven years at trade shows around the world. A new FLAAR Report is coming out on February on this subject. Plus it was possible to meet with Thomas Poetz at a lecture I gave at a technical university outside Salzburg three years ago. So I know the company for a long time.

Here are the PDFs on textile printers that FLAAR offers so far:

In progress a future FLAAR Report on: Calendering Machines: Heat Transfer Press for Dye Sublimation.

This report will be available as soon as we establish contact with the key calendering machine manufacturers so we can be trained in their company demo rooms. There is not enough time at any trade show, not even 14 days of DRUPA, to inspect all the printers, substrates, RIP software, inks, and accessories for a complete workflow (laminators, cutters, trimmers, etc). So visiting Monti Antionio, AIT, Klieverik, DigiFab (DigiHeat), Transmatic or AIT will be necessary before the FLAAR Report on calendering machines will be issued.

IF YOU WISH TO MEET DR HELLMUTH and speak with him about textile printing, he will be at the Dubai sign and printer show in mid-February. Towards the end of February you can meet Nicholas at the WP Digital InHouse launch of a 5-meter roll to roll UV printer at the Spuhl factory in Wittenback Switzerland.

During the last two weeks of March you can meet with Dr Nicholas Hellmuth in Croatia or any of the neighboring countries. He will be there for two weeks. Contact the nearest office of IB-ProCADD to see which day in which city.

You can also make an appointment to consult with Dr Hellmuth at ISA 2009 or FESPA Digital 2009 (e-mail FrontDesk@FLAAR.org or Skype flaar_mesoamerica

But the main advantage of coming to the Spuhl Virtu (WP Digital) InHouse event is that there is no cost, no fee to speak with him on Feb. 26 or 27, 2009.