

## Speedscreen ups production speed and quality with Durst Rho 800 Presto

When Kent-based Speedscreen originally enhanced its screen-printing facilities with flat-bed digital production five years ago, the company opted for a Durst Rho 205 to complement its analogue processes. This installation was so successful that the company chose Durst again when it decided recently to upgrade its UV-curable wide-format ink-jet capability. Its newly-delivered Durst Rho 800 Presto brings with it the versatility, high quality and rugged construction needed by this leading print solutions' specialist.

Speedscreen was formed in 1986 as a screen-printing specialist concentrating on producing work for advertising agencies and design companies, mostly based in London. From the outset, the objective was to serve a market sector where high quality applications were essential, with the result that the company quickly gained a reputation for delivering fine standards of accuracy. Today, it has a staff of 14 and a turn-over of £1.35 million.

The success of Speedscreen meant that, ten years after it was established, it was able to relocate to larger premises in Maidstone, Kent, where steady expansion was fuelled by the demand from a wider customer base. This included a growing number of blue chip clients who wanted to benefit from the exacting quality and consistency on offer. An extensive knowledge of screen-printing, combined with the ability to produce applications in sizes of up to 3.0 x 1.5 m in one pass, has always been complemented by attention to detail throughout with strong emphasis placed on colour management and fidelity.

Technological changes and the drive for shorter, more varied run lengths inevitably meant that Speedscreen needed to adopt wide-format digital capabilities to complement its analogue production capabilities. This was achieved with the addition of the Durst Rho 205, which was one of the first of these models to be installed in the UK, adding direct-to-substrate UV-curable printing to the company's existing capacity. As success continued, further digital solutions were incorporated, including a 3 x 2 m EskoArtwork Kongsberg table for contour cutting rigid and flexible materials. As demand for Speedscreen's services has continued to grow exponentially, this year the company decided to invest in a higher speed flat-bed and roll-fed printer to meet increasingly heavy production demands. Having assessed all the machines on the market, the company decided to stay with Durst and purchased a Rho 800 Presto in order to meet the speed and quality requirements which were needed.

Tim Hill, managing director of Speedscreen, states: "Our Durst Rho 205 has served us well but the type of work we're now being asked to produce meant that we needed a faster solution which didn't compromise on quality. The Durst Rho 800 Presto wasn't the cheapest machine on the market but its build quality and speeds of up to 120 square m/hour were complemented by the fact that it is an extremely well-designed flat-bed and roll-fed printer with a modest foot-print."

Installation of the new printer wasn't easy as it is situated on a specially constructed mezzanine floor at Speedscreen's facility. Because Durst uses only heavy-weight high quality components in its equipment, the overall mass of the machine meant that floors needed to be strengthened to handle its 5.5 tonnes. Its delivery also involved removing the front of the building and lifting the printer 15 ft by fork-lift truck onto scaffolding before moving it into its final position.



"This is a solid, high-end system and one which we expect will last us for many years," continues Hill. "The other options we looked at before deciding on the Rho 800 Presto looked remarkably flimsy and didn't offer us the build quality we need, such as the continuous board and roll-feed systems and the strong vacuum bed which we've already proved can flatten and hold warped sheets ready for printing."

Speedscreen opted for six colours – CMYKlcm – plus two white channels on its new investment. Many of the materials used by the company benefit from under- and over-printing of white and, as Hill explains, it enables non-white substrates such as corrugateds to be used with stunning results. The Durst Rho Presto 800 was supplied with Caldera's GrandRIP for fast and efficient work-flow, and the addition of a Barbieri electronic spectrophotometer simplifies accurate profiling off all types of media. Popular amongst screen-printers, the Durst Rho 800 Presto is the ideal solution for companies like Speedscreen who want to maintain their high production standards with the convenience of being able to output variable volumes. Its speed and versatility makes it ideal for both one-offs and longer production runs and its true hybrid construction makes it equally efficient when working with flexible materials and rigid substrates.

Hill concludes: "Speedscreen's investment in this new machine will turn us into a major player for wide-format digital print. The overall flexibility of the Durst Rho 800 Presto will bring huge benefits to us and to our clients, with shorter turn-round times and no compromise on quality."

