

ME & MY...

Presstek Vector FL52

Damian Smith, managing director of PrintTeam, has been impressed with this low-cost, chemistry-free platesetter's high quality and speed

What is it?

The Vector FL52 is the new version of Presstek's small-format, chemistry-free metal platemaking machine. It features a new imaging system with a fibre laser imaging head that is engineered to deliver excellent dot quality and good reliability. The new chemistry-free Freedom Pro plates are optimised to work with the Vector FL52. The grained anodized surface of these plates, based on Presstek's Pro graining technology, provides superior print performance, improved roll-up, better ink and water latitude, overall colour consistency through the press run and excellent handling on-press. These daylight-safe plates are easy to read after imaging, which enables full inspection prior to mounting on press.

Why did you make the purchase?

We wanted the improved registration, quality and reliability of the new machine and the new plates. The investment was the company's first step in offering our customers an environmentally friendly printing solution.

Did you look at any other products?

Yes we did, but the Vector was the only affordable chemistry-free platesetter that could make plates for both our B3 four-colour press and an SRA3 press.

What features do you particularly like?

The real benefit is that it is chemistry-free. We no longer have to worry about buying chemicals and conforming to the latest regulations on hazardous waste disposal. We also like its quality, speed, ease of use and small footprint.

What's the quality like?

In my opinion, this machine takes quality to the next generation with a significant improvement in fit and stability of tints. The dot quality, registration and stability from one batch to another are superb. We can compete with any B3 printer.

What about the speed?

One of first jobs we produced on the Vector required 64 plates and we produced them in four hours. Typically, we expect to make about 20 plates a day. The Vector is about 30% faster than our previous polyester platesetter, but it's the quality that is most important.

How easy is it to use?

It's very easy to use. The plate is inserted at the front, imaged and water-washed inside the unit, before being discharged as a completed plate. They run on press with the minimum of adjustment.

How reliable is it?

It is relatively new, but the reliability so far has been first



Smith: "We no longer have to worry about buying chemicals"

class. It's our only method of platemaking, so reliability is fundamental to the operation of this business.

What about the pre- and after-sale service?

I cannot fault them. We have dealt with Presstek for the past five years and it was one of the reasons we bought the Vector. What they say is what they do and that is refreshing in this day and age. They gave us excellent training and now four of us can use the Vector and Momentum Pro, which gives us maximum flexibility.

Has it won you any new business?

I can't say that it has brought us in any new business because we haven't marketed ourselves as 'green' printers. I believe it will only be a matter of time before customers are asking for this and we are now well equipped. We are producing some very high-quality work and that undoubtedly will help us gain and retain more business.

Would you say that it represents value for money?

Definitely. It's exceptionally good value.

Who would you recommend it to?

Any small or medium-sized B3 printer that wants to improve the quality of its plates and the efficiency of its plate production. ■

CONCLUSION

User's verdict

Speed	★★★★★
Quality	★★★★★
Reliability	★★★★
Value for money	★★★★★

Supplier's response

Raymond Hillhouse, sales and operations director at Presstek Europe, says: "The Vector FL52 is an ideal machine for a business like Print Team, which is very conscious about the quality it provides, but is also very aware of its responsibility to the environment. It is already seeing benefits in terms of reduced cost relative to no chemistry handling."

Price from £29,990

Contact Presstek Europe
020 8745 8000

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