

# Colour Case Study: Print Quest

Cutting-edge repro company Print Quest offers a complete prepress solution with the adoption of GMG for industry-standard proofing.



Formed in 1996, Skegness-based Print Quest utilises advancing technology at every opportunity across its prepress business. The company was the first in the UK to install the Kodak NX plate system in 2008, and the only provider of NX with Advanced Optics for improved resolution and output of a 2.5 x 5 micron dot.

With innovative solutions leading the way in so many areas of the business, Print Quest required their proofing system to follow suit. A GMG Color solution was specified in order to automate Print Quest's proofing process and match the level of accuracy and consistency they were able to provide with their high quality flexographic printing plates. Managing Director David Jarvis says, "As a company we're always testing and incorporating new products. We're taking our plate side to a whole new level where our competitors can't match what we do because a lot of the equipment we've

got has been made bespoke for us. The only thing that we were lacking was on the proof side. Where our previous system hadn't stood the test of time, in comparison GMG has advanced so much. GMG are colour specialists and develop software in very quick timeframes – their ongoing R&D was a big selling point for us."

Print Quest had previously used Star Proof for 10 years, but required the change in order to get improved accuracy and automated recalibration of their proofers. Prior to adopting GMG software they were making two to three plates for fingerprinting. Normal TVI curves would be applied and then reprinted on the press. The match to proofs would be acceptable but it was laborious to hit the desired standard.

Although outdated, one element of Print Quest's previous proofing system that they wanted to



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replicate was the fact it used Epson proofers. GMG was initially considered due to its partnership with Epson and ability to drive Epson proofers with its OpenColor and ColorProof software to offer a complete proofing solution.

GMG ColorProof enables precision proofing on even challenging colour and material combinations. Using GMG's unique MX device link profile to calibrate inkjet printers, ColorProof ensures that chosen printers, anywhere worldwide with a GMG system, will deliver the expected colour output. Print Quest combined ColorProof with the GMG ProofControl module in order to gain proof verification for both CMYK and spot colour



elements. The GMG sticker is attached to each proof to certify its accuracy. GMG DotProof is also being used to create colour accurate halftone proofs by predicting exactly what will happen during plate exposure as well as on the printing press.

Fitting well with Print Quest's pioneering ethos, GMG OpenColor is the only software on the market to provide accurate proof simulations of the overprinting effects of spot colours, through the use of spectral data calculations. By using spectral information (rather than L\*a\*b) to create each profile, OpenColor takes the mechanics out of Print Quest's profile building, reducing finger printing to save hours in operator time, as well as significantly reducing printing costs.

With GMG OpenColor installed, Print Quest are able to build a reliable proofing profile with as few as 36 CMYK patches, making it possible to print live work at the same time as profiling the press. This is the closest 'press simulation' tool available on the

market as that data can be used repeatedly, adapted for different substrates, print sequences, dot gains and finishing.

David Jarvis says, "GMG proofing has completely revolutionised and de-stressed the proofing process. But, we didn't buy GMG just because other people were using it, we bought it as it's the best system out there."

**David Jarvis:** "We can now create profiles with ease and use the inbuilt calibration system to read the proofs and certify them at the same time."

"Previously, we were having to certify them by ourselves and read all the patches in without being able to print anything on the proof. Now, every time a print comes out, the GMG software reads it and knows when it's right. If it's not, it fails it, calibrates itself and corrects it." Print Quest has also achieved an improved grey balance through GMG ColorPlugin, which colour-manages directly in Adobe Photoshop using GMG's proprietary MX technology. As opposed to ICC based solutions, GMG MX device link technology computes colour conversions directly in CMYK without a detour via L\*a\*b. This means the colour structure isn't re-separated, and the CMY and K information are computed separately, readjusting CMY and preserving the black channel for a superior grey balance.

Talking about how the GMG solution has impacted his business, David confirms, "The amount we've saved in time and money is immeasurable really. Backed up by our plate systems, we're quickly providing quality, accurate proofs meaning our clients' confidence has gone up. We demand more from our systems than most people would expect but we're happy with the results and aftercare from GMG. Technical support is excellent and regular product updates for new features make things easier, provide extra stability and advantages like the ability to export information."

