



Reducing costs by 50% compared to traditional proofing methods



HP customer case study: HP/Large Format Printing Division/Masters Color success story

Industry: Pre-press printing and post-production

Masters Color has been working in the pre-press printing and post-production sector for over 15 years. With an unrivalled reputation in the marketplace for their high level of product quality, thanks to the use of specifically designed electronic systems and skilled technical preparation, Masters Color supplies its clients with superior reproduction, modification and lay out of any type of image. Masters Color, based in Milan in Italy, also specializes in the management of printing for national and international campaigns and in the development of all types of publicity and packaging.

Perfection is a standard

Raimondo Villa, Managing Director of Masters Color, describes the creed that drives Masters Color's approach to the prepress business. "The prepress business is like a three-legged table – if one of the legs is shorter, the table won't stand. Success is about professional know-how, technological excellence and continuous innovation. There is no room for improvisation," Raimondo states, adding, "In the prepress business perfection is a standard, not a goal, and with digital technology we match that standard in half the time it would take using traditional proofing methods." Masters Color invest heavily in delivering a competitive prepress proofing

service that meets client expectations no matter what their printing press demands.

Less than half the time at half the cost

Masters Color has even developed its own, unique proprietary processes for proofing transparent packaging with white, gold, silver and Pantone® colors. Raimondo highlights the growing importance of the transparent packaging market. "Whatever you buy is packaged and the ability to proof transparent packaging offers our multinational clients additional opportunities to promote their products and brand. Any type of proof is certified," Raimondo says.

Masters Color use the HP Designjet Z3200 and Z2100 Photo Printers to proof transparent material. The HP Designjet Z3200 Photo Printer is Pantone-certified. Raimondo describes the advantages. "Printing on transparent material is extremely challenging in a digital workflow but clients save on costs and above all turnaround times. It takes us a day. We use the HP Designjet Z3200 and Z2100 Photo Printers to achieve this.

Traditional methods are possible but drying times alone would take days. Agencies inevitably have higher costs and normally use external suppliers, which adds time and costs to the processes. The

“HP Designjet Printers, HP Vivera Inks and HP Media give us the stability and reproducibility that is fundamental in delivering certified proofs. We can reproduce all the types of prepress proofs for the press technology our clients use, with total control and certainty over what we are doing.”

— Raimondo Villa, Managing Director,
Masters Color, Milan, Italy



continuous exchange of data and information between the customer, the agency and its suppliers is open to errors. The agency also adds charges for managing and verifying work. Our costs are 50% lower and the client can request last-minute changes and still make the press on time.”

Lucrative business opportunities

“The packaging market is extremely lucrative. Traditional publishing is suffering a structural crisis, competing with new media such as the internet, compounded by the challenging economic situation. Mass communication is increasingly leaning towards mass distribution channels, such as hypermarkets. This is reflected in the packaging business that is suffering less in the current economic climate. Staying ahead of the field is essential so innovation is critical. Most of our customers are multinationals, so when a new site is opened in a new market, they need all the packaging and media for the new sites. With the reproducibility and stability of our proofing process, using the HP Designjet Z series printers, we can quickly deliver the new proofs for new language declinations, each one with its own profile, weeks or months after the original proof was created. Traditional methods would take days and weeks.” Raimondo explains.

Going to press

Raimondo describes how Masters Color is able to manage even the most complex proofing jobs. “We recently completed a press campaign for a multinational client. The campaign consisted of advertising in 160 newspaper editions, 40 per day in 40 different newspapers, many printing on different paper types and using different printing presses. Editions can be repeated over time. The presses sent us a media plan for all the editions and the formats.

We adjusted the Adobe® PDF the suppliers provided us with the Adobe Distiller settings, such as specific resolution and compression settings. We printed the proofs at the touch of a button on the HP Designjet Z3200 Photo Printer and measured colors using our external spectrophotometer because it allows us to print a receipt with the values. We then sent the file to the presses over ftp. We completed the job in three days. Operators are directly in touch with the customers and can develop and print the proof autonomously. We could make and proof last-minute changes immediately. For an agency a job like that would be impossible. Time is critical,” Raimondo concludes.

Clients achieve massive gains

“Working with multinationals, we develop catalogs that we print on the HP Designjet Z6100 Printer. When clients are planning their next sales campaign, thanks to the box-making machine we purchased we can prepare a finished sample of the final packaging without going to press, take a photo of the package in our photo studio, layout and create the catalog. The operator sends the file to a server where it is ripped by the GMG RIP, then prepares the layout before going home, assigns the profile and calibration for the type of paper. The next day the HP Designjet Z6100 Printer has printed a couple of 100-page catalogs. Sales teams get a copy of the catalog and visit sales points to take pre-orders. The client can scale production capacity based on pre-orders so that factories can produce and sell to order. It is a complete cycle with us. They would have to start with an agency, then stick together a mock-up, then get a photographer to photograph it and retouch the photo. It would take ages and not reflect their end product. We provide the finished product. Whatever their needs, whether they need cardboard,

opaque, or lucid packaging with silver or gold, we can provide a finished sample that represents the final product,” Raimondo claims.

360° quality control

“For color conversion we use the GMG RIP as it uses the FOGRA standard, which is a European-wide standard. It allows you to profile any type of media on the HP Designjet Z series printers and to print proofs to FOGRA standards, such as 27, 39 or the latest release. The printer’s internal spectrophotometer is an incredible guarantee. Together with the GMG RIP, the HP Designjet Z3200 offers Pantone-certified proofing, plus its gloss enhancer avoids bronzing defects in black and white proofs. We print the Pantone, read them with an external spectrophotometer and normally it’s perfect. We print the proof and read the colors using the external spectrophotometer, print the receipt with the values and deliver it to the customer if it is requested. This technology offers us 360° control over the quality of proofs. It is a certainty and reproducible.”

The stability proofing demands

Raimondo believes that Masters Color ensures the stability, color accuracy and reproducibility of proofs and eliminates variables also by using together HP printing technology, HP Vivera Inks and HP Media. “We print on HP Universal Instant-Dry Photo Gloss. Proofs comes out of the printer dry. It’s exceptional. We are really happy with HP Media. It offers us the stability we need,” Raimondo says enthusiastically.

Proving the extremely high standards Masters Color achieves, Raimondo took the trouble to do his own test on HP Vivera Ink permanence in house. “HP Vivera Inks offer permanence – I did my own little test. I hung a print out in the sun in July and the colors were still perfect after 20 days,” Raimondo says, adding “HP Designjet Printers, HP Vivera Inks and HP Media give us the stability and reproducibility that is fundamental in delivering certified proofs. We can reproduce all types of prepress proofs for the press technology our clients use, with total control and certainty over what we are doing.”

“The HP Designjet Z series printers are extremely valid and we always achieve the proofing quality we need. We perform an internal calibration once every three weeks. With previous machines we calibrated once every 3 days. We can do that just before going home in the evening and the printer is ready to go. The addition of the internal spectrophotometer is an incredible guarantee. We never have problems with our printers, or our other equipment.”

Staying ahead of the game

“Our aim is to stay ahead of the game, always. We cannot afford to fall behind. The HP Designjet Z series printers give us the ability to reproduce all the types of proofs that our client’s need, giving us total control and certainty over what we are doing. Our clients have become so accustomed to the high standards we achieve that most publishers no longer request the hard proof. As I said, perfection is our standard.” Raimondo concludes.



At a glance

Industry sector:

Prepress

Business name:

Masters Color s.r.l.

Number of employees:

Approx. 30

Headquarters:

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**Challenges:**

- Offer FOGRA-certified proofs using accessible technology
- Offer Pantone-certified proofs
- Deliver proofs that are stable and reproducible
- Offer critical, faster turnaround at lower costs

Solution:

- HP Designjet Z6100 Printer
- HP Designjet Z3200 Photo Printer
- HP Designjet Z2100 Photo Printer
- HP Universal Instant-Dry Photo Gloss
- GMG ColorProof

Results:

- Costs reduced by 50% compared to traditional proofing methods
- Digital proofing workflow offers flexibility to develop new products
- Certified proofs for printing material on any press, including lucrative transparent packaging market
- Multinational clients appreciate ability to satisfy all prepress proofing demands
- Clients enthusiastic with press proofs in half the time even with last-minute changes

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