

TECHNICAL GUIDE

TEXTILE PRINTING

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
MEASURING COLOURS ON TEXTILES

Second Edition

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do I need to use any special tools for colour measurement?

You need to view colours in a viewing booth (lightbox), so that you can be sure of the lighting conditions. You should measure colours using a spectrophotometer, in conjunction with a properly calibrated monitor.

2. How can I be sure the colours on the print are what the designer wants?

Use applied colour management and process control and make sure that the designer knows what to expect in print. Produce samples of the job, ideally using the same digital press for the samples and the print run.

3. How much does a spectrophotometer cost?

You can buy a new spectrophotometer for a few hundred Euros, however low-end products generally offer low-end performance, so it is better to invest in a more expensive device. If you buy something second hand, make sure to get it recalibrated.

4. What is the most common cause of colour errors?

In a digital system colours are invisible until they appear on screen or in print, by which time it is too late to correct the mistakes. Poor data management and process control are the biggest source of errors.

5. Can we change output systems without seeing a change in colour appearance?

Yes, as long as you manage your colour data properly, the substrate is the same or very similar, and all devices and substrates are calibrated and profiled.

6. Is it possible to print textiles on a digital printer intended for the sign and display market?

If the printer supports inks and substrates suitable for textile production then you can print textiles with it. There are many digital presses on the market for printing soft signage, however if you are serious about getting into textile printing, invest in purpose-built technology.

7. Can I use web-to-print system to produce colour accurate digitally printed textiles?

Textile prints are like any other print product you offer on your website, so the colour accuracy depends on the colour monitors, the controls involved and the light source in which they are viewed. Correctly configured you can use your web-to-print software to colour check files automatically but a caveat for colour accuracy on the site is always recommended.

8. How often should I recalibrate my spectrophotometers?

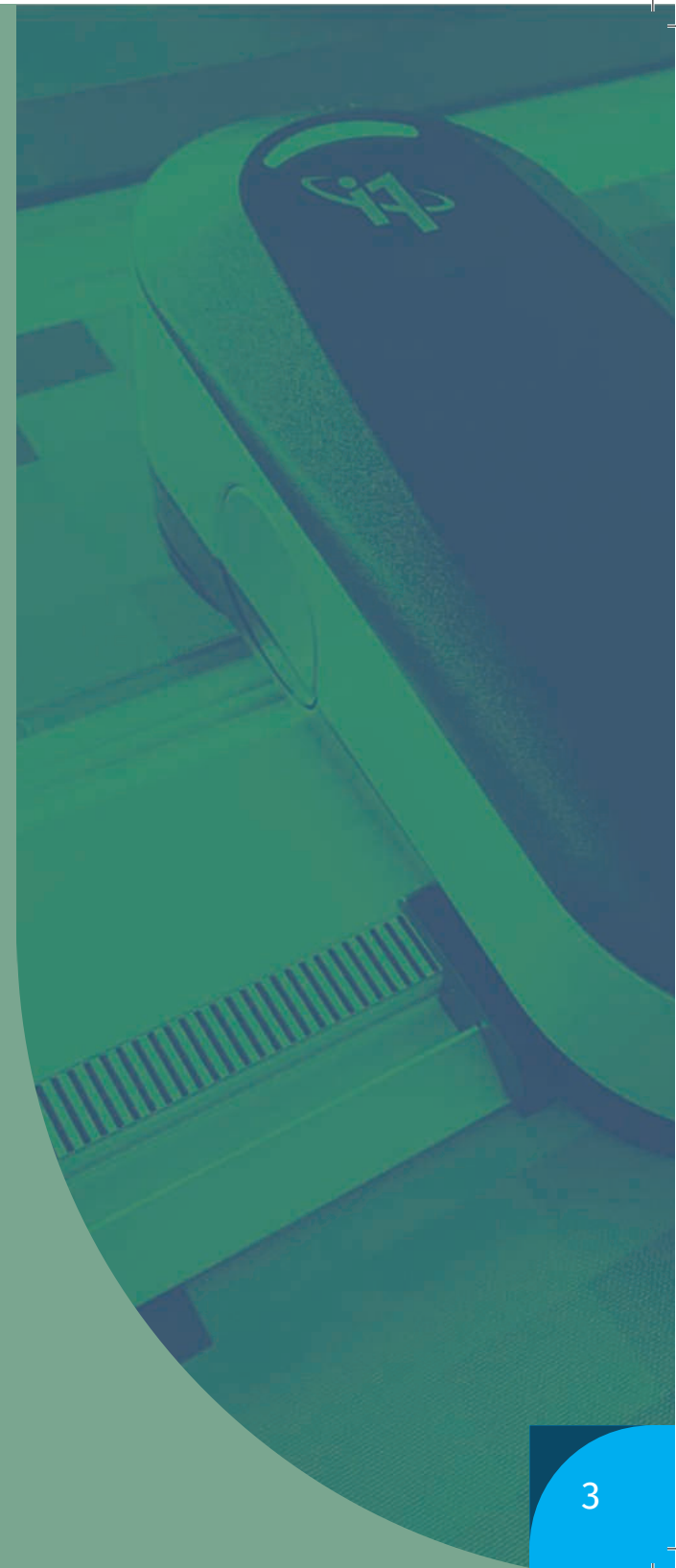
This depends on the device and how much you use it. Follow the manufacturer's instructions or get them checked at least once every second year.

9. Do we need any additional colour training to digitally print textiles?

If this is a completely new field for you, training your people as part of the investment process will help you to avoid pitfalls once you go live. That way you can maintain happy relations with your customers. Otherwise colour management is no different than that required for other substrates.

10. What is the best starting point for printing textiles digitally?

This depends on the level of expertise you have already. Sign and display makers who already print soft signage can develop wider capabilities based on existing activities. If this is completely new for you, start with identifying potential customers for the printed textiles you want to sell. Then research your technology options based on the products you want to print.



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