



PRINT AND INNOVATION WITH MD5

Surbiton based Fresh Graphic Solutions did some clever things with ink to give its customer what was needed...

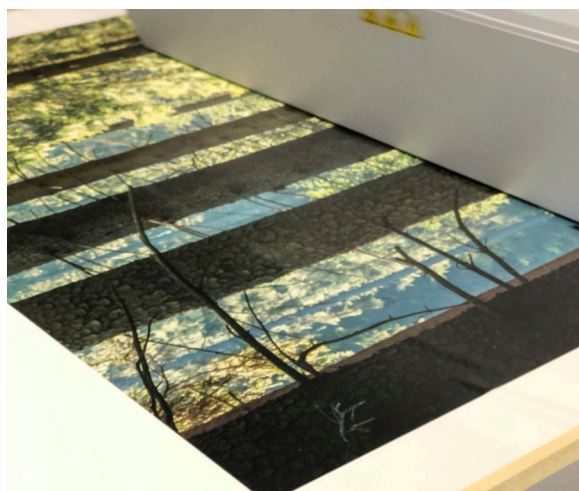
Digital printing is a wonderful thing. It can deliver very precisely metered quantities of exotic links onto all sorts of substrates that wouldn't even be suitable for transport through conventional presses. In creative hands, particularly those with a bit of technical expertise, digital print can do even more.

Fresh Graphic Solutions is based in Surbiton and its work can be seen nationwide. The company is extremely well equipped, and knows how to extract the best in terms of performance from the hardware it uses, and how to apply it to a very wide range of applications. Customers come to the company for its service and creativity, but also because it knows how to push the technical envelope and achieve results.

Fresh Graphic Solutions is run by MD Giles Adkin and his team. Giles is no stranger to signs and graphics production technology. His experience traces to hands-on time spent with the world's earliest sign computers and his background and grounding give him an artists eye for lettering and layout. He's also worked with legacy print technologies and knows how to get ink on substrates.

All of that experience came in useful very recently when a client came to Fresh Graphic Solutions, having first done it's due diligence on the company's excellent website. The application it wanted to pursue superficially looked simple, but came with some challenges.

The client had a balcony and through the balustrade a view they very much wanted to obscure. Traditional view blocking materials were considered such as etch effect films, but eventually something far more creative was proposed and agreed. A little Astroturf would deck the balcony flooring, and a Forest view would be applied to the glazing so obscuring the view beyond.



Lighting conditions on the balcony were such that the glass surfaces would bear the brunt of solar glare at some times of the day and that would wash the print out rendering it useless for the purposes intended. Simply overprinting the graphic would've yielded a very muddy looking result detracting from the subject matter.

Instead, Giles and the team elected to use an ink interlayer between two carefully ink-limited CMYK prints in register on a single substrate. So, reading from the first print and its first surface, the ink was deposited CMYK / White / CMYK. That's a lot of ink, but the result justifies the exercise. Now the print looks identical whether it is being viewed in reflective light or when it is transmitting the full glare of the sun.

Giles explained how the print works. "It may not seem obvious, but most print that is viewed in conditions where the light is reflected apparently off its surface, sends back to the viewer light that has taken two trips through the ink. Light enters the print, is reflected off the white substrate, and then takes a second trip through the ink to be emitted. If such a print is strongly backlit, the light only takes one trip through the ink and so the print looks washed out.

"Our balustrade print works a little differently. It doesn't matter whether it is seen in reflected or transmitted light, that light is always penetrating ink twice. So the print never looks washed out, and it certainly doesn't look muddy because it simply has too much ink on the substrate, overprinting in other words."

One consideration in producing such a print was the substrate to use. Physically, there is a lot of ink to handle and so the team elected to use **Metamark MD5** an **MD-Class** material with a highly developed appetite for ink volume. The results confirm that the substrate selection was the right one.

This technique has very broad application possibilities. It would obviously work for backlit posters wherever those posters need to look good day or night. There must be hundreds of other uses for it in situations where graphics are applied to glazing too.

Fresh Graphic Solutions has a bit of a reputation for innovating and thinking well outside the confines that limit traditional printing processes to equally traditional areas of application. So if you are trying to achieve something with print and all you're getting is blank looks when you ask about it, run the idea past Giles and his team. You're likely to meet with engagement and the ability to get it done.

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MD5

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