

# UV-cured printers Textile printers Inks, Media & Substrates Cutters & Laminators







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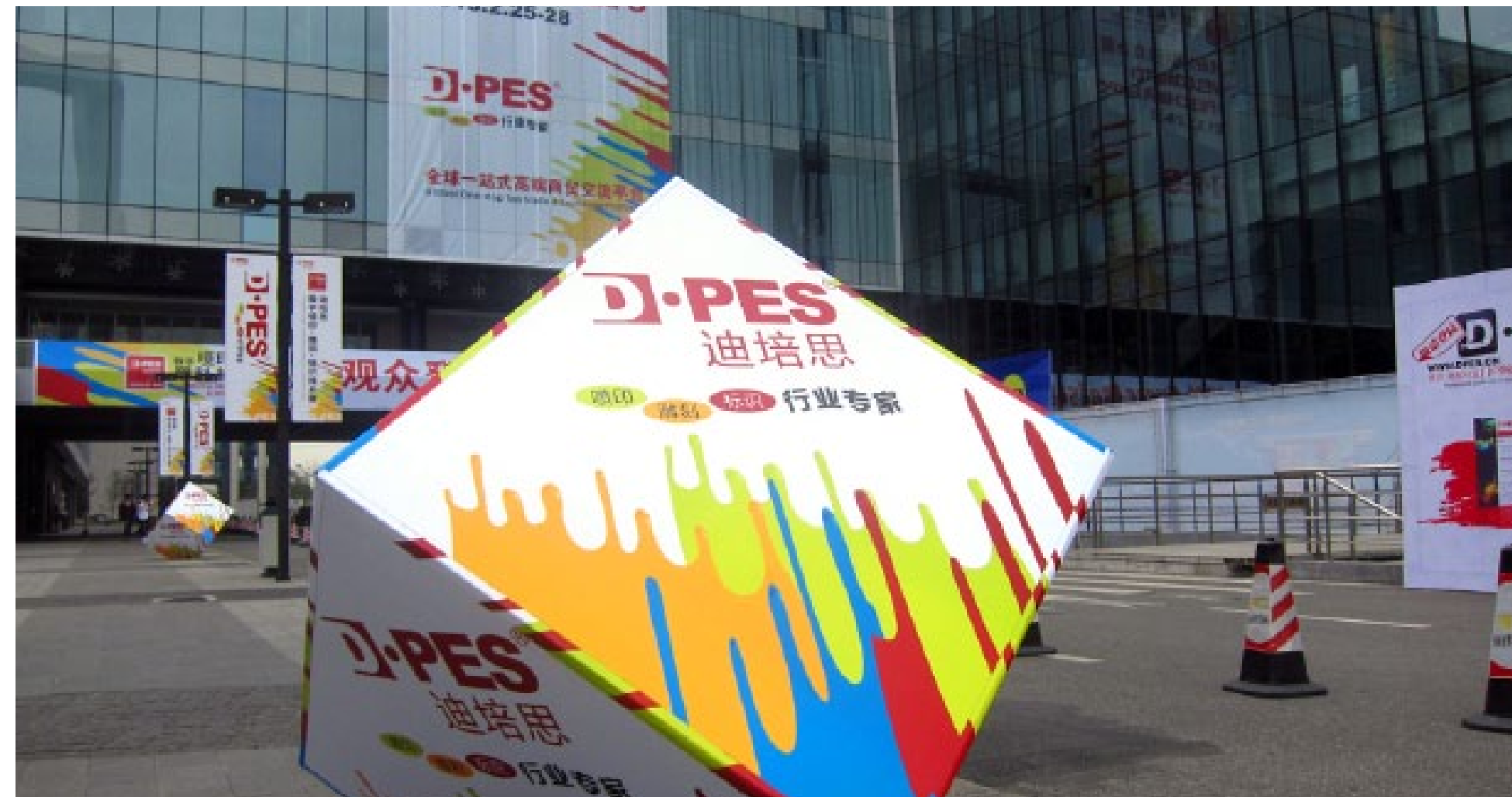
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## Introduction

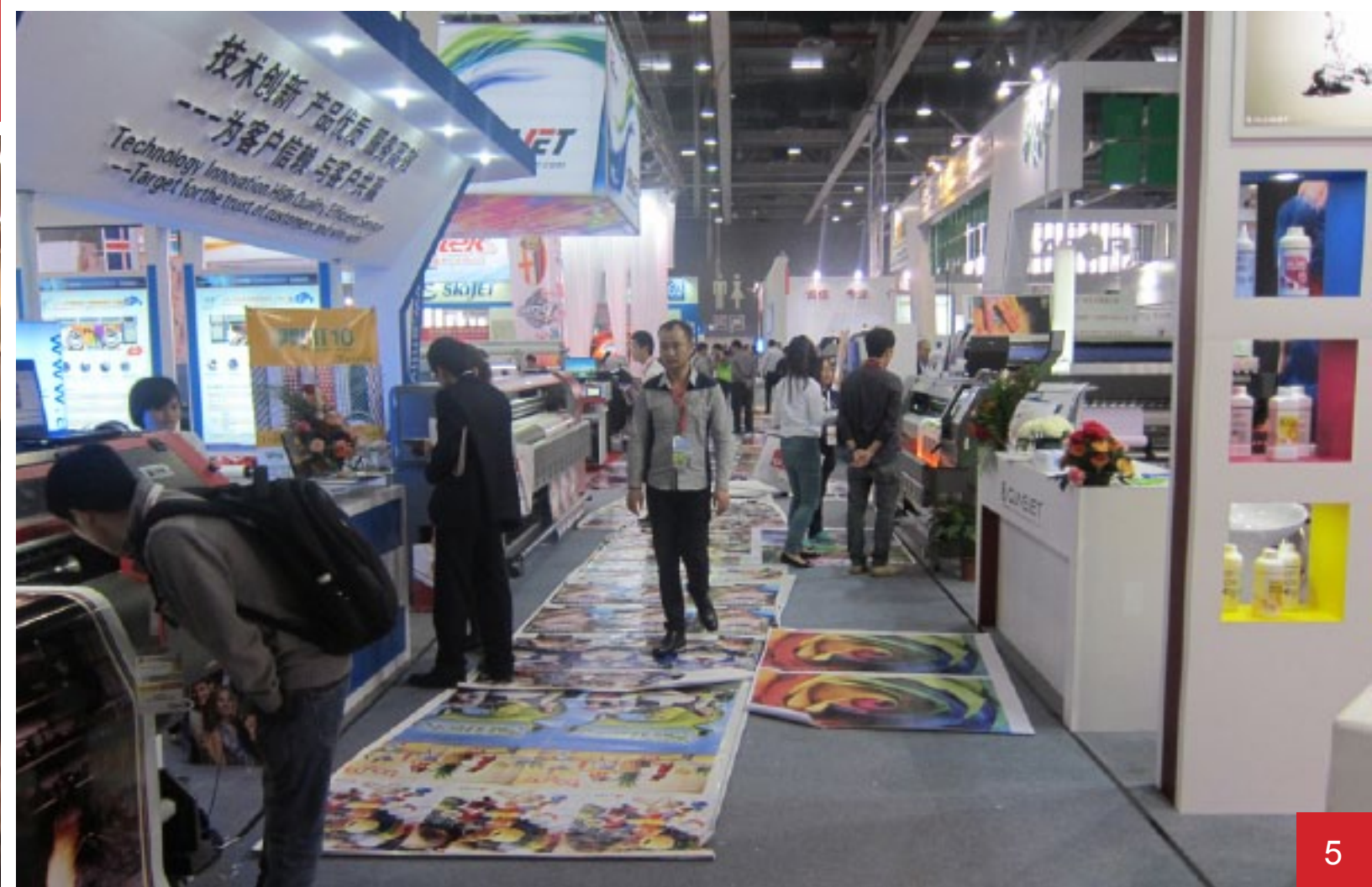
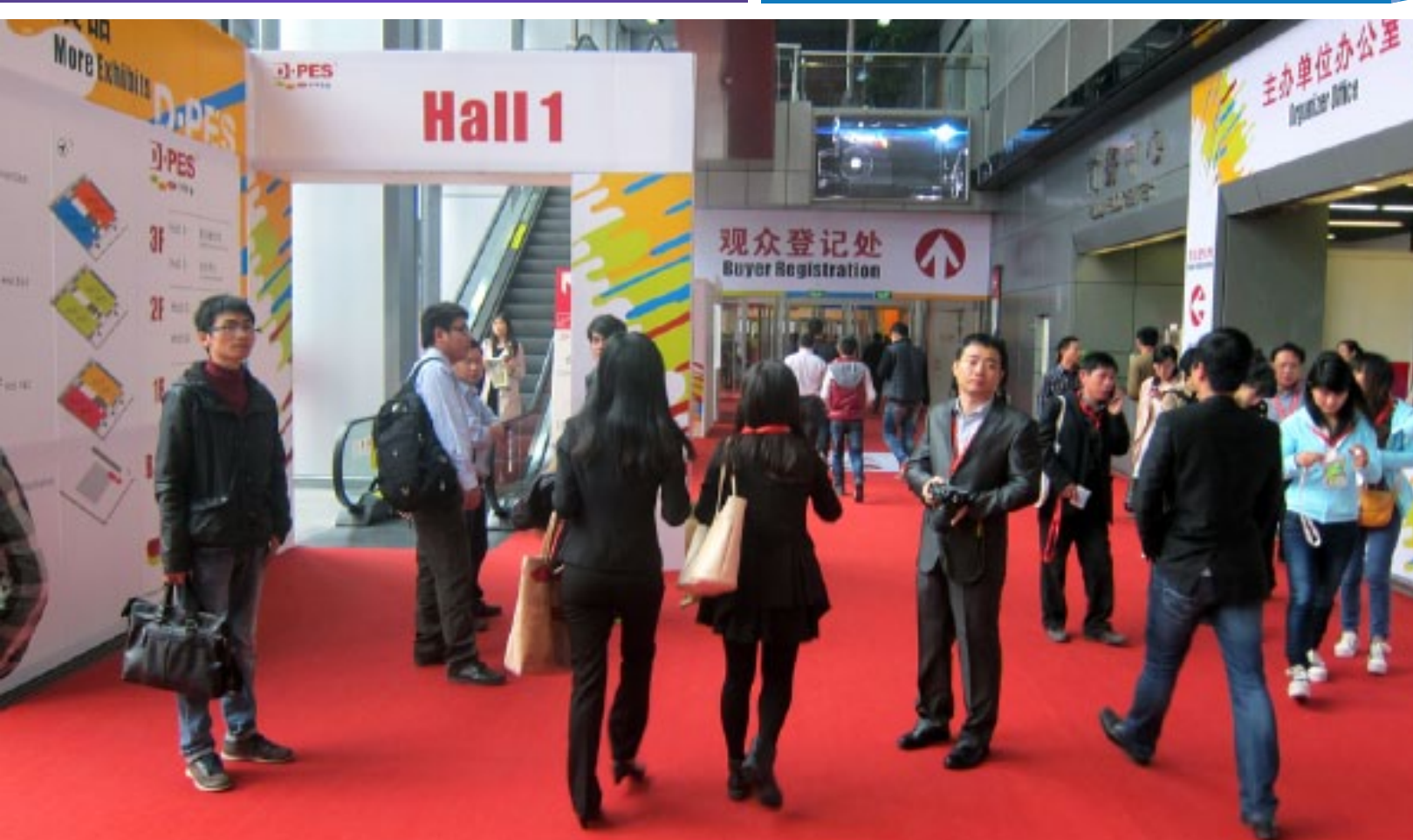
D-PES 2013 was an impressive event for wide-format inkjet printers and media. There were also a number of mostly Chinese ink companies and many brands of flatbed cutters: CNC and CO2 lasers.

The pages which follow are solely on D-PES; our reports on Sign China are separate. D-PES and Sign China are competing expos across the street from each other. Both are back-to-back so if you are in town to attend one you can attend the other also.









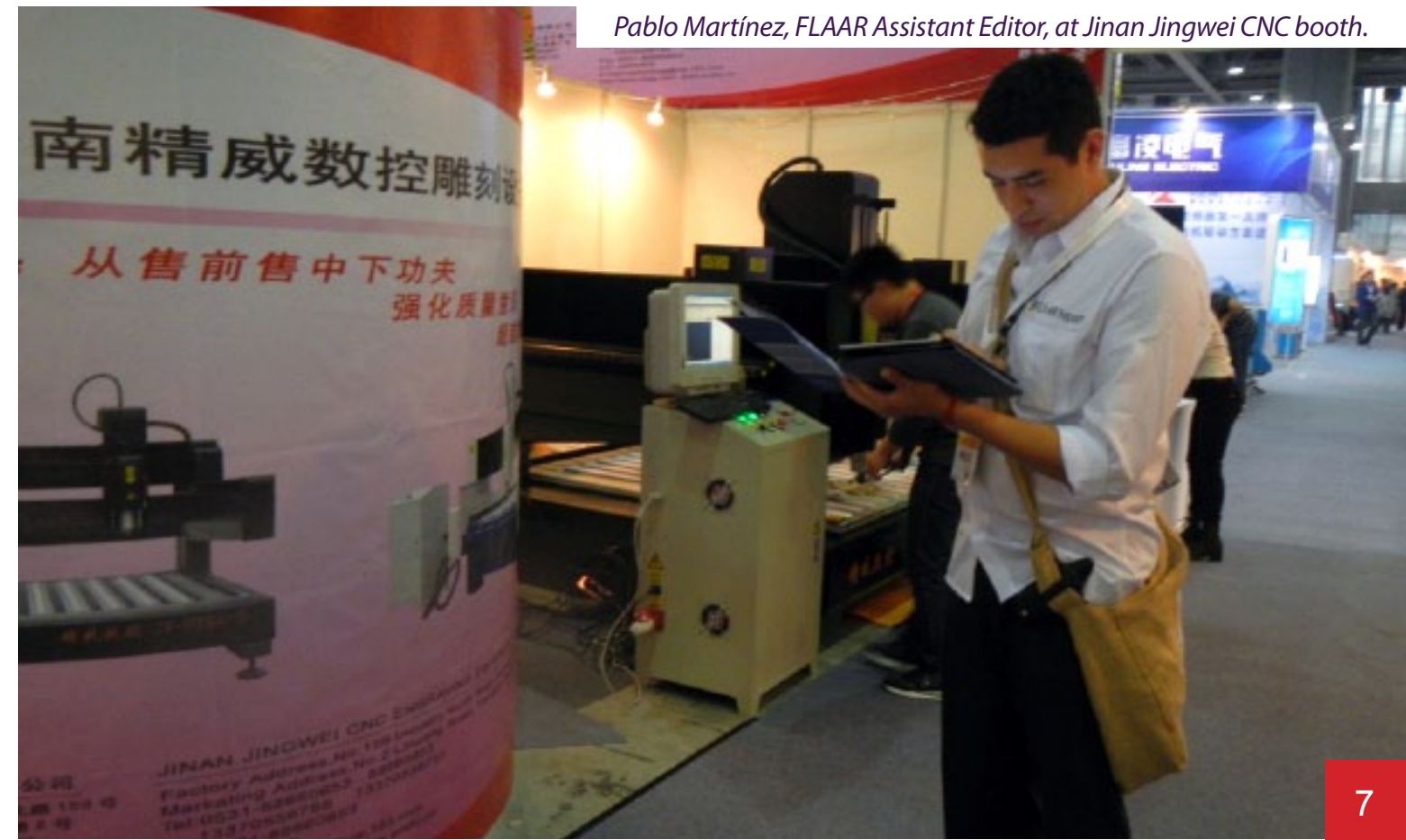




Grace Morales, FLAAR Assistant Editor at D-PES 2013.



Pablo Martínez, FLAAR Assistant Editor, at Jinan Jingwei CNC booth.



Nicholas in the booth of GLM (RBT Associates). The head of the company, Dr Ben Zhou, is visible at the table at the left.



# UV-Cured Printers

It helps to do adequate research before you make a decision of which UV-cured printer to consider.

There were 61 brands of UV-cured printers at D-PES (and several more brands at Sign Expo across the street the next four days). I repeat: over 61 brands at D-PES (not counting the additional brands across the street).

If you subtract the two brands from Korea and two brands from Japan you are left with scores and scores of Chinese brands.

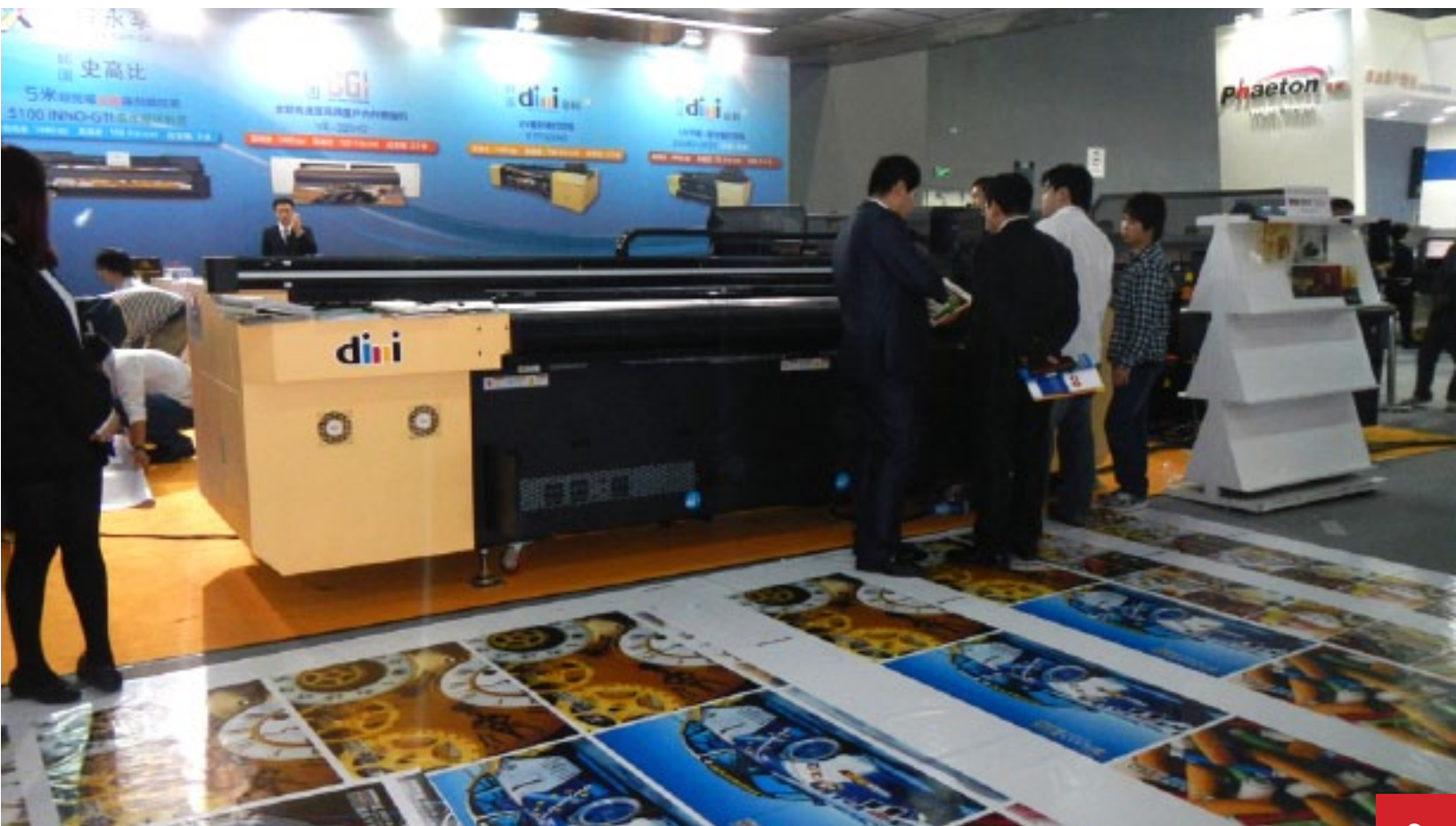
How in the world can a distribution company in South America, Mexico, USA, Canada, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Australia, Indonesia, Philippines, and other countries figure out which brands to consider, and which brands are still not really sophisticated enough for use outside China?



From right to left; Pablo Martínez, Grace Morales and Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth at Human Digital booth.



Jetga UV printer.



Dilli Neo Titan 2504D UV printer at Dilli booth.





Xenons FXB-2500 LED UV printer.



REVOTECH 320X UV printer.



Dr. Hellmuth at REVOTECH factory visit. The week after D-PES we visited the UV-printer factory.

Which are the factory brands in China? And which brands are simply re-branded?

Which companies in China have the experience and ethics to handle trade with your company in your country? Which companies in China are reliable and thus deserving of you to do business with them?

Same question for individual printshop owners around the world? Which printer factories in China should you get to know?

In order that we at FLAAR can answer these questions we visit factories, one by one. The week after D-PES we visited the UV-printer factories of iPentum (Icontek) and of Inwear (REVOTECH). Last year we visited the impressive factory of JHF.

In the future we are considering visiting the factories of Xenons, Kincolor, Human Digital and v. If other Chinese companies wish to bring our team to their headquarters we are open to discussion.

We have visited the factory of Sky Air-Ship twice.

Another reason why a factory visit is essential is so that we can better understand which name is a model, which is a corporation, which is a factory. For example, the new brand of "SMATCH" (**S**uperior **MATCH**) was established by Esenho Technology (founded by key people at SkyAir-ship) related to MPA Digital Technology Co., Limited. "MPA" stands for Masterwork Printing & Automation.

MPAD is charge of the overseas market only, but available to sell the models with Konica, Polaris and Xaar Proton 15+ Print heads. Esenho Technolog is responsible for domestic market, the model they sell is XAAR Proton 15+ Flatbed printer.

We now know to classify these printers under the corporate name MPAD.

But if you simply wander around the aisles of a trade show, it is tough to understand all this. But if you know the key people (in this case Mark Ma) you can learn which are the meanings of the different names in the booth and in the catalogs.

In a separate FLAAR Report we list all 51 brands and work at identifying which are factory brands, which are partner brands, which are rebranding by distributors. So if you are a distributor anywhere around the world you can order this report and learn which brand names you should consider. Write FrontDesk "at" FLAAR.org to learn about how to be invoiced so you can receive all this information.

Plus, if you are a distributor, printshop owner you can ask for direct consulting with Dr Hellmuth. If you are a manufacturer you can ask how to arrange for a FLAAR team to visit your company.





The new brand of "Smatch" (Superior match) was established by Esenho Technology, associated with MPA Digital Technology Co., Limited ("MPA" stands for Masterwork Printing & Automation).

MPAD is charge of the overseas market; available to sell the models with Konica, Polaris and Xaar printheads.

For further information, contact [mark\\_ma@outlook.com](mailto:mark_ma@outlook.com), [www.mpadigital.com](http://www.mpadigital.com)



SMATCH 2513 UV printer.







JHF Leopard E3000 UV printer.



Laurence Wettren (AAVPD Ltd) and Dr. Nicholas Hellmut at JHF booth.



Donna Whong (JHF, Group Sales Manager) and Pablo Martínez (FLAAR, Assistant Editor) at JHF booth.

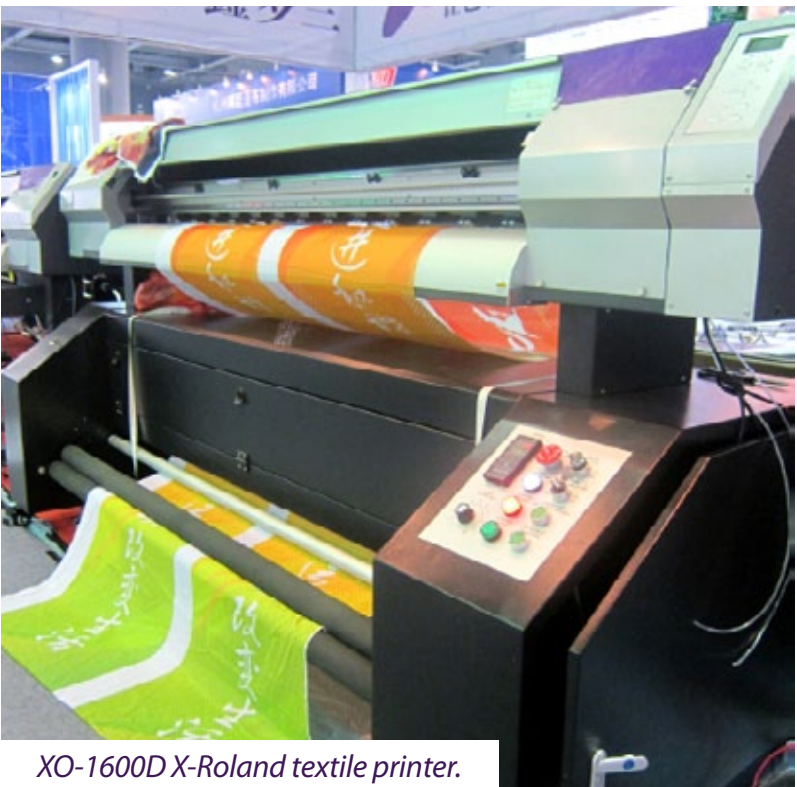


JHF booth, at D-PES 2013.



During D-PES 2013, JHF launched their NEW F07 UV printer. During 2012 the FLAAR staff have the opportunity to visit the headquarters of JHF at Beijing, China and learn a little bit more about their printers.





XO-1600D X-Roland textile printer.



ZeTong Digital RT-1800 textile printer.



Icontek TW-3200F3 textile printer, at Icontek booth.



Icontek customized TW-3200F3 textile printer.





Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth and Mr. Guosheng Qin at Hongsam factory visit.

## Textile Printers & Dye Sublimation Systems

In past years there were textile printers exhibited both at China Sign (D-PES) and the rival expo across the street (Sign China). This year (2013) there was one exhibitor with nice textile inks at Sign China (Hongsam) and several booths of textile printers, so there will be separate reports: one on textile printers at D-PES and a second report on textile printers at Sign China.

Over the last three years more Chinese brands have entered the market for textile printers. In most cases these use Epson printheads and a hot air sublimation unit from one of the three standard Chinese sublimation unit manufacturers.

Four TRENDS in textile printers were noticeable at D-PES 2013. We cover all of these in our separate report on textile printers at D-PES 2013 and additional FLAAR Report on textile printers and inks at Sign China. Plus we will comment on how all the evolving trends affect d-gen in Korea, Italy, and their market potential around the world. You may ask to be invoiced to receive these two full-color reports by writing FrontDesk "at" FLAAR.org.

The most innovative textile ink at the two Guangzhou area expos was the pigmented textile ink of Hongsam. We can write about the benefits of this ink since we know the Hongsam company. They flew us to their factory already two years ago, plus we had an informative evening dinner meeting with them during the Sign China expo.

After the two expos in Guangzhou we visited the factory of iPentum (Icontek) where we learned more about their textile printer(s). To really understand any printer, it is essential that a factory visit be offered by the manufacturer.

We appreciate the hospitality at the Icontek factory from Sonny, Silvia and the owner, Charles.



Dr. Hellmuth at Icontek factory visit, 2013. At the back from left to right: Eric (YJ), Silvia (Icontek), Sonny (Icontek), Craig Adams, and Alan Chan (YJ).







*Xuli X6 1880 printer.*

*Xenons X2A-6407SE printer.*

## Printers with DX Printheads

FLAAR is the only institute in the world which maintains lists of all printer manufacturers who offer printers using DX5 and DX7 printheads (only a few companies use DX6). DX4 printheads tend to be used only by Roland; hardly any other company uses heads of that older generation.

Dozens, actually scores, of Chinese printer manufactures use Epson DX5 printheads. This is one of the most popular heads in the world for eco-solvent and textile printers. Increasingly Chinese printers are switching to DX7 heads this year, but still DX5 are the heads that print shops like to see in their printers.

The problem is figuring out which Chinese printers are capable of functioning OUTSIDE China, in your print shop in the Americas, in Europe, in Africa, in Middle East, Australia or Asia.

It is important to have a printer  
**Which does not shake apart during shipment from China** (we found one brand that was consistently fallen apart by the time it got to Guatemala). The printer was okay in the factory, but was unable to function outside of the factory. This same brand and similar model had reliability issues in Europe.

It is helpful to have a printer  
**Which is sturdy: strong metal, which does not bend and is not flimsy**, ironically, the (first generation, the prototypes) of the Epson SureColor printers are considered by many people in the industry as the most flimsy produced in recent years: most brands of Chinese printers are actually more robust than the new Epson, especially the disappointing prototypes which Epson exhibited at Drupa 2012. Fortunately most of the cheap low-bid parts and inadequate engineering were fixed with a slightly improved model which is available now.

It is essential to have a printer  
**Whose factory is reliable, whose engineers understand electronics, firmware (software) and ink flow.** Plus, a factory which is proud to make a good reliable printer. Distributors around the world, and print shop owners, are tired of cheap low-bid brands which fall apart after a few months.

I personally realize that Chinese engineers are fully capable. They have years of experience making thousands of printers (actually thousands every month).

There are now Chinese, Taiwan, and Korean ink companies producing ink of all varieties which is perfectly functional.

There are about 67 brands of Chinese printers using DX printheads (these are all carefully listed and described in FLAAR Reports). The question is how in the world to figure out which are reliable !

**First step:** get to the corporate headquarters, meet the owners and key managers, and visit the factory.

**Second step:** speak with people who have used this brand themselves.

**Third step:** keep your eyes and ears open in the industry to learn from others who already have experience with DX printheaded machines.



*Inkwin SJ-1607 printer.*



## We at FLAAR look forward to visiting Chinese factories of solvent printers

Starting in 2009 we began to visit Chinese factories. In that year most were using entry-level model of Xaar printheads. But today the most popular printhead in China is DX5 and now this year, DX7.

Xaar kindly set up the appointments and drove FLAAR to the factories. We did this before or after APPPEXPO (Shanghai) for two years.

Now we hope to continue visiting Chinese factories during summer 2013, using Xaar or DX or Konica Minolta or Spectra or Ricoh heads.

In addition to visiting factories, we learn a lot from colleagues. One colleague has explained the acceptable quality of printers from Xucheng Electronic Technology (Xuli).

Another colleague has told us how satisfied he is with printers from Xenons.

But we have not yet been at either factory. However we at least now have a better understanding of these two brand names, compared with the 67 brand names total (mostly eco-solvent and textile). Plus there are over 53 Chinese brands of UV-cured printers; we visited two factories immediately after D-PES: iPentum (Icontek) and Inwear (REVOTECH).

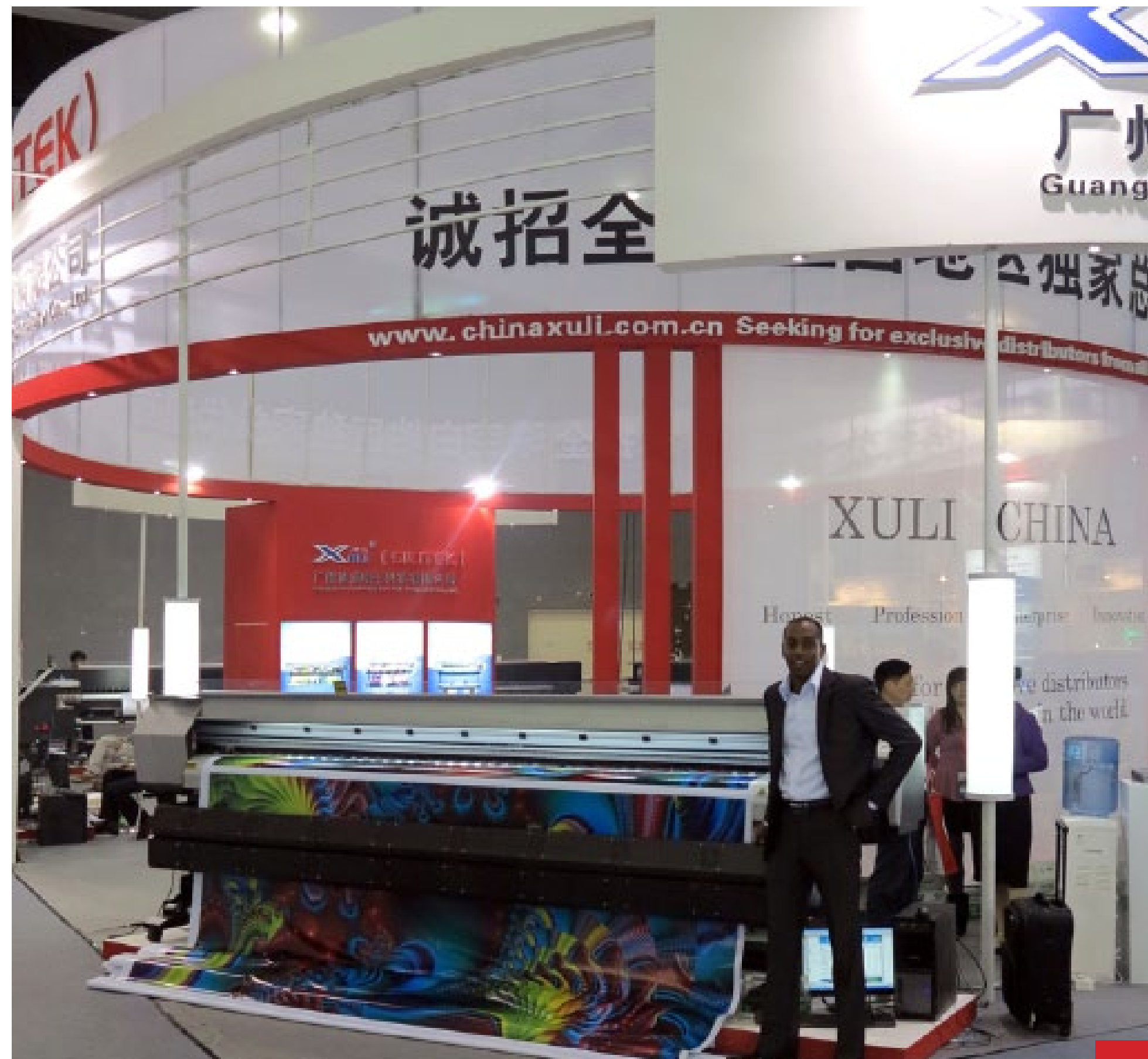
We estimate there are another 5 brands of DX-printheaded machines, in addition to Xuli and Xenons (and with Konica and other heads) which are suitable for eco-solvent ink (entry-level and mid-range, 1.6 to 2+ meter widths).

As soon as factory visits are arranged, we can report on additional brands.

## Printers for South Africa and nearby countries

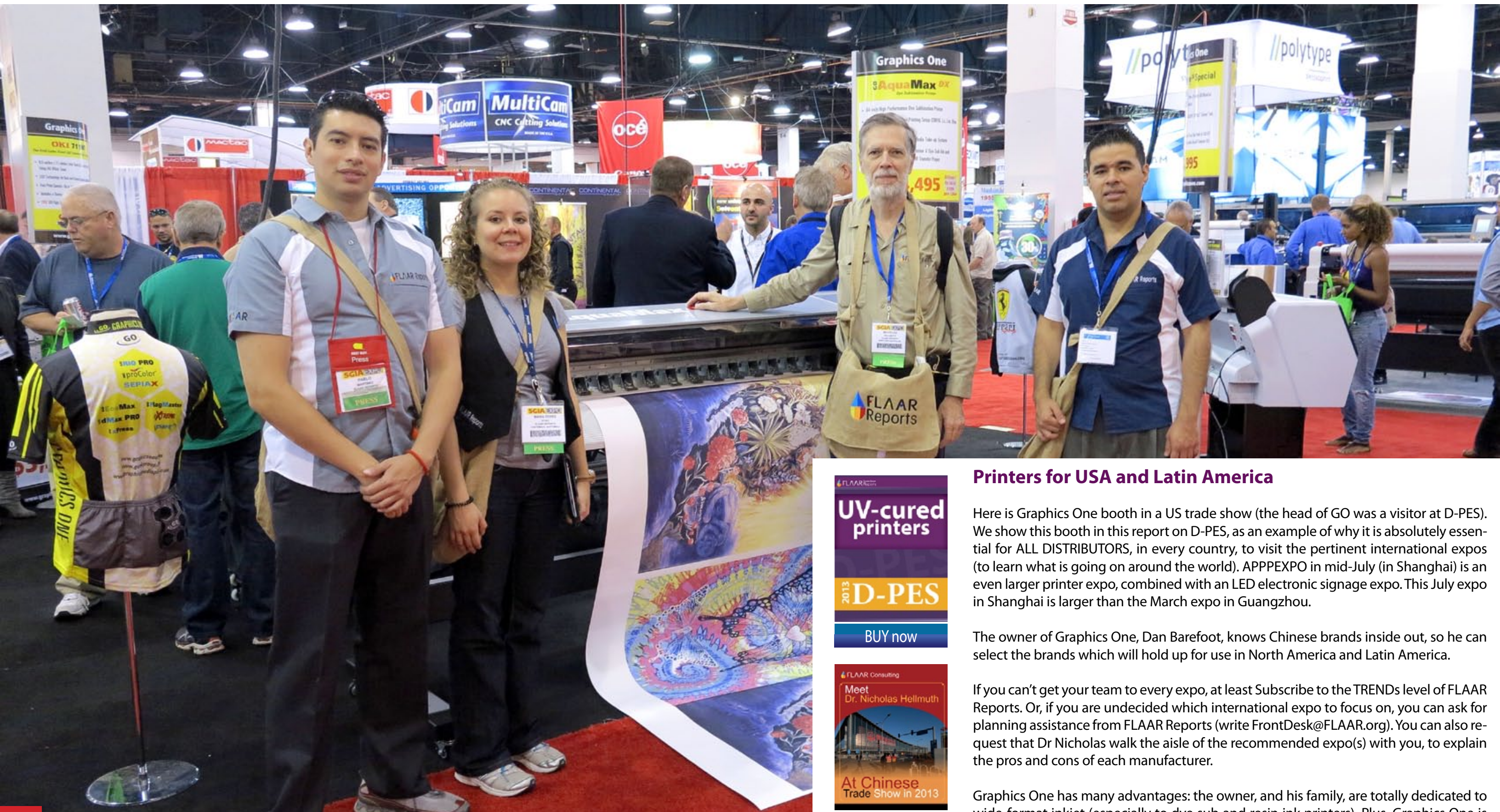
This is Aaron Francis. He is a distributor with advanced technical knowledge. Most distributors know how to buy and sell; Aaron also understands the inside of printer mechanics, the chemistry of ink, and the structure of inkjet coatings on media.

We are flying a Technical Writer from FLAAR to Sign Africa to visit his company (X6 Digital) (in addition to Dr. Nicholas who goes there every year already). The two of us will inspect the printers he is importing for his new company in South Africa.



Aaron Francis, founder of X6 Digital in South Africa, will exhibit good quality Chinese printers at upcoming Sign Africa expo.





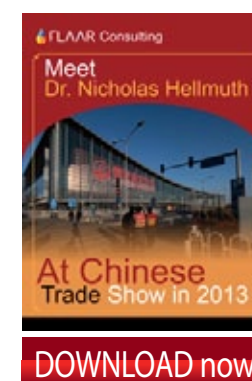
## Printers for USA and Latin America

Here is Graphics One booth in a US trade show (the head of GO was a visitor at D-PES). We show this booth in this report on D-PES, as an example of why it is absolutely essential for ALL DISTRIBUTORS, in every country, to visit the pertinent international expos (to learn what is going on around the world). APPPEXPO in mid-July (in Shanghai) is an even larger printer expo, combined with an LED electronic signage expo. This July expo in Shanghai is larger than the March expo in Guangzhou.

The owner of Graphics One, Dan Barefoot, knows Chinese brands inside out, so he can select the brands which will hold up for use in North America and Latin America.

If you can't get your team to every expo, at least Subscribe to the TRENDS level of FLAAR Reports. Or, if you are undecided which international expo to focus on, you can ask for planning assistance from FLAAR Reports (write [FrontDesk@FLAAR.org](mailto:FrontDesk@FLAAR.org)). You can also request that Dr Nicholas walk the aisle of the recommended expo(s) with you, to explain the pros and cons of each manufacturer.

Graphics One has many advantages: the owner, and his family, are totally dedicated to wide-format inkjet (especially to dye sub and resin ink printers). Plus, Graphics One is bi-lingual (English and Spanish).



Pablo Martínez, María Renee Ayau, Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth and José Melgar (FLAAR staff members) at Graphics One booth. SGIA 2012.

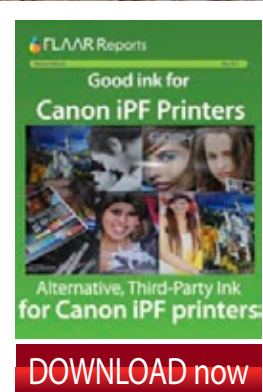


# Inks (After-Market, Third Party)

There are over a hundred ink companies around the world; and probably more than half of these are in China. It is not realistic to visit every single factory but a factory visit is essential for learning which companies we will consider writing about. Our goal is to visit at least three more ink factories.



There are two good ways to learn which after-market inks are good enough to consider: visit the factory and visit an end-user who is using the ink. This is how we know about Hongsam inks (including their wallpaper ink). Plus our knowledge of Inkwin comes from two factory visits plus visiting printshops using their ink.



Weifang Weixin ink company I have seen at Dubai expo and now at D-PES. However since I have not visited their factory there is not yet a discussion of their several kinds of inks.

But we do notice when we see a brand exhibited at several international expos outside China.







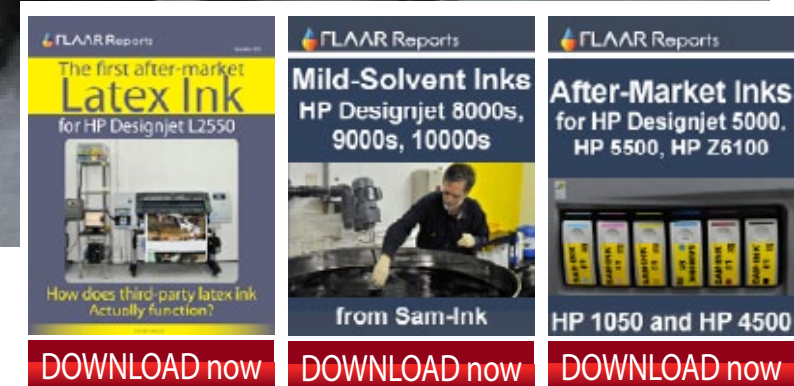
The ink company in China that we know well is Inkwin. During 2012 FLAAR visited their headquarters at Shanghai, also they had a large booth with plenty of space, the FLAAR team used their tables as our meeting area at the end of every day. FLAAR team used their tables as our meeting area at the end of every day.



DOWNLOAD now



FLAAR also has reports on Sam Ink of Singapore. We have been to their factory twice and look forward to visiting them again in the future.



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# Billboards & Building Wrap

For billboard and building wrap material, the brand I best know is ARIA.

To really understand which of the dozens, even scores of manufacturers are reliable, it is essential to visit the company headquarters, visit the factory, and get to know the people.

The competent manufacturer we have experience with is Yeong Jeou. We recognize their capability to handle sales around the world because they are themselves a multi-national company: Malaysia, Taiwan, USA with Chinese partners and a substantial factory complex in Zhongshan.

FLAAR has been to the Yeong Jeou factory three times (most recently the week after D-PES).

To learn about the advantages of PE over PVC, contact [aria@yjusa.com](mailto:aria@yjusa.com) and/or visit their web site [www.aria.us.com](http://www.aria.us.com)



In our search for reliable media from a known and respected company we have found GLM Digital Technology Co., Ltd., associated with Zhongshan RBT Digital Technology Co., Ltd. I have known the owner, Dr. Ben Zhou, for several years, and the week after D-PES had the opportunity to visit his new factory in Zhongshan.

## Indoor Signage Media, for water-based inks

There are so many kinds of inks, and each ink needs different kinds of coating. So there are many different media manufacturers, each focusing on different kinds of media.

Giclee and fine art photos, and high quality indoor signage (such as in perfume stores, shopping malls, airports) requires a superior class of media. On a billboard viewed from a highway no one will notice occasional defects. But a backlit perfume ad needs to be on flawless media.

Unfortunately there are now years of sad experience of printshop owners and distributors around the world receiving their shipments or container loads and finding that the substrates are defective. So our interest at FLAAR is gradually to locate manufacturers who either do not make defective media, or if a roll has an issue, the manufacturer will stand behind it and replace it with a good roll.

We have found GLM Digital Technology Co., Ltd., associated with Zhongshan RBT Digital Technology Co., Ltd. I have known the owner, Dr Ben Zhou, for several years, and the week after D-PES had the opportunity to visit his new factory in Zhongshan.



Here you see Nicholas and Craig Adams (partner with YJ in USA) on top of the special customized coating system for the PE as technical textile for billboards, bilding wrap, and other applications.



# Substrates for general signage

There are so many dozens, scores of manufacturers of general signage materials that it is tough for a distributor or printshop owner in North America, South America, Middle East, Africa or elsewhere to be able to decide.

For the last three years Pablo Martinez, of the FLAAR team, have been making lists of all exhibitors of media at all Chinese expos (and at FESPA, ISA and SGIA in USA, and recently at Sign Middle East in Dubai).

Our next step will to visit several factories so we can learn more about which of the companies should be evaluated and recommended.

A first step is to get to know the company in their own booth. Thus we visited the SignsCal booth at D-PES several times.



## Rigid Material

When we think of rigid material (for printing with UV-cured flatbeds) we generally think of foam core. But here at FLAAR we are also interested in Aluminum Composite Panels, honeycomb sandwich board and diverse other materials.

Most honeycomb sandwich material is made in Europe (especially Scandanavia). Some brands are North American. So far not much honeycomb sandwich material is offered by Chinese manufacturers. So we are keeping an eye out on the development of this market.

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## Laminators and Coaters

Distributors have asked FLAAR to find brands and factories in China that provide more dependable laminators. Thus during 2013 we will be doing more studies of Chinese brands of laminators.

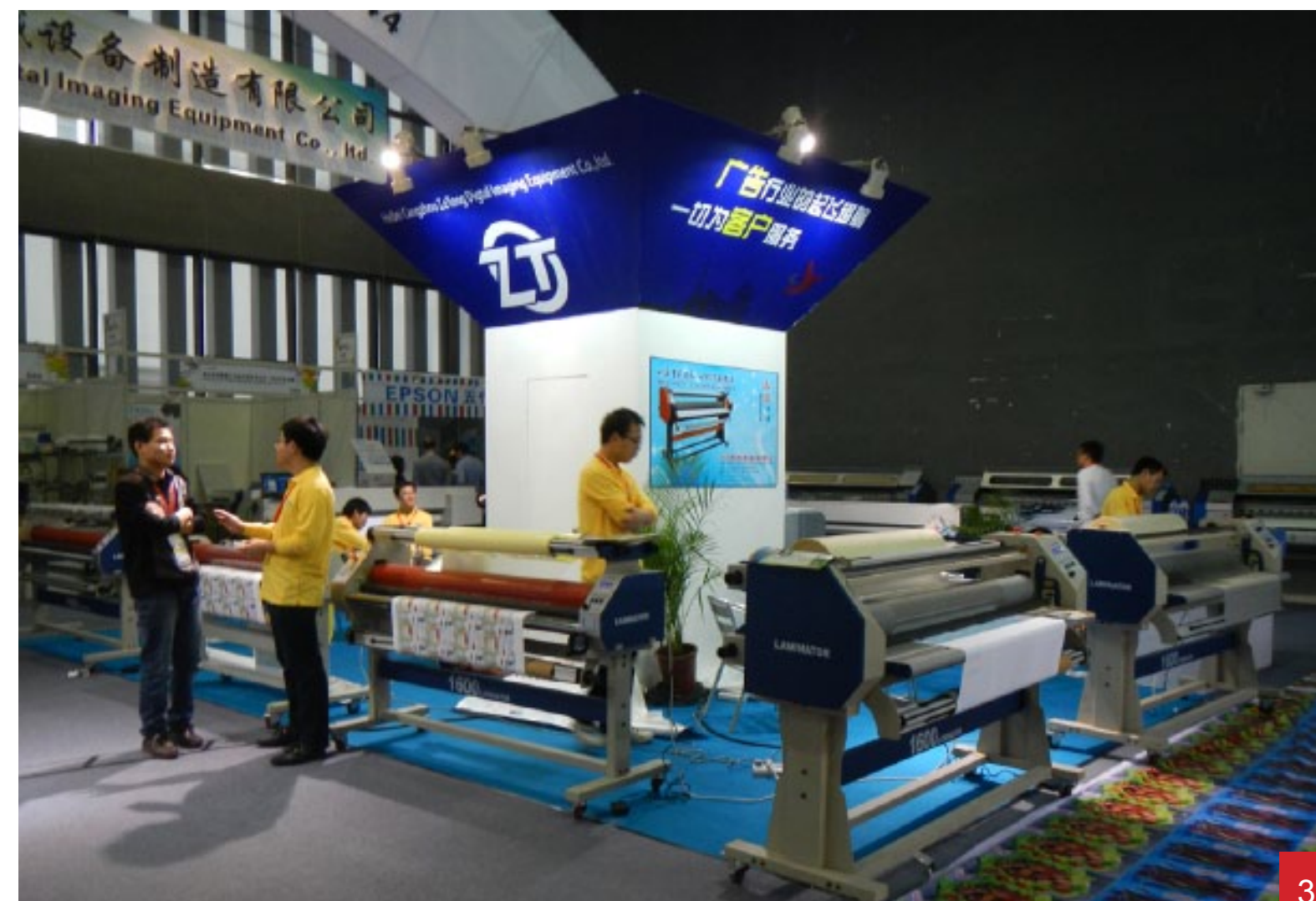
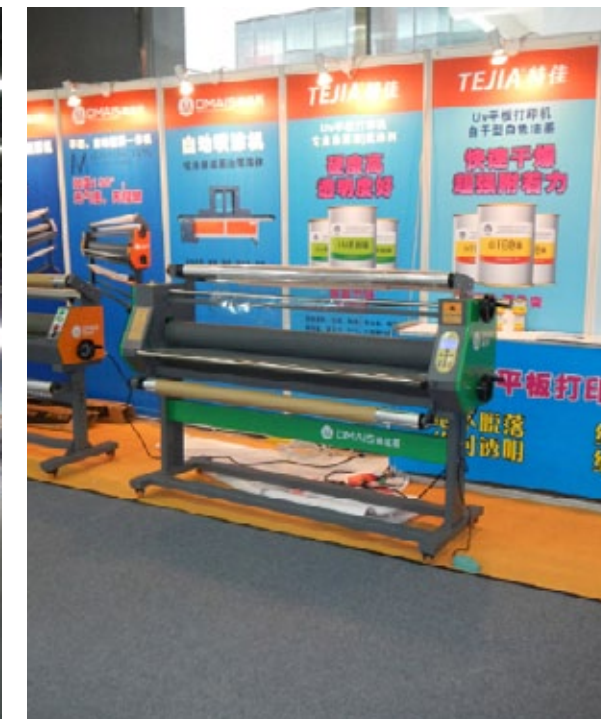
The first challenge is to learn which are the factory brands, and which are rebranded by Chinese distributors.

The parallel study will be to learn which Chinese brands are already rebranded in North America, Europe, Africa etc. We will be interested in learning about the Chinese factories which do not yet have branding outside Asia.

One brand I noticed at D-PES had hospitable and capable individuals in their booth, but their web site also showed UV-cured printers, so I estimate they are a distributor of general signage products: not a manufacturer. Their web site was entirely in Chinese, another suggestion that they are working for the internal market, not exterior.

So at the APPPEXPO in July we will continue to look at booths of laminators to be able to differentiate between manufacturer brand, and resellers.

Laminators are still a crucial part of the workflow, especially with latex ink printers: you need to laminate this material before using it outside, especially for car wrap.





# Vinyl Cutters

Lots going on in the world of vinyl cutters. Mutoh dropped the brand that supplied Mutoh cutters for so many years (Kona). But the Kona brand is still listed as the official Mutoh partner brand all over the Internet.

Several new print-and-cut printers are coming out from Chinese manufacturers. We are learning about these.

There is still an international market for stand-alone vinyl cutters. GCC is obviously a brand we know (have been to their Taiwan headquarters and have been to their factory in China). Summa is a brand from Belgium that we know from trade shows (but have not been to their factory).

During D-PES we visited the booth of Helitin, which was a notable brand because it is a cooperation between a Japanese company and a Chinese company. I have lived in Japan for six months (in Osaka, a Visiting Professor for National Museum of Ethnology, Minpaku, Senri Expo Park). And my father's architectural partners were always from Japan, so I know and respect Japanese capabilities.

At the Helitin booth I met

- Qianli Liu
- Angela An
- Apple Zhong
- Christine Pu
- Maxine Wang

# Flatbed cutters

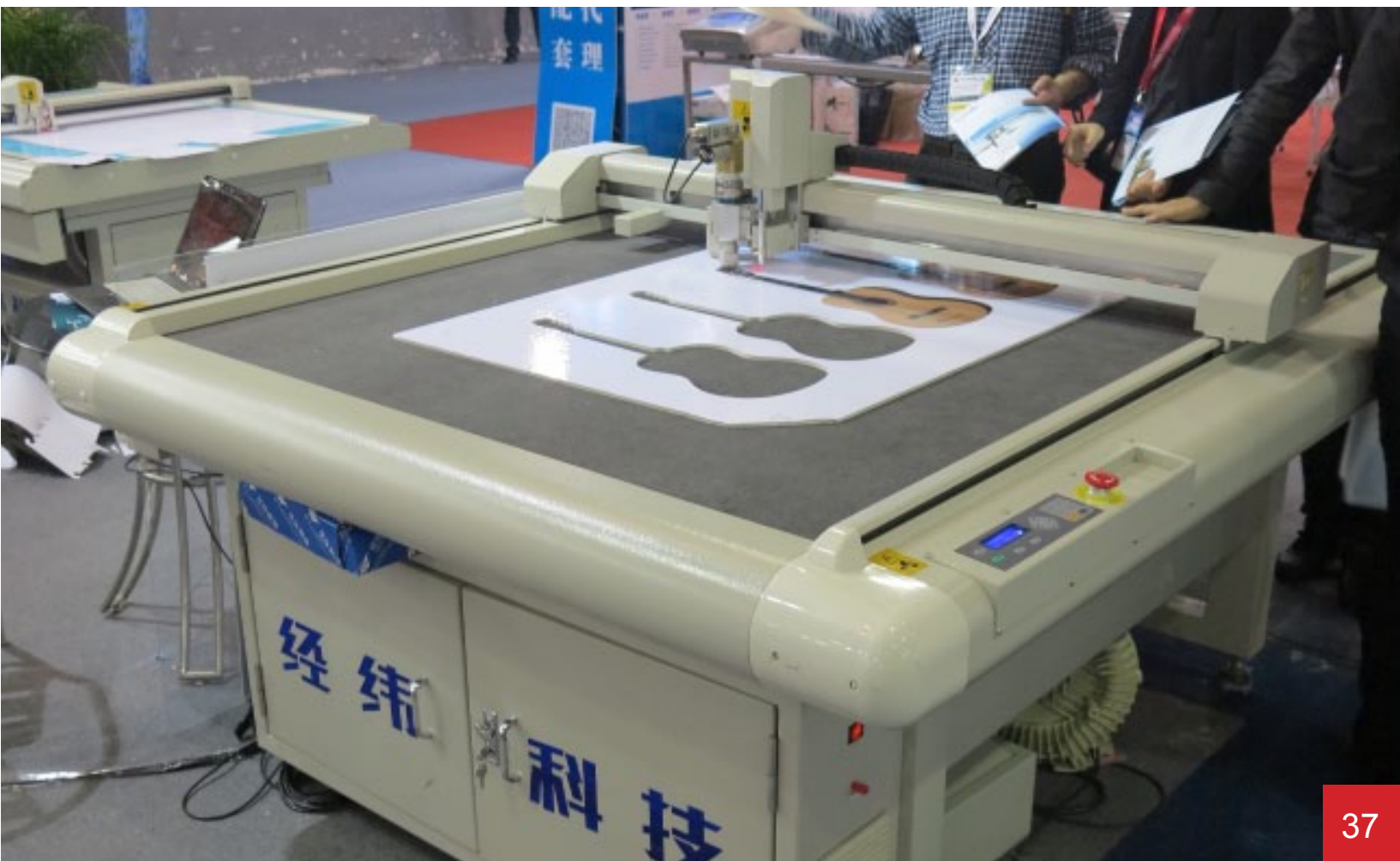
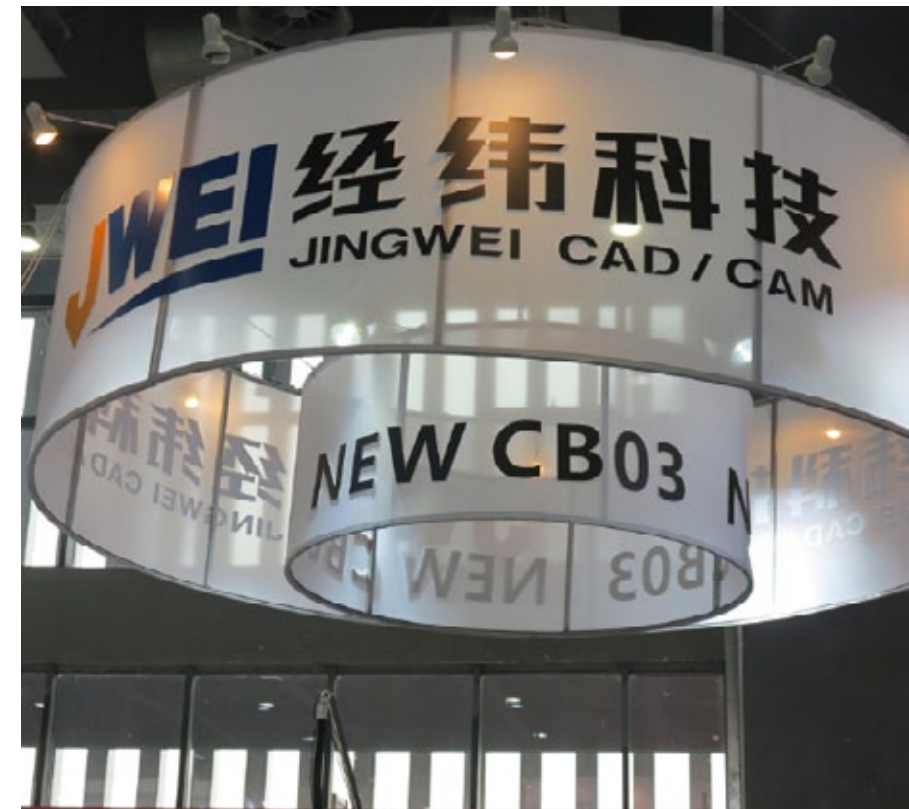
(CNC routers, CO2 laser engravers)

Both China Sign (D-PES) and then Sign China across the street had hundreds of exhibitors of flatbed cutters. There are mostly CNC routers and CO2 laser engravers.

90% of these do not yet have distributors outside China.

The brand that we most recognize is JWEI (JungWei Systemtechnik Ltd.). If I remember correctly it may have been at Sign Middle East (SGI, Dubai) where I first noticed their brand. Then I see their cutters re-branded in the USA by distributors focused on Latin America.

I have not yet been in their factory, nor have I inspected a printshop using their brand, but what I have seen in their booth suggests that JWEI is a brand with potential.



I also noticed the Chinese headquarters of Xi'an Helitin Bell Tech21 Co., Ltd in China is in Xi'an, a city famous for its archaeology.



## How to arrange a visit to your company by the FLAAR team

We have personally visited the factories of JHF, Sky Air-Ship and many others (over the last five years). After D-PES we visited the printer factories of iPentum (Icontek) and REVOTECH (Inwear).

We will be in Guangzhou in late May and Shanghai in early June, and thus look forward to visiting Chinese companies who make media, substrates, inks, textile printers, DX printers, and UV-cured printers. We are also interested in visiting companies who make laminators and flatbed cutters (and factories in other parts of the country).

We are aware of the situation with several other manufacturers. Most people in the industry are also aware of the situation where a container is sent and the buyer opens the container and finds that the printer is lacking print-heads! He goes to the company booth at D-PES and they are fully aware of what was not included. I was told this story by the person who got this unethical shipment of a useless printer frame.

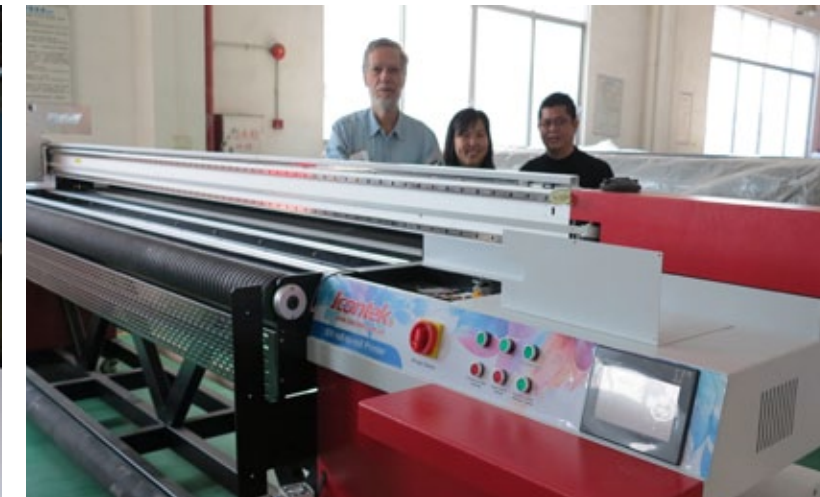
So what we at FLAAR Reports seek to accomplish, is to visit printer factories, and to speak with the distributors who import them to North America or Latin America, to Europe or to the Middle East or Africa, and then to issue our evaluations. We prefer to focus on the Chinese companies which are reputable (fortunately most are; but one or two are simply trying to make cheap low-bid equipment).



Dr. Nicholas and Grace, in the headquarters of Inkwin, in Shanghai.



Nicholas and Craig in YJ factory of PE.



Nicholas with Silvia and Sonny of iPentum (Icontek) in their factory (2013)



Nicholas in coating factory of GLM in Zhongshan, after D-PES 2013.



Lao Hon Neng (owner of REVOTECH), Nicholas, and Allan Guo (Manager) in factory visit after D-PES 2013.

We also visit ink factories (InkWin (two inspections), Hongsam in China; Sam Ink in Singapore (twice)).

And FLAAR inspects media factories (Yeong Jeu in Zhongshan three visits to their impressive factory) and this year we visited the GLM factory (also in Zhongshan).

So if you wish FLAAR to visit your factory:

- of ink, media or substrates
- of laminators or coaters
- of flatbed cutters, CNC routers, or vinyl cutters (roll)
- or of printers (UV-cured, textile, latex, eco-solvent)

You can contact us at [FrontDesk@FLAAR.org](mailto:FrontDesk@FLAAR.org). Cost is round trip airfare for Dr Nicholas and a consulting fee. If you wish a written evaluation report this is undertaken as a project after we are at your factory. We only issue written reports on acceptable, reliable products from capable and ethical manufacturers.



## Discussion of expo organization: Good features, but also what was in need of improvement

What is well done at D-PES are all the decoration outside to let people know there is a major expo inside. At SGIA last year, there was ZERO signage on any expo hall visible from the street in front of the expo center.

Having all escalators going UP and zero escalator going D O W N was not very helpful. The stairs were a long long long hike; and walking down is rough on your knee joints. Pablo had an app on his iPhone which clocked almost 12 km of walking during an entire day at the expo; I estimate I walked a minimum of 4 to 5 km every day, since I visited each hall at least twice a day (almost every aisle) (since I kept running into clients who needed to get to know a particular booth).





# Weather to expect:

What temperatures to expect? Will it rain?

In our Consulting services we explain what weather to expect; what to wear (weatherwise).

We also suggest hotels, transportation from airport. Contact FrontDesk “at” FLAAR.org to request consulting before the expo (to get ready) and during the expo (to have Dr. Hellmuth introduce you personally to key people) and after the expo (follow-up from the FLAAR Reports team, including from Dr. Nicholas).

# Petty Thieves

There is one country in Central America where I bet over 90% of the parked cars are broken into, even on well travelled streets, with people on the sidewalks. Thievery by breaking the car window and stealing any package inside is daily (and well known). Fortunately the thieves do not use guns, and the country otherwise is safe and a pleasant place for vacations.

In Atlanta, Georgia, the crime rate in downtown is high enough so I prefer to avoid any printer expo held in the downtown Atlanta area.

So it should hardly be a surprise that if you are walking around China with an obviously expensive backpack, or obviously expensive camera, you can expect to become a target of thieves.

Also, thieves work cleverly inside the expo hall: they buy entry tickets on the black-market outside the expo halls (when you leave the expo, clever women offer you 10 RMB to give them your badge: you are finished and you don’t need your badge any more). I am aware of this (mis-use of your badge later on) so I take my badges back to my home office.

But I spoke with one person who said they have been robbed three times in China. I spoke with a sales rep for another Chinese company who said she was robbed on the Metro.

And I heard of a significant robbery inside the Sign China or China Sign expo this year.

In other words: if you leave your backpack unattended, or you put your camera on a table: just as if you were in New York , it could be stolen.

I can still remember being in a New York restaurant. Four well dressed men came in; all in business suits. Three of them started to chat with women in the adjacent booth. While the women were distracted the fourth man stole all their purses.

There was a German TV documentary which showed how thieves worked on trains and in tran stations in Germany. They usually work in a team: one man starts to ask questions (to distract you). While your attention is on him, his accomplice steals your backpack or roller bag.

I got stuck in the Moscow airport one night, and had to overnight in an airport hotel. I could see the hotel from the terminal, but a local cab driver wanted \$20 to take me there by cab. I simply walked.

Other cab drivers offered to take you from Terminal 1 to Terminal 3 (on the other side of the runway). The cab drivers asked \$150 to take you to the other side of the airport! They knew if you waited for the mini-van you would miss your flight and be stuck in an overnight hotel. The cheapest hotel at the airport was about \$450 per night and it was a budget chain (Novatel or comparable).

So Guangzhou and Shanghai are not the only airports with capitalistic taxi drivers. Although obviously FLAAR is not a travel agency, we do plan and manage all our own travel for our entire staff, so we can assist you with our experience in getting a visa, and how to get from the airport to your hotel without getting counterfeit money or getting fleeced by taxi companies (even the taxi company sales desk fleeces you!).

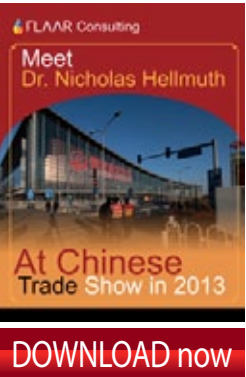
Two of us were cheated by the same taxi office, an official office inside the Gongzhou airport! So we explain how to avoid this in our consulting info.

Fortunately, 99% of Chinese people are honest and hospitable. And the country is definitely a lot more courteous to foreigners than one infamous country in Western Europe.

# Consulting available at APPPEXPO Shanghai 2013

# Consulting available at D-PES 2014 and Sign China 2014

Our services are primarily on wide-format inkjet media, substrates, inks, printers, and laminators, but, we also provide information on:



- How to avoid counterfeit money in China (yes, there is a lot of it)
- How to avoid being squewered at the airport by taxi drivers?

At airports in many countries around the world they use tricks to fleece you of your money. Moscow is infamous for this; but Chinese airports have clever ways to harvest your money. We have four years experience at the Guangzhou airport and five years experience at the Shanghai airport. Plus a FLAAR team resided in Beijing for about six weeks last year.

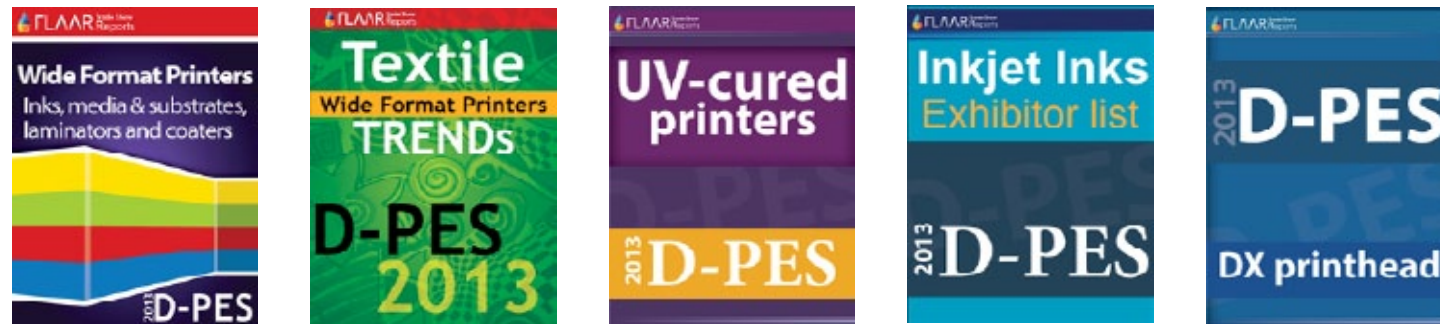
So if you are a manufacturer, a distributor, or printshop owner or manager, consider contacting FLAAR to obtain information on how to receive consulting at the printer expos in China.

We are also familiar with ITMA China (textiles) and the Chinese expo for printing on ceramic tiles.

APPPEXPO is the next giant printer and signage expo in China this year: mid-July. FLAAR Reports are available on this popular expo for 2012, 2011, and before (we attend every year). FIVE OF US FROM FLAAR will be at APPPEXPO 2013. Normally we send four, but now that we are also covering LED electronic signage, we are sending a fifth person. Visit our [www.large-format-printers.org](http://www.large-format-printers.org) and/or our [www.wide-format-printers.org](http://www.wide-format-printers.org) for previews of the exhibitor list for APPPEXPO 2013 in beautiful Shanghai.



## D-PES Guangzhou 2012



## Brief History of D-PES

There are two huge printer expos in China every year: February-March and July.

- The July expo is named APPPEXPO, and is held in Shanghai each year. It occupies more than 12 halls and includes all signage: wide-format inkjet and LED and traditional signage also.
- The February-March expo is divided into two competing expos:
  - China Sign (better known as D-PES)
  - And the original Sign China

Five years ago there was only one expo in Guangzhou: Sign China. Then in 2010 about 75% of the Chinese printer factory owners formed an association and initiated a separate new expo for themselves (since booth space in Pazhou expo center in Guangzhou had gotten too expensive).

FLAAR attended that first year (2010) and actually it was our reports before, during, and after which helped the world recognize that this new expo was worth attending.

The second year (2011) the D-PES was still at Dongguan (about an hour from the Guangzhou airport). They had shuttle bus service so you could still attend the competing Sign China in Guangzhou. The dates of the two shows were carefully scheduled so they overlapped.

In 2012 the D-PES expo cleverly moved to Poly World expo center, in Guangzhou, precisely across the street from the competing Sign China. So more and more printer, ink, and media manufacturers moved to the D-PES venue (since booth space was lower cost).

Also realize that APPPEXPO is still about 50% larger than China Sign for printers, and twice the size for media, substrates, and inks.

This year, 2013, at least 90% of the printer manufacturers, and 75% of the media and substrates, and roughly 80% of the ink companies were now at D-PES. What remained at Sign China (across the street) were about 5 printer brands, several ink brands, lots of media and substrates, and a substantial number of cutters (CNC routers and CO2 laser engravers).

But what really makes Sign China still have even more foreign visitors is its LED China expo, co-located with Sign China. This LED expo is larger than every such expo in the USA put together.

## D-PES Dongguan 2011



This report is the work of Pablo Martinez, Grace Morales, and Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth. We hope you enjoy the photography and we look forward to seeing you at an upcoming expo, especially in China.