

Chinese Printers

After-market Third-Party Ink, Media & Substrates, CNC Routers & Laminators



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Brief history of D-PES printer expo

About five years ago D-PES was an adventurous venture which split off from a major expo in Guangzhou. The original organizers of D-PES its first years was an association of Chinese printer manufacturers who wanted their own expo venue, so they split from Sign China (and formed "China Sign"). The first expos were held in the pleasant city of Dongguan, about 1 hour from Guangzhou. Most booths were purely printers (CrystalJet had the largest booth at the expo the first year).

During the first three years several companies had a booth at both expos. But gradually almost every printer brand moved to D-PES. By 2013 most of the ink companies had moved. By 2014 Hongsam, Sam Ink, and others were all at D-PES (no longer at Sign China).

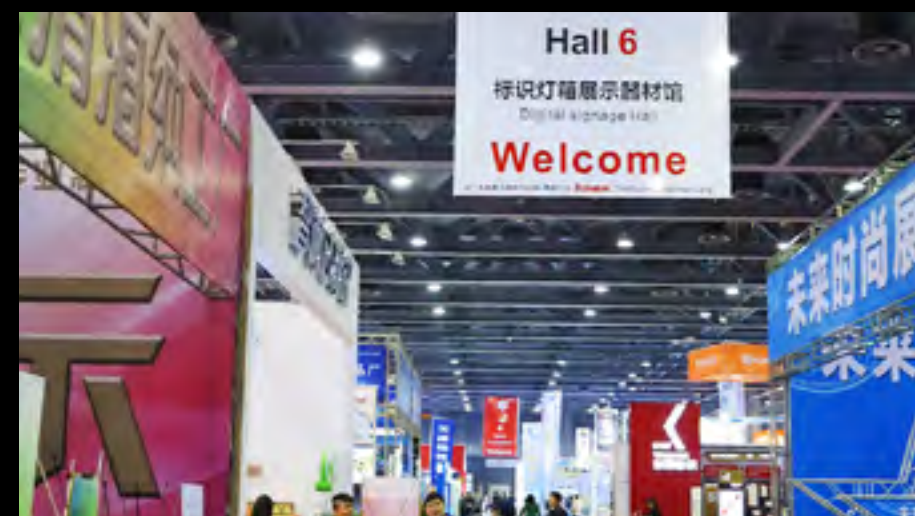
By about the third year the organizers had grown D-PES to include more ink and media companies, and more CNC routers and CO2 laser engravers. So by the third year the expo was large enough to compete directly with the original expo, Sign China. So D-PES eventually moved to Guangzhou: directly across the street from their "step-father".

D-PES has grown each year (but Sign China's association with LED China has caused it to grow even more, despite the loss of 90% of the printer brands to D-PES, 90% of the ink brands to D-PES, about 50% of the media and substrate brands, and perhaps 50% of the CNC router brands: all to D-PES). We cover Sign China and LED China in separate FLAAR Reports.

Now, in 2014, both expos are successful, but different. The crowds at Sign China and LED China are so large I can't even begin to describe the numbers. But D-PES had plenty of attendees as well.

So D-PES is now a major wide-format printer and signage expo, probably among the five largest in the world (APPPEXPO in Shanghai, and Serigrafia, Sign Future Textil in Brazil would be others in this clique. FESPA Europe is also large, healthy, and successful. Sign Istanbul also did quite well in 2013). These are among the largest signage printer expos anywhere.





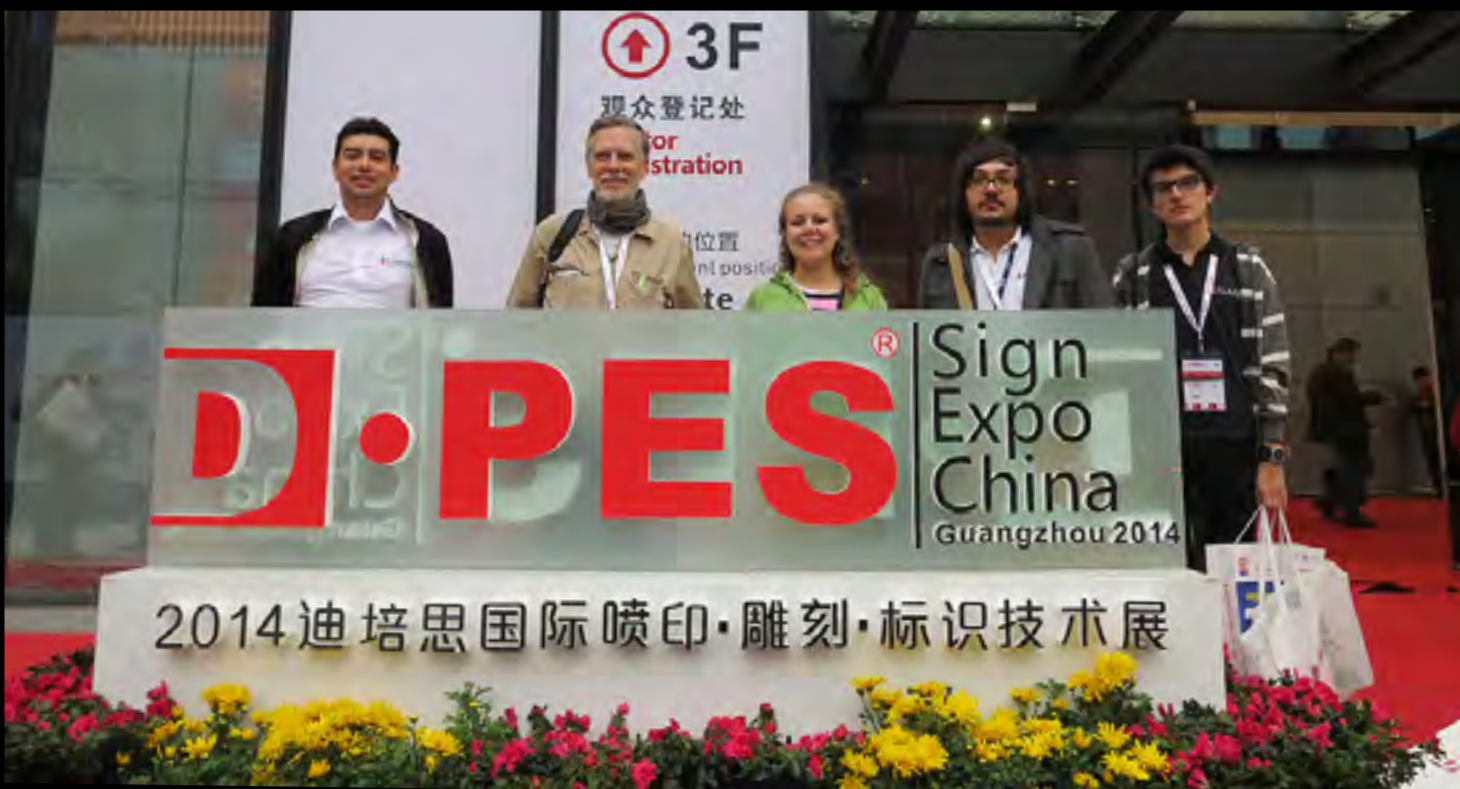
ENTRANCE AND HALL BY HALL VIEWS



FLAAR has attended D-PES every single year. Indeed the first year FLAAR was the first printer resource in the world to report fully about the entire birth of D-PES. In those years I went by myself. Now, five years later, we send five staff from FLAAR to handle D-PES.

- Maria Renee Ayau students textile inks, textile printers, sublimation transfer paper, and calendaring machines (plus printable fabric material).
- Pablo Martinez evaluates all solvent inks, UV-cured inks, water-based inks, plus CNC routers, CO2 laser engravers, media & substrates, and laminators.
- Kevin Rossatty spent five days making a list of every single brand and every single model of solvent printer at the entire expo. (we start work the day before the expo opens).
- Andy "Mike" Morataya harvested information on every single UV-cured printer brand, booth, and model at the expo.
- Nicholas Hellmuth kept track of trends, attended to many clients who came to Guangzhou to consult with him in person; plus he made a backup list of all the UV-cured printers and their main features (printheads, structure, classification, etc).

We then went to Sign China and LED China across the street. Dr Hellmuth and Andy Morataya then flew to lecture at Graphics of the Americas in Miami.





APRINT booth

Maria Renee Ayau, the textile ink and textile printer evaluator at FLAAR Reports spent the week preparing a detailed list of the 30 textile printers at the expo. Includes comparative specs, comments, etc.

We also discuss what textile inks, textile materials, sublimation calendaring machines, etc were present in each pertinent booth.

Although we have visited Chinese printer factories every year for the past six years, we have not yet been flown and hosted to visit a factory specifically focused on textile printers or calendaring (sublimation) equipment.

So we tend to focus primarily on the textile brand we know the best, DigiFab, headquartered in New York and in Los Angeles in the USA. Their printers tend to be made in Italy.

As soon as the manufacturers of calendaring systems, or textile printers fly us to their factory (perhaps the week before the APPPEXPO event in Shanghai in July, then we could add more coverage of a key brand of Chinese-made textile printers.



JHF booth



VJ 1802 S - APRINT



VJ 3202 ST - APRINT



T-3000 - JHF

Tough to write about the good features of a company unless we have visited their company factory, demo room, and headquarters. Plus, it is essential to visit their customers (to see how the inks function out in the real world).

Here is how we learn about textile inks

These three photos show the FLAAR team at Hongsam this year.



2014



2014

Here is Nicholas and Maria Renee Ayau at a print shop a year ago, inspecting how well the Hongsam ink works out in the real world.



2013



2014



2011

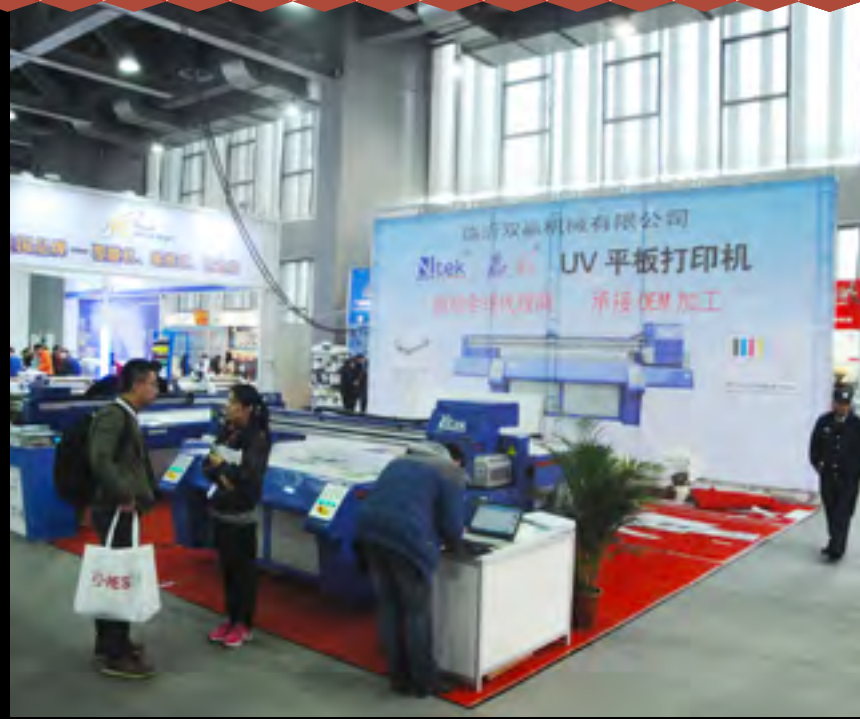
Dr. Nicholas and CEO Mr. Guosheng Qin at the Hongsam ink factory in 2011.



2011



2013



NTEK booth



BIG COLOR booth



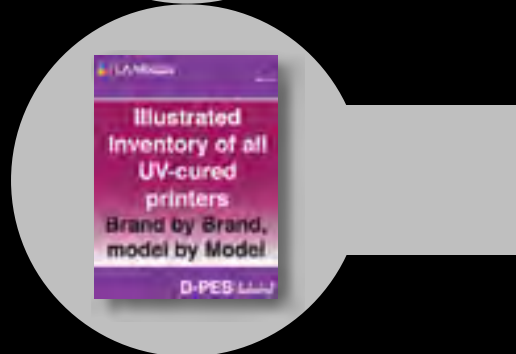
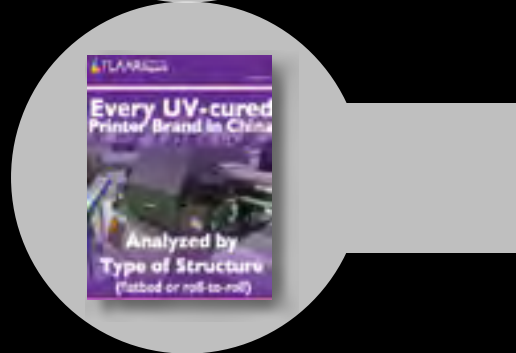
FLORA booth



DOCAN booth



BEIJING JING WEI booth





SMATCH is a growing brand name, coordinated by Mark Ma from MPA Digital Technology (www.mpadigital.com), which specializes in digital printing technologies.

Mark Ma and his team have many years experience, both with solvent printers and especially with wide-format UV-cured flatbed printers.



Mark Ma at the Smatch booth



2512C





SDM 3300 - UV



SKYJET booth



FT 3020 - UV



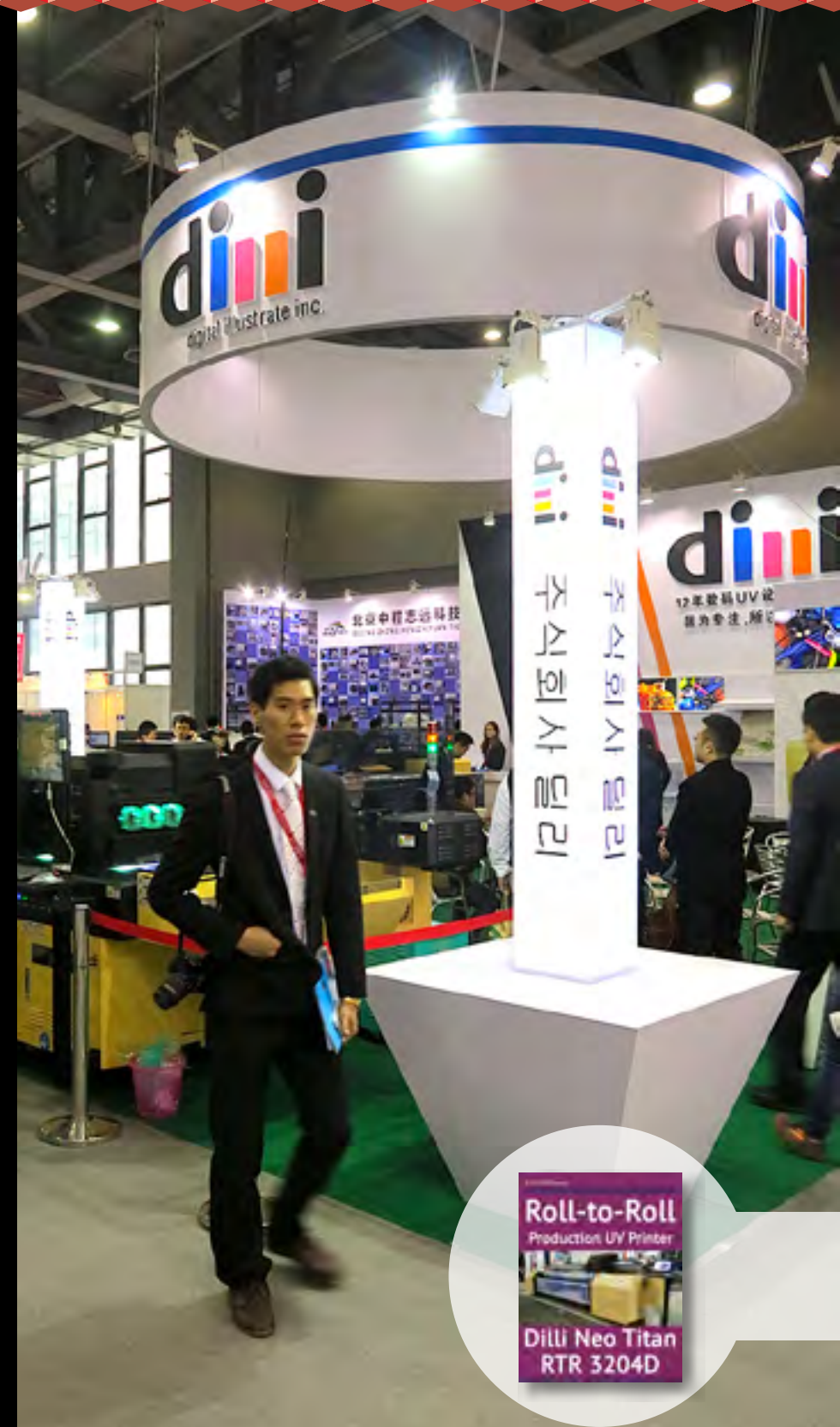
FTR 5200 - UV



DILLI booth



Neo Titan 2504D-W2V - UV



DILLI booth



Neo Sun FB 2513-04DWX - UV



Dilli has flown us to their factory in Korea, so we know this company well. Plus the Dilli owner and staff provide helpful information when we visit their booth.

There were over 70 brands and more than 101 different models of UV-cured printers. We have about five volumes of in-depth FLAAR Reports on these printers.

70 other brands of UV-cured Printers

As soon as the other brands of printers bring a FLAAR team to their factory, we can add coverage of the other brands in future reports.



Where were latex printers at D-PES 2014?

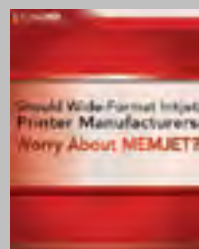
The situation with respect to presence or absence of latex printers at D-PES was so unexpected that we are preparing a separate FLAAR Report on this situation.

We also will include a recent evaluation of the overall reality check for HP latex printers, for Mimaki and Ricoh latex printers, and for the lone model of Chinese latex printers?



What about SUV printers at D-PES?

We will include a discussion of SUV printers in two separate FLAAR Reports: in the TRENDS level on UV-cured printers, and in the report on latex ink printers, since what is happening to the latex ink market is happening to the SUV market even more clearly.



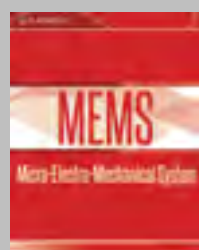
What about Memjet printers in China?

Presently there are several desktop sized Memjet printers, and one 42" wide-format printer in China using Memjet.

We tried to have test-print samples done on the wide-format Memjet, but it took so long to get the image into the system that I was not in the booth to take photos of the images coming out of the printer.

I had wanted to do a full report on this Chinese Memjet printer, but that was not realistic without the printer manufacturer setting up a dedicated time and place. In the meantime the best report we have is on the 42" Vortex of RTI, made in Europe and available worldwide.

FLAAR has done considerable research on Memjet printers and we have a full series of diverse evaluations being worked on.



There were dozens, scores of solvent printers. Most claim to be "eco-solvent" but many were full-solvent or mild- or lite-solvent (this is a polite way of saying that many had a solvent odor).

It is also worth noting how many kinds of solvent ink were there: eco-solvent was only one of many chemical classifications for what was available.



COLORTOP booth



CT320 - COLORTOP



GONGZHENG booth



HUMAN DIGITAL booth



E-JET - HUMAN DIGITAL



KE-JET - HUMAN DIGITAL



INFINITI booth



FY 3278N - INFINITI

The team at ColorJet provided hospitality in their booth. In fact I used their tables as a desk where I could write the FLAAR Reports on the expo.

Eco-solvent printers are a major factor in signage around the world.

If there have been x-thousand latex printers sold in five years, there are XYZ eco-solvent printers sold every month! So no matter how many kinds of new inks are produced, the market leader is still eco-solvent.

We look forward to visiting the corporate headquarters of ColorJet in India. Indeed India was the first country where FLAAR did a company evaluation: Tech Nova. We have a lot of friends and colleagues in India and enjoy the culture, the food and spices, and really like the architectural history of the civilizations and regional cultures of this fascinating part of the world.



COLORJET booth



COLORJET booth



Acura - SOLVENT

There were 56 booths with solvent printers.

There were a total of 175 different solvent printers.

In order to send a PDF as an attachment, it can't be much heavier than 5MB in file size. So it is not realistic to include photos of every printer in this free report. So we show the machines of ColorJet since they provided their User Manual, provided all the specs, answered all our questions, and most probably we will be flown to the factory later this year to do further evaluations.

Every year there are fewer and fewer brands of water-based printers being produced in China. Most companies have moved to

- More eco-solvent
- More UV-cured
- More textile printers (yes water-based, but “water-based” is also jargon for printing indoor signage, printing giclee and fine art photos, and printing photos in general).

Despite these trends, there were more water-based printers than I expected.

Ten years ago there were many Chinese printers using derivatives of the Lexmark printheads. Even five years ago there were still lots of Chinese printers using thermal printheads. But gradually more brands switched to Epson or stopped making water-based altogether. Yet, as mentioned above, when I looked at all the notes are team wrote, there were more water-based printers than I would have estimated. Thus we show and mention which were water-based in our special topic-oriented reports (so there will be a separate dedicated FLAAR Report on water-based printers made in China).



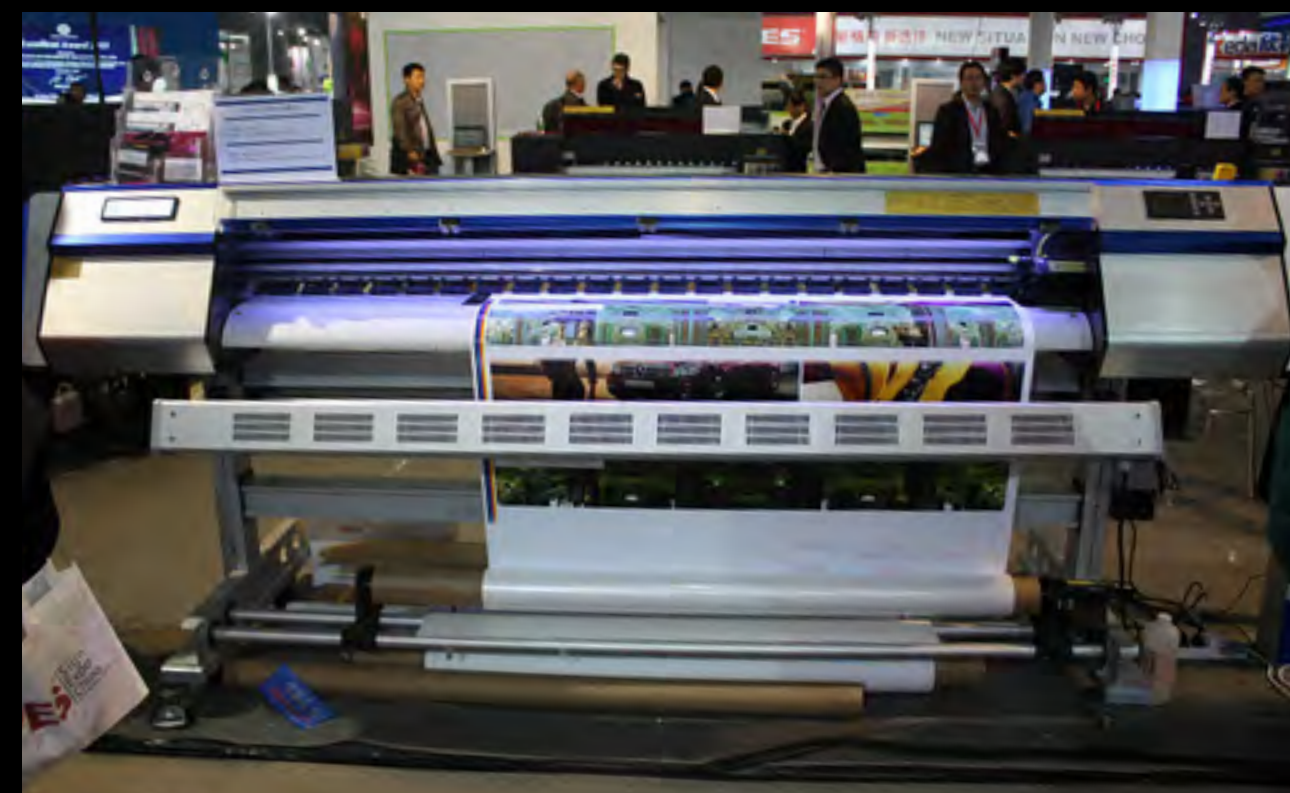
LOCOR booth



ADDTOP booth



Locor EasyJet 18W - LOCOR



HE 1802W - ADDTOP



Write FrontDesk@FLAAR.org to order this unique list.

Both D-PES and the competing expo across the street, Sign China, had booths of hundreds of brands of CNC routers, CO2 laser cutters, and a few XY digital flatbed cutters. The fumes, the dust, the shrill noise were rather noticeable. But at least the organizers of D-PES keep most such cutters in their own hall.

Expos in the Americas and Europe often forget to keep such noxious equipment in a separate hall. I can remember at the university where FLAAR had its evaluation facilities, many students would get ill and go to the infirmary when other students would cut plexiglass or other plastic materials with the CO2 laser cutters.

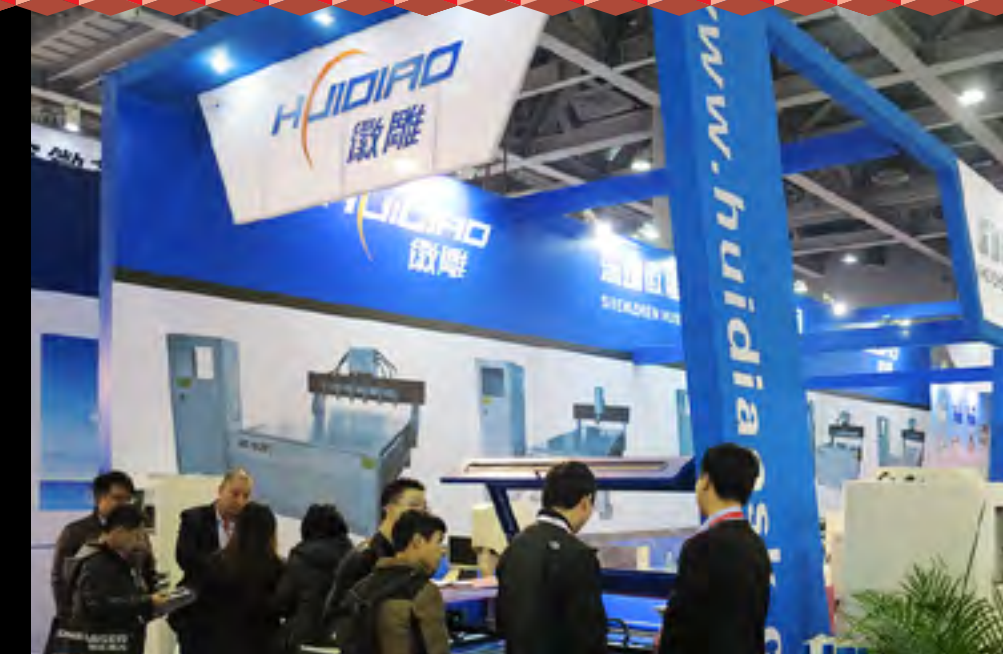
So it definitely is helpful to have all this kind of equipment in one single area (with realistic exhaust capability also).

There is a separate FLAAR Report which lists and has nice images of all the leading brands of capable Chinese companies who make CO2 laser cutters, CNC routers or the more sophisticated XY digital flatbed cutters.

Since we have not yet had time to visit a Chinese factory of CNC routers or CO2 laser engravers, it is not appropriate for us to recommend any one brand over another. So the photos here are just to provide a general introduction.



FORTUNA booth



HUIDIAO booth



EXCITECH booth



HONGDA BOKE booth



JIEKE booth

Although there were not many coaters here, the basic entry-level Chinese made laminator brands were on exhibit. We have a separate FLAAR Report which shows the primary brands and their pertinent models.

Since we have not visited any Chinese factory of any brand of laminator, we are not able to recommend any one brand. So the photos here are as a courtesy: these are not recommendations.



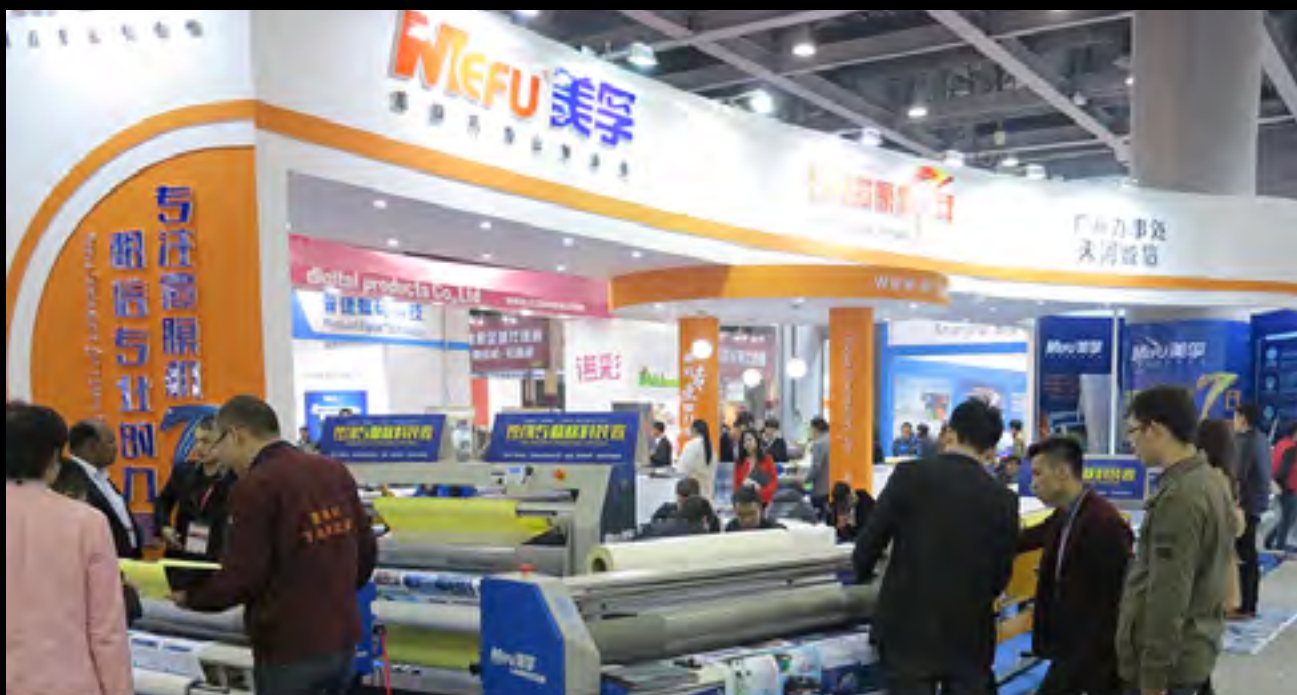
ROYAL SOVEREIGN booth



AUDLEY booth



ZHOU SURNAME booth



MEFU booth



ZETONG booth



DMAIS booth

Media and substrates are roughly divided half at D-PES and half still at Sign China across the street. Inks are now about 90% of the Chinese brands at D-PES (and about 90% of the printers at D-PES as well).

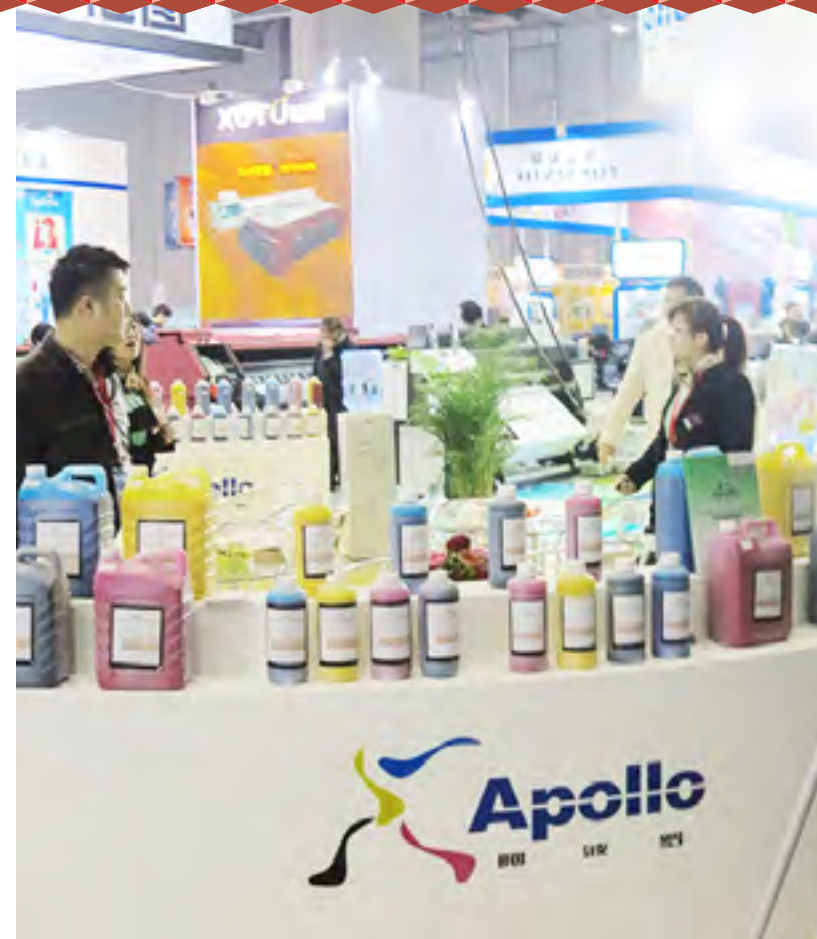
We found eco-friendly material PE from Yeoug Jeou in the booth of REVOTECH.

If your media and substrate company wishes a FLAAR Reports evaluation of your products, contact us at FrontDesk@FLAAR.org

We bring a team of two of us (Dr Hellmuth and pertinent specialist who is also a graphic designer to do the actual FLAAR Report).



DER booth



APOLLO booth



AOMYA booth



DPI booth



GEMEI booth



YITE booth



WINCOLOURS booth



COWRON booth

Textile inks are covered in the textile report. But all after-market third-party inks are listed, discussed, and presented in a separate helpful opus. The author, Pablo Martinez, has more than five years experience at the key printer expos in China (plus comparable experience at ISA, SGIA, FESPA in Europe, SGI in Dubai, and elsewhere).

Here is the booth of Hongsam. We feature Hongsam since we know the factory, and three times they have brought us to their Shanghai headquarters and demo room.



Inkjet Printing on Cotton, Silk, Viscose and Linen
Samples & Examples of reactive dye ink

HONGSAM booth



We cover Hongsam ink in our reports on textile inks. Their booth personnel were hospitable and I visited it every day.

INKS - HONGSAM



Full Color on Cotton
Benefits of Pigment Ink for Wide-format Printing

Mimaki Ts33-160A - TEXTILE



Brighter Colors for soft signage, flags, interior decor, banners & clothing
Dye-sub + Heat Transfer

HongJet HJ 4186 - TEXTILE



Circle Fine Art Prints Ink at better price
HP DesignJet Epson Stylus Pro Canon imageProGraph

INKS FOR TEXTILE - HONGSAM

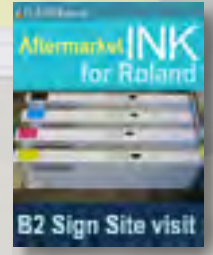
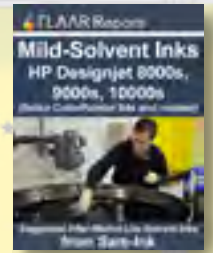
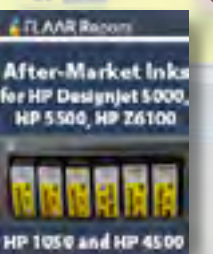
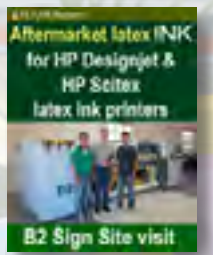


Sam Ink was the first ink company in the world to produce after-market latex ink. Plus they are a leader in producing ink for HP thermal printheads, especially for HP Designjet 5000 and HP Designjet 5500.

But already several years ago Sam Ink has expanded into providing ink for Epson DX printheads. Two of us were flown by Sam Ink to their ink factory and headquarters in beautiful, peaceful, friendly Singapore the week before D-PES. We also visited several print shops who were happily using the Sam Ink for eco-solvent printers with DX printheads.

The booth of Sam Ink was busy every day: people from all over the world, including lots of Chinese people. The owner and managers are completely tri-lingual, so they can handle people from lots of countries.

Since we have been flown to Singapore three times (about once every 18 months) it is easier to write about the company. Plus we have visited print shops (in Istanbul, in Brazil, and in Singapore) who are using products from Sam Ink. So it is easier for us to show their booth as an example.



Many Printer brands I have never noticed before

AIFA is a brand I don't remember from previous years.

DiKa is a brand that probably existed but I did not stop to inspect their booth in previous years.

SutonJet is a brand that I did notice in past years.

Most of these brands are dealers or distributors.

In our TRENDS level report we list which brands of UV-cured printers are gradually losing market share. Which brands have dropped out of the market; which brands are really growing.

Many brands in past years, I did not notice as prominently this year

Mars was a brand I remember from earlier years, but this year although other members of the FLAAR team noted them, I did not have them in my list. So we have comparative reports of which brands offer which kinds of printers, and how this has changed from year to year.

These reports are available if you have a top level Subscription to special-issue FLAAR Reports.

Traditional Vinyl Cutters

Distributors said that the brands of cheap low-bid vinyl cutters that they tried were inadequate. This is a polite way of suggesting to be careful and select a brand with a good reputation. Since these cutters are a commodity, and sold by low price, we do not evaluate brand by brand. But rather obviously, recognized brands, of companies with significant engineering capability can be considered.

The other factor which is crucial is to find a company whose goal is go engineer a reliable product with a reasonable product life of several years.

RIP Software

Not many RIP software companies had their own booth, but we tended to notice the RIP software personnel in various printer booths.

RIP software and color management are important aspects of printing.

Unexpected wide-format Technology

I have not seen a wide-format thermal printer for more years than I can imagine. Matan used to exhibit these in the 1990's into early 2000's. But one end-user in Florida said this technology and ink chemistry had issues, plus ink costs were excessive since you used only a small portion of the ink from each of the separate CMYK sheets of ink.

Thus it was surprising to see the Multicolor Thermal Pictorial Printer, of QuFushi YuQiaofu Technology Co., Ltd. The printer was kind of in a secret back room, but the printed samples were shown to the general audience.

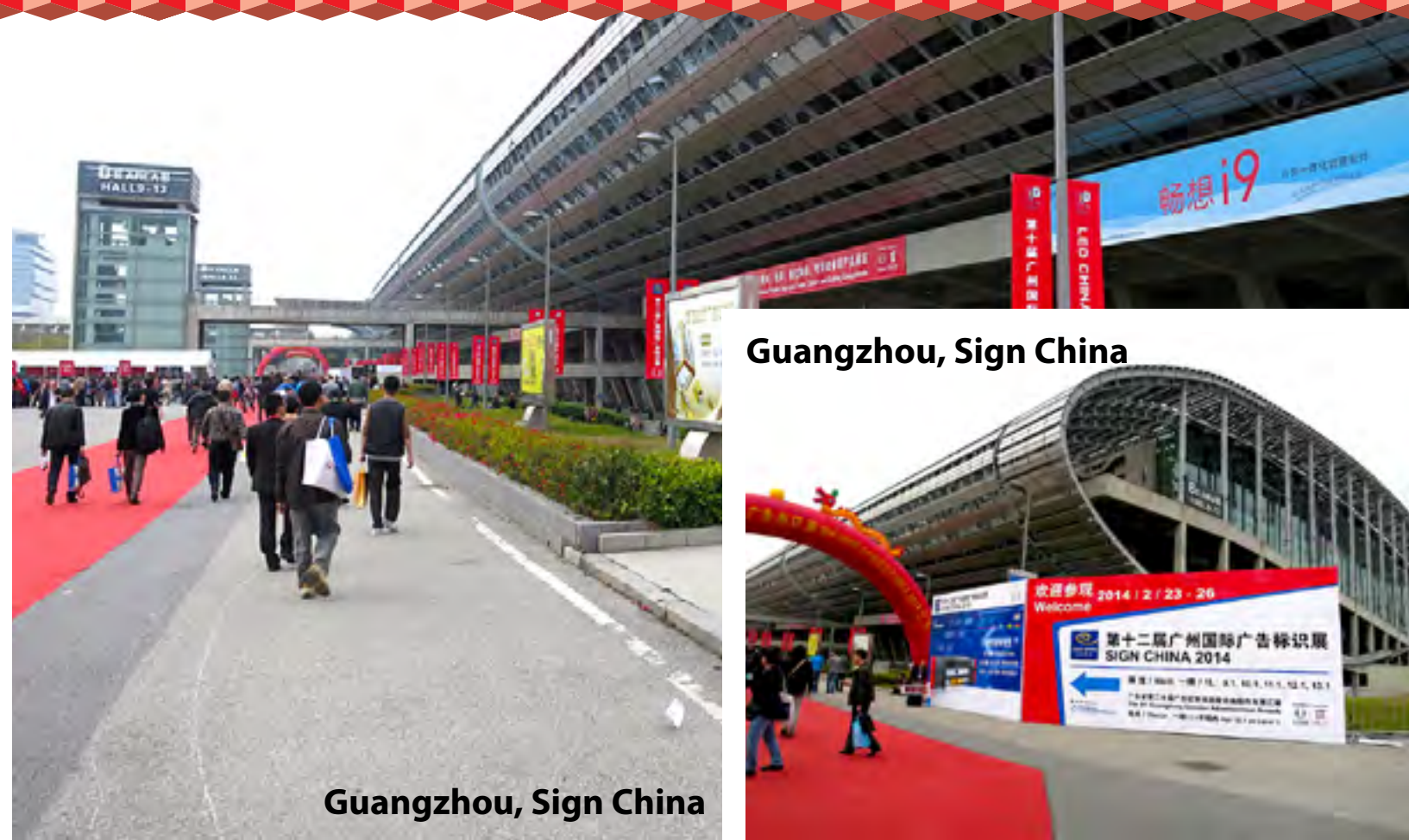
Since this technology was dropped by 99% of the manufacturers in the western world this is not a technology that most people would study.



D-PES is held at the Poly World Trade Center Expo, Pazhou, Guangzhou, China.

Sign China is physically directly across the street at the China Import and Export Fair Complex, Area B, Pazhou, Guangzhou, China.

We have a separate FLAAR Report on Guangzhou as a destination.



Guangzhou, Sign China

Guangzhou, Sign China



Shanghai, APPPEXPO



Shanghai, APPPEXPO



What about printer expos in Beijing?

There are two nice wide-format printer expos in Beijing. These are attended primarily by distributors rather than manufacturers. Beijing is a great city to visit and has an impressive expo center (has three actually). But most of the international printer expos are in Shanghai or in Guangzhou.

What other Chinese expos do we attend?

The Beijing expo hosted us the year four of us lived in Beijing for six weeks (translating the web site of a Chinese distributor).

We also go to the textile expos, glass expos, and ceramic printer expos. But it is very easy to select the wrong expo or the wrong city.

And there are many many printer expos for example, APPPEXPO in Shanghai. So if you wish to fly to China to attend an expo, it is worth the investment to ask for consulting services from FLAAR. Write us at **FrontDesk@FLAAR.org**. We can even suggest which hotels are best for which city.

If you did not get to D-PES

FLAAR can assist in facilitating your visit to a Chinese printer expo later in 2014 (APPPEXPO is in July, in the impressive city of Shanghai) or or in 2015. Contact either the e-mail above, or **ReaderService@FLAAR.org**.



Ceramic China

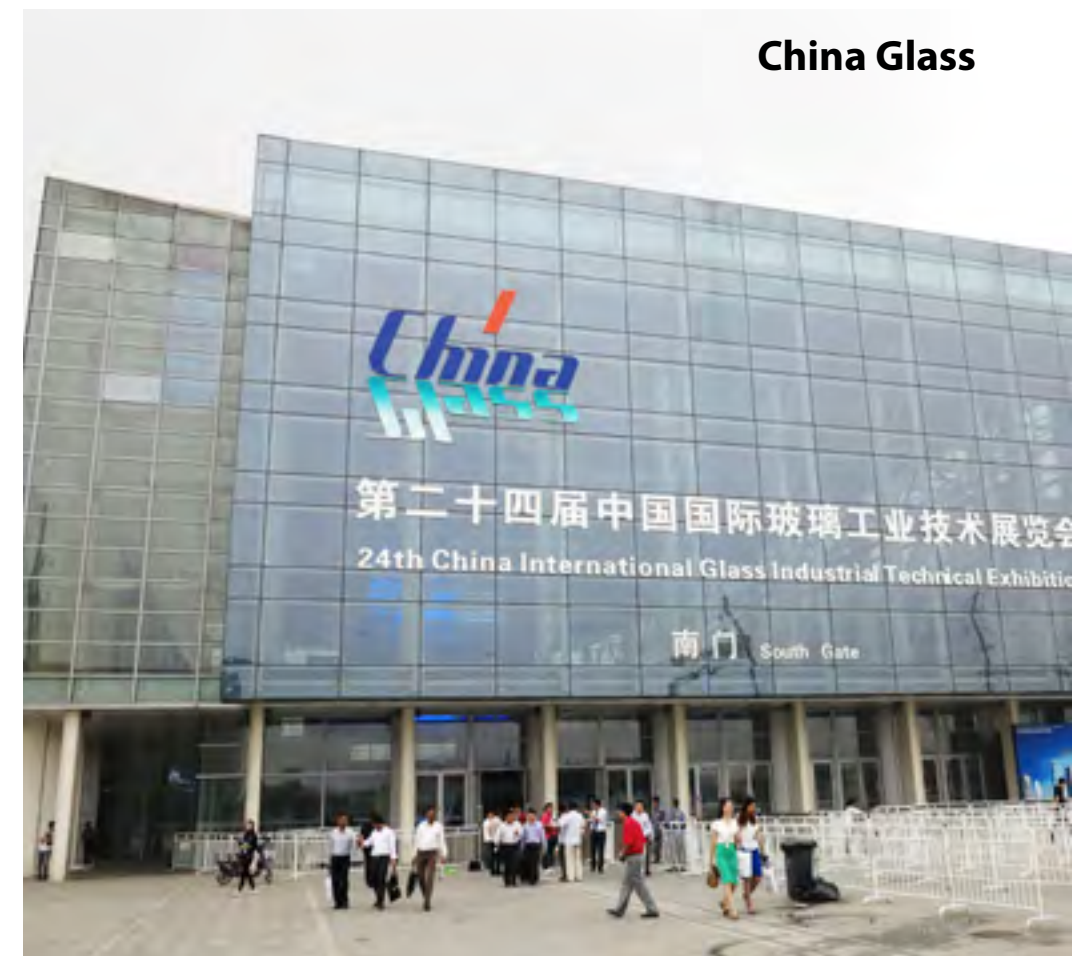


Ceramic China

ShanghaiTEX



China Glass



AWARDS

Graphic design in China is usually very professional. So we have noticed several designs which stood out. Please understand that with hundreds of booths and probably a thousand graphic designs, we can't show even 1% of them. But we do show a sample which we noticed.

Nice Logo Design Presentation

Icontek, front of their reception desk.



Good Design for Overhead Company Branding

Sky Air-Ship tends to have a sophisticated booth layout and decoration, especially in past years. We show their overhead branding display for 2014. FLAAR has been studying overhead booth logo display graphic design now for four years. We will be issuing special reports on graphic design for trade show booths later this year.

Sky Air-Ship has flown us to their factory, twice. Plus we have visited print shops who are using these printers. And at every expo we stop to visit their booth.



Best booth Wall Concept

The booths at APPPEXPO in Shanghai tend to be more extravagant than the booths at D-PES. So there were no "structures" in any booth at D-PES. But there were a few booth walls which looked very nice.



Best deep-relief UV-cured printing

Five years ago it was a Russian company who did the best deep-relief printing, but they don't even exhibit in the main Russian printer expo for over two years. Last year the best deep relief was in the booth of Dilli (at FESPA London 2013). At D-PES 2014 the best was in the booth of Temei, Hall 2, using a Win-Color UV flatbed (Win-Color printers may be rebranded from another factory; we discuss rebranded names in our TRENDS level UV report).

The difference between the Win-Color samples and the Dilli samples was that the Dilli graphic design allowed your eyes to notice the deep relief immediately. With the Win-Color designs, it is more subtle, so you have to use your fingers to detect the relief. Your eyes do not notice the relief until someone tells you it's there (though if the lighting came from the side, you would probably notice it better).

The young lady who came out to answer my questions in helpful English was a good representative of her company.

Hospitality in their booth

We sincerely appreciate the hospitality in each booth that we visit. The owner and top managers are usually deep in meetings; indeed the entire four days we never saw Mack Xin of Human Digital. So often it is the young sales reps who come to assist us to learn about their products.

We tended to have lunch in the booth of Sam Ink, and thank them for this (plus they flew two of us to Singapore to inspect their factory the week before D-PES opened).

There is not space to show all the capable booth attendants, the sales reps, and the managers in every booth. Since the five FLAAR personnel were widely distributed in the many halls, only a few times was there someone available to photograph the booth teams who were courteous and answered our questions. We show here the team from Happy Color (it would take dozens of pages to show all the helpful booth reps, but at least we wanted to show one).



What does FLAAR do at a trade show?

We have been consultants at Sign Istanbul for several years. FLAAR is a featured speaker at Graphics of the Americas. We are consultants for APPPEXPO in Shanghai. We have been consultants for SGI Sign Middle East in Dubai. Again in 2014 we will enjoy attending "Sign Africa and AFRICA Print." Their 2014 expo is named FESPA AFRICA. We will have a booth at ISA in the USA.

So for each expo we have a different position. In two parts of the world FLAAR is a also major contributor to the leading trade magazine in that country.

At D-PES we enjoy the hospitality of the original organizers and thus were part of the opening ceremony for two early years. In 2014 there was no major opening ceremony with dragon dance, plus the organizer corporate name seem to have changed a lot. But we do keep in contact and we do write about D-PES every year.

A useful and helpful educational goal of FLAAR is to share its knowledge and experience with print shop owners, with distributors, and with manufacturers. So at every expo we have meetings with these corporate individuals.

Also at a trade show people from all around the world come up to introduce themselves and thank us for our web sites and the FLAAR Reports. Print shop owners and distributors thank us for providing them with suggestions of which brands are more reliable.



Brad Houghton
Managing Director
Tuapeka Gold Print Ltd



Recognition of Good Practices by the Chinese Printer Industry

It is very helpful that more than 90% of the Chinese catalogs and spec sheets list the brand name and model number of the printheads.

Other companies, outside China, almost never show the brand or model of their printheads in their catalog; yet anyone in the industry who needs to know already knows what printheads are in the printers. So it would be a polite courtesy to clearly list the brand, model, and picoliter drop size.

In the USA it is actually illegal (for car manufacturers) not to list who is the manufacturer of the motor. This is based on a lawsuit of a man who bought a Cadillac and found that it had a Chevy motor inside. I would estimate that this or subsequent lawsuits require that the components be clearly listed for some products.

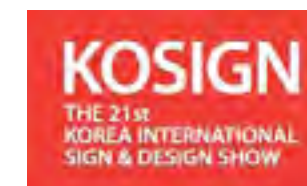
But I do not suggest any lawsuits; the goal is to be polite to potential customers and be ethical and honest in indicating what are the sources of the components in your printer. After all, once a print shop has a printer they will quickly find out what printheads are included and also what brand curing lamp is in their machine. Besides, competitors already know all this, so hiding this information is rather naïve.

Listing the ink source is not always realistic, but I do compliment efi VUTEK for clearly listing several of their ink sources.

And Chinese manufacturers deserve recognition for clearly listing their printhead brand and model. And in most spec sheets they also list the picoliter drop size.



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