As one of the few companies to make large-format digital halftone photographs for backlit displays, StarFoto is unique in the Benelux. This skill also makes the company uniquely qualified in the art of photographic reproduction. And it was this demand for exceptional quality that led StarFoto to invest in the EFI VUTEk QS2 Pro and become the first in the Benelux to implement the technology.

**StarFoto**
Unique large-format printer chooses VUTEk QS2 Pro to round out its photographic capabilities

**Challenge:**
“We were looking for a machine with which we could remain on top, both in terms of quality and production.”

Based in Bladel, the Netherlands the company opened its doors in 1976. Its core business of producing large-format photographic prints evolved over the years into every conceivable form of POP (point of purchase) application.

Until the late 90s, StarFoto used traditional photo equipment. Negatives were enlarged, printed on paper and then developed. Then in 1999 the company invested in a Durst Lambda digital halftone printer. “With this machine, we could - and still can - expose digital photos and slides to a width of 130 cm at a virtually unlimited length. The sharpness and colour depth of these prints is stunning, and at a resolution comparable to a 3200 dpi printer, it prints at 30 m² per hour,” says Eric Meijer, director of StarFoto.
Advancing technology
As the demand for products such as displays, banners and other POP material increased, StarFoto needed an alternative. “These were applications for which the Lambda printer was less suitable” says Eric Meijer. “The system also has its limitations because the material is water sensitive, therefore it is only suitable for indoor use and it must be glued as it comes off the roll. Looking for an alternative to print directly on vinyl and hard materials, we teamed up with VUTEk for the first time five years ago when we purchased a VUTEk PV200 hybrid UV printer. It is a solid machine with which we have a great deal of experience.”

Seeking a competitive edge
“A print quality which was excellent five years ago for the market and our customers is inadequate for our stringent requirements today,” says Meijer. “We want to continue to provide the top quality we are known for and to innovate. Therefore, we were looking for a new printer that is fast, versatile and can deliver the brilliant quality of our Lambda. Additionally, we wanted to be able to offer the latest features, such as special effects, white ink and multiple-layer printing in very high quality and speed. That is really a must and this clearly distinguishes us from other providers.”

However, the quest for a hybrid UV printer that fulfilled all these specifications did not seem to be working out. “Either the speed was OK, but the print quality did not meet our requirements, or the other way around,” explains Meijer. “Even switching between different materials and thicknesses did not go smoothly with some suppliers. And with the many different types of assignments we handle today, we cannot compromise on this. Finally we came back to VUTEk. The VUTEk QS2 Pro was actually the only machine tested which came really close to what we were looking for.”
tested which came really close to what we were looking for. The QS2 Pro is three times faster than the PV200 and offers a print quality that has more than doubled. The printer is so good that it can also be easily deployed to take over part of the Lambda’s production.

“The robustness and reliability of the VUTEk machines obviously played a part in our decision. Had this experience not gone as well, there might be another printer installed here. But that is actually the point: we have confidence in both EFI’s machines and their people. They have proven themselves with the PV200 and I am firmly convinced that it could not be any different now.”

About the VUTEk QS2 Pro
The EFI™ VUTEk® QS2 Pro is a two-metre, production-level UV printer driven by the Orion OS software platform, combining true grayscale print quality, colour accuracy and consistency. It delivers fine art and POP image quality through six-colour plus three-layer white and true grayscale print head technology. It delivers high image quality at production speeds with optimal ink utilisation, which lowers the cost per print. It runs multiple jobs at once with multi-queue functionality and integrates seamlessly with EFI web-to-print and MIS/ERP solutions.

Result:
“The QS2 Pro is three times faster than the PV200 and offers a print quality that has more than doubled.”
EFI invents integrated digital technology for businesses and enterprises worldwide that helps them increase their profits, productivity, efficiency and customer satisfaction.

Why EFI?

EFI™ (www.efi.com) helps businesses worldwide bring their visions and goals to life with a scalable, digital product portfolio. Our powerful servers; controllers; RIPs; inkjet printers, and precise colour and imaging solutions help companies increase their brand recognition and market reach on signs, buildings, bus wraps, graphic displays and more. Our business automation software helps companies work faster and more cost-effectively. Our office, enterprise and mobile cloud solutions help companies create, access, and communicate impactful information that can win them more business.