A great deal has changed since family-owned Van Strien Print & Sign opened its doors in 1960 in Roosendaal, The Netherlands. Back then advertising on vehicles, shop windows and displays were painted by hand. In the 1990s, chief executive Richard Van Strien, who had taken over the helm from his father Koos Van Strien, took the firm into the digital era with the acquisition of a VUTEk 1630 digital airbrush printer.

CHALLENGE:

“As the successor to our VUTEk 1630, we were looking for a five-metre wide roll-to-roll UV-printer with Point-of-Purchase image quality at a billboard production speed.”

Richard Van Strien, Chief Executive, Van Strien Print & Sign

Currently located in Oud-Gastel, Van Strien Print & Sign are known for the high quality and reliability of their work. They are the first company in Benelux to accept delivery of a five metre VUTEk GS5000r. Earlier in the year, the company had also bought a VUTEk 3360 and a GS3200. The installations fit into an ambitious investment plan which involved Van Strien also moving into a modern newly built premises with a working area of no less than 3500 m².
**Strikingly high quality**

Like the GS5000r, the VUTEk 1630 was also five-metres wide and suited for printing all types of large format applications ranging from canvases and banners to adhesive vinyl for lightboxes. "The 1630 had a resolution of just 18 dpi! This seems to be peanuts compared with the 1000 dpi resolution of our new GS5000r printer, but the prints were nonetheless of strikingly high quality. Thanks to the airbrush technique the ink flowed quite openly, which meant that the pixels were invisible. This gave beautiful results with photos in particular. We still have an old poster hanging up with a print of a Lamborghini and it can still be looked at,” explains Richard Van Strien. The 1630 was a very profitable and reliable investment as it was still in production three years ago.

**Reliability over price**

Van Strien is on their sixth VUTEk, partly due to the positive experience with their first. The reliability and uniform construction of all VUTEk printers score highly in particular according to Van Strien. “All VUTEk machines are produced according to the same pattern and that makes familiarisation with them and their use extremely simple. One operator can easily operate and maintain all of the machines. VUTEk printers are certainly not the least expensive, but they are the most reliable.”

**SOLUTION:**

“With its taut lines and robust aura, the VUTEk GS5000r is a genuine eye-catcher in the production hall and customers are really keen to see this monster at work.”
Years of practical experience taught Van Strien that the cost price of a machine is a relative concept. “We once experimented with a cheaper Israeli printer,” says Van Strien. “On paper this achieved high printing speeds and good quality, but the printer was unable to achieve this in practice due to an unstable print quality and technical disruptions. In the end the machine cost us twice as much for repairs and that is without mentioning the many hours it was out of service.”

Production rejuvenation
The relocation to the new building was the opportune moment to examine the pool of machinery thoroughly and to investigate whether it was still performing optimally for existing and future customer needs. “This analysis taught us that there was still room for improvement. Of the three existing printers we had the 3360 converted into a textile printer, while the two others were replaced by new machines.” This move ultimately proved to be a cheaper and quite faster operation than retaining the three existing printers. Furthermore, with the GS3200 UV-flatbed printer Van Strien also gain time and quality because printing is done directly on the material. The production setup was also completely reviewed and streamlined. One nice example of this is the RIP station screens. These hang neatly next to each other on the wall, so that the operator can oversee all of the production at a glance.

With the installation of the VUTEk GS5000r, Van Strien has found the perfect follow-up to the VUTEk 1630. However, this time at a resolution of 1000 dpi, so that even the smallest logo stays perfectly legible. “The possibilities with the GS5000r are almost unlimited. In particular, the photo-realistic image quality is phenomenal and at printing speeds that we previously only dreamed of. We are going for top quality with top equipment and, with its established value and robust reputation, VUTEk is the perfect advertising signboard for this.”

RESULTS: “The quality that we obtain with the GS5000r is breathtaking. The smallest logo also stays perfectly legible at high speeds of 288 m² per hour.”
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