

A man in a light blue shirt and dark trousers stands in a modern textile factory. He is positioned next to a large, white digital textile printer. The printer is processing a roll of fabric with a colorful, abstract pattern. The background shows industrial equipment, including large silver pipes and a ceiling with recessed lights.

**Adalberto Estampados**  
expands design offering and  
reduces fast-fashion supply  
chain costs with SPGPrints'  
PIKE® digital textile printer

**SPGPrints is a global leading company in the textile, label and industrial printing markets. It provides total system solutions, with a portfolio including screens, lacquers, inks, digital engravers, and a broad range of rotary screen and digital printing systems.**

Textile printer and supplier Adalberto Estampados, of Rebordões, Portugal, has installed a PIKE® digital textile printer from SPGPrints to offer new standards of quality and production efficiency to its international customer base.

Among the benefits delivered by the company's PIKE digital printer are reductions of lead-times by up to 50 per cent, reduced stockholding costs, faster time-to-market, and improved print quality, including the ability to print micro patterns, broadening the scope for new designs.

Installed in late 2016, the PIKE digital printer complements Adalberto Estampados' four existing screen printers. Ideal for volumes of more than two million linear metres per year on substrates up to 1850mm wide, the PIKE uses single-pass technology with fixed-array piezo-electric print heads. Using SPGPrints' Archer® technology, fine details and bright, saturated blotches can be produced with variable drop sizes

ranging from 2 to 10pL. Archer technology also enables ink to be precisely fired on to substrates from a distance of 4mm, giving the PIKE unparalleled substrate versatility.

"Two major trends are affecting us: the growth of fast-fashion, and more challenging designs," said Mário Jorge Machado, CEO of Adalberto Estampados.

"SPGPrints' PIKE printer addresses both these challenges, and offers scope for future developments."

Fast-fashion has revolutionised every aspect of the fashion industry.

"With the demand for new designs to appear in stores several times a month, the pressures on textile printers are enormous," said Mr. Machado. "The whole business model has changed. Not only must there be fast printing and delivery, but run lengths are shorter. This means that job changeovers must be fast, and with minimal waste. Deliveries need to be on time, and stock-holding by suppliers and retailers reduced to a minimum, to save costs. Price sensitivity adds to the pressure."

The decline in run lengths that results from frequent design changes is another pressure. Printing digitally eliminates screen preparation time, as well as chemical and water waste. Job changeovers require only the digital files to be loaded, and, possibly, the substrate changed.

"Another trend that is challenging textile printers is more complex designs," Mr. Machado continued. "More colours and finer detail are increasingly requested by fashion brands, and the desired results are simply not possible with screen printing. High-performance digital printers, like the PIKE, can deliver the designers' concepts.

"At present, we are running the PIKE on a single-shift basis," he explained. "Even at that level, it accounts for 25 per cent of our production. That means a single shift with PIKE is as productive as three shifts with a rotary screen printer, in our situation.

"Printing digi-



Mr. Jos Notermans, Commercial Manager, digital textiles, SPGPrints.

tally with PIKE reactive inks enables a much broader gamut of colour than is possible with 10 or 12 colour screen printers," Mr. Machado continued. "Designers are also pleased that we can now print very fine lines, strong colour blotches, sharp geometric designs – and even the micro-floral patterns, which are currently growing in popularity.

"We regularly print on knits and wovens of viscose, Lyocell, cotton, linen, and blends of these," he said. "The PIKE handles wovens from 60-70g/m<sup>2</sup> and knits of 200-240g/m<sup>2</sup>.

"Our customers become more interested in printing digitally when they hear we were able to print a 100,000m<sup>2</sup> order in two weeks on the PIKE. That job previously took four weeks using rotary screen," Mr. Machado said. "For brand-owners, this represents a significant jump in responsiveness. It means that their digitally-printed garments could be in the shops when, if screen printed, the textiles would just be headed for finishing. This is game-changing technology, addressing the quality, colour, volume and speed requirements of today's retail industry."

Speaking for SPGPrints, Jos Notermans, commercial manager digital textiles, said: "For companies like Adalberto Estampados, digitally producing high-volume, fast-turnaround textiles for big brands is a powerful competitive advantage. Using the SPGPrints PIKE to complement the work of its existing screen printers means textiles can be produced by the method best suited to the individual job, and deliver benefits of speed, quality and price to the customer." ♦

