

# Digital textile printing for fast fashion

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Discover how digital textile printing enables fast fashion brands in Pakistan to reduce their time to market, control costs, keep their offer fresh with a diverse product mix.

Traditional textile printing processes require large minimum order quantities, and two to three weeks to go from design to print. This restricts fashion brands from reacting quickly to rapidly changing consumer demands. Digital textile printing is changing that, and its rapid adoption amongst textile printers in Pakistan and worldwide is proof. The popularity of the digital prints in the fast fashion is evident from its increasing presence in the retail business. New brands and designers are taking advantage of the options digital printing provides for higher profits and opportunities.

## Advantages of the digital textile printing

The digital textile printing offers a number of advantages to the textile printer that were not possible before in the conventional printing:



Color matching by DuraPRINTS® between different substrats.

- ❖ Reduced manufacturing footprint and lower fixed costs by removing the screen engraving, color separation and color kitchen processes.
  - ❖ Improved equipment productivity by eliminating downtime from color changeover and screen alignment steps.
  - ❖ Sustainable printing process through savings in energy, water, chemical and dyestuff consumption.
- The benefits to the customer are even more obvious: digital textile printing enables designers and fashion brands



Maheen Khan Gulabo, printed by DuraPRINTS® at London Fashion Week.



Nomin Ansari printed by DuraPRINTS® Joy Ride at Fashion Parade London.



Rizwan Beyq printed by DuraPRINTS® Representing Pakistan's signature truck art Commonwealth Exchange at Buckingham Palace.

unlimited creativity with faster time-to-market:

- ❖ Printed samples are ready within days rather than weeks.
- ❖ Perfect color matching between samples and production runs.
- ❖ Short production runs and unlimited design or color changes.
- ❖ Market testing of designs enabled, and production on demand.

### Challenges of going digital with reactive inks

Printing with digital textile printers also brings some unique challenges for the conventional textile printing industry. To meet these challenges, some important considerations are:

- ❖ The fabric for digital printing has to be specifically prepared for digital printing with higher quality singeing, bleaching and mercerizing. The fabric surface must be smooth and free from lint or hairiness. It should be prepared to allow good ink uptake and dye fixation.
- ❖ An optimized pre-coating recipe and uniform application process that is adapted to different substrates such as cotton, silk, or viscose fabrics, enabling adequate penetration without color bleeding, or affecting fabric handle.
- ❖ Accurate printer calibration to ensure nozzle alignment, print sharpness, color consistency and ink consumption.
- ❖ Post-treatment processes of steaming, washing and finishing using equipment that is optimized for the intricacies of the digitally applied reactive ink dyes.



Designed and printed by DuraPRINTS® for Abdul Saboor.

### Fast fashion considerations

After the print house has realized the advantages and met the basic challenges of digital textile printing, they have to adapt to new workflows that arise from the fast fashion market in Pakistan:

- ❖ Excellent color matching from digital file to printed fabric, as well as exact color matching between different substrates. It is common in the local fashion market to have a silk, polyester or viscose dupatta (scarf) that must match with a cotton lawn shirt.
- ❖ Dupatta (scarf) fabrics are of ultra-low GSM such as tissue silks, and pose a challenge to achieve print sharpness and require delicate handling throughout the printing process.
- ❖ Zero deviation in print results in terms of consistent colors and sharp prints from sampling to production.
- ❖ Fabric handle and feel that is soft and bouncy that cannot be achieved from mass-production equipment designed for rotary or screen-printing volumes.

### Premium prints with DuraPRINTS®

DuraPRINTS® was one of the early adopters of digital textile printing offering roll-to-roll direct on fabric commercial print services in Pakistan since 2012.

DuraPRINTS® works closely with fashion designers, apparel brands and boutiques, as well as interior designers and furniture manufacturers to bring unique fashionable designs to printed textiles. DuraPRINTS®' large variety of clients puts it in a unique position when it comes to developing new ideas, handling delicate fabrics such as cotton nets, Bamberg chiffon or tissue silks, or heavy long-use fabrics for contract upholstery applications.

With its early experience in digital textile printing, DuraPRINTS® is a digital textile printer offering premium prints with brighter colors, greater sharpness, and excellent color matching. ♦

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