

CASE STUDY

ABYPrint forges ahead with EFI Pro 30h wide format LED printer

In 2022, ABYPrint installed an EFI™ Pro 30h wide format LED printer in its workshop in Montpellier in the south of France to support its current workforce and prepare for future developments.

Sophian Arab, managing director of ABYPrint, came from the world of event logistics. Faced with technological evolution and the arrival of digital, he needed to diversify his company’s activities and chose signage as his growth opportunity.

“One of the special features of ABYPrint,” he says, “is that it is part of a group that is structured around mastering all services for the world of events: from the rental of furniture and tableware to marquees, modular and custom-made staging, lighting, sound systems ... and finally, printing”

Today, ABYPrint has a turnover of 2.7 million euros, 25 employees and serves 2,000 agency clients or principals, mainly from the events and large-scale distribution industries. The company has produced work for Inovie Group, Intermarché, Montpellier HSC football club, Montpellier Métropole, and others.

The company’s expertise and machinery allow it to offer a wide range of services. It has a start-to-finish project management system (design, production and installation) for any type of wide-format printing: signs, LED light boxes, totems, coverings, etc. ABYPrint currently has 1,500 square metres



CHALLENGE

“Deadlines are non-negotiable and files sometimes arrive at the last minute ... [but] high print quality requirements do not change.”
– Sophian Arab, Managing Director



Sophian Arab, managing director and ABYPrint, and Yvan Loeul, head of ABYPrint’s management team



Established in Montpellier and Lille, France, ABYPrint produces large-format digital prints: exterior signage, interior signage, event graphics, vehicle graphics. The company also has carpentry centre in Fourques. Dedicated to serving communication agencies, ABYPrint has developed a strong commercial relationship with its customers for all of their needs. Its know-how and its machinery make it possible to offer a range of services and project management from A to Z (design, production, installation).

ABYPrint is part of WATE Group, a 17-million-euro, 150-employee consortium of six companies offering signage, carpentry, installation, set design, A/V equipment and catering equipment for the events industry.

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of floor space (of which 1,200 are dedicated to production) but by September 2023, it plans to set up in an all-new eco-friendly building that allows more effective management of its workflows.

The need for speed

“As the group has developed and its structure has evolved, we have had to strengthen the printing division,” says Yvan Loeul, head of ABYPrint’s management team. “A team of 10 people manages production in two shifts, and we now have a printing capacity of between 1,000 and 1,500 square metres per day. But in our projects, we had to speed things up again and reinvest.”

“We found out about EFI printers thanks to the distributor Club Groupe, and its large-format department located near Marseilles,” Arab recalls. “We have had very good relations with Club Groupe for many years. They are hard-working, efficient and on the same wavelength as us. Whenever we have needed to speed things up, logically, we turn to Club Groupe.”

And, the need to speed things up has been urgent. Between 2015 and 2022, ABYPrint’s turnover doubled. Arab says that happened because ABYPrint’s strategy is to “be responsive and proactive to all our clients’ needs and permanently adapt to the evolution of the market.”

SOLUTION

The EFI Pro 30h printer offered the production speed ABYPrint needed to stay ahead of the competition, as well as the flexibility and high quality required for the business’s customised services.

“Of course,” he adds, “that requires high-performance machinery that is both very productive and very flexible for our customised services. But we found ourselves facing a productivity deficit caused by the exponential growth of our turnover.

“Reinvesting in a highly productive printer, therefore, became our priority. Our constraints are those of our markets: the events industry is a highly seasonal sector that operates at full capacity over two three-month periods of the year. Deadlines are non-negotiable and files sometimes arrive at the last minute. This is a phenomenon that has become even more pronounced since the Covid-19 pandemic, as many events were cancelled and postponed to following years. Nevertheless, the high print quality requirements do not change.”

In short, ABYPrint needed to ensure it could print more signage, quickly and beautifully.

“We had started to shop around by requesting numerous trials and by going to trade fairs, without finding a printer that offered both an industrial design and excellent value for money,” Arab recalls. “An alternative was clearly missing in this sector.” That is, until Club Groupe recommended the EFI Pro 30h.

ABYPrint decided to make its smart investment in wide-format productivity, and Club Groupe, together with the EFI team, came to install the EFI Pro 30h at the Montpellier site in July 2022. “The week of the installation and set-up went very well, as everything was perfectly organised and went as expected,” said Loeul. “Just like the three training days. Our needs were a bit special due to the DNA of the workshop: our operators are versatile and not only carry out the printing, but also the cutting and various other tasks.

“Club Groupe and EFI, therefore, trained six people, adapting to their existing knowledge and their expectations. We were able to assess the excellent design of the Fiery® software in particular during training. We found it to be a very intuitive and fast solution.”

Loeul appreciates how the webcam installed on the printer has simplified any after-sales service issues.

RESULT

The EFI Pro 30h “delivers high quality without sacrificing productivity. For us, the versatility opens up great opportunities.”
– Yvan Loeul, Director



Between 2015 and 2022, ABYPrint’s turnover doubled, requiring the company to speed production up more than ever. The EFI Pro 30h printer offered the production speed needed to stay ahead of competitors, as well as the flexibility and high quality required for the business’s customised services

“It is a real plus for dealing with minor problems very quickly,” he says. Plus, he adds, “Club Groupe also has a number of complementary, well-trained technicians, which makes us confident about the future. When a partnership operates like ours, we do not regret having bet on loyalty and trust! Our approach, like theirs, is based on choosing a long-term relationship.”

Printing at speeds up to 230 square metres per hour, the 3.2-metre-wide EFI Pro 30h hybrid flatbed/roll-to-roll UV LED production printer offers four colours, plus white as standard, to create value-added prints, thanks to EFI's 7-picolitre greyscale UltraDrop™ Technology, which creates a maximum resolution of 1,200 dpi.

Recapturing signage volume with high quality

ABYPrint found the exact solution it needed, opting to configure its Pro 30h printer with four-colours and a channel of white, plus a channel of clear ink that can provide flood or spot varnish in matte or glossy finishes. “Alongside productivity that meets our expectations, the quality of the white, which is very opaque, was also a key criterion,” Arab says. “We use it to support prints on Plexiglas, and especially for selective underprinting beneath text that appears in dark areas. The rendering is also ultra-precise, even for small text!”

He also mentions how impressed he is with the printer's UV LED ink, not only in terms of imaging quality, but also the adhesion to all media and scratch resistance. “What we print, we also install, so we are very demanding on the durability of the inks during transport and handling. And of course, LED curing adds an ecological dimension – proof of our commitment for our clients and important for the health and working comfort of our employees,” says Arab.

Great opportunities ahead

While ABYPrint's Pro 30h printer is dedicated primarily to flatbed printing, the versatility offered with its roll-to-roll capability adds an additional level of flexibility. The wide range of capabilities the Pro printer 30h offers leads Arab to ask, “What printer can do more, can do better?”

After several months, ABYPrint's assessment of the Pro 30h printer is clearly positive: “It delivers high quality without sacrificing productivity. For us, the versatility opens up great opportunities,” Loeul says, adding that the printer also provides a differentiating quality advantage that ensured ABYPrint won back event work that had been lost with the pandemic.

“The EFI Pro 30h printer allows us to consolidate our presence in our events and large-scale distribution markets, while also allowing us to develop other activities.”

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