

Opportunities and applications for digital textile printing

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Abstracts

Digital textile printing has a number of advantages over traditional textile printing methods such as screen printing. It is flexible, and therefore enables manufacturers of printed textiles to produce short runs cost efficiently and adapt quickly to changes in customer requirements. Also, it provides designers and manufacturers with scope for producing detailed, high quality photographic images which could not be achieved using screen printing. The main drawback of digital textile printing is that production speeds are slow relative to those of screen printing. As a result, and in spite of the capabilities of digital printing, the volume of textiles printed using this technique worldwide accounts for just 2% of the total volume of textiles printed using all techniques. However, there are many applications which provide the digital textile printing industry with opportunities for expansion, notably soft signage, fast fashion and services relating to mass customisation. In the future, the scope for using digital textile printing as a tool for the mass production of printed textiles will depend on the ability of machinery manufacturers to develop digital textile printers with production speeds which rival those of conventional textile printing machinery. This report provides an overview of the digital textile printing market, and looks at the advantages of digital textile printing over screen printing, as well as the opportunities for digital textile printing in the apparel, home textile and soft signage industries. It also provides insight into the factors affecting the adoption of digital textile printing by the textile industry and the future scope for digital textile printing as a tool for commercial-scale print production.

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