

InkZone Move



InkZone Move: Evaluate Plate, Proof and Press Automatically

New

InkZone Move takes Digital Information's InkZone concept for digital presetting and closed-loop ink adjustment on offset printing machines to significantly wider audience and adds capabilities for both plate and proof evaluation.

The new InkZone Move (IZM) suite of solutions is divided into the IZM Press module (measurement and visualization of color control during printing), IZM Plate (measurement of the ink coverage on the printing plate) and IZM Wedge (evaluation of a media wedge on color proofs). All three software modules make use of a spectral engine from industry-leading supplier X-Rite assuring accuracy while setting a new industry standard for economy.

A New Standard in Cost-Benefit Ratio

The InkZone concept sets a new entry price point for a product suite with such a wide range of functions, including both the presetting of ink zones and spectral, closed-loop color control, which can be used on most any sheetfed-offset press. InkZone products bring automation and significantly improved efficiency to commercial and package-printing operations, including presses without modern CIP3 or CIP4 interfaces. The flexibility of the InkZone solutions can bring consistency and strong savings even to those operations where initial ink settings and subsequent color adjustments are carried out via visual evaluation and corresponding manual adjustments. In many cases, due to InkZone's adaptability and open architecture, many printers are finding value in replacing older preset and closed loop solutions on most any model of printing press.

This also allows dissimilar press models within a shop to all have a common operator interface and adjustment process. In short, few productivity investments can match the exceptionally high cost-benefit ratio of the InkZone suite of solutions.

Three Applications, One Measuring Device

InkZone Move is the latest product within the InkZone family. Its three modules – InkZone Move Press, InkZone Move Plate and InkZone Move Wedge – mean that for the first time ever, a comprehensive system is available for controlling the entire proof-to-print process. X-Rite's affordable Eye-One spectrophotometer is used as the sole measurement instrument to provide a variety of measurement data for all three of the solutions. In addition, the records from the three integrated applications are saved centrally in an XML-based file system, making them readily available for process analysis, and in a format compatible with a host of other systems. While the three IZM modules offer the most comprehensive benefits as an integrated suite, they can be implemented individually, and upgraded via a simple licensing method in order to add new components as desired.

It Starts with Fast Color Measurement

InkZone Move Press has at its foundation an unique software solution which makes clever use of automation to gather color measurements quickly from a color bar positioned at the edge of each press sheet. To ensure accurate alignment, the measuring device rides upon a precision guide which is included with the IZM Press package. This allows smooth and steady movement of the Eye-One and results in dependable, repeatable data – every time. When compared to slower manual color measurements, IZM Press completes a comprehensive evaluation of the entire press sheet in just a few seconds.

Press operators have the benefit of applying any necessary corrections faster, and can focus their attention on decision-making and press adjustments instead of on data collection. With such a simple color evaluation process, operators can always have access to an up-to-date look at any deviations from target values or customer-approved samples. And since the entire system operates uses a full-fledged spectrophotometer, it is equally well-suited for controlling both process color and spot-color work.

True and Consistent Color Results

Press operators will appreciate how easy and quick it is to interpret the graphic display of the IZM Press solution. The software depicts the ink-key zones for each unit of the press, and provides the option to view either absolute color and density results, or measurements relative to target values. With the functions of density, dot area/dot gain (tone value/TVI) and colorimetry (CIELAB/Delta-E), InkZone Move Press is the basis for process stability, color

consistency and adherence to recognized standards or specifications. And since IZM Press keeps a running history of your color results, you can easily use it to provide proof of quality records, or import the data from its native ASCII/XML format into analysis or statistical software for further evaluation.

InkZone Move Press supports all makes and models of printing presses, allowing operators to review measurements and make manual adjustments to the ink key settings. However, for prompt and consistent ink adjustments, IZM Press can be upgraded to a full, closed-loop control system (InkZone Loop), providing automatic, simultaneous regulation of ink key openings across all press units.

Even Faster Results with Full Automation

Most smaller press formats, like 52 cm (e.g. A3, 20", 2-up with 16 ink zones) or 70 cm (e.g. A4, 28", 4-up with 24 ink zones) can be hand-scanned efficiently using the IZM Press solution and the included precision guide. However, for larger press formats (A1, 100 cm, 40+", 8-up) and when businesses place a high value on operator convenience, a fully-automated precision guide is available for IZM Press. This auxiliary motor transforms the cost-effective Eye-One into a pressroom powerhouse, making quick work of color control bars with patches as small as 5mm (0.20") in size.

More Economy and Efficiency with Plate Measurement

Regular measurement of the printing plates is a key process-control component. As with on-press print issues, sources of error related to the plate can only truly be identified when the quality of the on-plate image is known. Thankfully, Digital Information has built a fast, ideal method to automate this process: InkZone Move Plate.

The software is used both for ongoing process control and also for preparation of the data used to calibrate the imaging device. After a quick scan of the 21-step tone scale, the software calculates and displays a characteristic curve for each color separation, including the numeric results.

Because of the integration of the IZM solution, IZM Plate can not only take advantage of the cost savings realized via a single Eye-One measurement device, but also the flexibility of reporting with the use of a common ASCII/XML data format.

IZM Wedge – Comparing Proof and Press

Rounding out the InkZone Move triad, InkZone Move Wedge is an efficient way to measure the quality of any proof via the evaluation of control wedges according to accepted standards. IZM Wedge includes many international formats for media wedges recognized throughout the industry; while the ingenious control wedge included with IZM press provides a correspondingly reliable method for controlling the print run. After measuring and evaluating the proof using IZM Wedge, the results can be checked for compliance against predetermined standard values (color space, characteristic curve) both quickly and reliably.

Prepress operators will appreciate the flexibility of the IZM Wedge solution to provide results as a straightforward data table, but also as a series of dot gain curves or as a 2-dimensional LAB/LCH plot of the primary and secondary colors. With the graphical display, users can easily evaluate key aspects of the proof, and the numerical DE color difference. This helps to assess the feasibility of achieving a proof with the available color set, and highlights the areas that need corrective action.

Complete, Uniform, Color Results

With its three software modules, InkZone Move offers a comprehensive set of tools for color consistency and uniformity across the entire imaging process. With objective, measurement-based evaluation of the proofing media wedge, printing plates and press-sheet color bar, InkZone Move provides a comprehensive approach to controlling all of the factors relating to quality sheetfed offset printing.

And as the industry's first, integrated aftermarket solution, InkZone Move has the capability to unite otherwise incongruent solutions from multiple system providers at each stage of the process.

In this way, the full process can be controlled using a single, comprehensive approach. When paired with the automation and affordability of InkZone Move, it's hard to envision a packaging or commercial printing environment

where it wouldn't be relevant.



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