

# Showcasing DTG printing in Vietnam

By Joe Link 03 January 2020

FLUXMALL DTG managing director Dmitry Sarbaev analyses the impact of Sole Ex on Vietnam's evolving digital textile printing market. Joseph Link reports.



Dmitry Sarbaev (right) discusses the advantages of DTG printing alongside Truong Ngoc Anh

The continued growth of the Vietnamese economy throughout the last decade, a nationwide rollout of fast mobile and broadband access, and the rapid penetration of social media – which is helping to increase the engagement between customers and brands – has created a foundation through which local fashion brands have not only emerged but also thrived despite growing competition from abroad.

The instant success that has been achieved by a large percentage of these start-ups is accredited by many to their use of direct-to-garment (DTG) digital textile printing technology. Sole Ex – an annual exhibition based in Ho Chi Minh City – promotes the use of DTG technology and evidences its wide-ranging capabilities from fast turnaround times to the simplification of the personalisation trend.

“It is exciting to see how young people come up with the idea of starting a local brand,” says Dmitry Sarbaev, managing director of DTG specialist Fluxmall DTG – a small-scale OEM and distributor of DTG solutions. “There is a story that stands behind each company and those new businesses can also easily find their niche in the growing Vietnamese market. The customer base of these companies is as young as the brand owners themselves, as millennials and centennials strive to stand out on the dull city street of mainstream fashion and feel cool and confident.”

## **DIGITAL PRINTING**

Through DTG printing, items can be decorated in a variety of ways but “what brings true value to all these garments is a strong and meaningful message that is delivered through the design and decoration”. Sarbaev also believes that the most successful start-ups are the ones that produce consistent designs, which makes the brand instantly more recognisable.

“It’s a fusion of creativity, personal perceptions of the brand owner and his or her team, and the availability of quality decoration methods that have recently become available for the industry within Vietnam,” Sarbaev says. “For me, this forms our (Fluxmall DTG) purpose as a company which is to focus on the Vietnamese market and enable the young talents to implement their concepts on garments via DTG printing.”

Sarbaev believes that the rise of local brands in Vietnam is driven by fast fashion, which remains a common trend across the globe despite its negative impact on the environment. Millennials, and now Centennials, demand a constant stream of products, limited collections and exclusive garments.

## **ONLINE INFLUENCE**

These generations are also discussing new collections online, often on social media. And, it is these platforms that have become critical marketing tools for fashion brands.

This is because social media is a great way for businesses to reach a large percentage of their customer base quickly and easily. It is also a simple way for brands to generate interest in a product before it even reaches the high street. This tactic ultimately boosts sales, particularly among the increasingly impatient centennials.

Nevertheless, a unique feature of Vietnam’s culture is a love for dedicated events and a multitude of these are focused on the fashion and textile industry. Millennials and centennials are eager to get dressed up, learn something new, discover the latest trends, or simply buy something new, according to Sarbaev.

## **SOLE EX**

One of these dedicated events is Sole Ex, which is among the most eagerly anticipated shows for local street culture in Vietnam, says Sarbaev. The exhibition – organised by Truong Ngoc Anh, founder of local brand HNBMG – began life as a small-scale footwear trade show in Hanoi. Since then, the event has blossomed into a full-scale fashion and accessories show whereby local brands display their latest products.

“From the very first meeting we had, Ngoc Anh has always been talking about education and its impact on the latest generation of fashion lovers,” Sarbaev adds. “His love for fashion and shoes, his passion to introduce high-quality sustainable products, evaluating customer experiences and developing the knowledge and awareness of various textile printing methods was always visible. This is exactly what the country needs for the market to grow inwards and mature.”

In 2019, FLUXMALL DTG collaborated with HNBMG to provide Sole Ex attendees with specialist DTG knowledge. To showcase the potential of DTG printing, FLUXMALL DTG used the technology to print 100 exclusive T-shirts live at the show, all of which were adorned with the official Sole Ex full-colour artwork, Sarbaev says. Visitors were also guided through the full DTG production process and received instructions from FLUXMALL DTG team members on how to care for their digitally-printed T-shirts.



Sole Ex has grown to become an exhibition which attracts thousands of visitors annually

## A GROWING AWARENESS

The knowledge sharing, for both local brands and their customers, incorporated a 15-min presentation by Sarbaev and Ngoc Anh which preceded the printing activities on the main stage. The central message of the duo's presentation was that there is more to DTG than simply the artwork and applying it to the fabric. For example, once the design has been printed you must know how to pack the product and price it appropriately for the brand's target market.

During his time on the main stage, Sarbaev also took the opportunity to present DTG Digital's recently-launched G4 printer. The machine was used in multiple demonstrations in the presence of Jerry Erich, business development director at DTG Digital, who travelled from Australia to present the machine to the Vietnamese market in the hope of capitalising on the country's expanding digital textile printing sector. Erich's session was part of the educational program which consisted of various speakers from local and international companies all of whom presented at FLUXMALL DTG's booth to provide visitors with more information about DTG printing, sustainability, and selecting the right equipment and consumables.

The Sole Ex program also involved talks from a selection of Vietnamese online influencers and leading figures from across the country's fashion and textile industry, many of whom took part in a series of panel discussions.

Events such as Sole Ex are evidence that modern technologies are capturing the imagination of young adults across Vietnam and in an increasingly globalised world these young entrepreneurs have easy access to the latest solutions. The fashion and textile industry is

important to Vietnam and the influence of inkjet textile printing – one of the most significant technological breakthroughs of the last 25 years – is expected to strengthen the sector throughout the next decade.

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