

ZON Retail Environments – G7® Case Study

G7 methodology is not limited to offset litho printing. A leading producer of retail displays and other printed textiles proves that effective color management is possible in the challenging realm of dye sublimation heat transfer printing.

Printing is not the single manufacturing process it was in the days of Gutenberg. On a regular basis, we invent new ways to apply images and text to surfaces—quickly, automatically, and at whatever volume required. One such invention is dye sublimation heat transfer which is used to print images onto textiles. One company, [ZON Retail Environments](#), has succeeded with this process, thanks in part to its advanced approach to color management in this atypical printing environment.

“Color quality and consistency is very important to the larger brands,” said ZON Retail’s Print Development Manager Bruce Compton. “When brands utilize different media, like printed paper and fabric, they expect us to create reasonably consistent color, even if the process for each media type is completely different.”

“Brands expect us to create reasonably consistent color on all media, even if the process for each type is completely different.”

— Bruce Compton, ZON Retail

ZON Retail often must match the color appearance of offset or digital print produced by other service providers. This can only be done, Compton maintains, by adhering to a common calibration and color management standard—which begins with G7 methodology. “More and more, knowledgeable buyers are requiring that kind of standardization,” he said.

Compton began exploring G7 in 2015, as part of his overall mission to bring standardized color management to fabric printing—which is far different from other printing types. “Think about offset,” he said. “That’s a controlled environment, with predictable dot gain and ISO standards for paper and ink. But with dye sublimation, depending on the fabric, speed, temperatures, and pressure during the transfer process, dot gains can be between 10 and 40

percent! With all those variables—and no standards—you can see how someone could be chasing color for a long time.”

By controlling the main attributes of gray—tonality and balance—G7 has given ZON Retail far greater control over color. “With G7, we can eliminate or control the variables inherent in dye sublimation printing, and create far more consistent results.”

“G7 allows me to get a quality print out very quickly, without chasing color for a week.”

— Bruce Compton, ZON Retail

Compton is clearly an early adopter of G7 for his particular niche. “In the dye-sub arena, there’s not a lot of information out there,” he said, emphasizing the importance of working with a G7 Expert. Despite the challenge of adapting a dye-sub process to G7—originally developed for traditional print—he said the results are worth it. “It allows me to get a quality print out very quickly, without chasing color for a week,” he said. “I’ve worked with color management since the mid-1990s, but I had mixed results when I brought that knowledge into the dye-sub arena. G7 has allowed me to transition that knowledge into this type of printing.”

The benefits of this transition include a marked reduction in time—achieving the right color in 2-3 hours instead of 2-3 days, or even weeks.

ZON Retail is also beginning to see business increases resulting from their color quality and time reduction. “The color we’re able to produce now, and the consistency of that color, is definitely bringing us work,” Compton said. “My sales guys tell me it really makes a difference. I’d say that G7 has improved sales.”

