



LabelTec starts its digital journey with Epson SurePress L-4733AW

The purchase of Epson SurePress L-4733AW puts LabelTec on the digital printers map

Auckland-based LabelTec has invested in an Epson SurePress L-4733AW to expand its capabilities to digital print, increase the range of applications, achieve consistent quality... and remove the windows from its building in the process.

LabelTec is not a new business in New Zealand. Mark Jackson put the company on the label printers map 16 years ago, offering printed and blank self-adhesive labels, heat-seal labels and developing one of the country's leading ranges of printed, woven and blank fabric labels.

"We are a full-service label company. Apart from product labels, adhesive labels, fabric labels for the garment, safety, and building industries, we offer warehousing labels, barcoding or in-office labels," says Andrew Jackson, Mark Jackson's nephew who took over the business and is currently managing the company. "We also sell commercial desktop printers; we can implement those solutions and support the customers all the way through."

Last year, under Jackson's management, LabelTec moved from East Tamaki to a new, modern headquarters in Westgate to facilitate future business expansion and development.

Helping the company to fulfil all of its customers' needs is an impressive machine park, which includes flexographic and offset printing equipment along with extensive finishing options, flatbed and laser die cutting. Adding the digital angle is the latest investment in an Epson SurePress L-4733AW.

"We were looking to move into a different space in the market, being that product label or short run adhesive label, which we had to produce using our flexo and offset presses or outsource in the past. We couldn't really cater or compete in this space," says Jackson.

The choice of digital presses available on the market is simply immense. However, LabelTec's priorities have ruled out quite a few brands. The company was looking for a machine with the ability to digitally print on fabric products, which are currently a crucial part of the business.

The second decisive factor was the equipment's cost to ensure the investment would fit the company's budget.

With these requirements in mind, Jackson travelled to Melbourne to PacPrint, where after seeing the machine in action, the company placed the order for the new Epson press.

"We've always had a great relationship with Epson and Aarque Group, the reseller here in New Zealand," Jackson says. "We knew it would take three to four months, so we scheduled the installation for January 20 this year.

"We made space for the new machine downstairs, and the only feasible way to enable the access was through the windows. We had to take them out with the concrete plinth they were sitting on. Luckily it was a beautiful day, and thanks to the amazing guys at Aarque Group, we had the equipment inside the building in one day."



The new press was installed in one day by Aarque Group, Epson's local reseller

After three weeks of setup and a few days of training, the LabelTec team was ready to use its new machine.

The SurePress L-4733AW is the third generation of Epson's successful resin aqueous inkjet press, with over 400 installations worldwide. A seven-colour press with orange and green inks and is approved to achieve 96 per cent of the Pantone solid coated colours. White ink allows printing of clear, metallic and coloured substrates.

It produces output on standard "off the shelf" coated, uncoated papers and film substrates with accuracy while maintaining outstanding print resolution and precision.



LabelTec team with newly installed Epson SurePress L-4733AW digital press

Jobs are quick to set up and easy to complete with the absolute minimum in consumption, wastage and labour. The SurePress L-4733AW is compact, easy to install, cost-effective to run, and can be managed by a single operator allowing unattended operation.

"The Aarque guys were impressed with the changes Epson had made with the machine versus the previous model," adds Jackson. "Everything was easier for them from a setup point, but also in terms of operations, this model has been changed and updated, including next generation AQ4 inks complying with REACH & FCM regulations and added automation for more uptime.

"From the installation point of view, it was a four-week process from the box landing to us printing our first job. The quality is fantastic. Ease of use is remarkable, and maintenance is definitely bearable. I know some digital machines, you can spend an hour at the end of each day. The Epson is different. It is very easy to operate and maintain.

"We have been using this press only a month and a half, but it has been at its capacity most weeks, which is fantastic."

Jackson hints that the company might be looking for another piece of equipment in a year or so. The team has been recently expanded with a new business development manager focusing on the digital side of the business. If everything goes to plan, the company will consider buying another piece of equipment.

"I would definitely go back to Epson. They have a UV inkjet press, which I think would be a good next step for us," Jackson concludes. **NZP**