

3 Keys to Color Correction by Craig Mertens

Color Correction

Color Correction is the process of adjusting the colors in a graphic for a specific printer, media (substrate) or ink. Every printer will print different colors for the same graphic. If a media or ink is changed, the colors will also change. If a different digital camera or scanner is used, the colors will change. If a heat curing or heat transfer process is used to finalize an imprint, the colors will change. It is highly unlikely that you will be able to take a digital photo or scan, print it out on your printer and produce the colors that you want without some form of color correction. EVERY image will need some level of color correction to improve the quality of the printed graphic. Although this sounds hopeless, there are some straightforward techniques in Smart Designer X3, CorelDRAW X3 and PhotoPaint X3 to help you obtain good color values in your digitally printed images.

Expectations are the Key

If you are printing "one off" T-shirts on a direct to garment printer at an event, the expectations of the client are going to be lower. If you are printing a large production run of mugs for a corporate account, your client's expectations are going to be higher. You need to be able to balance the time and energy spent color correcting the image with the expectations of the client and the profit potential of the job. Once you dial in specific color correction techniques for your printer, you will be able to produce higher quality images in less time.

Learning Your Printer

Each printer and imprinting process will have unique issues associated with color correction and print quality. Techniques used for one printer may be entirely different for another printer. It is critical that you spend the time to learn the various techniques that are appropriate for your unique printer and imprinting process. It is unrealistic to think that you will be able to pull a printer from the box, install software and print a photographic image with satisfactory results. By spending a couple of minutes adjusting the colors in your images, you will be able to get significantly better colors and print quality. This is a trial and error process that everyone must go through when learning the capabilities of a new printer.

Optimizing Output and Colors

Join Craig Mertens, CEO of Digital Art Solutions, on April 25th for a deeper discussion on a broad range of useful strategies to enhance output including color correction techniques.

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