

Digital Delivery...

Three Midlands based entrepreneurs saw an opportunity to start up a new printing business in Digital Textile Print applications and chose Cornwall as its location.

Overview

Nick Davies and John Purse were Directors of I-Sub Limited, a successful print machinery agency based in the Midlands. Having been in the industry for a number of years, they saw a gap in the market for dye sublimation print process - the use of digital textile print applications that can print onto almost any surface. Realising the potential of the technology they decided to set up a new company, The Print Environment.

Nick explains "We were becoming increasingly frustrated to see the industry struggle to produce onto new substrates such as 3D plastics, ceramic and glass and wood using the digital printing process so we thought we would use our knowledge and industry contacts to bring these products to the market. Due to the broad range of applications and flexibility of the digital textile technology, we are able to tap into the booming leisure industries, particularly marine and surf. When deciding where to move to start our new venture, we all thought about where we wanted to go. Having all visited Cornwall on holidays we thought it would be the ideal location - a beautiful place, but also with a strong marine and surf industry."

The Print Environment aims to become a major UK specialist digital textile print company, specialising in the design and manufacture of bespoke applications onto various materials, into general as well as a specific markets, both at home and overseas.

The company has bought an industrial site at St Columb Major, Nr Newquay. The premises are divided into office space and then a larger workspace housing the dye sublimation machines. However, The Print Environment not only wants to grow as a business but also support other creative individuals in the county. It is planning to do this by providing work space at a subsidised rate within its premises for businesses such as photographers or designers. Not only will the tenants have access to good quality workspace but there may also be opportunities for joined up working.

John commented: "We are aware of how difficult setting up your own business can be, so thought it would be great to help others get started. Also, it is likely there are going to be jobs that we work on where we will be looking to use the expertise of our tenants which provides a win win for all those involved."

Moving to Cornwall has meant that all three families of Print Environment's founding workforce have made the move to the county.

Nick adds: "Moving to Cornwall has had such a positive impact on our family lives. We all work just as hard down here, but seem to have a calmer approach to business due to the environment in which we work, which in turn has reduced any stress on family life. It's great to know that the kids are spending more time outdoors, which they love. We live a few minutes from the sea and spend most evenings on the beach. What more could you ask for!"

Technology

The Print Environment uses Piezo Ink Jet Printers, as well as MAC and PCs for the design stage. The company uses water based inks which are more environmentally friendly. Any paper used is from sustainable resources. The printers are able to print on almost any surface and the team likes to experiment to see what is possible. Surfaces include: textiles, ceramics, plastics event metals. But it's not just the surfaces that makes the technology interesting, as 3D printing is also possible, enabling an image to be printed on an object of any shape.

Support

The Print Environment purchased their premises from the RDA. Cornwall Pure Business has provided assistance with regards to what finance may be available to assist with the business growth. The company is currently looking to secure SFI finance to help with its plans for recruitment.

Clients

The Print Environment already has a number of clients, including a number of design agencies. They also print for White Stuff, Fat Face, Watergate Bay, British Gas, Anglian Water, Countryside Commission and Monsoon.