

## Panaz Furnishing a future through innovation

A Burnley textile manufacturer is aiming to double its digital print production using a game-changing end-to-end solution with help and support from Made Smarter.

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Over the last 35 years Panaz has evolved into one of Europe's leading suppliers of high-quality decorative fabrics and wallcoverings for the hospitality, healthcare, workspace and contract sectors.

With 100 staff at its purpose-built 90,000 ft<sup>2</sup> building, as well as offices in America, the business prides itself on investing in technology to be at the forefront of innovation.

Panaz has developed an end-to-end custom design and digital printing solution which will dramatically speed up and simplify processes, and double its production capacity.

Bespoke software allows clients to choose from an extensive library of Panaz print designs and artwork from around the world, customise the pattern, scale or colour, and then print it on a new digital printer and calendar heat transfer machine.

Rollie Attard, Chief Operating Officer for Panaz, said: “We see Panaz as being at the forefront of innovation within its industry and, as a consequence, need to keep pushing the boundaries when it comes to technology investment.

“There is an ever-increasing number of competitive importers from China and Europe entering the UK marketplace and competing for UK business.

“It is essential that we stay ahead of the competition and this necessitates a proactive approach to technology for the retention and growth of turnover and the protection of jobs.”

### The Challenge

Since moving into new premises in 2014 Panaz has been able to achieve efficiencies in many areas of the business. It has now focussed on its custom design process.

With current resources, Panaz is operating at maximum capacity and has to extend shifts and overtime to accommodate new business.

“The custom design part of our business is growing significantly,” Rollie said. “The custom process can be long-winded. While each project is unique, it could take typically two weeks from our first contact with a customer, designer or specifier, to when they receive a sample of their bespoke design, with many touch points along the way.”

### The Solution

Panaz has overcome these challenges by giving customers more freedom and flexibility to be able to customise the designs themselves to speed up the process.

The end-to-end custom digital printing solution uses a software platform which allows design customisation and order at the click of a button.

Rollie explained: “It's a game-changer. It gives customers creative freedom before instructing us to manufacture the sample and then, if approved, the final order.”

The software interacts with Panaz's digital printer RIP software to automate the production of the customer's sample.

Another key part of the project is the investment in a new wide width digital printer which will allow it to print not only 300cm wide fabrics but also two 150cm fabrics side by side. Meanwhile, a new wide width calendar heat transfer machine will then be used to produce the digitally printed design onto fabric before it is sent to the customer.

### The Benefits

The right-first-time, automated process will reduce the touch points between Panaz and the customer, making the business massively more efficient, and increase its speed to market.

Rollie said: “The process that used to take us around two weeks will come down to between 24 and 48 hours, depending on our capacity. That is extraordinary.

“There will be significant waste reduction in the print department as we won't have to create as many iterations of a sample design.



“The increased efficiency means we will be able to utilise our highly skilled design resource for more complicated design and range work.”

With the new hardware Panaz estimates it will be able to almost double its digital print production.

### The future

The project is part of a long-term strategy to increase automation and supply chain integration.

Phase two is to automate the warehouse process to achieve more efficiency in picking, packing and despatching.

A third phase will allow customers and suppliers to view parts of our system to enable them to place orders, check stock and check order status online.

“Our mantra has always been how can we innovate further,” Rollie added. “Made Smarter has enabled us to get to where we want to be much, much faster.”