

# Collaboration on Italian digital pigment project

By **Tansy Fall** 19 June 2018

Italy is consistently at the forefront of developments in the digital textile printing space. Recently this has led to a collaborative project between two companies in the Como area, which has established a research centre dedicated to digital pigment ink development.

Creazioni Digitali, a printing company specialising in sublimation with a strong commitment to innovation, has partnered with digital textile printer OEM Aleph to invest in innovative solutions related to the use of digital textile pigment ink. The centre will be focused on making the leap in quality that is needed to produce digitally printed textiles for fashion and home textile end-uses.

Founder and owner of Creazioni Digitali Roberto Lucini says: "In this industry we cannot stop, and to compete it is essential to invest in technology and human resources to offer new solutions to our customers." With a turnover of €5m, an annual production of 1.7 million linear metres of printed fabric, and a team of 30 people, Creazioni Digitali realises the entire process from pre-printing to finishing. The company also has a design department which develops new and customised products.

Lucini adds that he is conscious that the market is ready for digital pigment inks, predominantly as it wants to work with novel fabrics and fibres, including blends which can only be printed with pigment inks. According to Lucini, pigment ink is the only ink that allows for use of only one printing system for the production of different types of yarns and different applications.

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Furthermore, he comments that there is an increasing number of requests for environmentally friendly solutions, a theme that dominates the world of textiles. "Textile brands are more and more sensitive to green issues. Producing in a sustainable way is essential," says Lucini. This vision is also a key business driver for Aleph. "For this we are making our know-how available in order to achieve the goals we have set ourselves. Technology comes with experience and assistance."

The research and development centre dedicated to pigment ink development currently houses two Aleph LaForte Optima Fabric solutions, at 1.85m wide printing with pigment inks, as well as a LaForte Optima Paper printer, 3.40m wide printing with sublimation inks. A third system with reactive inks will be installed in the coming months.

The main problem is achievement of qualitatively acceptable results, Lucini says, but "with Aleph we are experimenting with a new solution that is giving us very positive results."

The two companies, which have offices very near to one another, have established a close collaboration. Aleph CEO Alessandro Manes says: "The next step will be to define procedures with a person from the Aleph team on site. We strongly believe in the partnership with Creazioni Digitali – which is useful for us to maintain direct contact with the operators of the sector and to develop, together with them, new products and new market segments."

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