

HARRY'S CASE STUDY

Harry's was launched by Jeff Raider and Andy Katz-Mayfield in 2013 because they were tired of overpaying for overdesigned razors. They wanted simple, high-quality products that felt good to use, all at a fair price. This improbable idea involved taking on two enormous brands owned by consumer package goods conglomerates that controlled around 90% of the men's shaving market at the time.

In early 2018, Harry's Labs was formed as a new division tasked with growing new brands. Since that time, the Harry's, Inc. portfolio has grown to include Harry's, women's razor and body care brand Flamingo, and haircare brand Headquarters.

While Harry's started online, it has become an omnichannel business, expanding to retail stores including Target and Walmart. Growing to become a global brand, Harry's, Inc. has learned to think at scale, and make decisions across multiple brands, multiple kinds of retailers, and multiple countries.

Harry's uses an internal creative team that works on the imagery for all of our product packaging. To get consensus on imagery approved, along with final approval for color is a laborious process. "Getting consensus on an analog hard copy proof involved getting people into the office to view it in the CIE D50 lightbooth," states Peter Possenti, Image Specialist at Harry's Inc. "So getting people together at a specific schedule always adds time to the process."

This problem was only magnified during the COVID pandemic. The headquarters for Harry's is in downtown Manhattan. With the offices closed due to the COVID pandemic, many of the creative workforce physically left New York at the height of the crisis. So how did this creative process continue with the advent of remote working being forced onto the organization? Without a digital color proofing system, the only alternative was to circulate analog hard copy proofs which bring their own set of challenges.

"Since our work is packaging, we would often circulate a 20" x 24" analog hard copy proof," continues Possenti. "If your comments are written on the proof, you have the challenge to decipher people's handwriting to understand what their corrections are. When you have multiple people writing on a proof, if you didn't put a piece of acetate down, people will write on it, but then you can't see the image anymore. Then there is uncertainty as to the spot that they're pointing to. Then, as that proof moves through an overnight mail cycle and you have three or four different people reviewing the proof, some people are going to say conflicting things, or some people



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may point out the same things. Then there are those people that use sticky notes and then the sticky note falls off and you totally lose that comment. For color critical work, we would send proofs around to multiple people, but not everyone who wanted a copy got one, and no one had a CIE D50 light booth in their home office. People would be standing by their windows or looking at the proof under incandescent lighting. Needless to say, that was a quite a challenge."

"Then the compiler has to take this large 20" x 24" proof back to his computer, find a place to put the proof, decipher all the comments, and create a new proof for final review. It was just very cumbersome. In addition to the stakeholders who were making color critical decisions, there could be other stakeholders higher up that would just want to see what the project was looking like and have some involvement. It would typically take a week to two weeks to get images approved for final color."

"In the past, we created hard copy proofs in the office. If you've run proofers, you know that you spend a lot of time chasing calibration. Like any other machine, these inkjet printers require a fair amount of maintenance. It becomes extremely disruptive when your proofer is down. If you get a bad batch of inks or bad paper, it throws a wrench into your whole proofing workflow. It would literally disrupt our whole week, since it's not just this one job we can't get out, but it impacts all those other jobs behind it as well.

CHALLENGE:

How do you manage color critical packaging for multiple products within a brand that involves key stakeholders among your creative and print production supply chain – both effectively and economically?

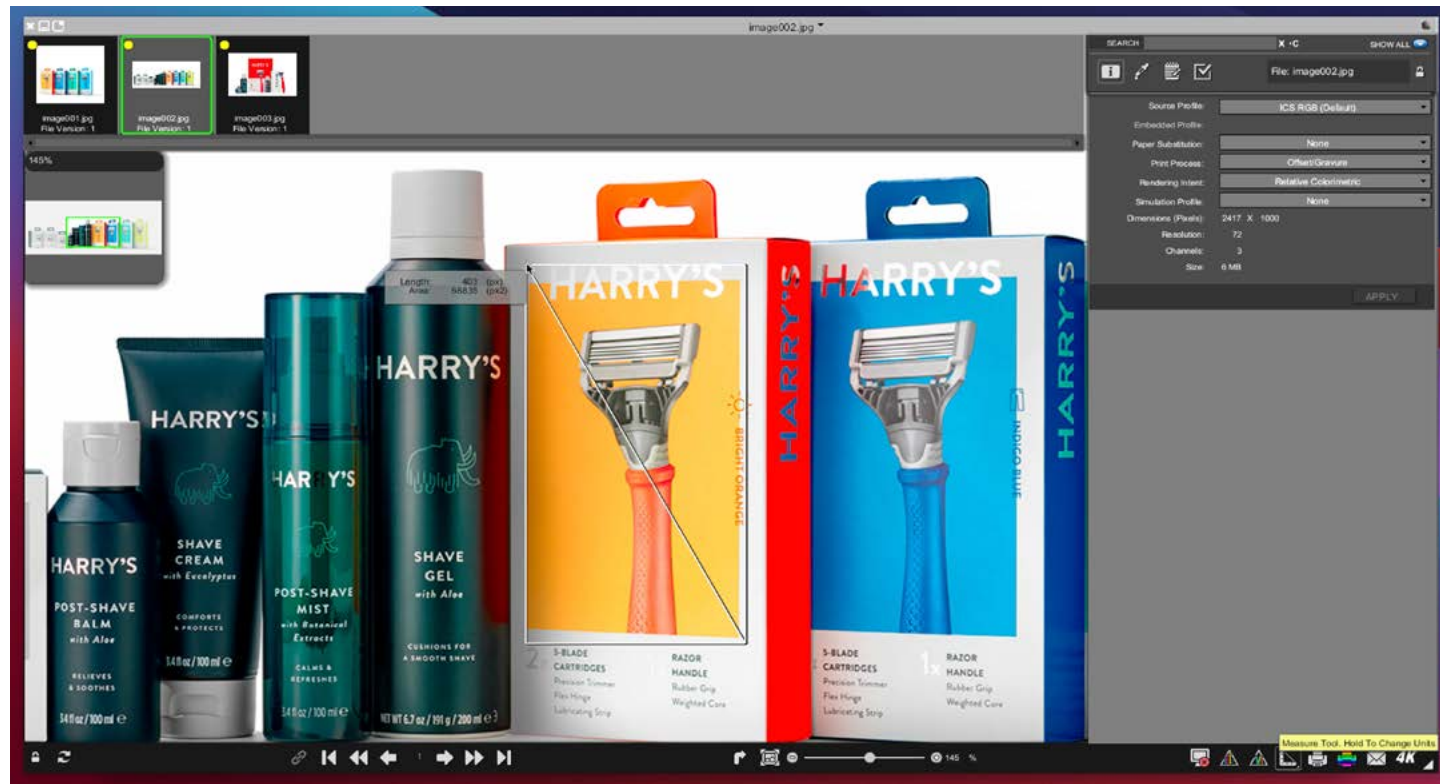


Getting products to market quicker

As the product offering within the Harry's brand began to expand to other men's shaving products, and other brands were being developed by Harry's Labs, a strategic decision was made to get product to market quicker. Harry's, Inc. has eliminated the bottleneck caused by analog hard copy proofing and adopted Remote Director as the backbone of their digital color proofing system. Remote Director is a cloud-based software solution that allows for the creation of color accurate online proofs to share with anyone, anywhere. The result: reducing a one to two week proofing cycle to a few days.

Remote Director includes a patented, state-of-the-art, monitor calibration software allowing users to calibrate their display to a color standard. Color settings for each project are synchronized and verified across all users invited to view the project. Users who are assigned a role that includes "color approval" are forced to calibrate their display before viewing and commenting on the proofs.

Harry's, Inc. was able to implement Remote Director with their internal team involved in color critical work by supplying them with color monitors that are capable of passing the ISO certification criteria that is verified as part of the Remote Director calibration process. Using Remote Director, they could collaborate online at their convenience or in real time with any number of viewers. Customizable user roles and permissions accommodate any project routing workflow. The markup notes are listed and linked to the annotations placed on the image to quickly reference without the clutter of a post-it note on the file. Approval and rejections lock the file for that user, preventing adding or deleting any previously made comments and a full audit trail is created.



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SOLUTION:

Remote Director is #1 for a reason – our patented software not only guarantees all are viewing the same color on calibrated monitors, but “heals” the break in the otherwise totally digital workflow caused by hard copy proofs.

BENEFITS:

The benefits of digital color proofing have extended beyond the obvious upside in controlling printed packaging projects. Remote Director enables Harry's to get products to market quicker.

Streamlined workflows with digital proofing

“We have definitely experienced an economic benefit,” notes Possenti. “We were spending \$500 to 1,000 per project on hard copy proofs and shipping. I would usually have to get at least three, sometimes four proofs pulled and then each one would have to be shipped to a different person. Those costs add up quickly. Then we would have to pull proofs to ship to the printer. The cost justification was very easy to quantify especially when we were all working remotely. After we did a couple of jobs, the savings started to add up really quickly. We've seen a payback in the first year for our initial investment in Remote Director.”

Remote Director has also enabled Harry's to get product to market quicker. “Every week there's a job that comes up that has to go out tomorrow,” observes Possenti. “For example, we needed to change the color of the razor handle to red. There's no way I could turn that around quickly with analog hard copy proofs. Another example was a recent large project where I don't see how we could have gotten the retouching even done on time without Remote Director. Because it's online, we could instantly message somebody, “Hey, I've got all these files ready. You need to look at them right now.” They would literally say, “okay, give me five minutes.” And in five minutes, we got the feedback and could move on to another round of approval.”

The benefits of digital color proofing have extended beyond the obvious upside in controlling printed packaging projects. “In addition to our “print” work, our retouchers do most of the digital work for the Harry's websites and social media. They have adopted Remote Director for digital applications as a proofing workflow tool because it's so much easier to do the commenting and route and approvals in the software. Prior to that, we would have to retouch images and send JPEGs or low-resolution PDF documents for approval. They would then be marked up either in a PDF or individually and

then sent back. Today we don't chase emails or PDFs. All of this is consolidated in Remote Director. Internally, we have everybody working on Remote Director, it's now a requirement for any retouching and our defacto proofing workflow.”

Outside of the benefits internal stakeholders receive, Harry's is progressively rolling out Remote Director to its different production printing plants. The promise of “soft proofing” or digital color proofing is something that converters/printers have been analyzing to enhance their production capabilities.

“We deal with a lot of printers/converters in our global print supply chain,” states Possenti. “There are several major printers around the world that do a lot of our packaging – and we are bringing those onboard as well. It costs \$100 and a few days every time to ship a proof back and forth overseas. So, we will definitely save a lot of time and money using Remote Director with them. In addition to our multiple printers in the US, we've started expanding our sourcing into other parts of the world. Our quality assurance team has bought into the value of digital color proofing, and that group drives the procurement of printers that we work with. The rollout has included education, testing, training, and parallel workflows with backup hard copies until they see the quality of the match. Once everyone has a successful implementation of Remote Director, they have instructed our printers that this will be a requirement to print for Harry's. Having our print vendors on board will improve our speed to market. Many of them are pleased since they have heard about digital color proofing, see its value, and are more than happy to try it out because Harry's is a big customer for them. I would not be surprised to see them adopt for other clients as well – the benefits are clearly worth the investment!”

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Peter Possenti,
Image Specialist at Harry's Inc.



A FINAL COMMENT ON DIGITAL COLOR PROOFING



“Whenever you use an analog hard copy proof there will always be some differences between what my proof looks like, what the vendor’s proof looks like, and then, what the final print sheet looks like,” states Possenti. “I believe that a digital color proofing workflow is better because if everybody’s looking at a properly calibrated monitor, we’re at least looking at the same thing. You’ve now eliminated all these variables.”

“Adopting Remote Director and digital color proofing was an easy decision,” concludes Possenti. “It gives you the ability to do things much quicker, get things turned around and approved and collaborate much more effectively. I think any company who saw what savings could be achieved would want to bring it on board – it’s a no brainer. Once you get your hands in it, you see the benefits of it quickly.”

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Remote Director is the only software solely focused on digital color proofing – from simple installations to save costs in house to high-end, color-accurate workgroups who need to see proofs – in real-time, on any mix of computer platforms and workflows and at any location in the world.

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