

Current State of Remote Proofing

Aktueller Stand des Remote Proofing

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Color proofing has an interesting history. Before the 1970s, on-press proofing was the norm. Customers would come to the printing plant and either stand press side or relax in a conference room waiting to approve that the press sheet represented their expectations. Very time consuming and expensive, although an "earned boondoggle" to some. The introduction of off-press overlay color proofing systems with the introduction of 3M Color Key, began to limit the on-sites. Next, laminated off-press color proofing took hold with the introduction of products by 3M, Dupont, Kodak, and others. While they were not as accurate as on press proofing, for "some" less critical color applications they would suffice.

By the time digital design and prepress became the norm, the concept of "soft proofing" or reviewing color and making approvals on a monitor started to take hold. While these were good for content approval, color approval was still a challenge. Even with ICC color management and profile support included in computer operating systems, creative applications, and prepress systems, it still "assumed" that all of the players in the design and production supply chain not only have compliant systems, but more importantly that they were set up properly. In essence, does it really look the same on my monitor as it does on yours, and more importantly the press?

Anytime you're passing PDFs around, you can say you're soft proofing, but there are hidden if not obvious problems. What monitors does everybody have? Do they calibrate them? When do they calibrate them? Do they pass ISO certification? What profiles are they using? Have they specified and controlled the lighting? Is there a press curve that needs to be applied to the file, etc.? Controlling the color proofing conditions is very crucial if you are trying to ensure and maintain brand identity in packaging or marketing.

Inkjet proofing solutions, like Kodak Virtual Matchprint, GMG ColorProof, CGS Color Tuner, and other similar solutions, provide some of that process control. Especially with the available range of proofing media, but now we are back to making and sending hard copy proofs, or relying on each of the stakeholders to maintain and calibrate their local proofing systems and as important, the viewing environment.

Today, controlled digital proofing systems that ensure proper setup and maintenance if each of the stakeholders has a corresponding system seems to be the answer. At one point, there were a number of systems introduced that endeavored to achieve that goal, but never seemed to be able to maintain that needed level of control across the stakeholder teams.

ICS Color applied for, and ultimately received a world and subsequently a US patent for "a system and method for creating characterization information from a first display device that can be transmitted and used by a second display device." Since then, they have introduced Remote Director, ProofCheck, PressCheck, and some OEM solutions that translated that patent into successfully controlled working technology, ideal for color critical soft proofing for brand and packaging applications. ■

Farbproofing hat eine interessante Geschichte. Vor den 1970er Jahren war Ausdruck mit einer Druckmaschine die Regel. Kunden kamen in die Druckerei und standen entweder an der Druckmaschine oder saßen in einem Konferenzraum und warteten, bis sie bestätigen konnten, dass der Druckbogen ihren Vorstellungen entsprach. Das war sehr



zeitaufwendig und kostspielig, auch wenn manche es als „verdienten Luxus“ gesehen haben. Die Einführung von Overlay-Farbproofing-Systemen – wie 3M Color Key – fing an, die Anzahl der Andrucke zu begrenzen. Mit der Einführung von Produkten von 3M, Dupont, Kodak und anderen setzte sich laminiertes Farbproofing durch. Diese Proofs waren zwar nicht so genau wie der Andruck, aber für einige eher unkritische Ausgaben reichte die Farbgenauigkeit aus.

Als digitales Design und digitale Druckvorstufe zum Regelfall wurden, setzte sich das Konzept „Soft-Proofing“, d. h. der Farbprüfung und Freigabe am Monitor durch. Diese waren zwar gut für die inhaltliche Freigabe, aber die farbliche Freigabe war nach wie vor eine Herausforderung. Auch wenn ICC-Farbmanagement und Profunterstützung in Computer-Betriebssystemen, Kreativ Anwendungen und Druckvorstufensystemen enthalten sind, wird immer noch „angenommen“, dass alle Beteiligten in der Design- und Produktionslieferkette nicht nur über konforme Systeme verfügen,