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Ronkonkoma, NY

Fineline, a well-recognized supplier of highly automated production equipment for the screenprinting and related industries in North America and CST, Krefeld, Germany reached a distribution agreement for Fineline to sell and service CST's Direct-To-Screen technology in the USA, Canada, and Mexico.

CST, short for Colour Scanning Technology was founded in 1989 by two partners and a family member of the 128 year-old Kesper Engraving GmbH located in Northern Germany. Their first digital product was a drum color scanner, the origin of the new company name. A wide range of film plotters, laser-engraving systems for rotary screens, and other digital imaging processing equipment followed. CST was mainly active in the worldwide textile industries where more than 1,000 machines were sold, installed, and supported.

7 years ago, CST designed and manufactured its own flatbed Direct-To-Screen imaging system. A 256 nozzle PIEZO print head dispenses wax as a medium accurately onto a light-sensitive emulsion-coated screen by transferring the print

image directly from computer to screen. This process eliminates the need for any type of film and all related processes, such as film plotting, film archiving, vacuum exposure tables, pre-registration concerns, etc. CST sold well over 200 machines for flat and rotary screens in Europe, Asia, North, Central and South America.

Because of the expense of print heads, their high and expensive maintenance requirements, and the expensive wax consumption, CST designed the identical technology but adopted it for inkjet print heads where water-soluble ink instead of wax is used as a medium. The benefit of this addition is a 60% lower consumption cost and with a 2 or 4-head print technology, the imaging speed can be improved by 150% over the wax imaging technology. CST has established a satisfied customer base where systems for screen sizes from 40" x 40" to 13' x 26' are installed in multi-shift operations.

CST has started its own research in how to further reduce the expensive consumable aspect of imaging screens without films and how to increase the imaging speed. In time for Drupa

in Düsseldorf, Germany, CST was able to finalize its engineering efforts and to introduce the new DLE system: Digital Light Engraver, which incorporates a special DMD (Digital Mirror Device) chip technology from Texas Instrument. Other manufacturers in the Computer-To-Plate offset industry provide this technology as step-and-repeat systems that are expensive because of the extremely heavy granite base and other manufacturing requirements necessary to eliminate the slightest processing vibration. CST's engineering staff, however, was able to incorporate this extremely accurate, high-quality, and high-resolution light exposing technology into a scrolling or scanning imaging method. With this new and unique screen imaging system that has been patented by CST, all consumable cost is eliminated. In addition, CST will be able to upgrade previously installed wax or inkjet CST Direct-To-Screen equipment with this new DLE light exposure technology.

CST is the only Direct-To-Screen imaging technology supplier worldwide that can provide Direct-To-Screen equipment with water-soluble ink, wax, or DLE light exposure technology. Strong demands

in the graphic and industrial screenprinting market convinced CST to enter this application with the same dynamic and professional efforts that it has demonstrated in the textile industries.

In 1996, Finline was instrumental in successfully introducing Direct-To-Screen imaging technology to the graphic screenprinting market in the USA and Canada and gained valuable expertise and experience. Peter Kesper, part owner and managing director of CST is delighted about his association with Finline: "Our strong engineering, manufacturing, and software background of complex digital color scanning and imaging systems together with Finline's successful track record in marketing, installing, and independently supporting Direct-To-Screen equipment in the graphic screenprinting market will form a very strong partnership".

Peter Max Weber, president of Finline added enthusiastically: "The possibility to offer the American graphic, industrial, and textile

screenprinting market not only one but 3 distinct Direct-To-Screen technologies from a serious German equipment solution provider is a very exciting development in advancing automation for screenprinting." Weber continued: "Finally, most screenprinters will be able to consider investing into Direct-To-Screen technology by choosing resolutions from 500 to 2,540 dpi, flat or vertical machines, portrait or landscape, with or without consumables, and for screen sizes from 40" x 40" up to 13' x 26' – and all at investment levels not imaginable before".

Finline provides high-quality prepress, press, and postpress equipment for visual communication and industrial screenprinting applications along with our legendary service commitment.

For more than 20 years, Finline has been providing a range of quality equipment that has allowed North American screenprinters to continually excel in their markets and to increase their competitive edge.

In a world of optimizing profits, efficient production, and relentless competition, Finline is a valuable source for advice, support, and solutions. Working with customers, Finline analyzes their needs; installing and maintaining equipment that combines state of the art technology with intelligent automation.

Finline is the North American distributor of high quality prepress, press, and postpress equipment from Argon HT, CST, Grapo, Klemm, SPS, and Notio.