

DIGIEYE IS MANUFACTURED
IN THE UK BY VERIVIDE LTD

NEXT PLC

Martyn Jennings (below) is a senior colourist at Next plc - a UK based retailer offering stylish, good quality products in clothing, footwear, accessories and home products.



Next distributes through three main channels: Next Retail, a chain of more than 480 stores in the UK and Eire; the Next Directory, a direct mail catalogue and transactional website with more than 2 million active customers; and Next International, with more than 140 stores overseas.

THE COLOURIST

'The Colourist' is the magazine of the Society of Dyers and Colourists - the SDC.

The Society of Dyers and Colourists is the only international professional society specialising in colour in all its manifestations



this article

Martyn Jennings of NEXT plc explains how the use of the **DigiEye Large Area Imaging System** has resulted in improved lead-times, savings in transportation costs & global visualisation for the product teams

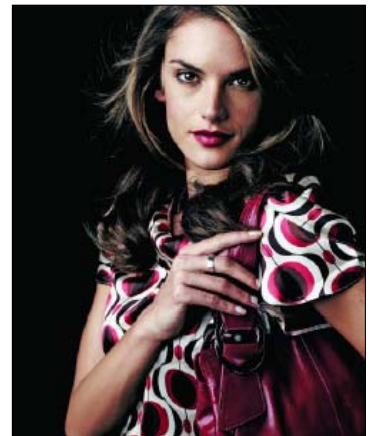
30 – The Colourist - Autumn 2007 Digital Imaging - The NEXT level

*This article, written by **Martyn Jennings of Next plc**, first appeared in 'The Colourist', the magazine of the Society of Dyers and Colourists, in Autumn 2007 and is reproduced with permission*

With the ever increasing demand for speed and accuracy of colour measurement and reporting, Next Plc as a business needed to look at alternative methods than those applied across the industry for our now diverse range of products and substrates used within accessories, non-clothing and homewares.

The company already utilised the DigiEye system from VeriVide within its test laboratory for the grading of colour fastness.

This pioneering and innovative system is a complete non-contact colour imaging solution which captures the total colour and appearance of 2D and 3D objects in a unique controlled lighting environment enabling reliable, consistent colour measurement and high definition imaging.



The DigiEye imaging box is more than adequate when working with smaller items, however, we needed to image full garments and hard goods and so we approached VeriVide with a proposal.

With a specific brief to work from, the resulting product was in effect a scaled up model of the DigiEye lightbox with the following features:

- Large area imaging cabinet, used with the DigiEye Imaging System or the DigiEye Colorimetric System in place of the standard size cabinet;
- Illumination that is controlled and even, suitable for most product images;
- A walk-in cabinet that can hold three hangers of clothing side-by-side, three mannequins or even a live model;
- Allows comparison of a complete outfit against the standard outfit;

- Can be used to image a full pattern repeat of fabric or prints;
- Ideal for imaging homeware hard goods and other large components;

The camera can be controlled to provide close-up images if required. The calibrated camera captures data in RAW format for very high resolution images; since the image is captured in controlled and consistent lighting the software can transform the RGB data from the camera into CIE colour space thereby enabling colour measurement of the item.

The software also contains a choice of colour difference equations so that items can be imaged with and compared to an agreed standard item, plus the data can be cross checked via *.qtx files with most popular software applications.



The use of the DigiEye large area viewing allows Next to provide unequivocal data resulting in: a reduced number of submitted samples; lead time reduction; cost reduction due to minimal sampling/courier costs; and allows visualisation across product teams. This also provides instant pass/fail decisions on basic products.

The unit is now fully operational in the Next warehouse with incoming stock being checked using DigiEye to enable technologists, warehouse staff and buyers to compare the received stock against previously agreed samples.

It is envisaged that the imaging of stock will ensure the product is correct for shipping onwards to stores, allowing faulty stock to be identified and communicated to head office and the relevant suppliers on the same day. Ambiguity and subjectivity are removed, allowing for easier resolution of quality issues and minimal 'on hold' times resulting in lost sales.

The use of digital technology for the measurement of non-standard products and the visualisation of goods is still in its infancy; however as the technology advances we will ultimately need this tool to aid our decision making and further reduce our lead times – DigiEye enables us to measure the unmeasurables.

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August 2007

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 See in Truth

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