

# WHY Jerry Leigh DEPENDS ON BROTHER DTG PRINTERS.

## EQUIPMENT

Two Brother GT-381 digital direct to garment printers

One 60-inch dye sublimation inkjet printer

Five 18-color automatic screen printing presses\*

One 12-color automatic screen printing press\*

\*Currently running only two of the six automatic presses. Remaining work is done offshore.

## NICHE

Resort, retail preprint programs, and licensed apparel. In the resort market alone, Jerry Leigh supplies more than 1,500 stores.

## SERVICES

Full-service decorated apparel operation offering screen printing in-house domestically and offshore and embroidery on a contract basis. Offers custom cut-and-sew apparel, full art and separation services, packaging, and fulfillment.

## PRODUCTS

Offers more than 3,000 products that includes a wide range of apparel as well as accessories and promotional products such as beach towels, bags, headwear, drinkware, collector pins, etc.

## SAMPLING

Done with two Brother GT-381 digital direct-to-garment printers and a 60-inch sublimation inkjet printer along with one oversize heat press and three 16 x 20 inch clamshell heat presses.



**Mike Zaremba**  
Production Manager  
JERRY LEIGH OF CALIFORNIA  
VAN NUYS, CA/ORLANDO, FL



**Jerry Leigh**

Opinions expressed by compensated participant

While digital direct-to-garment printers are well known for being ideal for short-run jobs, Jerry Leigh of California has found its two Brother GT-381 printers to be a life saver for something else: sampling.

As a full-service decorating operation that develops, produces and distributes major brand retail and licensing programs, production manager Mike Zaremba estimates that his department outputs 10-15 new designs a day with between three and four pieces of each design.

Once these designs are approved, the company will go on to do the printing. Some collections have between seven and 10 designs, and Jerry Leigh will print between 270,000 and 350,000 of each design. Zaremba, who is a 30-plus-year screen printing veteran and has worked for



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big-name companies like Quiksilver, Fox Racing, and Fortune Fashions in the past, has several reasons for switching his sampling to a digital direct-to-garment printer vs. doing it using traditional methods.

Although Zaremba had experimented with three other digital printer brands prior to the purchase of the Brother printer, he found that the color gamut was never wide enough to do sampling for childrenswear or juniors. Both markets demand bright, vibrant colors that the DTG printers he tested could not do.

When Brother approached Zaremba with samples printed on its machine, the production manager was impressed. “DTG printing will never match plastisol, but the gamut on the Brother printer was so much greater than any machine I had seen previously. It has since allowed us to print samples for these color-critical markets that could not be done before. We can now please a lot more clients with the color range.”

The other advantage that the Brother printer offers was its independent platens. The GT-3 series machines have two platens and each has pin registration hardware that makes it possible to load on a screen printing press.

So once a shirt is loaded onto digital printer platen, it can be taken to the screen printing press where it can be decorated with a special effect such as foil. Then the platen is loaded onto the Brother printer to be decorated.

Or it can be used the other way around. A full-color digital print can be done on the Brother machine, and the platen is loaded onto the screen printing press for the addition of glitter.

“Prior to having the Brother printer, a typical job might require 13 screens of which one would be a special effect. Now to do a sample of the same job, it’s only one screen for the special effect. When you are a high-volume shop doing licensed work for childrenswear, you need a digital printer all day,” says Zaremba.

The third reason the production manager loves his Brother GT-381 printers is how much money they save the company.

“If I have to do production sampling for a big box discount retailer, there is no benefit to using screen printing,” says Zaremba. “During the first sales pitch, they may be showing 70 graphics that will be whittled down to 20 winners. By using the Brother GT-381 to make the production samples, I am saving on the time and money it would cost to make the screens for 50 designs. It is a huge savings.”

Although at this time, Jerry Leigh only rarely does small production runs for Internet orders, according to Zaremba, he never has to worry about washability. “The durability is amazing on DTG. We have samples where they have been washed up to 12 times, and you don’t see any change in vibrancy,” he says.

“Primarily I have found that the Brother GT-381 is a great tool when you have a large number of samples to do on a daily basis, and you are trying to cut costs down by eliminating as many screens as you possibly can,” he says.