



Press Release

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For Immediate Release

MUTOH ROCKHOPPER 3 SERIES PRINTERS START SHIPPING

New family of wide-format eco printers specifically tuned for Mutoh's third-generation Eco-Solvent inks...

Belgium-based wide-format inkjet printer and sign cutting plotter manufacturer Mutoh Europe has started shipping its latest eco printer family, called **Rockhopper 3 series**.

The new Rockhopper 3 eco-solvent printer series succeeds Mutoh's award-winning Rockhopper II Eco-Solvent Plus inkjet printer series, of which more than 1700 units have been installed all over Europe since early 2004. Rockhopper 3 is offered in two different models, i.e. 65" (1653 mm) and 90" (2280 mm). Printing widths are respectively 1643 mm (64.68") and 2250 mm (88.58").

Rockhopper 3 printers have been specifically tuned for use with Mutoh's third generation of eco-solvent inks, called **Eco-Solvent Ultra**. Developed for the Mutoh Rockhopper piezo inkjet heads, the new Eco-Solvent Ultra inks will enable an even better output quality and media compatibility as well as an enhanced speed performance compared to the Eco-Solvent Plus inks.

Compared to Rockhopper II printers, Rockhopper 3 incorporates several new features, such as a newly designed unwinder/winder 100 system for optimum media guidance and the possibility to open the machine's left cover to allow the user to easily perform minimal periodical maintenance. Offering 8 colour channels, Rockhopper 3 printers can be set up in speed/autonomy mode (2 x 4 CMYK) or in photo-enhanced mode (CMYK, Lc, Lm).

Rockhopper 3 printers incorporate four latest generation 360 nozzle/colour piezo-electric drop-on-demand inkjet heads. The print heads feature "Dynamic Variable Dot Imaging technology", which enables the production of multiple and unique ink dots and the possibility to individually adjust the size of ink droplets. The result is finer detail and smoother gradients in highlight areas and crisp colours in the mid-tones and shadows. Ink drop mass range varies from 5.4 ng to 41.5 ng. This feature is particularly interesting for super fine prints up to 1440 dpi. Print resolutions offered are 360 x 360 dpi, 720 x 720 dpi & 1440 x 1440 dpi. Rockhopper 3 print head warranty amounts to 12 months.

Targeted at starting and established small to mid range sign shops with mid volume sign production applications (up to 3000 m²/year), the Rockhopper 3 prints directly onto (eco-) coated & a wide range of uncoated vinyl and banner materials. Thanks to the excellent drying and drop fixation characteristics of the new Eco-Solvent Ultra inks, all compatible uncoated self-adhesive PVC are printable at 6.5 m²/h at 720 dpi.

Typical production speed on uncoated banner at 360 dpi goes up to 13 m²/h. Even though Mutoh's Rockhopper 3 is capable of tackling volume jobs, an important advantage of the machine – when compared to (mild-) solvent printers – is that it does not necessarily require a 'minimum' daily volume and that it can be shut down easily for a longer period of time (e.g. holiday periods).

Rockhopper 3 application possibilities encompass indoor and outdoor poster printing : point of purchase displays, banners & signage, seasonal and long-term corporate graphics, long-term backlit signage, building and construction announcements, vehicle graphics, durable indoor graphics, POS displays,

Rockhopper 3 printers are delivered as a total solution. They incorporate four built-in digitally controlled heating elements, a network card, a 20.3 GB internal hard disk and a fully motorised heavy-duty unwinding/winding system for media rolls up to 100 kg allowing unattended roll-to-roll printing.

Attractively priced, the machines are also shipped as standard with an Eco-Solvent Ultra ink set, a Rockhopper 3 specific 'good shape kit' for minimal periodical (weekly) maintenance and a PS3-level RIP software pack. Rockhopper 3 users have the choice between Scanvec Amiable's PhotoPrint SE Mutoh Edition or Onyx RIPCenter Mutoh Edition. Media profiles can be downloaded free of charge from Mutoh Europe's website.

About Mutoh's new Eco-Solvent Ultra Inks

At a cost of more than 20 % below the Mutoh Eco-Solvent Plus ink, Eco-Solvent Ultra inks offer the same benefits as Eco-Solvent Plus inks, yet adding several enhancements, such as a higher colour gamut, faster drying time, improved ink fixation, improved scratch resistance, higher print speed on uncoated self-adhesive PVC and a wider media compatibility (i.a. media with standard paper backing becomes printable).

Prints made with the new Eco-Solvent Ultra inks are UV and water resistant for up to three years outdoor. For fleet, floor graphics or other applications where prints are exposed to intensive mechanical stress or abrasion, lamination is required.

Delivered in safe, easy-to-use 220 ml ink cassettes, Eco-Solvent Ultra inks are solvent-based inks, however, the inks do not spread any harmful VOCs in the working environment. As such, there is no need for special air purification equipment.

About Mutoh Europe N.V.

Mutoh Europe nv, Oostende, Belgium, is a wholly owned subsidiary of Mutoh Industries Ltd, Tokyo, Japan. Founded in 1991, Mutoh Europe's activities encompass development, manufacturing and distribution of CAS hardware (professional sign cutting plotters, apparel marking/cutting plotters and large-format full-colour piezo printers for commercial inkjet printing and sign making applications). Employing 290 people, the company markets Mutoh products all over Europe, the Middle-East and Africa through its extensive network of authorised distributors. More information on Mutoh Europe and its products can be found on <http://www.mutoh.be> .

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