

Color in Use: Increased Productivity with GMG ColorPlugin at Equator Design



Project: Improved consistency of color conversions in a multi-print process packaging environment and speedup of complex retouching processes in the flexo sector, **Company:** Equator Design, **GMG solution:** GMG ColorPlugin



Headquarter of Equator Design in Manchester

Manchester, England. 1997: In a single-roomed warehouse loft space two men and a shared vision to be different launched what is now a multi-national design company. Renamed Equator in 2012, the company now has 220 staff across offices in Manchester, Nottingham, Dublin and Chicago, with partner offices in Sydney and China. The company provides a 'Design to Shelf' concept for its bluechip clients including Coop, Aldi, Nisa, Roundys and SEG. This means taking a products development from retail strategy and creative design through to in-house photography, artwork and print management.

So how were brand colours maintained and controlled throughout their 'Design to Shelf' offering? The company's color workflow was pretty standard says Gary Moore,

Equator's Color Manager, "We used Photoshop with traditional ICC and manual conversions and called on the manipulation skills of color retouchers". The fact that the company has a Color Manager speaks volumes for the importance it, and it's clients, place on the importance of color in a brand's success.

Having used GMG ColorProof for many years and appreciating the GMG approach to color management, Equator agreed to be part of the 3 month GMG ColorPlugin beta trial. As Moore says, "It made sense to use the existing color management data we have – MX4, MX5, MXN, and 39L TAC300 – to convert images using GMG ColorPlugin as well as in our proofing solutions." The ingenious Adobe Photoshop plugin makes it possible to benefit from the



With GMG ColorPlugin color management can be realized directly from an operators desktop



Gary Moore, Color Manager, Equator England: "GMG ColorPlugin makes it possible to benefit from the advantages of GMG MX profiles directly within Photoshop."

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advantages of GMG MX profiles directly within Photoshop. Images converted using GMG ColorPlugin immediately reveal harmonious color gradients, neutral grey areas, and much more detail in the shadows. It also allows users to work specifically on individual layers. Even masked areas can be edited. This unique degree of flexibility has been invaluable – even for experienced Photoshop professionals.

Once the trial was completed it became obvious to Moore that GMG ColorPlugin would improve the consistency and speed of color conversions in a multi-print process packaging environment and assist and speed up complex retouching processes in the flexo sector. Although retouching skills are still required to some degree, productivity has increased. Plus, Equator has seen the consistency of their separations improve. Says Moore, "We investigated other competitive products, but in terms of quality and usability, GMG was the best. The fact you can do MX conversions direct from an operators desktop is making a significant difference, and we're getting greater consistency from operator to operator". Moore continues, "Customers are continually looking for faster time to market. GMG ColorPlugin helps us in our overall aim to exceed client expectations in terms of quality and speed. The plugin is giving us more capacity to handle greater volumes of work."

Equator's commitment to provide ever-evolving levels of customer experience is fertile ground for GMG. "Looking into the future," says Moore, "we expect GMG to use its experience and technical USP to help us to improve our working practices, deliver better quality and potentially offer new solutions to our clients."