No appetite for a bland diet

"Sometimes we quote for projects without knowing exactly how we'll complete them," Franck Dallefrate confesses. He focuses on special applications.

JPC Labo, Marly, France.
Rather than battling it out with the rest of the field in mass-produced and commodity items, this image service provider focuses on specialised applications, high quality and all-round service. It´s a successful concept in which a Nyala LED large format printer plays a key role.

“I prefer inspiring discussions about design solutions to endless haggling over prices,” says Franck Dallefrate, owner and CEO of JPC Labo. This is why he opted for a swissQprint Nyala LED. He and his team understand that the focus on application diversity, top quality and service is a competitive trump card. The battle over low-margin commodity and mass-produced items is one they happily leave to others.

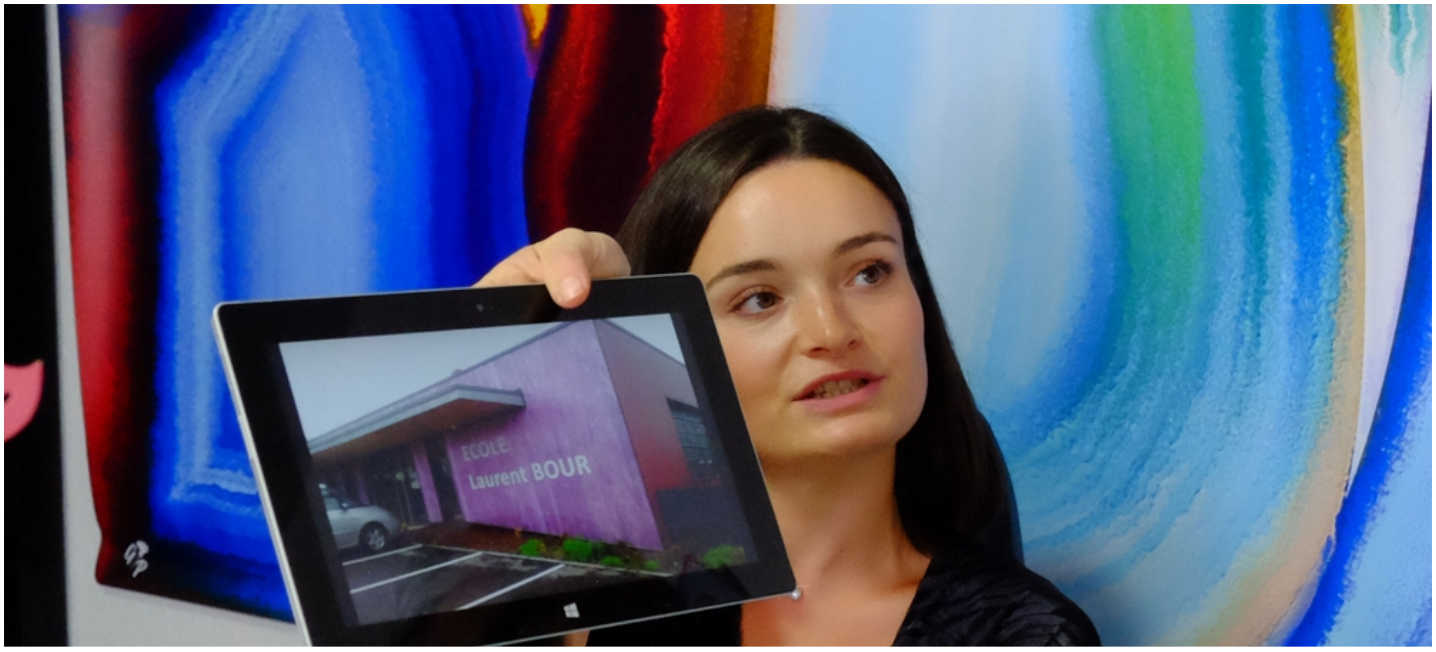
More performance, more free time

“We want to get the most out of our printer,” Franck emphasises, referring not so much to its output volume but rather to the broad and unusual spectrum it can handle. Of course, he also appreciates Nyala LED’s performance and reliability. With its predecessor of a different make, Franck and his son would sometimes have to drive to the premises as many as five times a night to change material so that a large order could be completed on time. Today, roll to roll jobs run unattended overnight. Nyala LED needs just one day for work that used to take a whole week with the old flatbed printer. “Furthermore, swissQprint has an ingenious way of handling white ink,” enthuses Franck. With the former printer, someone would have to visit the premises every other day during holiday closedowns to take care of the white print heads so that they didn’t clog up. Nyala LED does its own job of keeping the white ink agitated, which is a huge relief. “In this sense, we not only have more capacity, but more free time as well,” grins Franck.

More off-the-wall ideas

The greatest step forward, however, is clearly the new possibilities opened up by Nyala LED. “You can’t put a simple price on those,” Franck points out. His photographic clientèle is enthusiastically discovering varnish finishing, multilayer printing and 3D effects. JPC Labo originally started out as a supplier of photographic services and indeed develops films to this day. When Franck took over the business from his father-in-law around 20 years ago, he began to restructure the company and, above all, to increase its diversity. JPC Labo has been offering large format digital printing for more than ten years. So, in addition to analogue and large-format photo prints, the upshot of diversification is that today’s portfolio also includes lettering and signage, interior decoration elements and POS displays.

“With Nyala LED, we can be pushier in the marketplace,” Franck observes. Thus, customers are actively approached with new ideas – and regularly surprised by them, too. Those impulses come via one of the team who is constantly out and about, scouting for innovations. And gradually, courage for creativity is also awakening among customers. They increasingly challenge JPC Labo with off-the-wall concepts that require subsequent working out in detail.



Margaux tells of a school building façade made of clipped-together plastic twin-wall sheets.

Three machines in one

“Occasionally, we quote for projects even though we don’t know in advance exactly how we’re going to produce them,” confides Franck. “But we do know that we’ll manage the job with Nyala LED,” he says confidently, calling the printer a Swiss Army knife. Another manufacturer offered him three separate machines for tasks that just one swissQprint large format printer can cover: real flatbed printing, roll printing and finishing with effect varnish.

With Nyala LED, JPC Labo also processes many more substrates than before. In addition to acrylic glass, Dibond, Forex and films, the company also prints linoleum, glass, banner material, canvas, polycarbonate sheets and much more. An Esko Kongsberg cutter handles the trimming processes. JPC Labo plans to retire an existing Epson Stylus printer sooner or later; Nyala LED will also take over its tasks because, as Franck knows,“The output quality is on a par.”

Franck finds certain details of the swissQprint concept especially compelling: for example, JPC Labo regularly uses the RIP software tiling function for large wall coverings. The registration pins ensure that the print images line up exactly, and the same goes for double-sided printing. Moreover, the 3.2×2 metre flatbed is ideally sized to produce room-high elements in one piece. And talking of one piece: “It’s fantastic that the printer was delivered not as a bunch of subassemblies, but as a complete unit,” points out Franck. “The Nyala LED was ready the day after installation.”

Added-value service plus

For an interior decoration concept in a hotel, JPC Labo was commissioned to deliver 1×3 meter prints on glass. “If we were easy going, we would have produced a small sample of it,” says Franck. Instead, JPC Labo delivered a 1:1 sample, which wowed and won over the customer.

When it comes to complex projects, JPC Labo assists the process from planning to final implementation, including design if necessary. Franck’s employee, Margaux, tells of a 7×20 metre school building façade made of clipped-together plastic twin-wall sheets. Like a jigsaw puzzle, the printed rectangular sheets form an overall picture. JPC Labo meticulously planned the production and numbered each sheet, so that all the fitters on site had to do was clip together the lightweight elements in the proper sequence. “This kind of plus in the service we offer represents genuine added value for customers,” Franck sums up, “and it is what sets us apart from the rest.”

Ephemerality ups the pace of orders

“We live in a fast-moving world,” says Franck. Of course, this involves stress because customers are demanding ever tighter delivery deadlines. Meanwhile, product life cycles have also become shorter. “If you have a decoration concept implemented today, you don’t want to live with it forever,” observes Franck. Follow-up and replacement orders might already arrive after just one or two years, so Franck has few worries about capacity utilisation in the future. On the contrary, he wants to find new premises that fit with the current company structure as soon as possible, make processes leaner and thus free up new capacities.

JPC Labo was the customer who received the 1000th swissQprint machine – a Nyala LED – in May 2018.

Company	JPC Labo, Marly, France
Website	www.jpclabo.com
Segment	Photo and digital printing
Established	1985
Employees	5
Printer	Nyala LED
References	Communication and event agencies: shop fronts, shop window and POS displays, construction site billboards, fabrics for mobile exhibition stands, museum exhibition elements Restaurants and hotels: interior design elements Artists, photographers: one-offs with special effects Surgeries, hospital offices: decorative ceiling panels