

AccuColor Embraces Valéron

In today's world it is rare that product performance actually lives up to advertising promises. That is why AccuColor is anxious to affirm that Valéron not only "walks on water" – but doesn't even stir up the fish!

Starting as a home business near Salt Lake City, UT AccuColor purchased a Canon W6400 wide format printer in February 2007 and set up shop. Our first sale included four 12 foot banners and a fifth 24foot banner to announce a new large greenhouse complex that specializes in hanging plants. This led to our discovery of amazing Valéron!

It began with a call to the Canon media people to inquire what stock material is recommended for wide format printing of outdoor banners. We were stunned to learn that Canon has no qualified media for outdoor use. This put AccuColor in the position of either finding a solution or rejecting our first real sale.

Hours of investigation on the Internet followed - researching methods of creating outdoor banners. Recurring nightmares ensued punctuated with visions of stitching and grommeting.

It appeared that there was no solution until the word Valéron appeared during a search. Every other Internet solution had been investigated, why not this one?

The first excitement was to find Valéron listed as compatible with Canon printers using aqueous ink. However, the remainder of the specifications seemed even more remarkable - too good to be true. Could a banner material less than half the thickness of vinyl be so tough that it cannot be torn – even when wet? Can this banner material actually be waterproof after only a 12 hour drying period? Can this material be hung outdoors using simple "peal and glue" tabs called "BannerUps" and stiffening tab called "PowerTape"? Can a banner material only 11 mils thick withstand a 70 MPH wind tunnel?

Yes – it is true! And we at AccuColor have either confirmed or are in process if confirming all of the above claims.

We contacted Convert-All Print Media Company for a sample roll of this material. We wanted to test it prior to committing to the banner job for our new client. The sample arrived the next day! The Canon W6400 was pre-set to several media types and a predetermined picture of a vegetable assortment was printed on the Valéron.

It was found that while the setting for "Synthetic Paper" on the printer yielded a nice reproduction, there were other settings that gave a richer color and marginally better detail. After much study, the final setting was determined. A test print was made using the same vegetable picture. After allowing 12 hours of drying time, the print was placed into our home based environmental chamber – better known as "the shower". Water was run at steaming temperature and the Valéron print was subjected to the direct water, heat and humidity produced for nearly an hour. Truly there was no loss of color, no running ink, no degradation in the photo quality – even soaking wet. All attempts to tear the material while wet were futile. And the

attempts were as serious and significant as possible without the aid of tools. Once dry, the Valeron and photo appeared completely normal, as though it had never been wet. The only telltale signs of the testing were some minor divots in the edges of the banner material from the attempts at tearing it. This is something that would not happen if just hanging out in the elements.

We were sold! Our next call was to Convert-All to order full rolls of Valéron for our client and we began work. All of the banners printed cleanly and as expected. Their appearance was superb! After applying the “BannerUps” and “PowerTape” per their respective instructions, the banners were given a light coat of clear, UV-protective spray paint. This serves two purposes. First, a gloss type was used which brightened the colors. Second, the paint seals the pores in the Valeron to some degree protecting the content beneath.

Our client mounted two of the 12 foot banners back-to-back using a wooden frame. Screws were used to attach the “BannerUps” to the wood frame. This roadside banner set is shown in the picture below. One sign is facing East and the other West along their main road. Note the hanging baskets on each end of the sign showing their product.



These and three other signs were hung in April. It is now June and there has been no degradation of the banners. At the same time that these banners were made, a “swatch” of one was printed, prepared in the same manner as the delivered banners, and attached to the rear fence of our property. We are taking periodic pictures with a 10M pixel camera to evaluate the long term life expectancy of the Valéron material. All indications are that there has been no change from the time it was hung.

The prevailing wind at our location is from the West and comes directly off the surface of the Great Salt Lake, located about 2 miles from our client's location. These banners have survived micro-burst winds over 50MPH. They have been through rain, sleet, and snow. Still, they appear as they were just printed. Valéron completely performs as it claims! How refreshing.

The epilog to the story is that after the banners were hung many local people asked the owners if the green houses were private or open to the public. We were contracted to print two more 12 foot banners to state "Open to Public". The Saturday after they were posted, there were no fewer than 50 cars in their parking lot the entire day! At the end of June, they contacted us for two more banners stating: "Closed for the Season". Yes, believe it or not, all of these commercial greenhouses are virtually empty.

We at AccuColor have recently introduced Valéron to the national sales people at Canon during a seminar. If Canon makes the decision to qualify Valéron as an outdoor banner material media, the potentials are limitless. If approached, AccuColor will be willing to share what we have learned to everyone's mutual benefit.

Thanks Valéron, for a great product!

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