

A PHOTO PRINTING SYSTEM THAT ANTICIPATES YOUR NEEDS

Paul Scully, who opened his first photo store 23 years ago, now runs with his wife Rosin two Photo Station stores located in two neighbouring towns in central Ireland, Nenagh and Thurles. Interestingly for a comparative study, the two stores are not equipped with the same photo printing systems. While the Thurles store is still equipped with a traditional silver halide minilab, a year ago they installed a DS-PRO1 minilab system in the Nenagh store managed by Rosin.



How important is photo printing to your store business?

We are specialised in photographic services. Beside traditional photo prints, we are producing posters, canvas, and popular photo gift such as personalised calendars, mugs, mouse mats, greeting and announcement cards. We also sell photo frames and albums. Traditional instant photo printing accounts for about 35% of our turnover including around 10% for ID photo prints. We are printing an average of 400 prints a day, rarely less than 300. We also have online orders but it's not as big as it was at the peak of the pandemic.

What is the competitive environment for your photo printing business?

In Ireland almost every pharmacy has a photo printing service, so competitors are nearly everywhere. For example, within a five-minute walk from our Nenagh store,

there are four stores offering a photo printing service. However, it seems that in pharmacies, the staff doesn't show much interest in photo printing and doesn't really want to spend time helping customers. Our quality of service is probably one of the main reasons why our printing business has increased in the past years.

What is the profile of your customers?

We've got everybody from teenagers to grandparents. Teenagers printing photos for sharing with friends or for school projects and grandparents printing pictures they get from their kids, via social media sometimes. After they lost the reflex to print photos, many people come back because they realise that unless they print the photos of their kids, of family events... nobody will really see these photos anymore. However, between our two shops, the proportion of younger

customers is definitely higher and increasing in the one we renovated with a more modern look and the DS-Pro1 system replacing a traditional minilab. At first, the new store design attracts them, but eventually the service they get keeps them coming back.



What made you decide to replace your previous photo printing system?

It was for several reasons. Our minilab was aging and maintenance costs were increasing dramatically. It had to be repaired more frequently, and spare parts were getting more and more expensive, some of them even becoming hard to find. At the same time, to maintain the best quality of service, we needed a system better suited to the demand of our customers who, for example, wanted to transfer photos from their smartphone. Also, as we were moving to a smaller store in Nenagh, we needed a more compact system that could fit into the new space.

Why did you choose the DNP DS-Pro1 minilab?

First, we purchased DNP printers in addition to our traditional minilab. As we were very satisfied with the print quality, we decided to test the DS-Pro1. It turned out to be so intuitive and easy to use without the need for extensive training. It was obviously the system that allowed the

best transition to a solution that met all of our needs.

What is the impact of the DNP DS-Pro1 minilab on your business?

Definitely, the user-friendly customer interface has boosted the store's traffic and sales. Now, it's not rare that all three order terminals are busy and customers are waiting to print photos. Even if they only order 10 or 20 prints, the resulting increase in print volume exceed my expectations. You know, the more photo prints you sell, the more related products you sell. Since it became easy for customers to order larger photo prints that we can print instantly onsite, we are selling more picture frames. I can say that since the installation of the DNP minilab, our overall business in Nenagh has increased by 20%.

Actually, we are now considering installing another DS-Pro1 minilab in our second store using the possibility of connecting it to other printing systems and thus centralising the production management of all our photoproducts.

In practice, what are the main advantages and disadvantages of the DNP DS-Pro1 minilab?

Beside the reliability, the compact size, the ease of use and the absence of daily maintenance, the most striking advantage at present is the low power consumption of the system. We can easily compare between our two stores, the electricity bill of the store where the DS-Pro1 is installed is about 30% lower than the bill of the store with the traditional minilab! This has a significant impact on our overall printing costs. Another big advantage is that there is always a software improvement coming along, and some upgrades make a big difference. For instance, one of the latest update of the customer interface makes it now possible to order simultaneously different print sizes of a selected picture, without having to start over another order. This simple change in workflow is actually a trigger for impulse purchases of larger

print sizes that had an immediate impact on sales. As for the downsides, I don't really see any so far.

What is the feedback from your customers?

Usually when you are not getting any complaints you assume that the customers are satisfied but in fact, since the DNP minilab they comment on the colour rendering, the contrast and they mostly say they are happier with the quality than before.

Also, we can see that the SL-Pro interface makes a big difference for our customers. It has become so easy for them to transfer photos from their smartphone via Wi-Fi, using the QR code to connect directly.

In conclusion, would you recommend the DNP DS-Pro1 minilab to your colleagues?

As I said, we are now planning to install a second unit in our other store. Overall, considering its efficiency in terms of quality, cost, and operation, I think it's a fantastic system! Especially with the great support of Brian, our local DNP distributor, who advised us wisely and efficiently helped to set up the system with the configuration that exactly suited us ●

