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Vito Ferrone: "Prepared for a digital future" Italy ready for one-to-one

A keen eye for design

Graphic designers know their way to Timbroloredo Copyline. The hundreds of exhibitions and conferences annually taking place in Milan demand an incessant flow of print work. And the design work needs to be top notch. "We have in-house access to all graphic disciplines," says Vito Ferrone. "We are happy to take care of design, as well as printing and finishing."

The company's last offset press was discarded many years ago, as this classic printing technique no longer

fitted Timbroloredo's philosophy. Besides corporate identity catalogues, the company prints thousands of specially designed menu's, conference programmes and many calendars and catalogues. Ferrone proudly shows the corporate identity catalogue of an international consultancy firm. "Our printer offered such excellent quality on the Pantone colours that our corporate identity catalogues now serve as a guide to the printers of all company publications."



Timbroloredo Copyline
Vito Ferrone
Via Andrea Costa 7
MM Loreto
20131 Milano
Italia

+ 39 022 870 026 (telephone)
+ 39 022 847 693 (fax)

info@copyline.it
www.copyline.it



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"Serious investment in the latest technology. Not as an operator, but as a professional and creative partner."

Timbroloredo's shop in downtown Milan is more than busy. It is a coming and going of advertising agency staff, office employees, students and schoolchildren bringing in their printing and copying work. "We are ready for the digital future," says manager Vito Ferrone.



The broad shop on the Via Andrea Costa forms the nucleus of a number of companies revolving around it like satellites. The iGen3, which was installed in August 2003, is housed adjacent to the spacious courtyard. Thirty meters on, around the corner, the large-scale inkjet plotters are located. A shop a few buildings down houses the Next4You company, which

tends to Timbroloredo's database publishing activities.

"Times have been rather hectic of late," says manager Vito Ferrone. "This year has largely been devoted to optimising our printing activities. This involved moving shop twice within a short period of time, while shop sales and all our other activities carried on as usual."

Term paper on the iGen3

Timbroloredo is a household name in Milan. For over forty years the company has been engaged in copying and printing services. The shop plays an important role in maintaining direct customer contact.

Vito Ferrone: "This morning some students came in who needed 500 copies of their term paper. And all they had was a hard copy model. We put it on the scanner and used the iGen3 to print the job. Before they could finish their cappuccino's across the road, we had the job

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printed and finished. Maybe not the most spectacular application, but it does generate a lot of clicks.”

Although Ferrone wouldn't miss this kind of work for the world, he also looks further ahead. “We invest heavily in state of the art equipment. But we also invest in a well-trained staff. To boost our one-to-one activities we began Next4You. There, our customers are welcomed by our staff, experienced data base marketers, automation experts and an art director in a high-tech environment.”

Timbroloreto and Next4You are currently setting up an extensive loyalty programme for a perfume chain in Italy. Whenever a product is sold – whether it is nail varnish, a lipstick or an expensive perfume – the customer's address and the product information are forwarded to Next4You. The perfume company's marketers select special offers in line with the orders placed. During sales campaigns these special offers are subsequently sent to the customer via direct mail. The images, the address, the sales person's name and the offer to the customer are unique to each mailing.

“Intricate and complicated, because communications between us and the almost one hundred shops takes place via the fax machine,” says Ferrone. “That really is the only way, because retail staff can use a fax, but are not permitted to use email on the shop floor.” However, Ferrone expects this to change shortly.

On the eve of a breakthrough

“One-to-one marketing is scarcely out of the egg in Italy. We are slowly convincing corporate marketers of the impact personalised mailings have. My instinct tells me we are on the eve of a major breakthrough.”

One of Timbroloreto's customers increasingly engaged in one-to-one is a worldwide perfume company. “We maintain excellent relations with this company. We have been doing business with them for years. That mutual bond of trust makes it possible to experiment. This year is a transitional one which is teaching both us and our customers valuable lessons. Many customers come to us through word of mouth. That only works when one delivers accurately and on time and shows to be seriously investing in new technologies. Not as an operator, but as a professional and creative partner.”



The acquisition of the iGen3 helped Timbroloreto's start extensive direct mail campaigns of its own. Existing and potential customers receive a personalised calendar offering a full overview of all the iGen3's many excellent qualities, such as the large paper format and the wide choice of papers.

Strong in publishing

Milan is traditionally strong in publishing and there are many opportunities in this area. In the past, Timbroloreto already specialised in designing trial issues for magazines. These are used to test designs and generate advertising interest.

“The iGen3 offers tremendous opportunities in this area. One can print a magazine's trial issue on several different papers and try out various formats relatively easily. And internet orders of publications such as personalized cook books are on the increase. A totally new market, which very few companies in Italy are professionally engaging in. Italy is slowly getting ready for personalized information in large runs. And our people are ready and waiting. We have invested in the necessary infrastructure and equipment. As far as Timbroloreto is concerned, the digital future for

Milan and the rest of Italy has already begun.”

From stamps and seals to the iGen3

Stamps of all kinds, sizes and weights laid Timbroloreto's foundations. In 1963, Giampiero Fedeli began making stamps and seals in a small shop on Milan's Via Andrea Costa. After a while, customers could also have photocopies made and buy their office supplies from his shop. Before long the shop began to come apart at the seams and it moved to a premises further down the road. The same occurred several times in Timbroloreto's history.

By adding 'Copyline' to its name, the company, which employs seventeen people, means to show it has more to offer than simple photocopying. Printing has become an increasingly important activity. Besides the iGen3, running with a Spire Rip, the company features several other machines, including two DigiPath 3.0-driven DocuColors 2060. The company boasts its own graphic finishing department and has the capacity to realise a wide range of point-of-sale products finding their way to shops throughout Italy.

“The iGen3 offers tremendous opportunities to run trial issues.”