

How Pat Yeates, owner of Serigraf, Dublin, rates SEFAR[®] PCF

What is SEFAR[®] PCF?

SEFAR PCF is sectionally pre-coated mesh for industrial screen printing.

Large numbers of CD printers are already making successful use of this new development from Sefar to print compact discs. What are the experts saying about SEFAR PCF's process reliability, print quality and cost-effectiveness?

We put this question to Pat Yeates, Serigraf, Dublin, Ireland.

Who is Serigraf, Dublin?

Serigraf Ltd. was established in 1977 and since then has been supplying the screen-printing industry offering inks, mesh and stencils systems. Other services include stretching, stencil making, artwork origination, colour matching, training and technical support. Serigraf employs 15 people in its' 400sq mt factory.



Interview with Pat Yeates

- Q You were one of the first offering SEFAR PCF stencils to the CD manufacturers. Please tell us about your experience.
- A. *When PCF was introduced to us we realised its potential. After our initial tests and further improvements by Sefar, we introduced PCF to our customers. It was easy – they quickly realised the benefits of this product and embraced this new technology. As a result we have now over 95% of our CD customers converted to PCF.*
- Q. The conventional coating process has been replaced by an "industrial" process. What is your comment?
- A. *PCF offers great benefits to the Screen Printer. Because of a controlled coating process and stringent Q.C. checks it offers a repeatable high quality product.*
- Q. With SEFAR PCF printing results for fine halftones and lines are well above average. Do you share this experience?
- A. *Yes, our experience shows (depending on the halftone ruling) that dots below 10% and a line thickness of 70 microns are easily reproduced. The tonal range is extended and the shadow detail is enhanced. Over all the tonal values of the halftone positive are more accurately copied than with any other stencil system I know.*
- Q. What is the ideal Rz value for printing CD's?
- A. *There are many opinions as to what is the ideal Rz value, but this depends on the application and substrate. When printing 4 colour halftones the issue of Rz is not the same as when printing fine lines onto very smooth surfaces. Generally speaking an Rz value of around 5 and below is required. One of our customers reports an Rz value on 165-27 PCF, of 3.4.*
- Q. SEFAR PCF permits long print runs with one stencil. What is your assessment of these savings in practice?
- A. *It's true that PCF yields substantially longer print runs with a very high quality print result. The benefits to our customers are:*
- *Less down time on the press due to no screen changes.*
 - *Fewer screens needed per job, and according to one of our customers, backup screens are not necessary.*
- This also results in more consistent print quality throughout the run and less rejects.*

Q. Are savings with SEFAR PCF possible due to fewer process stages?

A. *Yes. PCF is not cheap, but as there is no need for degreasing, coating and drying the savings are obvious. Once PCF is stretched and glued and after the standard resting time the screen is ready for exposure.*

Q. How do you judge the handling of SEFAR PCF?

A. *The handling of PCF is no different to standard fabric, once the correct safe light conditions are in place.*

Q. Reproducibility of stencils is usually an important criterion. How do you rate this with SEFAR PCF?

A. *Reproducibility of stencils is very important particularly when printing four colour halftones. Our experience shows that with PCF you can reproduce the same quality stencil time and time again.*

Q. Fewer chemicals are needed in processing SEFAR PCF? What do your customers say about it?

A. *They say that PCF is really great - after all they don't have to use degreasers, wetting or roughening agents i.e. no more chemicals and they save in labour costs – this is a major advantage to them.*

Q. How do you rate the price-to-performance ratio of SEFAR PCF?

A. *PCF is dearer than standard fabric. However, the advantages of having a product like PCF with the savings of labour, processing time and chemicals rate PCF very high in the price to performance ratio.*

Q. Do you see any potential for further improvements to SEFAR PCF?

A. *There is always room for improvement, but it is difficult to see where this could come from as PCF more than satisfies the technical criteria required by the CD industry.*

We thank Mr. P. Yeates for his interesting and valued comments.

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