

with ink. Most plates were shown to have an acceptable degree of resistance to the solvents which they would most likely contact, but none were as good as Marathon.

Unfortunately only a limited number of users returned user survey questionnaires and they covered only five different plates. It was not possible, therefore, to make any meaningful comparison of the performance of one plate against another. However, some observations can be made regarding the performance of aqueous plates in general.

In terms of run length the overall consensus was that these plates give a similar or somewhat shorter run length than plates used previously, which in most cases included the standard Marathon. Dampening latitude and clean running were felt to be similar or better, whereas the resistance to marking and blinding was generally felt to be worse than previously used solvent-developed plates.

The analysis of developers confirmed that the main solvent was water. All of the developers were alkali, some more than others. In all cases the odour from the developer was less than from Marathon.

The report concludes that the two water-developed plates will on balance provide advantages over solvent developed plates in platemaking. Their performance on the press however compares less favourably; run lengths in particular are much shorter and consistent performance in normal industrial conditions appears difficult to achieve. Most of the plates developed with water-based developers also provide advantages in platemaking. Their overall press performance, as indicated by the user survey, was felt to be similar to the solvent-developed plates but with some reservation regarding run length, image blinding and resistance to marking.

It is felt that the current situation with these plates is analogous to that which existed with positive pre-sensitised plates about ten years ago. Then the pre-sensitised plate clearly offered many advantages over the deep-etch plate but on the press its performance