



## **Choosing the Right Inkjet Canvas: What to Consider when Creating Fine Art and Photography Applications**

There are many different surface finishes, from matte to high-gloss, and smooth to highly-textured, making the selection of inkjet canvas seem like a challenge. Inkjet canvas bases are usually made from cotton or polyester or a blend of the two. Their coatings allow a rather large reservoir for ink and yield very high gamut imagery.

### **100% Cotton Inkjet Canvas**

100% cotton canvases are best suited for small run fine art reproductions where acute differences between prints are desired. Featuring natural imperfections and irregularities, these highly textured inkjet canvas options allow for original unique character from print to print to result in an authentic and natural look and feel. 100% cotton canvases are available in either a gloss or matte finish.

### **Poly/Cotton Inkjet Canvas**

Poly/cotton inkjet canvas options are more commonly used for large or small production runs where consistency from image to image is desired. Also available in gloss or matte finishes, poly/cotton inkjet canvases deliver a smoother more consistent texture than 100% cotton. In addition to offering the look and feel of canvas with less natural artifacts, poly/cotton inkjet canvas choices feature a higher level of stretch-ability than 100% cotton canvases.

True for both 100% cotton and poly/cotton canvases, glossy finishes for inkjet canvas can provide water resistance, higher density, and an increased level of stretch-ability. In contrast, matte canvases are naturally water resistant and their weave patterns are more evident to offer a more traditional canvas look and feel. Since it is always easier to add gloss than take it away, matte inkjet canvas enables a custom level of gloss as determined by the selection of a top coat.

### **Common characteristics to consider when creating applications for the fine art and photography market:**

- ***Image permanence and true color fidelity:*** A number of factors, including the type of coating and whiteness of the coating will affect how vibrant images will appear when printed with inkjet technology. The substrate and coating components can also affect the longevity of the image, as can the type of ink used (pigmented inks should be used for real image permanence).

- **Optical brightening agents (OBA):** Papers without OBAs are preferred for the most color stable prints. OBAs can result in an image that has more “pop” because they make a medium appear brighter; however, they are not permanent. Since the observed color of a print is a result of a combination of the substrate color as well as the inks used, the substrate color will change (yellow) when the OBAs fade. This means that OBAs will affect the color of the print as it ages.

It is important to note that it is common practice to use negligible amounts of OBAs for on machine inspection in the inkjet coating process. These trace amounts are not used to enhance the whiteness and brightness of the product and have no negative impact on the longevity or achievability of the end product.

- **High archival quality:** To ensure the archivability of images, print providers should use acid- and lignin- free media since both acid and lignin can contribute to premature discoloration of paper. A naturally occurring component found in trees, lignin is the material that causes newspapers to yellow quickly when left out in the sun. As mentioned earlier, archival papers typically have buffering agents to prevent acidification from environmental factors.
- **Optimized coatings for high-quality color reproduction:** Fine art and photography media should be coated to accept heavy ink loads without substrate cockling or ink mottling. Exceeding the ink saturation limit can result in paper cockle, which affects printer conveyance and finishing. Use products designed with optimized coatings that result in good dot gain and excellent color output.
- **Water resistance:** Another characteristic to look for is a water-resistant coating that is free of optical brighteners, which can alter color fidelity and cause yellowing over time.
- **Easy to protect and mount:** Fine art and photography applications need to incorporate both high quality archival imaging media, as well as finishing and mounting products that have archival qualities.

For more information on inkjet canvas options from InteliCoat, call 1-800-628-8604 or visit <http://www.magicinkjet.com>. You may also view a snapshot of our Inkjet Canvas Media and Applications webinar on the InteliCoatTech YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2SDXLwmzwU>.