



Durst Image  
Technology U.S.  
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PRESS RELEASE

**From Traditional Screen Printer to  
Hollywood's Premier Digital Imager,  
California's Astek Wallcoverings  
Makes Rho 500R its Fourth Durst Printer**

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***"I can't believe the reds and oranges that are just popping off that printer." Aaron Kirsch says***

Astek Inc. of Van Nuys, Calif., recently installed a Durst Rho 500R – its fourth Durst printer – which effectively completes the company's transition from a traditional screen printer of wall coverings to a top provider of customized digital images for the entertainment industry, major retailers and leading design firms. The new Rho 500R, Astek President Aaron Kirsch says, takes the company beyond the ability to produce precise, color-accurate images to producing them in a smart and efficient manner.

"Our Rho 500R has only been running for a few weeks, and I can't believe the reds and oranges that are just popping off that printer," Kirsch says. "But it also allows for a much better utilization of time. A job that used to take 5-6 hours took an hour and a half on the Rho 500R. It not only helps us increase our capacity, but we can be smarter about what we print and how."

Established in 1980, Astek Inc. (formerly Astek Wallcovering) is a leading U.S. custom digital imaging house. The company occupies a unique market niche – creating backgrounds, interiors and facades for major motion pictures and television shows. Astek has expanded its design capabilities with a staff of trendsetting designers and illustrators and developed a world-class printing capability built on Durst UV inkjet printing platforms. The company produces the most creative, innovative, eco-friendly images

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for walls, ceilings, and floors on a wide range of materials – from papers, vinyls, Mylar and canvas, to plywood, glass, fabric, cork, grasscloth, plex, window film, and many other substrates.

Since Astek installed a Rho 600 Pictor five years ago, the company has become Hollywood's premier digital imager designing and producing sets and interiors so real, movie-goers will believe the story is "on location" when usually it isn't. Between the Pictor and 500R, Astek also acquired a Rho 320R and a Rho 800. Kirsch says he recently sold all of his solvent printers, which allowed the company to move "to a completely eco-friendly printing model" – a very important issue among the creative community.

Astek is about as busy as it can be. Kirsch attributes that to several factors. The company's in-house design staff provides creative concepts and customized designs that Astek then prints. A Zund router gives the company the ability to route and cut a wide range of materials and complete a wider variety of jobs. And the transition to digital imaging allows Astek to offer a dazzling array of imaging applications to satisfy the demanding requirements of some of the most high-profile, exacting customers anywhere.

"It really is amazing what we're able to print on now – foils, Mylar, burlaps, linens, plus commercial-grade materials," Kirsch says. "Metallic is very popular today, and we can print 'over white' and 'under white' to get some amazing looks." Astek has used its Rho printers to create the linoleum floors in the upcoming movie *Men in Black III*, as well as the carpeting in the recent hit *Little Fockers*. The company also printed the eye-catching walkway for 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox's gala 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration.

If you saw the Golden Globes award show, you saw Astek's handiwork – white ink on acrylic to create the three horizontal light bars running across the stage's decorative superstructure. And in one of its more challenging recent applications, a Rho printer printed on 4x6-foot aluminum sheets – six times – to create the textured interior of a spacecraft for a new science-fiction movie, *Battleship*. "That was a more complicated job," Kirsch says. "But the Rho printer performed as advertised, and it came out perfect."



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As far as Kirsch is concerned, Durst makes the best digital printers. “The bottom line is that these are work horses that deliver better image quality,” he says. “Durst roll inks don’t crack like other inks do. I

can do two-pass printing and get very good image quality. We can be much more cost-efficient for our clients on short runs. They’re durable, reliable, and backed by a very good service team.

“We still use our Rho 600 Pictor,” Kirsch adds. “It’s got more than 10,000 hours on it and it’s still going strong. It’s a champ, and it shows you how well-designed and well-built these Durst printers are. Plus it’s been fun to watch the progression of the Rho platform since we got our first Durst printer.

“Our clients are very specific with their demands and they want the best. I want to be known for producing the best quality digital print for today’s market. We do have competition, so we want to bring our ‘A game.’ The Rho 500R and our other Durst printers help us do that.”