

ECRM

ECRM was one of the early entrants into the CTP market with the AIR 75, a 4-up platesetter which utilized a 488 nm blue argon gas laser. The first AIR 75s shipped in September 1997, but this model ultimately met the same fate as the Barco Crescent, which also used an argon blue laser - total obsolescence.

In October 1999, at Graph Expo, ECRM introduced two new platesetter models, the Wildcat and the Tigercat, both based on holographic imaging technology. Both machines were available with a 633 nm HeNe red gas laser or 532 nm green YAG laser diode. The WildCat was aimed at the newspaper market. The TigerCat targeted commercial printers, offering resolutions up to 3556 dpi. Of these two models, the TigerCat survived, and a violet model was introduced in 2001. However, overall, neither the WildCat nor the TigerCat were well received by the marketplace.

ECRM's made its next attempt in the CTP arena by acquiring Optronics in March 2000. Optronics was a manufacturer of imagesetters, scanners and platesetters. Optronics' platesetter, the 8-up 830 nm thermal Aurora, had only mediocre market acceptance. Upon acquiring Optronics, ECRM discontinued their imagesetters and scanners, and rebadged the Aurora platesetter as the ECRM DesertCat. Market acceptance remained mediocre. This, combined with the lukewarm acceptance of the WildCat and TigerCat, resulted in difficult times for the company. Financial and management reorganization followed. ECRM emerged from this reorganization with introduction of the violet Mako 2 platesetter in March 2002. In this machine, ECRM utilized the simple and proven design of their Mako and Stingray imagesetter engines and adapted them to the production of metal plates. The reasonable price and the relatively simple engineering of the Mako2 made it a popular machine.

In the following year, ECRM introduced their 4-up Mako 4. This model was available with either a 5 mW violet laser for silver-based plates or the 30 mW violet laser for photopolymer plates. This choice of laser also became available to Mako 2 buyers. The success of the Mako 2 and 4, along with the introduction of the Newsmatic for the newspaper market, provided the resources to ECRM to finally introduce a viable 8-up CTP device, the Mako 8. Eventually all these models were available with a 60mW laser.

At Drupa 2008, ECRM trumped their competition by introducing the 120 mW visible light diode in its entire commercial line-up of platesetters. ECRM added an X to the model number to designate the 120 mW machines. However, this is somewhat confusing, as a Mako 4X was introduced in 2006. In 2006, ECRM heralded the Mako 4X as offering "a clear path to chemistry-free technology". However, they made no mention of the wattage of the laser, but we know it to be a 60 mW. In their pre-Drupa press release, ECRM announces the Mako 4X as a brand new product, along with the Mako 2X and 8X.

Follows a chronological history of ECRM's commercial printing platesetters:

| Model | Year | Max. & Min. Plate Size | | Laser |
|------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|
| AIR 75 | 9/1997 | 4-up | | blue 488 nm Argon Ion |
| TigerCat | 9/1999 | 4-up | | red 633 nm or green 532 nm YAG |
| TigerCat | 5/2001 | 4-up | | violet 405nm 5 mW |
| DesertCat 8 | 5/2000 | 8-up | | thermal 830 nm |
| DesertCat 44 | 9/2002 | 4-up | | thermal 830 nm |
| Mako 2 | 3/2002 | 22.0 x 22.0 | 10.0 x 10.0 | violet 405 nm 5 mW |
| Mako 2 (or System 2) | 5/2003 | 26.4 x 22.1 | 9.94 x 8.98 | violet 405 nm 5 mW or 30 mW |
| Mako 4 | 5/2003 | 36.5 x 25 | 9.94 x 8.98 | violet 405 nm 5 mW or 30 mW |
| Mako System 4 | | 29.3 x 24.2 | 9.94 x 8.98 | violet 405 nm 5 mW or 30 mW |
| Mako 4Matic | 4/2004 | 38.5 x 25 | 15.15 x 15.15 | violet 405 nm 5 mW or 30 mW |
| Mako 8 | 4/2004 | 45 x 32.44 | 9.94 x 8.98 | violet 405 nm 5 mW or 30 mW |
| Mako 4X (or System 4X) | 9/2006 | 37.8 x 26.0 | 9.94 x 8.98 | violet 405 nm 60 mW |
| Mako 2L | 2006 | 22.1 x 22.1 | 9.94 x 8.98 | violet 405 nm 30 mW |
| Mako 2X | 5/2008 | 26.4 x 22.0 | 9.94 x 8.98 | violet 405 nm 120 mW |
| Mako 4X | 5/2008 | 37.8 x 26.0 | 9.94 x 8.98 | violet 405 nm 120 mW |
| Mako 8X | 5/2008 | 45 x 32.44 | 9.94 x 8.98 | violet 405 nm 120 mW |

See page 42 for productivity specs.