

# DTG & ME

MEET MARY, THE DTG PRINTER THAT CHANGED A MAN'S LIFE



Greg, Dan and Stu

“It’s not only the quality of the machine, but the quality of the people behind the machine”  
– Stuart Endersby

**M**eet Mary, the direct-to-garment printer that’s caused quite a stir at WA’s Fremantle markets. Named after Mary Austin, the lifelong partner of Queen’s Freddie Mercury, the purchase of this machine has been the kickstart into the next chapter in Stuart Endersby’s career. A media-guru-turned-business-owner, it was only months ago that Stuart made the big decision to step away from his successful 30-year stint in commercial radio and pursue the inception of his t-shirt company, Freo T-shirts.

With the departure of the previous t-shirt printing stall, Stuart saw an opportunity to set up shop at the Fremantle markets, and started researching the most effective ways to provide quality t-shirt prints for his customers. The further Stuart delved into the world of textiles and printing, the greater the realisation that technology

had progressed well beyond the point of screen printing and vinyl transfers.

“I just saw the opportunity when the t-shirt shop left the markets to do a better t-shirt shop. I had the idea and I wasn’t sure where to start, so I just started to do a lot of research on YouTube and the internet, and eventually came up with direct-to-garment printing”, says Stuart.

It was during his research, and after reaching out to Brother International Australia, that Stuart met Dan. Dan Keast, school-teacher-turned-textile-aficionado and owner of DTK textiles, stumbled into the DTG printer distribution industry after several coincidental meetings abroad with Greg Benardos, the National Manager of DTG at Brother. Already having built a career in clothing manufacturing and supply in Australia, Dan was interested in the vast development

of garment printing. It was a chance call from Greg, that put Dan in front of the GTX machine. Seeing the quality of the prints that the GTX produced, as well as a space in the market to service Australia’s western border, Dan was very keen to become a local distributor of the textile printing device.

“It wasn’t only the quality of the garments that had me interested in working as a distributor of Brother products. I’ve also received genuine support from the team there – one could say they’ve truly been ‘at my side’ from the beginning, and that has positively impacted the relationship that I’ve fostered with my customers”, says Dan, as he discusses his experience working as a distributor for Brother’s GTX machines.

“What really pushed me to enter the Perth market, and one of the things I retained from [my] experience, was the

number of people who bought very good machines, of varying brands, who should've gotten quite good results. They were buying machines from very good companies located in Sydney, Melbourne or Brisbane, but the problem was there was no support, particularly when the machine needed maintenance", says Dan, as he discusses his introduction into GTX machine distribution.

"That was the point at which I realised that to get the best out of a DTG machine, there's need for an ongoing relationship with somebody who could come and service it on a regular basis. When I saw the significant advances that had been made with the [GTX] machine, I knew I had to get on board".

Fast forward several years, and Dan, being the sole distributor of the GTX for Southern and Western Australia, received a lead from Brother to call a man in Fremantle who was interested in the machine. Thus, the two paths collided, and Stuart met Dan, who ultimately set him up with Mary.

"I got a phone call from Dan that changed my life", says Stuart. "Dan happened to be in Perth at the time and we caught up at our old shop for a meeting and he had a whole heap of samples of the shirts printed on the GTX. I was just blown away by the quality, but even more so, I was just as impressed with Dan; not only as a representative of Brother, but as a genuinely nice person, who was willing to give a lot of advice. I knew at that point that it wasn't just about the

machine, but also that Dan was the person that I wanted to deal with".

A touch over three months ago, when the perfect shop location became available within the Fremantle markets, Stuart jumped at the opportunity and signed on the lease. With his vision of an Apple-esque store front, and the help of Dan by his side, Stuart saw his idea come to fruition. It was then that the pair put the finishing touches on the Freo T-Shirts stall and plugged in Mary, the GTX garment printer, for the first time. From that moment, the orders have not stopped flooding in, as Stuart receives requests not only from his store front but from online platforms as well. Since its opening, the store is already exceeding expectations, with repeat business and word of mouth sales driving profits. When asked about the success of the store so early on in its inception, both gents agreed that aside from a little bit of luck, it has mostly come down to the quality of customer service.

"We make sure that the whole experience from a retail point of view, when you come into the shop, is great, but it's also the experience online when you're sending people proofs of the shirts – that is something they're not used to getting", says Stuart, as he talks about the importance of customer service to his business model. "We make sure to get back to people very quickly, we give them competitive pricing, and a good quality garment with a good quality print".

In order for Stuart to provide such great customer service, he relies on

the customer service of Dan, who from the very beginning has provided direction, advice and his expertise on the GTX, to make the process as seamless and efficient as possible.

"I can pick up the phone and ask Dan questions about better prints, or pre-treatment, or something regarding maintenance on the GTX and, 99.9% of the time Dan will just be able to give me the answer straight away", says Stuart, as he discusses the positive impact that having an efficient distributor has had on his business.

"It's not only the quality of the machine, but the quality of the people behind the machine. In this instance, not only Brother, but obviously Dan as well, have just been outstanding to deal with".

Greg Benardos, National Manager DTG for Brother International adds: "At Brother the importance of the customer experience is paramount. That experience is delivered by our staff, our dealers and representatives and our products. When that finds the best opportunities and end users then it's very rewarding for all parties. Stuart and his business embody the future of this growing industry and is a great example of when passion meets opportunity."

Partnerships play a vital role in the growth of a business, as the success of Freo T-shirts highlights. While Mary, the GTX, has been pivotal to ensuring that Stuart is able to consistently deliver a superior product, it has been the hard work and cooperation of all the people involved, that has truly allowed a dream to become a reality.



# GTX

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