Title:
Epson Yesterday and Today

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Summary:
Epson started as watch making company Seiko Epson Corporation, Japan. Epson was established in 1961 to manufacture precision parts for Seiko watches, back then it was called Shinsu Precision Manufacturing Company.

Keywords:
Ink, Epson, Seiko, imaging, printing, chemical, midtones, media types, gray balance, picture

Article Body:
Epson started as watch making company Seiko Epson Corporation, Japan. Epson was established in 1961 to manufacture precision parts for Seiko watches, back then it was called Shinsu Precision Manufacturing Company.

Epson’s first foray into the printing and imaging business was the Olympics of 1964 held in Tokyo. The company was awarded a contract to develop a precision timer for the Games. The printer they developed for the Olympics - EP101 is also, where Epson derives its name! It was one of the first printers for electronic calculators to hit the commercial market. It was the beginning of Epson’s journey in the printing and imaging business.

The TX-80, Epson’s first dot matrix printer hit the market in 1978, then in 1984 came the SQ 2000 it’s first inkjet printer. The TM 930 Epson’s pc-pos package printer launched in 1990 created a new market in the printing business. Epson gave a number of first printers to the world among which is Epson stylus 800- an inkjet printer equipped with micro peizo technology launched in March 1993, and then the Epson Stylus Color in May 1994 was the world’s first 720 dpi color inkjet printer.

September 1998 saw the launch of TM-H5000 its first hybrid printer which featured fast quiet printing and copy functionality.

Epson’s Technological Breakthrough

The Ultrachrome K3 Ink

The Epson UltraChrome K3 Ink is a high-density resin coated pigment ink. It comes in two types Black & White and Color. It has a wide color gamut for both types. The black palette consists of three shades of black- Black, light black and light light black. The color palette consists of the standard cyan, light cyan, magenta, light magenta and yellow. Oh and it has two user exchangeable black ink modes- photo and matte!

Now you will wonder what is so special about Ultrachrome K3. A simple comparison between the traditional toner manufacturing process and the ultrachrome K3 process will answer the question - traditional toners were manufactured by grinding the toner particles mechanically to the smallest possible particle size that can be achieved mechanically; now the major disadvantage here is the energy and hence cost. You would wonder how energy comes into picture. The process being mechanical and done under pressure requires considerable amount of energy and the smaller the particle size the more energy required and energy is expensive!

The second disadvantage is that the particle size is not uniform and cannot be controlled, again because the process is mechanical put simply a grinding process!

Both of the above disadvantages are overcome in the Ultrachrome K3 manufacturing process. The process is chemical process requiring negligible energy. The resin is placed in a water-based environment where the particles are allowed to grow in a controlled environment. Once the particles have achieved the desired size, they are removed from the environment and processed to give the Ultrachrome K3 ink! Sounds simple right? However, the process is not as simple as it sounds!

The Customer’s Advantages:
Energy and cost conservation are the Epson’s advantages; what benefits do the customers get. At the end of the day, the customers have to be very satisfied, if they are going to buy “the system”.

8-Color Ink System
* High Density pigments for an extremely wide color gamut
* Professional print permanence ratings for truly sellable quality prints
* High-gloss Microcrystal Encapsulation Technology for reduced gloss differential
* Superior scratch resistance from improved pigment and resin chemistry
* Color is stable immediately after printing - no short term color shifting
Three-Level Black Ink Technology
* Simultaneously uses Black, Light Black, and Light Light Black inks

* Significantly improves the printers gray balance
* Impressive midtones and highlights for a smoother tonal range
Two User-Exchangeable Black Ink Modes
Two specific black ink modes - Photo Black or Matte Black

Optimizes black ink density for various media types dramatically improving the final print quality

It is goes without saying that Epson like all other top brands in the market too encourages its customers to use only original Epson ink and Epson media to achieve best results. It claims that the ink and media are manufactured to work hand in hand to achieve the best results as compared to their competitors!