

# Digital Print Technology: An Opportunity and a Threat to Banknote Production

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## Abstract

*For the banknote industry, the advent of and rapid advances in digital printing technology present both an opportunity and a threat.*

*On the one hand, digital pre-press techniques are revolutionizing the speed with which banknote designs can be originated, as well as broadening the range of security features that can be generated and the quality of these. Digital printing is also ideally suited for banknote serialization as an alternative to traditional letterpress printing, although banknote producers are yet to embrace it in production.*

*On the other hand, a combination of the falling prices in digital printing technology and advances in the quality and capabilities of these is lowering the bar to counterfeiting, and making the tools for the production of fake currency available to a much wider pool of potential counterfeiters. In other words, counterfeiting is moving beyond the traditional, skilled criminals and is now within the reach of the everyday opportunists – presenting a potential explosion in fake currency.*

*In their battle to stay one step ahead of the counterfeiters, banknotes issuers and producers are engaged in a constant process of innovation and renewal involving the reduction in the lifecycle of banknote designs and the development of ever-more complex intrinsic and extrinsic security features – at the same time as ensuring quality and durability of notes and their acceptability to the public.*

*This presentation will cover the principles of banknote production and the main producers, worldwide demand, rates and methods of counterfeiting (including an analysis of the growth of digital counterfeiting) and some of the latest features and development to maintain the integrity of banknotes, particularly against the threat posed by digital reproduction.*

## Author Biography

*Astrid Mitchell is Editor of Currency News, the monthly business-to-business newsletter for the currency industry that covers the design and specification, production, processing and distribution of cash. It is read by central bankers and issuing authorities, banknote printers and substrate suppliers, cash handling organizations and CIT companies around the world. Currency News is published by Currency Publications Ltd., a joint venture between Currency Research (organizers of the Currency Conference) and Reconnaissance International - consultants and publishers of market intelligence on authentication technologies and strategies for brand protection, security print and personal identification.*

*Mitchell began her career with banknote printer De La Rue in 1983. She subsequently worked for OpSec Security Technologies, a provider of authentication features for high security documents, and Bundesdruckerei, the German banknote printer. She joined Reconnaissance in 2002 and was responsible for the inception and launch of Currency News in 2003. In addition, she is currently working on the production of a new global report on banknote production and processing, the first of its kind for the banknote industry, and is executive editor of two sister publications – Holography News and Authentication News.*

*She has a degree in politics from the University of Durham and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing.*