
Subject: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Psychobob](#) on Tue, 29 Jan 2013 20:41:11 GMT
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Edit (15/04/2013): Problem solved, the reprint came out great: [Click here to see](#)

Hi Shapeways community,

My latest order arrived today and this was my first print using full colour sandstone (FCS from here on out). When I saw this, I couldn't help but feel disappointed with my print as it seemed to have very heavy frosting/noise and I was hoping any veterans using FCS could advise me before I contact shapeways customer service.

As mentioned, it's my first print in FCS so it's possible I'm setting my expectations too high, but when I look at other people's pictures, it seems to just make me think this isn't quite right.

For instance, nervousSystem posted up this recently (<http://www.shapeways.com/forum/index.php?t=msg&th=12598& amp; amp; amp; amp; amp; amp; amp; amp; amp; start=0&>).

There's also this one by Ad-Edge (<http://www.shapeways.com/forum/index.php?t=msg&th=11846& amp; amp; amp; amp; amp; amp; amp; amp; amp; start=0&>).

The colours are very nice/consistent throughout and there is far less "frosting" than I see on mine (even in the dark areas on their models it seems).

Below are some pictures and little blurbs that highlight what I am trying to illustrate in the picture. I've included some hi-res links also so you can get a better look if you need it. The noise/frosting does come out fractionally more in the pictures I do have to say, but it's not wildly out from what it is like in real life.

Scale is approx 10cm x 10cm x 1cm

Hi-res link

Lot's of "frosting" throughout the model. Especially noticeable on the dark areas.

Hi-res link

Another angle, just for comparative reasons. Again showing the heavy frosting all over the model.

Hi-res link

In this picture I wanted to try and photo the angled edge on the red portion of the model. I'm not sure if the picture picks it up, but in real life, it has a somewhat yellow tinge to all that frosting/noise on the angular side of the red portion.

Hi-res link

This is more focused on the flat red portion

Hi-res link

Finally, a shot of the entire model.

I really appreciate any feedback anyone has on this.

Thanks!

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Youknowwho4eva](#) on Tue, 29 Jan 2013 20:53:34 GMT
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I think it depends on lighting and scale. If you look at nervoussystem's images, you can see some "frosting" as you call it. But it looks like the lighting hides it better. Also by the layers it looks like their items are bigger than yours. So the images being taken farther back would look less frosted. You are always welcome to contact service about how you feel about your prints. We like to know how we impress, and how we are below your expectations. I'd read Ad-Edges post more, and look at post production techniques for bringing the best color out of your color prints.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Psychobob](#) on Tue, 29 Jan 2013 21:34:05 GMT
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Thanks Youknowwho4eva, really appreciate the fast response.

Even holding it at an arms length away and looking at it at different angles (for seeing different lighting conditions on the surface), you are right, at some angles it's more noticeable than others. However, at any angle I've looked at it so far (again, at arms length), the "frosting" (I'm not sure if there's a better word for describing it?) is still quite considerable in comparison to other people's prints (not just the 2 examples I mentioned earlier).

AD-Edge did post some before and after "post production" pictures, but even the "before" pictures didn't appear to have as much as I seem to see on my print.

A concern of mine is that if I put this up for public sale and people have to use 'post-production' techniques to remove this 'frosting' (that's if this is not a misprint issue, but how it would normally print with this material), it can be a turn off for potential buyers and also mean that this cannot be sold on shapeways publicly. Instead I may have to order these, carry out post-production and then sell them on ebay or alike myself, charging additional for post-production and a second postage to the end customer. Or just not sell these

I'll hold off contacting customer services until tomorrow just in case anyone else has an opinion on this. As I mentioned, it's my first FCS print so I was just keen on hearing what others who print in this material have to say, as I have nothing to compare this to myself first hand.

I don't want to keep this entire thread negative, so I will say that one thing that I was impressed with. It did seem to come out fairly strong and it doesn't seem "slightly brittle" as the materials page describes it (I wouldn't hit it against a wall or anything, but I would say this could withstand a good force). I'm not sure if that's because of this particular model's geometry or not, but like I said, I was impressed.

Thanks again for such a quick response.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [mkroeker](#) on Tue, 29 Jan 2013 22:28:17 GMT
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I suspect at least part of that effect/defect may depend on your choice of colors (dithering - the ZCorp printers are sort of a cross between a state-of-the-art 3D printer and a mid-1990s inkjet).

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Brian123](#) on Wed, 30 Jan 2013 00:36:57 GMT
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Hmm, I think that looks a little odd. From my experience, the color should be solid and mostly matte, no variation beyond subtle lighting from fine texture and print layers. Your print looks like white goo is left behind along each printed layer at random amounts.

If lighting was to blame, then why does the white goo get thicker and thinner over flat areas like on

the red surface.

Take a look at my large full color print I got this month. I was absolutely amazed at the quality. Color was bright and vivid, solid, and nothing to clean up. This is a how looks straight from Shapeways. Lighting is two recessed lights directly above and some soft surrounding lights.

Spike Full Color Print: <http://shpws.me/n98V>

2nd to last picture has some nice closeups. Such as the wooden stump and books, face, you can begin to see some print lines and texture, but no white goo or frosting on anything. I'm glad received a good print so customers that order have good reference in case they receive a bad print, especially for what they paid.

Also, here's a white and dark-gray figure with a new photo I took at the same time/ similar lighting, printed back in November 2011.

Toon Lemur Full Color Print: <http://shpws.me/IBnL>

My first Lemur print had to be reprinted actually. Two were ordered around the same time, one by a friend and one for me. We received them a week apart. My friend lives in the Netherlands near Shapeways, while I'm in the US. Her copy was good, not perfect, but acceptable to her. While mine had several defects. Not exactly goo, but odd patches of uneven color and rougher print lines than usual. The link below is a thread I started over the issue. You see her print, mine, and the final reprinted copy. There are a lot of close-ups, different lighting, so sometimes it does look like there's frosting on the gray areas. Though, my final copy looks great at any distance.

<http://www.shapeways.com/forum/index.php?t=msg&goto=3954> 0

Here's a direct link to a before and after prints of the Lemur character:

<http://www.shapeways.com/forum/index.php?t=getfile&id=12707&private=0>

For the Spike print, I made some adjustments to the model/color and ordered a new print. It was due to ship yesterday but haven't heard anything yet. When it arrives, I'll get to see if the quality is consistent.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality

Posted by [Psychobob](#) on Wed, 30 Jan 2013 13:49:02 GMT

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Thanks for the replies everyone.

Brian123: Appreciate you posting links to your own misprint and the reprint, it has me all the more convinced this is a misprint.

I have contacted Shapeways customer service and I'll report back once they get back to me.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Psychobob](#) on Thu, 31 Jan 2013 16:27:21 GMT
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Just thought I would quickly add a follow up.

As always, impressed with Shapeways customer service. They have looked into the issue and will be re-printing my piece for me. I'll follow this up again once it's been re-printed and shipped to me.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Brian123](#) on Thu, 31 Jan 2013 17:23:01 GMT
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Psychobob wrote on Thu, 31 January 2013 16:27 Just thought I would quickly add a follow up.

As always, impressed with Shapeways customer service. They have looked into the issue and will be re-printing my piece for me. I'll follow this up again once it's been re-printed and shipped to me.

Thanks for keeping us updated, looking forward to seeing the improved piece. Sometimes below-par prints slip through, then other times they'll make the judgement call to reprint it before mailing. They did the latter with my recent order of my Spike print. It missed the estimated shipping date 3 days ago. So I contacted Shapeways today and they told me it had to be reprinted.

Also, yesterday a customer told me their order came in and it looked great, with very short production time. That was a big worry off my mind. If you're worried about this happening again to customers, add a good disclaimer in the description. Probably mentioning Shapeways excellent customer service will usually determine a reprint is acceptable if the quality doesn't meet your pictured sample quality, a perfect print.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Youknowwho4eva](#) on Thu, 31 Jan 2013 18:08:10 GMT
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Please not that Sandstone is listed as half a week delay. From what I've heard, the printers have been kicking butt on FCS so any delays should be fixed quickly.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Psychobob](#) on Tue, 19 Feb 2013 20:52:41 GMT
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Hello!

I received some re-prints that Shapeways had organised for me and the snowy/frosty issue was fixed. It took a little while to arrive as they had the printer issues, but that wasn't a problem for this model.

Unfortunately it looks like there's a new problem on the reprints. So I thought I would update this thread so others can see that Shapeways did indeed do a reprint for me on the original issue and also so that I have uploaded some new pictures that I can point Shapeways customer services at.

The new problem is that the reprint seems to be missing chunks of layers in areas on the model. Pictures speak louder than words and will be much more clear than I can describe, so I've got some pictures below to show the issue. The original print didn't have this issue, so I'm sure it's a misprint.

Hires link

First a quick picture showing the difference between the original and the reprint. Looks far better, the snowy issue is much better, the colours are solid this time and even the graphics look sharper. However, this picture doesn't show the problem. Keep scrolling down to see it.

Hires link

This picture helps show the issue. There's a big clump on the red button part that is raised and there are then divots in various other areas. The 1st print didn't have this issue.

Hires link

This image is a colour coded version of the above picture to help illustrate the problematic areas. The bright green area shows the parts that are raised, the pink shows all the divots or recessed

areas.

Hires link

Not so concerned about the bottom, but just illustrating there are some divots here also.

Hires link

Not a big issue, but in 1 place there seems to be a clump of glue. I'm sure I could pick this free, but I'll wait to hear back from Shapeways before I try anything in case it damages it.

So, off to contact Shapeways CS again and will report back once more on the outcome.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Youknowwho4eva](#) on Tue, 19 Feb 2013 21:01:01 GMT
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Well the colors look fantastic! I'm sure service will get you fixed up. Hopefully we won't see these issues as much in the future.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Kaetemi](#) on Thu, 28 Feb 2013 17:30:18 GMT
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I've had a batch of prints with the colors different on opposing sides with the white frosting effect as well once (a long time ago).
It looked kind of like the print heads were misaligned, causing the different ink colors and binder to be shifted.
Near-black was literally purple on one side and green on the other.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Brian123](#) on Thu, 28 Feb 2013 18:06:41 GMT

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Sorry to see your 2nd print with good color now has a new problem. I'm sure they'll have it fixed for you. I'm hoping recent problems are due to a color printing facility moving to a new location, which caused a delay for a recent print of mine.

Speaking of that print, I just received it and everything looks perfect except for a small visible layer of glue stuck to it. Unfortunately that excess glue is right on the character's face and is not removable. Like having a dead pixel in the center of a new screen, small, but ruins it as a whole. I'm waiting to hear from Shapeways. I did notice two tiny spots that were oddly raised or recessed like the issues on your 2nd portal print, located on the flat base. Almost didn't notice it, so no where near as bad as your print, but the glue on the face is very distracting.

My first print of the model was perfect, except for issues that were my fault. I revised the model and ordered this 2nd print to be my final piece. After all that hard work, and delays, it's hard to settle for one with a defect that wasn't there on the previous print.

Here's a post I made asking if anyone knows techniques to remove this glue, but no responses, includes photos:

<http://www.shapeways.com/forum/index.php?t=msg&th=13004& amp; amp; amp;start=0&>

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality

Posted by [Brian123](#) on Mon, 18 Mar 2013 20:46:46 GMT

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Hi Psychobob,

So what was the outcome after over the re-print with new issues?

I just received my re-print 30 minutes ago and it had a new issue that never occurred with other prints of it. This time they overlooked the material inside the mouth.

I've done two prints before, a test print that was smaller, and the final print with a white goo on the face. The inside of the mouth on those prints were perfect, you could see the tiny ugola, which showed off the detail of 3D printing. This time, the whole back of the mouth is filled with white. This must be the first time for this issue since I've not heard any complaints from customer orders. It's modeled feature I clearly point out with a detailed photo on the product page.

The back of the mouth is actually a hole to the hollow head, and the head can drain through the neck into the body, and so on to the bottom of the base.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Psychobob](#) on Tue, 19 Mar 2013 11:22:07 GMT
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Hi Brian,

The first print seemed to have a snowy issue. Shapeways looked into this and it was apparently caused by not being submerged in the solution long enough. So they then issued a second print.

That print then had the latest issues where it looked like there were missing layers from the model in various places, again Shapeways offered to reprint again for me.

I'm currently now waiting on the delivery of the 3rd print, which is on a delivery van as we speak and estimated to be delivered by today. Once I've received the new print I'll report back on that.

In regards to your item, I would say if you've printed the model before and not had an issue, but on the latest one you have, get in touch with customer services. They're generally pretty good at coming back to you on any issues. It's worth taking some photos for them also to illustrate the issue and so they can identify exactly what was wrong. You don't necessarily have to upload them to the forum if you don't want to, but you will need to upload them somewhere for them to see the pictures as I don't believe the web form allows you to attach any pictures.

Cheers

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [AmLachDesigns](#) on Tue, 19 Mar 2013 12:35:06 GMT
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Quote: You don't necessarily have to upload them to the forum if you don't want to, but you will need to upload them somewhere for them to see the pictures as I don't believe the web form allows you to attach any pictures.

Send an email with the pics to service@shapeways.com.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Brian123](#) on Tue, 19 Mar 2013 14:43:38 GMT
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Got my fingers crossed your reprint is perfect.

I'll be sending an e-mail to Shapeways on my lunch break later today.

Here are pictures of the latest issue with my reprint:

File Attachments

1) [spike-reprint-issue.jpg](#), downloaded 137 times

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality

Posted by [Psychobob](#) on Thu, 21 Mar 2013 21:36:14 GMT

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Well, I did promise an update on the last print. The box arrived at the office and I opened it up, looked pretty good at first.

The surface didn't have any errors like print 2, and there didn't seem to be a snowy issue like in print 1. However this time, the colour seems to look like it's faded and has a tinge of cream throughout.

As always below are some pictures to explain the problem.

Here a picture of all 3 prints I've had done to date of this model (the oldest is on the left and the most recent is on the right). It's been progressively been getting better, but as you can just about make out in this picture, the latest's prints colour is off. It seems to be faded and have somewhat of a tinge of cream to the colour. The previous two prints had issues but as you can see their colours match whilst the latest doesn't.

HiRes link

This picture shows the 2nd print and the 3rd print (most recent) side by side and a bit closer together. The latest print on the right has a cream tinge to it.

HiRes link

Here's I've stacked the 2 pieces ontop of each other to make it much easier to compare. The latest print is on the bottom and the previous print is on top. As you can see there is a cream tinge to it and some of the colours look faded. In the previous version (the top one), you can see a difference between the black and dark grey 'legs' of the piece. In the most recent (bottom

piece), there's not that much of a difference between the two.
HiRes link

This shows the bottom of the piece. ot too concerned about the bottom, but this does show the colour difference. The most recent print is on the left and the previous print is on the right. It has a cream tinge and is much more faded than the previous version.
HiRes link

So the history so far is:-

Print 1 - Snowy finish and very 'noisy' colours as a result. No problems with the surface as such
Print 2 - Colours were good, no snowy issues and colours were smooth. Surface had divots and layer chunks missing
Print 3 - Surface was good and smooth, pretty glossy I might add which I liked. Colours look wrong as they seem to have a tinge of cream and looks faded (more obvious in some areas than others)

So, I'm off to contact Shapeways again for attempt number 4. I bet they must love my emails(!)

On the plus side, I did order a second item in strong and flexible, and that came through and looks fine from what I can tell. I'll post that one up in a week or two once I've finished processing it.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [maartje](#) on Fri, 22 Mar 2013 15:23:39 GMT
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Hi Psychobob,

Just got your mail, I'm going to discuss this internally, made a new complaint for it and requested a free reprint for you again.

Please keep contacting us if you have quality issues, we are here to help you!

Have a nice weekend!
Cheers Maartje

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Psychobob](#) on Sat, 23 Mar 2013 14:10:29 GMT
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Thanks!

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Youknowwho4eva](#) on Mon, 25 Mar 2013 15:15:17 GMT
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Thank you too for your continued patience. I know this has become a lengthy ordeal. But you have helped us find issue that we can now address.

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [nickelroadgifts](#) on Mon, 25 Mar 2013 16:26:33 GMT
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Wow great to see a company stick behind their product and really work with their designer! Lesson to be learned here! And great way to deal with it OP instead of just firing off a series of tirades!

Kudos to all!

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Psychobob](#) on Mon, 15 Apr 2013 20:41:40 GMT
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Greetings all!

The latest reprint arrived last week and I'm sure Shapeways CS will be happy to hear that they can see the back of me on this, as I'm very pleased with the re-print!

I've only had enough time to take a very quick picture but below is picture of the new re-print. No frosting/snowy issues, layer chunks missing or incorrect colours! The colours look really nice in person

At this point in time, I'm also feeling those misprints may have actually been a blessing in disguise as I now have some spares to test smoothing out on.

So far the first test was a disaster, simply spraying on my usual varnish reacted in a really odd way (I can only imagine it reacted to the glue solution these are dipped in) and completely frosted over. You could barely see any of the original texture below it. I got a few more tests going on the pieces (trying a varnish I use for oil paints now), but can't report back on anything yet.

Once I've finished those test I'll probably then make a post on my website, take some better pictures and then maybe even put this up in my shop

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [Youknowwho4eva](#) on Tue, 16 Apr 2013 12:54:18 GMT
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Does Happy Dance

Subject: Re: Portal 2 FCS print, a bit disappointed at the quality
Posted by [maartje](#) on Tue, 16 Apr 2013 18:20:21 GMT
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Hey Psychobob,

Super news, - thanks for the update!

I'm happy that I could help

Cheers Maartje