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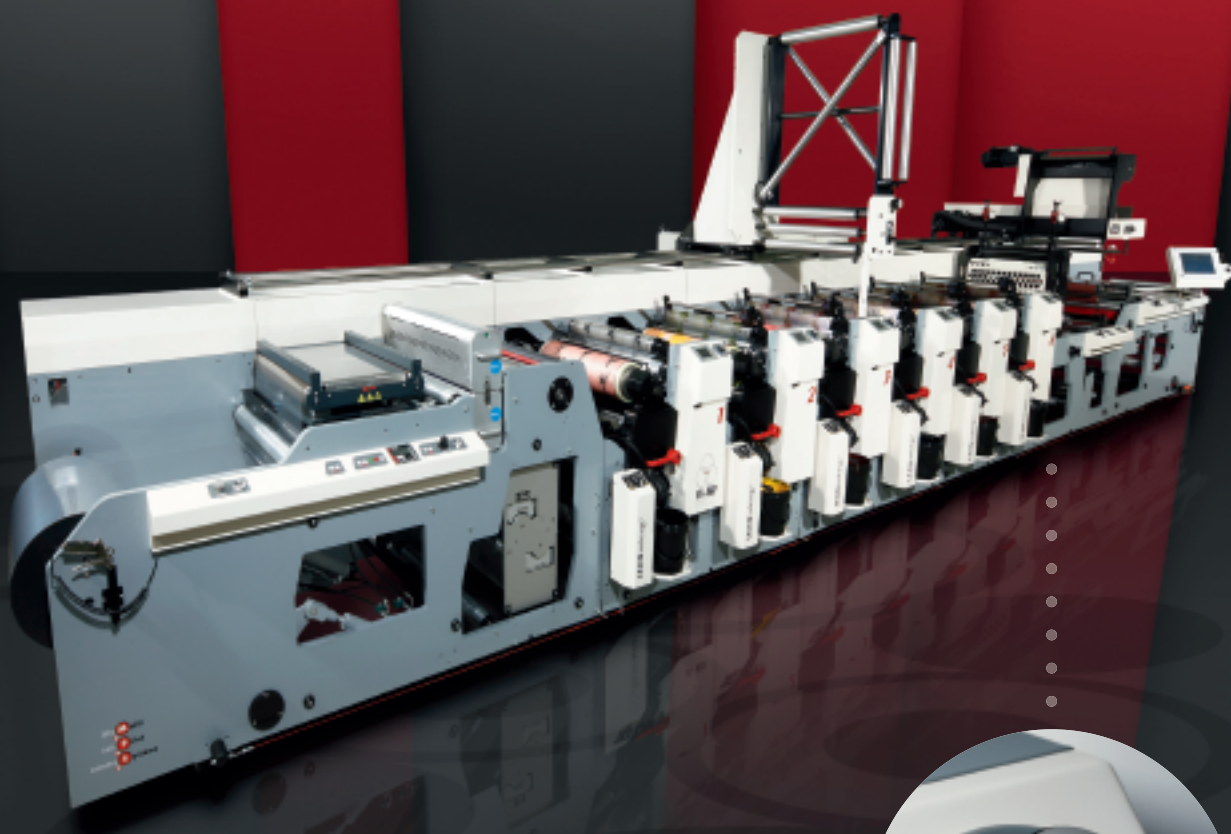
Technologies

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- Braille Inspection
- Security Feature Inspection
- Inkjet Numbering
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- Process Data Collection and Analysis

Applications

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GLOBAL CO-OPERATION

In a very positive move, the world's major self-adhesive label trade associations have come together to create the 'L7', a forum for discussion of issues of common interest in a rapidly globalizing world.

The new grouping was created at a summit hosted by Labelexpo Asia in Shanghai. The L7 will hold its first full meeting in Barcelona in March then at Labelexpo Americas in Chicago in September.

In addition to FINAT and TLMI, the other five members of the L7 are PEIAC (China), LMAI (India), JFLP (Japan), Latma (Australia), and Salma (New Zealand). An 'L8' or even 'L9' could well be formed with the addition of Latin American organizations such as Brazil's ABIEA and the newly founded Mexican label association.

Such a global forum has long been advocated by this magazine and leading industry figure Mike Fairley, founder of L&L and Tarsus director of strategic development, who called for the creation of a joint global position on environmental affairs at the FINAT congress in Paris two years ago. The simple fact is that the major global end users are already meeting with global standards bodies to determine sets of 'sustainability' regulations (see Danielle Jerschefske's article on page 22) which will have a huge impact on label converters wherever they are located. If we do not have a voice at this table, we could as an industry be saddled with onerous obligations which harm instead of improve our competitiveness and ability to invest. So the L7/8/9 should now press to be represented on bodies like the Global Packaging Project to offer label input on the whole area of sustainability and environment. The GPP brings together the world's most powerful brands and packaging manufacturers to define a common 'language' for the global sustainability debate.

Already the L7 has made a positive start, identifying areas where they can make an immediate start on issues like developing a common environment platform and setting common entry criteria for the global label awards, as well as exchanging data and opinions via a new FINAT-built website.

The Tarsus group is meanwhile developing a global label summit in 2011 which will bring together the global label associations, global end users, converters, legislators and other key influencers in a forum where these issues can be discussed.

None of this is to say that regional associations are no longer required. But as an industry we do need a global voice – and fast.

ANDY THOMAS

GROUP MANAGING EDITOR

athomas@labelsandlabeling.com

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L&L

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INBOX

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If you have not seen or heard of 2D or QR Barcodes, you soon will. Most media experts predict that printed 2D Codes on any and all printed media, will become more common in our daily consumer culture than mobile phone Texting has.

Cell phone cameras with Texting OR Internet connectivity instantly take you to rich audio video media content via the Cross-Medial link to any URL. Soon you can bluetooth these scanned 2D Codes to larger video screens such as iPad, TV, PC, video monitors or friends' Smart phones.

Most packaging, labels, DVD and video game packaging, POS Signage, catalogs, magazines, newspaper, print ads and educational books will soon have 2D barcodes.

Europe, the Americas, Canada, Australia and Asia are rapidly catching up to Japan and growing the 2D Code Media evolution / revolution which many see as a paradigm shift in cross-media marketing / communications and creating consumer behavior changes within our media culture.

2D Code trends are being driven by strategic financially ROI driven investments from most every global wireless cell phone provider, cell phone manufacturers, mobile and e-marketing groups, Ad agencies and many global consumer brands and e-media ad agencies are engaging within 2D code applications, including Pay Per Click for cross-media communications and marketing. ALL will be heavily promoting code scanning on TV ad campaigns.

Soon we will see 2D or QR code printed decals & labels on most every storefront, more common than the "Visa Accepted Here" decals & labels. Any business that has a web site will have a 2D Code on business cards, pizza boxes, web sites with discount coupons, links to You Tube Videos or any offers that can be updated at anytime via the URL content.

Lou Berceli
Digital Label System Solutions

Hi Lou – Thanks for your post. You are correct; there is a wave of new technology coming, driven by the growth of easy to use smart phones and mobile applications. What most people don't realize is that the technology has already moved far beyond simple 2D and QR barcodes. In the not so distant future, you may not even need a barcode. A good example is the "Google Goggles" mobile app for Android-based phones, whereby a user can simply take a picture of an item, place, or thing with their mobile phone to search the web – no barcode or RFID chip is involved. Currently, even more advanced software is in Beta testing that will take this technology to the next level and transform the way people use their phones, link to other devices / technology, and communicate. From a digital printing / label perspective, I feel this technology is complimentary to printing, not destructive.

Stephen G Saunders
Citadel Industries, Inc.

For extended versions of these threads, plus the chance to contribute, visit www.labelsandlabeling.com/blog.



End users and brand protection...

Brand Managers need to participate in the process of developing brand protection, pilferage and counterfeiting, tamper evident label/tape solutions. Tamper evident/security label development is a job that not only costs a lot but also takes away a lot of productive time. It is the need of the hour, that brand managers, instead of shooting down products developed and presented, should actually begin to participate and indulge in aiding development of such products that they would eventually use. This way they would effectively be a part of the development of practical solutions to counter pilferage, duplication and counterfeiting.

Harveer Sahni
Managing director at Weldon Celloplast Limited

That goes without saying. If the consumer is viewing, touching or interacting with the product, they are experiencing the brand. Therefore brand managers have a stake in how product security is presented to the market. If one's brand identity is meant to convey consumer friendliness, it makes little sense to have (say) a tamper-evident design that frustrates the end-user.

Doug Wegman
Marketing & strategic planning at Hammer Packaging

I agree with Doug, it does go without saying that Brand Managers need to be involved from the get go. Are you finding that this is not the case? If so, then maybe the sales teams need to engage the clients better and ask the right questions to understand the client's requirements. I have seen that sales people are at times more focused on "selling what we make" vs. selling what the clients actually need. As in any business, it's about the customer's needs. To develop successful products and solutions, one has to live & breathe from the clients' point of view and only way to do that is by engaging the clients by inquiring and learning from the process to customize the product to meet their specific requirements. In my experience, by using the customer actively in the development process, you will notice better results and longer-lasting & stronger relationships.

Nimitt Adhvaryu
Director of business development, OMNI Systems, Inc.

NEWS

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

YORK HITS ACQUISITION TRAIL AGAIN

York Label has acquired Southern Atlantic Label, a converter based in Chesapeake, Virginia, USA. Founded in 1972 and employing 130 people, Southern Atlantic Label's primary market segment is food including poultry, deli meats, cooking oils and sauces in addition to beverages, durable goods, healthcare and personal care; which align well with York's core markets.

John McKernan, York Label's president and CEO, commented: 'The addition of Southern Atlantic Label to the York Label platform brings benefits to all stakeholders. Southern Atlantic Label is complementary to our company not only from a regional perspective, but it will create new growth opportunities with world class consumer product companies. Southern Atlantic Label associates will benefit as a result of the strength of York Label's structure and focused investments. Its customers will benefit due to expanded capabilities of York Label in addition to the outstanding quality, responsiveness and service which has been consistently demonstrated by Southern Atlantic Label.'

Terms of the acquisition were not disclosed, but the transaction was 100 percent funded via new capital infusion by Diamond Castle Holdings (DCH) and York Label management.

LAKE SETS UP SOFTWARE SUBSIDIARY

Lake Image Systems, a supplier of verification and inspection systems, has launched a subsidiary, Lake Image Web Technologies. The new company will develop software tools and products for sale exclusively through the Lake Image group of companies.

The move is said to reflect Lake Image's desire to extend its reach and grow beyond its existing market of digital printers and mailing houses into the wider commercial printing market where integrated variable data reading and print quality inspection are increasingly required. Lake Image has already launched IntegraVision PQ which provides commercial printers and label manufacturers with consistent repeatability, essential in pharmaceutical, medical, and food packaging printing.



REPRESENTATIVES from the Japanese, Chinese, North American, European, Indian, Australian and New Zealand label associations meeting at Labelexpo Asia in Shanghai

GLOBAL ASSOCIATIONS GATHER AT LABELEXPO

FIRST meeting for new 'L7' group sets out global priorities

The world's major self-adhesive label trade associations have come together to create the 'L7', a forum for discussion of issues of common interest in a rapidly globalizing world.

The new grouping was created at a summit hosted by Labelexpo Asia in Shanghai, followed by a networking dinner supported by L&L. The L7 and will hold its first full meeting in Barcelona to coincide with the FINAT technical seminar on March 12-13. The second meeting will be hosted by Labelexpo Americas in Chicago this September.

In addition to FINAT and TLMI, the other five members of the L7 are PEIAC (China), LMAI (India), JFLP (Japan), Latma (Australia), and Salma (New Zealand). An 'L8' or even 'L9' could well be formed with the addition of Latin American organizations such as Brazil's ABIEA and the newly founded Mexican label association.

Such a global forum has long been advocated by this magazine and leading industry figure Mike Fairley, founder of L&L and Tarsus director of strategic development.

Commenting on the global association meeting, Fairley said 'The L7 should now press to be represented on the Global Packaging Project to offer label input on the whole area of sustainability and environment.' The GPP brings together the world's most powerful brands and

packaging manufacturers to define a common 'language' for the global sustainability debate.

The Shanghai Labelexpo meeting – which was addressed on global trends by L&L editor Andy Thomas and Tarsus Labels group MD Roger Pellow – identified four areas of interest for collaboration: networking, including a young managers' network; knowledge sharing in areas like technical education, standardization, legislation, management education and lean production; joint promotion of the industry; and collaboration on sustainability and environmental issues.

The first practical step will be an exchange of market and association data, with FINAT building an internet platform where member associations can review and consult on each other's programs and activities. The March Barcelona meeting will focus on the standardization of label competition formats.

The Tarsus group is meanwhile understood to be developing a global label summit in 2011 which would bring together the global label associations, global end users, converters, legislators and other key influencers.

Roger Pellow commented: 'It is essential that the label associations around the world start to communicate and establish global standards before the global brands and retail groups force their own agenda on the labels industry.'



ASTRO-MED ACQUIRES LABEL LINE

Astro-Med has acquired Label Line, a manufacturer of labels and tags located in Asheboro, North Carolina.

Label Line will become part of Astro-Med's QuickLabel Systems brand, a manufacturer of digital color label printers and related labels, tags, and ink supplies. The facilities and employees of the former Label Line will remain in North Carolina and enable QuickLabel Systems to serve customers nationwide with offset and flexographic printed labels, hot stamp labels, string tag labels, apparel labels and tags, barcode labels, and specialty custom-printed materials.

Albert W. Ondis, Astro-Med's CEO, said: 'Acquiring this established label converter and custom label print house will allow QuickLabel Systems to serve customers across the United States with increased production capacity and broader label product offerings. Customers who own our label printers will benefit from these expanded capabilities, and we will also be able to add new customers who are in the market for custom label printing services, especially for the very high-end custom labels demanded by food and beverage and health and beauty brands for their primary display label packaging.'

'The acquisition of Label Line is in accordance with the three-year strategic business plan we adopted in August, which calls for us to make a few modest acquisitions that, along with internal growth, will drive our revenue toward the \$100 million mark. We expect this acquisition to allow us to realize approximately \$5 million in sales that will be accretive to revenues as well as earnings.' Bill Lineberry, former president of Label Line, will join QuickLabel Systems as a consultant. 'For years I've admired QuickLabel's digital label printers and the specialty color thermal transfer ribbons and labels they have tailor-made for their printers. I'm delighted to be able to contribute the talents of our press operators, production artists, salespeople, and the capabilities of the 21 presses we have here in North Carolina to the growing QuickLabel Systems business,' he said.



THE INDIA LABEL SHOW is now Labelexpo India

TARSUS EXTENDS LABELEXPO SERIES

The Tarsus group organizer of the Labelexpo Global Series of events – has announced the launch of the South China Label Show, part of the Labelexpo Global Series, to take place on 25-27 October 2010 at the Jinhan Exhibition Center in Guangzhou.

The launch of the South China Label Show follows the success of Labelexpo Asia 2009, which attracted 16,601 visitors to the event in December. Market feedback reportedly indicated the need for a show in the south – one of the country's main printing and production hubs. Guangdong Province alone has some 18,000 print related organizations, with 1,500 of these specializing in narrow web applications. Annual per capita label consumption in China is less than one square meter, compared to over 15 sq meters in the US and Europe, giving an indication of the tremendous growth potential of the region.

L&L sponsored a successful conference-based event in Guangzhou in 2006. The new show, however, will be a full exhibition featuring a wide range of presses and other working machinery. This will be complemented by an educational seminar program.

At the same time, Tarsus Labels group MD Roger Pellow announced that the India Label Show will now be known as Labelexpo India. Already the largest label event in India, the show joins events in Brussels, Chicago and Shanghai. Labelexpo India 2010 will take place on December 8-10 at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi. The previous event in 2008 attracted over 200 exhibitors and almost 5,000 visitors.

'The Labelexpo brand has set standards in our industry for the past 30 years. In the same way, Labelexpo India will support the vibrant Indian label industry and provide a platform to present the latest innovations,' commented Pellow.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST
GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

**SUN LICENSES BRAND
PROTECTION SYSTEMS**

Graphic Security Systems Corporation (GSSC) and Sun Chemical have signed a license agreement that utilizes Sun Chemical's security products with GSSC's technologies to authenticate branded consumer products.

Sun Chemical's brand protection technologies include the Verigard proprietary machine-readable covert taggant system and a range of secure inks and coatings. GSSC owns a comprehensive intellectual property portfolio, with 22 USA patents and other worldwide issued applications in anti-counterfeiting, fraud identification, online authentication and related technologies.

**NAPA CONVERTERS GAIN 24/7
ACCESS TO WINE STOCKS**

UPM Raflatac has launched a 24-hour service offering to the Napa Valley, California, region in the US. Converters can now take advantage of next day delivery of the company's wine labelstock products if their order is placed by 12:00 noon PST.

All wine products are available trimless at 5,000 feet, and 95 percent of all rolls delivered splice-free. UPM Raflatac's wine labelstock product range for the Americas market now includes products compatible with HP Indigo technology.



PUERTO MADERO, Buenos Aires, South America

**ALTECH SETS UP MANUFACTURING
IN ARGENTINA**

ITALIAN APPLICATOR manufacturer opens Latin America subsidiary

Altech, the Italy-based manufacturer of labeling equipment and identification systems, has opened a subsidiary in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to serve the Latin America market.

A number of the company's automatic labeling systems will be manufactured in the new subsidiary, and will be available with an Argentine certificate of origin. Import duties that are applied in some South American countries to European products can therefore be avoided. Altech LA is a joint venture with Tema, formerly Altech's distributor for the region.

Altech's product range includes applicators for self-adhesive,

wrap-around and shrink sleeve labeling, as well as labeling heads and material identification systems.

'We are committed to manufacturing labeling systems that offer high-end quality and performance at extremely competitive prices,' said Gerardo Naveira, managing director of Altech LA. 'We are also going to trade in complementary products, such as label printers and ribbons, in order to offer an exhaustive range of items that can meet the very diversified and complex labeling needs of the food, chemical, cosmetics and pharmaceutical industries, our natural absorption markets.'

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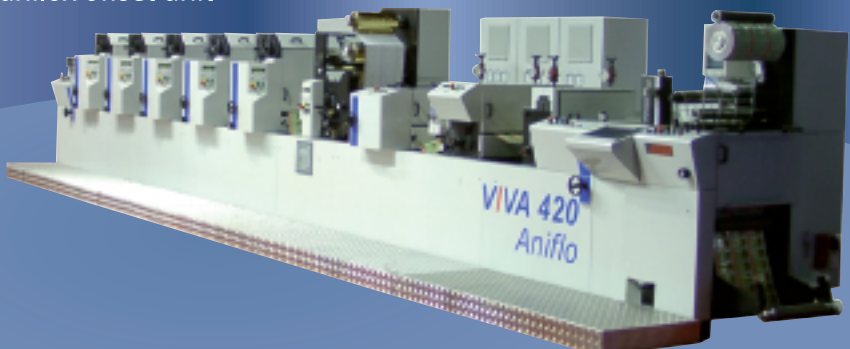
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TARSUS REVAMPS MEXICO SUMMIT

LATIN AMERICA summit adds networking opportunities

Label Summit Latin America, sponsored by L&L, returns to Mexico City on May 11-12. The event will host a number of new features in its fourth outing in Mexico, including a revamped conference program, round-table discussion groups and extended opportunities for networking.

The conference will replicate the successful afternoon break-out sessions that were introduced at the event in Sao Paulo last year. The afternoons will divide into separate management and technology streams, with the former focusing on streamlining production and costs, taking advantage of multi-media platforms, and employee development. Technology sessions will

center on digital and flexo printing, label applicator technology and the growing use of management information systems.

Leading figures from industry associations from various parts of the world will provide attendees with overviews of different markets on the morning of the first day, while a special guest speaker from outside the industry will provide a fresh perspective on business leadership and challenges.

Other sessions will focus on the challenges of a running a family business, international partnerships, environmental sustainability and security and brand protection. Representatives from leading global

brands will offer the end user's perspective, while there will also be presentations dedicated to sleeve labeling and the growing private label sector.

Round-table sessions with industry experts will take place on the morning of the second day, allowing for informal and in-depth discussions about a variety of topics including global markets, management and environmental sustainability.

Following on from the successful global association meetings at Labelexpo Asia at the end of last year, the event's organizers intend to provide an expanded platform during the Summit for networking between converters and associations from North and South America and Europe. In a further development, visits to local converters and demo centers, organized on the day after the Summit, will give visitors the chance to see demonstrations of the latest press technology.

'Returning to Mexico for a fourth time, it is essential for the event to evolve and give further value to delegates,' said James Quirk, it's editor for Latin America, who will co-chair the conference.

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PROFLEX

Proflex 'S' Series

- > New Touch Screen Operator Interface
- > Servo-assisted control on all press operations
- > Fully Programmable Digital Control Platform
- > Preset tension parameters for flexibility of substrates
- > Superior and consistent print quality
- > Higher productivity & reduced waste
- > Auto Register option
- > 250 & 330mm web widths
- > Wide range of accessories & options



REFLEX

Reflex 'S' Series, Re-Register System

- > New Single Colour Press Design
- > Servo controlled re-register system
- > U.V & IR drying options
- > High speed production
- > Full range of options
- > Compact converting press
- > 250mm or 330mm web widths

CENTRAFLEX

Centraflex 'UV' Series

- > New Press design 5+ 1 or 6 + 1 Colour options
- > 1000mm CI Central Impression Drum option
- > Full IR or UV optional drying systems
- > Chilled Central Drum option
- > Wide range of Accessories
- > Superior printing platform for unsupported materials
- > 250 & 330mm web widths



WEBFLEX

Webflex 'S' Series

- > Servo Drive line
- > Touch screen control
- > Preset Parameters for all substrate types
- > Job information storage & retrieval
- > Auto register control option
- > IR & UV Drying systems
- > Chill Roll option
- > 330 & 430mm web widths



LABEL TRAXX ADDS MASTERPIECE TO PARTNER LIST

MIS users can order materials on-line

Masterpiece Graphix (MGX) has become a supplier partner for Tailored Solutions' Label Traxx, a management information system for the flexo/digital converting industry. MGX materials and services will be available through the Label Traxx system as a part of Label Traxx's December software update.

Masterpiece Graphix specializes in coating digital label stocks. Printers using the Label Traxx system will be able to reduce their order entry time by connecting directly and securely to Masterpiece Graphix, eliminating double entries and greatly reducing erroneous entries. MGX, through Label Traxx, will also provide immediate order

confirmation and advance shipment notice data. Utilizing the barcode scanning feature of Label Traxx, users will have the ability to scan incoming and work-in-process MGX material to maintain an accurate inventory count with ease.

'We're excited to offer Masterpiece Graphix digital materials to Label Traxx users,' said Doug Watson, president of Masterpiece Graphix. 'Label Traxx is a great system for digital press users, and we are a one-stop shop for digital sheet and roll products. Masterpiece Graphix plus Label Traxx equals an ideal partnership for the flexo/digital label printer.'

NUOVA GIDUE SIGNS SMAG AS FRENCH DISTRIBUTOR

Nuova Gidue and Smag have signed an agreement which will see Smag distribute the Italian company's products in France.

Federico d'Annunzio, MD of Nuova Gidue, said: '[I] greatly thank Saverio Monopoli and Graphic Evolutions for the strong support in France during the last very difficult year, when GE has shown true and effective loyalty to our company. Nuova Gidue and Graphic Evolutions will fully continue their cooperation and focus together on the North African emerging markets, where we plan to widen our sales and service organization and strengthen our actual presence.'

Stephan Rateau, MD of Smag, commented: 'We had for many years a successful relation with Gidue. French converters are very satisfied with the Gidue machines, and today we are

happy to work with Nuova Gidue to support existing installations and to propose innovation and creative solutions. It is good for our customers and for our industry.'

Federico d'Annunzio continued: 'We must provide a perfect local sales and service support. The past "dreams" of globalization led to mistakes which must not be repeated. A strong local organization is fundamental to the French market, and Smag can provide a true first-class service. Successful innovation needs focus on an effective 360 degree partnership.'

The distribution agreement includes the full Nuova Gidue range of flexo, offset and multi-process combination presses, including the new press lines which have been recently introduced to the market – Short Combat and Master Combat.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES



SCHREINER HONORED BY PHARMA GIANT

Leading German converter Schreiner MediPharm has been presented with Wyeth's 'Global Recognition for Outstanding Wyeth Suppliers' (GROWS) Award at a ceremony in Munich, Germany.

A panel of Wyeth executives evaluated the global pharmaceutical corporation's suppliers and selected six winners in six different categories. Schreiner MediPharm was chosen for its achievements in the area of 'Continuous Improvement'.

Wyeth's VP and chief procurement officer Paul Addis commented: 'High quality materials and dependable service are critical to providing the exceptional products our customers expect and consumers deserve. This year's winners have distinguished themselves through their strategic alignment with our business, their operational performance and outstanding quality, their world-class innovation and their commitment to continuous improvement. We are very appreciative of their strong support and happy to recognize their contributions.'

Roland Schreiner, president of Schreiner MediPharm, said: 'The award motivates us at Schreiner MediPharm to maintain our high standards and our ongoing commitment to improvement and excellence. We thank Wyeth for recognizing our efforts and we will continue improving as a reliable and flexible partner in the future.'

CORRECTION: DURST CONTACT DETAILS

We have been asked to point out that the contact details for inkjet specialist Durst in the Labels & Labeling annual Directory and Yearbook refer to the company's US office. The primary contact should be the company's Italian operation, as follows:

Helmuth Munter,
segment manager, label printing

Durst Phototechnik AG

Vittorio-Veneto-Straße 59
I-39042 Brixen, Italy

Tel: + +39/0472/810111 (main)

Tel: + +39/0472/810114 (direct line)

Web: www.durst.it

Email: hmunter@durst.it

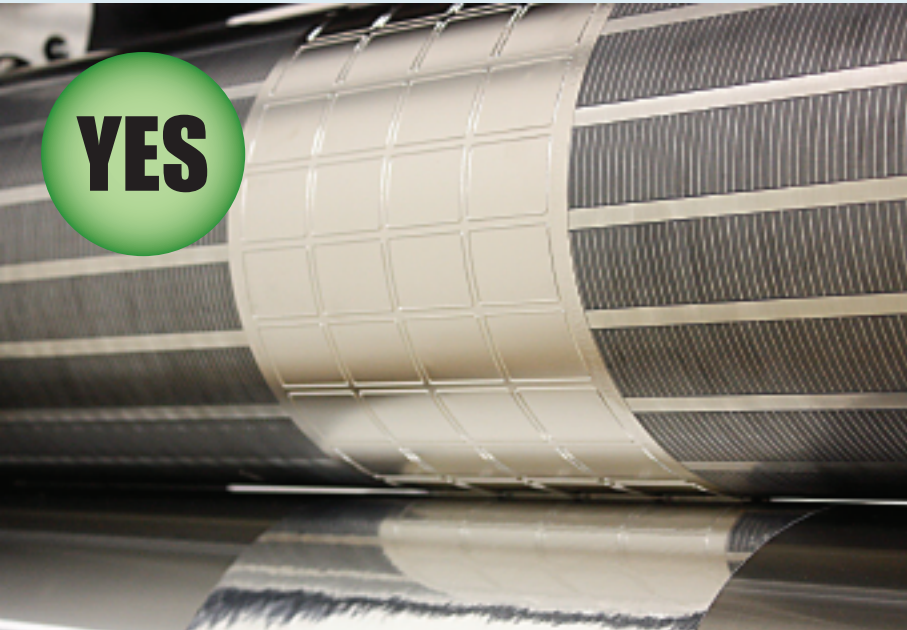
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NEW PRODUCTS



1 OPTIPRIME HP-OPTIMIZED SUBSTRATES NEWPAGE CORPORATION

NewPage Corporation launched its HP Indigo-certified OptiPrime Digital label paper at Dscoop5, an annual conference for Hewlett-Packard users.

OptiPrime Digital, designed for printing pressure sensitive labels, is pre-optimized allowing converters to skip traditional digital print surface pretreatments. OptiPrime Digital has undergone testing by HP and the Rochester Institute of Technology School of Print Media for HP Indigo ws4500 and ws6000 presses.

OptiPrime Digital label paper is said to feature a smooth semi-gloss finish, premium brightness, and high strength for die-cutting and matrix stripping during pressure sensitive label converting.

OptiPrime Digital is available as a NewPage tri-certified grade, indicating chain-of-custody certification by three third-party organizations including the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) schemes.

NewPage Corporation has also introduced EcoPoint Plus, a bottle label paper featuring 10 percent post-consumer waste (PCW) recycled fiber.

EcoPoint Plus is third-party chain-of-custody certified to the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the Program for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) schemes.

Available in 70, 75 and 80 grams per square meter basis weights, EcoPoint Plus features a bright white print surface for 'excellent' artwork reproduction in offset and rotogravure printing.

2 LX900E COLOR LABEL PRINTER PRIMERA TECHNOLOGY

Primera Technology has launched its LX900e color label printer. The LX900e is the company's fastest inkjet color label printer, producing labels at speeds of up to 4.5 inches per second – almost 17 times faster than Primera's LX810e machine.

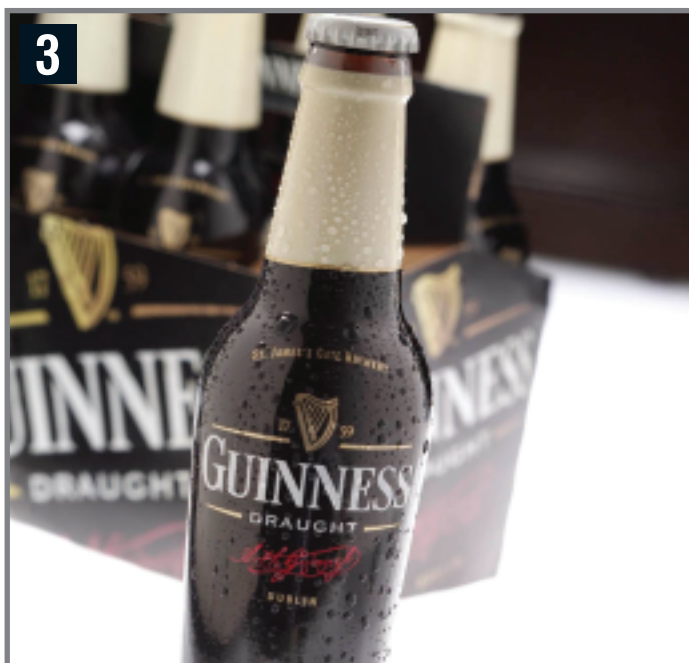
Separate ink cartridges for cyan, magenta, yellow and black keep operating costs low since only one color at a time needs to be replaced. The semi-permanent print head reportedly produces razor-sharp text, brilliant graphics and 'the most photo-realistic printing ever offered on a dedicated short-run label printing device', says the company.

Mark D. Strobel, Primera's vice president of sales and marketing, said: 'We listened carefully to our users. They told us that faster printing and separate ink tanks were the most important new features we could offer. At the same time, they weren't willing to sacrifice the excellent print quality they were getting from their existing Primera color label printer. LX900e delivers on all of this and more.'

Typical applications include product labels for coffee, wine, water, bakery, confectionary, meat, cheese and other specialty and gourmet foods. LX900e is also suited to private labeling, test marketing, pre-press proofing, hazardous goods marking and retail labeling.

Printer drivers are included for Windows XP/Vista/7 and Mac OS X 10.5 (or higher) along with label design software for Windows. Most other popular graphic design programs for Windows and Mac can also be used to design and print labels.

Substrates include many different inkjet-qualified label and tag materials, including Primera's TuffCoat Extreme white and clear polyester and white BOPP. Printed labels are said to be water, scratch, smudge and tear-resistant. Water-resistant paper labels are available in high-gloss, semi-gloss and matte finishes. Label size is as small as 19 mm (.75") wide and 19 mm (.75") long up to a maximum of 203.2 mm (8") wide and 609.6 mm (24") long.



3

SHRINK FILM LABELS EASTMAN CHEMICAL

Full-body shrink film labels manufactured with Eastman Embrace LV copolyester, now available in Europe, enable brand owners to create differentiated package designs. The film's durability and toughness are married to the resin's ability to cover uniquely contoured and shaped bottles and jars, increasing the visual impact on consumers confronted with a dizzying array of both international brands and increasing private-label offerings.

'Brand owners must do everything possible to attract anxious consumers in this tough economy,' said Michael Hartmann, market development manager for packaging at Eastman Chemical Company. 'The ability to retain or grow market share through special promotions fits perfectly well in the Embrace family's capabilities.'

Eastman Embrace copolyester can be printed with thermochromatic, metallic and glow-in-the-dark inks and used with spot varnishing and Organic Photovoltaic (OPV). Its ability to be decorated and embossed provides new alternatives for shrink labeling. By consistently stretching the film from the top and bottom of the bottle, Eastman Embrace copolyester eliminates 'smiley faces' on square and oblong containers.

Eastman Embrace copolyester for shrink film is claimed recyclable and environmentally friendly. It doesn't contain halogens, sulfur, nitrogen, lead, mercury, cadmium or hexavalent chromium. The Embrace materials are designed 'to be compatible with today's recycling infrastructure', says the company. Eastman Embrace copolyester for shrink film allows for thinner packaging walls and therefore reduces overall material consumption. Embrace resins do not use glue to adhere to bottles and can be fully removed from containers with no glue residue.

4



SCREEN EXPOSING UNIT AWT WORLD TRADE

AWT World Trade has expanded the options available with its two models of screen exposing units – the Pro-Light 1 and Pro-Light 2. Now screen printers can choose the size and features best suited to their production needs, enabling them to produce the high quality screen exposures quickly and without reshooting.

'Transferring artwork to the screen is one of the most important steps in producing high-quality screen prints,' said Michael Green, president of AWT World Trade. 'Many printers still under-expose their screens and do not achieve the emulsion hardness required for fine detail work. The digital timer enables the exact exposure times critical to so many screen printing applications, and the UV spectrum lamps provide quick and consistent exposure as well. We have the right exposure unit for any application, no matter what the printer's skill level or budget.'

The Pro-Light 1 vacuum frame and light source combination bench-model units are designed for beginners and professionals alike. The standard models come with a choice of three lamp types: focused fluorescent lamps, for directing maximum exposing energy to the screen; high-output black lights, for enhanced efficiency, faster exposure, and longer emulsion life; and high-output UV spectrum lights, for four-color or detail work.

The Pro-Light 1's flexible rubber vacuum blanket helps maintain complete contact between film positive and mesh to prevent distortion, returning to its original shape after the exposure cycle has been completed. All bench models can be equipped with an optional stand and storage shelf if desired. Depending on size, units come with eight, 22, or 30 lamps.

09.14.10





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THE COPENHAGEN CLIMATE summit accelerated the rush by global retailers to respond to public concerns over climate change (photograph: Christian Åslund / Greenpeace)

Green impact

DANIELLE JERSCHEFSKE examines forthcoming sustainability legislation that will impact converters across the world in the very near future

The landscape of 'global sustainability' is changing fast. The groundwork for a number of sustainable packaging regulations has been laid and will be enacted by the end of 2012. ISO is developing international sustainable packaging standards most likely based on current European values. The Sustainable Packaging Coalition is creating an on-pack label to increase the rate and reach of recycling in the US and Canada. Brand owners are seriously evaluating supply chain carbon and energy emissions. Is the label industry prepared?

ISO SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING STANDARDS

In early December 2009, Stockholm, Sweden welcomed around seventy packaging representatives to meet with ISO leaders to lay the groundwork for international sustainable packaging standards. Representatives attended from the US, China, Japan, Korea and eleven European countries. ISO has created a dedicated sub-committee, SC4 Packaging and the Environment, which is responsible for all standards related to packaging, with a Secretariat shared between China and Sweden.

It is likely that the ISO standards will be based on existing European packaging and environment standards developed by CEN (European Committee for Standardization). The CEN standards are linked to the EU Packaging and Packaging

LABELS&LABELING

Waste Directive and the Asian guidelines for environmentally conscious packaging. This development holds some serious implications for North American label and packaging manufacturers that are not familiar with the more stringent standards found in Europe.

ISO has proposed standards dealing with source reduction, reuse, recycling, energy recovery, chemical recovery, composting and bio-degradation. Approval is expected by the second quarter of 2012.

The European Organization for Packaging and the Environment, EUROPEN, is enthusiastic about the ISO development. Julian Carroll, EUROPEN's managing director, stressed the problems created for converters by the rapid growth in the number of environmental initiatives, particularly outside Europe. 'Sometimes their goals are contrary to each other and occasionally they don't make any environmental sense. The proposed ISO standards could become a much needed benchmark for any proposed regional, national or even local packaging regulation.'

SPC: EMPOWERING THE CONSUMER

Over the same week that SC4 was established, Anne Bedarf, project manager of the Sustainable Packaging Coalition



"In the wake of the UN climate summit in Copenhagen, brand owners have become acutely aware of the growing global pressure to move to a lower carbon economy within five years"

(SPC), gave an update on the group's Labeling for Recovery Project, via a webinar sponsored by Pira International. Started in May 2007, the project is supported by major blue chip corporations including Mattel, Estee Lauder, PepsiCo and SC Johnson, and aims to create a clear recyclability message for consumers through a widely accepted on-pack label. This will include developing and implementing a reliable, user friendly, consumer-facing website (www.howtorecycle.com).

'We envision that the outcomes from this project will serve to highlight the limitations of the current US recovery system from a collection standpoint,' said Bedarf.

By the end of this year, SPC aims to have data on the effective reach of recycling projects into communities and how much material actually is recycled. In the meantime, it is compiling consumer feedback from on-line sources and reaching out to recyclers, local government and other interested stakeholders. A pilot program will be launched this year.

GREEN GUIDES

The SPC project is being developed around the framework of ISO 14021 and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims, a.k.a. the Green Guides.

The FTC Green Guides outline general principles that apply to all environmental marketing claims and guide consumers in making educated decisions on products they purchase. The Green Guides were first issued in 1992, and reviewed in 2007 because of the explosion of 'environmental' and 'sustainable' claims seen on

packaging. Terms such as 'compostable', 'bio-degradable', and 'recyclability' are all claims that the FTC deems confusing, and which can prevent the development of proper recycling habits. A handful of SPC members attended the ISO meeting in Sweden to ensure that the terminology used in the Label Recovery Project aligns with the ISO.

The SPC will use the British Retail Consortium's universal on-pack recycling label scheme as a model for the US and Canada. Since its introduction in May 2009, the BRC's program has reached fifty signatories.

The BRC on-pack system evaluates three levels of recyclability:

- Recyclable** – 65 percent
- Check local** – 15-65 percent
- Not recyclable** – less than 15 percent

The percentages denote the capability to recycle a particular packaging material within the consumer's local region. For the US market, the SPC is looking to use 60 percent as a threshold because of lack of infrastructure for a number of materials. However, having a higher rate could drive the creation of the required systems; one packaging supplier, Tetra Pak, was driven in the UK to create a recycling system for its materials because it did not want to be labeled as 'not recyclable'.

But Bedarf said there is unlikely to be a single global symbology: 'The symbols used in the UK are not a recognized symbol in the US. Also, the US government requires the chasing arrows symbol to be used on anything pertaining to recycling.' Additionally, the SPC wants the symbols to be more 'official' looking, a design choice that the BRC intentionally did not follow.

The SPC is closely monitoring the partnership between Keep America Beautiful (KBA) and Curbside Value Partnership (CVP) which aim to increase community participation in recycling programs. (www.Earth911.com). In 2008, KBA recycled 189M PET bottles and collected 89M pounds of debris throughout the US. The SPC, KBA and CVP are looking for any technology within the label and packaging industry that will help increase these rates (check SpearPET on page 46).

'CURBING' SUPPLY CHAIN IMPACTS

In the wake of the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen, brand owners have become acutely aware of the growing global pressure to move to a lower carbon

economy within five years. The world's largest brand owners rely heavily on transportation to reach their customers and are seriously evaluating their supply chains to find areas where energy and carbon emissions can be cut, quickly.

Peter Lacy, head of sustainability for Accenture, a global management consulting firm, posted his evaluation of the Summit on www.businessweek.com highlighting the participation of Paul Polman, CEO, Unilever and Muhtar Kent, CEO, Coca-Cola.

Lacy reported Muhtar Kent saying, 'We believe there will be massive innovation at the interface of supply chains and sustainability. We believe the supply chain can be a massive source of competitive advantage in a re-set world.'

Global end users like Coke and PepsiCo have a vested interest in seeing projects like the SPC's Label for Recovery project through to success. Fifty percent of Coke's global packaging weight is non-refillable PET plastic bottles while half of PepsiCo's global packaging by weight is glass and plastic bottles.

With the advent of social media and consumer education, combined with a more functional recycling infrastructure, these massive companies are looking to continue growing, but more sustainably. They will have the tools to reduce their businesses' environmental footprints while keeping shareholders happy.

POSSIBLE EXPANSION OF ON-PACK LABEL:

1. 'Do Not Burn' for dioxins in plastics
2. Home/Industrial Compostable - the USPC, USEC is working on this
3. 'No sourcing information' or 'certification'
4. SPI resin codes with polymer abbreviation too confusing, low recycle rate

WHO'S WHO

- Keep America Beautiful – the not-for-profit organization that educates communities on litter control and waste management
- Curbside Value Partnership - The CVP was formed in 2003 by The Aluminum Association and The Can Manufacturers Institute to help communities grow and sustain their residential curbside recycling programs.

SABRE **X** ***TREME***

LASER LABEL CUTTING SYSTEM

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MODERN Beijing

China roundup

L&L China editor Kevin Liu rounds up the latest developments affecting the Chinese labels industry

CHINESE ECONOMY BOUNCES BACK

– 2009 GDP UP 8.7 PERCENT

Preliminary statistics released by the Chinese government have shown that the country's GDP in 2009 reached 33.5 trillion RMB (\$4.9 trillion), up by 8.7 percent calculated at comparable price, while the growth rate dropped by 0.9 percent compared with 2008. On the quarter-by-quarter basis, the economy grew steadily from 6.2 percent in Q1 to 10.7 percent in Q4.

Industrial production gradually recovered. Profits from 30 major industries out of 39 grew compared with the same period of the previous year, while investment in fixed assets is also up.

Total retail sales of consumer goods throughout the year stood at 12.5 trillion RMB (\$1.8 trillion), a growth rate of 16.9 percent in 2009 and an increase of 2.1 percent compared with 2008. Retail sales in urban areas reached 8.5 trillion RMB (\$1.2 trillion), up by 15.5 percent. Outside the major conurbations, retail sales of consumer goods (at and below county level) also showed a healthy 15.7 percent growth, standing at 4 trillion RMB (\$0.6 trillion) by the end of last year.

Retail sales of 20 consumer goods categories grew by a large margin – for example, garments, shoes and hats, fabrics and clothing up by 18.8 percent, furniture by 35.5 percent and automobiles 32.3 percent.

Prices paid by consumers were on the decrease throughout the year, but are now rising for some products like tobacco, liquor, medical care and personal products, food, together with household facilities and maintenance.

Income levels of urban and rural residents maintained steady growth, and employment levels were better than expected. Per capita income of urban residents totaled 18,858 RMB.

Disposable income of urban residents amounted to 17,175 RMB (\$2,750), up by 8.8 percent compared with the previous year. Deducting price factors, the actual growth was 9.8 percent.

The global crisis slashed China's budget surplus by almost \$100 billion. Total export volume was down by 16 percent, and imports down by 11.2 percent, resulting in a trade surplus of \$196.1 billion.

NEW IMPORT TARIFFS FAVOR FLEXO UNIT PRESSES

The Chinese government has published a new schedule of import tariffs for print-related consumables and machinery, which heavily favors in-line flexo presses and roll-fed applicators.

In a Q&A session with officials from the Ministry of Finance, it was announced that a relatively low provisional tariff rate will be levied on key equipment and components which facilitate the introduction and promotion of new technology – such as the unit-type narrow flexographic press. The purpose of this adjustment of tariff rate is to encourage enterprises to innovate, and to boost the development of high-tech industry and advanced manufacturing industry.

In other parts of the new schedule, the import tariff rate on photosensitive plate materials remains the same, but there will be a zero tariff rate on CTP equipment and remote ink controllers for offset presses.

BILL GATES FOUNDATION INVESTS IN BEIREN GROUP

Shares in Beiren Printing Machinery Holdings soared after Microsoft chairman Bill Gates' charitable foundation became a

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AN aerial view of the metropolis of Guangzhou, Guangdong

major shareholder in the Chinese press manufacturer.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, set up by Gates and his wife, paid HK\$15.65 million (\$2m) to buy 7.08 percent, or 7.08 million shares, of the mainland-based printing machinery maker at an average price of HK\$2.21 on July 2, according to a stock exchange filing.

The Gates Foundation is said to favor investments in the package/print machine industry, and it is reported that J.S.Machine, one of China's leading printing and packaging machine manufacturers, is a potential target.

LABOR SHORTAGE HITS PEARL RIVER PRINT INDUSTRY

Business enterprises in Dongguan, Guangdong Province – a key center of the Chinese printing industry – are recovering from the economic crisis but running into an increasingly serious labor shortage. Statistics from the local labor and social security department show that since the second half of 2009, more than 90 percent of enterprises found it difficult to recruit employees. Only 4,000 job seekers responded to the manufacturing industry's special recruitment campaign held not long ago – in contrast with over 11,000 job vacancies. It is estimated that the serious imbalance between supply and demand in the human resources market has led to a supply-demand gap exceeding 50 percent. Enterprises are itching for more hands at the same time as a huge number of migrant workers head for home for the Spring Festival. Some enterprises do not even dare to accept orders. Experts believe that the main reason for the shortage of migrant workers in the Pearl River Delta is the higher pay in the hinterland cities.

BEIJING DINGA ACTS AS SOLE AGENT FOR RYOBI PRESSES

Japanese company Ryobi and Beijing Dinga held a joint press conference to announce further cooperation last month. The

press conference was presided over by Wang Rongde, deputy general manager of Beijing Dinga. A presentation on Ryobi explained it manufactures offset presses, electric tools, car accessories and building products. The 920 series multi-color high-speed offset press, launched in 2006, has sold more than one hundred in China. A newly-developed 1050 series of five color coating offset press on display at drupa in 2008 will be launched in China in 2010.

Beijing Dinga is now the general agent for all types of Ryobi presses covering China's mainland, Hongkong Special Administrative Region and Macau Special Administrative Region.

JOINT VENTURE ESTABLISHES AGFA GRAPHICS ASIA

Agfa Graphics and Shenzhen Brothers Gaodeng Investment Group (Shenzhen Brothers) have signed an agreement to combine their Greater China and ASEAN activities to create a joint venture. Shenzhen Brothers have been distributing Agfa Graphics films since 2000.

The joint venture, named Agfa Graphics Asia, will be able to fully draw on the infrastructure, technology, manufacturing and distribution strength of its founding companies. Agfa Graphics already has subsidiaries in Greater China and ASEAN and a state-of-the-art printing plate factory in Wuxi, China.

In its first year of operations, the new company is expected to achieve sales of 200 million euros. Agfa Graphics will be the majority shareholder with a stake of 51 percent. Shenzhen Brothers will own 49 percent of the company. Chairman of the Board will be Stefaan Vanhooren, president of Agfa Graphics, while Huang Zhiqiang, CEO of Shenzhen Brothers, will become the CEO of the new company.

The new company, with its headquarter in Shenzhen, Guangdong, is expected to go into operation no later than the third quarter of 2010 subject to regulatory approval.

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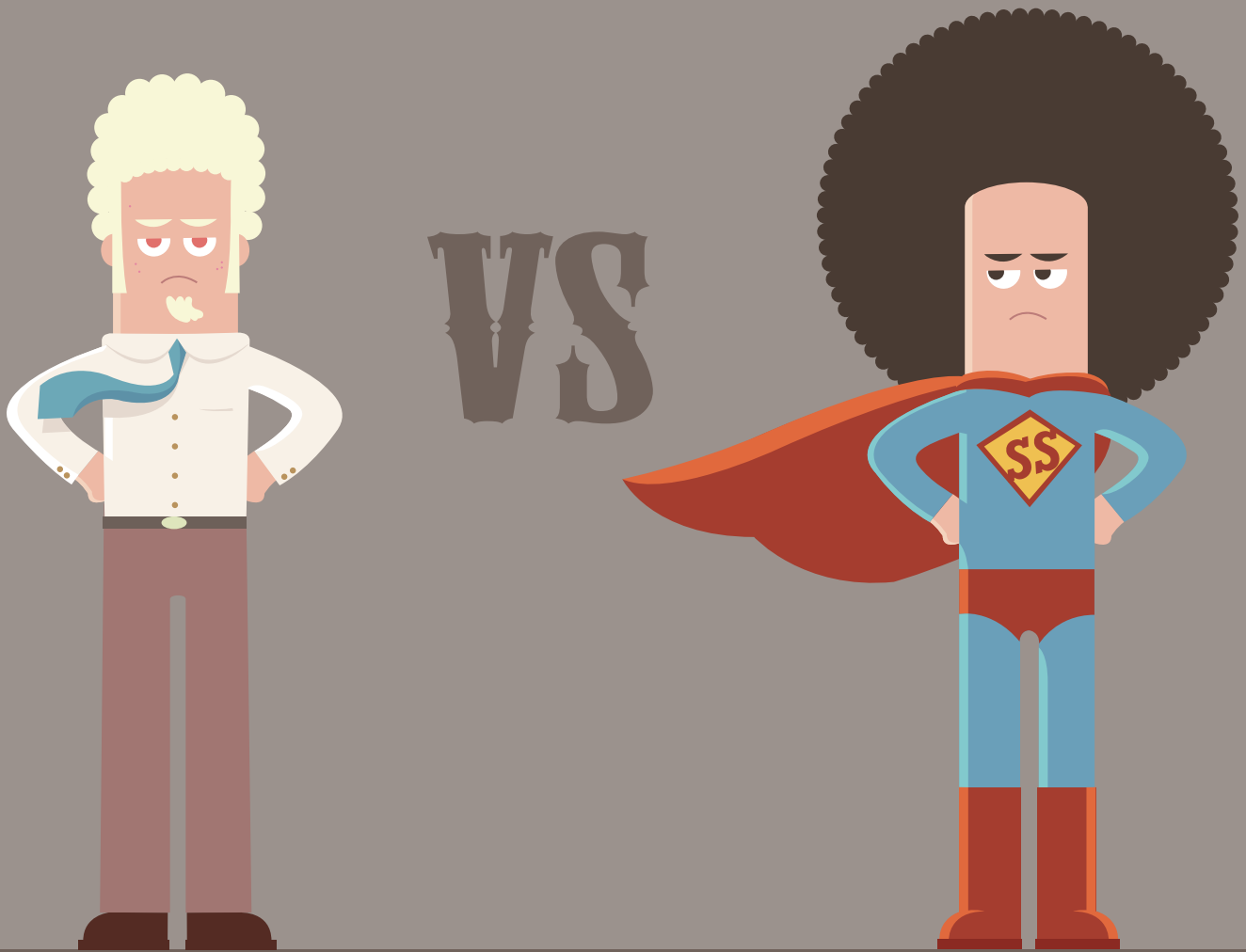
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More...

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Regain your hero status

L&L columnist Bob Cronin, the Open Approach, urges converters to explain to end users how a service-oriented, value-added partnership can help achieve their brand goals

In today's times, it's easy to think things are beyond our control. New advances in production, sustainability initiatives, and security requirements seem forever changing. We are constantly pushed to add equipment, retool processes, and adapt to fluctuating demands. We are faced with higher costs and lower budgets – and fewer resources to get the job done. The value of our businesses are going down, our suppliers are changing terms, and our lenders are switching to enemy lines. With all this against us, what could possibly be on our side?

The answer is in our customers. At first thought, we might think this is conflicting. After all, isn't it the customer who's driving these incessant changes anyway? Isn't it the customer who doesn't understand the unique value we bring them?

The economic downturn changed the landscape. Companies cut programs – and associated label orders – to save costs. Your competitors dropped pricing to get work. Clients pushed for discounts, and you responded. In some cases, you even did jobs at cost (or lower) just to keep them. What all this undercutting has done is reduce your perceived value. You've lost control of the customer and what they can bring to you. Through all the bending over backwards, you've changed your position of leader to order-taker. Customers no longer consider label companies their 'partners'; they consider you one of many possible sources to print their goods.

This has to change. Like no other graphic communications entity – and perhaps no other resource – a label company is its customers' hero. Nothing tells a story like a great package. Visually striking labels move products off the shelf. Brilliantly colored foils, innovative print techniques, and intriguing diecuts compel purchases. Shinksleeves, flexible packaging, and other revolutionary thinking keep product formats fresh and exciting. Special label features are plentiful. Label providers are brand champions. You are your customers' heroes; you simply need to reclaim your title.

With 2009 behind us and markets stabilizing, you need to revisit your approach. You have not stopped being important to your customer, even though it seems so. You just need to get back into the proactive mode that built your business. You need to change things—and regain your control by selling, servicing, and shaping your customer. It starts by demonstrating how you bring value.

VALUE OF LABELS TO COMMUNICATE

People may not see a billboard or television spot or hear a radio commercial. They may not click on a banner ad, open an email, or jump into a social media endeavor. But whether a purchase is considered at retail or online, the one thing consumers see 100 percent of the time is its printed packaging. Indeed, the printed

label plays a critical role in a product's success. Labels communicate quality, appeal, freshness, or taste. Labels trigger a feeling or emotion. For industrial items, labels can be a means to categorize, describe, or warn of danger. Whatever the primary message or purchasing driver, a label's ability to convey it is essential. Thus, your job as a label provider is not simply producing an order, but ensuring the success of its message. Every project must be approached accordingly. Service the customer as an advisor in their communications endeavors. Get involved as far upstream as possible. Planning, go-to-market strategies, or even product engineering, be involved in as many aspects as feasible so that you can respond with packaging that improves their ROI. Reshape how your customer considers you, and get invited to the table.

VALUE OF LABELS TO TRACK AND MANAGE INVENTORIES

If you cannot find it, you can not sell, deliver, recall, or report on it. A label's ability to tell people what is in a package, where it is, and when it was produced brings value to the client. Whether supporting a product with barcodes, RFID tags, or holograms, you're helping the customer better run their business. You can help them get better organized, streamline shipments, or even mitigate lawsuits. And, as we delve further into



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bob Cronin is managing partner of The Open Approach, an investment banking/M&A firm focused exclusively on the world of print. The firm's proven results have made it the exclusive member-recommended firm of PIA/GATF and IPW. For more information, visit www.theopenapproach.net, email Bob Cronin at bobcronin@aol.com, or call +1 630 323 9700.

emerging areas such as nanomaterials and nanotechnology, our value will compound further.

Label companies are in an advantageous position. Explain how your unique knowledge and investments can help clients run more efficiently. Offer new solutions for monitoring their labeled items. Market yourself as an invaluable part of their supply chain, and regain respect for your role in their organizational processes.

VALUE OF LABELS TO BUILD BRANDS

Companies spend millions packaging their products. They want their offering to be seen, differentiated, and purchased over all others. They study material, inks, coatings, durability, etc., to ensure they emit the greatest response. Brand recognition encompasses not only a logo or design, but all printed aspects of the project at hand. For packaging and labels, print is the most important aspect of the marketing mix.

Label providers can deliver the unique shapes, foils and decorative elements, consistency of custom colors, and more to ensure clients' succeed. Label companies are their clients' brand police, ensuring products are seen in their most positive light. Truly, nothing can destroy credibility faster than a poorly produced package. Between the economic decline and the shift of print buying to purchasing departments, a label's value may have gotten lost. It is our responsibility to step up and demonstrate our role in achieving branding goals. We need to understand our clients' brands and go the extra mile in crafting our solutions. Such efforts reinforce our ability to serve them and continually earn their business.

VALUE OF LABELS TO IMPROVE PROFITABILITY

Label providers are devising a myriad of ways to help customers improve their profitability. Temperature-sensing labels reduce product loss and spoilage. Security and fraud protection labels decrease theft. And tamper-evident and anti-counterfeiting devices on labels and packaging mitigate lawsuits, protect jobs – and save lives. Clearly, the role of label providers is crucial. The better we can help clients ward off these issues, the more profit we can regain for them – and the more valuable we'll become.

In today's environment, ROI is



everything. Labels providers are in an exceptional position for driving it upwards. If we focus on developing better ways for clients to recapture expenses, we'll regain our image.

VALUE OF LABELS TO GROW THE BUSINESS

All things considered, labels and packaging are among the best tools to drive business growth. Whether it's through new product rollouts, more economical package sizes, changes to eco-friendly or biodegradable substrates, safer or increased-shelf-life packaging, or a host of things to come, label providers bring a value unsurpassed by nearly any other supplier involved along the way. We need to show our clients the ways we do this – and continually deliver. More important, we need to reinforce our message. We need to rethink our sales approach, service philosophy, and overall strategy to reshape the atmosphere and regain our stature for the unique and rich benefits we bring.

No matter what kind of product or technology we use, we are not here to print labels. We're here to communicate customers' goals, help them better manage inventories, build their brands, improve their profitability, and grow their businesses. We're here to deliver value. We simply need to regain control. It all begins with a message: We provide value. We're here to bring that to you.

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A new dimension in UV Flexo?

IN A JOINT PROJECT between L&L, Flint Group Narrow Web and Skanem Sweden, this specially printed insert demonstrates how new flexo technologies in conjunction with Flint's new Flexocure FORCE ink system are pushing the boundaries of flexo. Andy Thomas reports

Looking to evolve UV flexo technology, Flint Group has embarked on a project aimed at exploiting the opportunities presented by recent development in UV flexo inks, printing plate and repro technologies.

Niklas Olsson, global brand manager of Flint Group Narrow Web, explains: 'We wanted to see and directly compare how far we could go in putting together all the best tools available and at the same time choosing a demanding design which would allow converters to see just what you can achieve using the new technologies that now are available.'

Flint Group Narrow Web approached Skanem Sweden – one of Scandinavia's leading label converters with a strong commitment to pushing the boundaries of flexo – to test its new ink system together with the other elements of High Definition Flexo, namely imaging system, screening technology and plates.

'They had the technical capability and knowledge that would enable this test to be carried out, and together we developed a design concept that would enable us to investigate how far we can push the limits,' recalls Olsson.

High Definition Flexo has introduced repro and plate technology that are claimed to enable flexo quality to rival gravure and offset. The printing ink is fundamentally involved in the process, as it has to support the ability to print sharper, stronger images at lower film weights.

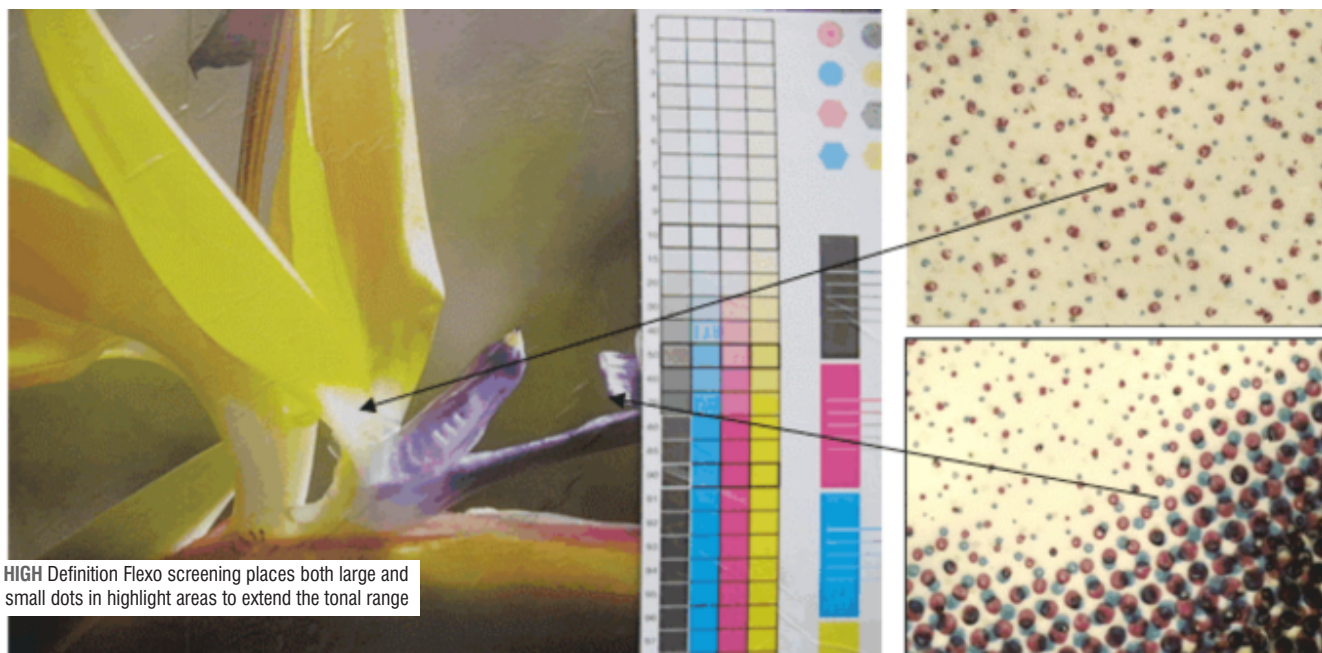
Flint Group Narrow Web carried out a series of in-depth

interviews with leading UV flexo users in Europe and North America, asking 'what will you need to be more successful in UV flexo'. 'We noted more than 40 individual needs/categories were mentioned, illustrating clearly the versatility of UV flexo, and the wide range of demands attached to it,' says Niklas Olsson. 'It also illustrates the complexity associated with designing the 'perfect' UV flexo ink.' Among the 'wanted attributes' mentioned were:

- Improved adhesion to a wider range of synthetic films
- No pinholes or mottling in solids on synthetic substrates.
- Higher color-strength of Pantone base colors
- No foaming (especially important for chambered doctor blade systems)
- Improved flow and stability of inks – irrespective of shades

Olsson says Flint Group has met these demands with its new Flexocure FORCE UV flexo ink series. 'The results from the beta test of Flexocure FORCE is making us believe we have that perfect ink,' says product manager Par Olsson. 'We have got an overwhelmingly positive response with 100 percent customer feedback reporting clearly improved properties in all areas, including printability, adhesion and press performance.'

Concludes Olsson, 'We are very pleased that we have managed to exceed the ambitious target of getting all the



HIGH Definition Flexo screening places both large and small dots in highlight areas to extend the tonal range

identified properties improved.'

The question remained how far design elements can be stretched using all the tools currently available. The enclosed insert is intended to show this. It is constructed using three different labels, comparing 'conventional' flexo at 133 lpi with the same images printed in High Definition Flexo, imaged at a resolution of 4000 dpi to deliver accurate, sharp imaging of text and line art, printed with 175 lpi plates. The prints were made using solvent-based flexo on flexible packaging.

"This screening places both large and small dots in the highlight areas to extend the tonal range to a much smaller percentage value than was previously possible with flexo"

It is important to note, that it is not only that the technology can create very small pixels: there are also new screening technologies involved.

This creates rounder dot shapes that are more stable on the press, resulting in longer print runs with the same printing plate, less press stops for wash-ups, and greater productivity.

This screening places both large and small dots in the highlight areas to extend the tonal range to a much smaller percentage value than was previously possible with flexo. A smooth vignette transition throughout the highlights to 'zero' without visible, hard edges has always been the goal for plate makers and flexo printers.

The enclosed insert shows what is possible with this high resolution system, and one can clearly see that the optics deliver more clearly defined, better shaped screen dots, because the dots are made of many more pixels.

'When discussing the project,' says

Thomas Nilsson, production manager at Skanem Sweden, 'we advised Flint that they were asking for elements in the design that we were not sure would come out looking perfect, but they insisted in testing the boundaries. It really asked a lot of the repro, plate, press, our printers and the ink. I must admit that the results were very good. The new ink proved to give that extra color strength to the image, making it possible to use the finer anilox engravings needed for printing with high line count plates, while still delivering

remarkably high colour strength.' Nilsson concludes: 'Even if some of the things in the design set-up could have been made better, I'm convinced that this is a step towards better flexo print quality. We can now utilise new design elements previously not possible in flexo, so we are definitely pleased with the learnings we have gained in this exercise.'

Niklas Olsson once again draws attention to the importance of the ink system in achieving this result. 'With the introduction of Flexocure FORCE we have developed a new platform of ink technology that will give UV flexo printers several clear advantages. This exercise shows that we are looking at an evolution rather than revolution, as innovations are many small improvements rather than one major new breakthrough technology. But when considering that improvements are seen over a range of 40 different properties, Flexocure FORCE may be that extra power that pushes the boundary of UV flexo into another dimension.'



STANDARD Flexo



HIGH Definition Flexo

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST ENVIRONMENTAL LABEL STORIES

EUROPEN INTRODUCES SUSTAINABILITY GUIDE FOR BRAND EXECUTIVES

Europen, the European Organization for Packaging and the Environment, has developed a reference guide for product executives to use when creating a workable sustainability platform. *Packaging in the Sustainability Agenda: A Guide for Corporate Decision Makers* encourages brand leaders to account for packaging within the wider scope of sustainability.

Nearly forty retailers, packaging suppliers, packaged goods manufacturers and trade groups including Bacardi, Danone, Diageo, Carrefour, Exxonmobil Chemical Films and Stora Enso participated in the guide's development. They believe that packaging can only be evaluated as a part of a complete product life cycle because of the role it plays in protecting products.

The new guide will educate important decision makers on how to create a long-term balanced sustainability strategy, inclusive of packaging, that would hopefully limit the promotion of legislation that can be costly, inefficient and less sustainable. The guide says, 'the packaged good supply chain must ensure that increased pressure to be sustainable does not result in counter-productive responses.'

It promotes the use of Life Cycle Analysis as a holistic means of measurement because it 'allows a user to identify the potential environmental burdens at various points' in the value chain. It also explains the difference between the two types of LCAs. A screening LCA makes use of average data and reasonable estimates to calculate impact, taking a shorter amount of time. A detailed LCA can take up to a few months while paying great attention to detailed studies in order to determine a wider range of impacts. Note that any LCA that meets the requirements of ISO 14044 (51) can support comparative environmental claims.

Chapter 4.1 Practical Advice: Corporate Policies and Strategies is well worth a review. Here the guide lists examples of what should be included in a well designed corporate sustainability strategy. It says that a well designed corporate strategy 'means avoiding hasty jumps onto fashionable bandwagons' and 'not allowing unfounded perceptions of consumers and others such as the media to dictate how companies respond' among other points.

Check out these sites for more information on product life cycle analysis: <http://asc.uark.edu/default.asp> <http://www.sustainabilityconsortium.org/about>



1



1

LABEL EXPOSURE

1. +359 Graphic designer Jordan Jelev 'The Labelmaker' at Factor R Studio redesigned the label for popular Bulgarian wine +359. The range, by Villa Lyubimets winery, is named after the country's international phone code and the font is based on the one used by Bulgarian Post in the 1960s, giving the wine strong national appeal.

'I wanted everyone not only to see this label as an image, but to feel it and sense it with their fingers – that's why I used puff-up transparent varnish to make the biggest possible relief structure on the logo,' Jelev says.

A selective transparent UV matt varnish is applied on the pattern of circles around the logo against glossy background and a transparent puff-up varnish on the +359 logo to create the appearance of wave lines. The label is bordered with a glossy hot foil stamp, and there are some tiny hot foil dots around the logo as well.

+359's label was screen-printed by Rotoprint in Bulgaria on Fasson MC Plus.

2. KOALA RANCH Peering out from a bottle of Chardonnay is the new face of Koala Ranch from Andrew Peace Wines. The South East Australian producer enlisted marketing agency Colle+McVoy to reposition its line of value wines. Labels for six different blends were printed digitally by Labelhouse of Melbourne, Australia. 'Koala Ranch wanted a look that was as simple, inviting and cuddly as the koalas who drink it,' the designers say.



2

3. WILD JUICE Chadwicks has created three cartoon animal-themed shrink sleeves for Villa Drinks' new 'Wild Juice' range of childrens' soft drinks. The three flavors are Tangy Tiger orange, Cool Croc apple and Party Parrot blackcurrant. The sleeves were reverse printed on 50 micron extra high shrink PVC, with high gloss and a visibility window. Kursat Uysal, business development manager at Chadwicks, says: 'Our teams worked together to find innovative packaging solutions to suit the product and brand and the Wild Juice range really allowed us to get creative.'



3

4. DI PALAMO WILD FIG AND GRAPE Riviera Labels worked closely with Unex Designs on the labels for Di Palamo's bath and personal care range. Unex had real-time press input as they are close to Riviera's production plant in Torquay, UK. 'We have a close relationship with Unex, and they are always pushing design concepts,' says director Peter Burnard. The label was printed with on a Lintec LPM300ITP using 4 color process + spot grey (mirror image) + flood white onto clear poly-prop. It was then laminated with white poly-prop to totally obscure the print. The web was re-passed and printed 4 colour process + spot grey + spot matt varnish + spot gloss UV flexo varnish in register with the image underneath. The label was applied to a clear bottle so that the image could be seen through the contents.



4

5. LATE HARVEST The label for Quinta do Portal's latest addition to its range of wines, Late Harvest, was designed by Blackburn's brand design. Taking inspiration from the brand name, Portal, meaning doorway, the designers created an adaptable brand identity, using a door knocker across all varietals. As well as the now established door knocker branding, Late Harvest picks up on the golden and copper colors of autumn vine leaves, which shine through the wine from the back of the bottle.



5

6. HEARING HEALTH VITAMIN Business Resource Solutions (BRS) converted a bi-lingual extended content label for Premier Micronutrient Corporation. The front of the label for Hearing Health Vitamin bottles is printed in English and pulls away to reveal information in French. The majority of the adhesive on the front label was deadened to allow the label to be peeled up, with the left back edge left alive to function as a hinge. The front was printed using 5 color stations including metallic silver ink. The back side is printed in black ink on a clear pressure sensitive film and laminated with a semi-gloss paper face. The label also has full UV varnish to create high gloss and scuff and water resistance.



6

HOW TO GET EXPOSED

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THE VOICE OF THE END USER

ART TO SCIENCE

PASSIONATELY seeking new knowledge and nurturing a learning culture leads to a technological prowess that fuels the innovation engine, explains L&L columnist Paul France, global innovation manager at Procter & Gamble

'Know all that is knowable'. The phrase is cliché – but behind the trite, there is truth. Knowledge is the foundation of innovation and creativity is the ability to assemble knowledge in new ways. The circle of creativity, as shown below, starts with a basic understanding or knowledge about the problem to be solved. Only when you possess some new knowledge can the innovation spiral starts its journey.

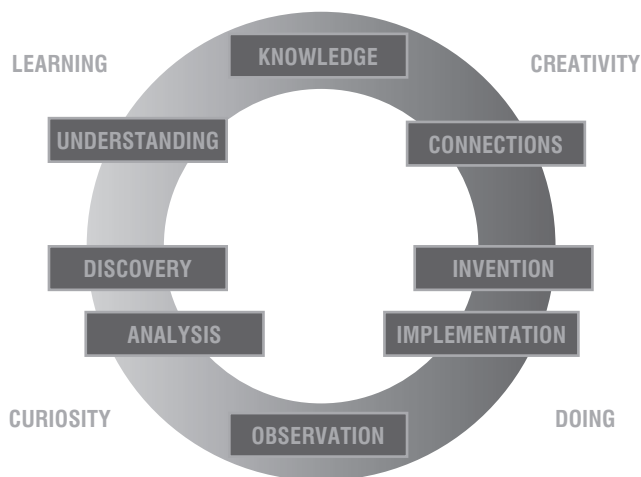
The depth and breath of technological knowledge needed to be successful in the labels and labeling (L&L) industry is staggering. It covers diverse fields from chemistry and polymers science to electro-mechanical engineering. No wonder it takes years before one can call himself an expert in the L&L field. As an innovator, there is no substitute for developing technical knowledge. You absolutely have to do it. Don't let lack of basic knowledge be the key inhibitor for innovation.

Innovators are driven by internal forces to learn, and what is learned will be focused on solving critical problems and pushing innovation. Successful L&L innovators always seem to have learned something about things they did not know: unfamiliar polymer science and physics, ink chemistry, color science, web material handling, etc. Innovators need to grow in knowledge, experience and skill in order to develop the next breakthrough.

So become a learning machine. Learning is a lifetime obligation. Continual learning comes from having a multitude of relationships, reading technical articles outside your comfort zone and undertaking new and challenging assignments. Louis Pasteur is a great model of how a better understanding of fundamental scientific principles is critical to perpetual success in innovation. Pasteur, the father of microbiology and immunology, was a chemist who launched his memorable scientific career by studying the shapes of organic crystals. That specific knowledge led to his first discovery that started a forward moving path of multiple breakthroughs. One discovery, one concept, led almost 'inescapably' to another but it all was based on a strong ethic for scientific rigor.

A smart approach is to start creating models. I prefer to use models as early as possible in the development cycle. There are multiple kinds of models to be explored: mathematical, physical, computer and virtual models, consumer models, etc. This type of thought experiments, sometimes called by the German name of gedankenexperiments, are a great tool to postulate an early hypothesis or enable you to further define the problem.

Prototyping is the next phase in gaining useful knowledge. Prototyping is one of the most efficient means of bringing a



model to life. Make your learnings on a small scale and your profits on a large scale. This is a slight revision of a quote from L.H. Baekeland, the inventor of Bakelite plastics and founder of Union Carbide. I've tried to apply this principle for over 20 years to promote the benefits of prototype iterations. The current challenge is to find the right balance of bench and virtual prototyping capabilities – bench scale transformation learnings enable virtual capabilities, eventually accelerating the development cycle.

I would like to conclude with a plea to continue passionately seeking and promoting scientific rigor within the L&L industry. There are plenty of opportunities in both the printing and decoration area to strengthen and share knowledge. This magazine of course is a great venue for sharing the latest insights. After all, to quote Newton: 'If I have seen further it is only by standing on the shoulders of giants'.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul France has been 17 years with P&G. Since 2006 he has had global responsibility for printing and decoration innovation for all P&G brands. Within P&G, France is also a Technology Entrepreneur: constantly on the outlook for new technologies and new products. This column represents a personal view and not that of Procter & Gamble

Labelexpo demonstrates China's growth

MORE THAN 16,000 PRINTERS visited Labelexpo Asia, held in Shanghai in December, demonstrating that the Chinese label industry has reached a new level of sophistication. Andy Thomas reports on Western companies' plans for this key markets

Labelexpo Asia confirmed its status as the leading label event in Asia when the show welcomed a record 16,601 visitors. Compared to the 2007 visitor total of 14,004, this represents an increase of over 18.5 percent. Although this show remains primarily a Chinese event, visitors were registered from 78 countries, with over 10 percent of attendees from outside China – particularly India, Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia.

The show was held at a time when the Asian economies, including China, are preparing to lead the world out of recession, according to the Asia Development Bank. The ADB forecast growth rates of 4.2 percent this year and 6.8 percent for 2010.

Chinese economic growth saw retail sales reach US\$1,153.8 billion in the first eight months of 2009. This represents a 15.1 percent increase over the same period in 2008, as revealed by China's National Bureau of Statistics. Overall, retail sales are expected to reach \$3.2 trillion by 2013, doubling the 2007 figure.

This growth is being driven by global brands in China. Unilever, for example, recently announced that its annual China sales have reached 1 billion euros (\$1.46 billion) and will grow at least 15 percent a year, fuelled by rising affluence in the world's third-largest economy. Unilever sees growing competition from increasingly sophisticated local players as well

as international rivals, according to China President Alan Jope. 'I'm not doing a good job if sales growth doesn't reach 15 or 16 percent,' Jope recently told the Reuters news agency. Revenue from China doubled to \$1 billion between 2004 and 2007.

Beiersdorf, the beauty and skincare company, also has a fast growing Chinese portfolio. As an example, the company has just launched a marketing campaign for Sleek, its Chinese shampoo brand. Sleek was first launched by C-Bons, a domestic manufacturer, which extended its range to cover conditioners and shower gels. Beiersdorf took an 85 percent stake in C-Bons two years ago, giving it ownership of this brand and a number of others, including Maestro, S-Dew and Hair Song. The product is being printed offset combination on a Nilpeter MO3300.

Already, one can see other Chinese brands following C-Bon's example in the toiletries and cosmetics sector, bringing to market very sophisticated products using clear-on-clear labels, metalized films and multi-process printing.

The Chinese pressure-sensitive industry is considered a leading economic indicator, changing in advance of the economy, and is fast gaining momentum. Exhibitors at Labelexpo Asia reported a good quality of visitor, with a far greater level of expertise in PS technology than two years ago.

Omet, the only Western 'conventional' press manufacturer at Labelexpo Asia with working machinery, was demonstrating a 10-color Flexy 330 press with cold foil and Rotascreen. The press was assembled at Omet's Suzhou, China, operation. Joe Zhou, China manager for Omet, said the company enjoyed a highly successful Labelexpo Asia. 'The number and quality of visitors was excellent. We received many solid enquiries about our demo machine over the four days of the exhibition, including some strong interest of actual sales from professional printers.'

A good indication of the growing market for added value applications in China was the success of Stork Prints at the show, majoring on its in-line screen printing solutions. The company's Rieks Reyers said: 'This part of the world is booming and we actually took orders at the show. It's very reassuring to see that label converters in Asia have embarked on the route of value adding through screen printing.'

The Western materials manufacturers all reported a growing trend towards the use of higher value added pressure-sensitive materials.

Avery Dennison predicted a boom in the market for pressure-sensitive labeling solutions in China. Dagang Li, vice president and general manager, Roll Materials China, Avery Dennison, said the PS industry in China is reaching a critical mass, with converters starting to take a more customer-centric approach to applications development. 'With consumers demanding more, and an industry increasingly capable of delivering more, China's pressure-sensitive market is ready for



开幕典礼 Opening Ceremony



substantial growth. We are already seeing the market here picking up and, given the current strength of China's retail sector, we foresee remarkable opportunities for the local pressure-sensitive industry.'

Li gave examples of brands which have moved to PS including The Great Wall Wine Company, one of China's largest wine producers, which is transitioning all its white wines to self-adhesive labels after using them on its high-end wines since 2008.

UPM Raflatac was majoring on its ability to support global brands moving into China with the same specification they use in other global markets. 'Our multiple manufacturing sites throughout the Asia-Pacific ensure that our customers receive products that meet their quality requirements and specifications no matter where they operate,' said Ilkka Ylipoti, senior vice president of UPM Raflatac Asia-Pacific. 'Most importantly, our personnel have the local and global knowledge to provide the expertise and

support that our multinational customers need.' Ylipoti gave the keynote Labelexpo Asia presentation.

Ritrama used the show to promote products from its recently commissioned Chinese label coating plant. The Hefei plant opened six months ago, and incorporates a customer solution center for Asia Pacific. Products produced by the Hefei plant will include both film and paper rolls, materials for beverage labels, body care and household containers, "no label look" films, paper sheets for screen and offset, PVC sheets for screen printing and wide rolls of film for digital ink-jet printing.

Although the plant specializes in producing globally specified materials for global brands, the company's managing director Ricardo Rink says around half of the plant's high quality film output goes to Chinese brands – particularly toiletries & cosmetics, beverage and pharma – driven by competition with the global players. Ritrama is now involved in expanding its Chinese logistics system.

For Dow Corning, the show was a chance to gather market information to drive regional market-focused innovations. Dow Corning's global industry director, Jun Liao said a major part of the company's communications message is to convince converters of the advantages of solvent-free systems.

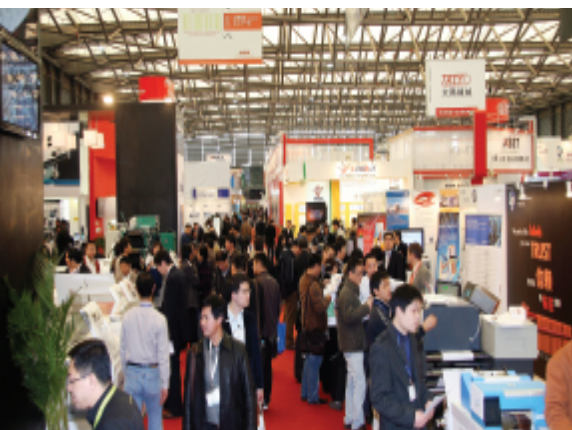
Dow Adhesives and Functional Polymers, a business unit of The Dow Chemical Company, has just completed the Shanghai Dow Center (SDC), which functions as a fully equipped R&D center, as well as the company's Asia Pacific regional headquarters, and houses more than 500 engineers and scientists in over

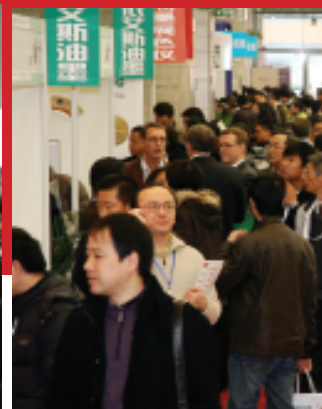


80 laboratories. 'A customer innovation center allows the development of customized formulation for emerging markets and increasing specialization, such as battery, drum and beverage label applications,' says SK Tham, regional Tapes, Labels & Textiles commercial director, Asia Pacific. 'It's our commitment to this fast growing region and to the development of adhesives specialized for regional applications.'

Moving to ancillaries, the growing emphasis on manufacturing efficiency helped companies like automated web handling specialist Martin Automatic. Alphasonics, a supplier of anilox, plate and inking parts cleaning systems, was promoting complete cleaning solutions for the flexo printer. Managing director David Jones commented: 'I never found anything in China for five years, but I persisted, and finally at this show, with our new agent Uniway China, we have found that printers are buying more sophisticated presses to achieve consistent quality – and need proper cleaning equipment. I have a renewed optimism for the Chinese market.'

Erhardt + Leimer announced an alliance with Chinese machinery specialist Relia Precision Machinery, with Relia demonstrating E + L inspection systems on its rewinder. 'This is not just an inspection system,' says E + L's Dirk Schroeder. 'It incorporates full stop-and-go, positioning of defects.' The machine will only be available to the Chinese market, where





E+L believes it benefits from a cost effective price and ease of operation.

It was the first show for Maxcess China, and the company had no less than four exhibiting press manufacturers equipped with FIFE guiding products. Digital drive specialist Redex also remarked on the new opportunities opening up in sophisticated machine development.

Turning to Smart Labels, which are a growing market to protect the supply chain of goods manufactured in China, Muelbauer was demonstrating a range of RFID solutions.

A market is also opening up for software products which promote Lean Manufacturing processes. Maja Terzi, at ERP specialist NiceLabel China, said Labelexpo Asia had been a great success, with the main focus on the company's NiceWatch Enterprise Business Connector and NiceLabel 5.2.2. MIS specialist Sistrade was demonstrating the latest version of its PRINT software, which is particularly aimed at companies with operations across multiple plants. It handles management of both labels design and production.

Ramon Lee, managing director of finishing machinery specialist Brotech specializes in Chinese-built slitter-rewinders and die cutting machines, and his Eurotech slitter rewinders now has

over 30 installations. He is also agent for Nilpeter and inspection specialist AVT. Lee now has 100 AVT camera systems installed in the labels industry in China.

Lee says at the top end of the market, the entry of Western label converters like Rako and CCL has led to a bigger concern for quality among Chinese printers. 'I think the entry of these companies into China will have a positive impact because it will lead to a higher level of competition between Western and Chinese printers.' Lee says there is also a trend for packaging printers in China to look at the labels market because of the growth they see there. The security print market is a key value-added area, and at the show, Nilpeter announced the sale of a 20 million RMB (\$2.9 million) press to one of China's leading security printers.

DuPont was showcasing its Cyrel FAST TD 1000 thermal plate processor and the new Cyrel XD digital imaging system. The company estimates that 60- 70 percent of narrow web presses installed in China are letterpress, so there is a big market flexo market to play for.

DuPont was promoting HD (High Definition) flexo, which is claimed to allow flexo printers to match offset quality work with 175lpi screens using existing equipment. The Cyrel XD



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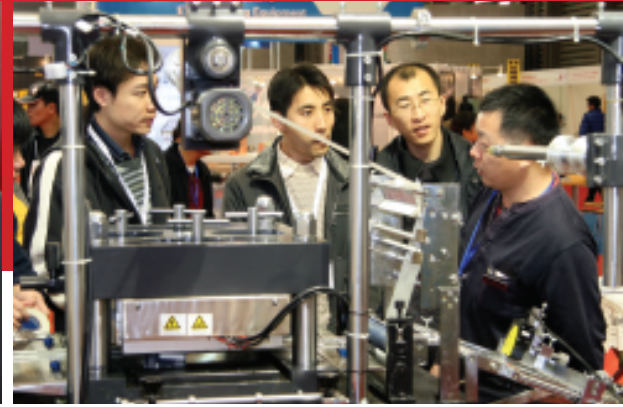
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Innovation With Passion



imager supports an HD workflow. The work demonstrated by the company, printed by leading Chinese converter CymMetrik, showed vignettes without the obvious 'break' points common to flexo work. The FAST processor means there is no degradation of the highlight and shadow areas during plate processing.

Canadian company ETI, which assembles its Metronome press in China, demonstrated how its Cohesio laminate manufacturing system is being used in China to convert clear-on-clear labels for international and Chinese beer brands. The company has now sold three Cohesio lines into China and two Metronome presses. A key customer is Sao Haoneng, a converter which has expanded out of sheetfed printing and went straight to the ETI solution when it diversified into PS. It uses a gravure combination Metronome press feeding onto a Cohesio – and a second machine is on order.

DIGITAL

With the growing maturity of the Chinese label market, we can expect to see a rapid trend towards shorter runs, variable data imaging and reduction in the length of supply chains. All these factors favor digital printing.

HP, which organized a 'Digital Edge' seminar on digital print applications the day before the show, demonstrated a range of digital printing solutions and alliances based around its flagship WS6000 digital press and the established ws4500. VS Hariharan, vice president of Graphic Solutions Business, HP Imaging and Printing Group, Asia Pacific, said: 'Asia is one of the fastest regions to recover from the global economic downturn and is aggressively on its path to recovery. This is the right time for PSPs to rethink their growth strategies

and pursue strategic investments in key print solutions that will let them ride the next wave.' Prepress and workflow solutions from EskoArtwork and finishing systems from AB Graphic International were showcased.

Durst's Helmuth Munter, was also upbeat about prospects for digital inkjet label printing in China: 'We are very excited about the positive response that we had during Labelexpo Asia. We invited strong prospects to the show, but we also collected many hundreds of good quality leads. Our first Tau 150 installations will be following very soon.'

Big news at the show was the announcement that United Printing Company, the agency for Mark Andy/Comco/Rotoflex, is now the Chinese representative for digital press manufacturer Xeikon.

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THE heat transfer station on the Moss Digital Decorating System. The web has been digitally reverse-printed on a Xeikon press

Xeikon shows heat transfer IML alternative

A COMBINATION OF DIGITAL PRINTING and heat transfer technology are opening up short run decoration alternatives to manufacturers of plastic pails currently using IML or direct printing. Andy Thomas reports

Xeikon and machinery manufacturer Moss have developed a system for digitally printing and applying heat transfer labels to plastic containers – an alternative to direct printing and in-mold labeling which opens new market opportunities for PS label converters.

Unveiled at an Open House at Punch Graphix's manufacturing facility in Lier, Belgium, the Digital Decorating System enables production of approximately eighteen round 10-liter pails a minute, equivalent to a traditional direct offset printing press. The system has been eighteen months in development.

Xeikon industrial business development manager Filip Weymans said Xeikon and Moss had identified a gap in the market for short runs of high quality plastic containers. These are currently decorated either with in-mold labels – an inflexible, but high quality system with high set-up costs – or direct printing, which allows more flexible production, but at the cost of lower quality. The digitally printed heat transfer system developed by Xeikon and Moss offers decoration quality similar to IML and superior to direct print, according to Filip Weymans.

'In terms of supply chain, with IML there is no flexibility to change the marketing mix closer to the point of filling and distribution,' says Weymans. 'This is particularly important for products like paints, with their complex mix of sizes and colors.'

For the end user, digital printing eliminates waste and reduces inventory of decorated products, opening up new business opportunities in just-in-time, quick change and short run plastic containers.

Weymans says the Xeikon press delivers other benefits over existing processes, including accurate color matching for re-prints and the ability to incorporate variable data such as numbers, barcodes, images, text and logos.

HOW IT WORKS

In operation, the image is reverse printed onto a release liner, which is brought into contact with the plastic container. The toners are transferred and the image 'fixed' by flame treatment.

Xeikon was demonstrating the process with its 3300 and 5000 digital presses using standard CMYK toners plus white. The company worked closely with release liner specialist Mondi to develop PET liners which combine a release layer with an adhesion promoter. A glassine liner can also be used, in which case the adhesion promoter is not required. The liner cannot be reused once the ink has been transferred.

The finished print gives a high light fastness, is water-resistant and FDA approved for indirect food contact. The flame treatment also imparts a high gloss.

'The advantage of heat transfer label technology is that



MDDS infeed and outfeed - a compact footprint

"For label printers, heat transfer can be additional business alongside the self-adhesive label jobs they run already. We made sure that heat transfer labels and self adhesive labels can be produced on the same Xeikon press without hourly changeovers"

it gives a true 'no-label look', since only the print/color is transferred,' says Filip Weymans. 'We also obtain high scratch and chemical resistance without the requirement for varnishing, and we use an inexpensive liner when compared to a self-adhesive label.'

MACHINE SYSTEM

The container handling system developed by Moss – a manufacturer of silk-screen, dry offset and hot stamping container decoration systems – comes in two versions: the Digicon, for containers with a round cross-section, and the Digiflex, a fully automated machine which can handle pails with oval, rectangular and square cross sections using shaped carriers. Both systems are claimed cost effective with runs as small as 500 and work with PP or HDPE containers. In the future, Filip Weymans believes the system could be extended to the high quality tube market – particularly for toiletries and cosmetics applications.

The Digicon demonstrated at the Open House was equipped with a 6-station indexing turret, and the basic version can accept pails from 1-25 liters. The machine incorporates a unit to pre-heat the containers to encourage transfer of the print, followed by either a mechanical or optical register device to position the print on the container, then flame treatment. For applications that need extra durability, an in-line varnishing unit can be incorporated into the Moss transfer machine.

To demonstrate the versatility of the system, Open House

LABELS&LABELING

delegates were invited outside the Xeikon building for a digital photo shoot. The image was shortly afterwards transferred onto a plastic pail on the Moss applicator.

The Moss Digital Decorating System (MDDS) was field tested by the Jokey Plastik group, which manufactures screen-printed plastic containers at multiple sites worldwide. Jokey committed to no less than seven Xeikon digital presses, working with the company to fine-tune the press parameters to yield optimal results on the heat transfer process. It announced commercialization at drupa 2008. 'The Xeikon toner-based process proved to be the only one effective in combination with our packaging materials,' says Matthias Zientek, production manager at Jokey Plastik, 'We were pleased that Xeikon toner carries the Swan label (official Nordic eco-certificate). Also, Xeikon toner has been FDA-approved for certain food contact applications, which for obvious reasons is a plus in our business.'

One of the first commercial sales of the Digicon was to a paint company, which is now producing pails with 1,500 variants using one operator.

THE FUTURE

Filip Weymans sees the DDS digital heat transfer label system opening up new opportunities for converters: 'For label printers, heat transfer can be additional business alongside the self-adhesive label jobs they run already. We made sure that heat transfer labels and self adhesive labels can be produced on the same Xeikon press without hourly changeovers.'

The case of Jokey Plastiks demonstrates that injection molders might also back integrate digital transfer label printing into their container manufacturing operation. 'The injection molders who currently apply the in-mold labels have a need for short runs. High warehouse costs and faster turnaround is creating a demand for a more flexible decoration technology,' says Weymans. 'Unless they partner up with label converters able to offer the right service they will invest in the Xeikon press as Jokey did.'



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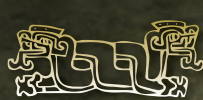
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SpearEarth Wins Big

PS LABEL SPECIALIST SPEAR wins big with its EMS system modeled after Lean Six Sigma standards. Danielle Jerschefske reports

Spear, the beverage-focused, PS label specialist based in Cincinnati, Ohio, was awarded the 2009 TLMI Environmental Leadership Award because of its exemplary Environmental Management System (EMS) that it calls SpearEarth. The converter found success with SpearEarth because its framework remains true to the company's business strategy, operations platform, and general mission. The key was leveraging its lean manufacturing strength.

President Rick Spear, says, 'We have always been an environmentally sensitive business, but it has only been the last three years that we have seriously increased our focus.'

Dave Dickerson, director of Lean Six Sigma, comments: 'Lean Six Sigma is the obvious platform to drive environmental change. We draw on its methods to continually improve product quality and business processes to reduce waste and increase operational efficiencies. Since Lean is a process that's focused on the measurement of anything and everything, and has accountability embedded within the system, it's only natural to make sustainability a part of the lean manufacturing process. The required metrics dovetail nicely with process control.'

'At first the program started as a way to differentiate,' Dan Muenzer, global marketing VP explains. 'Now it is also a way to increase the bottom line. SpearEarth is about creating an engine. We have people that make it work, who know continuous improvement and know how to place measurements around daily operations.' Ten percent of the Spear work force is Green Belt trained.

Each year Spear conducts setup standardization and press uptime projects, yielding significant annual savings. Each operation has an active project queue and using Six Sigma as a guide, Spear has achieved a 2 percent yield improvement, reducing process waste by 55 tons annually.

In order to drive the EMS, the company created the **LABELS&LABELING**

SpearEarth Task Force, an executive team that includes its president and the directors of Six Sigma, corporate quality, European operations, system support and global marketing. Then it created a Global Energy Reduction Task Force that focuses on the company-wide goal to reduce energy and water usage by 10 percent annually. This task force includes 'empowerment teams' from each of its facilities that regularly report to the executive team. The progression of SpearEarth is evaluated under best practices in the group's weekly operational meetings.

SpearEarth tackles a number of key areas that assist the business in achieving its goals: solid waste reductions, matrix recycling, advanced materials development, supply chain efficiency and external validation. It is a model of an effective EMS.

SOLID WASTE REDUCTION

• LINER RECOVERY

Through both internal and external initiatives, Spear has reduced its waste to landfill deposit by a total of 10,725 tons over the last two years [see figure 1]. The most impactful way that Spear achieved this reduction was by connecting its customers with recycling groups that can collect expended release liner after application.

The global consumption of PS label release liner is approximately 1.4m tons. North America and Europe are estimated to each produce around 450,000 tons of paper base for silicone coating. Less than 8 percent of liner waste is recycled globally and maybe 10 percent in the Western World; this recycle rate has to improve. (*see Note 1).

Spear has motivated its customers to participate in a PET liner collection program which has recovered seventy-five percent



of the volume of liner supplied by Spear, salvaging 7.8M pounds of Spear PS liner from landfill. Spear has also developed a proprietary collection system that it hopes will allow for the remaining 25 percent to be recovered. This will require Spear to find solutions for its smallest customers. It is not cost-effective or efficient to pick up small quantities of liner.

'It is imperative both financially and for the environment to have a full truckload of liner picked up,' Dickerson says. Cal Frost, CEO of Channeled Resources Group, knows this obstacle well. He has been working diligently for the last three decades to facilitate a solution for liner waste recovery. CRG currently has nine service centers throughout North America, with about the same number in Europe, which CPGs can use as a resource for release liner removal.

Spear was able to facilitate liner pick up for a majority of its clients because of the large amounts of release liner used by each one. Sixty percent of Spear customers use PS labels, and a good percentage have some of the highest average run lengths found in the industry. The larger the customer, the more liner expended, giving opportunity for cost-effective alternatives to landfill and bottom-line savings.

Muenzer explains: 'At its outset we took the project to AB (Anheuser Busch) and presented the two-pronged benefits – money and value. We wanted to know if they'd be interested in working with us as a partner for this business and after some review, AB accepted the proposal. Their decision is what set off the growth of the project.'

Frost estimates that the collection and recycling rate is higher for filmic liner, maybe 25 percent, but only because of the huge amount generated by one or two players in the beer industry that participate in liner recovery programs.

This higher rate could be attributed in part to Spear's effort in bringing a liner recovery solution to its customers as an add-value

service. Spear estimates that twelve of its customers' locations have enlisted in a liner collection program. About half of these plants use a proprietary source where the spent liner goes to recycling facilities for re-use as a secondary product or for re-use as energy (see *Note 2).

Most of Spear's big clients are already involved, including Heineken. However, it has been more difficult to persuade clients that use co-packers. Spear believes that the benefits will eventually convince more to partake.

'The financial benefits combined with the capability to add more total value to their organizations will move them,' Muenzer says. With growing pressure on a brand's social responsibility, successful participation in such a project will add sparkle to a corporation's CSR report.

In the case of the smaller customer, Spear acts as a broker to coordinate pick-ups. Bacardi, for example, takes advantage of this option. It is about the smallest customer of Spear's that can participate in a liner collection program and remain viable. Ideally, Spear would like to extend this service to European clients, but continue to find quantities involved to be prohibitive.

• SIZE MATTERS

Spear turned to the PET recycling community as another way to reduce the impact of PS labels on the environment. It works closely with Faith Group, a PET materials trader and processor with locations in New Jersey, Mexico and Hong Kong, and collaborates with Avangard Innovative, one of the largest recycling support groups in Mexico. Both companies specialize in the collection of used plastics, most any type, shredding it, and turning it into regrid pellets for the textile industry.

The converter was able to realize significant landfill reduction by introducing its customers, especially the smaller players, to this concept. Dickerson says, 'The waste stream has four times as many pounds of plastics outside of liner. We have shown our customers what's capable with other packaging scrap, such as strapping, material core, shrink wrap and more. When you account for other non liner plastics to the total quantity, removal becomes

NOTE 1: According to the Leading Futurists (Packaging: 2010 and beyond – Twitter @packfutur), recycle rates within the industry will be expected to reach 80-90 percent in the next few years.

NOTE 2: By definition, this system is liner re-use not recycling because it is not a closed loop system. The industry will hopefully find a closed loop system soon where the polyester liner is recycled for re-use as liner, meeting the cradle-to-cradle expectations of many leading end user groups such as the SPC.

easier to justify for small users.'

Overall, the facilitated collection and recycle of additional packaging scrap prevented 15m pounds of waste from going to landfill (not included in Figure 1).

SPEARPET

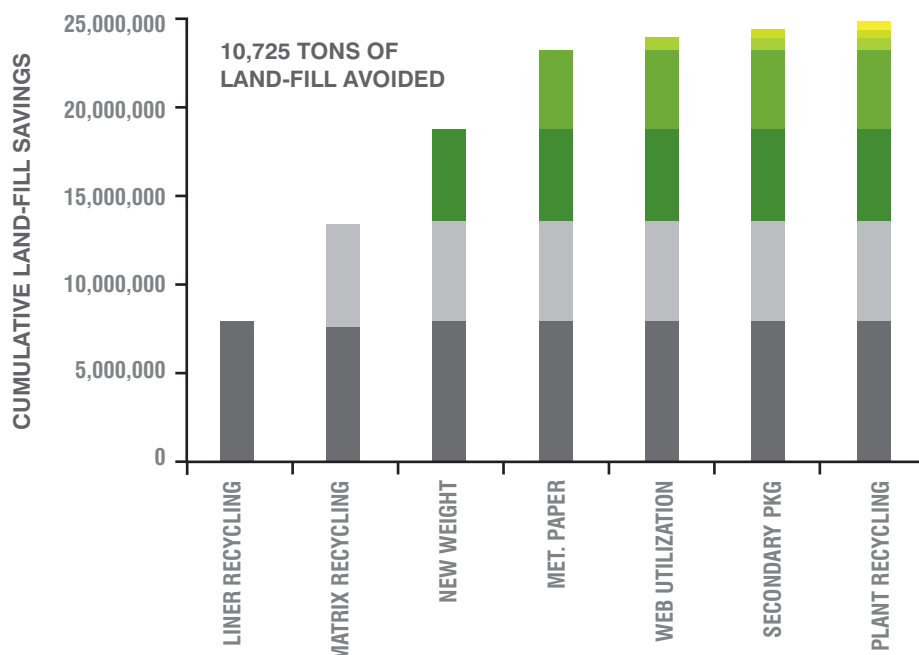
Mixing BOPP film with PET in the recycling process impairs the clarity of the plastic, making it undesirable for re-use in new bottles. Spear collaborated with its material suppliers to create SpearPET, a BOPP film matched with a proprietary adhesive that releases from the PET flake during the recycling process, separating the BOPP face stock from the stream and maintaining the usability of the PET.

Muenzer says, 'this technology allows PET to be reused with acceptable clarity and haze values. We're the first to introduce a PS label that can do this.' The Association of Post Consumer Plastic Recyclers gave the company an award for the material.

MATRIX WASTE

Matrix represents 85 percent of the company's operational waste. In

FIG1: SPEAR LAND-FILL SAVINGS



collaboration with outside recycling companies, such as International Paper Products Corporation, Spear currently turns 42 percent of its matrix waste into bio-mass fuel blocks or pellets. This percentage represents 5.7m pounds of solid waste.

The widely dispersed locations of matrix recycling facilities have made the system a non-option for most of the industry. The Spear executive team is working with its current processing partners, other vendors, and industry experts to find a local solution for its remaining percentage of matrix waste. It would like to see a reliable plant successfully operating near its headquarters as soon as possible.

NET WEIGHT REDUCTION-FILM & PAPER

To reduce total material consumption and waste, Spear partnered with Avery Dennison FRNA to develop thinner PS film with the same quality as the industry standard. The thickness of the components in a standard laminate are 2.0 mil BOPP face stock, .5 mil adhesive and 1.0 mil PET liner.

Spear has successfully transitioned over sixty percent of its customers to the 17 percent thinner Gen 1 laminate, directly diverting 5m pounds of PS material from going to landfill. Gen 1 has a 1.6mil face stock, .4mil adhesive, and .9mil liner. 'We anticipate a further

reduction of 1.5m pounds once we switch our remaining clients to Gen 1,' Muenzer says.

This reduction not only restricts the amount of solid waste produced in the manufacturing process, but also limits energy consumption. More Gen 1 labels fit onto each roll, allowing Spear to ship more labels per truckload. Dickerson explains, 'Due to the shipping efficiencies of a thinner label, we have reduced our annual shipments by 300 full truckloads.'

Spear is actively testing Gen 2, a 1.0 mil, .3 mil, .75 mil material, which will allow for a further reduction in land filled pounds.

At Spear's Clarksville, Tennessee facility – acquired in the summer of 2008 – all metalized paper labels have been converted from 62# to 54# material. The net total reduction in material weight salvaged a total of 2m pounds from landfill. Here too Spear garnered energy savings by fitting more labels per truckload, eliminating 120 truckloads per annum.

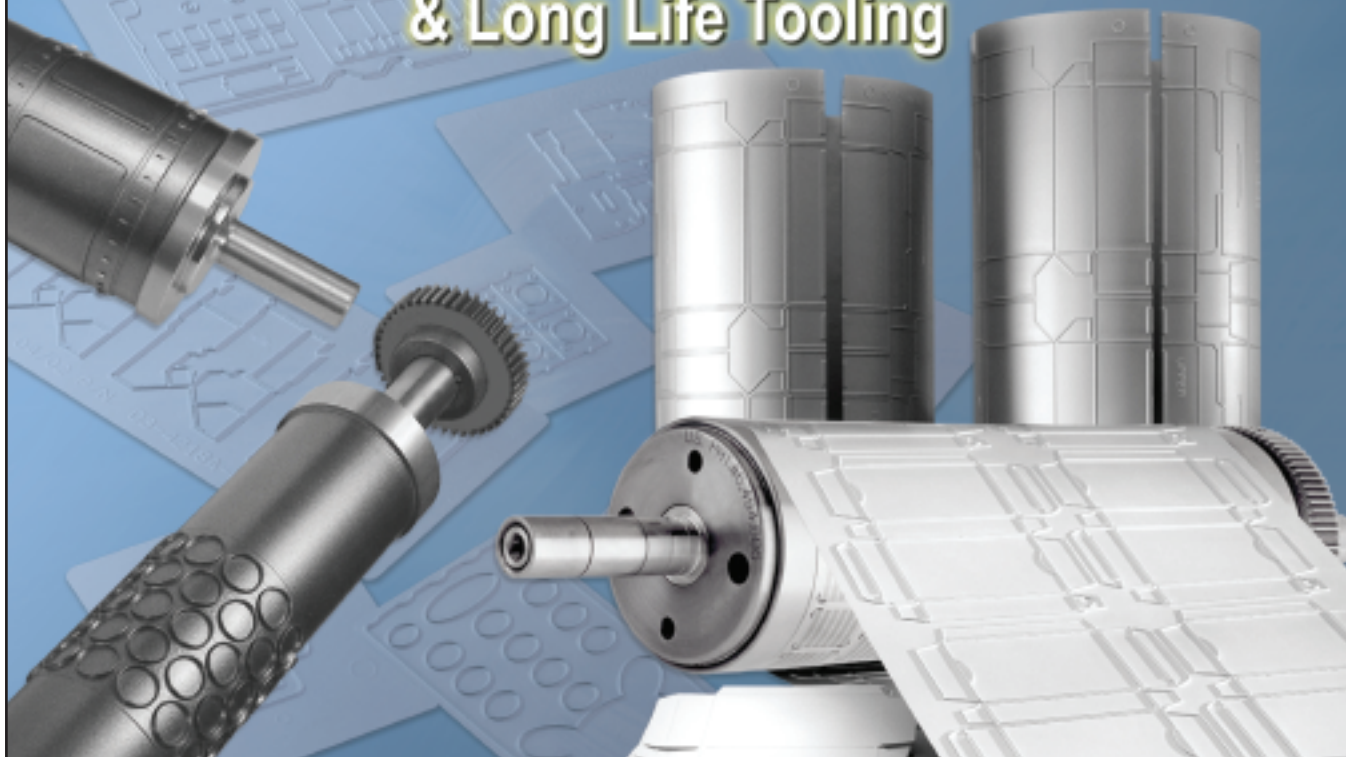
EVERY BIT COUNTS

Spear cut 600,000 pounds of waste from its operations by utilizing supplier-based programs such as Fasson's Exact. Programs such as these reduce off-cut, trim and matrix waste. Educating customers on efficient design to fill the web space played a role in this landfill avoidance too.

Some changes in secondary packaging platforms and configurations removed



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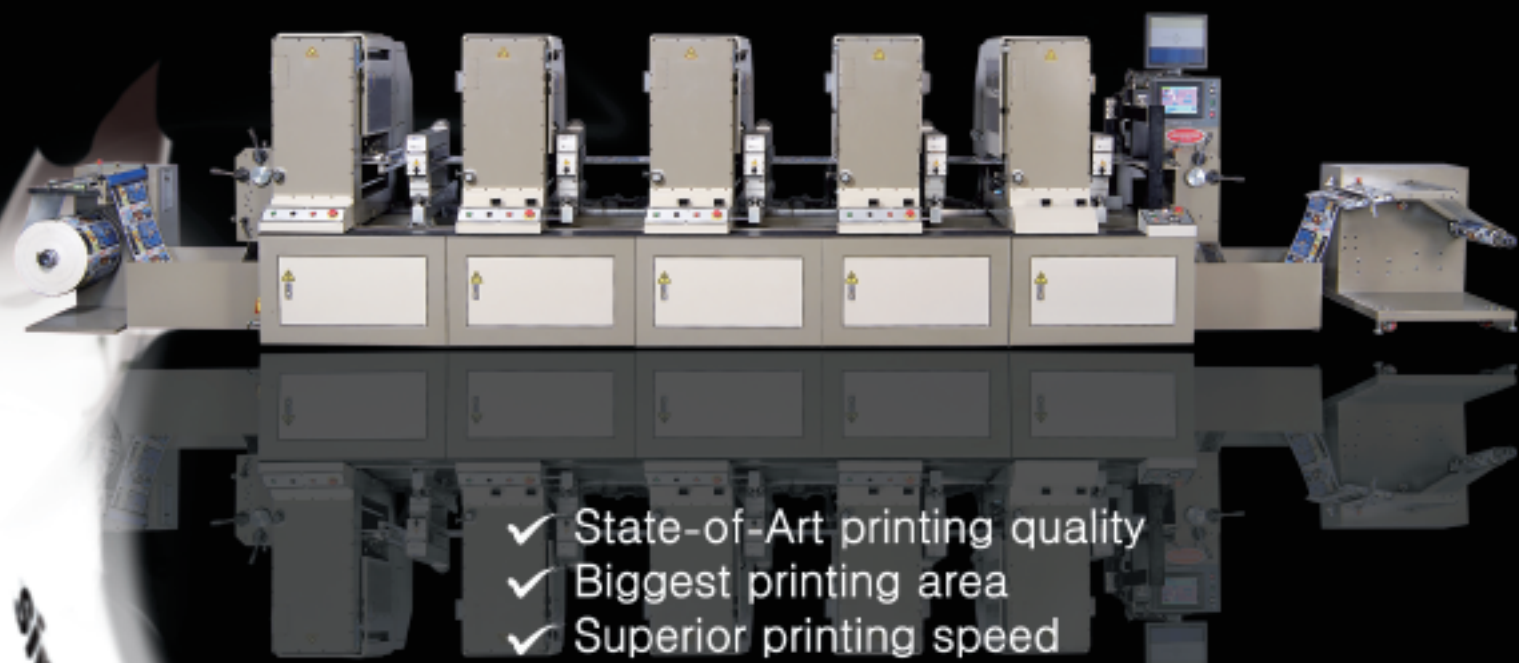
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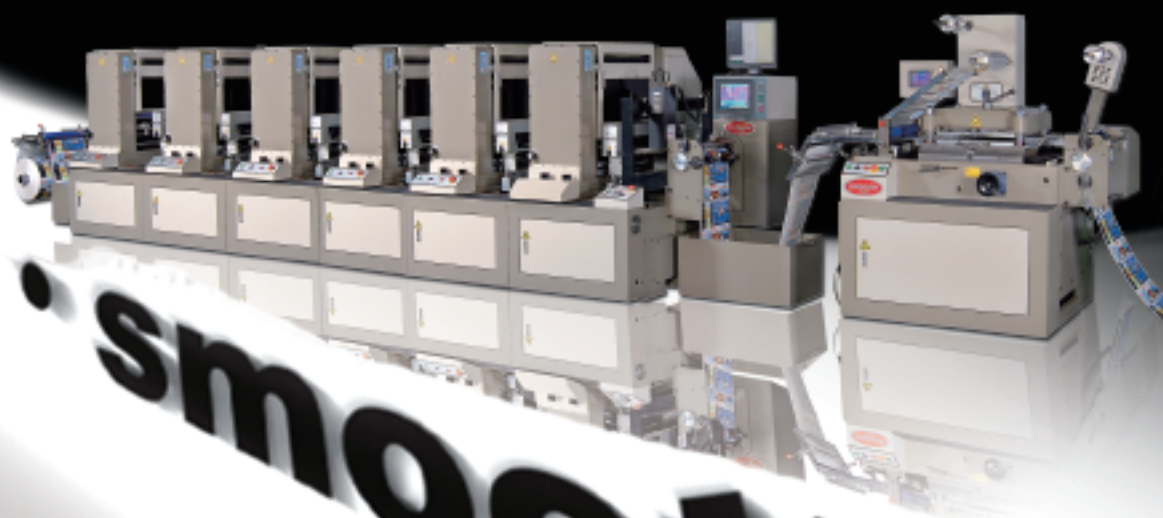
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550,000 pounds of unnecessary material from the Spear supply chain. It switched nearly half of its clients from bleached corrugated packaging to box-less pallets, and through re-configuration, ships 20 percent more labels per pallet to its Latin American accounts.

Spear has also designed a new corrugate shipping box where the corners are removed. 'We've challenged our vendors to reduce the corrugate in our boxes by 15 – 20 percent with this new design,' Muenzer explains. 'The design offers a unique look, reduces environmental impact and increases cost savings.' The company hopes to find a viable vendor by the end mid-year.

Full-fledged recycling programs within each of its facilities recover 54 percent of non-matrix operational waste, including aluminum, steel, copper, corrugate, paper and plastic. Together these programs recovered over 500,000 pounds of waste last year. Additionally, Spear installed vertically integrated, closed loop solvent recovery systems that virtually eliminate the disposal of solvents. The systems reclaim 3.5m pounds of solvent each year.

THE DISTRIBUTION CHAIN: FREIGHT & LOGISTICS = ENERGY

SpearEarth is complementary to the 'SpearSystem', a consultative approach where the customer is supported throughout the label process, from design and production, to application,

filling and distribution. 'We've added more value to our services with SpearEarth. It gives us more power to insure our customers' goal of product success,' Muenzer says.

Reduction in operational waste directly translates to freight mile savings in the distribution chain. Freight miles are measured as a ton-mile, equivalent to one ton of freight moving one mile.

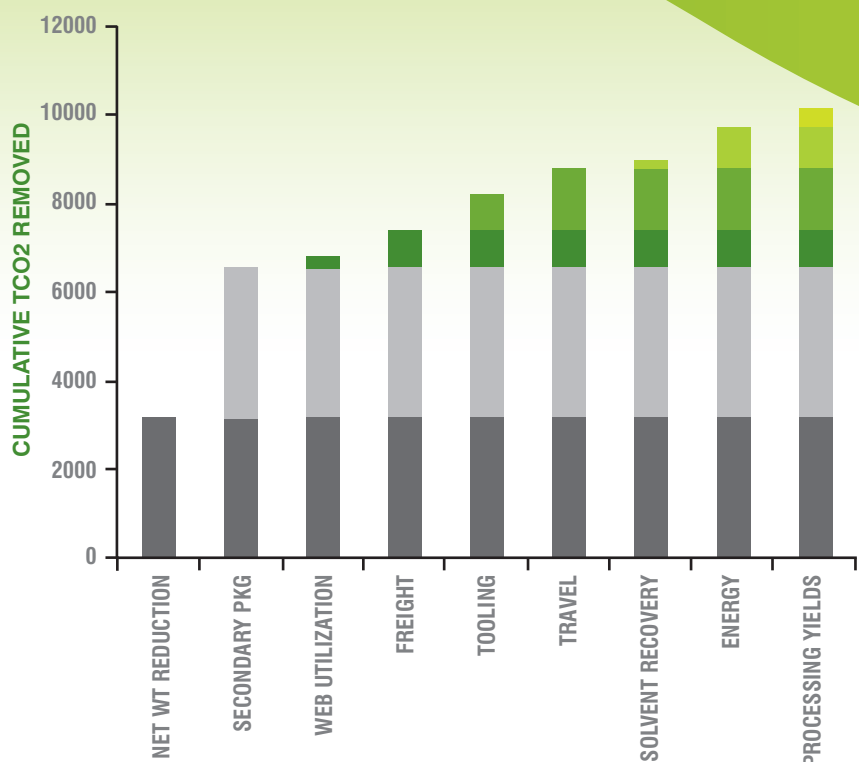
Spear constantly audits its logistics systems, calculating miles, number of shipments, and time to evaluate efficiency and effectiveness. Its goal is to optimize loads and reduce freight

miles wherever possible. All of the aforementioned programs within SpearEarth have eliminated 8.7m ton-miles from the company's delivery and distribution chains.

A ton-mile measures energy efficiency and is a necessary measure to construct carbon emissions data. Spear calculates ton-miles and kilowatt hours saved according to Energy Star guidelines into CO₂ emissions using www.carbonfootprint360.com. The company has saved a total of 10,142 tons of CO₂ [Figure 2] since SpearEarth was put into place. It follows the Carbon Disclosure Project guidelines in the US and the Carbon Trust in the UK. All of its data is certified annually through these two organizations, creating the transparency brand owners require of an EMS.

SpearEarth is an exemplary model of how to build the modern converter's EMS: filter the system under your operations management and ensure that the system follows in-line with your business strategy. The company expects its UK site to obtain ISO 14001 certification by the end of the year, followed by the rest of its global locations thereafter. It is also reviewing the TLMi's LIFE Program.

FIG2: SPEAR ANNUAL TCO₂ SAVINGS



Carbon footprint calculations from www.carbonfootprint360.com are based on the latest greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions science and reliable protocols from the well respected World Resources Institute (WRI) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

The

BARRY HUNT examines how JDF functionality is creating bridges between management information systems and graphics workflow systems – including direct links to digital presses

Developers of management information systems have introduced many software modules that strengthen the links between departmental workflows and production management systems. As a bridge between the front office and shop floor, they cover everything from small label printing firms to networks for large groups with multiple plants. The latest stage is to widen the appeal of MIS connectivity with JDF (Job Definition Format) protocols to create 'job tickets', while JMF (Job Messaging Format) files handle the feedback. Recent developments include JDF-enabled MIS to facilitate e-commerce functions, as well as systems adapted to facilitate the handling of large volumes of digitally printed short-run jobs.

Initially focused on sheet-fed offset printing, these industry-standard protocols (see sidebar) have since been adopted by leading MIS developers to cover a range of web-fed printing applications. According to Gerard Marneth, CEO and founder of DiMS! JDF connectivity has begun to make a big impact in label

bridge

production: 'It really is a significant MIS development. As more and more manufacturers and software developers accept and prepare for JDF, printers will begin to realize the significant benefits in efficiency and data accuracy. We are thoroughly committed to using JDF protocols and JMF messaging as the means of connecting to virtually every piece of equipment in the printing environment. We also provide direct machine interfaces, which connect to legacy equipment not offering JDF connectivity.' (Last November DiMS! received its fifth certification from the Printing Industries of America, a CIP4 testing body. It was related to various JDF-enabled finishing processes.)

One promising example involves the seamless transfer of MIS job specifications with artwork and other prepress stages. EskoArtwork has been working with CERM, a Belgium-based international MIS supplier, to develop integrated JDF-based workflows that incorporate MIS modules. They allow users to pass comprehensive job specifications, including bar codes and step-and-repeat data, from their MIS databases to EskoArtwork's BackStage prepress workflow system. Jobs passing through the production cycle send back information to the MIS as JMF messages. Full traceability through the production process gives production managers an overview of all prepress and press room activities. They can make on-the-fly adjustments to job planning, while front office staff can update customers' job status information.

"As more and more manufacturers and software developers accept and prepare for JDF, printers will begin to realize the significant benefits in efficiency and data accuracy"

An early adopter was 5/7 Etiquette, a producer of food, wine and cosmetics labels near Avignon, France. In October 2007 it began using JDF to link MIS with its prepress workflows. This involved setting up an intelligent JDF connection between an existing label-specific CERM MIS and a BackStage server driving PackEdge workstations and a CDI platesetter. (Described in L & L, Issue 4, 2009 pp 54-55.) CERM has also developed Web4Labels, which allows brand owners their own direct link with prepress, with MIS providing permanent communication between them. Printers' customers can manage products and artwork, as well as prepare proofs for new products. 'The individual status of products is synchronized between the three parties: brand owner, MIS and prepress. Therefore, the most unreliable part in the total lead-time for new products - communication with the brand owner - has become more secure,' says Peter Dhondt, CERM's business development manager.

Tailored Solutions recently launched Label Traxx Version 5.5, which

offers a JDF/JMF connection with BackStage, sharing information between MIS, prepress, press and post-press finishing. (Innovative Label Solutions in the USA is piloting the project.) It is said to allow converters to streamline operations, save time and eliminate rekeying errors. The same program was recently extended to work with HP Indigo digital printing workflows. The software tools incorporate the costs structures of HP presses based on run lengths, click charges and related factors.

For its part, Xeikon now offers two-way communication between its X-800 Digital Front-End, which drives the 3300/3000 label presses, and Prism's MIS software using WIN and QTMS modules. It has also demonstrated JDF integration using the Deixis web portal software. This allows end-users to request a job, while a CERM system automatically generates a quotation. After approval, the MIS gathers all the relevant job settings and artwork for passing to the front end, which reports the real time job status.

MIS connectivity with digital workflows still lacks some important features. As Gerard Marneth points out, much of the post-press equipment associated with digital printing is not JDF compatible: 'Paper for digital printing is often roll fed, which changes how inventory is accounted for. Also, shorter print runs often mean that overheads must be assigned differently. Once these differences between digital and offset or digital and flexo are properly quantified, then MIS systems can easily calculate the crossover point between digital and more conventional technologies.'

Ken Meinhardt, president of Tailored Solutions, says converters frequently overlook the administrative costs when managing digital workflows. 'The cost of processing an order through a factory tends to be fixed, regardless of the order quantity, value and margin. But digital printing typically means handling more small runs with lower margins. Unless they can lower the administrative overhead associated with individual orders, printers will require more staff.'



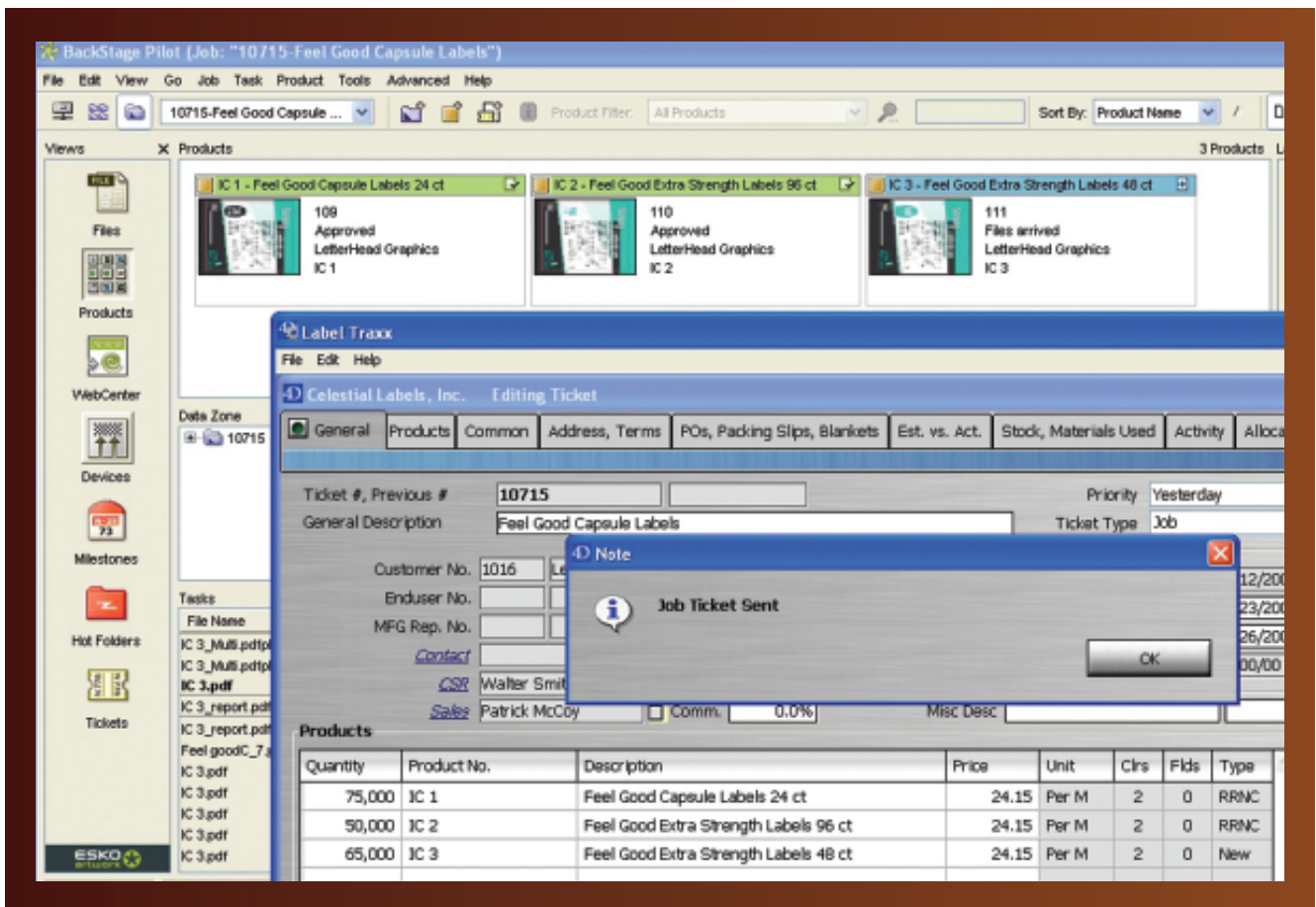
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"After I started my apprenticeship at Kocher+Beck I knew beyond a doubt that I wanted to stay on as a trainee. When I was accepted onto the training programme for industrial mechanics, it felt like an ace in tennis, my favourite sport. I don't mind being the only girl in the programme – I can deal with the guys! I keep my eyes on the goal: to become a precision lathe operator and have a career on one of our state-of-the-art CNC machines. My inspiration comes from the many experts and specialists here who started out just like me – as Kocher+Beck apprentices."

Christine Armbruster, second-year apprentice with a clear game plan



A POWERFUL TEAM FOR YOUR SUCCESS



THE LABEL TRAXX MIS demonstrated communicating directly with EskoArtwork's Backstage Pilot graphics workflow system. Information is exchanged seamlessly between the two programs using embedded JDF links

PURCHASING SOLUTIONS

Online estimating and order processing is set to increase among label converters, especially those offering digital printing services. Most MIS developers already offer various web-to-print modules that allow customers to log into a converter's website to receive instant quotes, generate purchase orders and accept uploaded copy and artwork. Some automated versions allow customers to track the progress of their jobs, including delivery information. Stock lists and repeat orders are other functions.

The widespread acceptance of Apple's iPhone and similar smart phone devices opens up another way for print customers to access printers' on-line services. Hiflex has started the ball rolling with its iPhone Portal, said to combine the leading edge technology of its MIS and online Web2Print services. The company, which is based in Germany and the USA, claims a world first for the technology which provides remote access to its Estimate, CRM (Customer Relationship Management) and JDF/JMF (feedback from production) via the internet.

In a related vein, several MIS developers have formed supplier partnerships that allow their users to order roll or sheeted labelstocks electronically. An early example allows users of the Label System MIS from UK-based Shuttleworth to plug into Avery Dennison's Fasson Connect electronic ordering system. Besides eliminating extra paperwork and reducing ordering errors, this type of ordering procedure includes data encryption and confirmation of transactions to strengthen system security. Such schemes also remove the need for manual or double data entry. Label Traxx's version includes a barcode scanning feature compatible with manufacturers' roll barcodes (EPSMA) to aid tracking and reducing inventory management time. The company is seeking to integrate its system with die suppliers, such as Rotometrics and Gerhardt. The success of involving other supplier groupings in such initiatives ultimately depends upon overcoming differences in regional distribution patterns and in generating sufficient customer demand.

MIS is on firmer ground when applied to production management systems. Within the context of accepted Lean Manufacturing principles, converters must assiduously collect and process shop floor data in order to assess their job costs and gross margins. Such data also allows managers to verify the

accuracy of estimating standards, while identifying the most likely jobs that will prove profitable. 'Many label converters either do not collect press run time data, or they collect this information manually and only occasionally process it,' says Meinhardt. 'But as margins tighten and supplies become more expensive, it is mandatory that label producers

HOW JDF WORKS WITH MIS

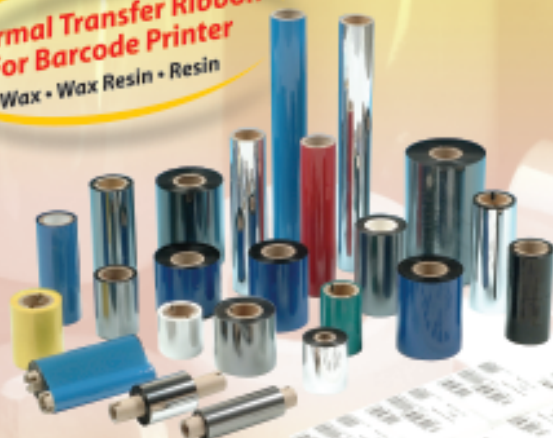
The Job Definition Format protocol is usually, but not exclusively, based on the widely recognized XML (Extensible Markup Language) standard or specification. XML is a tag or a code that identifies this information. An unlimited number of JDF-compatible processes with XML tags allow various types of suppliers' systems and equipment to work together. This includes machine-to-machine and machine-to-MIS information exchange. Users can therefore track information from an early stage in the workflow in order to create accurate estimating models. Once the sales or customer service staff have entered client and project data, no further rekeying is required unless some details change. The customer profile, along with the client's preferences, follow the job to completion so avoiding errors.

JDF was initiated by Adobe Systems, Agfa, Heidelberg and MAN Roland in 1999, then handed over to CIP3 at Drupa 2000. CIP3 was later renamed CIP4. The Swiss-based consortium (it means the International Cooperation for the Integration of Processes in Prepress, Press and Postpress) comprises leading graphics industry players who jointly control its development.

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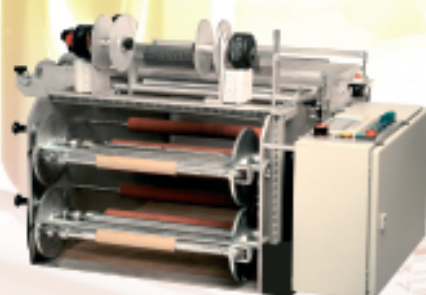
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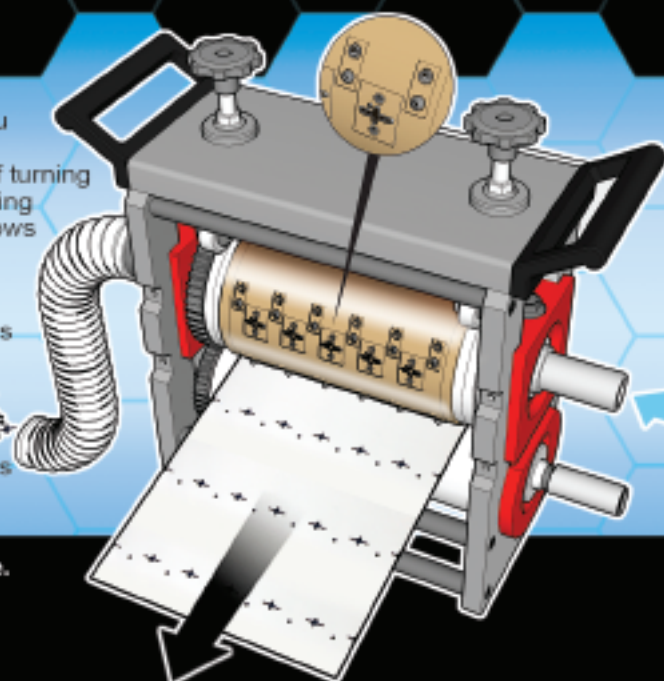
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understand the costs and margins associated with every job. Job costing tools help identify the margin in each job and illustrate the money being made or lost on each. A good system should track and compare the times required for make-ready, running and wash-ups, and should also track costly operations such as color-matching. It should also identify the specific materials used and correlate purchases with each job.'

Marneth broadly agrees: 'Two of the most powerful uses of a modern MIS system are determining business inefficiencies, and assessing the relative profitability of customers. The objectivity of a properly implemented MIS system can eliminate subjectivity and political maneuvering from the business. It can present management with a true picture of both machine and employee performance. Moreover, the MIS system can assess the business from many aspects, such as margin generation, overhead allocation, shift differences, and crew expertise. Creating a "phantom" press or finishing machine and assessing its efficiency is an excellent method of evaluating a prospective purchase.'

Prepress and press room staff therefore have a big responsibility in accurately keying the required data for someone else to process every working day. Press operators normally use fixed workstations with conventional keyboards to input time-related data on make-ready, running, and wash-ups. Handheld devices give mobility in allowing staff to identify specific materials and control warehouse stock with the aid of barcode scanning facilities. 'The future of shop floor data collection probably will not be found in mobile devices, but rather with the evolution of the machines and presses the operators work with,' says Peter Dhondt. 'After the JDF link with prepress will come the JDF/JMF link with presses. Let's hope the JDF-spirit will soon ignite the narrow web press manufacturers.'

Some of this spirit is reflected in recent examples to connect MIS interfaces with 100 percent print inspection systems that can automatically store data on detected defects. It has begun too attract the interest of some specialized converters. Examples include AVT's new MIS Connection for its PrintVision/Helios II inspection system and MIS support for Nikka Research's ALIS inspection systems.

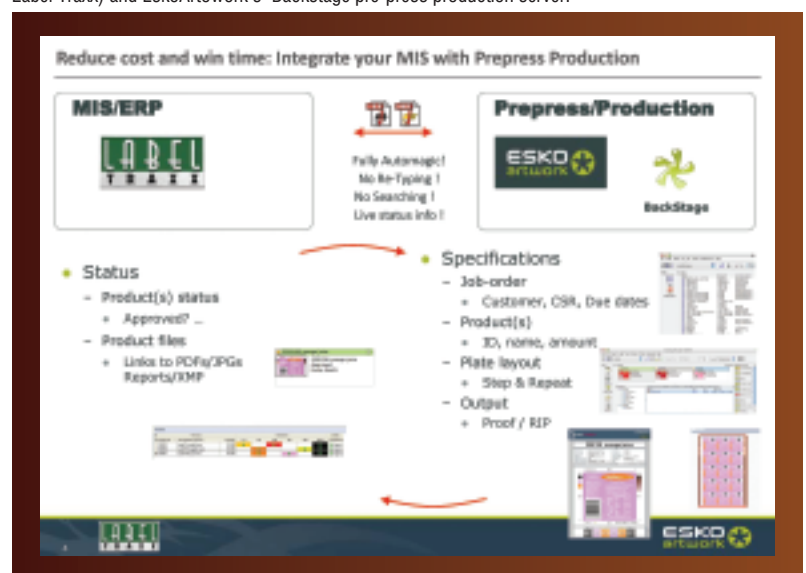
Among many converters one visible aspect

of their adoption of MIS is the absence of wall planning boards. 'They have already been replaced by electronic planning boards,' says Dhont. 'This is not necessarily because of the presence of ingenious automated scheduling tools, but mainly because of the real-time information they present. Customer job approvals immediately give a green light in respect of scheduling. Production delays, such as when quantities are changed, are visible, as are time over-runs.'

Depending on the application and prepress procedures, it is also possible to gang-up jobs with similar production parameters, so reducing make-ready and wash-up times. Arguably, electronic production scheduling is less relevant for presses and equipment dedicated to high volumes of quick turnaround work. Perhaps there is still a place for the old planning board, especially since job scheduling is a complex and somewhat intuitive process. 'MIS users can assign jobs to presses and allocate resources in many ways, but some factors are more subjective and virtually impossible to quantify. Differences in press crew efficiency, or the relative importance of customers to the business, are examples. Therefore, most printers regard the MIS-produced schedule as a recommendation, but will still rely on an experienced employee to make the final judgment,' says Marneth.

In summary, it is fair to say that a carefully selected and well implemented MIS package really is an effective bridge between a company's administrative and production departments. In moving far beyond the traditional basic costing and estimating functions, MIS has shown to be particularly suited to managing the diversity of printing and finishing processes required for label production. It also accords with the development of web-based interfaces, both in managing accounts and promoting products and services. Furthermore, we can expect more inclusive examples of JDF connectivity involving end-to-end label production in all types and sizes of plants.

A schematic showing in detail which data elements are exchanged between an MIS (in this case Label Traxx) and EskoArtwork's Backstage pre-press production server.





EXPOSURE unit and CDI 1450 for Cyrel FAST round



THE label industry led the way in adopting DuPont's Cyrel FAST TD4260 FAST thermal plate processing technology

Cyrel's landmark

DUPONT is celebrating Cyrel's 35th birthday. Barry Hunt reports on photopolymer developments and the related growth of digital imaging technology

The term 'flexography' may date back to 1952, but nobody took the process seriously until the arrival of photopolymer plates. By replacing vulcanized rubber, they began to deliver improved image quality and good press performance. A major landmark occurred in 1974 when DuPont introduced Cyrel F, along with dedicated exposure, processing, drying and finishing units. Thirty-five years later, new types of Cyrel plates and sleeves, plus a selection of integrated processing equipment, are core products for DuPont Packaging Graphics.

The birthday celebrations at its European support and manufacturing headquarters in Neu Isenburg, near Frankfurt, included a series of presentations. Björn Meth, business director, said that while the current financial crisis was the worst since the Great Depression, its effect on the packaging industry had been less serious than expected: 'A large part of packaging relates to the food industry and even in a crisis people still need to eat and drink.' DuPont's strategy, he said, was to stay close to its customers, focus on innovation, build a winning network, concentrate on sustainability and go where the growth is.

Jan Scharfenberg, technology manager, explained how flexography originated from aniline printing, using hand-cut rubber plates. The dye-based inks later proved unsatisfactory for food packaging. While Cyrel F marked DuPont's entrance into flexo platemaking, it had already proved the feasibility of photopolymer technology with Dycril letterpress plates introduced in 1959. Growing flexo usage in the US led to the second-generation Cyrel FR in 1978. Cyrel LP followed in 1980 as an attempt to reduce solvent washouts in platemaking. By now flexo was losing its 'potato stamp' image and expanding rapidly into global markets. The German manufacturing plant for European markets opened in 1986. It helped to increase flexo's penetration of the wide-web package printing market at the expense of gravure.

The Cyrel Digital Imager (CDI) launched at Drupa 1995 used a pioneering laser-ablatable masking system (LAMS). Image data was processed on a front-end system from Barco Graphics (now

EskoArtwork). In 2000 Cyrel FAST appeared as the world's first solvent-free, dry thermal plate processing system. Two years later seamless Cyrel round digital sleeves with solvent processing appeared. Cyrel FAST round followed in 2008 as the first dry thermal sleeve processing system. Following beta testing, it is now commercially available.

Charlotte Debarre, project manager for sustainability issues, said social responsibility had been DuPont's corporate policy since the mid-1980s. Being associated with the packaging industries meant that the trends and definitions associated with 'sustainable footprints' continued to change dramatically. In 2007 a Life Cycle Assessment, using an independent review panel, was applied to flexo and gravure in order to quantify their relative environmental performances. The results, (posted on the company's web site) showed that savings in greenhouse gases are possible in package printing, especially when choosing flexo printing and Cyrel FAST thermal platemaking instead of using gravure. Citing the increased sensitivity of brand owners and retailers towards the environmental impact of their packaging, Debarre said DuPont has so far initiated contacts with approximately 200 key buyers in Europe, plus selected flexo tradeshops and converters. 'Sustainable growth is a not a distant goal, but an immediate reality,' she added.

Digital platemaking has allowed users to develop various workflows to improve production and achieve near-gravure quality levels. Print quality naturally depends upon plate quality. In evaluating this and other workflow attributes, Jan Scharfenberg said large differences exist that are customer and application specific. While high line counts were essential to assess the finest highlights, line elements and text, other plate users would look for products capable of delivering closed solid areas with good gloss.

The introduction of filmless photopolymer platemaking in 1995 simplified the workflow. With CDI and main exposure units, the choice is between using the conventional solvent washout method of removing unexposed non-print areas, or the faster Cyrel FAST thermal process with its absence of lengthy drying



birthday

period. Seamless photopolymer sleeves (as well as plates) follow similar solvent or thermal processing workflows using dedicated equipment. Besides eliminating plate mounting, sleeves are said to offer significant advantages in terms of printing properties.

'Overall, digital LAMS technology has dramatically improved print form quality in terms of higher resolutions, better detail sharpness, a greater tonal range and increased print contrast', Scharfenberg said. He added that the LAMS process had considerable potential for further development, combined with current and future screening technologies. In many cases optimized print forms would require the use of finer anilox rolls and highly pigmented inks.

Juergen Andressen, EskoArtwork's vice president for flexo business, recalled the events leading to the 1995 debut of the Cyrel Digital Imager. Twenty years earlier as cofounder of Baasel Scheel Lasergraphics he had introduced the first direct laser engraver for flexo rubber plates. A partnership established with DuPont in 1989 moved the company into computer-to-plate technology. In 1996 he sold the company to Barco Graphics, which was later acquired by Esko. The 1,000th CDI installation occurred in 2007. Since then the pace has increased with 1,500 CDI units installed worldwide. Around 630 are in European markets, while North America accounts for nearly 500 installations. Applications include a wide range of labels and flexible packaging, as well as flexo-printed corrugated board and certain security products.

The current CDI range comprises seven multi-sized Spark platemakers from the A3 (plates up to 420mm x 300mm) to the CDI Spark 5080 (plates up to 1,270mm x 2,032mm). The CDI Advance Cantilever comes in two versions: 1750 (plates up to 1,270mm x 2,032mm) and the 1450 (plates up to 1,067mm x 1,524mm). Current developments center on ergonomics and automation, plus diode technology to give more control and

a longer life for inline UV main exposure.

The recently-launched High Definition Flexo combines high resolution optics with new screening technology. Benefits include smooth vignettes, a full tonal range to emulate offset and gravure, high line counts with standard anilox rolls and print process conversions without changing files.

Kim-Regin Sustmann, sales and marketing director of Fischer & Krecke, described the aims of flexo4all, a not-for-profit alliance of 19 independent print and packaging industry suppliers. Working strategically as a partnership, the members share their experiences and knowledge to promote flexo packaging printing by increasing awareness of its advantages and innovations. It was founded in 2007 as a natural evolution of Dupont's 'Flexo the Alternative' initiated over 20 years ago. 'We are still conscious of overcoming past prejudices,' said Sustmann. In respect of establishing higher color production standards, he said flexo4all would try to influence moves in this direction, although the nature of multi-substrate flexo printing introduced many difficulties.

Good color management standards are obviously important. Reiner Stoll, market development manager, described a survey of 450 flexible packaging converters and buyers in Europe and North America. It asked them how they selected a print process and supplier, also what it would take to choose flexo. The four top-scoring replies were: 'Reliability and consistency of print color', 'Cost efficient printing with many repeats', 'Shorter delivery lead times/turnaround times for repeat jobs', and 'No variation in printing result, especially colors'. Not surprisingly, most of the respondents who explicitly preferred flexo printing to gravure said it was cheaper. Gravure supporters overwhelmingly gave 'better quality' as their main reason. Improved quality and lower delivered costs are clearly the main drivers, whatever form of flexo printing technology is used.

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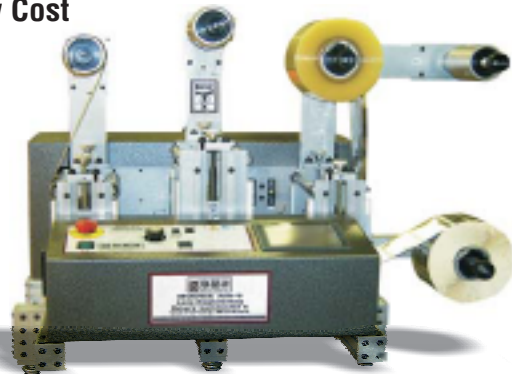
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Northern exposure

JUJO THERMAL – part owned by Ahlstrom Corporation – has become one of Europe's largest thermal paper suppliers while working hard to reduce its environmental impact. Elinor Zuke reports

Rows of terraced houses line up in the woods of Kauttua, south west Finland. They were designed by modernist architect Alvar Aalto in 1937 to house workers at Ahlstrom's paper mill, with each home entering directly to the forest and finished with local natural materials.

Ahlstrom Corporation sold its Kauttua subsidiary to Jujo Thermal in 2005, while retaining a significant stake. The workers' houses (now hotel rooms) still stand as a reminder of the long history of the paper industry in the region.

Jujo Thermal's is one of Europe's largest thermal paper suppliers, its annual sales having grown from 31,000 to 55,000 tons in the last three years. Its turnover last year was over 100 million euros.

It's a growth pattern the company's new CEO, Peter Hutton, has no intention of letting up. 'The plan is to grow sales of value added goods and grow the company by a third,' he says. 'We are marketing globally where we can do so based on technology differentiation. Where certain segments of the business tend more towards volume and price-based

competition then our natural area is closer to home.'

Hutton is excited by the potential for growth in eastern Europe and Russia, which last year accounted for just over a quarter of Jujo's sales. 'Russia's is a growing market and the sales growth is very good. Plus it's a great thing to be a neighbor to someone who is going through very strong stages of growth, growing as a society as well, so we try to be as active as we can all across the emerging east. We're growing and developing the market there when it comes to quality and value added as well.'

Building on Jujo's strong technical platform by investing more in R&D is a key consideration of the chief executive. 'Our technology is so specialized that the joint R&D of the Finnish paper industry doesn't go where we want. We start where they stop. At the moment it's in-house, but we need to look at EU and Finnish development funds,' he says.

Hutton thinks anti-counterfeiting will be a growing business. Jujo is well placed if this is the case, having worked in brand protection for several years. It holds a patent for a covert



JTK has reduced landfill waste by 80 percent in ten years, switched to hydro power for all production and co-developed a waste water purifying plant

security paper which adds fluorescent fibers visible under UV light, marketed as Extrassure. Meanwhile its tinted thermal papers are most frequently used in receipts to enhance brand recognition.

In 2006 Jujo installed a multilayer curtain coating machine. The Metso Optilayer allowed it to increase thermal paper capacity from 40,000 to 70,000 tonnes per year, and produce larger qualities of its increasingly-popular durable grades.

The company's JTK durable grades have a 12 year image stability guarantee, while the range's topcoating gives the paper mechanical strength needed for label printing, scratch proofing and moisture resistance.

Its Extra Durable grades have 25 years preservability, and are used more often for POS printing, including Ikea receipts in the company's Nordic stores.

Marketing manager Maria Konttinen says Jujo can also offer customized papers to its customers thanks to the new machine. 'In practice we could do almost any kind of coating on almost any kind of material. For example, we can add backside barriers and top-coating for extra protection or create security papers, special layers or chemistry with fluorescent fibers.

'Not all thermal paper manufacturers have this possibility. Some buy paper from an outside company and don't have an integrated operation,' she adds.

Jujo takes the environment seriously. It has improved the combustion of waste onsite – using the resulting energy for the majority of its heat energy – increased materials collected

for recycling, and co-developed a waste water purifying plant with other local factories. In total it has reduced land fill waste by 80 percent since 2000, from 182 tonnes to 36 tonnes last year. Earlier this year Jujo announced the use of carbon-free hydropower for all electrical energy used to produce direct thermal label papers. The company has also been granted FSC and PEFC chain of custody certification as well as the Nordic Swan ecolabel.

'The state of the Baltic Sea [of which the gulf of Finland is part] has to be improved substantially over the next 30 years and thanks to things like the Nordic Swan but also hard legislation and the Baltic Sea commission, we are managing to start to clean it up,' says Hutton.

Unlike many companies operating from industrial estates, Jujo also sees the impact of its production activities directly - its factory is next to Lake Pyhajarvi and its tributary river. 'It's very shallow, so this means that we as a manufacturer have to be concerned with what we do and how we do it,' Hutton adds.



JENS REMMER, sales director, Peter Hutton and Maria Konttinen



EXTRA durable grades have 25 year preservability



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Dieter Böppe, manager of rotary cylinder production,
has been with Kocher+Beck for 40 years



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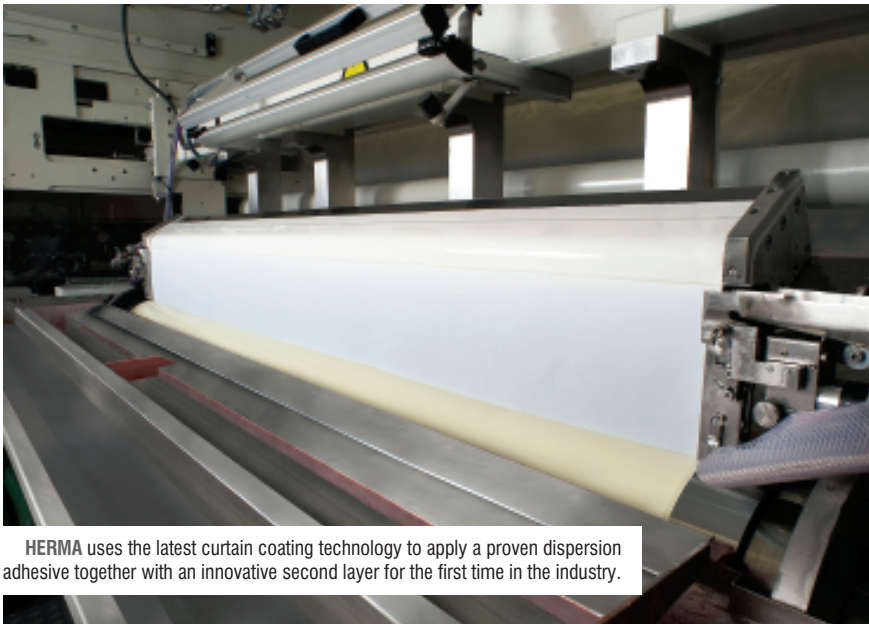
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MULTI-LAYER COATING BREAKTHROUGH CLAIMED BY HERMA

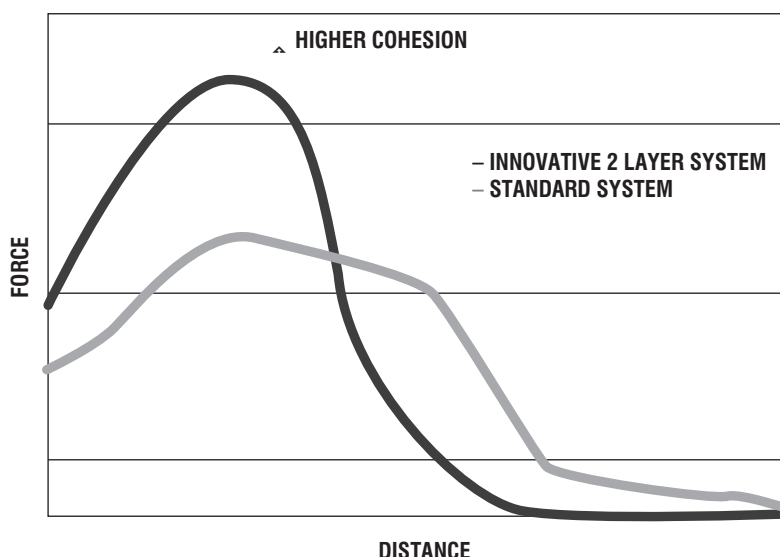
Herma is claiming an industry first in using multi-layer curtain coating technology to apply its 62X dispersion adhesive 62X in conjunction with a new, specially developed second layer. The resulting adhesive material, called HERMAperfectCut, is claimed to offer superior convertibility and die cutting performance, extending die life, while both tack and peel adhesion remain high.

The adhesive coating applied by the multilayer process 'breaks down' faster and thus facilitates the die-cutting operation during label production. Die-cutting pressure, for instance, can be decreased by 15 to 20 percent. This not only reduces wear, but also contributes to raising production machine output. In addition, cohesion – the internal force that holds together the adhesive layer – has been significantly increased. Since less adhesive bleeds as a result, HERMAperfectCut offers outstanding and especially reliable convertibility, says Herma.

The benefits offered by the new adhesive material are most apparent in conjunction with film products. HERMAperfectCut is therefore being made available initially with three PE and PP films: as a white, glossy standard PE film, and as white, glossy PE and PP films with a special surface treatment for better printability. This new assortment is to be extended.

HERMA commissioned the curtain coating line at its Filderstadt, Germany, plant in 2008. The HERMAperfectCut product launch was preceded by extensive tests and trial runs.

COMPARISON OF A STANDARD PRESSURE SENSITIVE ADHESIVE WITH AN OPTIMISED 2-LAYER VERSION



HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES



DIAGRAPH TAKES NEW SABREXTREME LASER LABEL CUTTER

AB Graphic International has announced the sale of its first, new series SabreXtreme laser label cutter to US converter Diagraph, Northern Ohio. The new version includes enhancements to label cutting software and will enable the company to specialise in very short run label work.

'The laser cutter has enabled us to greatly improve our ability to economically process small quantity label jobs,' said Mark Uvlin of Diagraph of Northern Ohio. It also means we can develop as a trade house by taking on the more troublesome small jobs from other label printers that don't yet have this capability. AB Graphic International cooperated with us to develop and customize the laser for our digital workflow and have been a pleasure to work with.'

SabreXtreme offers network connectivity, enabling a company's art department to directly load a library of label cutting patterns to run. The patterns are selected by the operator using barcodes printed on work orders. In addition, the Windows-based software now permits all machine settings to be saved so that the exact performance of a pattern can be duplicated later.

AB Graphic says laser technology dispenses with the need for conventional die cutting tools and the costs associated with production and storage on short run work. It also means less waste and faster make-ready times.

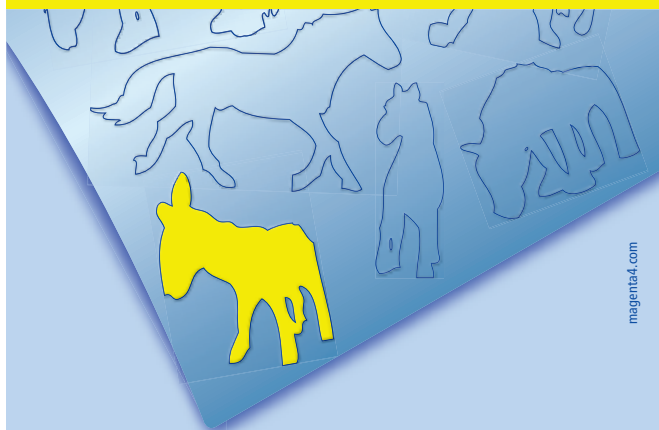
EFI ANNOUNCES USER GROUP PROGRAM

EFI has announced the program for its 11th annual Connect users' conference taking place April 18-21 at the Wynn Las Vegas. The complete schedule of over 120 break-out sessions is now available online at www.efi.com/connect. There will be dedicated sessions covering the company's Jettron narrow web products.

Keynote speakers include Robert Tapella, CEO of the US Government Printing Office and Joan B. Davidson, group president of Sheridan Publications Services at The Sheridan Group, and recent recipient of the prestigious NAPL Soderstrom Award, talking about operational efficiency improvements.



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Specifying tapes for combination printing

CORRECT TAPE SPECIFICATION is essential to achieve high quality combination printing, explains Guenter Kern, international market manager at tesa SE

Standard is not enough anymore. The production of a high quality label requires a combination of creativity, technical knowledge, sound organization and the willingness to invest in quality control. Modern hybrid printing presses are superb converting instruments and are no longer limited to labels. They can create all kinds of packaging solutions – including flexible packaging, display boxes or sleeve labels.

At the same time, competitive pressures have compelled printers to aim for higher levels of efficiency and process security, encouraging press manufacturers to focus on process optimization through the reduction of waste and job set-up times.

PLATE MOUNTING TAPES CAN MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Modern plate mounting tapes have become an essential part of this drive towards print process optimization. Foam-based tapes are widely available in the required thicknesses of 380µm (15mil) and 500µm (20mil), designed to ensure print results of the highest order, and with tailored adhesive properties that provide superior handling properties. The properties of the foam itself are crucial in a plate mounting tape, as the foam ultimately determines whether print results are just 'good enough', or genuinely exceptional. Advanced plate mounting tapes have specially engineered foams, developed with the twin necessities of best possible elasticity and consistent thickness in mind. Selecting the most appropriate foam hardness is also important, with the need for each adhesive variation to be available in softer density for finer screen print, and medium/hard density for solids and combination work.

When different printing techniques are used on the same press, each needs to achieve similarly high levels of performance.

CONSISTENCY IS KEY

The foam cell structure of today's leading plate mounting tapes ensures better recovery properties than standard foam based tapes. This feature, coupled with superior consistency of foam thickness, means that machines can run print jobs even faster without running the risk of compromising

"The foam cell structure of today's leading plate mounting tapes ensures better recovery properties than standard foam based tapes"

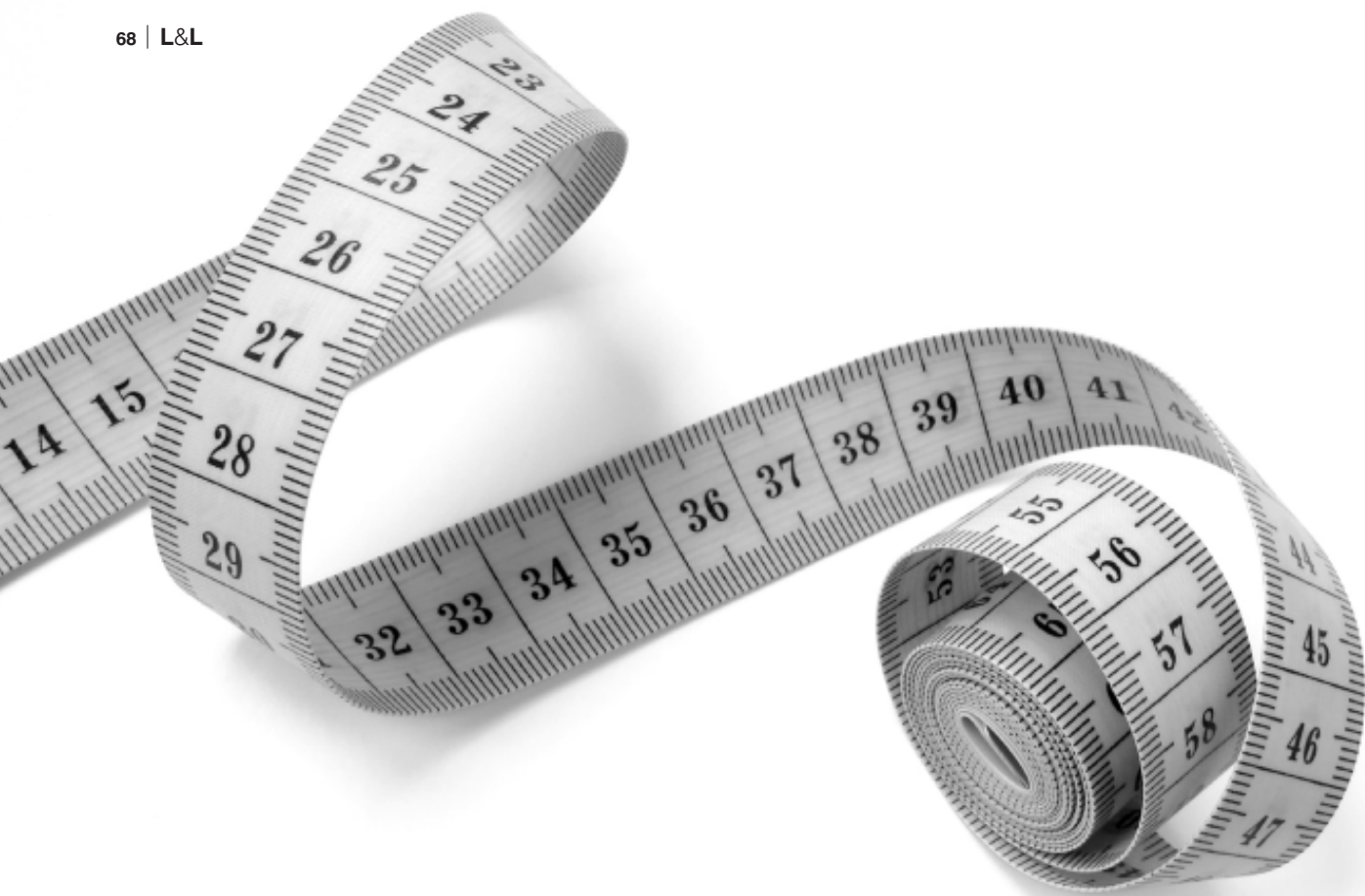
print quality. Ideally, tapes can also be reinforced with a stabilization film, meaning a tape not only has consistent foam thickness from the outset, but it also stays that way. In markets where print runs are becoming ever shorter and plate changes are more frequently required, foam-based tapes with the narrowest possible thickness tolerances are of key importance.

CYLINDERS AND SLEEVES

Several further factors are essential in determining the performance of a plate mounting tape in the modern label printing industry. The adhesive formula itself is of supreme importance, both in guaranteeing a secure bond between the tape and cylinder or sleeve, and a secure, tailored bond between the tape and plates of different thicknesses. In addition, the adhesive must be specially designed for fast handling – even allowing the tape to be reused to further speed up processes and lower costs. This is in addition to the need to make mounting, repositioning and demounting as effortless as possible, but not at the expense of process security.

CREATING TOMORROW'S SOLUTIONS

In the future, the demands on label printing will continue to increase; labels will be required with ever more detail and print runs will become increasingly specialized and shorter. Leading plate mounting tape manufacturers are seeking to adapt foam properties to offer the best possible characteristics. Companies like tesa now work closely with the different sectors of the industry – printers, machine manufacturers, plate manufacturers and sleeve manufacturers among others – to guarantee process security, efficiency and consistency of foam thickness and print results.



Measuring up

THE ability to measure all aspects of the flexographic workflow is a critical part of becoming a competitive, quality assured converter. Alexander James outlines a practical plan of action

Given today's competitive environment, it is imperative in the flexographic printing industry to maximize efficiencies. This is especially important with the tight financial situation many businesses find themselves in. Improvements in efficiencies must be accomplished with thorough quantifiable procedures and streamlining of all workflow. Incorporating procedures using equipment that enables the measurement of the flexographic process and proper documentation is a critical part of assuring consistency and efficiency.

Now is the opportune time to evaluate your process, your workflow, and find opportunities for improvements that will make you more efficient and more competitive. There are an abundance of technologies available which make it extremely feasible to measure and establish tolerance for the entire flexographic process. In this article, I will review workflow going

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from digital file through the prepress area, including plating, pressroom, aniloxs and ink preparation. I will cover ways of adopting instrumentations that can benefit any company.

We will start with a simple example of using a target for a place to track consistency throughout each stage. For example you can have targets of 100%, 70%, 50%, 20%, 1%.

Established design tolerances and parameters won't be covered. The assumption will be that those parameters – minimum fonts, line widths (positive

and negative), printable screens for achievement of quality vignettes, have been instituted. Most companies should have those tolerances in the form a design specification sheet, based on the limitations of their equipment in combination with their ability.

These targets will have measurable tolerances – and more importantly, a point of reference for troubleshooting the process from digital file preparation through polymer processing and plating.

We are now ready to review the process. Initially, when processing any job, keep

DIGITAL DATA	COMPENSATION CURVE				FILM			
	Y	M	C	K	Y	M	C	K
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1%	1	1	1	1	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
20%	16	18	16	16	16.5	18	16.5	16.5
50%	38	41	39	38	38	41	39	38
70%	61	61	63	63	61	61	63	63
100%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

"Tracking this information you will know at what point the decrease in any volume no longer will allow you to hit a target color"

the targets with each separation. When the compensation curve is applied, track and document the actual numbers used for each curve.

Additionally, measure the targets using a transmissive densitometer after the film has been processed. If your workflow is digitally based with a direct to plate system, measure the mask prior to processing the plate. See the example below. Keep in mind this is only an example; your actual numbers may differ.

Several key points to keep in mind are the tolerance for each stage for example for film, the 1% should be +/- .5%, the 20% should be +/- 1%, the 50% and 70%, +/- 2%, and of course the 100% is 100%.

The next stage is to process the plates. For this purpose we will stick with the conventional approach and measure

this procedure is knowing prior to sending any plates to the pressroom for production that the workflow up to that point is holding consistent tolerances every day. Should an issue arise during production, you can now refer to the quantified workflow via documentation. This allows you to quickly draw inferences for potential areas to evaluate, plus eliminate time-consuming and needless analysis of verified workflow.

Finally, as the plates are taken to the pressroom, the printed result should be the final data that is quantified to close the loop on the workflow. Having each stage of the process measured and quantified establishes a process checklist and tolerances. This valuable information validates the consistency of each job when in production, and in addition it gives you valuable information for reference when

graphic and color requirements so they can help you determine the right anilox specification to meet your requirements.

For example, if you have FIRST density targets for your process inks you need to be cognizant of what engravings will give you the desired density numbers. The same goes for jobs that are screens, combination, or solids. If you are printing jobs with a specified delta E tolerance, you need to not only be aware of the anilox specification that will allow you to achieve the desired color, but more importantly the tolerance for volume variation. For any given anilox engraving that delivers a specific color match you need to know at what point does a change in volume no longer allows you to achieve a color match.

Quantifying that change can be achieved numerous ways – with the help of your anilox supplier, by conducting periodic audit, and by investing in anilox measuring

for success

our targets after each plate has been processed. The thickness of the plates should be documented along with the measurement of the target. A tabletop micrometer can be used to measure the plate thickness and a variety of optical measuring devices are available that enable the measurement of tone-scale polymer targets, be it conventional or digital, as part of quantifying your workflow. Once this information is known you should always record the acceptable variance for your operation.

Going forward, keep in mind that every job should have documentation for each of these stages to assure that every separation is maintaining a high degree of consistency. The value of establishing

repeating the job on a reorder.

A common misunderstanding is that quantifying and documenting should be only for process printing jobs. Every job, regardless if it has process, screens or combination work, should be recorded.

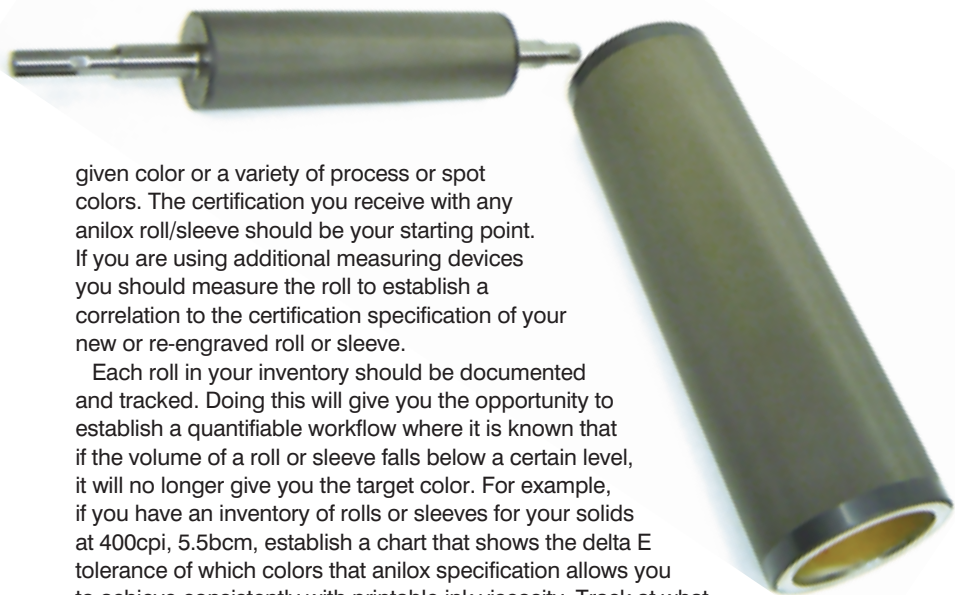
Once the plates make it to the production floor with the documented tolerances, the next area to review is the selection on your anilox roll/sleeve. Your choice for anilox specification is another crucial element for having consistency and a quantifiable workflow. Make sure you calculate the correct engraving specification that addresses your requirements for dot support, ink volume for color achievement and consistent printability. Contact your anilox supplier and ink supplier with

technology that will allow you to measure the change in volume over time and will enable you know ahead of time when a volume for any anilox will not give you the opportunity to hit your desired color. You will also need an effective, verifiable and documented cleaning procedure of your anilox inventory. Working with your anilox supplier, when you order an anilox roll/sleeve you can start by tracking the anilox specification for any

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DIGITAL DATA	POLYMER				PRINT GAIN			
	Y	M	C	K	Y	M	C	K
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10%	1	1	1	1	3	4	4	4
20%	18	20	18	18	28	30	30	30
50%	42	45	48	45	62	62	65	60
70%	63	65	65	65	61	61	63	63
100%	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100



given color or a variety of process or spot colors. The certification you receive with any anilox roll/sleeve should be your starting point. If you are using additional measuring devices you should measure the roll to establish a correlation to the certification specification of your new or re-engraved roll or sleeve.

Each roll in your inventory should be documented and tracked. Doing this will give you the opportunity to establish a quantifiable workflow where it is known that if the volume of a roll or sleeve falls below a certain level, it will no longer give you the target color. For example, if you have an inventory of rolls or sleeves for your solids at 400cpi, 5.5bcm, establish a chart that shows the delta E tolerance of which colors that anilox specification allows you to achieve consistently with printable ink viscosity. Track at what point you no longer can hit the target colors. In your inventory of aniloxs, you could easily have a range of volumes that will deliver more or less color depending on actual volume. There are many instances where a color match will not be achieved when the bcm is .5 less than your specification. A .5 difference can easily be the situation when a roll/sleeve is not properly cleaned. I have measured anilox roll/sleeves staged to go into the press that had a difference of .8bcm less than the target bcm required to hit the color due to lack of proper cleaning procedures and verification.

Tracking this information you will know at what point the decrease in any volume no longer will allow you to hit a target color, then you can decide to reassign the anilox roll to a color that you should know will be achieved with the worn, changed volume.

Unless you are using the same equipment that your anilox supplier uses, your measurement not surprisingly will be likely be different. You can work with your anilox supplier to periodically conduct an audit to help you establish a wear and condition history. The value of taking the time to establish working histories will be a decrease in make-ready time, more production output of your presses and predictability in your ability to hit a color. Having quantification as part of your documentation process when struggling to hit a specific color you can pull up the data and quickly evaluate whether your current anilox choice is part of the issue. Inspecting the cells of all rolls/sleeves prior to putting them in the press should be part of standard operating procedures. Remember that an engraving that is not properly cleaned can have a volume loss exceeding the tolerance you set in your workflow.

Finally, you must document the variables of your ink for each press run. Every print job should have documented the running conditions of the ink for the total run length of the job. Viscosity and color tolerances need to be recorded. You will soon discover the variability in color that a change in viscosity of 3 or more seconds can make. For the sake of consistency, if you do not have automatic viscosity meters, you should manually measure the viscosity every half hour and document the findings.

Inks going to the press floor should have a known flow target and spectral data. This is especially important when dealing with work-off inks or excess inks. Be sure to use a spectrophotometer to track the L*a*b values of your color to confirm your delta E tolerances are being achieved. In the ink lab you can use proofing devices to pull drawdowns prior to sending ink kits to the production floor. Taking the time to do this up front will save color-matching time at the press. Your press operators should be press operators, not ink technicians.

In summary, the entire process can and should be quantified on a job-by-job basis. This does require an investment in the right equipment needed to measure each stage of the workflow. However, the long-term benefits by far outweigh the short-term cost. Your initial investment in time and equipment will be compensated many times over by lowering costs associated with press downtime, ink waste, ink inventory, material waste and lost production. Guesswork troubleshooting no longer has a place in the pressroom in today's competitive world, so do yourself a favor and start quantifying your workflow and reap the rewards.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST
GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

FLINT APPOINTS AGENTS IN SA AND FINLAND

Flint Group Flexographic Products has appointed Kemtek Print Solutions to distribute in South Africa rotec sleeves and adapters in addition to its product range of photopolymer plates and ITR sleeves, processing equipment and washout solvents. The agreement is an expansion on a cooperation that has existed between the companies for over ten years.

Kemtek Print Solutions is a distributor of flexographic consumables and equipment for the flexo market in South Africa. The company has branches in Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, Pretoria and Port Elisabeth.

And after many years of cooperation in Sweden, Flint has expanded its contract with AB Kelva to cover photopolymer plate distribution in the Finnish market.

AB Kelva cooperates with nps (Nordic printing solutions) in Kintaus, Finland, where an AB Kelva sales office and warehouse is located for the Flint Group plate business.

POLAR AND HEIDELBERG CELEBRATE TIES

Polar and Heidelberg are celebrating 60 years of co-operation. In 1949, the friendship between the head of the Heidelberg sales office, Nicolaus Reisinger, and the Mohr family, owners of Polar, expanded into a business relationship. Both companies exhibited their products at the Frankfurt Spring Fair that year, and Heidelberg's director Hubert Sternburg was impressed by Polar's cutting machines. Seeking technology to complement his own company's products, collaboration begun. To date, Polar has sold more than 130,000 high-speed cutters via Heidelberg's distribution networks around the world.

EMIS GAINS AFRICA AGENT

Warsaw, Poland-based Emis, manufacturer of the Flexor line of inspection slitters and rewinders, has appointed Graphica, run by John Warder, as its agent for east Africa. Graphica has its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, offices in Tanzania and Uganda, and will also cover Rwanda and Burundi.

'We are excited and proud of our agreement to move forward together with Graphica. They have an outstanding reputation and local knowledge and are recognized as leaders in their part of the world. This union will be a fruitful one,' said Adam Robak, international sales director for Flexor.

NEW AGENT BEEFS UP ETI'S JAPANESE PRESENCE

ETI Converting Equipment, based in Quebec, Canada, has appointed Libero, run by Kazumi Hiroshima, as its agent in Japan.

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This book brings together the combined knowledge of some of the world's leading RFID smart label experts to provide a comprehensive guide to understanding the basics of RFID.

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HERMA'S film curtain coating line

Film developments

WITH TRENDS including thinner films as part of moves towards more 'sustainable' packaging solutions, Andy Thomas rounds up the latest developments in filmic label technology

With the increasing impact of environmental pressures through the supply chain and the need to cut costs, down-sizing is today a major focus for label film developers. As well as saving raw materials, thinner gauge materials reduce transport costs and energy usage, while increasing the efficiency of the print and labeling operation, with more meters of labels before roll changeovers.

Avery Dennison Roll Materials Europe introduced at Labelexpo Europe a thinner 23 micron PET release liner to its Fasson range. Avery hopes this will extend the use of film liners beyond clear-on-clear-film applications to areas where glassine is the current choice. Fasson PET23 is launched initially with two Fasson film facestocks – Fasson PP Light Top Clear and White – as well as a paper facestock, the multi-purpose Fasson MC Primecoat. Fasson PET23 release liner is fully recyclable, complete with its silicone release coating.

UPM Raflatac meanwhile introduced its Thin Range, comprising ten labelstock combinations. Under this program, the company's PP30 liner is available with a range of paper faces, while a PET25 liner is offered in place of a standard paper liner with PE and PP faces. Additionally, a selection of thinner Lite paper faces is coupled with a thin Honey Glassine 50 liner.

Ritrama launched at Labelexpo Europe its light weight Evolution PE60, designed as an alternative to standard PE 85 micron films in cosmetics and personal care applications. As well as the environmental and production efficiency advantages of thinner films, Ritrama says the material exhibits improved flexibility, allowing labels to conform on a wider range of applications.

Looking to eliminate liner altogether, Arca Etichette and Ritrama presented in Brussels a complete linerless self-adhesive label

solution for applications like labeling boxes, shrink/wrap trays and multipacks. The facestocks comprise a 60 micron white matt BOPP film and a 76 micron direct thermal paper, both with permanent adhesive. The 'Bi-Fuel' print/apply system developed by Arca Etichette incorporates a thermal transfer printer.

There are, of course, other aspects to the environment debate aside from downgauging. To aid the recycling of reusable beer bottles, Gombau has launched a new Wash Off film that will fall off after two minutes in 80degC temperatures.

Innovia Films meanwhile continues to expand its NatureFlex cellulose-based film range, bringing converters a choice of clear, white or metalized label facestock films. As with the clear NatureFlex facestock film NVL, the new films in the range, white NVLW and metalized NML, are based on renewable wood pulp sourced from managed plantations, which either have or are working towards FSC, PEFC or similar certification. NatureFlex films are manufactured from 95 percent renewable raw materials from sustainable forestry sources.

Still on the 'sustainability' theme, Mondi has extended its Sustainex product range with a 'biodegradable and compostable' polymer-based release liner certified to EN 13432.

PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENTS

A key film driver in the beverage market has been roll-on-shrink-on films, pioneered in this sector by ExxonMobil. Now the Specialty Packaging and Films division of Dow Chemical has introduced Opticite, a line of polystyrene films designed specially for roll-on-shrink-on applications with a high shrink value. 'Traditional roll fed shrink films have a 10-15 percent shrink,' explains Chuck Carn, business development manager for the division. 'Our Opticite line provides 50 percent shrink. It's perfect for applications on high



INNOVIA'S cellulose-based films have helped brands build an environmental profile

contour bottles – the brands can use their existing application machinery and simply add a shrink tunnel.'

Mactac Europe, meanwhile, has been reaping the benefits from the commissioning of its new hot melt coater, CL9. The company says the coater enables it to be more flexible for low volume, niche orders. The company recently revealed a proprietary universal polyolefin filmic face material developed with the flexible packaging division of the Bemis Group. The new film is available in white and clear gloss and is coated with the acrylic multi-purpose adhesive MP128N.

Flexcon showed a number of new materials at Labelexpo Europe, including Flexmount Advantage, Pharmcal PM 15156E, Pharmcal PP 16856E. At the same time, Technicote has added a 2 mil clear polypropylene, called Value Plus, to its clear films product line. The film is available 'trim free' with TS523 permanent adhesive and 1.2 mil polyester liner out of the company's Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, manufacturing facility.

In the demanding technical film arena, Polyonics is promoting three new products: XF-509 is a 1 mil black polyimide label material which can be printed with a white thermal transfer ribbon. XF-300 is a 5-mil nylon cloth label with high chemical resistance, printable with thermal transfer, dot matrix and even with a ballpoint pen. Typical applications include electrical and laboratory applications. XF-596/7 and XF-597 high gloss labels, matched with the proper thermal ribbon, will withstand the high temperatures, harsh chemicals, and solvents typically used in circuit board manufacturing processes.

An interesting new supplier to watch in the BOPP label films sector is Dubai-based Taghleef Industries, which recently opened a US office in Charleston, South Carolina. The site will also host warehousing facilities courtesy of a partnership with Dockside Logistics, a warehousing company based just a few miles from the Wando Terminal in Charleston.

Colin Jones, Taghleef Industries's US market development manager, who has over 25 years experience in the BOPP industry in Europe and other regions, commented: 'TI Films is the fastest growing BOPP producer in the world. With these new

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facilities coming on stream as we speak, we look to develop strategic partnerships with many leading BOPP film converters and users. Our raw material resources for the future are well documented and with that support we ensure that TI is ready for the challenges ahead.'

DIGITAL

The continued strength in the digital market of HP Indigo has seen the range of specially coated films offered by manufacturers increase dramatically over the last few years. Those developments continue via HP's ongoing materials certification program. There has also been significant development of films targeted at xerographic printers which use heat to fix toners to the substrate, as well as VIP applications using inkjet or thermal transfer.

Hanita Coatings, for example, has a new line of topcoated polyester films for UV inkjet and solvent-resistant thermal-transfer films for industrial and under-bonnet applications, along with new tamper-evident security face stocks. Ritrama has now introduced a Roll Indigo range, which is currently undergoing HP certification. Intercoat has launched a material for its range of HP Indigo-certified coatings – a PP 60 micron on a 30 micron PET XP-Liner – while Flexcon is busy promoting its DigiPro range.

Sihi has launched four new grades of PicoFilm both for xerographic and Indigo printing, as well as new coated films based on PP and PVC for the digital and litho market in the 200 μ m to 350 μ m range. Within the company's EnDURO Ice range two PS grades have been launched, one for conventional roll and one for digital printing, 'giving the advantages of transparent papers with the performance benefits of film'.

MDV now has a range of digital media including Robuskin PET 50 B/S, a thin film supported by most digital printers, and a range of Robuskin PVCs for digital dry toner machines.

Intercoat has launched a new material in its range of HP Indigo-certified coatings – a PP 60 micron on a 30 micron PET XP-Liner - while Turkish supplier Polinas now has a range of BOPP coated films for HP Indigo digital presses.

Synthetic papers are also now appearing for the HP Indigo presses. Arjobex has had its Polyart Digital synthetic paper certified for use with HP Indigo's ws4000 and WS6000 presses. It is available for both adhesive labels and tags. Yupo meanwhile, has launched its own HP Indigo-certified synthetic paper, called YupoBlue.

SYNTHETIC PAPERS

In the field of synthetic papers, Arjobex has extended its Polyart Wet Glue range designed for cold glue cut-and-stack labeling of glass or plastic bottles. It consists of a cavitated HDPE film and a water absorbent coating, and is claimed to have a touch and feel close to premium coated paper. Polyart Wet Glue can be printed on both sheetfed offset presses and UV machines.

Valéron Strength Films is showcasing its new Valéron RxS PE-based cross laminate, where one or both film surfaces are grafted with an adhesion promoter. The company has also unveiled its extended range of Valéron TLP products, developed for integrated pharma label applications. Yupo has launched a tamper evident synthetic paper, SAR 60, which allows double sided printing and gives converters the flexibility to use different designs instead of the traditional 'void' image. The company is also promoting YupoTako, a material which sticks to flat surfaces, due to its mirco suction structure, using no adhesive. Tako means 'octopus' in Japanese. The material leaves no sticky feeling on label or surface. It can be washed with water to enable reuse after the adhesion is weakened by dust.

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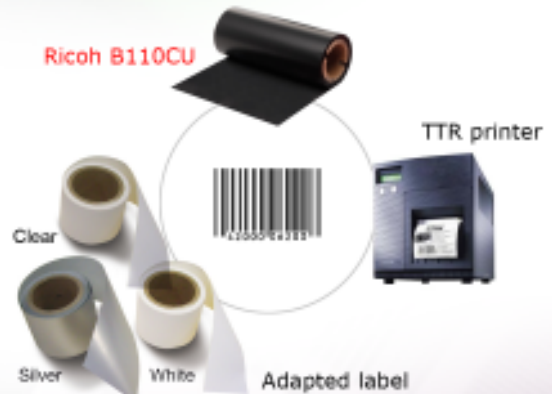
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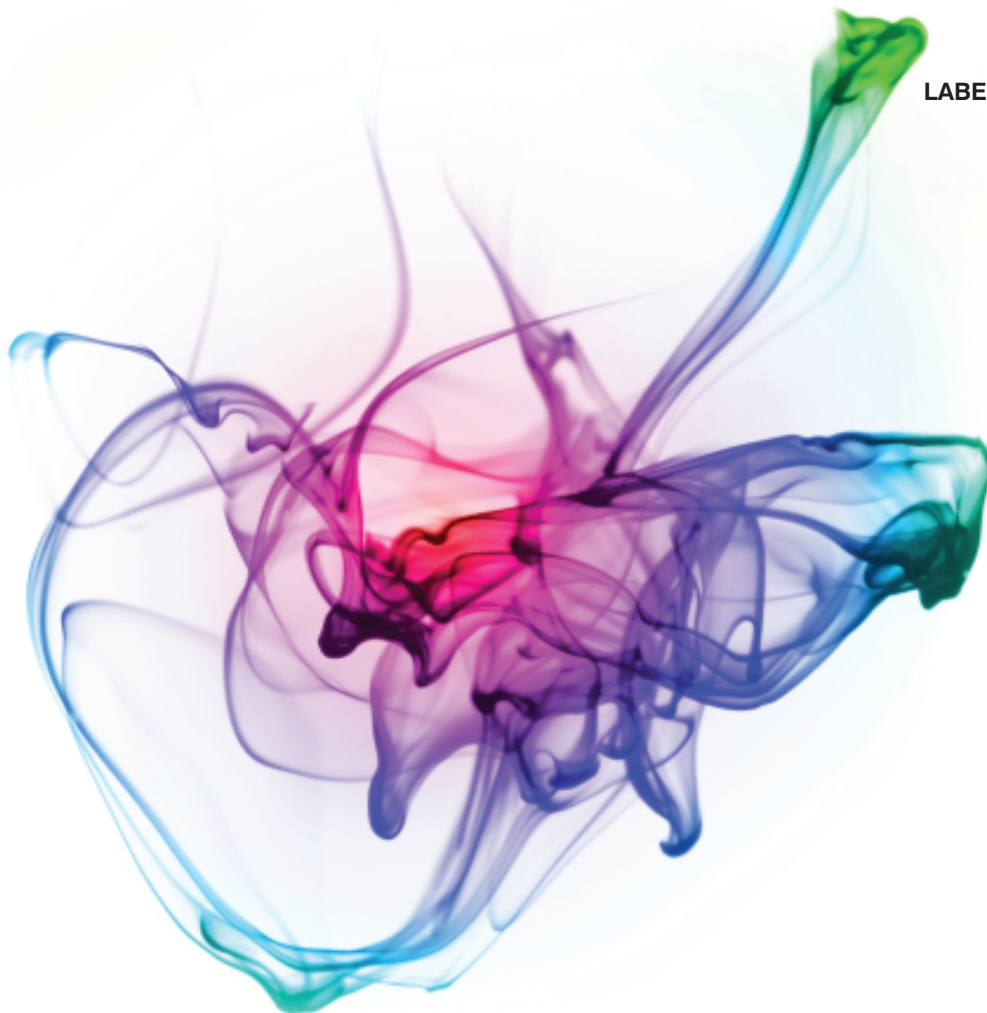
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Inks and coatings

ANDY THOMAS looks at new developments in ink systems, focusing on more opaque flexo whites, inks for low migration food label applications and special effect inks – including the latest in RFID antennae printing

Looking forward to the most significant ink developments in 2010, we can discern some key trends: low migration inks to meet new food contact regulations; more opaque flexo whites to allow converters to replace screen whites for some clear film applications; and, one for the future, the first commercial appearance of LED-cured inks for narrow web presses.

Ink manufacturers are today responding to a tougher migration regime for inks on labels which are used on food products. The pace is being set by regulations formulated in Switzerland which have required the development of a new generation of low migration products.

One of the first manufacturers to analyze the new requirements was Mirage Inks, which has now released its Quartz Artemis cationic range, formulated without potentially harmful bi-products like benzene, itx and 4 methyl benzophenone. Tests by Pira on commercially printed shrinkable PET found no detectable migration.

Paragon's recently launched NC Series ink range meets the latest Nestle migration compliance list for raw materials, and cures at speeds over 250m/min with what the company says is a high color strength. The NC Series includes the LM and LO Series, all of which are Benzophenone, ITX and BDK free.

Arets Graphics now has its own series of low migration UV inks formulated for compliance with non-direct contact food packaging (regulation 1935/2004). The ink series include: EXC20000M wet offset for films and foils; EXC30000M wet offset for paper and carton; and EXC50000M flexo inks for paper, carton, films and foils. Various UV lacquers are included in the system.

GSB-Wahl's new UV-Flexoserie 70, UV-Letterpress series 7000 and its new UV-cured varnishes – available in several gloss and matt versions – are free of Benzophenone. The company now sells these inks along with its PFR ink management system. Other manufacturers which have released low migration products recently include Siegwerk and Pulse Roll Label Products, whose PM and BB ranges of inks for food packaging applications also address changes in Swiss regulations and EuPia guidelines.

WHITER THAN WHITE?

Running a press with a screen white on combination printing jobs usually results in greatly reduced running speeds – as well as the need to have separate screen units on the press and the associated screen making pre-press and equipment.

LED CURING INKS

LED curing on inkjet presses is increasingly well established, particularly for interdeck applications, but at Labelexpo Europe we saw the first demonstration of LED curing on conventional narrow web production systems. Ink manufacturer Siegwerk was at the center of these developments with a new ink system developed to work alongside a curing system from US company Phoseon on a Gallus ECS340 press. Siegwerk's LED system includes UV flexo inks, UV screen inks and UV overprint varnishes. The company says they are a match for conventional UV inks in terms of drying speed, achieving print speeds on a suitably modified press in excess of 100 m/min. The lamps and inks are currently 15-20 percent more expensive than those for conventional UV drying, but Siegwerk says this is offset by lower energy consumption, the elimination of air exhaustion systems and a safer work environment.

So the development of flexo whites for clear film work has been something of a 'holy grail' for ink manufacturers.

The recent Labelexpo show in Brussels saw many manufacturers announce new flexo products for this application. Flint Group, for example, upgraded the opacity of its CombiWhite ink and improved press performance and printability, while launching Flexocure XS opaque white ink for shrink sleeve printing, with improved slip characteristics.

Siegwerk's new Sicura Flex White flexographic ink is also designed as a replacement for Screen whites, although it must be used in conjunction with Praxair's specially developed ART anilox roller. FujiFilm Sericol has its UVivid Supernova White, developed as a UV flexo base coat for filmic materials. As an expert in screen inks as well as UV flexo, the company advises that the printing of fine text with UV flexo white ink is not generally recommended with high volume anilox rolls. Lower volumes will improve definition but this will be at the expense of opacity and lay of solid areas.

In other words, there are still many applications where a screen white is still required, and development of high opacity screen whites shows no sign of slackening. Marabu, for example, recently launched its UltraRotaScreen UVRS series that are designed specifically to complement letterpress and offset, and the UVFS series for use with UV flexo.

WIDER DEVELOPMENTS

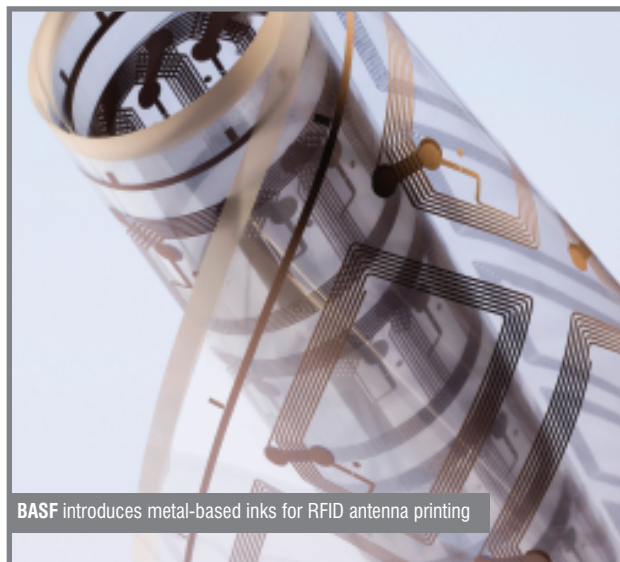
The major ink manufacturers have continued to enhance and expand their existing narrow web systems.

Sun Chemical announced new UV additions to its Solaris system at Labelexpo. SolarFlex Nova for UV flexo is claimed to offer improved cure time, higher color strength, and can be supplied alongside the company's ColorSat color management tools to reduce downtime. Silicone-free, the new ink allows for easier post-print enhancements as well. Suncure Starluxe is the company's latest UV offset ink, offering enhanced performance on a broader base of substrates. Solar Screen Opaque Whites are now available in both silicone and silicone-free versions.

Flint Group Narrow Web has expanded its Flexocure narrow web series with Force, a UV flexo ink said to offer easy handling due to lower viscosity and no foaming, while offering good adhesion to a wide range of substrates. Tests have shown new ink does not cause plate swell.

Other new products from the company include an anti-bacterial UV varnish and UV-curable primers designed to replace pre-topcoated synthetic substrates – another 'holy grail' of ink and coating suppliers.

The environment continues to affect the development of new ink series. Ruco, for example, recently introduced a line of UV screen printing inks made up of 40 percent 'renewable raw materials'. At Labelexpo the company showed the inks printed on a Fasson biodegradable stock. Developed for the decoration of plastic films, the inks are available in high-gloss formulations. The company claims a high resistance to solvents and a high quality print result on pre-treated PE and PP.



BASF introduces metal-based inks for RFID antenna printing

SPECIAL EFFECTS

On metallics and special effect inks, Marabu has two new screen gold pastes, which join its successful high-gloss silver S-UV 296. All metallic concentrates can be used with the respective clear for rotary and flatbed printing.

Security ink manufacturer Luminescence has meanwhile introduced a metamerically optically variable ink. The system uses two inks that appear exactly the same when viewed directly, but one changes color when the viewing angle is changed. The system can be incorporated into designs or make a message emerge from a flat image. The inks are available in several different colors and are suitable for flexo, gravure, intaglio and screen printing.

CTI has completed its range of thermochromatic inks for screen, gravure, flexo and offset printing, and added other special effect inks including glow-in-the-dark and color shifting options.

Meanwhile, Radior has announced that its Smartinks metallic ink series - available both in UV flexo and water-based flexo variants - are now joined by The Fluosmart 7910 series, the company's new generation of fluorescent UV flexo inks. Also new is a range of UV flexo and screen inks for specific scratch-off applications.

NEW APPROACH CLAIMED FOR RFID INKS

CypoPrint is a new range of metal-based inks from BASF for the production of flexible antennas for RFID tags. The non-conductive CypoPrint inks are claimed to offer a more eco-friendly alternative to the current etching technique and represent the first solution for the additive manufacturing of RFID antennas.

The benefits of additive manufacturing compared with aluminum etching are the efficient use of raw materials and the lower environmental impact, says the company. The new CypoPrint inks replace the conductive printing pastes previously used in the additive process and reduce the manufacturing costs of RFID antennas.

The CypoPrint inks are applied to polyester films using a standard printing process and then given a conductive metallic coating in an electroplating system for flexible electronics. 'Because the CypoPrint inks are converted and made conductive in the electroplating stage, we refer to them as "seeder" inks. CypoPrint is the seed that we apply to the object where we later want to grow copper conductor structures,' explained Dr Christoffer Kieburg, project manager in BASF's metal systems business. 'Another customer benefit is the variable layer thickness and conductivity of the antennas, which can be easily adapted to the various memory chips during electroplating.'

In addition to the CypoPrint seeder inks, BASF's portfolio also includes a primer to achieve better adhesion of the antenna structures formed on the film.

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CORTI'S facility in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Label growth for Argentine packaging converter

THE label division of Argentina's premier pharmaceutical packaging converter is the fastest-growing part of the company, with further investment and a move to a new facility planned for this year. James Quirk reports

Buenos Aires-based Tallares Gráficos Corti is Argentina's biggest pharmaceutical packaging converter. Founded in 1930, it operates a fleet of presses for folding carton printing in its 23,000 square meter facility, producing some 200 tons of packaging every month. Long established in the packaging sector, it is now Corti's label division that is the fastest-growing area of the company.

As in a number of countries in South America – neighboring Chile is another example – Argentina's label sector is relatively youthful; large-scale production and investment in North American and European machinery only began in earnest in the 1990s.

Tallares Gráficos Corti is one of a number of companies to have ridden this wave. Its interest in label production – seen as a natural progression from its successful folding carton business – began in the 1980s, but it waited until 1992 to open a dedicated label printing division.

This division began with a Mark Andy 910 press. Early clients were companies to whom Corti was already supplying folding cartons and who were beginning to seek locally produced labels. While serving these existing clients, the division began to attract new business in its own right. A Mark

Andy 2200 – was installed in 1996. With a 10 inch web width and eight colors, it allowed Corti to compete for work usually carried out on Gallus and Ko-Pack machines.

Since then, a 7-color Mark Andy Scout has replaced the 910 and an offset press from Rotatek was brought in to handle pharmaceutical leaflet printing in rolls – non-adhesive informational labels placed inside pharmaceutical packaging. The flexo machines count rotary die-cutting, UV varnishing and lamination among their options. Corti plans to buy a further narrow web press for its label division during 2010, with machines from Mark Andy and Nilpeter being considered.

The investment doesn't stop there. Impressed with what he saw at Labelexpo Europe 2009, managing director Gustavo Corti ordered a machine from Italy-based Cartes which will bring hot stamping and silkscreen capabilities. A second Prati rewinder will also be purchased during 2010.

PRE-PRESS REVAMP

A key element of the label division's growth has been the investment in 2009 in digital plate-making equipment. Previously outsourced – as is often the case in Argentina – the addition of Cosmolight digital plate-making from Japanese



A view across part of Corti's folding carton division

company Toyobo, installed by local distributor Leftech, has had 'a big impact' on the company's label production, says managing director Gustavo Corti. 'Our label business has grown a great deal since its inception. We have many more clients and the trend towards shorter runs in the market results in an increased number of print jobs. It has been a big advantage for us, therefore, to bring plate-making in-house.' Corti's label division currently produces up to 80,000 square meters of materials per month.

Production manager Diego Castellano reveals that the reduced environmental impact of the Cosmolight water-wash plate technology is part of a wider strategy in the company. 'It means we can avoid using solvents, which is an advantage from a point of view of environmental sustainability,' he says. 'Production is also much quicker: plates are ready within an hour and a half, while the quality is comparable to digital plates produced using solvents.'

Further environmental initiatives include only using FSC-certified materials, while Corti is also in the process of acquiring ISO:14001 certification.

Corti's pre-press department also counts on Screen PlateRite CTP equipment for flexo plate-making for its folding carton division. Pre-press is located directly next to the carton division, and Corti now plans to move its label production – at present housed on the other side of the premises – into a currently empty area adjacent to the folding carton division. The development will not only increase the label division's physical size, but will also allow easier and swifter communication between it and the pre-press department. The move is due to be completed by the beginning of next year.

Further investment in the label division – in the form of RFID technology and equipment – is also being planned. Corti already buys labels with pre-inserted RFID tags for pallet tracking, and has installed a reader from Alien Technology which ensures pallets have passed through quality control as they leave the premises.

Investment will take the form of an RFID insertion machine, says Gustavo Corti, who reveals that this machine will also allow for the production of peel-off labels – useful for pharmaceutical products where space for requisite legislative information is often at a premium.

While the RFID-enabled pallet tracking stands as a useful capability in its own right, Gustavo Corti says that it is also serving as a dry run for the planned future capacity to supply RFID labels to customers.

The company's plans for RFID technology have not been driven by the pharmaceutical industry directly. Corti plans to move ahead irrespective of impending legislation, viewing it as the most effective technology available for track and trace. Should legislation never come, Corti reveals there are 'other plans' for the technology's use.

LATIN AMERICAS NEWS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST LABEL NEWS FROM LATIN AMERICAN

BRADY EXPANDS IN BRAZIL WITH FURTHER CONVERTER ACQUISITION

Brady Corporation, a provider of identification solutions and specialty materials, has completed further expansion in Brazil with the acquisition of Sao Paulo-based converter Stickolor Indústria e Comércio de Auto Adesivos.

Brady expects this acquisition to further strengthen its position in the industrial identification market in Brazil and enhance its screen printing capabilities, as well as facilitate its growth into complementary markets in the region including automotive, agricultural equipment and major appliances.

'Stickolor is known for its superior screen printing capabilities and exceptional quality, and we are excited to be able to offer their products and services to our customers as well as bring new Brady products to their customer base. Their markets and capabilities are complimentary to Brady's and their focus on teamwork and customer service is a strong cultural fit,' said Matt Williamson, president, Brady Americas. 'We look forward to working with the Stickolor team, and are optimistic about the opportunities to further grow our business in Brazil where the economy remains relatively strong.'

Brady opened W.H.B. do Brasil as a sales and marketing office in 1996, and established manufacturing in the region in 1998 with the acquisition of VEB Sistemas de Etiquetas in Sao Paulo. The company opened a second factory in Manaus in 2002 and purchased Asterisco Artes Gráficas, a label converter serving the electronics, automotive and pharmaceutical industries, in 2006.

The acquisition of Stickolor was aided by the former owners of Asterisco Artes Gráficas, now operating as an industry consultant under the name Asterisco Consultoria e Participações. The company specializes in consulting for management, financial administration and mergers and acquisitions.

ETIRAMA LAUNCHES FLEXOWINE UV MODULAR AT OPEN HOUSE

Brazilian press manufacturer Etirama hosted an open house weekend in December at its facility in Sorocaba, in the state of Sao Paulo, to launch its Flexowine UV Modular press.

The event, dubbed Orange Weekend by the company, was attended by around 90 people representing Brazilian converters, while a number of industry suppliers also participated with table-top stands.

The Flexowine UV Modular is evolved from the company's successful Flexowine press, which has been installed at hundreds of converters around the world. Seven of the new presses were sold on the first day of the event.

The Flexowine UV Modular is a short web, 7-color press with UV curing stations between each print unit. Claimed to offer short set-up times, it comes with automatic tension control and options include hot and cold stamping and lamination.

'The launch of the press was very successful and customers were excited about the machine's short web system, one of its most important features,' said Rodis Ferrari, Etirama's sales manager. 'We are very happy and excited about this new model.'

Etirama used the event to present the Ewald Daefferner Award, named after a leading figure in the Brazilian printing industry who passed away last year. Competed by companies which utilize Etirama's central drum press, winners included Etima, Automação and Le Print.

During the event, a number of industry suppliers, including Flint Group, Stork and Braga, held technical training sessions for visitors.



RFID-TAGGED pallets pass through an Alien reader for quality control verification.

Meanwhile, testing is also being carried out for Braille printing on labels. Unlike in Europe, there is no legislation for Braille on pharmaceutical products, though Corti already counts on that capability in its folding carton division.

Corti's folding carton printing is handled by a fleet of press from KBA, Ryobi and Man Roland. Slitting takes place on four machines from Bobst, while a stamping unit from the same company caters to hologram applications and contains an electronic multi-register system that Gustavo Corti says is unique in Argentina.

Folder glueing lines are equipped with a verification system specially developed for pharmaceutical applications, which automatically expels faulty products from the line after reading a code.

While the company's production is dominated by pharmaceutical applications, it also produces labels and packaging for the cosmetics, food and beverage industries. It mainly serves its local market, with some products also exported to other Latin American countries such as Mexico and Cuba.



ETIRAMA launches Flexowine UV Modular at open house

LATIN AMERICAS NEWS

THE LATEST LABEL NEWS FROM THE LATIN AMERICAN REGION

WAL-MART TO OPEN 110 STORES IN BRAZIL

Wal-Mart will open up to 110 new stores in Brazil in 2010 with a total investment of 2.2 billion reais (USD \$1.2 billion). The expansion plan exceeds the previous year's outlay by 40 percent. It will be the biggest investment the company has made in Brazil since it entered the country 14 years ago, Hector Nunez, who heads the domestic operations for the company, told reporters recently in Sao Paulo.

Wal-Mart competes in Brazil, a nation of 190 million people, with market leader Grupo Pao de Acucar and French company Carrefour, the country's second-largest retailer. Meanwhile, Wal-Mart Stores has named the head of its Walmart de Mexico business as president and CEO of its Walmart Latin America regional operations. The retailer, based in Bentonville, Arkansas, said that Eduardo Solorzano will oversee Wal-Mart operations in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua and Puerto Rico. Solorzano will be based in Wal-Mart's Latin American regional office in Miami.

COLOMBIAN CONVERTER INSTALLS BST PREMIUS INSPECTION SYSTEMS

Plastilene, a South American flexible packaging converter, has installed three BST Premium inspection systems at its Bogotá, Colombia, production facility following successful trials of the print defect detection technology.

The systems were trialed for two months on W&H flexo presses. Alejandro Defrancisco, plant manager, said: 'The trial showed that BST Premium with automatic print defect detection is an extremely effective tool for managing print quality on press. It contributes significantly to better print quality, reduced waste and improved production efficiencies, while allowing us to deliver the very best possible quality product to our customers on a daily basis.'

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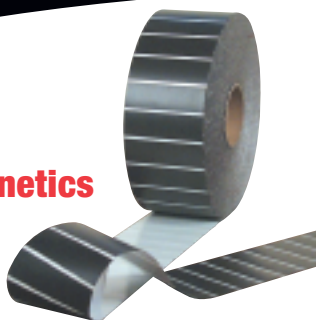
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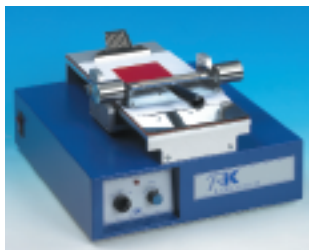
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Supplier partnership yields results

WORKING more closely with suppliers and using their expertise can help converters and their customers develop new, value-added solutions. L&L reports on how this helped one hardware manufacturer produce more durable labels at a lower total applied cost

Using the resources of suppliers can be a great way for label converters and end users to develop new product solutions which drive down cost and enhance label performance. A good example of this process in action comes courtesy of FLEXcon, which was asked to help a global manufacturer of highly durable residential- and commercial-grade outdoor power equipment to develop new nameplate solutions for its product lines ranging from snow throwers to riding and push mowers.

The OEM, which prints in-house, invited FLEXcon to help devise a solution that would improve application efficiency, outdoor label performance, and total costs. Under no circumstances could this solution sacrifice aesthetics, which is critical to the brand and the consumers' perception of the products' long-lasting

quality. Members of FLEXcon's technical, marketing, and sales teams were invited to visit one of the manufacturer's plant locations to walk the production lines to seek opportunities for process or material improvement.

During the visit, the FLEXcon team saw that the OEM was utilizing sheeted polycarbonate nameplates for its brand identification labels. Polycarbonate material was originally chosen because of its durability. However, the polycarbonate was costly and the manufacturing process required to produce sheeted nameplates was time-consuming and labor intensive. At the plant, production personnel complained that sheeted material was difficult to remove from its backing, resulting in added handling time and increased scrap. Finally, plant personnel

complained that discarded backing sheets were littering the production area.

Production of the polycarbonate nameplate material required a three-step process. First, the graphics were reverse printed via screenprinting on the back of a polycarbonate sheet. Then a transfer adhesive was laminated to the back of the printed sheet. Finally, the sheet was die cut to create individual nameplates. Several problems were associated with this approach:

■ COST

Polycarbonate is expensive—not only the material, but also the costs associated with scrap left over from die cutting, as well as the additional labor and processing involved in a multi-step production process.

"Under no circumstances could this solution sacrifice aesthetics, which is critical to the brand and the consumers' perception of the products' long-lasting quality"

■ LABEL DAMAGE

After die cutting, the sheeted labels must be stored in containers and handled individually when the nameplate is attached to the end product, increasing the potential for the nameplates to be dropped, damaged, contaminated with dirt and grease, or lost on the shop floor.

■ UV DEGRADATION

While polycarbonate resists impact and abrasion, it discolors in the face of prolonged exposure to UV sunlight, causing the manufacturer's nameplate – and its brand image – to degrade over time.

FLEXcon was able to present the OEM with a pressure-sensitive label solution that addressed this nameplate challenge. The graphics would be printed directly on a FLEXmark vinyl base film, and protected from weathering and abrasion by DPM CVE clear polyolefin overlamine. DPM CVE features an embossed "velvet" texture, similar to the textured surface of the more costly polycarbonate. The self-adhesive label stock eliminated the need to apply a transfer tape and could be printed flexographically in roll form, replacing the three-step operation with a single-pass process. The durability and scratch resistance of the new product construction is as good as or better than the old polycarbonate product.

REDUCED TOTAL COSTS

Less expensive materials, paired with in-line, roll-to-roll flexographic printing - which is less expensive than screenprinting - and overlaminating make the new nameplate labels less expensive to produce.

Durable goods require durable brand identity labels that are attractive and remain readable and intact over the life of the product. But it required the FLEXcon team to work closely with this OEM to thoroughly understand their end use requirements and nameplate application processes. There are clearly wider lessons to be learned.

NEWS IN BRIEF

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES



LARGE-FORMAT MANROLAND PRESS STARTS UP AT GRAFOBAL

Slovakia-based converter Grafobal a.s. in Skalica, at the foot of the White Carpathians, has installed a five-color Roland 900 with coating module.

Grafobal is one of the leading packaging printing groups in Central and Eastern Europe and has received many awards for outstanding business and printing performance. The group's printing facility in Skalica specializes in the full range of packaging applications, including labels, carton and corrugated board.

The new press is equipped with Roland's AUPASYS logistics system, the TelePresence workflow management system, in-line inspection and coating module. Grafobal has also ordered a seven-color Roland 700 HiPrint with double coater.

Grafobal has produced packaging in Skalica since 1905, and services end users to international customers from its production sites in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania, Bulgaria and Russia.

GOSS LAUNCHES PACKAGING PRESS

Goss International has introduced a web offset press with variable repeat capability for label and packaging printing adapted from its Sunday web newspaper press technology.

'Variable sleeve web offset technology is gaining momentum as a high-quality, cost-effective alternative to flexo, gravure, sheetfed offset and traditional cassette-style web offset for many packaging applications,' said the company's Klaus Dietel. 'By adapting proven Sunday press technologies to address the specialized requirements of this market, Goss International has created exciting new possibilities for packaging producers to cut costs and achieve higher productivity and quality.'

The new Goss Sunday press models are available in narrow and wide web widths from 20 inches (510 mm) to 75 inches (1905 mm) for flexible packaging, label and folding carton applications. They feature quick-change sleeve technology to allow variable repeat settings. The advanced inking, dampening and process control systems used in Sunday presses for high-quality commercial offset printing have also been incorporated, along with Goss automation and workflow technologies to reduce makeready requirements and waste. The new variable sleeve offset Sunday press models are available as complete production systems, including roll handling and converting components to meet various application requirements.

Graham Trevett, vice president of sales for Goss International in North America, says the company recently installed a Sunday web press in the United States that 'prints on packaging stocks and interfaces with an advanced in-line finishing system. Our goal is to open up a dialogue with progressive packaging printers interested in breaking away from traditional workflows and exploring new web offset alternatives.'

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CORPORATE CULTURE



The motivation to grow

BUSINESS MANAGERS have a view of what motivates their people. They are smart enough to know that “money” is the trick answer and some state that keeping a job is motivation enough! Both are wrong.

Progress drives us like nothing else. Why? Because it is the measurement of success.

Relative progress to our peers and competitors, as individuals and teams, defines us, and is a powerful motivator. So business growth is not just about financial improvement. It is our progress in developing our assets: people, products and processes that delivers sustainable growth.

In 2010 with the worst of the recession behind us, we must progress. There is no option. Companies have to progress, (to grow), to remain competitive.

Let's look at the power of progress from four perspectives: people, processes, products and practicalities:

PEOPLE:

Many companies develop their people using training needs analysis, competency grids and other key processes. But individual development must be balanced with an ability to recognise and build on group progress to produce a winning team. Winning is a powerful drug in driving employee satisfaction and development.

PRODUCTS:

Progress in products is all about who is buying what. Recessions are great for innovations and new products, which must be used to motivate overall sales. Winning companies deliver new products, and cross-sell to existing ranges.

PROCESSES:

Good processes reduce waste, improve efficiency and release resources for growth. This is highly motivational and sustainable. Improving processes should not be about simple cost cutting. It should be about better use of resources, better return on investment. The mindset needs to be: work smarter not harder.

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PRACTICALITIES:

5 MOTIVATIONAL PRINCIPLES

1. Align and set complementary objectives across departments, forcing better solutions and greater efficiency.
2. Allocate the people, resources and finance against each opportunity and measure progress against understood milestones. Use time pressure to drive delivery, but avoid unnecessary stress.
3. Recognise progress as it happens, whenever roadblocks and difficulties are overcome, not just at the end.
4. Managers must engage with the detail to appreciate the progress made from the team's perspective.
5. Provide a supportive culture: one that recognises the differences in running the day job (the urgent) and delivering growth (the important).

The real motivational benefit of growth is the development of the whole team and their ability to deliver the right answer, faster and with better results, consistently over time ... without you. Now that's Progress.

To comment or ask questions: andrewlester@carr-michael.com. For more information on driving progress and growth please visit our web site www.carr-michael.com.

ABOUT ANDREW LESTER:

Andrew Lester is a new contributor to L&L. He is the managing partner of Carr-Michael, business growth specialists. He has worked in a wide variety of sectors and was MD of Jaguar Cars UK from 1996-2001, successfully leading the transition of the company. Andrew is author of the acclaimed book “Growth Management: Two Hats are Better Than One” (Macmillan 2009) which Warwick Business School recommends on their Executive MBA programme and where he has spoken on managing growth. The reviews and first chapter of his book can be viewed at <http://www.carr-michael.com/ebrochure>.

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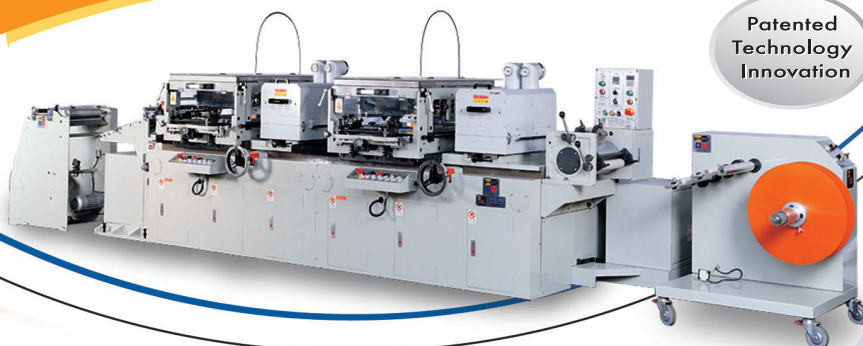
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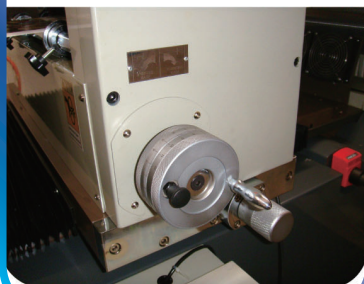
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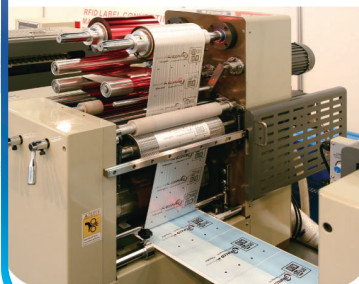
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