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THE WIDER WORLD OF NARROW WEB



VOL.34 ISSUE#2 MAY 2012
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PRIVATE BRANDS

Innovative bottle and label designs work together to reposition key global spirits brands

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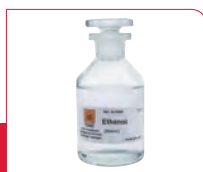




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HP Indigo launches a new range of digital packaging presses aimed at carton and flexible packaging applications

REVOLUTION NUMBER TWO

I wrote about the beginning of the digital label revolution almost 20 years ago when Indigo and Xeikon launched their electrophotographic engines at Ipex '93. I watched with amazement as the technology almost died through a lack of understanding of the PS industry, then bounced back when HP acquired Indigo and Punch Graphics Xeikon, and we saw the launch of the first industrial strength digital label presses. Today 'digital' is the biggest single press brand and of course inkjet has gatecrashed the party, but it has been a long and rocky road.

At a pre-drupa press conference in Tel Aviv I believe I witnessed the start of the second digital revolution, where industrial strength digital printing is extended into the field of packaging (and avoiding the mistakes of the early digital label years). HP Indigo showed prototypes of two new digital presses targeted respectively at the carton and flexible packaging and film label markets. These are heavyweight machines, weighing in at around 11 tonnes, and HP is working with a range of partners to bring complete converting lines, from pre-press to finishing, to market. The presses' extended format size fits in with existing carton and flexible packaging workflows and allows wide web and sheetfed converters to use existing finishing equipment. In other words, these presses sit squarely in traditional packaging print workflow.

At the same time, L&L's technical editor Barry Hunt attended the Xeikon pre-drupa event, and learned that the company is demonstrating a 3500 press with a dedicated and robust in-line carton finishing unit. Add to this a range of inkjet options dedicated to packaging production which will be launched at the show.

Does this affect label converters? Absolutely. At the HP Indigo pre-drupa event, it was revealed that it was a label converter – Jay Dollries, president of Innovative Labeling Solutions – whom HP had consulted in the development of their new digital packaging presses. With their extensive experience of working with digital technology, label converters have the opportunity to become one stop digital packaging shops, offering end users color managed on-demand print across multiple packaging substrates.

It will be fascinating to see how this all pans out in the four years to the next drupa.

ANDY THOMAS

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ISSUE 2

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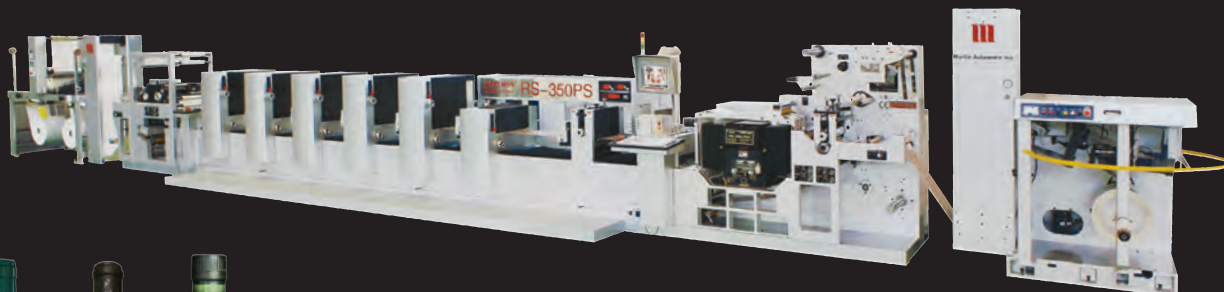
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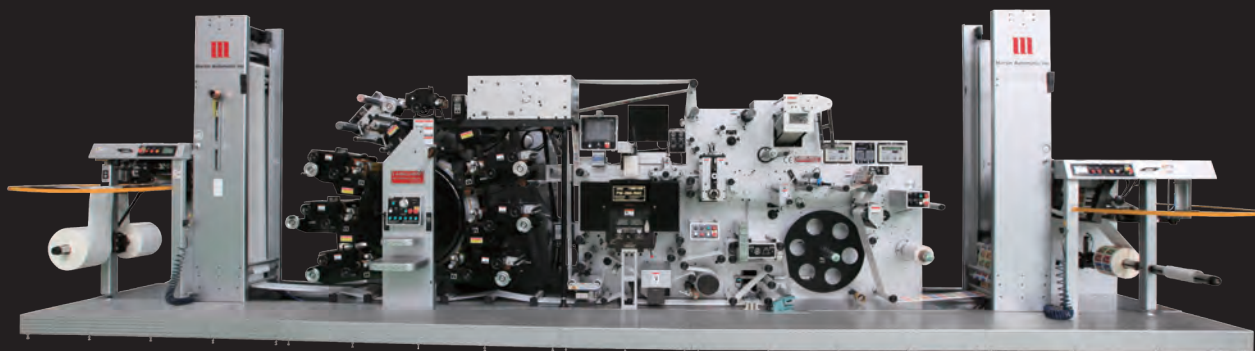
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INBOX

The forgotten people

CAROL HOUGHTON, highlights one question the industry wants answered

Baker Self Adhesive Labels' HP Indigo-sponsored open house event towards the end of last year (see L&L issue 1, 2012 p68) opened my eyes to another 'layer' within our industry. In addition to the obvious message that 'digital is everywhere', there was a strong emphasis on the value of the operator and the skill, knowledge and training involved in the job. Yet, after a year in the industry – including visits to printers, suppliers and trade shows – I had never really thought about the people behind the machines. Indeed, one lady at HP Indigo suggested they are 'the forgotten people'.

A discussion on LinkedIn further highlighted the mystery surrounding operators. A post from Amy Munice, president of Global B2B Communications, a resource for engineering and technology-based companies that sell products and services worldwide, got us at Tarsus thinking. What do operators read?

Munice discussed a recent conversation with a client in the automotive industry; revealing that print magazines are nowhere to be found in engineers' offices, and several companies are known to have banned reading trade publications in the office – including online media.

Jack Kenny, president of Jack Kenny media, commented, 'The management of a printing trade magazine I worked for tried to encourage subscriptions by press operators, pre-press people and all others who contributed to purchasing decisions. These folks might not be managers, but they use the equipment and materials and in most cases (I'd like to think) have opinions about their performance. Advertisers in the magazine wanted to know if the publication was penetrating to the operator level because they understood the role that these folks play in purchasing decisions.'

Andy Thomas, editor of L&L, noted, 'Worker education is a wider problem than just discouraging workflow access to trade magazines.' Finat sponsored an 'operator dedicated' day at Labelexpo Europe last year in an effort to promote the importance of their role in the industry. However, only a few companies participated. These companies benefited hugely and as Thomas said, 'Their workers spotted things which the managers missed which helped them do their jobs more efficiently – often "insignificant" things from an owner's point of view. The same benefits to the wider company would accrue from encouraging shop floor workers to read their trade industry magazines!'

Without the expertise of the operators there would essentially be no label production. So, if not from trade magazines or attending industry shows, where do they pick up their knowledge? If you are an operator, please enlighten us!



New issue of PPW available

The latest issue of Package Print Worldwide features a detailed Drupa 2012 exhibitor preview, as well as an extensive look at the environmental credentials of cartonboard and the future for the inks and coatings market. Further market insight on the material handling, used machinery and narrow web carton finishing segments is supported by case studies and product news from Goss International, HP Indigo, Bobst, Cerutti and manroland Latina. The first results from Package Print Worldwide's study of today's package printing market will also be presented, detailing the high level of planned investment by printers and converters of printed packaging over the next 12-24 months.

Your Tweets

US consumers do care about sustainable packaging when buying products <http://lat.ms/xG4J2l> #recycle #addvalue

@DanielleJersche: Latest TwitterTalk #labels #printing: #BPAfree, @MethodTweet, @TLMI Set Up and Waste Reduction, @Heideldruck into cartons, #P&G

composting, #LCABPA free label material for food #packaging RT @LabelsNLabeling: Herma offers bisphenol free economy thermal paper <http://tinyurl.com/7o5z48g>

#labels RT @LabelsNLabeling: Ecology Coatings & @WhitlamLabel develop sustainability initiatives <http://tinyurl.com/866c7wb>

Companies leading global movement to redefine success in business <http://bit.ly/xM4OGr> @SustainBrands @MethodTweet @Patagonia #environment

Heidelberg makes moves into folding cartons. Advert in @packprintworld @Heideldruck #diversify #packaging #labels @drupa2012

So much going on in #North_America #labels market - new leadership, changing partnerships, innovation, generation exchange, investment @TLMI

Excellent tips in Set Up and Waste Reduction w/ Hurst of Yerecic Label <http://bit.ly/xlSeDe> #success @TLMI #leaders #printing #labels

NEWS

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST
GLOBAL LABEL STORIES



L-R: Peer Gronkowsky, Rotocontrol operations manager and Marco Aengenvoort, managing director

ROTOCONTROL ACQUIRES LEOMAT

Rotocontrol has acquired Germany-based LeoMat, a supplier of processing machines for adhesive labels, foils and paper.

The company says its expansion is a result of significant sales growth from successful worldwide slitting, rewinding and die-cutting finishing machine installations, as Rotocontrol enters its fourth year of operation.

Marco Aengenvoort, managing director, said: 'The acquisition of LeoMat marks an important milestone for the future of Rotocontrol. With this acquisition we have significantly increased our manufacturing and engineering capabilities which would be difficult to do so quickly organically. The company is now even more strongly positioned to offer converters around the world a well-rounded product portfolio based on German design and manufacturing.'

Meanwhile, Rotocontrol has appointed Peer Gronkowsky as operations manager. The former plant manager of LeoMat, Gronkowsky will oversee the Rotocontrol service and support, research and development, engineering, manufacturing and purchasing departments. The LeoMat purchasing, manufacturing and engineering employees also joined the Rotocontrol team at headquarters in Ahrensburg. A company event was recently held to welcome LeoMat to the Rotocontrol team.

With the acquisition, the Rotocontrol product portfolio has expanded to include digital and booklet finishing machines. The existing LeoMat branded finishing machines will still be available to customers, and service for all installed LeoMat product is now available through Rotocontrol.



L-R: Sales and marketing director of Interlabels Gautam Kothari, CEO and owner of Skanem Group Ole Rugland and managing director of Interlabels Bhavin Kothari

SKANEM PARTNERS WITH INDIAN CONVERTER

MOVE adds digital and booklet finishing to company's portfolio

Skanem will buy 51 percent of the shares in Indian label converter Interlabels.


Owner and CEO of Skanem Ole Rugland said: 'By partnering with a company that matches Skanem's corporate culture, we will strengthen the group's overall vision and strategy. Interlabels is a professional company with great experience in handling demanding customers and complex orders. They also have competence and a solid knowledge base, which will be extremely useful for the cooperation in India, as well as for Skanem Group worldwide.'

Skanem already has one factory in Asia – located in Bangkok, Thailand which opened in 2007 – but Interlabels is its first establishment in India. Rugland continued: 'Interlabels is today a well-run, profitable company. Our aim is to support this profitable growth. We therefore want to build on the existing management and staff on site.'

Interlabels has a leading position in India with two factories, as well as a factory in Nairobi, Kenya and a large customer reach. Bhavin Kothari, managing director of Interlabels, said: 'We believe this alliance with a global leader like Skanem will help ensure a continual strong focus on innovations and leadership in the South Asian region.'

Kothari further explained the strong synergies between the two companies: 'The product range and customer profiles of both companies are quite similar. We also believe that Skanem's global presence and expertise combined with Interlabels local experience and coverage will make the venture a formidable force in the Indian label industry.'

Rugland concluded: 'India is a market with a great potential and rapid consumption growth. Through this partnership, we get access to this exciting market.'



PANTONELIVE digitalizes the traditional processes

PANTONE AND X-RITE INTRODUCE PANTONELIVE

ESKOARTWORK and Sun Chemical announce support



X-Rite and Pantone have unveiled PantoneLive, a cloud-based color service that provides instant access to essential brand color standards. PantoneLive

is the first service under the Pantone Digital Business Unit, a newly created division of X-Rite that is the byproduct of Pantone's color expertise and X-Rite's color science and technology leadership.

'Nearly 50 years ago, Pantone brought consistency and a common language to an industry that lacked standardization. Historically an analog process, reliant on centuries' old color alchemy, printing and production have advanced with technology in the digital age,' said Ron Potesky, senior vice president and general manager of Pantone. 'PantoneLive digitizes the process, taking it from visual and subjective to consistent and repeatable – significantly reducing production timelines and improving the bottom line.'

Brand color standards are the principal component of PantoneLive and are derived from real ink on real substrates using real printing processes. This allows brand owners to predict how corporate spot colors will reproduce on a wide variety of substrates including brown corrugated, clear film and white polypropylene. A brand's color assets, analogous to a brand's color DNA, are managed and maintained in a secure cloud-based data repository to ensure accurate color communication – to any supplier, around the world.

PantoneLive is connected to a

large portfolio of software, containing real-world color data for hundreds of thousands of colors, and is supported by the latest color measurement technology. This is combined with professional services including workflow and color rationalization audits, and customized operating procedures from Pantone and X-Rite. Custom and bespoke spectral data, as well as metadata, are used to digitize brand colors. Digitized palettes are then expanded to create independent color standards to allow for accurate color reproduction on a variety of substrates.

While users of any manufacturer's ink will be able to take advantage of PantoneLive, Sun Chemical is the preferred ink partner, while EskoArtwork is also a preferred partner supporting PantoneLive. Both companies worked closely with Pantone and X-Rite to develop PantoneLive. Sun Chemical's technology and color data are the foundations for PantoneLive, and this technology is integrated into EskoArtwork's technology.

In addition, Windmöller & Hölscher, a supplier of flexographic central impression and rotogravure printing presses, is recognized as the PantoneLive technology partner, serving the flexible packaging industry. In this unique capacity, Windmöller & Hölscher will extend the capability of its 'Col' on-press color matching system to incorporate access to the PantoneLive ecosystem, thereby allowing converters to reduce press set-up times and in turn assure the quality of important brand colors on press.

See page 49 for a full report.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST
GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

SCHREINER OPENS CHINA SUBSIDIARY

Schreiner Group has opened a new trading company in Shanghai. The business activities of Schreiner Group (Shanghai) are focused on the automotive, electronics and solar industries.

'Through the new trading company in Shanghai we assure proximity to our global customers. The Asian region naturally harbors huge growth potential as well,' said Roland Schreiner, chief operating officer of Schreiner Group and responsible for sales and operations.

In Shanghai, the company offers its wide product portfolio focused on marking products and functional films for engineering industries in line with its German location. The trading company's qualified sales engineers are familiar with the requirements of the various sectors. Customers in China are now supplied directly from Shanghai which simplifies business transactions and assures short delivery times.

The business organization is closely aligned to collaboration with the German location. A Chinese native speaker based in Oberschleissheim is in charge of internal coordination.

FIG EXPANDS OPERATIONS

Flexo Image Graphics (FIG), the distributor in India for Mark Andy and Rotoflex, has expanded its operations. The company moved to its new facility in the Patparganj Industrial Area in Delhi on March 1, citing increased demand for Mark Andy and Rotoflex equipment from Indian converters. The new office, 40 percent larger than the company's previous space, will coordinate the FIG's efforts in sales, business development, spare parts and service support for existing and new clients.

Gourav Roy, managing director of FIG, said: 'This is an exciting time for FIG. We were bursting at the seams in our existing office with little or no room for expansion. We are clearly delighted to have secured this new facility as it will leave us well placed for future growth. Our move to larger premise reflects a confidence in our ability to continue to grow and provide high quality products, support and advice to our clients.'

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST
GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

4PARTS PROVIDES DESIGN SERVICES TO WINERIES

4parts was recently established in Northern California to offer a range of tailored branding services to wineries, including brand-building strategies, marketing services, logistics and wine label design services.

4parts was founded by a group of wine business veterans who recognized the need for wineries to keep their branding fresh amidst an industry congested by more than 100,000 SKUs. Filling the void of agencies which provide select services to wineries, 4parts' goal is to create a long lasting impact for its clients' wines by ensuring all of the branding components are interlinked in a consistent and focused manner. 4parts' services are offered as a package or via an à la carte style menu based upon the winery's individual needs.

David Hanson-Jerrard, managing partner of 4parts, said: 'Very simply, we help wineries define their wines by communicating a compelling story using all of their assets to pull in the same direction. We saw that the wine industry was sorely lacking a partner solely focused on their business, who could provide fast, impactful and economical solutions to the challenges their brands face. Many wineries have their labels designed by one company, their websites by another, marketing and brand strategy by a third. We believe wineries will benefit more by using a single agency.'



PULSE is moving to a new 2,500 sqm site

PULSE TARGETS INTERNATIONAL GROWTH

UK-BASED ink manufacturer moves to new premises

Pulse Roll Label Products, a UK-based narrow web ink manufacturer, is in the process of setting up home at a new 2,500 square meter (27,000 sq ft) facility as it targets a growing international customer base.

The new facility is located nearby to its current 500 sqm (5,000 sq ft) location in Yate, near Bristol in the UK and will provide Pulse with the space to grow its customer base overseas.

Pulse managing director Gary Seward said: 'We're increasing the market we're attacking. Historically, we've been focused on the UK with a little bit of export but now we want to be addressing the export market more.'

'We're moving to a more international role. Markets that are already big for us are in Eastern Europe, such as Poland, Russia, Ukraine and Latvia, and we're making a big push for the Far East, in Thailand, Singapore and Japan. We're due to recruit an agent soon that will handle those markets, as well as China.'

Seward added that Pulse will use the additional space afforded by its move to a factory more than five times the size of its previous location sparingly, as the company is moving to lean manufacturing principles that will see it use as little space as possible for production of its inks, coatings, adhesives and print consumables.

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HP AND ESKO DONATE TO CAL POLY

US COLLEGE receives ws4000 and Kongsberg iCut

Through a partnership with Hewlett Packard and EskoArtwork, US college Cal Poly's Graphic Communication Department has installed new equipment that will give students hands-on experience integrating the technologies of digital printing and commercial printing and packaging.

HP donated a variable data Indigo WS4000 series web press valued at 188,000 US dollars and EskoArtwork donated a Kongsberg iCut variable data die-cutting system worth 179,000 US dollars.

The web press and die-cutting technology will be used by graphic communication students in advanced digital printing classes and by

professionals attending industry seminars and workshops conducted by the Graphic Communication Institute at Cal Poly.

The workflow resulting from these two systems allows printing runs of one or multiple images and moves them to the iCut for variable die-cutting of individual or multiple images. The iCut is based on Kongsberg technology, combined with iCut software tools designed for short-run production work, in sheet and roll form.

Cal Poly graphic communication professor Malcolm Keif and department head Harvey Levenson led the effort to bring this digital web press and die-cutting workflow together.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

MERCIAN LABELS LAUNCHES INTO FOLDING CARTONS

With unique features and variable data now ever more frequently demanded in the carton industry, UK-based Mercian Labels Group launched an innovative new service at the Packaging Innovations Exhibition in Birmingham, UK.

Using the latest Xeikon 3000 series digital platform and a unique new in-line conversion process, the company is now delivering variable data and multiple designs onto printed folding cartons, cost effectively in short runs.

Managing director Dr Adrian Steele said: 'The conventional sheet fed litho manufacturing process for printed folding cartons limits the creativity that brands wish to incorporate into their packaging. Digital printing permits the inclusion of personalized content on every pack, with infinite versions for trials as well as inclusion of unique brand protection features. The Xeikon imaging technology we use offers fantastic full color 1200dpi quality using light-fast and FDA approved food-safe toners.'

The samples on show at the Easyfairs Packaging Innovations Exhibition are printed on high quality 400 micron folding cartonboard, and incorporate a number of security features such as microtext, variable barcodes and variable text and numbering.

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NEWS

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST
GLOBAL LABEL STORIES



TONY LANGLEY of Langley Holdings

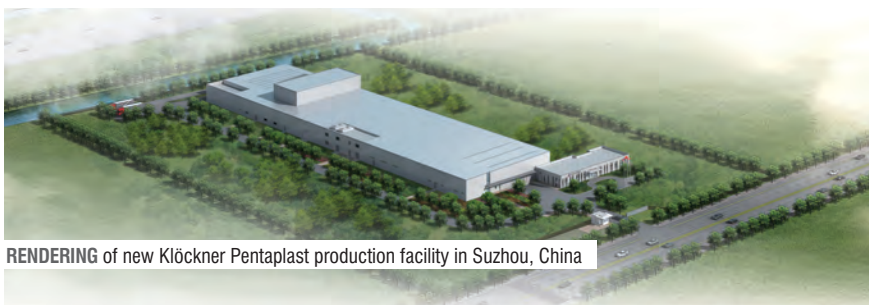
LANGLEY HOLDINGS TAKES ON MANROLAND SHEETFED

British engineering group Langley Holdings has been named as the company taking over the sheetfed printing equipment division of insolvent German press manufacturer manroland. The news follows the announcement that Possehl Group had purchased manroland's webfed printing systems site at Augsburg. Within this announcement, it was said that the Plauen assembly facility was to be outsourced as a new company and the Offenbach sheetfed printing systems site would be restructured through a management buy-out in cooperation with an investor.

Langley Holdings has now emerged as the investor in manroland's sheetfed printing equipment division and production facilities in Offenbach, as well as the international marketing organization in more than 40 countries. Langley Holdings already operates two successful technology divisions in Germany in the field of capital equipment: the Piller Group in Osterode, Hanover and the Claudius Peters Group in Buxtehude, Hamburg. In 2011, Langley Holdings achieved revenues of approximately 500 million euros, with a profit before tax of some 76 million euros.

Around 840 employees are to be retained from the 1,700-plus currently employed at the Offenbach location, Langley Holdings said.

Werner Schneider, manroland's insolvency administrator, said: 'I am very pleased with the solution which will provide a long-term perspective to the Offenbach location and the sheet-fed printing business. Tony Langley, sole shareholder of the Langley Group, is well known as a long-term investor who acts strategically. We are convinced that a lasting perspective has been found for manroland's sheetfed printing business.' Tony Langley said: 'We foresee very good economic prospects for manroland sheetfed following the recent restructuring. This is a world-class business with an excellent reputation and its production and research and development facilities are superb; everything one expects of the very best of German engineering.'



RENDERING of new Klöckner Pentaplast production facility in Suzhou, China

KLÖCKNER BEGINS CHINESE FACTORY CONSTRUCTION

SITE will produce packaging films for growing domestic market

Klöckner Pentaplast Group has begun the construction of its first manufacturing facility in China. Located 80km west of Shanghai in the Suzhou Industrial Park in Suzhou, China, the new site will produce packaging films for the growing domestic Chinese market.

The first phase of production capacity will focus on transverse-direction oriented shrink label films, used primarily for full- or partial-body shrink-sleeve applications.

The new 12,000 sqm manufacturing site will house state-of-the-art production equipment, high-tech production control systems and a research and development laboratory. The site will increase Klöckner Pentaplast's global shrink-films capacity by 6,000 metric tons. The CNY 185.7 million (29.5 million US dollar) investment is targeted for completion in first quarter 2013 and is expected to employ 100 people.

Pentalabel shrink films are engineered specifically for full-body or partial shrink sleeve labels, roll sleeve labels, promotion packs/multi-packs, tamper-evident closures, capsules (wine caps), and

pressure sensitive labels. The films are typically printed for highly decorated labels that provide food and consumer products with 360-degree graphics.

'This new site enables us to continue to support our customers' growing global demand for high-quality packaging films, especially in the dynamic Chinese market,' said Christian Holtmann, CEO of Klöckner Pentaplast Group. 'As the world's leading producer of rigid films, we are excited to expand our presence in China with a broad film portfolio produced utilizing the most advanced production technology to allow regional and global converters and brand companies to source consistent, high-quality films.'

Christopher Frank, managing director, China, for Klöckner Pentaplast, added: 'The Suzhou Industrial Park is a natural choice as the home of our first manufacturing plant in China. Its focus on innovation, strong infrastructure, and business-friendly environment make it an ideal location. In addition, Suzhou is located close to major metropolitan areas to further enhance our service capability.'

M-REAL TO BE RENAMED METSÄ BOARD

European fresh forest fiber paperboard producer M-real will become Metsä Board following the decision by parent Metsäliitto Group to rebrand as Metsä Group.

The names of Metsä Group's business areas will change as a result and represent the final stage in a restructuring based on the group's strategy, Metsä Group said, adding that the purpose of the process has been to create a unified and competitive forest industry group. The group focuses on

five core businesses: wood products, pulp, board, tissue and cooking papers, and wood supply and forest services.

The Metsä Group's paperboard division has also announced a new research and development (R&D) center in Äänekoski, Finland. Its aim is to support customers in the packaging industry with R&D in product innovation, introduce applications of new raw materials from forest fibers and study how its products can match rapidly-evolving printing and converting technologies.

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THE MAYOR AND MAYORESS of Fareham cut the ribbon to open Unit 2, alongside Edale's managing director James Boughton

EDALE HOSTS OPEN HOUSE AND EXPO

EVENT marked opening of factory's second unit

UK press manufacturer Edale held its first open house and exhibition at its premises in Hampshire on February 8.

The local Mayor and Mayoress of Fareham cut the ribbon to officially open Edale's second unit and to mark the start of the exhibition. There were a large number of visitors who spilled in and began browsing the various table tops and catching up with industry friends, suppliers and customers.

Visitors saw demonstrations of the Edale FL-350 modular flexo press, which was launched at Labelexpo Europe 2011, and a Gamma scratch card line – an 8-color machine which has been sold to an overseas customer for the production of pre-paid telephone scratch cards. Other machines available to view were three Beta modular flexo presses and the Alpha compact flexo press.

The event hosted 20 suppliers as exhibitors, with a number of the companies also giving presentations. The attendees were: Alphasonics, API Foil, Asahi Photoproducts, Creation Reprographics, Cheshire Anilox Technology, Daco Solutions, Domino, EskoArtwork, Fiberweb, GEW, Herma, JM Heaford, IST, Lake Image Systems, RotoMetrics, tesa, Vetaphone, Xeric Web Drying Systems and Zeller & Gmelin. The BPIF and EFIA also had a presence at the event with John Bambery, chairman of the BPIF, kicking off the day's presentations.

Jeremy Westcott, Edale's sales and marketing director, said: 'For a first event, this really exceeded our expectations; we had over 100 people attend the day made up of customers, potential customers, suppliers and press. We are thrilled with the initial success the open house seems to have brought.'

'It was a day to open the doors of Edale and show people how Edale work, what we have managed to achieve with the opening of the second unit, and also the wide range of products that we can offer. It was great to be able to have our suppliers and also our worldwide network of agents attending a day like this.'

The open house made up one day of Edale's distributors training schedule, giving them the chance to increase knowledge on not only Edale products but also those of their suppliers. The second day of their training saw the sales and marketing team give the distributors a talk on Edale's objectives for 2012, as well as a technical presentation on the FL-350 from senior designer Glen Whittington, tied in with hands-on print training on the FL-350 machine in the showroom, which saw the distributors competing against each other on the 'Pit Stop Color Change Challenge'.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

EDALE APPOINTS RUSSIA DISTRIBUTOR

UK-based press manufacturer Edale has appointed EdaleRus as its distributor in Russia following successful participation in the Poligrafinter show.

The appointment was quickly followed by the sale of a 9-color Beta modular flexo press with combination flexo/screen and hot foiling units to Laguna, based in Tver. Laguna is an offset printing company which has moved into production of self-adhesive labels, where it will use the Edale press for printing healthcare, cosmetic and liquor labels.

Evgeny Lebedev of EdaleRus, said: 'We recently made a commissioning of the Edale Beta 330 flexo press at the Russian printing house Laguna in Tver. It was a joint installation with Edale's engineers alongside specialists from EdaleRus. The press has many options, such as delam/relam, Stork screen printing unit, die-cutting, cold foiling and UV dryers. This is the first flexo press in this factory and we are delighted that Laguna chose the Edale Beta for their first taste in flexographic printing.'

Alla Poltavtseva, director of Laguna, said: 'This is our first Edale press as we diversify into the flexographic label market. We were very impressed with the FL-350 launch at Labelexpo Europe and really helped to secure in our mind that Edale were the right choice. Our decision to purchase the Beta then became an easy one after visiting an Edale customer in the UK, who also ran high specification labels on their Edale machines.'

ESKOARTWORK REPORTS HD FLEXO GROWTH

Over 160 professional flexo users have achieved HD Flexo certification, according to EskoArtwork. The company reports it is enjoying 'exponential' growth in the number of HD Flexo certified customers and partners, as the process increases its footprint in the industry.

'Customers are finding HD Flexo certification makes a big difference,' said Jan Buchweitz, senior product manager, digital flexo at EskoArtwork. 'They want to know that certified components will all work perfectly together, whether they are printing machines, ink or tape. They also want advice from providers that clearly understand exactly how HD Flexo delivers an improved print performance and how individual providers can best leverage this capability within their operations.'

The introduction of HD Flexo into the daily production environment is smoother, says EskoArtwork, when trade shops and printers are using HD Flexo certified components. For vendors, partners and customers wishing to take advantage of the certification program, a rigorous process requires that different print samples from five different commercial jobs be printed consistently.

By the end of 2011, EskoArtwork could welcome 95 HD Flexo certified customers, 60 HD Flexo certified partners and 10 HD Flexo certified vendors. Many more companies are currently undergoing the application process.

The nine HD Flexo certified vendors are press manufacturers Edale, Gallus, Mark Andy and Omet; ink supplier Siegwerk; anilox suppliers Apex, Harper and Zecher; and tape suppliers Lohmann and tesa.

Among the converters certified to HD Flexo is Rako Etiketten. Stefan Behrens, head of pre-print, said: 'Being HD Flexo certified strengthens our market presence and distinguishes us from the competition. The certification is a great marketing asset – it gives our customers and prospects even more confidence, and will help us win business.'

NEWS



FINAT LAUNCHES UPDATED EDUCATIONAL HANDBOOK

Finat, the international association for the self-adhesive labeling industry, has launched its revised and updated Educational Handbook.

The present edition was commissioned to 4impression Training based in the UK. Among other sources, it draws from the range of 'e-modules' 4impression Training developed on behalf of Finat previously, and from the Finat Knowledge Hub, the internet library of articles and archives accessible to Finat members via www.finat.com.

The new Finat Educational Handbook aims to be the key reference source for the combined knowledge embedded in the association and covers the various stages and aspects of the unique self-adhesive labels and labeling process. This edition replaces the existing version that was first published in its original language (English) Finat in 1996 and later released in German, French and Spanish, with authorized translations in Italian and Turkish issued by the respective national associations.

To allow easy access to the numerous cross references and links provided in the text, this edition is made available in electronic format. This protected PDF file allows users not only to read the book on PC, laptop or tablet reader, but also to cross-link within the book or link from the present document to the underlying reference on the Finat website or other source. In electronic format, the Educational Handbook will be updated at regular intervals, in response to new developments.

'There have been significant changes in label materials and technology in recent years, aimed at meeting a growing demand for new label stocks, shorter runs, industry digitization, migration-free inks, rising costs and ever-faster moves towards a more sustainable and environmentally-friendly label-usage requirement,' commented industry expert Mike Fairley.



WACKER'S Nanjing site manufactures Vinnipac dispersions and dispersible polymer powders as binders for sectors such as construction, coatings and adhesives

WACKER EXPANDS POLYMER SITE IN CHINA

COMPANY INVESTS 40m euros in two new facilities

Wacker Chemie is expanding its Chinese polymer activities by investing around 40 million euros in building two new production facilities at its Nanjing site. The Munich-based chemical group is expanding the site's existing facilities for vinyl acetate-ethylene copolymer (VAE) dispersions by adding a new reactor with an annual capacity of 60,000 metric tons.

This measure will double Nanjing's VAE dispersion capacity to around 120,000 metric tons per year, making the complex one of the biggest of its kind in China. The new reactor will begin production in mid-2013. At Nanjing, Wacker is also building a new plant to produce polyvinyl acetate (PVAc) solid resins with an annual capacity of 20,000 metric tons. This plant is due for completion in early 2013.

The new production facilities will give Wacker sufficient long-term capacity

to meet the strong demand for VAE dispersions and PVAc solid resins in the Asia-Pacific region. The main application fields for VAE dispersions lie in construction, coatings and adhesives. PVAc solid resins are used in industrial applications and to manufacture gumbase.

Wacker's plant at Nanjing already produces vinyl acetate-ethylene copolymer dispersions and dispersible polymer powders for the construction, coating, adhesive and other industries. By bringing together its Chinese polymer activities at a single site, the company expects to gain decisive advantages and synergies – achieving economies of scale through a common infrastructure and energy supply. Additionally, it will be able to enhance its transport and logistical efficiency.

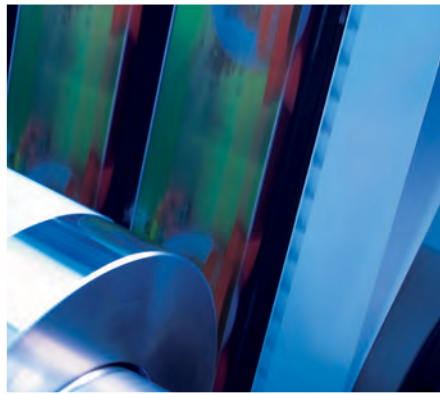
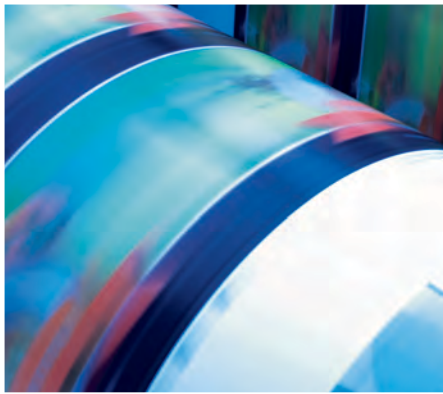
ISYS LABEL APPOINTS MALAYSIA DISTRIBUTOR

iSys Label, a manufacturer of short to mid run digital label presses, has appointed MetroGraphic Equipment as its newest distributor covering Malaysia and Singapore.

'I strongly believe this machine will sell well in our market. I have heard positive feedback on the Apex 1290 printer from Eddie of Gulmen Engineering, an iSys Label Australia distributor. The Apex 1290

prints efficiently on non-coated labelstock, which most digital label printers currently cannot do,' said Eric Goh, director of MetroGraphic Equipment.

MetroGraphic Equipment is located in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia's capital. Established in 1992, it specializes in new, used and refurbished label printing machines, slitters and plate making equipment.



Success and security for the labelprinter



Designed

SUSTAINABILITY in packaging design is now being demanded by consumers, governments and global brands. It's time for the labels industry to take notice, argues Danielle Jerschfske

Increasingly, global consumers are making purchasing decisions based on both health and sustainability factors, and are more empowered than ever in this digital, mobile world to understand these impacts at the 'first moment of truth' – at the store shelf.

So we need to empower label and packaging designers with the tools to identify

areas for reducing environmental impact, and at the same time open up new avenues for innovation and added value.

Design for Sustainability (D4S) is much more than manufacturing a 'green' label or package. It brings value to the product by minimizing its social, economic and environmental impact. Life-cycle analysis

(LCA) and supply chain management provide the tools we need.

LIFE-CYCLE ANALYSIS

An LCA study of a product can be broken down into four main aspects: how raw materials are acquired and converted; how the product is manufactured; how it is used/reused; and what happens to it when it becomes waste. Packaging for distribution is included in the production phase.

More specifically, LCA is a technique to assess the environmental aspects and potential impacts associated with a product, process or service by:

- Compiling an inventory of energy and material inputs and environmental releases
- Evaluating their potential environmental impacts
- Interpreting the required actions for decision-makers

Cradle to cradle, or closed loop, design is the only way to achieve a sustainable future. But this will require better assessment of the impact and recovery value of materials, as well as measures to understand, track, manage and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

If label designers are to understand the life-cycles of the materials and processes they specify, they must rely on industry scientists, engineers and others behind the latest innovations to provide them with real, tested data so that they can make informed decisions in this critical first step of the packaging life-cycle.

This in turn requires multi-disciplinary, global industry collaboration, as seen on the recently established working committees in the industry's leading trade organizations, TLMi and Finat.

PRESSURE POINTS

Global brands and CPGs are being held increasingly responsible for the environmental footprint of their products, including total carbon output, and are therefore taking the lead in highlighting areas where improvements can be made. According to the Sustainable Packaging Coalition, label material and content indexing has already begun and will be included in databases used to evaluate packaging recovery streams.

The same pressures are being felt at government level. European nations, led by Germany, already have tough recycling regulations. The Brazilian government's recent National Policy on Solid Waste (Política Nacional de Resíduos Sólidos a.k.a PNRS), enacted in August of 2010, has become a pressure point for the local label industry. PNRS places the onus for collection and reuse of waste on the company that produces it, and seeks to achieve success using 'reverse logistics' systems, with the waste being returned back through the supply chain.

But perhaps the most comprehensive example of the power of legislation came in Canada, where the government enacted a stewardship tax in 2010, forcing large grocery retailers – including Safeway, Metro and Walmart – to pay for selling packaging which cannot be recycled within the existing infrastructure.

The impact of the legislation was felt immediately. PET thermoform containers were found not to be recyclable because the pressure sensitive label adhesive gums up the recycling process, contaminating the PET flake. The grocery members of the Retail Council of Canada immediately issued a call for a test protocol to demonstrate which label adhesives are recyclable. The Association of Postconsumer Plastic Recyclers in coordination with the National Association for PET Container Resources set up a working group with

LIFE CYCLE ANALYSIS FOR GREEN DESIGN



CARBON ACCOUNTABILITY

Out of all the areas of 'sustainability', global brands have had the most success in reducing harmful environmental emissions, and on-pack carbon label schemes now allow brands to communicate this success to interested consumers.

The Carbon Reduction Label scheme is administered by the Carbon Trust, a not-for-profit UK-based consultancy which works to educate national governments and consumers about the causes and effects of CO₂ emissions. Brands that use the label must calculate the emissions footprint of the product in question with regard to the international PAS 2050 standard. The Carbon Footprint labeling system then communicates to the consumer the total amount of emissions released in bringing a particular product to market.

The system takes into account every stage of the product's life cycle, including extraction of raw materials, manufacture, packaging, distribution, use-phase and post-use/disposal.

Once the footprint of the individual product has been measured and certified, the brand must set goals to further reduce carbon emissions. Every two years the carbon footprint is re-measured and if there has been no further reduction, the label is withdrawn from the product and its packaging. Walker's Chips was the first brand to include a Carbon Footprint Label.

In the US market, GNP Company was the first poultry producer to

for life

As well as action on the global stage, the environmental profile of a product or process will be heavily affected by the available local recycling and recovery systems – for example, which materials are accepted and how they are 're-valued'. A reliable resource for this information in the US is Earth911.com.

the producers of PS labels for PET thermoforms to jointly review the effects of adhesives on the recyclability of the container. More information can be found at www.plasticsrecycling.org/pet-thermoforms. The lesson for North America is that the label industry needs to catalyze change and innovation before legislation restricts its creative opportunities.



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GREEN GUIDE

Danielle Jerschefske is joint author with Mike Fairley of the recently published *Environmental Performance and Sustainable Labeling – A 'How to' guide to becoming a 'greener' label converter and label user*. The book is now available through the www.labelsandlabeling.com bookstore.

introduce the Carbon Reduction Label on its Just BARE product packaging. Although clearly committed to creating a more sustainable package, the company quickly ran into challenges, since many of the 'greener' materials available are not able to provide the durability needed to ensure food safety through the entire production and distribution chain. Still, steps have been made. For example, the company's Just BARE brand of poultry uses a #1/PET/PETE plastic tray that is accepted by some – though not all – municipal recycling sites, and it recently switched to a linerless pressure sensitive label, thus eliminating the need for a release liner, cutting additional waste from its product's life-cycle.

Tesco, one of the world's leading private label retailers, uses the Carbon Label on a variety of its products following a decision in 2007 to work with the Carbon Trust. Today it sells more than 100 products across a wide range of household applications that bear the Carbon Reduction Label. In 2011 the retailer set ambitious goals to reduce the carbon emissions of the products sold in its stores by 30 percent by 2020. At the same time it committed to assist its suppliers in reducing their own carbon footprints by 50 percent over the same period.

The supermarket chain initially made a pledge to label all of its 70,000 product lines, but in January of this year retracted this goal due to the large amount of work and the cost involved in indexing the different life stages of so many products. The label will still be used on currently indexed products.

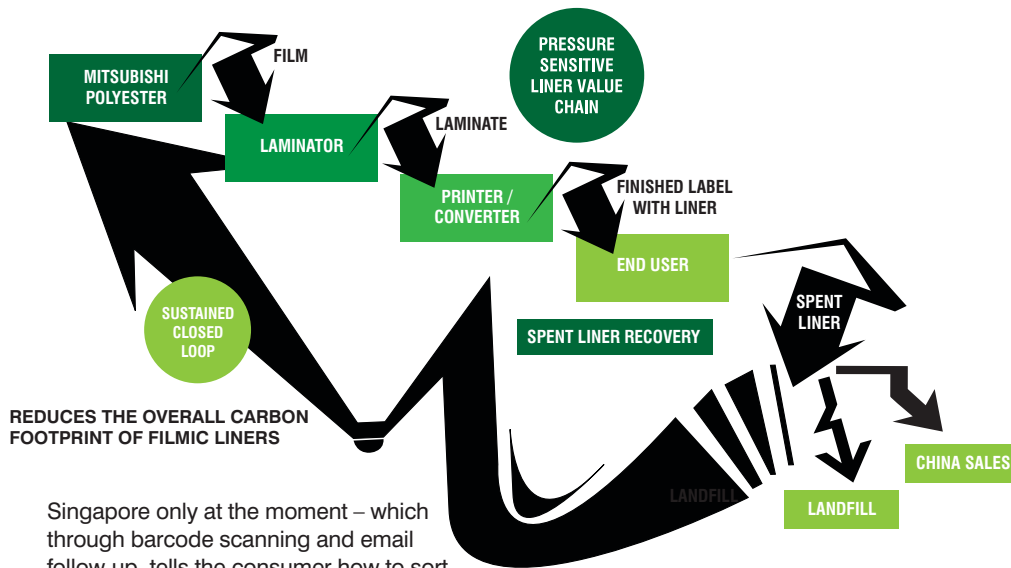
SMART SUSTAINABLE INTERACTION

Interactive packaging tactics such as QR codes and the SnapTag are helping brands and retailers improve the way they communicate sustainability to consumers – for example by directing a buyer to an informative website or educational game.

Already there are applications that instantly inform consumers of the various life-cycle impacts of a chosen product. For example, The Good Guide smart phone app provides information on the sustainability and health and safety profiles of both products and the companies that manufacture them. The application has a bar code scanning facility to identify the product, which makes the process extremely fast and simple. Overall scores are provided for health, environment and societal factors. Good Guides currently includes rankings for more than 120,000 different products in a number of personal care, household, electronics, toy and food sectors, and is adding more each month.

In 2011, Nestlé introduced its mobile app 123Recycle – for

REPROCESS PROVIDES A CLOSED LOOP RECYCLE SOLUTION



Singapore only at the moment – which through barcode scanning and email follow-up, tells the consumer how to sort and dispose of the various pieces of a product's packaging. It was developed by the local Nestlé Singapore team and the Nanyang Polytechnic School of Information. The global brand hopes to develop the application for other countries and regions.

Social media avenues will be used more and more to reach and educate consumers on sustainability. Reckitt Benckiser has done a great job of interacting with its customers through Facebook. Via its powerBRands

game, which is somewhat similar to Facebook's Farmville, users must use their sales and marketing skills to beat the competition, working their way up to be the company president.

More recently the market saw the introduction of Trash Tycoon by TerraCycle, which is also similar to Farmville. In this interactive game, players earn points for collecting trash in their community and for finding value streams for the materials to be upcycled into new products.

We can expect to see similar initiatives specifically talking to consumers about the

GLOBAL CONCERNS

With global label consumption increasing at a rapid rate, the issue of environmental footprint will only become more urgent. In developed Western markets, consumption rates of PS labels averages around 14-18 m² (45-55 sq ft) per person, per year. But developing markets consume only between 0.9 and 3m² per person, showing the huge growth potential. As the Earth's population increases by over two billion by 2050, middle class numbers are expected to continue rising, driving stronger global demand for consumer goods and packaging. It is clear that change is inevitable.

carbon footprint of packaging and products, recycling, energy reduction at the in-use phase and general environmental information. As consumers continue to gain perspective and increasingly reward brands that align with their sustainable values, label converters and suppliers must themselves become an active part of the conversation.

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Müller Martini VSOP
Variable Sleeve Offset Printing

The technology of the VSOP web offset press provides the capability to take advantage of many market trends in packaging: flexible packaging, labels (shrink sleeve, self-adhesive labels, wet glue labels, IML, wrap-around), folding carton and liquid packaging. The press runs up to 365 m/min (1200 ft/min) and produces the complete size range (381–762 mm/15–30") by using lightweight print sleeves. The VSOP is available in web widths of 520 mm (20 1/2") and 850 mm (33 1/2") and offers a great number of hybrid configurations with flexo, gravure, screen etc.

Müller Martini – your strong partner.

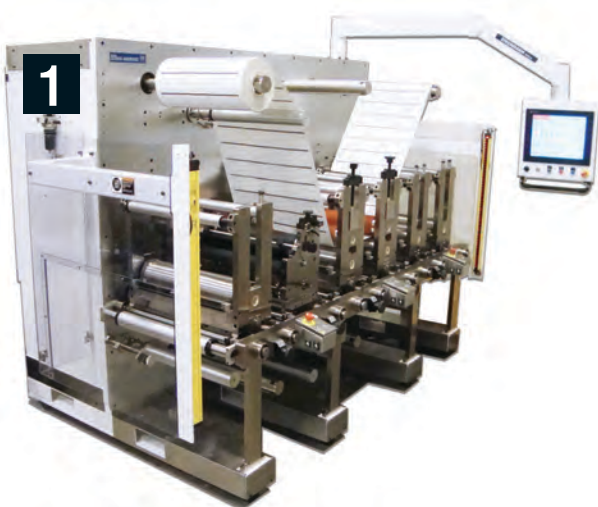


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MÜLLER MARTINI

NEW PRODUCTS



1 HIGH CAPACITY CONVERTING SYSTEM DELTA INDUSTRIAL

Delta Industrial has introduced its new High Capacity (18-24in) Delta Crusader converting system. This practical extension of the Delta Mod-Tech line of converting systems was designed to provide a full modular platform for the manufacturing and finishing of wider webs and larger parts. In addition, the expanded web width offers a solid inline or offline converting and finishing system for digitally printed web. A variety of process modules may be incorporated into the system such as full rotary and semi-rotary die-cutting, over and under laminating, coating, precise part placement, slitting, sheeting and pouching.

REMOVABLE IN-MOLD LABEL SYSTEMS LABELLING

UK-based converter Systems Labelling has launched a totally removable in-mold label. R-IML has no impact on traditional molding processes but can be removed during the recycling process or by the consumer after use. Systems Labelling's CEO Steve Pickford said, 'This innovation will contribute directly to the sustainability objectives set out in the Courtauld Commitment. This innovative breakthrough is set to revolutionize the in-mold labeling market. We have developed a solution (patent pending) that will mold at the same temperatures and dwell times whilst performing in moist, chilled, damp or microwave conditions.'

PP is the third most common polymer found in household waste in the UK, after high density polyethylene (HDPE) and polyethylene terephthalate (PET). PP packaging is used in many different grades and colors, making it difficult to recycle. According to Systems Labelling, the ability to recycle natural/clear or white polypropylene to its original state displaces the use of virgin resin in consumer product packaging for color sensitive applications providing a commercial value for all stakeholders. Defra and WRAP estimate for every one tonne of PP recycled we would save approximately one tonne in CO2 emissions.

The company said, 'Until now there has been little incentive for UK industries to consider the benefits of reducing the dependence on virgin PP in the manufacture of food packaging and, at the same time, divert waste from landfill and boost the UK market value of recycled PP.'



2 ROTARY DIE-CUTTING MODULES SCHOBERTECHNOLOGIES

Schobertechnologies, a subsidiary of Schober, has launched a range of high capacity and high speed rotary die-cutting modules. Schobertechnologies specializes in the development of rotary tools, modules and specialty machines used in film, foil, packaging, nonwovens and paper converting industries.

The die-cutting modules have a working width of up to 1,000mm and are designed for production speeds of up to 300m/min. They are available as modular line shaft-driven machines as well as in a hybrid version with individual drive technology. 'The innovative drive concept of the Schobertechnologies die-cutting module offers higher precision and flexibility due to a precise electronically synchronous run and digital servo-drives,' said the company.

The die-cutting modules feature a preset and calibrated pressure adjustment, high-precision bearing assemblies and housings for low temperature running, vibration-free design, micrometric die wear compensation adjustment (GCS) as well as central quick magnetic/anvil disengagement (without loss of registration) in order to ease web threading and consequently shorten the set-up. Most materials available in roll format can be die-cut, including self-adhesive liner materials as thin as 30 microns.

CUSTOMIZED PET TRAYS INKTRAYS

Inktrays has launched a range of customized PET trays that allow quick changes between printing jobs. The company is owned by Wasberger, based in Sweden, which is also the parent company of finishing equipment manufacturer Grafotronic.

The customized PET trays have been available in Sweden and Finland since 2010, and have now been launched across the rest of Europe. Inktrays are said to reduce downtime and increase productivity. Each PET tray is produced according to the specific ink-tray in each printing press.

An early adopter was Ettiketto Labeling Systems, one of Sweden's largest label converters. 'I am very satisfied with the result of the Inktrays and I use the product in all our presses today. As an example, if we change jobs three times a day on our 6-color press, we are looking at savings in the area of 30,000 euros per year,' said Rikard Ahlin, production manager at Ettiketto.



3

3 MH METALLIC FOIL RANGE API FOILS

API Foils has expanded its MH metallic foil range, designed specifically for uncoated, porous substrates and textured surfaces. The MH grade is said to be a reliable, versatile foil much used for drinks labels and cartons. Nine new colors have been added to the standard color range, taking the number of options to 30. In addition to a comprehensive selection of golds, silvers and metallics, the range now includes a choice of bronzes – which has seen increased interest, especially from the drinks sector.

API believes the new range of colors will provide designers and brands with more choice, giving them the tools to drive creativity, while printers will be able improve their offering of added value, finishing options. The company said, 'For designers looking for something unique, API can work with them to create special shades just right for their concept'.

Aimed at all printers using rotary, cylinder and platens printing systems and working on uncoated or textured substrates, the MH range has a heavy coat weight of adhesive, low activation temperature, easy release and is an option for large image areas on difficult uncoated substrates. It is also suitable for coated substrates, most ink types and varnishes as well as applications combining foiling with embossing.

GREEN PAPER RANGE RITRAMA

Ritrama, a manufacturer of pressure sensitive materials, has released a new range of 'green' papers. FSC certified, the Green Grade Range is produced from recycled paper labelstocks with up to 100 percent recycled fiber content and paper facestock comes from certified cellulose guaranteed by approved mills. All the products are said to provide excellent printability and converting characteristics.

The company said it is investing heavily in eco-materials and 'has adopted an ambitious environmental strategy establishing operational changes at different areas that involves the whole organization'.

4

4 EXPANDED RARE EARTH MAGNET RANGE BUYMAGNETS.COM

Bunting Magnetics has expanded its line of high-energy Neodymium and Samarium Cobalt permanent magnets on its website, BuyMagnets.com. The line now includes additional shapes, sizes, and grades, as well as Rare Earth holding assemblies. The Neo Assemblies come in concentric and two- and three-pole configurations and are corrosion-resistant.

The new magnet products include several new grades; the grade of a magnet helps determine the strength of the magnetic characteristics within that magnet type. Over 1,300 different magnets are now offered, most of which are in stock and ready for immediate shipment.

Neodymium Rare Earth magnets offer very high energy and holding power in compact sizes and light weights. Bunting Neodymium-Iron-Boron magnets are now stocked in six grades and dozens of standard sizes and shapes, including bar and plug shapes. The selection includes a heat-resistant grade plus corrosion-resistant nickel-plated Neodymium magnets.

Samarium Cobalt Rare Earth magnets are said to be suitable for use in many high-energy and high-temperature applications. These magnets combine energy products that approach those of Neodymium grades with temperature stability similar to that of Alnico magnets.

CO2 REDUCING LABEL SATO

Sato, a manufacturer of barcode printing, labeling and EPC/RFID products, has released its new CO2 reducing Econano series of labels. A special absorbent is added to the label's adhesive which reduces the amount of CO2 released at the point of incineration by 20 percent compared to conventional labels. 'Reducing carbon emissions is a challenge for all businesses today,' said Etsuo Fujii, president of Sato Corporation. 'But the cutting-edge technology Sato employs in its Econano series labels offers our customers a helping-hand in achieving their environmental targets, and provides them with solutions beneficial to all levels of consumer goods product identification and supply chain labeling.'

According to the company, it is possible to achieve approximately a 50 percent reduction in CO2 emissions at incineration by combining Econano technology with Sato's Nonsepa linerless label series.

NEW PRODUCTS



1 VISUALIZER TOOL COLOR-LOGIC

Color-Logic, developer of the Process Metallic Color System, has begun shipping its new visualizer tool, which enables graphic designers and brand owners to visualize the complete array of Color-Logic metallic and decorative effects on their designer workstations.

Color-Logic's director of sales and marketing Mark Geeves commented: 'Our new Color-Logic FX-Viewer permits designers and brand managers to accurately visualize all Color-Logic metallic hues and decorative effects.'

'The Color-Logic FX-Viewer is an integral part of the basic Color-Logic software, which creates 5-color files for printing with metallic inks or with white inks on metallic substrates. Using our software, designers can both create and view the metallic look and special effects of Color-Logic files right on their desktop workstation monitors, and thus verify visually, in one easy step, how their designs will appear when printed.'

'It is no longer necessary to cycle through costly design iterations or expensive proofing to verify decorative effects.'

ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE WINE LABEL PAPER G3 ENTERPRISES

G3 Enterprises has launched GTree – an environmentally sustainable wine label paper which was developed for use on all bottling lines, including those utilizing high-speed and mobile bottling application equipment.

Manufactured from 100 percent post-consumer recycled fiber, GTree is claimed to have one of the greenest environmental footprints of any labelstock currently offered. The GTree label contains true recycled fiber consisting of sorted office paper that has had at least one useful life before being recycled. G3 Enterprises teamed with family-owned Monadnock Paper Mills to research and develop a 100 percent PCW labelstock that could meet the rigors of bottling including tensile and tear strength, brightness, embossing and scuff resistance that is equal to or better than current paper stocks. Additionally, the GTree label paper is designed with a unique formulation which results in increased resistance to water absorption, allowing it to maintain its premium appearance and high quality print aesthetics even when exposed to ice bucket conditions for prolonged periods.

2 SHEET COUNTING SCALE POLAR

Polar has introduced a new counting scale to measure the accurate amount of sheets.

Integrated into the jogging process, the scale is said to guarantee exceptional counting precision due to its double reference weighing. Operated from a 5.7 inch color display, the scale is fast and easy to handle. It is integrated into the jogging process and guarantees exceptional counting precision due to its double reference weighing.

An ethernet interface allows network connection and input of the counting data and results. The solid aluminum stand is made of three sections and can be converted for different scale positions – an adjust fixture allows the control unit to be positioned in many different ways.

The new model was introduced in October 2011, replacing the previous device. The company said: 'The first reactions we have got from our customers prove the scale's excellent reliability and precision'.

Among its environmental attributes, GTree labelstock is manufactured using 100 percent renewable electricity, is processed chlorine free, and is manufactured carbon-neutral. In addition, the fiber waste created during the manufacturing process is captured, processed and reused as compost for crops and bedding for livestock.

Throughout the research and field testing period, GTree label is said to have proven consistently reliable, having been tested using all current labeling methods and systems, and has the ability to run 'exceptionally well' on today's high speed bottling lines. GTree is manufactured under certified ISO 9001 and 14001 quality and environmental management systems.

'GTree is a cost-competitive bright white, uncoated stock which offers excellent embossing and hot foil stamping performance,' said Fred Dale, G3's label division's senior manager for technical service and quality control. 'At G3, our commitment to quality and performance ensures that our GTree label offerings meet and exceed our customers' requirements for every application.'



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NFC FARE collection on a tram

Connection revolution

A NEW GENERATION of NFC-equipped smart phones is set to revolutionize the way we interact with products. Carol Houghton reports

QR codes have been a hot topic of late (see L&L issue 1, 2012 page 67), but new developments in augmented reality and near field communication (NFC) technology are already threatening to make QR codes old news.

A leading mobile phone manufacturer is scheduled to introduce its first third generation smart phone by mid-2012 integrating NFC technology from Inside Secure, manufacturer of semiconductor technology for secure transactions and digital identity. The phone will run on one of the most widely used mobile operating systems under license, and utilize the Inside MicroRead NFC controller chip and Inside Open NFC protocol stack software to deliver NFC capabilities to a broad range of applications.

The Inside NFC implementation will open up a wide range of interactive possibilities, including use of a mobile phone to pay when shopping or on public transport, and to access information or call a taxi by tapping smart tags in posters. 'NFC will be a revolution,' says Loic Hamon, vice president NFC products. 'It is a virtual world in your handset, making that link

to the real world easier.'

Data security will clearly be an issue, given the amount of sensitive information – like bank details – stored on the chip, but Hamon says very high security levels have been built into the software.

A NEW GENERATION

NFC is positioned as a 'third generation' interface, following the original mobile phone and then the iPhone. 'This third generation focuses on the connection of the virtual world of the phone to the world around you and easy, instant access to information' says Hamon.

Where QR codes require user action – downloading software, acquiring the image and following links – the NFC chip is constantly looking for tags to interact with. 'NFC is always on so it will revolutionize the way we interact with the world,' reinforces Hamon.

These are still early days for the technology, which unlike QR codes require a complex infrastructure of phone, reader, tag etc. 'However,' says Hamon, 'the penetration of NFC is now significant and in a couple of years the user experience will change dramatically.'

Charles Walton, general manager and executive vice president at Inside Secure, reports that the company has already shipped 20 million units of its NFC software for use in a broad range of mobile devices since February 2011, with half of those shipments taking place in the past five months.



THE SMART POSTER application

INSTALLATIONS



VANDEMOORTELE offers a wide range of margarines, frying fats and frozen bakery products throughout Europe

ESKOARTWORK WEBCENTER VANDEMOORTELE (BELGIUM)

Vandemoortele, European manufacturer of frozen bakery products and lipids (margarines and fats) has chosen EskoArtwork's WebCenter to manage the increased demand for packaging designs and streamline any changes or updates to artwork.

Jost Buthmann, Vandemoortele's group procurement manager – responsible for all purchasing of packaging – explained: 'On a yearly basis we handle over a thousand design changes in our packaging that consists of over 5,000 SKU's. Very often, these are only small changes that, for example, concern updates in texts. But the approval cycles can still take up to six or eight weeks. We really needed a solution to speed up that process, and make it more efficient and effective.'

Vandemoortele opted for Esko WebCenter to manage the pre-production approval and project life-cycle. Buthmann said: 'We were especially impressed by WebCenter's capabilities for online reviewing and approval of graphical content from anywhere, anytime – with everybody always able to review the same picture of the latest version. This provides us with more control and flexibility during the process. 'I'm confident that we will be able to halve the amount of time we need for decision making cycles, without compromising quality or security. There will be less mistakes or misunderstandings, and at the same time it will speed up our time to market.'

ETI COHESIO MACHINES TELROL (NETHERLANDS) AND BLUEPRINT (ITALY)

ETI Converting has sold three ETI Cohesio machines in Europe, all of which will be used to serve retail markets.

Telrol, based in the Netherlands, purchased two machines for its new company, Jac-Stick BV. The first was installed in January 2012 at the 11,000 square meter production plant in Almere, with the second due to be delivered in July.

The third machine has already been installed at Blueprint, a family owned company in Benate, Italy. The equipment will be used to apply thermal coating, print, apply silicone and glue, die-cut and finish labels in-line with a non-stop turret rewinder.

LABELS&LABELING



CHRIS CHAPPEL, Edale's print application engineer, with the Alphasonics Megan system

ALPHASONICS ULTRASONIC CLEANING SYSTEM EDALE (UK)

To coincide with the recent Edale open house, Alphasonics has provided the Hampshire, UK-based press manufacturer with a full refurbishment of its ultrasonic cleaning system for demonstration and in-house cleaning purposes.

The 'Megan' system utilizes the Alphasound Dual Frequency technology and is capable of cleaning three aniloxes of up to 700mm face width technology at one time. It is also of the highest grade of equipment in the Alphasonics range. The system was originally installed in 2002 but has undergone a full overhaul to bring the unit to current specifications for the benefit of Edale and its customers.

Christopher Jones, Alphasonics UK and Ireland sales manager, said: 'We're thrilled to be able to install not only what is essentially a brand new piece of kit, but also an example of the very best cleaning system on the market into Edale's production facility. It shows our dedication to providing the very best quality of equipment and also indicates the strength of the relationship between our two companies.'

The system will now be used to clean aniloxes for Edale customers and also as demonstration tool for those looking to install their own cleaning system to facilitate an anilox cleaning regime.

Chris Chappel, Edale's print application engineer, said: 'The Alphasonics tank is a crucial part of our anilox maintenance schedule. With a clean anilox we can be sure that every time it goes to press we achieve the best possible results.'

The system was unveiled and demonstrated at the 'Expo' event in early February. Along with other OEMs, Alphasonics exhibited and made educational presentations on its technology during the day-long event.

Chappel continued: 'Our relationship with the company works well, and we have always had a high level of confidence in their products. Taking part in our open house event which we held in February this year, we hope, has shown visitors the benefits of the unit for themselves.'

Suppliers, distributors and customers descended on Edale's production facility in Fareham, providing a platform for interaction, education and valuable experience for attendees and exhibitors alike.

Jones said: 'All in all, it was a great event and something we're extremely happy to be a part of. I think everyone took something away from it and the team at Edale should be congratulated on their hard work in putting everything together so well.'

ROTOCONTROL FINISHING MACHINES

FLEXCOAT (BRAZIL), BAUMGARTEN (BRAZIL) AND BARTHEL

Brazilian labelstock manufacturer Flexcoat has ordered two RSP single pass inspection machines from Rotocontrol, while Baumgarten, a label converter based in the same country, has ordered its second Rotocontrol RSC inspection slitter rewinder. The deals were handled by Marcelo Zandomenico of MZ Maquinas, Rotocontrol's agent in Brazil, and Michael Aengenvoort, business development manager for Rotocontrol.

The Rotocontrol RSP series machines have a small footprint – only 1.2 x 2.6 meters of floor space plus the moveable control panel – and are specifically designed for compliance with the most demanding security label inspection and finishing applications. Flexcoat plans to run 100 percent inspection of pharmaceutical labels and other production runs with their two RSP finishing machines.

'The production intended for the RSP inspection machines requires secure inspection, including re-inspection when labels are reworked. We evaluated other alternatives, but opted for Rotocontrol as their machines are solidly built and fully integrated with the latest inspection technology. The re-inspection mode will assure our pharmaceutical customers 100 percent compliant product,' said Nilson Barrantes, managing director of Flexcoat.

Located in the city of Louveira, Flexcoat has two coaters for self-adhesive laminating. The company operates in markets including pharmaceutical, automotive, food, cosmetic, fridge, and electronic.

Baumgarten's RSC machine has a 440mm web width and dual rewind with capacity up to 700mm and tension control from 100 percent servo Bosch Rexroth Drives, enabling the company to produce shrink sleeves at high-speed and efficiently. Also ordered was the Vacuum Splice Table option, which delivers operator efficiency by allowing automatic placement of mill-splice/flags, matrix/missing labels and vision detected defects right on the vertical inspection plate/waste rewind for reworking. The machine is equipped with a Nikka Research inspection system.

SISTRADe WORKFLOW SYSTEM

HERZOG ETIKETTEN (GERMANY) AND ETIFORMA (PORTUGAL)

Label converters Herzog Etiketten (Germany) and Etiforma (Portugal) have installed workflow systems from Portuguese company Sistrade.

Sistrade Print is a vertical MIS system that allows users to coordinate the management of all departments, from specific estimating according to product type, invoicing, supplier purchases, stock management, job order management until the manufacturing data collection via production terminals, and automatic data acquisition.

Herzog Etiketten serves the tire, chemical, food and wine industries. Headquartered in Rohrbach, not far from Alsace and Strasbourg, the company serves customers in Germany, Switzerland, France, Poland, Slovenia, Turkey and Dubai.

NILPETER FB-SERIES PRESS

HINE LABELS (UK)

UK-based Hine Labels has installed a Nilpeter FB-3300 S narrow web press to complement its existing four-unit FB-2500 with a web width of 273 mm (10.75 inches) and 6-color FB-4200 with a width of 425 mm (16.75 inches). The new press has eight servo-driven UV flexo units with centralized touch screen control and a maximum web width of 350 mm (13.75 inches).

Bill Hine, managing director, said: 'These presses operate to an amazingly high standard, with practically zero maintenance. Our latest is configured to run with two webs and is fitted with a relamination/delamination unit. This allows us to produce multiple products, including leaflet labels, and peel/ reseal types.'

He expects the flexible configuration of the FB-3300 S will significantly increase the company's efficiency as a trade label printer. 'We can handle a wide variety of added-value work that other label printers may find too awkward or inconvenient to produce themselves. It involves working with a wide variety of substrates, from paper and filmic labelstocks to plastics for printing tags. We also produce labels with basic RFID inlays.'



The configuration includes cold foiling and three die-cutting stations. The first undercuts from the top, which allows easier and safer die changes when running with two webs. Hot air dryers with water-cooled chill rollers and UV-curing units are fitted as standard. The former allows the company to print food-related labeling and packaging with water-based flexo inks. The UV-system from IST Metz is the first in the UK to use the compact MBS-6 lamp modules. With an energy-saving output of 120 W/cm, they can achieve the same ink curing results as standard UV-units requiring up to 200 W/cm. In the press room, the company's flexo presses handle the mid-to-long run work, while shorter runs are completed on a Xeikon 3000 digital color press.

MARTIN AUTOMATIC REWINDER

PEMARA LABELS (MALAYSIA)

Martin Automatic has shipped an automatic butt splicer and transfer rewriter to Pemara Labels Malaysia for use at its factory in Balakong in Selangor State. Miss Ngooi Pei Ling, general manager for Pemara Labels Malaysia, placed the order at Labelexpo Europe in September 2011.

The equipment includes an MBSC automatic butt splicing unwind and STR automatic transfer rewriter. The equipment combo is the first splicer and rewriter to be installed at Pemara's Malaysia location and will provide non-stop operation to a Gallus EM 340S press. The majority of printing jobs are opaque and clear-on-clear PS labelstock.

In addition to making automatic roll changes in the splicing mode, the MBSC splicer is also equipped as a dual unwinder. This feature enables Pemara to unwind two rolls of liner and face stock simultaneously into the press with automatic tension control over both webs.

This marks the group's fourth investment in Martin splicers and rewinders. With earlier installations on Gallus presses in the Jakarta, Ho Chi Minh City and Melbourne headquarters plants, Pemara has now placed Martin Automatic roll changing systems in every one of its label facilities.



AVT INSPECTION PURGINA (SLOVAKIA)

Slovakian label converter Purgina recently installed the Advanced Vision Technology (AVT) web inspection systems on the company's two Gallus presses. The company also invested in AVT workFlow for the press rewinds.

'Our latest investment has raised the profile of the company, improved the quality of labels we produce, and helped us to win new business,' said Stefan Kilarsky, general manager, Purgina. 'I believe there is no better solution for quality control, better production efficiency, and increased profitability. The AVT Helios II system has the best interface of all, is easy to learn and operate, and in the trials we conducted, it produced the best results.'

The AVT equipment 'marks' print errors within the roll and presents this information to the splicing table at the rewind. This is achieved via AVT's

WorkFlow link, which uses a printed barcode to synchronize the web, and allows bad material to be stripped out and a perfect roll to be delivered to the customer. Being fitted to the press, as opposed to the rewinder, the AVT technology has added an extra dimension to consistent high quality, and has made significant improvements to Purgina's productivity and profitability. By assuring quality upstream, and reducing printed waste, the rolls delivered to the rewinders are quick to process and guarantee 100 percent accuracy to the customer.

This new improved label quality has allowed Purgina to pioneer self-adhesive labels in the Slovakian wine industry, which has switched from wet glue labels in 10 years, and also attracted interest from Hungarian and Austrian wine producers. From being a supplier to the high volume, low value food label market, investment in technology has brought Purgina international status in high-end label conversion, serving markets where margins are better, but standards far higher.

Kilarsky concluded, 'In today's competitive marketplace, nothing less than 100 percent consistent quality is good enough – and the only way to achieve that is with 100 percent inspection – for me, there is no better solution for increased productivity and profitability than AVT.'

WEBEX SLITTER ACUCOTE (USA)

Acucote, a manufacturer of pressure sensitive materials, custom adhesive and silicone coated products, has installed a 60-inch wide slitter from Webex at its distribution center in Dallas, Texas.

The center-surface winding machine provides the facility with greater versatility and increased finishing capacity. The new slitter, added to the present 30 inch width capability, will offer features to handle a more extensive variety of demanding slitting work. The 60-inch slitter has the ability to do 40-inch OD rolls and slit widths from two-inch to 60-inch. The new slitter should be fully operational by mid-February.

In addition to 60-inch slitting capability, Acucote plans to increase the variety of inventories available from the Dallas facility. Both will improve service to the Southwest, Rocky Mountain and Central-Plains territories.

AB GRAPHIC FLYTEC BAEHREN DRUCK (GERMANY)

AB Graphic has supplied a third flytec label inspection rewinding system to Moenchengladbach, Germany-based converter Baehren Druck. The flytec 150 model supplied features bi-directional rewinding to ensure all labels are inspected and error free and allow continuous printing. The flytec 150 will be



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used for 100 percent print face inspection of pharmaceutical labels at speeds up to 150m/min.

Designed for 200mm maximum web widths, the specification supplied includes inside/outside forward and backward winding modes, constant web tension, web break control and web length, roll diameter and label counting. Equipped with PC controlled fleyeVision print face inspection camera the system offers gray scale line scanning at 2048 pixel resolution and minimum defect detection across the web of 0.15 square mm (black dot on white background).

Svend Herder, head of production planning at Baehren Druck, said: 'We already had two flytec 2000 inspection rewinding machines and when the need arose to replace an older rewinder, we immediately contacted AB Graphic International. The new flytec is ideal for our requirements with an excellent price to specification ratio. Our previous experience with the

GERMANY-BASED converter Baehren Druck now runs three AB Graphic flytec systems



performance of our existing flytec machines and the fact that we would be getting a relatively local, fast and efficient package of machine and technical service was a key factor in the purchasing decision.'

'The flytec 150 is a one stop solution for 100 percent web inspection, suitable for final checking of the print face before delivery,' said Christer Markgraf of AB Graphic. 'The web is inspected and when an error is detected, it is rewound back to the splicing table in front of the camera where the faulty label can be replaced or removed. Once the correction has been made, the web is re-inspected ensuring 100 percent inspection.'

'We specialize in the production of high value secondary packaging materials and offer a wide variety of labels for the pharmaceutical industry,' added Walter Baehren, CEO at Baehren Druck. 'Eighty-six percent of our turnover is in this industry

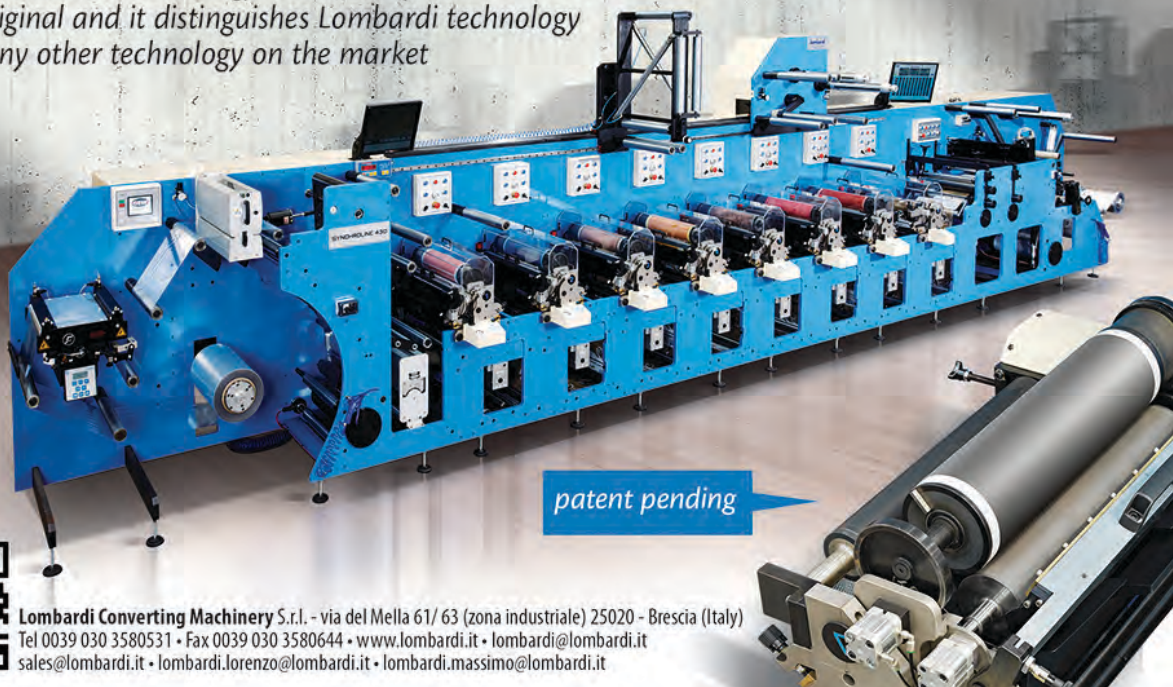
so we need optimum print face inspection so that we can guarantee the stringent levels of product security demanded by this market and trouble free, onward label application. The flytec 150 has also significantly increased our flexibility on shorter print runs. We no longer have to interrupt long run jobs being processed on our larger flytec 2000 machines to meet the demand for an urgent short run job order as these can be processed on the new machine. We also save more time than we had initially expected.'



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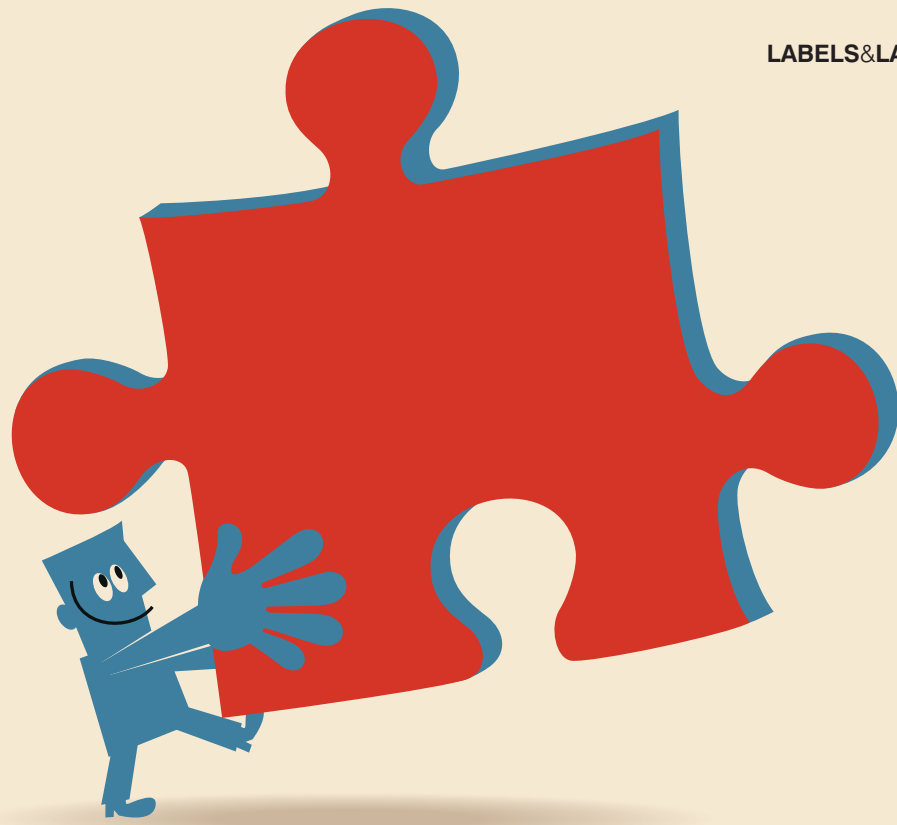
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Top Markets **for M&A**

WHAT'S HOT, what's not, and who's buying in the second half of 2012. By Bob Cronin, The Open Approach

Mergers & acquisitions are the ultimate barometer for every industry. They can tell you what the market thinks is important, what your competitors are thinking, and who believes the business is valuable long-term. And certainly, if you are looking to do a buy-sell play, you can use current activity to gauge potential interest and likely valuations. Most important, however; M&A can signal the necessity for your company to change. Be it product offerings, vertical presence, core capabilities, in-demand ancillary services, or any factor, M&A activity can help you prepare a directional plan for the road ahead.

Whether you are considering a transaction in 2012 or simply looking to extend your competitive advantage, you need to stay abreast of the deals — big and small. And you need to understand their influence in your given market. Are you losing or gaining competition because of M&A's shift in players? Are companies entering or exiting your venue? Is what you are doing today valuable for the long-term?

Acquisitional buyers within today's label industry are primarily the major strategic enterprises and private equity firms. The former includes huge conglomerates — both domestic and global — that seemingly dominate every headline. The private equity firms span numerous

investor types and include mid-market portfolio holding companies growing steadily into major status. Both of these buyers know their stuff. Experienced M&A directors (along with their M&A firms) are spearheading the plays. Each and every transaction is scrutinized rigorously for its 24-, 36-, and 60-month value, and no opportunity is pursued that does not provide for a positive upside. They know what they are doing. And what they think matters.

So, in today's environment, what are they thinking?

MAJOR ENTERPRISE: INTEREST AND OPPORTUNITY

Strategic players continue to hunger for and gobble up small- to mid-sized label enterprises. Pressured by shareholders, they are pretty much required to deliver accretive earnings regardless of economic situation or market fluctuations.

Just like in any industry, major-player acquisitions are moves to increase operational scale, while also altering the fragmented market for business advantage. In essence, majors are moving to consolidate services into single platforms and outweigh alternatives, by sheer size and scope.

They are seeking to expand customer bases, geographies, products, services,

and new possibilities. Additional capacity at reasonable cost provides them with improved channels to key markets and financial synergies that increase value.

In labels, the strategic majors are currently most active in prime and data labels, as these are two areas that can be easily integrated into their present lineup. They have existing businesses within their organizations and are bolstering their capabilities. For them, quick mobilization and synergy realization are key. They can make acquisitions in prime and data labels and see revenue and profitability gains in a matter of months. Their platform is already in place. Strategic majors can often be restrained by their leverage and credit lines, so they typically buy at their comfort level.

These players are not looking for a two-year timeline or a transaction that carries too much risk. Familiar products and services are favored. Yet, the additional assets and customer bases should be complementary to the core and have limited unnecessary overlap.

In addition to the product type, strategic buyers are currently looking for candidates that can complement their operations with positions in healthcare, pharmaceuticals, and food and beverage, and avoiding enterprises with heavy account concentration or little diversification. Acquisition candidates

have a little more slack with regard to equipment and leadership, because the major company is already well positioned in those areas and many times simply folds an acquisition into current operations.

These transactions are typically better publicized, and deal value is readily accessible for the public companies. Multiples vary based on many factors, and deal structure can be substantially different. Because of this, any company selling needs to understand these variances and have reliable consultative and advisory resources. If you need help deciphering what these mean, I'm happy to assist.

PRIVATE EQUITY: INTEREST AND OPPORTUNITY

Private equity, too, is very active in the label space. In fact, over the past 10 years, I would estimate that around 70 percent of all significant label deals had private equity leadership or backing. Yet, you may hear of fewer due to restrictions in information release and investor confidentiality, along with the fact that deal values are not readily publicized. Additionally, there is seemingly more confusion over what private equity buyers actually are and a misperception of their being similar to venture capitalists.

Having executed multiple deals for

private equity clients, I can attest that they are very knowledgeable and diligent enterprises whose ultimate goal can easily align with strong enterprises. Just like you, they are seeking hard work, growth, and success. They share in the building, the strategy, and the risk. And they provide the vital support — strategic, operational, financial, etc. — to drive strong results. With private equity plays, entrepreneurs are often still at the helm of their enterprises, championing their people and resources.

Private equity acquisitions are unlike strategic acquisitions in many ways. The most important is that private equity buyers are typically developing new platforms or creating what they believe could be game-changers in the industry.

They build investment models by examining opportunities that hold certain attributes: industries with growth rates above GDP, areas that perform well in differing economic cycles, and those that can produce rapid buildout and value acceleration because of increasing size and position. They are looking at specific investment cycles — put in their time and resources and get out upon reaching specific milestones. Timelines can be 18 months, two years, five years... depending on the particular elements of their investment model.

Private equity firms prefer investments that have limited capital need, proven management teams, strong barriers to customer exit and entrance for competition, and contractual business relationships. They dislike risk as much as any other acquirer, but they may be more apt to take on innovative operations or up-and-comers, provided such companies can truly provide a compelling upside.

In our industry, private equity has significant interest in prime labels, due to their performance in the current economy and strong financial returns of prior M&A plays. Significant recent deals include Resource Label Group's (portfolio company of First Atlantic Capital) acquisition of Pamco and KRG Capital's purchase of Ft. Dearborn Company.

Thus, at the moment, you can find numerous private equity firms as owners, and even more of them seeking opportunities to get in. Enterprises are also selling from mid-market private equity owners to larger private

equity firms. These firms in turn are pulling together substantial rollups that will likely have a huge impact on the trajectory of labels in the next few years.

Private equity firms are not as interested in data labels, as they believe companies in this market do not have the guaranteed revenues or customer lock. While data label entities may indeed bring strong performance or good books of business, their higher competition and weaker customer ties can result in lower ultimate sell multiples — not a good thing in the private equity world.

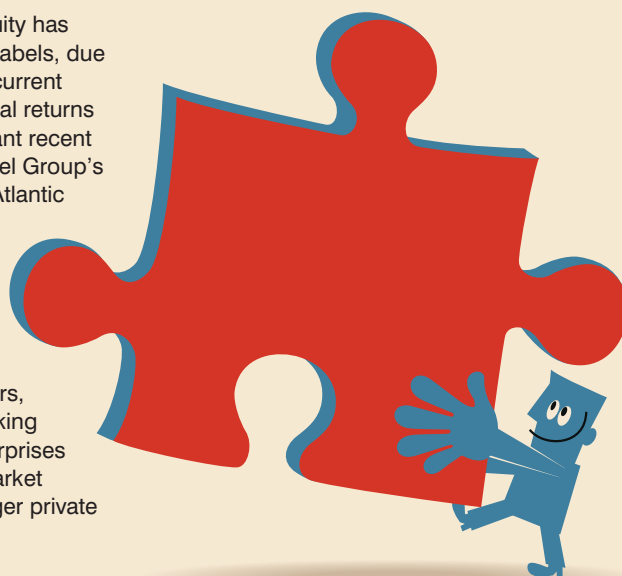
If you are looking to buy, consider where these top investors are looking and think through what you need to be to compete. If you are looking to sell, examine your position in the prime areas of opportunity. Do you offer what today's buyers are looking for? If you need to change course, what will it take to get there and how long will you need? Make sure you accommodate this time lapse into your transformation strategy, as you don't want to end up in 2014 with a company that would have been competitive in 2012.

Yet, market dynamics are constantly in flux. If there is one thing we have learned in the past several years it is that what is in demand today can burn out by tomorrow. The above activity is my best view for what's likely to transpire over the next six months. But things can change quickly. New systems, technologies, inventions, and business opportunities are part of our culture. That said, your key to a lucrative deal is knowledge. Stay apprized, stay informed, and stay tuned. Your M&A opportunity could be right around the corner.



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.



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Brand design: Express your personality

GLOBAL branding and packaging consultancy, Cartils looks at the current trends in beverage label design

Building a brand in today's consumer society has become a major challenge. Brands try to get the consumer's attention within an information overload provided by the existence of a large number of brands. Some brands seem to succeed time after time and turn out to be role models in designing a winning brand presentation. Cartils, an international branding and packaging agency, looks into the latest developments of some of these role models within the beverage sector and explains current trends in brand design

FEMININITY

After years of successful expanding, Heineken felt it had too many different bottles in its beer range. The international beer brand decided to bring uniformity in its packaging range through the introduction of a new iconic bottle. Uniting Heineken's packaging did not only bring consistency but it delivered efficiency gaining too. It became a successful and innovative design respecting the brand's status and reputation.

During the evolutionary update, all parts of the package design were taken into account. The designers focused on every detail. Based on Heineken's famous racetrack around its logo, ellipses were brought into the bottle, the glass and the can providing family resemblance. But the lines surrounding the racetrack in the label opened up to integrate the bottle and the label. The clear plastic label supported this integration, creating transparency. Furthermore, the characteristic red

LABELS&LABELING

Heineken star moved to the top of the neck label, enhancing more confidence through the brand's icon.

While replacing the well-known long-neck, the new Heineken bottle is a couple of millimetres shorter and three percent lighter. And although the sound of this does not seem to be very revolutionary, with three and a half billion bottles a year, it turns out to deliver a saving of 14 million kilograms of glass.

Being a well-established role model in the beverage industry, Heineken set a great example with this integrated and transparent look. Another example of this integration between bottle and label is surely created by Captain Morgan's Spiced, the rum brand owned by Diageo. It changed its name – originally called Morgan's Spiced – and label last summer as part of a rebranding campaign featuring the familiar pirate character. The structural packaging remained unchanged with embossed details but the Captain Morgan identity has become the heart of the brand as a very small-detailed illustration to endorse the mythological and narrative style.

Together with these two notable examples, Cartils perceives a trend of femininity through refinement and integration in many of today's brand presentations. Great detailing tends to endorse quality. Focusing on both the label (2D) and the bottle (3D) during the redesigning process and integrating them into one united design underlines this tendency. Furthermore it fits an up-to-date version of today's brand presentations in which brands open up and relate themselves to transparency.



CONFIDENCE AND MASCULINITY

Not long before Captain Morgan's rebranding campaign, Diageo also changed its Smirnoff bottle into a more refined variant. In order to enhance confidence, the bottle now includes prominent signatures of Smirnoff's historical producer Pierre Smirnoff alongside the crown. A more refined typography and glass embossing have also been adopted. Diageo even changed the brand's main icon hoping to encapsulate the premium, heritage and purity cues. The new look of Smirnoff No.21 emphasizes the vodka's quality and its heritage as a supplier to the Russian tsars.

Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey has also been changing its bottle for a more confident appearance. While its values remain the same, Jack Daniel's decided to reinforce its brand changing both the vessel and label. The label retained its signature qualities but got edited to create a more crafted feel. Besides that, Jack Daniel's got rid of its finery. The new bottle introduces more chiseled shoulders to enhance the confident and masculine silhouette.

Bringing more masculinity into a bottle or including quality cues in a label are ways to endorse a brand's confidence. A brand can appear trustworthy and qualitative this way, representing itself as an authority in its area. Cartils considers this as a more and more upcoming trend, as it sees brands trying to get themselves noticed as masculine, broad shouldered, strong footed and contrasting labeled presentations surrounded with medals, signatures and crowns.

ABOUT CARTILS

Cartils is an international branding and packaging consultancy with offices in Amsterdam and London. Established in 1960 and one of the first branding and packaging design consultants, it advises international companies in the area of branding strategy, brand portfolio management and packaging design (graphic and 3D design) in the premium FMCG market. Today with a staff of 70 people, Cartils handles projects in more than 40 countries and has recently worked on a number of brands including Grolsch, San Pellegrino, Carling Black Label, PAGO Fruit Juice, Cristal, Wyborowa Wodka, Baltika, Chateau Giscours, Ketel One Vodka. Website: www.cartils.com.

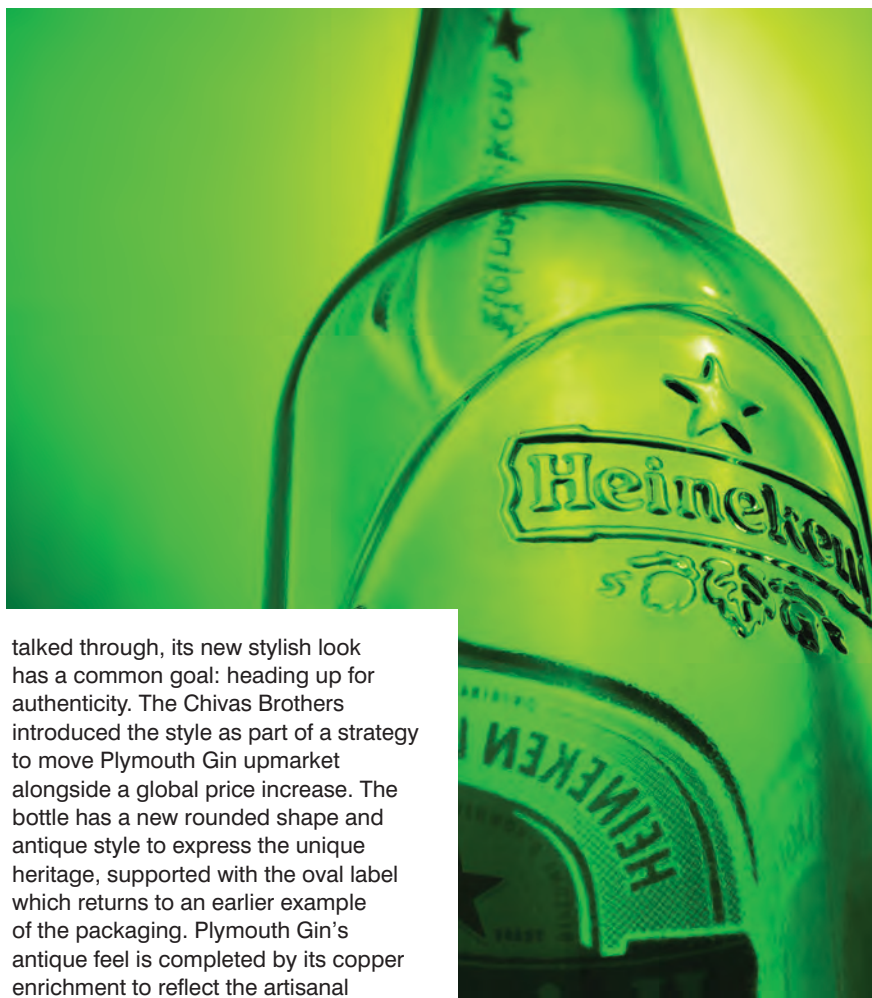
AUTHENTICITY

Turning back to its roots or brand story can be a whole other way to reinforce a brand. Many brands are pursuing a redesign these days enhancing the brand's core values and roots and leaving the rest of 'the finery' out. The brand icon becomes the main focus in the brand presentation again. The red grouse for example – the well-known icon of The Famous Grouse – has become the main focus in the brand's latest redesign. Although The Famous Grouse has updated its packaging several times over its 114 year history and every bottle has featured the red grouse, it now takes a more prominent position on the bottle's bigger label becoming the real hero of the pack.

A design should fit the brand story to become credible and authentic. By turning the red grouse into the most striking part of the bottle, The Famous Grouse centralizes its brand story in which the red grouse refers to its historical background when the noble came to Scotland – the only place where one could find the rare bird – to hunt and fish.

Also Bacardi emphasized its (sub-) brand story when launching its Bacardi Oakheart Spiced Rum. The new product is a tribute to the modern day adventurer, created in charred American white oak barrels. The textured bottle has a strong shape and looks rugged, masculine and edgy while it communicates the brand's provenance and heritage through the badge-like label in which the brand's icon gets a central position.

Although Plymouth Gin is creating exactly the opposite feel of the manly spirit we just



talked through, its new stylish look has a common goal: heading up for authenticity. The Chivas Brothers introduced the style as part of a strategy to move Plymouth Gin upmarket alongside a global price increase. The bottle has a new rounded shape and antique style to express the unique heritage, supported with the oval label which returns to an earlier example of the packaging. Plymouth Gin's antique feel is completed by its copper enrichment to reflect the artisanal credentials. The copper cap stands for the copper pot that has been used in production since Victorian times.

Also heading up for authenticity is the latest limited edition port collection 'The Bold & Brave Port Co'. The collection shows five different bottles in an ingenious way, all capturing craft and expertise. As Cartlis sees a trend in brands using paper labels to enhance craftsmanship, this port went one step ahead of the trend. An old-fashioned hole-punched label brings hand-crafted exclusivity to each individually numbered bottle. The rubber band and illustrated single-color seal creates quality. The bottle and the radial and flourishing layout express a classic feel with a modern touch: like a tattoo.

GROLSCH

A great example in which more than one of the above trends is represented is SABMiller's Grolsch. Together with Cartlis, Grolsch revealed its new graphic design for all bottles, cans and other packaging hitting the store shelves worldwide in the beginning of March this year. SABMiller teamed up with Cartlis to give the brand a more prominent look and feel. The primary focus was on the creation of a consistent worldwide visual identity, which emphasizes the brand values as well as increasing the standout factor. The most important solution was

found in the development of the 'Grolsch brand badge'. The new image carrier reinforces the Grolsch brand values and it provides a more fresh, robust and dynamic look. Meanwhile, it fits Grolsch's rich heritage and shows off the brand's story of quality, attention to detail and pride in standing out from the crowd. It embodies independency, craftsmanship, authenticity and a premium feel. But more important, it shows a brand world that revolves around beer with character.

In the new Grolsch design all of the trends mentioned before can be recognized. By emphasizing its craftsmanship ('Vakmanschap is meesterschap') the authentic character of the brand was reinforced. A feminine touch can be found in the refinement of the badge, while the badge as an element has a confident expression.

Today, Cartlis sees three leading trends which seem to have nothing to do with each other at first sight, but appear to be connecting in a higher level. All of the above trends are actually ways to bring brands closer to their core values. Although the executions differ, brands seem to sharpen up their brand personality and dare to present themselves more outspoken in order to stand out in the crowd. In terms of design, this makes 2012 the year of expressing personalities.



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Backing

BARRY HUNT examines how sustainability issues are boosting interest in linerless labels

Linerless labels have a release coating on the face and an adhesive on the back. When wound in rolls the coating prevents the labels from sticking to each other, much like industrial tapes. Their most obvious benefits as an alternative to conventional laminates is that the elimination of paper or filmic liner, or backing, greatly reduces raw material costs as a percentage of a label's total production costs. There are also more finished labels per roll to reduce overall handling and transport costs. Waste reduction as an environmental issue is also important. After all, the liner has no further use once the label is applied to the pack or container, whereas a linerless label uses all the material through its life cycle.

Preventing this wastage was always a major aim of the early – and largely unsuccessful – schemes to introduce linerless technology. Today the improved techniques with current offerings have fortunately coincided with a greater awareness of so-called 'sustainability'. In a packaging context they reflect the increased awareness by retail chains and brand owners of the need to take environmental and social issues more seriously. There are now numerous initiatives around the world intended to encourage more packaging recycling schemes and so reduce landfill waste. Vocal support from consumers and environmental lobby groups also back these initiatives with the aim of minimizing the impact of packaging on the environment.

The renewed interest in linerless technologies also coincides with attempts to persuade converters to sign up to release liner recycling schemes. As one would expect, we are unlikely to see the demise of the release liner any time soon. Liners fulfill a useful role as a protective carrier for the pressure-sensitive adhesive, while acting like an anvil to facilitate accurate die cutting or perforating. However, in the wider

"Preventing wastage was always a major aim of the early schemes to introduce linerless technology"

scheme of things, annually dumping billions of tons of spent silicone-coated paper or filmic release liners in holes in the ground is the antithesis of good environmental practice. Even more so when one considers that siliconized glassine and kraft paper liners are made from high-quality wood fibers that are commercially suitable for recycling.

Finat, the label trade organization, supports several European recycling

schemes. They begin with the free collection of spent liner from the converters' premises, and transportation to a repulping plant, using water that contains chemicals to release the silicones from the fibers. A flotation process follows of the type normally used for deinking/cleaning fibers of repulped printed papers. The same process removes the released small silicone particles, resulting in pulp suitable for making new products, such as fine and specialty papers – including release liner and facestocks.

Most siliconized filmic liners are made from polyester (PET) or polypropylene (PP) polymers for many prime-label applications. Spent liners are reground and granulated into plastic raw materials for a wide range of industrial and consumer products, as well as for new silicone film.

The more prominent recycling initiatives include partnerships between Avery Dennison and Morssinkhof Rymoplast for recycling PET liners in Europe; the film and paper recycling schemes in Europe and the USA run by Channeled Resources; paper liner recycling throughout Europe by Cycle4green (C4G) with Lenzing Papier as an Austrian papermaking partner; and the RafCycle scheme for recycling paper and PP liners



ETI'S linerless version of its Cohesio coating line

linerless labels

from UPM Raflatac.

Interestingly, in the US Mitsubishi Polyester Films has developed Reprocess as a sustainable technology for recycling PET liner. It was beta tested as part of Spear's global corporate program named Spear Earth. Release liner makes up about 30 percent of Spear's product. Instead of being landfilled, the new technology allows cradle-to-cradle recycling of spent liner into new grades. Mitsubishi says it hopes Reprocess will eventually become an industry standard.

LINERLESS INITIATIVES

Whether these and similar recycling initiatives will effect linerless usage is a moot point, but we do know where the current impetus is coming from says Yves Lafontaine, VP marketing for ETI Converting in Canada: 'The pressure to adopt linerless technology is definitely coming from the end-users, not the converters. Initially, linerless didn't kick-in because of the limitations on both format sizes and die cut shapes, but that has been overcome.'

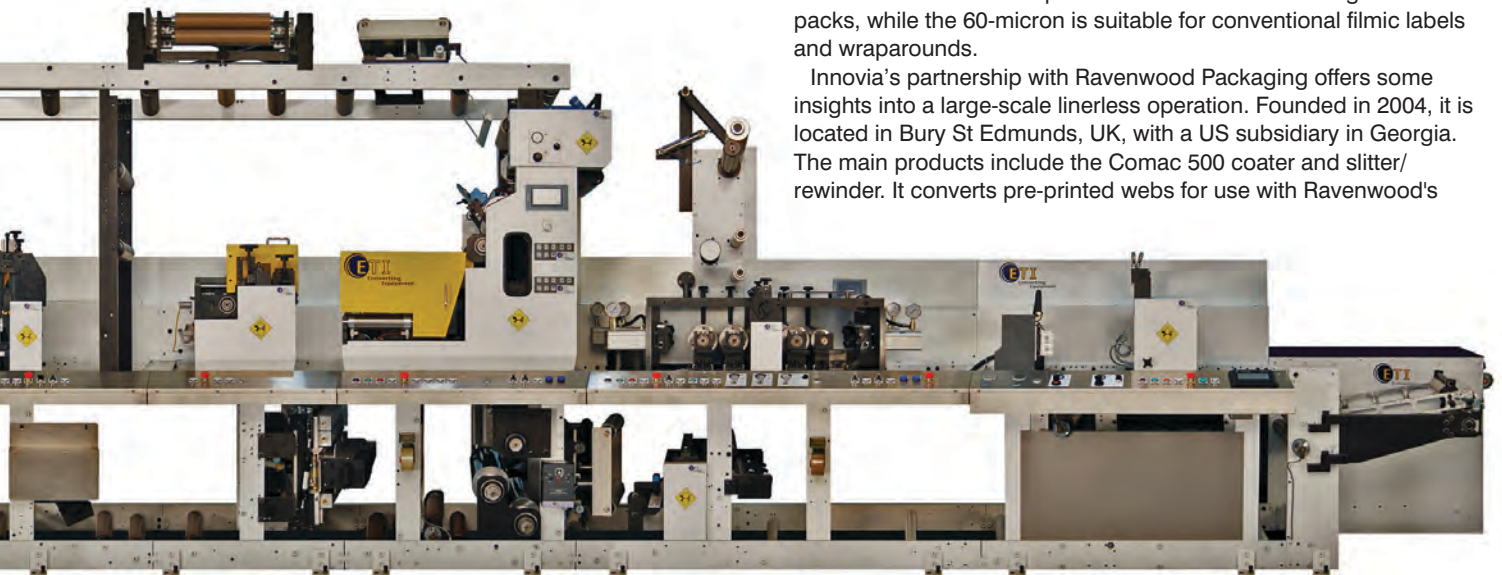
ETI's technology follows several years of developing a linerless version of its established Cohesio coating line, ostensibly developed for converters to manufacture

labelstock in-house. The new linerless model comprises a single unwind (rather than two), UV flexo printing units, conventional die cutting modules, and individual coating units for the water-based silicone and hot-melt adhesive. Printed webs can be paper or biaxially-oriented polypropylene (BOPP) grades.

Lafontaine says that after several years of development, the company is going ahead in full gear to build its linerless business. ETI has already signed non-disclosure contracts with at least 10 major brand owners in North America. Interestingly, when researching the market the company found that roughly 36 percent of labels are applied manually. It is a common practise among international packers of soft fruit, where applying linerless labels by hand in the field eliminate the problem of dealing with unsightly and useless spent liners.

Other manufacturers of converting and finishing equipment have begun to notice the potential for linerless technology. These include Prati, which recently introduced a linerless version of its Saturn slitter/rewinder, complete with die cutting facilities and a large unwind diameter. On the substrate front, Gruppo Irlplast, a maker of coated BOPP films, supplies a 60-micron matte film with guaranteed bar code readability. Innovia Films, a major UK-based manufacturer of BOPP and cellulose label and packaging films, recently introduced Rayoface NB in two linerless grades. The 92-micron version can replace carton board for sleeving food packs, while the 60-micron is suitable for conventional filmic labels and wraparounds.

Innovia's partnership with Ravenwood Packaging offers some insights into a large-scale linerless operation. Founded in 2004, it is located in Bury St Edmunds, UK, with a US subsidiary in Georgia. The main products include the Comac 500 coater and slitter/rewinder. It converts pre-printed webs for use with Ravenwood's





'Linerless labels can be printed on both sides since the release coating and adhesive is applied after the label has been printed'

Nobac linerless label applicators. These include the Nobac 500 sleeve for applying sleeves in five formats, such as C-wrap and full wrap, to packs for chilled foods and convenience meals. It handles up to 180 packs/minute. Users can specify optional thermal transfer overprinters. Its wide-edge presentation of labels to the pack is said to deliver more labels per reel with reduced downtime.

'Linerless is ideal for this type of food packaging,' says Paul Beamish, founder and managing director. 'We also see a growing potential for linerless wraparounds for bottling applications. By targeting brand owners we intend to

move slowly into other areas. Ultimately our business is based on developing specialized applicators, which must be as good as, or better than, conventional in-line applicators, and linking them with a commercially viable in-line coater.'

The Comac 500 uses specific glue heads for applying accurately monitored lines of hot-melt adhesive, from three mm to 25mm, on the reverse side of the label. The small amount of water-based silicone used for coating the front is nitrogen inert, which means deleterious oxygen has been flushed from it. The pre-printed labels are slit and rewound on a three-core turret rewinder. A narrower 300-mm wide version was introduced at a

food trade show in March.

Ravenwood's European customers include Paragon Print & Packaging, based in Spalding in Lincolnshire, it is one of the UK's largest label converters, with specialities that include food packaging. It uses two Comac 500 coaters in its linerless division, using conventional UV flexo presses for printing the facestock. Reflex Labels, another large UK label converter/packager, also uses Ravenwood equipment for linerless labeling of small jars, drinks bottles and chilled food packs.

Generally speaking, the water-based silicone release coating also protects against exposure to UV, and resists moisture and chemicals, which add to

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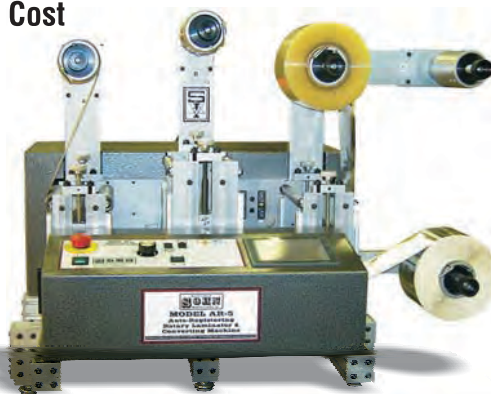
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a label's longevity. Also, linerless labels can be printed on both sides since the release coating and adhesive is applied after the label has been printed. Without the need for matrix waste stripping, flexo presses can usually run faster, while having just a single substrate can aid overall print quality.

PRINT-AND-APPLY GROWTH

One of the fastest growing linerless sectors relate to the various print-and-apply applications. Several systems are available, each boasting high productivity, fast reel changes and a choice of ribbon-based thermal transfer printers from OEM suppliers. The main demand is for linerless pallet labels, autoID labeling, and price-weight labels where measuring devices are included as part of the system. They usually run with MS Windows operating software and the thermal transfer paper or filmic materials can include metalized grades to achieve special effects, perhaps with a corresponding metallic ribbon.

Recent examples include the new TT-PA Evo 150 from Transfer Trade, part of the Italian T-T Trade group. With an emphasis on easy reel handling, the machine runs with reels up to 400mm in diameter, dispensing three times as many labels as a similar size of pressure-sensitive labels. Furthermore the system allows label length changes on the fly. ALtech offers the new Alcode LL print-and-apply machine with an unwind, cutter and thermal transfer printer; applying labels with air or contact methods.

Speeds vary between 20 to 80 labels/min depending on label size.

Tamper Technologies based in Derbyshire, UK, offers linerless technology for its range of tamper-evident labels. Users can apply them onto cardboard cartons, plastic containers and flexible packaging. Once applied the labels leave a clearly visible warning message 'VOID OPENED' for quick detection of attempted theft or attack. 'The increase in roll capacity and reduction of shipping, carriage and storage costs make the linerless label a great option for our distributors and their customers. We are delighted with this product range as it makes sense. It costs less and is good for the environment too,' says Chris Chiles, managing director. He adds that standard and bespoke linerless labels now account for nearly 60 percent of its global tamper-evident business. Current usage includes a variety of industries from logistics and transport, food, retail through to pharmaceutical and asset protection.

The specialized nature of linerless technology, with its requirement



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for dedicated applicators, has led to several licensing arrangements. With protected trademarks and patents, they resemble those in the extended text, leaflet-label applications. An example is the Catchpoint linerless system based on microperforations, now used widely for a variety of prime and print-and-apply applications.

Based near Leeds, in the UK, and with a US subsidiary in New Jersey, Catchpoint's partnerships include Label Aire, makers of vacuum-based systems, and AEW Delford, a global supplier of price-weight machines with variable data overprinting. One of its largest projects aimed at global brand owners involves a partnership with WS Packaging Group, a founding licensee with 17 manufacturing locations in North America and Mexico. Catchpoint also has links with ILTI, an Italian maker of high speed rotary applicators.

At the time of its launch in 2005, Catchpoint claimed its technology would contribute to cost and environmental savings across a broad spectrum of solutions, with no adverse effect on production efficiencies or shelf appeal. Furthermore, creative brand managers could additionally exploit the change to meet consumers' demand for less packaging waste. As the company's publicity points out, no other packaging component wastes over 50 percent of

input materials.

Seven years on it would appear that manufacturers of fast-moving consumer goods are catching up in the name of sustainability. Many have introduced packaging designs with much smaller environmental footprints. A notable example of what is happening in this fast-changing scenario comes from the international drinks giant Diageo. Its Sustainable Packaging Guidelines refers to all aspects of its huge packaging spend. It has the ambitious goal of ensuring 100 percent of its packaging designs are reusable, recyclable or suitable for waste management practices within individual countries by 2015.

Linerless technology would appear to tick many of the sustainability boxes. With improved coating technology and advanced applicator equipment, it could make a big impact in several key prime label sectors, especially food packaging areas. It is also poised to make further inroads into the labeling of glass bottles and jars, while building on existing thermal transfer print-and-apply growth in the logistics, and data labeling sectors. Combined with any expansion of the various spent liner recycling schemes, the latest linerless technology could make a big contribution towards helping self-adhesive labeling clean up its act.

AWARDS UPDATE

LATEST NEWS UPDATE

LABEL INDUSTRY GLOBAL AWARDS 2012 OPEN FOR ENTRIES



Suppliers and converters are invited to submit entries for this year's Label Industry Global Awards. Being held at Labelexpo Americas in September, the prestigious awards recognize

and reward companies and individuals for excellence and best practice.

The four categories open to entries and nominations are: Continuous Innovation Award, New Innovation Award, Converter Award for Sustainability/Environmental Responsibility and the R. Stanton Avery Lifetime Achievement Award, sponsored by Avery Dennison. Last year's winners included Helmut Schreiner (above), Novelprint, EskoArtwork and Kolibri Labels.

Any company can enter these awards, subject to meeting the entry criteria. Submissions must be received by Friday May 18 2012. Short-listed finalists will be announced in June. Full details are available at www.labelawards.com.

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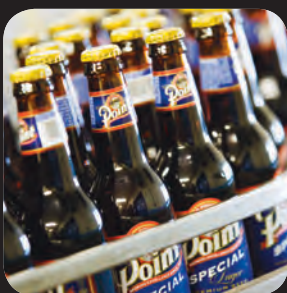
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Managing color in the cloud

THE PANTONELIVE portal allows brand owners to store and share key color assets, making it possible to manage and communicate colors accurately to any supplier around the world. Carol Houghton reports

PantoneLive, a cloud-based color service that provides instant access to essential brand color standards – digitalizing the traditional analog process – was unveiled at a launch event in London. It is the first service under the Pantone Digital Business Unit, a newly created division of X-Rite that combines Pantone's color expertise and X-Rite's color science and technology resources.

IMPORTANCE OF COLOR

'Everyone cares about color,' says Ron Potesky, senior vice president and general manager, Pantone. 'Our reaction to color is almost instant and has a profound impact on the choices we make every day'. Research results presented at the press conference showed that 70 percent of purchases are made in just a five second window and brand color is a key influencer. Interestingly, 97 percent of the consumer sample said they would choose a product behind the first on the shelf if the pack appears discolored; color accounts for some 60 percent of acceptance or rejection of a product. Potesky concluded: 'For consumers, product color and quality go hand in hand'. We have to get the color right first time and every time'.

A NEW SERVICE

Pantone is widely accepted as the definitive color reference library, helping users achieve the same results across different printing processes and substrates. However, varying standards across the globe, substrate restrictions and differences in Pantone-based guidebooks mean it is not always accurate. Over time, this variation can mean that brand colors become unrecognizable. More than a quarter of brand owners surveyed said they 'frequently' encounter inaccurate color and this results in additional costs through the supply chain.

'The growing complexity of the international supply chain, and brands trying to drive down price without sacrificing color control, was an opportunity for X-Rite to reduce the challenge by creating new tools,' said Tom Vacchiano, president and CEO, X-Rite.

Sonia Megert Marshall, vice president, Pantone Digital Business Unit believes the launch of PantoneLive will change how and when decisions regarding color are made. 'Today, expectations are hard to meet; swatches are exchanged, there is a struggle to meet deadlines and so on. But we don't need to do it this way. That is why we developed PantoneLive technology. Brand color now lives in a cloud.'

PantoneLive uses CxF (Color Exchange Format) to hold all the associated color

metadata that needs to be shared, with measurement and verification based on objective spectral data rather than subjective visual evaluations and costly adjustments on press. This profile is then available to all authorized users across the supply chain from designers and printers to ink suppliers and pre-press professionals.

It is estimated that some 80 percent of brand launches already use digital elements including 'virtual' pack design and simulated shelf space. Paul Baker, principal scientist, package development at Procter & Gamble remarked that 'going digital has transformed the way of doing business'. At the same time brands are adopting simpler color palettes,

PHARMACEUTICAL MARKET

In addition to communicating brand identity and quality, Mike Cheetham, CEO at Chesapeake said accurate color also helps in the fight against counterfeiters, as any color variation creates doubt in the consumer's mind and opens the door to counterfeiters. Using PantoneLive on one job, for example, Chesapeake was able to reduce color variation by 84 percent and improve process controls, which led to zero rejections from the print run and 100 percent client approval. PantoneLIVE is creating another positive impact on Chesapeake's business. The company previously stocked as many as 3,000 different inks in its Leicester, U.K. plant and now stores only 537 without reducing color choices.



requiring less inks and minimizing spot colors. Both trends are fully supported by the PantoneLive ecosystem.

PREFERRED PARTNERS

Sun Chemical and EskoArtwork are both recognized as preferred partners in the PantoneLive project. Sun Chemical recently announced that its own SmartColor system has been retired from the market and integrated into PantoneLive.

Felipe Mellado, chief marketing officer for Sun Chemical said, 'Every PantoneLive color request to Sun Chemical will be created using this global platform. Since PantoneLive's color definition is derived from real ink on real substrates with real printing

processes, brand owners can predict from their design concept how their brand colors will reproduce on a wide variety of substrates, from recycled carton board to clear film or white polypropylene.'

Carsten Knudsen, president and CEO, EskoArtwork, explained how the partners' expertise fitted together: 'Pantone brings the color standards and language of color, X-Rite brings measuring devices, Sun brings a common ink format while Esko brings color management and integration to the workflow'.

Esko's Color Engine is the enabling technology which supports the



PantoneLive color management process across the prepress packaging workflow. The combination of PantoneLive spot color profiles with Esko's patented spectral ink model provides accuracy and predictability for spot color simulation.

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a leading supplier of flexographic central impression and rotogravure printing presses, is recognized as the PantoneLIVE technology partner serving the flexible packaging industry. In this capacity, Windmüller & Hölscher will extend the capability of its EASY COL on-press color matching system to incorporate access to the PantoneLIVE ecosystem, allowing converters to reduce press set-up times and assure the quality of important brand colors on press.

PantoneLive is designed as an open system, however, and it is expected that other industry suppliers – including ink companies – will join in the near future.

In terms of pricing, PantoneLive uses a subscription model which requires an annual licence. Costs are different depending on position in the supply chain and how users need to access the system.



THE HEINZ BEANZ BLUE PROJECT

Produced by the UK subsidiary of US-based H.J. Heinz Co., Heinz Beanz are consumed in more than 60 countries worldwide, including Russia and China. Since the early 1940s, the product has been a staple of the British public – every day more than one million cans of Heinz Beanz are consumed in the UK. Paul White, innovations manager, Heinz UK explains; 'As one of the UK's most loved brands, our customers expect consistency.'

Responding to changes in consumer lifestyles, Heinz leveraged its famous 'blue' brand beyond the traditional can label to other packaging formats, including resealable fridge packs and single-portion pack Snap Pots packed in cartons.

A color audit of the Heinz Beanz palette was conducted to identify all the colors currently used to produce the signature blue. It assessed litho for wet glue primary labeling on the can; gravure-printed shrink sleeves and laminated OPP for the primary packaging of Fridge Packs; flexo shrink PP for secondary packaging for cans; as well as litho sleeves for secondary packaging on the Snap Packs.

Consumer tests showed that the biggest color matching challenges were presented by the flexo and gravure printed shrink film and litho printed carton board. Out of date swatches and color books meant the Heinz blue (pantone 7467) was not being matched by the printer – in fact there was a total color difference of 8.9 dE.

The company turned to Pantone and Sun Branding Solutions, a brand lifecycle management agency, to manage the process. Once Heinz had identified its preferred color, PantoneLive provided the closest match in its database and published these standards on-line to all partners in the supply chain. EskoArtwork and Sun Branding validated each stage online, 'stress testing the process' before the color profile was uploaded.

Heinz was delighted by the results, as Nigel Dickie, director of corporate and government affairs for Heinz affirms: 'The digital tools gave us unprecedented control and consistency from different print processes and materials. Across all of our packaging formats we saw a reduction in color variance of 50 percent and saved time by establishing one color target that can be applied to all our Heinz Beanz designs. The results with our Beanz packaging have been so remarkable that we plan to extend PantoneLive to additional product lines, including Heinz soups and Spaghetti Hoops.'



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ART and Sue Yerecic



DAVE and Elaine McDowell



CINDY White and Dan Muenzer



DUANE Wall, Brian Gale and Gary Cooper

Hit the upswing

US converters were advised to invest in 'disruptive' innovation and their employees as the economy continues to recover. Danielle Jerschefske reports

TLMI once again invited Alan Beaulieu, principal at ITR Economics to this year's Annual Converter Meeting.

The signs of recovery are now evident in the US economy said Beaulieu, making it a good time to invest. Segments as diverse as energy, the environment, pet products, food, alcohol and security are all showing a high level of resilience. A key to success in the upswing is staff retention and training, said Beaulieu. 'You must pay to keep the best and brightest in place.'

Beaulieu does not believe that Europe will lead the US into recession this year,

LABELS&LABELING

while China has its own issues with housing, an inflation bubble and the inflexibilities of a government planned economy.

There are downsides, however. Oil prices will continue to rise, says Beaulieu, although there is enough domestic capacity to serve the nation's needs. At the same time, US government debt remains high, with the country now paying 55,000 dollars a second to its creditors.

Other negative trends include a continued increase in the cost of labor, while 38 percent of the labor force

remains on the government payroll.

This system needs to be supported by workers with high skill levels and thus the critical importance of training.

Howard Putnam, former CEO at Southwest Airlines addressed delegates next. His message echoes the recommendations of Beaulieu, 'Value and preparation are key to ascension. Make turbulence work for you. And challenge conventional thinking.'

At Southwest Airlines, the company was able to cut assets while maintaining revenue, driving an increase in its bottom line. He encouraged profit sharing as an



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JOE Marks and Sandy Petersen



EUGENE SINGER Award winners
Walter Zeek, CEO of Kopco Graphics
and Joel Carmany of Consolidated Label

effective way to build team incentives.

For the first time at this event, the Young Leaders Organization hosted an operational improvement discussion led by Brian Hurst, VP of production at Yerecic Label. Hurst shared the Pittsburgh-based converter's platform for reducing waste in set-up. The model system relies on a team of three in each cell, or press area, to keep the press moving effectively without anyone crossing paths during the switch.

The converter used videotaping as way to understand how staff were moving round the press. Clear responsibilities were then defined for each operator, helper and finisher.

Accountability has been embedded in the system. Everyone in production is cross-trained and required to pass a skills test with a perfect score. An incentive structure is based on cell team performance.

Visual cues have been brought into play using green, red and yellow lights on each press. This gives operations management a snapshot of uptime and the ability to tackle any possible issues before productive press time is lost.

The message from this meeting was clear. North America's label industry leaders must ramp up their investment plans, train and incentivize their employees and adopt longer term, disruptive strategies for innovation.

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MICHELLE Garza, Nick Van Alstine, Cinty Whit, Judy Jackson



(L-R) Art Yerecic, TLMI chairman and president of Yerecic Label; Joel Carmany, president of Consolidated Label Company; Lori Campbell, chief of operations, The Label Printers; Craig Moreland, president of Coast Label Company and Walter Zeek, president and CEO of Kopco Graphics

BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

TLMI has announced the winners of the Eugene Singer Award for Management Excellence. One of TLMI's highest honors, this award recognizes excellence in business management measured by a set of growth and profitability ratios through the participation in the TLMI Management Ratio Study.

Fountain Valley, California-based Coast Label Company won in the small company category for the fourth time. Company president Craig Moreland commented: 'I believe that there is more value in the various TLMI competitions and certifications than we as members sometimes acknowledge. After winning the Singer Award for the third time in 2010, I challenged my team to try to achieve what I dubbed the "Triple Crown". I wanted Coast Label Company to become ISO 9001:2008 certified, LIFE certified, and win the Eugene Singer Award – all in the same year.'

Fairfield, Ohio-based Kopco Graphics won in the mid-range company category, defined by sales of six to 14 million dollars. This is also Kopco's fourth TLMI Eugene Singer Award. Aurora, Illinois-based The Label Printers won in the medium company category, defined by sales of 15-35 million dollars. This is The Label Printer's third Eugene Singer Award. Longwood, Florida-based Consolidated Label won in the large company category, defined by sales greater than 35 million dollars. This is Consolidated Label's 10th Eugene Singer Award.

TLMI LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE

TLMI has launched its newly redesigned website at www.tlmi.com. The new site offers direct access to essential information for TLMI members, in addition to news and announcements for the greater North American narrow web industry.

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FTA looks forward

DANIELLE JERSCHEFSKE reports on Flexographic Technology Association's 2012 Annual Forum in Texas



Co-chairmen Randy Butler of Printpack and Bob Mullen of Sun Chemical Corporation led this year's Flexographic Technical Association's Annual Forum, which featured sessions comparing print processes, emerging technologies, becoming profitable in short-runs, interactive technologies, standardization of color specifications and discussions around improving operational efficiencies. The event also hosted the InfoFlex exhibition with over 200 booths, presentation theater, an educational pavilion, a social networking event and more.

Jeff Feltz from Mark Andy looked at how to compete against digital in producing short run jobs, a trend being driven by several forces – the growth of private brands, regionalized promotion, and lean initiatives throughout the supply chain. In recent years, digital technology has been positioned as the only viable solution to economically meet these short run demands, but Feltz pointed out that advances in modern flexo presses now enable converters to produce shorter run lengths more economically than ever before. This in turn is changing the economic breakeven point between new flexo technology and digital.

Paul Lancelle, Eastman Kodak Company looked at extended color gamut (six and seven color) reproduction and asked if the same objectives could be achieved through the use of four color process printing. The presentation included case studies that demonstrated the capabilities of four color process in flexo compared directly to ECG technologies.

Steve Smiley of Vertis Communications

detailed new ISO standards updates that are expected to affect the flexo industry. These standards address issues such as agreement with FIRST (Flexographic Image Reproduction Specifications and Tolerances) objectives, how to properly setup and characterize a flexo press and the requirements to obtain accurate, reproducible readings that will agree with visual evaluations of images and spot colors. The three standards are:

ISO12647-6 Process Control for The Manufacturing of Halftone Color Separation, Proofs and Production Print; ISO3664 Viewing Conditions and, ISO15339: Printing of Digital Data to G7 standards (Part 1).

Esko's Rory Marsoun reviewed the different applications of water-based, solvent and UV inks and ran through a flexo graphics primer discussing issues of dot gain, compensation curves, gray balance, tonal range, ink film thickness, solid ink density, traps, vignettes and more.

Eckart America's Scott Schultz talked about the evolution of metallic and special effect pigments in the packaging industry.

Colleen Larkin-Twomey of California Polytechnic State University discussed interactive engagement with smart-phone-enabled consumers using QR codes, Snap Tags, Track and Trace, and Augmented Reality.

2012 EXCELLENCE IN FLEXOGRAPHY AWARDS

Label converter winners in the Flexographic Technical Association's 2012 Excellence in Flexography Awards included, in the mid-web category MPI Labels of Baltimore, and in narrow web

ASL Print FX, Bay Tech Label, Cal Tape & Label, Cameo Crafts, ColloTYPE Labels, G-3 Enterprises, HAVI Global Solutions, J. Ryan Printers, The Label Company, Labelad, Labeltronix and McDowell Label. In the student category California Polytechnic State University, Clemson University, Gordon Graydon Memorial Secondary School all won awards.

ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE

The Label Printers of Aurora, Illinois earned an honorable mention in the 12th Annual FTA Environmental Excellence Award program. The Label Printers established a 'Go Green, Save Green and Earn Green' program that has kept almost 70 percent of what had previously been solid waste from landfill and saw it either recycled or converted into energy. The label converter is also TLMI L.I.F.E certified.

2012 HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

Alfred K. Bowers, customer solutions manager in the Premedia Technologies Division of RR Donnelly in Menasha, Wisconsin was inducted into the Flexographic Technical Association's 2012 Hall of Fame. He is a standard bearer of FIRST and is considered to be 'the flexography's Walmart connection'. His advocacy for industry wide standards and specifications led him to work with the International Standards Organization and its Walmart Ink Specification Project, which contributed to the development of the retailer's Packaging Scorecard.

The Excellence in Flexography Award, Best of Show, Labels, meanwhile went to Labelad for Southern Comfort Voodoo, Vampire, Zombies. Sean Teufler, Harper Graphic Solutions won a President's Award.

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QUALITY IS ALWAYS IN DEMAND





Russian alcohol brands seek distinction

RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT moves to control alcohol consumption have intensified competition on the shelf, spurring the need for more brand differentiation through innovative label design. Danielle Jerschefske reports

When Russia opened up its market 20 years ago, it catalyzed the creation of one of the world's largest counterfeit markets estimated to be worth 49 billion US dollars compared to the global country average of 21 billion US dollars. The alcohol, tobacco, cosmetics and pharmaceutical markets have been especially hit. Experts estimate that one-third to half of all alcohol sold in Russia is counterfeit.

The country has one of the highest alcohol consumption rates in the world. For this reason, the Russian government has been making legislative moves to reduce this rate while at the same time lowering counterfeit sales and increasing tax revenue. These various government policies related to alcohol also aim to make Russia a global player in product sales as the country looks to raise its profile by exporting more.

In the last few years, most vividly since the establishment of the Federal Service for the Regulation of Alcohol in December 2008, the country has seen visible steps towards state monopolization of alcohol sales. The most recent move has been a bill which will classify beer as alcohol.

Effective in January 2013, the government will ban sales of beer during specific time periods and at outlets like kiosks and airports. With limitations already in place on print and television advertising for alcoholic products, and a similar ban expected for beer, it is only possible to catch the consumer at retail level.

Many brands have disappeared because of this shift. Since 2008 the number of liquor and wine producers has dropped by 40 percent and distributors by 50 percent. All of these factors point towards a need for more infrastructure in the label supply chain to support more value-add production of labels.

CONVERTER/BRAND PERSPECTIVE

Imagency Print in Moscow is one of Russia's leading label converters. It produces labels for cosmetics and perfumes, food, spirits, industrial and other consumer products and pharmaceuticals. The converter embarked on a partnership with Pago in 2009 to bring international brands label and packaging consistency in the Russian market, particularly in Moscow and St. Petersburg which represent 20 percent of the nation's FMCG sales.

Armed with nine printing presses, including a handful of Gallus RCS 330 models equipped for offset combination printing with screen and flexography to add the most shelf impact, the converter produces world class work. One machine is a 16-color all UV, which gives its customers extreme color flexibility and opportunities to apply multiple varnishes for depth and interest. Most recently the converter integrated an in-house designed MIS system to manage daily operations.

Imagency Print CEO, Ivan Maslov and deputy director, Zhanna Suprin explained the complexity of the Russian

vodka market with their customer Oleg Glazunov, brand management director of Zolotaya Manufaktura. 'The recent movements within the government to limit the promotion of alcohol consumption have increased the importance of catching the consumer at the store shelf. With thousands of vodka brands available in the marketplace, it's becoming more and more difficult to create a long-standing brand awareness.'

The increase in government managed outlets is only in the mass market. Zolotaya Manufaktura produces alcoholic products in the premium/super premium categories, sidestepping sales into state-managed outlets to avoid intrusive limitations. It sells four million liters of alcohol products monthly.

Vodka production is a difficult process and to be a successful brand it is not imperative that you have your own production. And while quality is important, in Russia the brand that prevails has the best supply chain

THE ENVIRONMENT

There are no waste management laws in place right now to govern the Russian packaging industry. This could pose new challenges to Russian brands looking for export growth as adherence to new European and international waste management laws and standards will be difficult. Some converters are currently selling their matrix waste to be upcycled into new products, but this is not widespread.



network to navigate sales and distribution across the nine time zones and multiple cities of over one million spread throughout the world's largest country.

Zolotaya Manufaktura sells into 40,000 shops. It values its relationships with distributors in every Russian and CIS region. It supports brands with offices selling direct into the major retail network in all the nation's biggest cities.

Both converter and brand are pleased that Avery Dennison and Artmark have invested in the Moscow distribution center (see L&L1 p42), demonstrating that the supplier partners see long-term value in the market. Imagency is excited about the opportunity to deliver more unique material options to local brands as competition intensifies. Zolotaya is eager to wow consumers and protect their brands' integrity.

Zolotaya's Kalinka brand has made a large investment to export into 50 countries around the world. For this reason the brand owner is interested in the newest label and packaging technologies and in what label styles and designs appeal more in foreign markets.

Suprin says, 'We've traditionally avoided using exclusive materials

because we know how difficult it is to source. If we can get them reliably and are able to bring exclusivity to our clients, they're willing to pay for the differentiation.' When you look at the cost of the majority of vodkas on the shelf with a price point between three

and five US dollars there's room for brands to invest in distinguishing labels that provide counterfeit protection.

VODKA LABEL DESIGN

Uniqua Vodka Design is one of the nation's leading label design firms specializing in vodka and breaking into the wine market by building on this experience. Uniqua designs labels for the market's three top vodka brands.

The design firm stresses that it is not just a creative resource for brands. Dmitry Morozov, chief of creative group, says, 'We hire people from the segment who know the industry inside and out. In this way we can educate our clients on every step in bringing a vodka brand to market – label material and bottle selection, label application and alcohol production.' The design team believes that the key to a brand's success is focusing on one specific market segment. With over 3,500 brands already in the marketplace, honing efforts to reach a particular consumer demographic is the best way to win.

Uniqua works with some beer brands, mostly the international labels looking for an edge. Morozov says, 'Vodka has a three year life cycle, so this is where we see the most interesting innovations. We can see the changes that are happening in the market, particularly as brands try to differentiate. Often the change occurs with a move from wet glue to clear-on-clear PS material.'

Uniqua clients are consulted on the advantages that can be found by choosing pressure sensitive labels for their brand, both by shelf appeal and total applied cost when it comes to labeling efficiencies. The feeling is that the material selection is wider and there's more opportunity for add-value print effects at the design level.

Wine is currently not as heavily legislated as other alcoholic beverages and therefore the market is experiencing some uptake, although there is little



'IF YOU HAVE NO SENSE OF HUMOR THIS VODKA IS NOT FOR YOU'

Russia's Ministry of Health produced a video in 2010 featuring a squirrel going through alcohol withdrawals. The squirrel video was intended to be a humorous way to educate the population on the problems of excessive alcohol consumption. Nearly half of all deaths between ages 15 – 54 in Russia are linked to alcohol. Posted on YouTube the video has become widely popular, reaching four and a half million views.

Zolotaya Manufaktura is a large national brand house that produces a handful of alcohol products for various market segments. Coincidentally, Zolotaya launched its successful Belochka brand of vodka featuring a rabid-looking squirrel on the label shortly after the video was released.



Belochka vodka is described as 'a truly Russian spirit of self-irony that helps people to overcome difficulties by laughter'.

demand at this point for better quality, more impactful labels. The government displayed its support of Russian-made wines by subsidizing a trip for leading producers to attend the London Wine Fair in 2011.

BRAND PROTECTION AND SUCCESS

Brands will take complex steps to protect their equity. With the Belochka vodka label (photo below left), producer Zolotaya used glow in the dark ink as an authentication tactic. Demand for security in labels is huge in Russia. Unique and obvious is what brands are looking for when fighting counterfeit producers.

Uniqua management is extremely interested in interactive packaging, specialty films in small quantities and custom materials that will help its clients build market share. Morozov says, 'The high-end segment has developed quickly and there is a willingness to pay more for material that will enhance the brand.'

It is clear that there is great opportunity to be captured in the Russian label market over the coming years. With premium brands growing quickly, stiffening competition, and Russian government supporting the promotion of national brands globally, the demand for superior labels and international support will increase.



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GREAT ATTENDANCE at Finat Technical Seminar 2012 Barcelona

Finat Technical Seminar looks to the future

MIKE FAIRLEY reports on a technical seminar which focused on the future of the pressure-sensitive industry

With a theme of 'Self-adhesive labels and their future vs alternative technologies: Evolution or Extinction' the recent Finat Technical Seminar in Barcelona attracted around 175 delegates. Presentations ranged from the history of self-adhesive labels to a review of threats and opportunities. A mix of technical, regulatory and market topics were covered, providing an interesting overall balance of subjects.

Held at the Hotel Fira Palace from the March 7-9, the program was aimed at providing a confident outlook to delegates who have been experiencing pressures from the environment and sustainability, from other labeling technologies – such as the growth in shrink sleeve labeling – and from material price increases and a slowing label market in developed economies.

An opening keynote presentation by Sjaak Elmendorp, Avery Dennison, set out an interesting historical overview of the evolution and development of self-adhesive labels, looking at the pioneering work of Stan Avery in the 1930s to milestones in adhesives, face and liner materials, linerless solutions, and the applications and markets for self-adhesive labels today.

In looking at the threats and opportunities for the self-adhesive industry, Corey Reardon of AWA, forecast global label industry growth of three and a half to four percent for the coming year, although the growth figures for the developed markets of Western Europe and North America were more likely to be half of those rates. The highest growth is expected in the fast-emerging markets of China, India, and Latin America.

While glue applied and self-adhesive labels are still by far the largest label sectors globally, shrink sleeve labels have now nevertheless gained a 12 percent market share. 'Challenges

for the pressure-sensitive industry' explained Reardon, 'include the costs of raw materials, competition for polymers, the perception of pressure-sensitive labels as high cost, and the whole area of environment and sustainability.'

Jeroen Van Bauwel of Xeikon presented a review of digital and flexo and how they complement each other, explaining that it was necessary to understand the puzzle and sell solutions rather than just print. The integration of variable print elements and the importance of workflow integration were also emphasized.

The challenges of converting thin films and liners were discussed in some detail by Maldwyn Nicholas Jones of Kocher + Beck. He explained that it was not easy to convert thin films but if the converter gets the parameter right then it can be done successfully, although it was likely to lead to some reduction in press speed. Areas to be addressed included keeping equipment in good condition, periodic inspection of cylinders, the accuracy of dies, die-height adjustment when running and consistency of film thickness. It was proposed that test runs should be made in advance.

Talking about performance labels, and particularly the durability of UV inkjet printed images and UL recognition, Trevor Hinchcliffe, 3M Industrial Adhesives & Tapes, examined performance label applications in terms of cradle-to-grave requirements, printing and converting needs, variable information application, and adhesive performance. Durability requirements, he explained, were resistant to dirt, grease, grime and chemicals. Currently largely printed offline, he felt that UV digital inkjet was ideally placed to meet future demands. He



KURT WALKER president of Finat



MIKE FAIRLEY delivered the keynote presentation



RÜDIGER HAGEDORN of the Consumer Goods Forum



MALDWYN NICHOLAS-Jones of Kocher + Beck

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also reviewed UL Standards and what converters needed to do to obtain UL approval.

Looking at 'the future for label printing' with UV LED curing, David Johnson, Integration Technology Ltd, talked about the advantages of this technology, which offered instant on/off, reduced power consumption, safer wavelength and can be used with heat-sensitive substrates, requires no air extraction and uses no heavy metals.

Johnson told delegates that UV LED was currently a challenge for existing conventional technologies, but was finding increasing interest from the narrow-web digital label and packaging printing sector. Inks, he explained, were readily available and the systems were easy to integrate.

Day two opened with a presentation by Roger Hagedorn of the Consumer Goods Forum about the need to develop a common language on sustainability in the packaging supply chain using existing internationally recognized metrics. The optimum packaging solution was to be neither over-packed nor under-packed. Key sustainable pointers he explained were to favor biodiversity, use sustainably sourced materials, protect water sources, be renewable, avoid fossil fuels and make a low contribution to landfill.

This session was followed by Will Parker of Reflex Labels, probably one of the most environmentally-friendly and sustainable converters in Europe, who outlined all the areas where they had improved and/or made savings through sustainable materials, operations and applications. He concluded with a review of how they were using both linerless and traditional methods of labeling.

Other speakers included Wolfgang Aufmuth of Collano Adhesives who discussed sustainability considerations from the viewpoint of an adhesive manufacturer; Jonathon Sexton, Sun Chemicals, who examined some of the unintended

consequences that arise when looking at ink technology and its environmental footprint, and Mark Macaré, Finat, who provided an update on the Finat release liner recycling program.

The final keynote presentation was by this writer, Mike Fairley, looking at some of the lessons we can learn from the evolution and history of the label industry, from the printing of the early wine, beer, pharma, food and personal care brands over the past 150-200+ years, the on-going demands of brand owners and how the industry has adapted and evolved, as well as how cost, price, downturn and other industry pressures actually stimulate innovation and take the industry forward.

The final part of this presentation set out two industry challenges: How to spread the message about the positive sustainable things that converters are doing worldwide that could benefit the whole industry and, secondly, how the industry needs to join together to provide information on the carbon footprint of the label supply chain that brand owners are starting to demand.

Labelstock suppliers are already working on a carbon footprint for their materials and ink makers are doing the same for inks. Pre-press companies are working on this, press manufacturers have started to do calculations, as well as some UV-curing systems suppliers. Even the MIS companies and the waste management end of the chain have started looking to calculate carbon footprints. Unfortunately, all this is largely being done in isolation from other suppliers in the chain, or without feeding data to the converter that could be used in his calculations. What is perhaps needed now is to set up a pilot project that joins all these elements together. The industry would undoubtedly learn a lot that would take them into a more sustainable future.

All-in-all the Finat Technical Seminar provided an interesting mix of presentations, stimulated thought amongst delegates, and left everyone looking forward to the Finat Congress in June.



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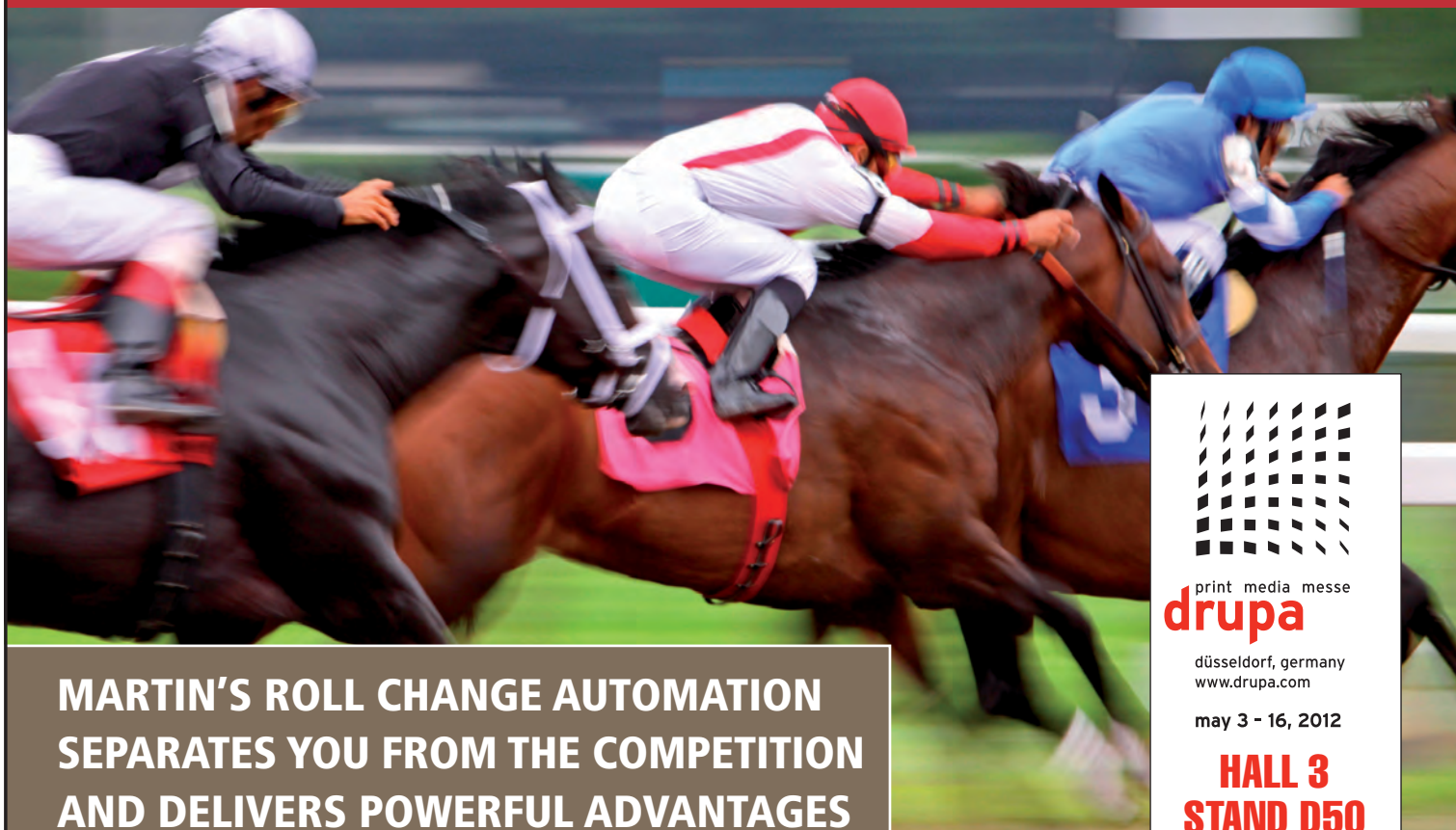
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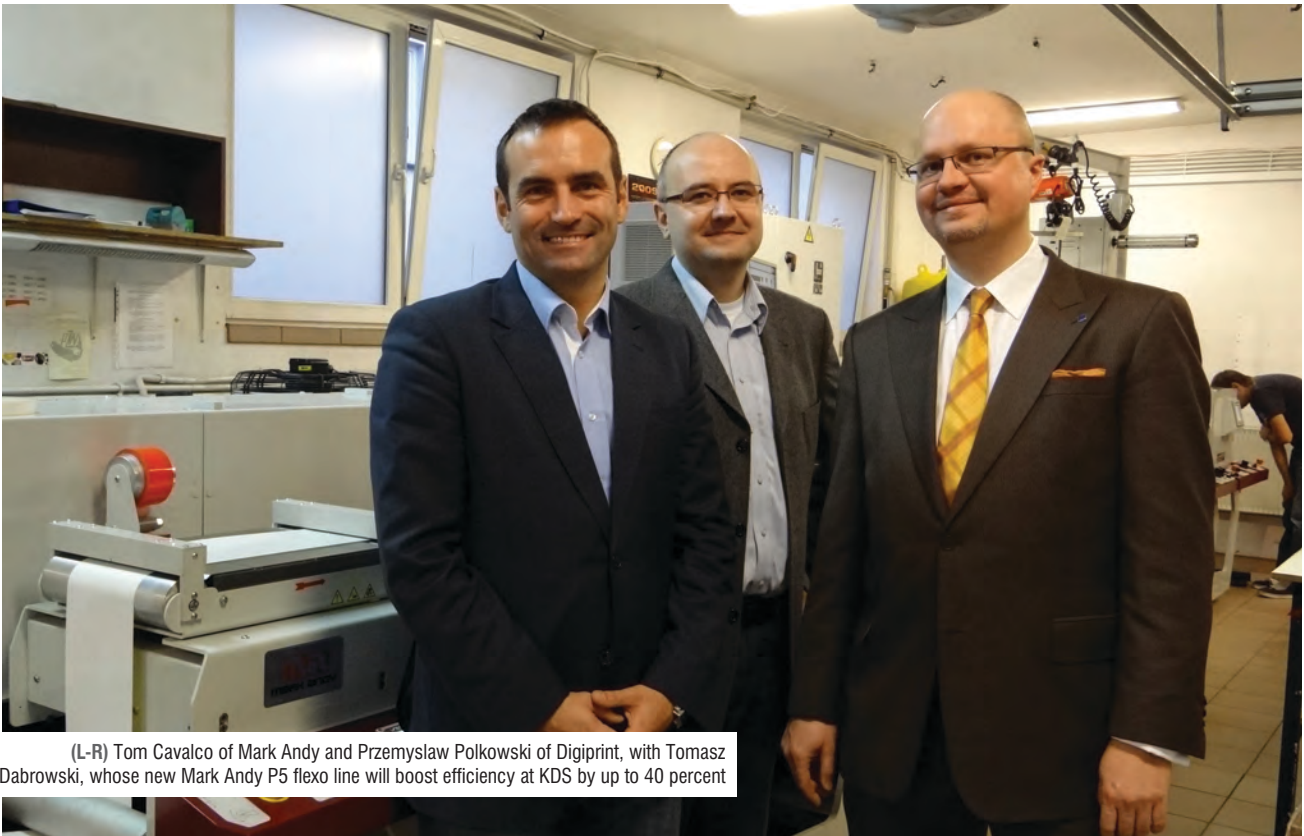


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(L-R) Tom Cavalco of Mark Andy and Przemyslaw Polkowski of Digiprint, with Tomasz Dabrowski, whose new Mark Andy P5 flexo line will boost efficiency at KDS by up to 40 percent

Polish growth supports investment

THE CONTINUED SUCCESS of Poland's economy has encouraged converter KDS to invest in a new Mark Andy P5 and Rotoflex inspection rewinder. Andy Thomas reports

'We anticipate the new Mark Andy P5 will boost our efficiency by 35-40 percent,' says Tomasz Dabrowski, owner of KDS, the label converter based in Sulejowek in Poland. His confident prediction was made after visiting another Mark Andy P5 user, Labelprint in Estonia.

In three years, this small label converting business has equipped itself with two new flexo presses, and importantly, according to Dabrowski, two Rotoflex inspection/rewind machines, which have immediately overcome a production problem KDS had been incurring with tension control.

'We installed the first Rotoflex VSI in 2010 after looking around the market for a machine that suited our type of work. It was the Rotoflex's a/c vector motor that clinched the deal. The machine's servo drive allows us to run with very low tension, and this prevents the perforations from tearing on the tickets we produce.'

A second machine was installed in 2011 – this time a Rotoflex VSI with the latest Genesis control system. The new software adds greater control and the ability to store job information for future recall. Dabrowski is proud that he had the first of the new Genesis machines to be installed in Europe and claims that it offers a complete job change in 30 minutes. With plans afoot to invest in MIS to provide better production data, the Genesis software on the Rotoflex is a key link in improving efficiency at KDS.

With business growing at around 12 percent year on year, there became an obvious need to increase print capacity, and

following negotiations with Mark Andy's European office, and distributor in Poland, Digiprint, a deal was struck to install a rather special P5 press. Specified and built as an exhibition demonstration model for Labelexpo India

and Labelexpo Europe, the 6-color P5, fitted with UV curing and chill rolls, is a perfect fit for KDS' short run work. A laminating unit is on order for installation, but otherwise the press went straight into production the weekend it was delivered to work alongside its 10" stablemate, the 2200, with full interchangeability of print cylinders and anilox rolls.

According to Dabrowski: 'The servo drive gives remarkable registration accuracy. We make ready on plain paper and then splice the correct substrate for the job. Waste is only 25-30 meters per make ready because the web path from unwind to rewind is less than 12 meters.' So good is the registration, that KDS has been able to process 12-color jobs without difficulty by re-passing the printed web through the press. 'Irrespective of speed, the register is always spot on,' he adds, saying: 'we regularly run the P5 at 200 meters/minute.'

Fitted with low volume ink trays with Teflon coating, the P5 is fast to wash up. This is ideal for KDS' work, which typically is 500-2000 linear meters, and mostly 4-color process plus varnish, or four process, one special and a varnish. It is work that Dabrowski sees as well suited to the P5 flexo line.

'I do not see digital as an industrial process yet – it has too many variations in its technology. For short runs, especially



KDS' second Rotoflex VSI has the new Genesis system for greater control and job recall for repeat work

'Two Rotoflex inspection/rewind machines have helped KDS overcome a production problem'

on expensive substrates, the P5 still performs better,' explains Dabrowski.

Currently, KDS' business is split 35 percent filmic: 65 percent paper substrates, with the former continuing to grow. Markets served are mostly the food industry, where KDS has seen demand pick up in the recession, with more food being purchased for home consumption. The company is also moving into peel-off labels and has been experimenting with different weights of varnish to lower the power of the adhesive, to make for easier peeling. In addition, the Mark Andy 2200 press is fitted with the company's Gizmo unit for peel off labels production, which is an area KDS is keen to develop.

Most recently, KDS has installed an EskoArtwork CDI platemaker with HD module that offers 4000 dpi. The Mark Andy P5 is approved by Esko for HD flexo production, which allows KDS to offer very high quality on low quantities, at competitive prices. 'I see this as a good sales tool, and as an insurance against rampant price cutting,' says Dabrowski.

Looking ahead, he sees growth in multi-page booklet work, and Braille printing on lightweight cartons, for which he will add a screen cassette unit. The company currently produces cinema and transit tickets on 250-gsm card, and it intends to grow this sector of business, along with its export trade, which is currently small. In its second factory, KDS manufactures plain labels and thermal transfer ribbons for barcode printers. A staff of 70 generated a four million euro turnover in 2011, but Dabrowski is keen not to grow too large, believing the flexibility of a smaller unit offers better security against market fluctuation.

LABELS&LABELING

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

DOMINO SETS SIGHTS ON EMERGING MARKETS

Domino Printing Sciences, a global manufacturer of coders, lasers, printers and printing equipment, is planning to continue its growth, after its 33rd consecutive year of increasing sales in 2011.

Sales were up five percent from last year, at a record 314.1 million pounds, while pre-tax profit was also a record 59.5 million pounds.

Operations in the developing markets of Europe, in the Middle East, Africa and Asia all reported strong growth. Despite good growth in the UK and Germany, sales in other parts of Europe and North America were below last year's levels.

Looking to the future, Domino said it has plans to grow its operations in the emerging markets of India and China in order to match growing market requirements, as well as overhaul its UK operations.

Chairman Peter Byrom said: 'I am pleased to report that the group has achieved record annual sales of 314.1 million pounds, an increase of five percent. Annual underlying pre-tax profits of 59.5 million pounds were also a record. Net cash flow from operating activities before taxation was 51.1 million pounds.

'The board has approved plans for the expansion of our manufacturing facilities in both China and India to meet growing market requirements. The manufacturing facilities in Cambridge, UK, are close to capacity and a planning application has been made to build a new factory adjacent the existing facility at Bar Hill. All these investments are expected to be met from the group's own cash resources and existing debt facilities.'

Domino's headquarters in Cambridge, UK

ESKOARTWORK APPOINTS ASIA PACIFIC VP

Industry veteran Hoshi Deboo has been appointed as EskoArtwork vice president for Asia Pacific. He will take over from Jean-Pierre De Moor to spearhead growth initiatives in the region (excluding China).

Carsten Knudsen, EskoArtwork CEO, said: 'Hoshi brings a wealth of diverse executive talent and experience to this role. I am pleased to welcome him to our team as we continue to drive growth and profitability in the Asia Pacific region. As this dynamic market continues to rapidly evolve, EskoArtwork is perfectly positioned to help customers make the most of developing opportunities. Central to that ability is an assured delivery of service via an educated and cohesive team that Hoshi is well-suited to lead.'

Deboo added: 'I am excited to be joining the EskoArtwork team. EskoArtwork brings market-leading solutions to the printing, publishing and packaging industries and is committed to developing new services and solutions that help customers meet their individual market and end user needs. There is a huge opportunity for growth of this business in the Asian market, and I am looking forward to transforming those growth opportunities into reality.'

Deboo joins EskoArtwork from United Fiber Systems, where he was acting chief executive officer and executive director charged with restructuring the company and bringing in a major investor. Deboo has a BS in mechanical engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, and an MS in industrial and systems engineering from the Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago. He also speaks four Asian languages and has a wide network of US and Asia Pacific contacts.

LOPAREX INVESTS IN EUROPE

Loparex Group is investing significantly in its European operation for release liner production as part of an ongoing program of investments to enhance the group's offering to the global release liner market.

The Apeldoorn production facility in the Netherlands will undergo an extensive capacity and capability expansion – including installation of a new, high-speed silicone coating line, upgrades to existing silicone coating lines and the poly-coating extrusion line. The expansion – to be completed by the third quarter of this year – will complement Loparex' existing manufacturing facilities in North America, China, India and Thailand.

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GROUP MANAGING DIRECTOR STEVE WALKER (left) watches flexographic machine manager, Nylle Rosendale, adjust set up the company's latest MPS EF 410

Moving into film

WATERSHED PACKAGING has diversified from labels into flexible packaging with the installation of new MPS presses and a range of finishing kit. Andy Thomas reports

Consistency and consolidation could easily be the by-words for Yorkshire-based Watershed Packaging. Since its inception in 1993, the company has been led by owner, John Waters, from its early days as a supplier of packaging consumables to one of the UK's leading label converters, and most recently, a showcase for MPS press technology. Today, the company operates from three sites: Leeds, which is still headquarters; Blackwood (Wales); and Beverley, also in Yorkshire.

To understand the reason behind the company's success, which has seen annual sales double in the four years since 2007, one has only to quiz the energetic management team. 'We run a tight operation and are all very much hands-on,' explains group managing director, Stephen Walker. 'The key to success is specialization, both in the skills you have and the work you do,' he adds.

Anna Wood, group sales director, takes up this point: 'We're a very sales driven organization and have the capacity to secure large orders with our team. Our recruitment policy is to secure the right sales people, even from outside the industry, because we believe we can always teach them about print.' Her words are brought to life by the recent promotion of the company's sales manager to sales director, and the appointment of a new production manager.

But progress has not always been so rapid and, as Walker points out, various acquisitions over the years have done much to enrich Watershed's business experience, and refine its expertise. In 1996 the company bought Logo Tapes, a supplier in Wales that added capacity to the packaging supplies department, and then in 1998,

it acquired Ace Printing, based in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, which added the capacity of two flexo labels presses, and marked the company's first tentative step in printing.

Six years on, and by then confident of its capability in print production, 2004 saw the installation of Watershed's first new press, following a visit to that year's Labelexpo in Brussels. Steve Walker explains: 'We set out to look at slitter/rewinders, and came home having ordered a press! Even the choice was not straightforward. We had decided on one manufacturer's press before seeing a demonstration by MPS – and that last minute change of heart has been fundamental to our growth and success in the intervening years.'

The press ordered was a 7-color EF 330, fitted with delam/relam and chill drums to allow the production of unsupported filmic substrates, and according to Walker: 'It sold itself with its flexibility,



SAMPLES of work produced on Watershed's three MPS lines

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

CCL REPORTS PROFIT INCREASE

CCL, the Toronto-based label converting group, has reported full-year sales of 1.3bn CA dollars (805m pounds) for 2011, up 6.4 percent on 2010. EBITDA profit figures rose 8.8 percent to 239m CA dollars. In the figures, sales for the group's CCL Label division passed one billion CA dollars for the first time.

DIC ACQUIRES PACIFIC INKS

Sun Chemical's parent company, DIC, has strengthened its packaging inks business in the Asia-Pacific region. The wholly owned Singapore-based subsidiary DIC Asia Pacific Pte has reached an agreement to take over all business of Pacific Ink Limited of New Zealand.

SPINNAKER FORMS ESOP PLAN

Spinnaker Coating, a manufacturer of adhesive coated papers and films, has become an S Corporation ESOP, effective February 1, 2012. In the transaction, prior investors sold 100 percent of their ownership interest to a newly created Employee Stock Ownership Trust, allowing current and future employees to gain a beneficial ownership interest in the company without any personal investment. Effectively, says the company, the ESOP is a qualified retirement plan which, based on company performance, could generate 'significant' retirement benefits for Spinnaker's approximately 250 employee owners.

SMARTRAC REBRANDS

Smartrac, a manufacturer of RFID transponders and inlays, has launched group-wide branding activities, which sees recently-acquired KSW Microtec change its name to Smartrac Technology Dresden. The initiative will include the integration of UPM RFID into the Smartrac Group upon completion of the acquisition.

TMI GROUP ACQUIRES FIBRO SYSTEM

The TMI Group of Companies, a manufacturer of testing instrumentation, has acquired Fibro System, a developer of quality control systems based in Stockholm, Sweden.

NEENAH PURCHASES WAUSAU'S PREMIUM BRANDS

Neenah Paper has acquired the branded premium paper portion of Wausau's Fine Paper division. 'The acquisition of Wausau brands strengthens the breadth of our existing Fine Paper business with added scale in the marketplace, prospects for growth in new channels such as retail, and the opportunity to provide our customers with better service,' said Julie Schertell, president, Neenah Fine Paper.



WATERSHED PACKAGING'S founding owner John Waters and group sales director Anna Wood, with Nick Tyrer of MPS Systems UK Ltd

which suited our requirements perfectly, and its operator-friendly design.' The press was installed in the company's new green field facility in Leeds, and in 2006, was joined by a second MPS press, this time a 7-color EP 330 of similar specification, but with the added advantage of being able to run flexo or screen in all print heads.

As business boomed and the MPS lines were kept fully loaded, the company acquired Aurora Colors in 2008 to grow its business, but by now the market was beginning to slacken, and Anna Wood began to look elsewhere for business. 'We saw labels as a saturated market where profits were determined by service and quality – and while we knew we offered both, saw no sense in making further investments in new technology to serve a stagnating market.'

With label run lengths declining, but demand for flexible packaging on the rise, Watershed invested in a third MPS line, which was installed in 2011. Another EF 410, but fitted with Automatic Print Control (APC), which reduces make-ready time, stores job data for repeat work, and reduces waste, the new MPS 'just eats work,' according to Steve Walker, who claims to have it running regularly at 180 m/min in perfect register. This is helping to grow the flexible packaging element of the company's output.

With its eyes on the shrink sleeve market, Watershed has also invested in a Freschi Tubolatrice sleeving machine. When commissioned, it will be the first of its kind in the UK, and typifies the company's policy of continual investment, which has also seen a Bar Graphic Elite rewinder installed. Designed to run film, it has servo drive and a dual rewind, and has boosted productivity in the finishing department.

By the time this magazine is published, Watershed will have taken delivery of its fourth MPS line – this time a duplicate EF 410 of the 2011 machine, both of which use sleeve technology and enjoy the new shorter web path design that was introduced at Labelexpo in Brussels last year.

Praised for their reliability, the MPS lines have been fundamental to Watershed's success. 'We have budgeted 1.8 million pounds for presses in 2012,' adds Walker, hinting at future investment. 'We always buy quality, even if it costs more, and believe in preventative maintenance, because you cannot put a price on reliability,' he concludes.

For Anna Wood and her sales team the future looks bright, with a decision to scale back on self-adhesive label volumes in favor of new and more profitable market opportunities in sleeves and linerless labels, as well as serving the rising demand for sachets.

Currently a staff group of 70 generates over eight million pounds turnover a year, and with the proposed move to an enlarged facility due in 2012, Watershed seems destined to continue on its path to success.



SAMPLES of work produced on Watershed's three MPS lines



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Cloud color control

AN INTERNET-BASED color quality control system allows converters to remotely monitor their print output to international standards, writes Andy Thomas

Sheetfed converters can now remotely monitor daily print output to ensure it meets international industry standards such as ISO and G7 on any workstation via a local intranet or an HTML Internet server.

InkZone Report quality control software from Digital Information supports X-Rite Intellitrax/Easytrax and Techkon Spectrojet/SpectroDrive scanning instruments, as well as the company's own InkZone Move system. It gives authorized users 24/7 worldwide access to information on the stability of their color printouts, allowing them to verify color value positioning within defined tolerances.

The system takes measured densitometrical and spectrophotometrical values

and stores them in an SQL database. InkZone Report then compiles HTML structured production protocols for single sheets, as well as for whole print jobs, based on these data files.

With the click of a mouse, the desired report can be selected and viewed on an unlimited number of workstations running a standard web browser.

InkZone Report works with CMYK and spot colors and compares job target values (defined values) against the actual measured values of the solids (Lab and Delta E), dot gain, mid-tone spread and print substrate. The scanned color values are converted into HTML structure and displayed

onscreen as graphic diagrams. Values lying outside of the defined margins can be easily identified on these diagrams and the user can immediately see the scanned color information as numerical values.

Sample data sets out of InkZone Report are available at www.digiinfo.com/products/inkzone/report.

Digital Information was founded in 1990 and specializes in closed-loop technology products. InkZone, launched by the company in 2001, has enabled hundreds of printers to integrate their existing and new presses into digital networks. Preproof is the company's double-sided proof system.

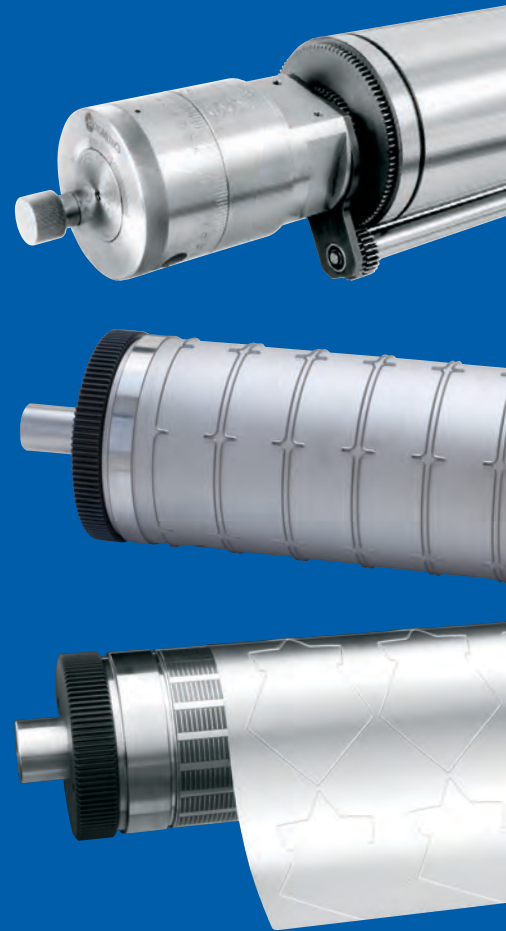


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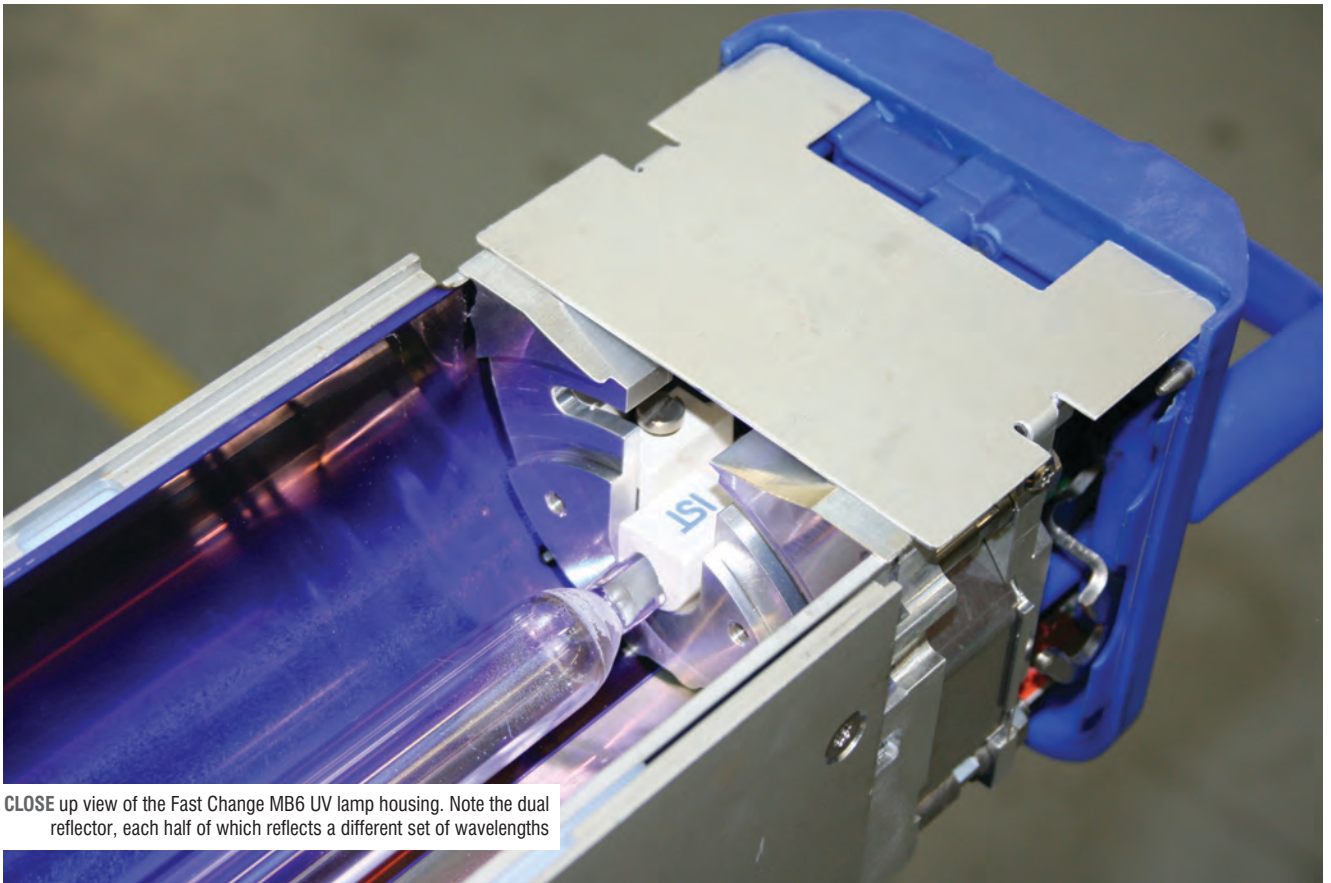
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CLOSE up view of the Fast Change MB6 UV lamp housing. Note the dual reflector, each half of which reflects a different set of wavelengths

New lamps for old

USING A NEW REFLECTOR DESIGN, IST has managed to squeeze 200W/cm curing power out of a 120W/cm lamp. Andy Thomas reports on the launch of the MB6

IST has developed its most energy efficient UV lamp system to date. Unveiled at the company's 'UV Day' at its research and production facility in Stuttgart, Germany, the new generation MBS-6 outputs 120W/cm but has the same curing power as current generation 160 and 200 W/cm lamps.

IST calculates that for a press with eight printing units and a 450mm lamp length operating for 3,000 hours (two shifts) a year, potential savings reach 40 percent compared to its existing 200 W/cm system and 20 percent compared to a 160 W/cm system. Carbon emissions are reduced by some 6,000kg against a 200 W/cm system and over 3,000kg against a 160 W/cm system.

At the heart of the MB6 is IST's new Duo Reflector Geometry, a 'split' reflector design which combines the company's existing URS and URS-A reflectors to individually reflect longer and shorter wavelengths.

Reducing lamp output lowers its temperature and this has also allowed IST to redesign the internal components. Requirements both for exhaust air and cooling air flow to the UV unit are reduced, which in turn reduces contamination of the

lamp and reflector and the time required to clean the lamp. There is also reduced heat stress on the UV lamp during ignition and in stand-by mode.

All the components of the UV curing unit can be accessed and changed without the use of tools – an FLC (Fast Lamp Change) bulb can be changed in seconds. When the MBS quick change cassette is inserted in the press all supply connections couple automatically.

The MB6 has a new rotary shutter design powered by an independent electric motor with a battery backup, so if the press pneumatics fail the shutter will always rotate into place, protecting the web from heat damage.

MBS-6 UV units are delivered and prepared for UV measurement using the portable UMS-2 UV measurement device, which connects via a dedicated cable port.

The new lamp system is complemented by IST's new ELC electronic power supply unit, which allow stepless control of the UV lamp. The units can be stacked, greatly reducing the space required for separate power cabinets, and additional units are connected via a single cable.

VALIDATION

The IST MBS-6 system has been independently certified as energy efficient by the German Professional Association for Printing and Paper Processing (DGUV), which is the testing and certification body of the statutory accident insurance and prevention institution in Germany. The system has also received the DGUV test signet (formerly GS signet) which certifies the product's safety – claimed a world first for this class of product.

MB6 users will see a new 'e3' (energy efficient equipment) label on their lamp housings, which signifies a more energy UV efficient system compared to the previous generation MB5.

All components of the UV lamp and power system are manufactured in-house by IST and its subsidiary companies on one integrated site.



(L-R) Tim Fiedler (X-label), Karl-Friedrich Michel (X-label), Knut Schulzke (Oscar Mahl) and Erwin-Oscar Mahl (Oscar Mahl GmbH)

IN PRACTICE

Two German converters were present at the press launch of the MBS-6 to talk about their practical experiences with IST's latest UV curing systems.

Oscar Mahl is a third generation family-owned firm with 80 employees and three divisions: adhesive labels, web offset (business forms) and sheetfed offset. Labels

is the fastest growing part of Oscar Mahl's product mix, servicing a wide range of medium-sized businesses in sectors from direct contact food labels to cosmetics, chemicals and logistics.

The company's first experience of IST's UV curing system came with its purchase of two Codimag offset presses, a Viva 340 and Viva 440. CEO Erwin Oscar Mahl then took the

existing 160 W/cm lamps off his Gallus EM280 flexo press and replaced them with a 120 W/cm MBS-6 lamp system.

The converter was already experiencing greatly increased energy costs – rising by more than 50 percent between 2002-2011. 'This made it welcome to reduce the lamp output to 120 W/cm,' says Erwin Oscar Mahl. 'We got identical drying results and production speed compared to a system with 160 W/cm lamp output and a significant reduction in energy costs. In addition IST's service was first class.'

In addition, said Oscar Mahl, the reduced thermal load on the lamps had led to a reduction in exhaust air, a cost reduction over the whole system and reduced contamination of the lamp and reflector. 'We noted extended lamp life of approximately three times and extended reflector life, approximately four times. It is a reliable, trouble free system which means a reduction in machine downtime and there is easy maintenance of the UV lamps thanks to quick exchange-ability. This offers significant

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X-Label is one of Germany's leading converters. Founded in 1991, it has grown fast by acquisition to a 123m euro operation, projected to grow to 150m euros by 2013. The company runs a wide array of print and coating processes on an equally wide range of substrates. Its major end user markets are home and personal care, premium beverages and food.

The company gave a case study of the energy reduction experienced after installation of an IST Electronic Lamp Control (ELC), with 10 140W lamps installed on a 330mm wide Gallus EM280 operating over 6,000 hours a year (three shifts plus overtime). Production uptime was 70 percent with 30 percent for machine makeready, maintenance, washup etc. The result was a reduction in energy usage of 12.5 percent.

'We also noted increased productivity with the new IST URS reflectors – approximately four times higher reflector life,' said X-Label CEO Tim Fiedler. 'Reduced energy consumption is beneficial for the service life of wear parts too. For example using the UV lamp with ELC there is reduced stress for the UV lamp during ignition and in



stand-by mode.'

In terms of productivity, Fast Lamp Change has had a significant impact: 'We can change a lamp within a single minute, without disconnection of cables and removing of covers, which gives us time savings of 15-20 minutes per lamp, and so we are quicker back into

production. There is also easier cleaning of UV lamps and reflectors.'

It is clear that the new MB6 UV lamp – using a simple but effective design concept – takes the labels industry a major step forward in finding ways to minimize energy costs and reduce its carbon footprint.

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INTERCOAT

Inkjet offers new CTP approach

A NEW SYSTEM allows the black mask layer in flexo CTP to be applied by inkjet. Andy Thomas reports

Black mask ablation has become the dominant way of imaging digital flexographic and letterpress plates. The plate is pre-coated with a black layer which is burned away (ablated) in the image areas by a laser, followed by conventional plate exposure and processing.

But at Labelexpo Europe a start-up company called DigiFlex demonstrated a new approach which uses a high definition inkjet to print the black mask directly onto a standard flexo, letterpress or analog dry-offset plate.

There are three main elements to consider when using inkjet ink as a mask to prevent UV exposure light from reaching the plate:

- Optical density of the ink in the UV range (over 4.5)
- Smooth operation of the print-head, eliminating any nozzle clogging or misdirection of the droplet
- High print quality on top of any non-porous flexo plate, eliminating any ink clustering or bleeding

The desired optical density is achieved by adding UV absorbent elements to the ink in order to ensure high UV light blocking. Since no solid particles are used in the ink formulation, there is no source for nozzle clogging, and DigiFlex says smooth jetting 'is ensured throughout the system's lifetime'.

The main obstacle preventing earlier pioneers from reaching the high print quality required to print a negative mask on top of the photo-polymeric plate was that inkjet ink is very dilute and non-viscous. Jetting it on top of a non-porous substrate often caused print quality failures.

DigiFlex overcame this difficulty by developing its own unique bi-component reactive ink approach.

The flexo plate is coated with a special primer layer which contains a reactant 'A'. The ink, jetted on top of the plate contains a reactant 'B'. When the ink droplet hits the plate surface, chemical reactants 'A' and 'B' both react instantaneously to cause the gelation of the ink droplet. The resulting highly viscous ink droplet causes no print quality deterioration and behaves almost like a conventional offset ink. This mechanism ensures that the tiny ink droplet forms a minimal dot on top of the flexo

plate, eliminating any ink spreading.

The DigiFlex system uses an advanced inkjet unit which jets ink droplets of 3.5 pL at 2880 dpi resolution. Combined with a very accurate plate feeding table, this system achieves 180 lpi quality on the plate.

So how does it work? A photopolymeric plate is coated with a special thin coating via a lamination process. This process transfers the thin coating layer from a substrate onto the plate. The plate is then introduced into the system, and the RIPped separations are printed on top of the plate. The ink is dried in-line and the plate comes out of the machine. Printing speeds are from one m2/hour up to a possible two m2/hour. Once the plate mask is ready, the standard processes of exposure, wash-out, dry-out and development are performed.

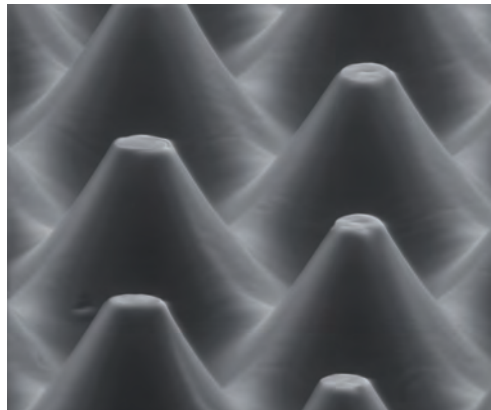
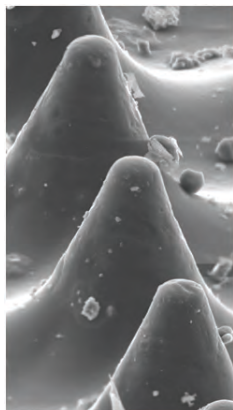
THE BENEFITS

According to Dr. Moshe Frenkel, founder and CTO, DigiFlex, there are many benefits to the process.

Most importantly, no oxygen reaches the plate during the curing process. Exposing the plate to UV light in the presence of oxygen at the top of the plate causes a round-top dot to form, and this shape can introduce stability problems during printing. A flat-topped dot shape ensures instantaneous set-up since the pressure on the plate has almost no effect on dot gain. 'Using the DigiFlex inkjet flexo CtP with its bi-component ink technology, a flexo plate with flat-topped dots is produced directly, enabling fast set-up time, with no dot gain,' says Dr Frenkel.

Any analog plate can be used, including water washable, solvent washable, flexographic, letterpress or dry offset.

ROUND-TOPPED dots (left) v. Flat-topped dots (right)



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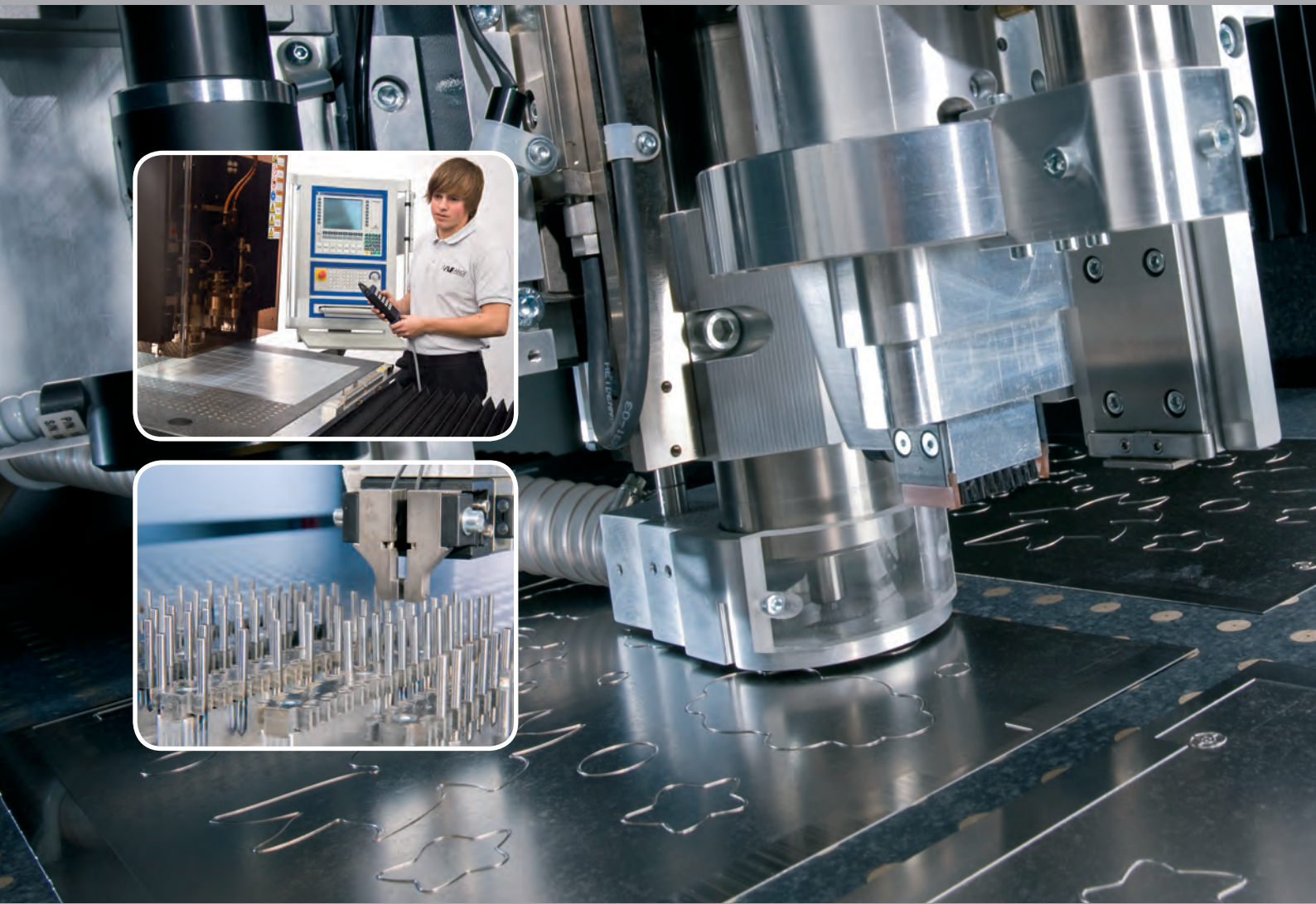
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Offset launch

A NEW OFFSET PRESS from Nuova Gidue was the star of the company's recent Open House held at its manufacturing base in Florence, Italy.
Andy Thomas reports



THE GIDUE CUBE unit unites the new removable mini-cassette with the existing Xpaand inking system

Nuova Gidue has unveiled a new offset press design during an Open House at its manufacturing base in Florence, Italy.

The M7 Xpannd offset press line features the company's new lightweight 'mini-cassettes' for different repeat lengths which can be exchanged quickly and easily using a cart + rail system. The offset mini-cassettes are stored next to the press in an area Gidue calls 'The Organizer'.

During the Open Day a complete changeover of four cassettes was carried out in 90 seconds, showing the efficiency of Gidue's easy access 'Offset Cube' Lean working layout. A short web path helps reduce waste during setup.

'Flower' flexo units and screen units use the same Universal cart + rail system, and can be positioned at any point in the press. These process heads are also stored in the Organizer in front of the press: a total of eight mini-cassettes and process heads can be held opposite each print unit. Additional process units available for the press include gravure units, rotary

and flat bed embossing units, and inkjet numbering station. The dies are also moved to the press on the universal cart + rail system and stored in the Organizer.

The M7 press incorporates what Gidue calls 'Digital Offset' technology. This uses an HD Camera for each print station in combination with multiple servo-motors to measure and automatically adjust the register and ink density using specific 'master' marks. Digital Offset performs press set up in few meters without operator intervention, and maintains constant print and register quality at any speed.

For handling heat sensitive substrates there are chill drums on each print unit, and the servo-driven inking rollers are chilled for temperature control.

Federico d'Annunzio, managing director of Nuova Gidue says he decided against the current trend for a variable sleeve press design, despite the fact that the company had already developed such a system for its Leonardo offset press back in 2003.

'Firstly, offset needs heavy duty pressures and especially on wine label papers and carton a lot of

printing pressure is required. A double frame hard steel cassette can stand high printing pressure without any deformation, keeping excellent printing quality for many years. Hollow printing sleeves can show quality inaccuracy, unless fully in metal. But this increases the weight of the sleeve dramatically, making it heavy to handle.'

D'Annunzio argues that his mini-cassettes have no moving parts which require maintenance. 'Offset printing sleeves need sliding mechanical elements in the print unit to allow the format change. These are elements of mechanical weakness and need constant maintenance, to keep the same print quality during the years.'

In terms of logistics, d'Annunzio says that with a variable sleeve press, two offset metal sleeves have to be loaded and unloaded per each print station (blanket and plate cylinders). This means loading and unloading on at least four print units probably three to four times a day. 'The Mini Cassette instead can be literally moved "with one finger", at a convenient height, and it is loaded and unloaded with simple, light and fast operations. No physical effort or handling



THE offset mini-cassettes are moved on a universal cart between the Organizer area next to the press and the Xpaand inking unit. The complete offset unit can also be exchanged with any other process unit on a modular universal platform.



THE MASTER M5 combination flexo press. Note the Print Tutor camera system on print unit closeup. This controls print pressure as well as register



A MULTI-PAGE LABEL was produced from a single web on the Combat M3 press



risk from the operator is needed.'

The Open Day showcased Kocher & Beck's aluminum print cylinders where the biggest sized 24in cylinder weighs no more than eight kg. In terms of cost, the mini-cassette costs around 30-40 percent more than a double set of metal sleeves.

The M7 Xpaand press has been designed with a small footprint, so seven platforms and three dies occupy less than eight meters.

The press incorporates features developed for Gidue's flexo press lines including the 'Snowball' matrix stripping unit, which keeps the matrix removal roll in constant contact with the stripping unit, moving horizontally as the matrix roll increases in size. This allows the press to run at full speed even on jobs with complex waste stripping profiles. The full rated speed of the M7 Xpaand is up to 150m/min in offset and flexo mode.

The press line is available in widths of 370mm, 430mm, 530mm and 630mm. A special variant, the LTO 530-630 is dedicated to packaging, lottery ticket and heavy duty carton production.

FULLY LOADED FLEXO

Open house visitors also saw a fully loaded Gidue Master M5 'Digital Flexo' press with the 'Print Tutor' system which allowed the press to be set up with 14-16 meters waste over each day of the Open House.

The system uses cameras to read density, register and pressure, then multiple servos dynamically adjust both print pressure and register during the run. One camera reads registration marks printed on the narrow strip of waste on the edge of the roll, and automatically adjusts length and cross register. A second camera incorporates pattern recognition algorithms – as seen on traffic cameras – which constantly read the number of pixels on a printed patch. If print pressure is too high, the patch expands, telling Print Tutor system to reduce the pressure. If the patch shrinks, print pressure is increased.

The press was shown printing at speeds up to 150 m/min running with the Snowball matrix waste removal system. There was no print waste associated with stopping and starting the press.

'Our aim in all our machines is digital control of all print processes to eliminate or reduce the amount of operator intervention by measuring and controlling print pressure, register and density,' said Federico d'Annunzio. 'This means the operator can be doing other useful tasks such as preparing the next job and finding ways to become more efficient. With this technology we can compete with digital on short runs.'

The third press on show was an 8-unit M3 Combat, demonstrated with in-line multi-page label/coupon conversion. The press comes as standard with Gidue's Print Tutor for automatic control of print pressure, register and ink density. Die cutting pressure is also controlled digitally. All these parameters can be stored for when the job is run again.

It is also possible to fit the press with a semi-rotary die cutting unit with a single cylinder, which allows the press to match the set-up times of digital presses, says Gidue.

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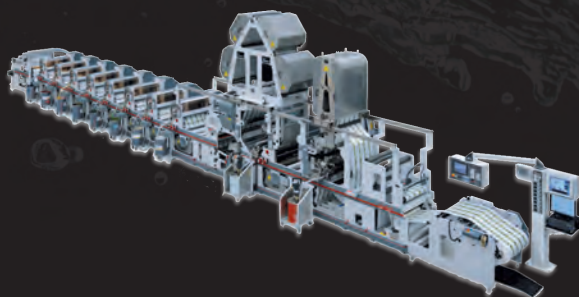
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(L-R): Sander Lenten, managing director, IGT Testprint Research and Andries Slagter, Comprint with the Laser-GT

Niche print

AT THE BACK of a small print shop, Comprint has created a new niche. Carol Houghton reports

Started in 1870, Comprint is a family run business based in the Dutch village of Sappemeer. It was taken over by Andries Slagter in 1995. Since then, he has replaced most of the machines and applied new technologies such as moving prepress to computer to plate and running a chemistry-free operation.

It is Slagter's philosophy to keep investing and he prides himself on returning all profit into developing the business. 'It is very important that all investment is done at the right time for the right purpose. It is the reason we are still in business today when the prospect for printshops is not too good. It proves there is room for a small company if it can find a niche.' For Comprint, the success has been in printing leaflets and labels for pharmaceutical applications but the company has recently found a new niche with the help of laser technology.

LASER CAPABILITIES

The idea to use laser die cutting first arose in 1999, when – on behalf of Comprint – a student investigated the technology, exploring the possibility of

applying laser on sheets. The conclusion was reached that laser was not yet ready; it was too slow and more lasers would have been needed to increase speed, making the system too expensive.

Ten years later, the company needed to produce labels on roll and once again considered using laser technology. Slagter approached IGT Testprint Research to discuss building suitable equipment, designed for adhesive label material supplied on rolls. Slagter adds, 'The idea for Laser-GT was mine, as was the choice of the laser. Where IGT Testprint came in was the technical engineering and building.'

In 2010, the Label Laser Cutter – named the Laser-GT by Slagter – was installed. He explains, 'It was a large investment and we had to find new and innovative ways to use it.' The first production run – completed while the Laser-GT was still in its testing phase in April 2011 – was a full color printing run of paper price labels for a chain of retail shops. Slagter continues, 'We are building up experience with the Laser-GT and it is very promising. In fact, I would say it is close to perfect.' The company

is also looking for a way to recycle its matrix waste.

Slagter says it is now cost effective to print from one to 10,000 labels, all in full color and cut in any shape. This increased flexibility has provided a huge advantage for Comprint. He continues, 'Before, customers said they were forced

SHRINK ISSUE

Comprint has set up a project with Avery Dennison Luxemburg to investigate using a double layer of polyester to avoid heat variations in laminates with a paper-based release liner. Polyester shrinks at a different rate from the paper backing liner as it cools down after laser cutting, leading to 'crinkling' in the finished roll. 'We have one supplier who delivers a PE white gloss with paper backing that is adequate, but also quite expensive. Currently we are in the process of investigating alternatives,' explains Slagter. 'Another test roll is on its way which we will be testing shortly. Paper-based materials we found to be OK already but minor improvements can be made to achieve even better results.'

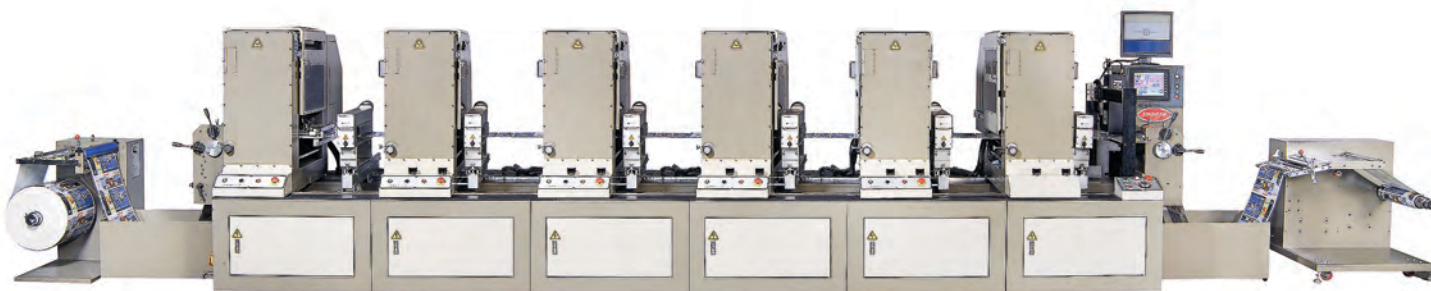
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The Laser Label Cutter is suitable for applications requiring on the fly cutting of labels – and label and carrier material – in any shape and on a wide range of label substrates, as well as engraving. The 60w CO2 single laser works at a field width of 210 mm, with a maximum roll diameter of 300 mm.

A key demand during the building of the machine was that it could keep up

with the company's laser printer. Slagter is satisfied this has been achieved. Dependent on the shape, it can print up to 10 m/min.

The laser is used offline, as Slagter explains, 'Printing and converting in line causes tension problems. This way production and finishing are separated, which offers more flexibility.' Adds Sander Lenten, managing director, IGT Testprint Research. 'It could be used in line but a buffer system would be needed as the printer and laser work at different speeds.' The company uses a Degrava laser printer printing to a 21.6 cm web width. 'This is where we make money. It works for us and the customer,' explains Slagter. All labels are printed digitally, with offset used for the pharma leaflet and other commercial work.

"There is room for a small company if it can find a niche"

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

Bevelling is an unavoidable issue with laser technology and was a topic of discussion in the development process. Slagter admits there is a limitation that some materials show a small brown edge, caused by the heat of the laser. However, polyethylene and polyester both perform well. Paper is the most difficult material but as it is often used for labeling brown cardboard boxes, Slagter says this is not a major issue. He continues 'We tried reducing heat from the CO2 laser but this also reduces the power of the laser. We are currently searching for a material which is resistant to browning.'

Slagter is also investigating the smoke which occurs when the laser marks the labels, mostly the result of burning paper or PE and a small amount of glue. 'We want to have it investigated to establish what exactly is going to be emitted during the marking process. If necessary we will take precautions to avoid unwanted emission of fumes. As it is now the smoke goes into open air.'

Slagter says he supplies to a good group of customers and expects an increase in demand as the success of the Laser GT continues. He adds 'we hope to build another machine in cooperation with IGT Testprint, perhaps a more powerful one, but for now we need to communicate to our customers that we have created this new market'.



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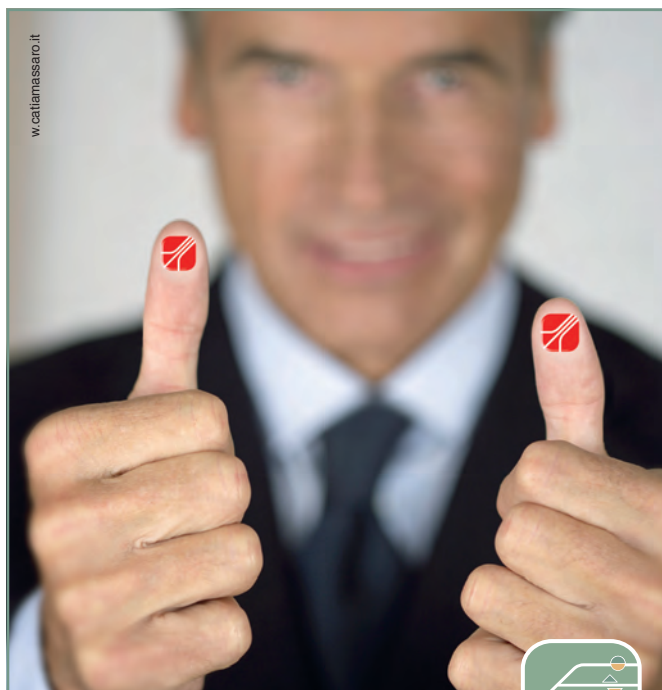
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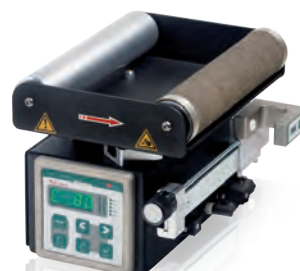
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Digital storm hits China

AT LABELEXPO ASIA new digital presses outnumbered letterpress launches for the first time. L&L China editor Kevin Liu gives a Chinese perspective on the prospects for digital

For a long time, letterpress has been the mainstream technology in the Chinese label printing industry, and it has become the common view that flexo printing is popular in the West and letterpress in Asia. However, Labelexpo Asia 2011 turned this well-versed view upside down.

Nowadays digital printing – or the digitization of printing – is having an ever greater impact on the Chinese printing industry, not only in the commercial sector, but also now in the label printing sector.

At Labelexpo Asia 2011, digital printing established itself as an important production method for labels. A wide range of digital printing devices and equipment flooded the expo, from the smaller standalone label printing devices launched by companies like Primera, Epson, Atlantic Zeiser and Universal Advanced Technologies, to the large industrial-type digital printers launched in China by HP Indigo, Shanghai Taiyo, Beijing Basch and Xeikon. The quantity of digital printing equipment displayed far and away overrode letterpress.

Compared with traditional printing, the advantages of digital are now better understood by Chinese converters: simple operation, a clean work environment, production on demand effectively decreasing waste and stock holding, and variable data printing. As the sophistication of the manufacturing equipment continues to advance, the printing quality of digital, which used to be disparaged by Chinese printers, is now improved to the point where it is considered close to offset printing. At the same time, digital equipment is becoming more affordable for Chinese converters.

At present, the main problem perceived with digital printing in China is the cost of consumables. But we believe that it won't take too long before the cost of consumables for digital printing moves to a reasonable price range.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF DIGITAL PRINTING

There were several categories of digital printing equipment launched at this expo. One type is the small label printing device originating from a portable printer, which is mainly used to print small labels, price tags, name cards etc on specialized self-adhesive paper stocks, for only simple text, barcodes, or two dimensional codes. The selling point of such equipment is its compatibility with information systems, small size and simple operation rather than speed and print quality.

Another category is the narrow web inkjet printing system

represented by Atlantic Zeiser, for example. It is mainly used for variable data printing and is generally working as an auxiliary device supporting traditional printing equipment, or working directly inline with traditional printing and converting equipment.

In addition, there is the true industrial type of digital printing equipment. At Labelexpo Asia 2011, HP Indigo was one of the exhibitors attracting the most attention, not only because of its reputation and acreage of booth space, but the fact it brought the latest digital printing equipment in the shape of the WS6600 and WS4600. It should be made clear that HP Indigo did not attend the giant All in Print China 2011 exhibition which was held before Labelexpo Asia, but chose instead to focus on this specialized market segment.

Xeikon also attended Labelexpo Asia and displayed its newly launched 3030 digital label press.

Chinese enterprises were also showing their own, self-researched digital presses, including Shanghai Taiyo and Beijing Basch. This upscale digital printing equipment was mainly inkjet using foreign-made printing heads.

WHERE NOW WITH DIGITAL?

While digital printing develops vigorously, it is still some way from substituting conventional print in China. Firstly, the cost of digital printing is getting lower but it is still higher than traditional printing. In large series production, digital printing at this point holds no advantage.

Second, the development of the technology is significant but not decisive. For Chinese printing enterprises, the application of digital printing changes not only the mode of production but also the business model and workshop environment. Most business enterprises here did not take this fully into consideration when they decided to install the first generation of digital printing equipment.

Third, digital printing needs the development of new skill sets.

So digital printing in China is finally coming, and quickly, leaving no time for people to even take a breath. But it still needs time to substitute traditional printing, maybe on the day when the materials, business model and training issues are completely solved.

Cost drivers



RAW MATERIALS prices will continue to rise through 2012 driving increased ink costs for label converters, warns Jan Paul van der Velde, senior vice president of procurement, Flint Group

There is a misplaced view that raw material costs for the graphic art industry are coming down. After more than one and a half years of costs constantly increasing, people have clearly been looking for good news and as we saw prices generally stabilize in Q4 2011, it seemed things were actually improving. On an almost daily basis, people were hearing about the economic crisis and assumed that these difficult times would contribute to raw material costs going down.

In reality, with the exception of gum rosin – which dropped slightly in Q4 and Q1 but is now already on the way back up – hardly any materials dropped significantly in price. Most materials actually stabilized at high levels or with very minor reductions but, when compared to the increases we have seen, they are still at near record levels. Overall costs for the ink industry will be higher in 2012 than they were in 2011, which had itself been a record high year.

Crude oil prices in 2011 were on average higher than in 2008 – when we all spoke about the crude oil crisis. Already, 2012 prices have crept almost silently past 2011 figures. Crude is the single largest cost driver for the ink industry with many materials linked to this, such as mineral oils, hydrocarbon resins, carbon black and solvents, as well as many other chemicals indirectly linked to crude.

It is also a good example of how raw materials have resisted the current economic conditions to remain at record high prices. Demand and speculation have driven prices, and unfortunately the tension in the Middle East has also been reflected in the costs of many of our own base chemicals such as benzene, toluene, styrene, propylene etc.

Crude oil costing has had a significant knock on effect and is a good example of the challenges for ink producers. Many of them introduced hybrids – based on a combination of phenolic and hydrocarbon resins – in 2011, due to the high costs of phenolic resins. However, crude increases meant this cost effective alternative is no longer there.

Unfortunately I believe we are running out of alternatives

to protect our customers fully for the inevitable; costs will continue to rise in the next few years due to increasing raw material costs caused by increased global shortages and the better cost/price management of the chemical giants. Further speculation on major commodities will only further serve to compound the negative price effect.

The ink industry is somewhat dependant on materials coming from China. If you produce pigments – in China, India, Europe or the US – many of the intermediates are only available from China. China also holds the key for the costs for key intermediates for UV and other specialty materials. A further 70 percent of the world production of gum rosin has a Chinese origin. With the strength of the Chinese currency (Yuan) versus the US dollar and the ongoing five percent revaluation annually, pigments and all other Chinese origin materials will continue to increase in cost. Add to that the increased costs of the environment in China and India, the container transport costs – and for those based in Europe the weakness of the euro – and you already have quite a difficult cost scenario.

Specific materials also have their own issues. Yellow pigments are expected to increase sharply in price in Q2, driven by the sharp increases of benzene in China. Blue pigments are under pressure due to copper and PA. The story of TiO₂ is even more frightening, with all producers announcing major price increases for the sixth quarter in a row. Due to the increases in styrene and propylene costs we will also see water-based and UV resin prices increase.

What surprises me is that the graphic arts industry seems to deny the facts. Of course nobody likes to talk about cost increases, but the customer has the right to know. We understand that our customers commit themselves to forward contracts with their customers based on their knowledge of cost developments. Flint Group has been a leader in sharing information with our customers about issues affecting the worldwide supply of critical raw materials.

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THE PANEL SESSION: (L-R) Corey Reardon, president and CEO, AWA, Christian Velasquez from Dow Corning, Mikko Meyder of Evonik and Sean Duffy, Bluestar Silicones

Liners in focus

THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS and trends in the release liner market were discussed at AWA's annual release liner conference. Carol Houghton reports

Despite the economic uncertainty facing the world economy, the release liner industry is expecting worldwide growth in 2012 to average between three and 10 percent. According to the latest research into the sector from industry consultants Alexander Watson Associates, the strongest long term growth prospects are seen in the emerging markets of Eastern Europe, Latin America and Asia-Pacific. Indeed, while North America and Europe each account for just under one third of world liner volume, Asia Pacific already consumes 28.6 percent.

At the same time, AWA's research shows continued consolidation across the release liner supply chain, not just in Europe and North America, but also in developing markets, while raw material costs have increased dramatically along with energy, labor and transport costs. These increases are expected to continue through 2012, though at a reduced level.

Carsten Lange, managing director release liner, coatings and consumer packaging at Mondi, told delegates that the release liner industry needs to do better at supplying good statistics. Many suppliers are now part of groups which do not report, and there is very little comparable data for raw materials, said Carsten: 'At best, pulp price is an indication.'

He cited GDP growth issues in Southern Europe as a main concern for the industry, as well as challenges for the Eurozone as a whole, which accounts for 25 percent of the global economy.

'We should organize ourselves to be stronger for growth opportunities and take care of the future – and it is possible it could be a negative one,' he warned.

APPLICATION SPECIFIC

Corey Reardon, president and CEO, Alexander Watson Associates (AWA) looked at the segments where release liner is experiencing its highest growth – particularly labels, tape and hygiene. 'The results are skewed by the label market,' he said. 'We could have a whole conference on that!'

In terms of materials and markets, glassine/calendared kraft papers still represent a solid 41 percent of the overall release liner market, with film currently taking 12 percent. Pressure-sensitive labelstock remains the largest segment, at 51 percent. Reardon predicted that, 'In this market, 40-60 percent of liner usage for primary product labeling will migrate to film in the next five years.' He added that variable information print – itself representing 50 percent of the label market for release liner – will, however, always remain paper-based.

Mikko Meyder, Evonik agreed there will be an increase in the use of filmic materials, driven by the ability to produce lower gauges. Sean Duffy, Bluestar Silicones added, 'People are beginning to look at the feasibility of film liner in terms of recyclability, sustainability and cost as well as the possibility of UV curing.' But Duffy believes the evidence does not support the idea that film will overtake paper. 'Paper still has a decent future.'

Peter Sandkuehler, group leader, TS&D, performance plastics, for Dow Chemical Company, identified a trend for experimenting with LDPE for release liner stock. However, stiffness and optical balance requirements present a challenge here.

SUSTAINABILITY

Jackie Marolda, senior consultant and vice president AWA, looked at issues surrounding sustainability. 'Recent innovations include the downgauging of PET to create lighter weight rolls. We can also expect to see paper-based thin liners as well as substitution trends

such as linerless.'

She continued, 'Linerless doesn't work for everything – but it has found its opportunity and is creating value there.' Linerless offers numerous benefits: eliminating the cost of buying and disposing of siliconized liner; allowing use of butt-cut label formats; more labels per roll – meaning fewer changeovers – as well as more material per pallet which reduces shipping costs.

However, it does have limitations in terms of materials – facestocks, adhesives and printable silicone coatings – application machinery and application speeds. Marolda says the industry is developing hybrid application equipment to apply both linerless and traditional PS labels. There is also a problem with label shape as complex curves cannot be die cut. However, 'We can print a shape on a square clear film label to create the same effect,' she explained.

Marolda also identified a major change in value chain relationships, with raw material suppliers beginning to pair with machinery suppliers, such as Innovia Film's collaboration with Ravenwood Packaging on linerless labels. Sean Duffy, Bluestar Silicones agreed: 'Collaboration is key to making the industry more efficient.'

Mark Macaré, public affairs/issues and recycling manager at Finat, looked at European Union directives affecting packaging and packaging waste, as well as corporate drivers. Walmart, for example, is looking to reduce packaging by five percent by using supplier sustainability assessments. Macaré said that 70 percent of all brand owners now identify 'sustainability' as a competitive advantage.

Macaré identified recycling bottlenecks for both PET/PP and paper liner. 'Used liner is generated downstream in a "fragmented chain" causing logistical problems in addition to a lack of awareness and urgency at the end user. There is also a problem with pan-European ownership. We have seen a limited number of success stories and lack of volume.'

DRINK TO THAT

Dennis Bakx, global category buyer packaging materials/global purchasing at Heineken, gave the company's perspective on the release liner industry. He started by pointing out that the beverage industry continues to undergo consolidation. In 2010, the top four players had a 50 percent share of the market, up from 23 percent in 1995.

Bakx said that while the recession had hit the food and beverage sectors, 'people still need to eat and drink'. However, consumers have changed their spending habits, with a trend towards drinking at home instead of in bars and restaurants. This has continued to drive demand for bottles and cans, and this in turn has increased demand for PS labels and associated release liner.

The Heineken brand uses 10 billion front, back and neck PS labels a year. Most are single-trip, but with some wash-off for returnable bottles. Bakx says wash-off filmic labels are still at the introductory phase: 'We are currently validating this but it is a difficult process'.

For Bakx, PS filmic labels remain the decoration option of choice, delivering a key communications channel with the 'no label look' as well as functional requirements including high efficiency application, high line speed, and uninterrupted bottle application.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

RR DONNELLEY SIGNS DEAL WITH METRO

RR Donnelley has been awarded a multi-year multi-million dollar agreement by Metro, a grocery and pharmacy chain in Quebec and Ontario with more than 65,000 employees. Under the terms of the agreement, Metro will draw upon RR Donnelley's Canadian production, distribution and technology platform for its administrative and operational documents, which includes variable imaging, labels, forms, electronic documents, fulfillment and logistics.

WELDON REPRESENTS ITALIAN SUPPLIERS

Italy-based die-cutting machine manufacturer AMC Italiana-Averoldi and die supplier Mabar have appointed New Delhi-based Weldon Celloplast as their exclusive distributors in India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and the Middle East.

US CONVERTER COMBINES FACILITIES

US label converter Hooven-Dayton has combined its two sites in Dayton, Ohio, into a new 110,000 square foot production facility and corporate headquarters.

ASTRO-MED DIVESTS OPERATIONS

US-based label converting group Astro-Med has announced the divestiture of its label manufacturing operations in Asheboro, North Carolina. The sale was made to the original owners of Label Line.

SISTRAD UPS MIDDLE EAST FOCUS

Portuguese MIS supplier Sistrade aims to increase its presence in the Middle East with the opening of a representative office in Abu Dhabi and a series of reconnaissance trips to the region, including participation at the Pack Print Summit in Dubai in November 2012.

MONDI AUSTRIA BECOMES FSC CERTIFIED

Mondi Release Liner Austria, based in Hilm, has become the first plant in Mondi's release liner segment to be awarded FSC certification. The plant currently holds FSC certification for its bleached kraft paper – commonly used for envelopes, labels and graphic arts. More of the company's plants are expected to be FSC-certified in the near future.

EDALE HD FLEXO CERTIFIED

Press manufacturer Edale is the latest company to achieve HD Flexo certification from EskoArtwork. The Hampshire, UK-based company achieved certification for its FL-350 and Gamma flexo machines and hopes to certify all its presses, with the Alpha compact and the Beta modular next in line.

MONTALVO CELEBRATES 65 YEARS

The Montalvo Corporation is celebrating 65 years of providing electronic web control equipment, brakes, clutches, and other control devices to the converting industry worldwide.

SUPPLIERS JOIN TLMi

TLMi has welcomed two new supplier members to the association: Gurnee, Illinois-based PC Industries and Brattleboro, Vermont-based FiberMark.

RFID SPEEDS DRIVER LICENSE CHECKS

Schreiner PrinTrust has developed the ((rfid)) Document Label for fast and reliable driver's license checks. Data such as the validity of the document and user ID can be stored on the RFID tag for fast and decentralized checks after label application. The label is applied to existing ID documents – such as driver's licenses or membership cards – and has key data encrypted for contactless reading, simplifying and enhancing security of administrative processes for vehicle fleet management and car sharing systems.

Additionally integrated features provide protection against counterfeiting. For example, security cuts prevent the complete and thus undetected detachment of the label. Optical serialization using human-readable text, barcodes and DataMatrix codes is also available.



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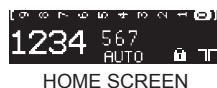
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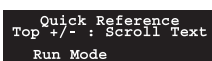


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Finishing system roundup

KEY TRENDS in label finishing equipment include increased flexibility through modular design and systems tailored specially for the needs of digital and short run label production. Andy Thomas reports

AB GRAPHIC INTERNATIONAL

AB Graphic International has a raft of new developments to show in the run-up to drupa. The latest Omega Digicon 2 label converting line can now be configured for non-stop operation with semi-automatic turret rewinders. The system can also be supplied with off-line turret rewriter to allow machine slow down when the finished roll terminates.

ABG has also been following the move of the market – and particularly its partner HP Indigo – towards narrow web packaging applications, now offering finishing solutions for digitally printed labels, flexible packaging and cartons. The Digicon series 2 converting line shown at drupa is equipped to run both labels and folding cartons with an HP Indigo WS6600 Digital press both in and off-line. To illustrate the effectiveness of printing small order quantities for cartons, ABG has joined forces with cutting and creasing equipment manufacturer KAMA. The centrepiece of the stand will be the Digicon folding carton solution with flat bed die cutting and creasing.

The latest developments for ABG's Digicon Sabre Xtreme laser cutter unit include non-stop digital die changeover and variable data capability. The system can be supplied with a digital cold foil application system using inkjet to apply the adhesive without the use of printing plates, as well as an automatic slit change pattern system for non-stop operation. At drupa the unit will be equipped with UV flexo and overlaminating modules.

ASHE CONVERTING EQUIPMENT

Ashe Converting Equipment used Labelexpo Europe to show an Opal slitter rewriter equipped with a 100 percent inspection system from Eye-C, thanks to a new reciprocal partnership between the companies which also saw Eye-C run an Ashe rewriter on its own stand. The machine can process any substrate up to widths of 600mm.

Also on display was a servo-driven Opal 330 with die station for blank and pre-printed labels, as well as a Solitaire filmic slitter which can handle web widths of 400-800mm.

AZTECH CONVERTING

Aztech Converting used Labelexpo Europe to demonstrate an ISR slitter rewriter with 100 percent inspection from Erhardt + Leimer, and a BSR dual spindle slitter rewriter, which can handle all substrates including unsupported film. The ISR range has a maximum speed of 243 m/min and the BSR of 228 m/min.

BAR GRAPHIC MACHINERY

Bar Graphic Machinery recently launched its Multiflex finishing machine, featuring an intelligent servo rewind system able to handle 'infinite' substrates including films, foils, light board and label stock. The company also introduced a digital label converting system, the Elite FDTR. The machine incorporates print to print re-registration, die-cut to print re-registration and servo-driven self-positioning print cylinders for automatic print registration set up, waste reduction and minimum downtime.

DACO SOLUTIONS

For finishing digital labels, Daco Solutions has launched its Spectrum servo-driven single color flexo press with re-register capabilities. The Spectrum can apply a varnish or overlaminate and die-cut to register. It is also capable of producing single color flexo labels and die-cut, using the re-register system to add further colors, or just simply die-cut plain labels.

DELTA INDUSTRIAL

New from Delta Industrial is the high capacity (18-24in) Delta Crusader converting system. This extension of the Delta Mod-Tech line of converting

systems was designed to provide a full modular platform for the manufacturing and finishing of wider webs and larger parts. In addition, the expanded web width offers a solid inline or offline converting and finishing system for digitally printed web. A variety of process modules may be incorporated into the system such as full rotary and semi-rotary die-cutting, over and under laminating, coating, precise part placement, slitting, sheeting and pouching.

Delta's Spectrum II system, meanwhile, is a modular finishing system designed to work in-line with digital presses.

DPR

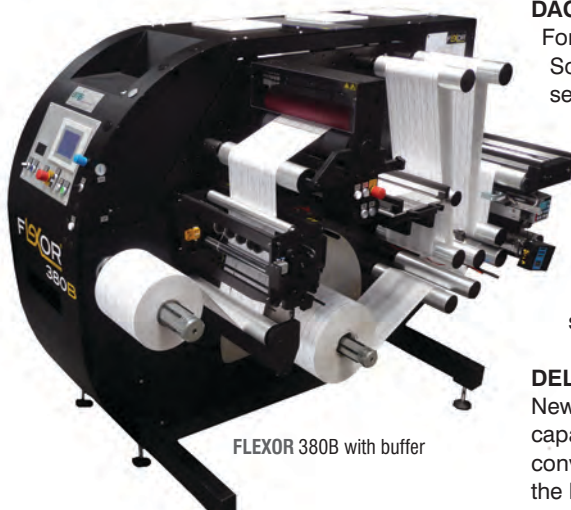
DPR has developed a reversible reel to reel machine which will count labels on rolls up to 220mm (8.66in) wide with outside diameter up to 400mm (15.75in). Reversible rotation means it can be used face in and face out and there are options to count individual labels, and in meters and feet. Missing label detection is incorporated and the machine can use both pneumatic and mechanical interchangeable core holders.

EMIS

The Emis Flexor line now includes the Flexor STACRW4-12, a fully servo four spindle turret rewriter with a width of 410mm. Flexor 440IS meanwhile is a 440mm wide inspection machine equipped with the latest Nikka D1 camera system. Flexor 380 2C+ is a 380mm wide machine equipped with a double die-cutting unit and a re-register module to die cut pre-printed labelstock.

LOMBARDI

Lombardi's new modular Screenline finishing machine – which includes silkscreen, hot foil and die-cutting – features the company's patented doctor blade, the Air Blade System (ABS) on its flexo station. The quick change ABS incorporates what Lombardi calls Hi-DynamiX, a pneumatics-based locking mechanism which automatically and dynamically adjusts pressure against the anilox. The benefits include better ink distribution and more even setting of the blade across the anilox, helping prolong anilox life.



FLEXOR 380B with buffer



CTEC McKesson glueless turret

GRAFISK MASKINFABRIK

The Digital Converting Line 500 (DC500) from Grafisk Maskinfabrik, can handle web widths from 100mm up to 515mm. The DC500 comes with UV flexo-varnish station with registration and super-gloss varnish capabilities. It can also be fitted with a semi-rotary hot foil station with GapMaster. This machine joins GM's smaller digital converters, the DC330 – shown at Labelexpo Europe fitted with a Zenna laser die-cutter – and the DC330-mini.

GRAFOTRONIC

Grafotronic has launched its 440HI slitting machine with a 100 percent inspection system from Nikka. The 440HI is a high-speed fully servo-driven machine with new features such as an

integrated roll lift, slide control panel and a quick-change knife package.

The company has also launched its modular Converting Line 380 CL, which at Labelexpo Europe was equipped with two flexo units, die-cutting and a new automatic turret rewinder. Each module is servo driven and works independently. Extra units, such as lamination, inkjet, labeling, 100 percent inspection, hotfoil and varnishing, can be added.

HKM

At Labelexpo Europe HKM showed its 380 rewinder with an additional rotary die-cutting station, enabling production of both blank and printed labels. The company's HKM 280 rewinder can automatically stop after counting down a defined number of labels regardless of the machine's speed, a function which increases speed and productivity.

LABELTECH

Labeltech has developed a stand-alone modular version of its Furu MMLD system which integrates missing label, matrix and flag detection, stroboscope trigger and automatic calibration, with the additional functions of label and meter counter, recipe selection and USB connection. The unit is available for retrofitting on older inspection/rewind machines.

The company's own machines have meanwhile been enhanced with the EasyTens function, which allows different web tension profiles to be created simply by 'dragging' the desired values onto a chart.

Also new is a fully servo-driven die cut to register module for blank and printed labels which supports up to two die cut units for work on both web sides. The Furu MMLD system can be integrated to reduce web waste and down time.

MARTIN AUTOMATIC

New from Martin Automatic is the MBSC butt splicer, seen for the first time at Labelexpo Europe on the Labelmen stand. The MBSC was shown working with the company's STR turret rewinder. Martin Automatic also showed a STS automatic unwind/splicer, complemented by an STR turret rewinder at the delivery end of the press. Both of these units were built by Labelmen, under license.

MAXCESS

Maxcess has released the Tidland G690 Leaf Shaft, a new design which features an external bladder air system with four expanding 'leaves' for improved performance and ease of maintenance. The system is targeted at narrow to medium web converters. The expanding 'leaves' improve core life and deliver superior torque for consistent and predictable wound roll tension, says the manufacturer.



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THE Easy Tens function

NEWFOIL

Newfoil's SF330 servo-driven flexographic varnishing unit is designed for varnishing digitally printed webs, and will spot varnish in register or flood coat webs up to 350mm wide. It has optional unwind and rewind units for stand-alone operation or can be interfaced with Newfoil hot foil, embossing and die-cutting machines for inline use. Dual UV and IR drying units are incorporated as standard.

PERFECTO

Perfecto's latest G4 series of label inspection slitter rewinder machines offer maximum slitting speeds of 300m/min and 100 percent inspection at 150m/min. The LabelSpect G4 label inspection slitter rewinder incorporates a 100 percent defect detection system from BST International.

POLAR

Polar will demonstrate at drupa the latest version of its LabelSystem automated cut & stack finishing system. The basic LabelSystem DC-11 will be shown together with with a LabelSystem



MARTIN LRD Automatic Transfer Rewind

DCC-10 counter-pressure die-cutting machine with a new loading system. The LabelSystem SC-10 will be shown with a new automatic air-board removal system. Also new is the BM-105 manual multi-station banding machine and the Polar LabelSystem SC-25 with log banding.

PRATI

Prati demonstrated its wide range of finishing equipment at Labelexpo Europe, including a booklet finishing version of the Saturn servo slitter inspection rewinder, the PharmaCheck 100 percent label inspection system targeted at the the pharma industry, the new Digitplus for finishing and laser die-cutting of digitally printed labels, and the new Linerless version of the Saturn slitter inspection rewinder. This machine features two interchangeable rewinder shafts to rewind the lanes in an alternate mode, to avoid rolls sticking.

A Jupiter inspection machine equipped with the Proxima detection system is targeted at clear label inspection at maximum machine speeds.

ROTOCONTROL

Rotocontrol's recently launched EPOS option (electronic knife positioning system) fully automates slitting set-up, reducing job change time to less than a minute, even with shear systems using upper and lower blades.

Also new is the SVS (Sensing and Verification System) option, which features powerful algorithms to detect repeated printed images on most material types including clear on clear, IML and butt-cut labels to provide missing label and matrix detection feedback to the machine.

The company recently announced the acquisition of Leomat.

ROTOFLEX

Rotoflex now equips all its inspection rewind systems with the Genesis advanced control system. With a simple HMI, operators can monitor all functions and identify faults and issues from a single screen. The system can detect missing labels in multiple lanes as well as detect the presence of a matrix. With multi-lane counting, the converter gets



CALLING ALL OPERATORS!

Slitter.org is a new jobs website dedicated to helping find Slitter Rewinding operators vacancies in the converting, printing and packaging jobs market. Experienced Slitter operators are highly skilled employees with high levels of 'mechanical sympathy' and an extremely good working knowledge of winding principals, and as such are in high demand.

Hiring a skilled and reliable slitter operator makes a huge difference to productivity, and therefore the financial performance of winding machines, so the new website also looks after the best interests of converting and packaging industry recruiters.

Job seekers and employers alike can search for jobs by country on the website at www.slitter.org <<http://www.slitter.org>>, follow on Twitter at @Slitter_Jobs or view available vacancies on Facebook by searching for 'slitter jobs'.



IDLAND Leaf Shaft



accurate label counts for each roll. The capability to count and inspect a variety of label shapes – not just squares or rectangles – results in an accurate count of labels per lane, regardless of varying label shapes or lengths.

SCHOBER

The Spider is Schober's latest addition to its RSM line of rotary die-cutting machines. Spider is a high-speed automated stacking and counting system, handling large IML products at web speed up to 50m/min. The equipment can handle different types of products with exchangeable, product-specific pick-up plates, stacking them non-stop into a dual piling cassette system. A 100 percent product inspection system with discharge facility of bad products is also available.

SERLEM

Serlem's CFB 550 is an offline machine designed for the production of labels from reel to stack of various shapes and thickness. From the printed reel, it can cut materials such as OPP, PVC or paper. The machine is particularly suitable for IML production.

SOMA

Soma's new Venus III slitler rewinder is designed to convert film materials in web widths from 1100mm to 1850mm and has an overhead web path to enhance clean room conditions and permit entry into the food and pharmaceutical packaging markets. The company's new PLUTO III slitler rewinder, meanwhile, has stronger side frames permitting accurate slitting at speeds up to 600m/min in widths from 1100 to 1600.

SMAG

Smag has now fully commercialized its I-Cut 330 offline label processing system, matching high speed varnishing and die-cutting with rapid changeover. One customer, Lenzlinger Etiquettes, based in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, claims to make 30-50 job changes a day. The company is using the I-Cut 330 to support its four HP and Xeikon presses.

SPIPKER

The S-Con Vert is a new converting machine from Spilker which features digital adjustment of the longitudinal cutter. An integrated roll-handling system enables it to perform the role change without manual lifting. The S-Con Vert 550 has a simple manual inspection and optional 100 percent inspection system.

UNIVERSAL CONVERTING EQUIPMENT

Universal Converting Equipment has developed a regenerative web guiding system for slitler-winding machines. The Converter Guide 4 web guider – which uses electric linear actuators instead of hydraulics – stores the energy produced by braking for use during the motoring phases of operation.

The Converter Guide 4 web guider will retrofit onto a wide range of slitting machines, coating and laminating machines, sheeters, unwinds, presses and hot melt coating machines.

XEIKON

Xeikon now offers a dedicated in-line finishing solution – the DCoat 500 – for its top of the range 3500 press, outputting 20 inch material. The company's existing DCoat 330 fits its 13 inch machines, and as an additional option Xeikon offers the UCoat coater/slitler/sheeter which can be used for both labels and packaging.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

SISTRADÉ INSTALLS AFFIRM GLOBAL REACH

Portuguese MIS/ERP specialist Sistrade has announced successful installations at converters in Germany, Belarus and Colombia.

Herzog Etiketten KG, a German company specializing in self-adhesive label printing, acquired a full Sistrade business management system - ERP/MIS Sistrade Print – that will allow management integration of all departments. Herzog Etiketten KG specializes in labels for the tire industry, chemical industry, food and wine labels.

Bogota-based Proempaquas Ltda is among Colombia's biggest companies, with over 35 years of experience in the production of flexible packaging and self-adhesive labels for the food, cosmetics, agrochemical and pharmaceutical industry. The company uses ERP/MIS Sistrade Print for all aspects of company management.

Uniflex is based in Minsk, Belarus, and has 15 years' experience as a producer of flexible packaging and self-adhesive labels. The company decided to acquire a Sistrade Print integrated management system to allow it to integrate production of all kinds of jobs from flexible packaging to self-adhesive labels by analyzing production parameters including print processes and types of work. The system handles technical data-sheets, estimates, invoicing, CRM, as well as production processes including issuance of job orders, collection and analysis of online production data in all the sectors of the company and production supervision. Cost control is handled through detailed comparison of estimated costs and time versus the actual production time and costs.

Sistrade Software Consulting, S.A. is an information systems engineering and consulting company with offices in Lisbon, Porto, Madrid, Warsaw, Sao Paulo, Istanbul, Frankfurt, Paris, Abu Dhabi and Milan. Sistrade Print is a multilingual platform which makes it possible to implement and use the system in any language or several languages at the same time.

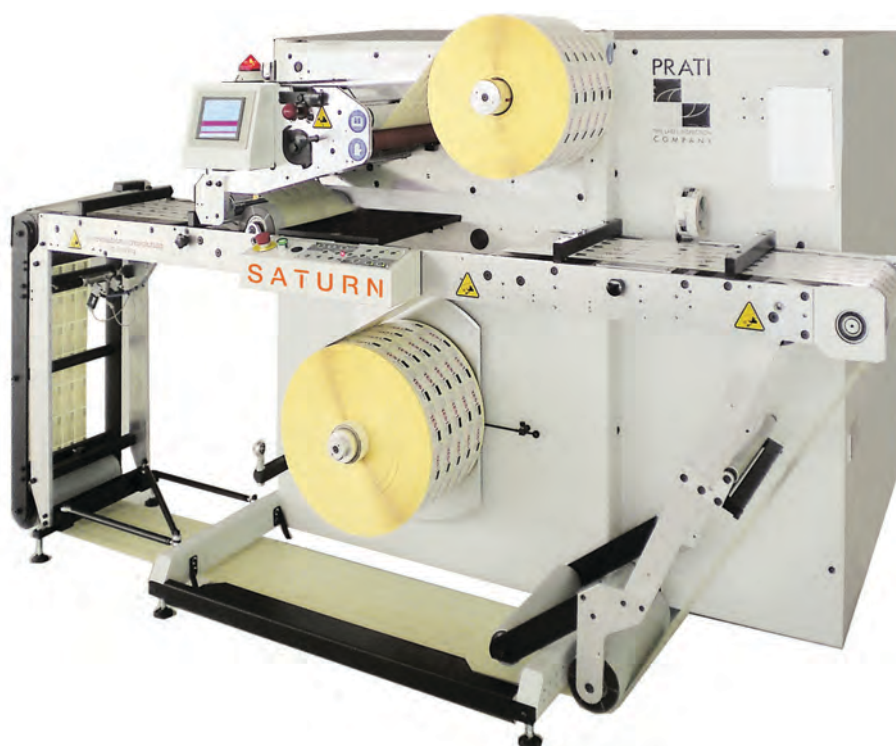
Sistrade Print is a fully web-based ERP/MIS, developed specifically for label converters, and is able to produce estimates relating to product type, including labels, stickers and sleeves and to control production in real time.

In the cutter settings, the estimator can define each cutter's characteristics including type of the cutter, the height and width of the label, and the spaces between the labels. When creating an estimate, the system automatically assigns the cutter associated to an individual customer, or allows the estimator to amend it or create a new one.

The system also handles calculations around foil stamping including automatic calculation of cylinders repeat, whether stamping will be on or off-line, and the calculation of stamping foil costs.

Users can simulate different scenarios involving different machine combinations, printing cylinders and cutters, calculating the combinations that best match the estimator's scenario. The estimator can then analyze the imposition and the cutting plan.

The system will also analyze the number of rolls required for a job and the optimum reel width.



PRATI Celebrates VEGAplus BOOKLET Success

12 SYSTEMS SOLD for production of booklet labels help customers realise business potential



Faenza, March 2012 – With a dozen installations worldwide and one customer ordering five, PRATI is celebrating the market success of its VEGAplus LF 330

BOOKLET system. "We are really proud this extraordinary solution is helping so many companies develop new applications to enable growth in such a range of markets segments", says Chiara Prati, sales Manager at PRATI.

Specifically designed for the off-line production of booklet, coupon and EC labels, the 75m/minute VEGAplus LF 330 BOOKLET has a web width of up to 330mm and can apply - in register - a booklet label on the base label. It is ideally suited to pharmaceutical and agri-chemical sectors as well as the food industry where this type of label is perfect for promotional content on packaging. It runs unsupported and self-adhesive labels - standard, coupon, flat, curved, and thick booklet - regardless of the diameter.

Delivered in a modular format, it can be adapted to meet customer's requirements.

"It is this modular approach that helps the VEGAplus LF330 achieve all the benefits of off-line processing specifically inspection of the pre-printed web, faster speed, more accuracy in the tension control and register, accuracy and clean process," adds Chiara Prati.

This solution, combined with the Labelexpo launched SATURN BOOKLET control inspection machine, ensures PRATI offers a complete workflow solution for the production of booklet, coupon and EC labels. Equipped with the BKL web path up-grade, big idlers, special nipping wheels and an out-standing web guide system, the SATURN BOOKLET delivers highly quality BKL labels inspection using the Nikka camera even for 'irregular face' labels. It's specifically designed to finish the production process of coupon and

booklet labels with slitting, rewinding and full inspection operations.

"As a unique manufacturer of the broadest range of high-quality label inspection solutions we are a one-stop shop offering a complete booklet workflow. Also for booklet labels, customers can rely on what best meets their application requirements," concludes Chiara Prati.

Visit the following YouTube link to see the VEGAplus BOOKLET system in action: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHF8C313Dk>



Drupa 2012 preview

DRUPA is the world's biggest and most comprehensive commercial print show, but also sees the launch of many products of interest to label converters. Andy Thomas rounds up a selective list

ABG

ABG shows converting lines on the HP stand in Hall 4 demonstrating its ability to offer finishing solutions for digitally printed labels, flexible packaging and cartons.

Exhibits will include the Digicon Sabre Xtreme laser die cutter with UV flexo and over-laminating modules and a Digicon series 2 converting line equipped to run both labels and folding cartons with an HP Indigo WS6600 Digital press both in and offline. A Digicon Lite, label converting system will highlight the company's entry level, low cost option for converting digitally printed webs.

AVT

AVT shows its PrintVision/Helios II installed on an HP Indigo WS6600 digital press, demonstrating print inspection and verification of variable data. Drupa also see the introduction of SpectraLab as an add-on module to the Helios II family, featuring in-line spectral measurements.

It provides absolute color measurements in L*a*b*, to match with brand owner's color standards and design. Also new is an upgraded PrintVision/Argus Elite, featuring pressure setting from the image, which is demonstrated on the new F2 Comexi

press on the Comexi stand.

The PrintVision/Jupiter system will demonstrate RightSeal, the improved dual optic head operation for cold seal monitoring, as well as iReg, a semi-automatic registration setting for CI Flexo presses. This system will also be equipped with SpectraLab.

APEX GROUP

Leading ink, plate, and software suppliers to the flexo industry have joined Apex to create a flexo Pantone simulation guide for release at drupa based around the company's GTT (Genetic Transfer Technology) ink metering technology.

Offset printers can now use GTT-Offset cylinders, for coating/lacquer applications, and claimed advantages include higher gloss points, less foaming, easier cleaning – and typically less drying time and lacquer usage.

Apex also previews its X-Sleeve project: next-generation lightweight and durable plate-mounting and bridge sleeves. Finally there is the BioClean anilox cleaning and maintenance package which offers 'earth-friendly' anilox (and GTT) sanitizing solutions with more convenient packaging.

BST INTERNATIONAL

On the largest booth in the company's history BST International shows QCenter and QCenter.Spectral, two developments claimed to set new standards in the production control on running webs.

The inline spectral measurement system QCenter.Spectral makes it possible to obtain both reliable inline and offline data on specified colors over the entire print run.

Working in close partnership with X-Rite, this makes the results of inline measurement and measurement with stationary handhelds comparable for the first time. This will set a new industrial standard for color quality control and workflow simplification, says the company.

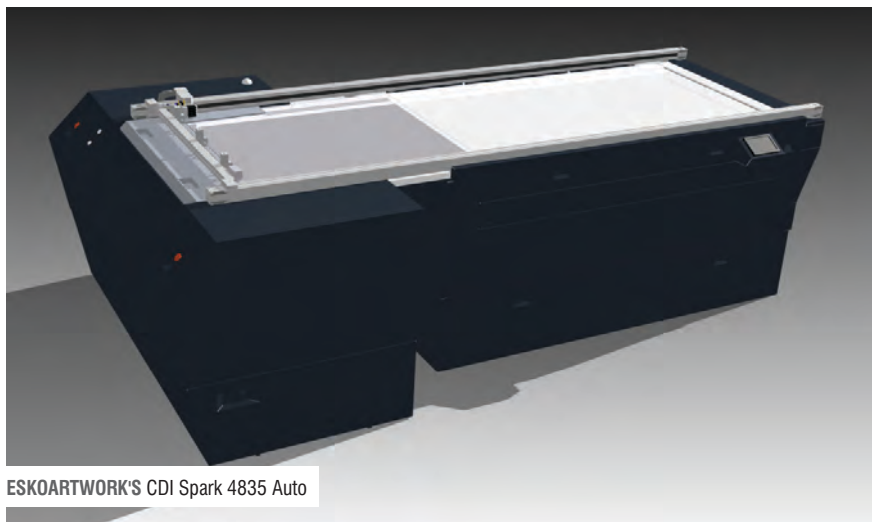
QCenter is a modular product line for centralized control functions including web inspection and 100 percent inspection. Via the intuitive touch screen interface, the operator controls any actions such as color measurement, zooming, selection of image details and monitoring of the entire web width. In addition, QCenter features the one-to-one display of the complete repeat in high resolution HDTV quality.

Also new is ekr 500 D, the digital enhancement of the successful web guiding controller ekr 500 Plus. By changeover to digital technology ekr 500 D provides simpler connectivity and ease of operation. In combination with the newly designed CompactGuide rotating frame guide, the customer gets a Plug & Play system for a broad range of web guiding tasks.

DIGIFLEX

DigiFlex is to launch its Flexojet1725 Inkjet Computer-to-Plate system for flexographic, dry-offset and letterpress plates. The FlexoJet1725 inkjet CtP jets DigiFlex Bi-component ink on any flexographic analog plate to create a mask, replacing the black ablation layer found on standard digital flexo plates.

The system can also be used to produce dry-offset and letterpress printing plates (see page 80).



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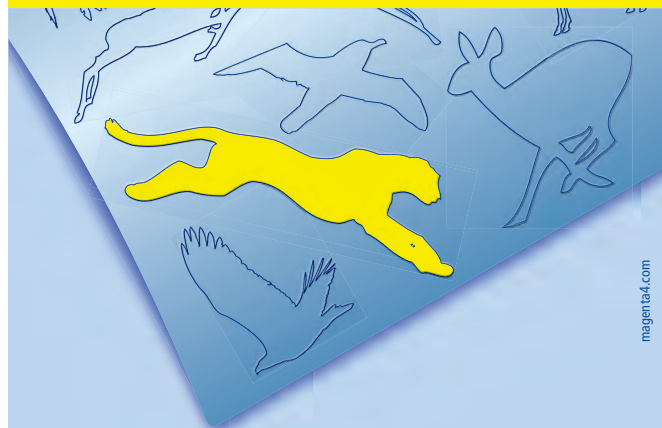
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DOMINO

Domino will show the latest version of its established N600 inkjet press. The Domino N600i offers 600dpi resolution on up to four grayscale levels on paper or filmic substrates and is rated at 75 meters (246 ft) per minute.

The enhanced i-Tech features largely revolve around increased automation with reduced need for manual intervention, leading to quicker changes and more consistent print quality. Integral with the N600i is Domino's i-Tech CleanCap automated cleaning and capping station. By reducing expensive downtime, and working with the ActiFlow ink circulating system to keep ink flowing around the print head at all times, print quality is more consistent.

DUPONT

DuPont has announced full commercialization of DuPont Cyrel DigiFlow, a new digital workflow enhancement designed 'to expand the capabilities of digital Cyrel and digital Cyrel FAST to deliver superior print quality and productivity'.

Cyrel DigiFlow is a relatively simple and inexpensive modification to the existing line of DuPont exposure units; it adds a chamber that allows the creation of a controlled atmosphere during the main exposure allowing one-to-one reproduction of image elements on the plate. This one-to-one reproduction is critical to optimizing the effects of solid screening patterns.

The Cyrel DigiFlow exposure units were designed for use on an 'as-needed' basis, and can easily be switched off when the standard digital dot is the preferred result. Because of the low cost and the flexibility of Cyrel DigiFlow, DuPont believes this is the simplest and most cost-effective solution for those flexographers wanting to seamlessly switch between standard and hybrid dots.

EDALE

Edale will be promoting its current range of printing and converting machines with a strong focus on the packaging and folding carton market, catering for offset printers diversifying into the flexographic print process.

THE ISYS EDGE 850 desktop label printing system



LABELS&LABELING

ESKOARTWORK

Esko Artwork describes its new Suite 12 as a major update to its software suite for the packaging, labeling, sign making and display industries, writes Barry Hunt. It includes new releases of its flagship applications: ArtiosCAD, ArtPro, PackEdge, DeskPack and Studio which create automated workflows with color management and artwork creation for the various primary and secondary packs from pallet cartons to the retail shelf. Suite 12 also offers a series of 'walkthrough' visualizations of product packs in retail environments for brand owners.

The CDI Spark 4835 Auto is said to reinforce Esko's dominance of the digital flexo platemaking market from when the first CDI was introduced in 1995. Based on ablation masking, the new platesetter has automatic plate loading and unloading. It features the digital Inline UV2 back exposure unit which gives a choice of dot structure. This technology is also seen on the CDI Spark 2530, equipped with magnetic drum.

Esko also features the latest quality-led developments with HD Flexo platemaking, which has reached 400 installations worldwide. They include HD Flexo Pixel+ technology. This is an optical, electronic and screening enhancement for HD Flexo imaging to support flat-top dots creation for different plate vendor flat-top dots offerings like DigiCorr, DigiFlow, Lux and Next. It leads to a substantial increase in solid ink density says the company. It also features the inclusion of digital main exposure built into the CDI imager (Inline UV2). The combination of innovative imaging and screening technology is said to allow users to control the shape of different dot structures in one single plate.

The new Kongsberg XN finishing table, shown with an upgrade of the i-cut Suite, is said to offer increased flexibility at an affordable price. Applications range from carton printing to signage and display. Partnerships featured at drupa include Agfa, Durst, EFI, Fujifilm and HP Indigo.

The company is one of six technical partners for PantoneLIVE from X-Rite Pantone. At drupe, it will promote the first integration of the PantoneLIVE color control system within the packaging supply chain. It is combined with Esko's Color Engine system.

Enfocus introduces PitStop11 (PitStop Pro and PitStop Server 11) for PDF preflighting and correction. The company says there are over 130,000 PitStop users since the first version appeared 15 years ago. Also making its debut is Switch 11, a modular software system to automate repetitive FTP file handling tasks. It integrates with existing systems and drives third-party graphics applications, including MIS.

FFEI

FFEI will showcase a new, end-to-end, digital labels solution, which includes a Caslon digital inkjet press incorporating a new digital spot color unit printing white ink, and FFEI's latest RealPro workflow software.

'This solution enables label converters and digital print houses to partner with one technology supplier where all components are designed to work together,' comments Andy Cook, FFEI managing director.

Caslon is a digital color inkjet press jointly developed between FFEI and Nilpeter, can be installed as part of a traditional narrow web label press or utilized as a standalone digital inkjet system, converting high quality labels up to 420mm web widths, at 25m per minute rising to 50m (dependent on resolution).

New for drupa 2012, and available from FFEI and reseller partners, is an additional Caslon digital spot color unit that prints digital UV-curable white ink. This new capability eradicates the need to pre-print white ink via a traditional press – shortening production times, minimizing cost and providing increased job control.

In addition, FFEI Caslon customers can now benefit from the newly enhanced RealPro Workflow System, a fully automated

DigiFlex.



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MARK ANDY LP3000, 2004 330mm web, corona, 8 flexo, UV, T Bar, delam/relam, UV over lam, 2 rotary die, sheeter, back slitting, matrix & product rewinds, includes large selection of tooling. *Ref.LF821*

MARK ANDY 2200, 1995 254mm web, 8 flexo, delam/relam, hot air & UV, 2 rotary die, 2 matrix waste & 2 product rewinds. *Ref.LF804*

MARK ANDY 2200, 1998 10" web, corona, 8 flexo, UV, UV Over lam, 2 rotary die, matrix waste & product rewinds. *Ref.LF797*

MPS E330, 1999 330mm web, corona, 8 flexo servo driven, UV, Chill rolls, T bars, 2 rotary die, matrix waste & twin spindle rewind. *Ref.LF812*

NILPETER M03300, 1999 340mm web, corona, 5 wet offset, remote ink control, 21,22,23,24, Åoffset cassettes, 3M platforms: 3 flexo + 1 screen, UV, T bars, delam/relam, UV overlam, 2 rotary die, nonstop matrix waste & product rewinds. *Ref.LO772*

CODIMAG VIVA 340, 2000 340mm web, 5 offset, 1 flexo varnish, rotary die, Gap Master, matrix waste & product rewind. *Ref.LO779*

CODIMAG VIVA 340, 2005 340mm web, 5 L/P, UV, 1 flexo varnish, 1 rotary die, Gap Master, matrix & product rewinds. *Ref.LL820*

DELTA B100, 1985 240mm web, 3 L/P, UV, repeat 190mm, over lam, flat die, hot foil, slitting, matrix & product rewinds. *Ref.LL800*

GALLUS R200B/S, 2002 Corona, 6 print positions: 5 L/P + 2 screen, UV, hot foil, reverse printing, delam/relam, 1 flexo varnish, over lam, flat + 1 rotary die, matrix waste & product rewinds. *Ref.LL826*

KOPACK ALL IN ONE, 1990 2 unwinds, 250mm web, 12 L/P (6 CI+6 stack), UV, plow fold, hot melt glue, over lam, 2 rotary & 1 flat die, sheeter, rewind. EXCELLENT CONDITION. *Ref.LL682*

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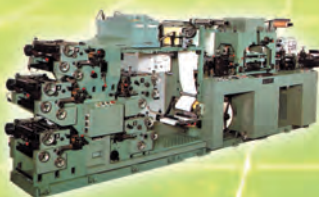
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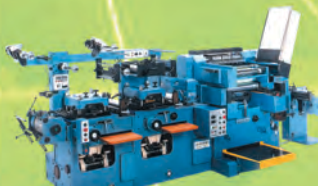
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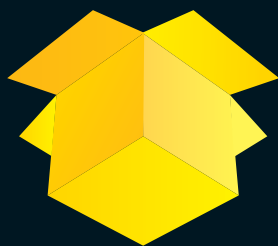
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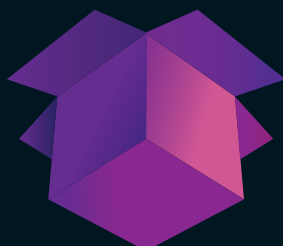


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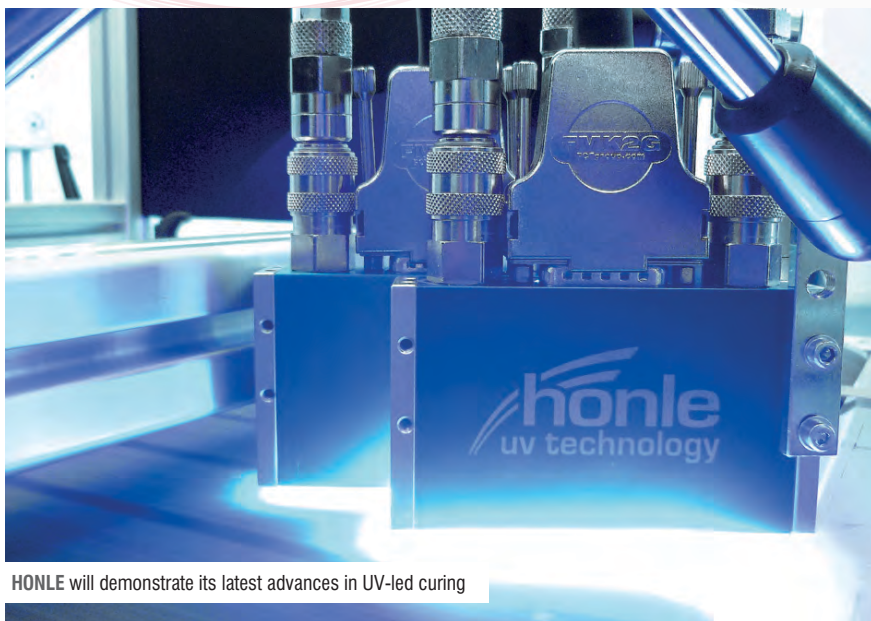
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HONLE will demonstrate its latest advances in UV-led curing

production solution for commercial, digital and label printers. New specialized labeling and packaging features enable seamless integration with the Caslon digital inkjet press, providing users with the ability to centralize control of their files and intelligently output them via the most cost efficient route, whether on a digital or conventional output device, or a third party system.

Visitors to the FFEI stand will also

see live demonstrations of RealVue 3D Packager, a 3D visualization software option for fast carton packaging or label prototyping.

FOCUS LABEL MACHINERY

Focus enters the digital print market with its new d-FLEX inkjet press. The press adds full color inkjet heads into the company's existing Reflex servo press along with an inline UV flexo print head,

die cutting, slitting and rewinding. Focus will demonstrate high quality variable images, overprinted in perfect register with UV flexo ink, then converted and rewound in a single pass.

In another new development, Focus extends its Centraflex model from water- and solvent-based to a new UV model designed for printing and converting a wide range of unsupported substrates including shrink sleeves and casings.

In order to stabilize the substrate temperature whilst subjected to the heat of the UV dryers, the Centraflex UV press will incorporate a water-cooled C.I. drum, using chilled water, together with air-cooled lampheads on each print station. The increased drum diameter allows extra space for the drying system and gives good access to all six print stations. For casings, the optional turn bar system will enable the substrate to be printed on both sides simultaneously, allowing up to six colours to be printed in register front and back (6 + 6 color printing). Also, an integral scraper blade system will be employed to remove any excess ink when casings are printed right up to the edge, without creating a build-up of ink on the CI drum.

For textile labels and ribbons, Focus will launch the bench top B4 Letterflex.

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This new design offers up to four colors, with options for reverse side printing and multiple ribbon printing. A new, halogen lamp drying system enables production speeds up to 60 m/min.

FUJIFILM

Fujifilm looks set to launch its Flenex DLE (Direct Laser Engraved) platesetter. To shown at Drupa with Fujifilm's new Flenex WV-1 plate, it is designed for carton, flexible packaging and label applications and available for UV or water based inks.

GALLUS

Gallus will demonstrate new inline decoration options on its ICS 670 carton press including a new gravure printing unit which can be integrated at any point in the machine and can use both water- and solvent-based inks. Cylindrical gravure sleeves help reduce operating costs and a shorter web path with various dryer options helps reduce waste. New inline modules for laminating and cold foiling on transparent films will also be shown. Gallus' HiDef flexo printing system will be introduced. It involves a combination of temperature-controlled anilox rollers, dynamic printing pressure adjustment and matched inking systems and printing plates.

The show also sees a new blank ejection option for the Gallus FCL flat-bed die-cutter. A 100 percent inspection system detects faulty blanks, which can then be ejected on a lane-by-lane basis with no restriction on blank length. Up to eight lanes of blanks can be monitored individually.

GSE

GSE Dispensing demonstrates a new software interface that integrates seamlessly with the printer's IT system. The MIS interface provides real-time information such as ink availability, ink recipes and an immediate overview of ink costs per order, enabling a more responsive print value chain.

A GSE associated company Print Proof Solutions will also display its Perfect Proofer at the drupa stand, an automated, table-top wet-proofing solution.

HONLE GROUP

The Honle Group will be demonstrating the latest advances in UV-LED curing, including the LED Powerline, a compact, high-performance array used for pinning and final curing in inkjet printing. The LED Powerline is available in wavelengths of 365/375/385/395/405nm. The length of the array is variable in 40mm steps and can be extended to over 100 cm.

LABELS&LABELING

Also new is the Eltosch ECOPower Dry, a modular IR/HA dryer for sheetfed presses. Each drying segment contains its own supply unit with integrated fan, damp register and microcontroller, which allows individual programming.

The Honle Group also shows a nitrogen-inert UV printing system for low-migration inks. High-speed inertization reduces the concentration of photoinitiators and thus migration levels.

See the news pages for the latest developments from HP Indigo

INX

The company shows its Evolve Advanced Digital Solutions line of equipment, which includes the new NW140 digital narrow web press with UV LED-cure single pass output, the CP100 cylindrical printer, and the MD series of flatbed printers.

INX offerings at drupa continue with various inks, coatings and color management options. Company experts will also discuss low migration packaging ink technology, including the European Printing Ink Association's newly updated guidelines and requirements.

INX also shows its print quality analysis support and Device Link Solution that optimizes total ink coverage while reducing ink consumption for both traditional and digital printing.

ISYS

Isys will launch its EDGE 850 desktop label printing system at the show. The digital press will print variable data on die cut or roll substrates at speeds of eight m/min (25ft/min/ 6ips) on a wide array of media. The company says applications will include beverage, food and consumer product label printing.

K2

UK-based press manufacturer, K2 International will exhibit a 6-color

FastAction flexographic press. It will be equipped with full UV curing and servo drives to enable both label and film packaging substrates to be processed and will incorporate a digital print head for variable data and barcodes.

The FA Fast Action press is available for both narrow and wider web labels and packaging applications up to 800mm. 'While our core competence has been in labels, we also manufacture wider web presses to meet the demand for packaging such as shrink and wrap around labels as well as specialized applications,' says managing director, Russell Oddy. 'For example we recently supplied an 800mm wide press for printing butter wraps equipped with drying systems for both solvent and water based inks.'

Standard equipment for the FastAction press includes PLC touch screen controls, automatic web tension, print and die stations of equal height for safer operation, ceramic anilox rolls and fast action print and die stations. Options include rotary cold foil stamping, UV laminating, sheeting, fan folding and video web inspection and remote diagnostics.

KODAK

Kodak will launch 10 new products from flexo plates to the latest high-volume digital inkjet presses, involving 30 individual industry partners, writes Barry Hunt.

Kodak will feature the Spotless Flexographic Solution for its established Flexcel NX flexo plate system. It is said to reduce spot color printing – meaning fewer plates and changeovers with faster make-readies – combined with gravure-like quality. This technology forms the basis for the new Flexcel Direct System for producing in-the-round flexo sleeves for package printing using



KODAK'S Flexcel Direct system

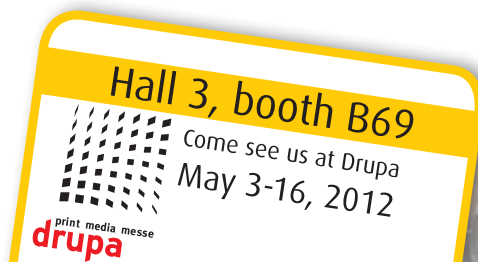
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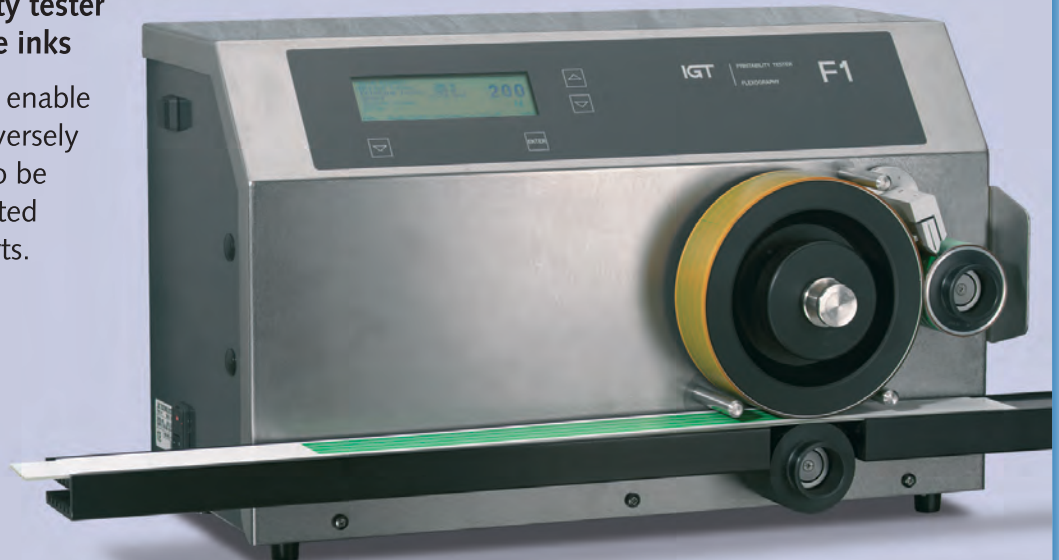
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direct laser engraving technology. Kodak claims it offers an affordable and energy-efficient approach to producing the press-ready elastomer sleeves with consistently high levels of print quality, while contributing to fast press set-up times.

Kodak will also launch Sonora XP, which is the latest iteration of its thermal direct offset plate system. As a waterless processing method it offers environmental benefits with lower operational costs and labor. Aimed at emerging markets, the Kodak Achieve is an entry-level thermal CTP system, complete with platesetter, plates, workflow, processing and chemistry.

LABELTRAXX

Narrow web MIS specialist Label Traxx introduces Digi Traxx, a powerful new tool for simplifying the prepress functions associated with multi-version label jobs in a digital environment. Digi Traxx imports line item data via XML directly from an existing MIS system, laying out the job ticket in the most efficient and productive manner. Digi Traxx creates the necessary JDF files and sends them to Esko Automation Engine AE10, where press-ready layouts are automatically created for printing, including step-and-repeat and markup insertion.

LONGFORD INTERNATIONAL

The company highlights two new offerings: a pharmaceutical track and trace system for serialization of pharmaceutical cartons and the C350 High Speed Tipping feeder which is able to accurately place leaflets, coupons and other pieces onto a carton on a folder gluer at speeds up to 70,000 pieces per hour.

MELZER

Melzer demonstrates its SL-600 RFID converting line. With up to 60,000 products/h this machine is designed for industrial production of small-sized RFID labels for alcohol brand protection, pharmaceutical fraud protection, vehicle identification and other high quality mass applications. The system incorporates testing and selection of UHF transponders in a 6-track stop and go process, ensuring only 'live' chips are selected. Melzer also demonstrates a fully automatic production line for e-cover inlays based on plated antennae plus lamination. For high productivity, the system includes selective antennae testing and chip connection by soldering.

MITSUBISHI PAPER

Mitsubishi Paper shows its new CTP system, Violet DigiPlate (VDP) and the newly developed silver nano particle technology for the printing of functional electrical circuits.

PHOSEON

Phoseon's UV LED curing technology will be showcased at OEM partner stands throughout the show, with both air and water cooled products based on patented Semiconductor Light Matrix (SLM) technology that utilizes proprietary packaging, optics, and thermal design.

POLAR

Polar will demonstrate the latest version of its LabelSystem automated cut & stack finishing system. The basic LabelSystem DC-11 will be shown together with a LabelSystem DCC-10 counter-pressure die-cutting machine with a new loading system. The LabelSystem SC-10 will be shown with a new automatic air-board removal system. Also new is the BM-105 manual multi-station banding machine and the Polar LabelSystem SC-25 with log banding.



FFEI launches digital press with Caslon inkjet module and new white print unit

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VETAPHONE'S VE1C quick change Corona-Plus treater station

PULSE ROLL LABEL PRODUCTS

This ink manufacturer launches new UV flexo formulations for shrink films and labels. The SLM Flexwrap Series of UV inks and coatings offer a range of EuPIA compliant formulations for shrink film and indirect food packaging applications. These inks do not need primers or protective varnishes. The SG series offers similar characteristics but are not intended for food packaging. Both offer high adhesion and shrink characteristics of more than 70 percent.

SF010, is a UV curable, silicone-free opaque white ink for rotary screen printing. The ink is formulated to permit use as a first-down white for subsequent over printing by flexo, letterpress and litho as well as screen inks or varnishes.

The new range will be complimented by EL088 a UV flexo, semi-gloss release

varnish for peel and read applications and the RLM series of metallic gold and silver inks and foil effect brights for flexo, screen or letterpress printing. Both products are suitable for use on coated paper and board and treated PE, PP and similar substrates.

QUADTECH

QuadTech introduces the SpectralCam HD color measurement system, an inline high-definition dot viewing and web stabilization system which enhances the company's existing spectral color measuring system. The HD variant facilitates on-the-fly detection of dot abnormalities such as pin-holing, bridging, doughnuts and halos. Images are captured at 2500dpi and are made instantly accessible through the ICON integrated networking platform.

SCHOBER

Schobertechnologies launches high-speed-robot technology for stacking and counting long and very challenging/complex IML-products inline with its RSM rotary cutting machine.

The unit features rapid acceleration, velocity and precision in stacking very long IML products at continuous web speeds up to 50 m/min.

Exchangeable product-specific Pick-and Place fixtures allow for flexibility and rapid changeover and ensure that products of different styles and forms are reliably stacked nonstop in dual piling cassettes at synchronized speeds. An inspection system for 100 percent quality verification with integrated waste separation is also available.

The standard configuration of the IML rotary cutter includes an M-Stack delivery system. S-Stack or the high-speed robot 'Spider' deliveries are available as options for future upgrades.

Additional optional equipment are an adjustable de-nesting station for

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several products across, offering reliable product stacking even for off-set product orientation as well as an antistatic device and a gap control system (GCS) for precise wear compensation of the die. Additional technologies to be highlighted at the show include die cutting, laser cutting, sealing/embossing, punching, cut & place, scoring/grooving, gluing/bonding, cutting, collating and product delivery.

SOMA

Soma's new Venus III slitter rewinder is designed to convert film materials in web widths from 1100mm to 1850mm and has an overhead web path to enhance clean room conditions and permit entry into the food and pharmaceutical packaging markets. The company's new PLUTO III slitter rewinder, meanwhile, has stronger side frames permitting accurate slitting at speeds up to 600m/min in widths from 1100 to 1600.

STORK PRINTS

Stork Prints shows its established DSI UV inkjet press with a new digital primer, enabling printing on machine coated paper. The press is supplied with four print heads as standard, but an additional six can be added to enable options like the digital primer, digital white and an extended color gamut through orange and violet.

The company also launches a new range of light-weighted gravure sleeves and adapters. The reengineered sleeves are based on a single metal technology – directly engraveable nickel.

As well as standard electromechanical engraving, the nickel sleeves can be engraved by Stork Prints' direct laser engraving systems for a fully digital, one-step process. This eliminates the cost of film and time-consuming exposure, washing and drying processes. No chrome plating is needed, which saves handling and is more environmentally friendly. After usage, the sleeve can be scrapped and the nickel re-used for new sleeve production. The sleeves weigh just 20 pounds and are available in any repeat size from 12" to 42" and in printing widths up to 75".

The program is completed with Stork Prints' adapters, the bridge between mandrel and sleeve. Sleeves can be mounted in and outside the machine, potentially reducing set-up times dramatically.

TRESU

Tresu Group will unveil an inline, pressure-controlled varnishing system for high-speed, sheet-fed and web offset printing presses. Suitable for UV- and water-based varnishes, and based on Tresu's ancillary's flexo technology, the new self-regulating system comprises the Tresu UniPrint Combi chamber doctor blade E-line and Coating Circulator and a Tresu Coating Conditioner.

A key feature of the concept is the company's Pressure Control Technology. This ensures a sufficient pressure so that a constant barrier is maintained between the chamber doctor blade and the rotating open anilox cells, preventing air-bubbles from entering. Working with the UniPrint Combi is the Tresu Coating Circulator i Series. The circulator automatically adjusts to the coating supply and initiates either a six-minute or intensive 12-minute cleaning program, enabling fast job changes. By means of a sensor to measure coating volumes and press speeds at the doctor blade, the circulator regulates coating consumption. Temperature regulation for UV coatings is achieved with Tresu's new Coating Conditioners, which feature an automatic re-filling system to maintain coating quantity and temperatures of up to 55°C.

VETAPHONE

Vetaphone will demonstrate its updated VE1C Station with the unique Quick Change System enabling quick and easy cleaning and changing of the complete set of electrodes, in a matter of seconds, without the use of tools, and ensuring minimal downtime and increased productivity.

The open type of Corona-Plus treater station has an easily accessible design for single or double sided treatment. The stations can be fitted with a wide range of ceramic and metallic electrodes in a variety of shapes. The treater stations give optimum surface adhesion on all types of plastic, paper and metal substrates.

The electrode cartridge is available with segment-, profile- and ceramic electrodes. The Quick Change (QC) electrode cartridge is aimed at film lines with widths from 100 mm to up to 2500 mm. Vetaphone will also display the new iCorona generator series with features including auto power density control, auto quality reports and auto maintenance schedules all controlled via an intuitive touch control panel.

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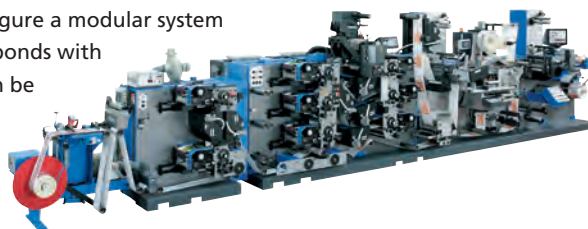
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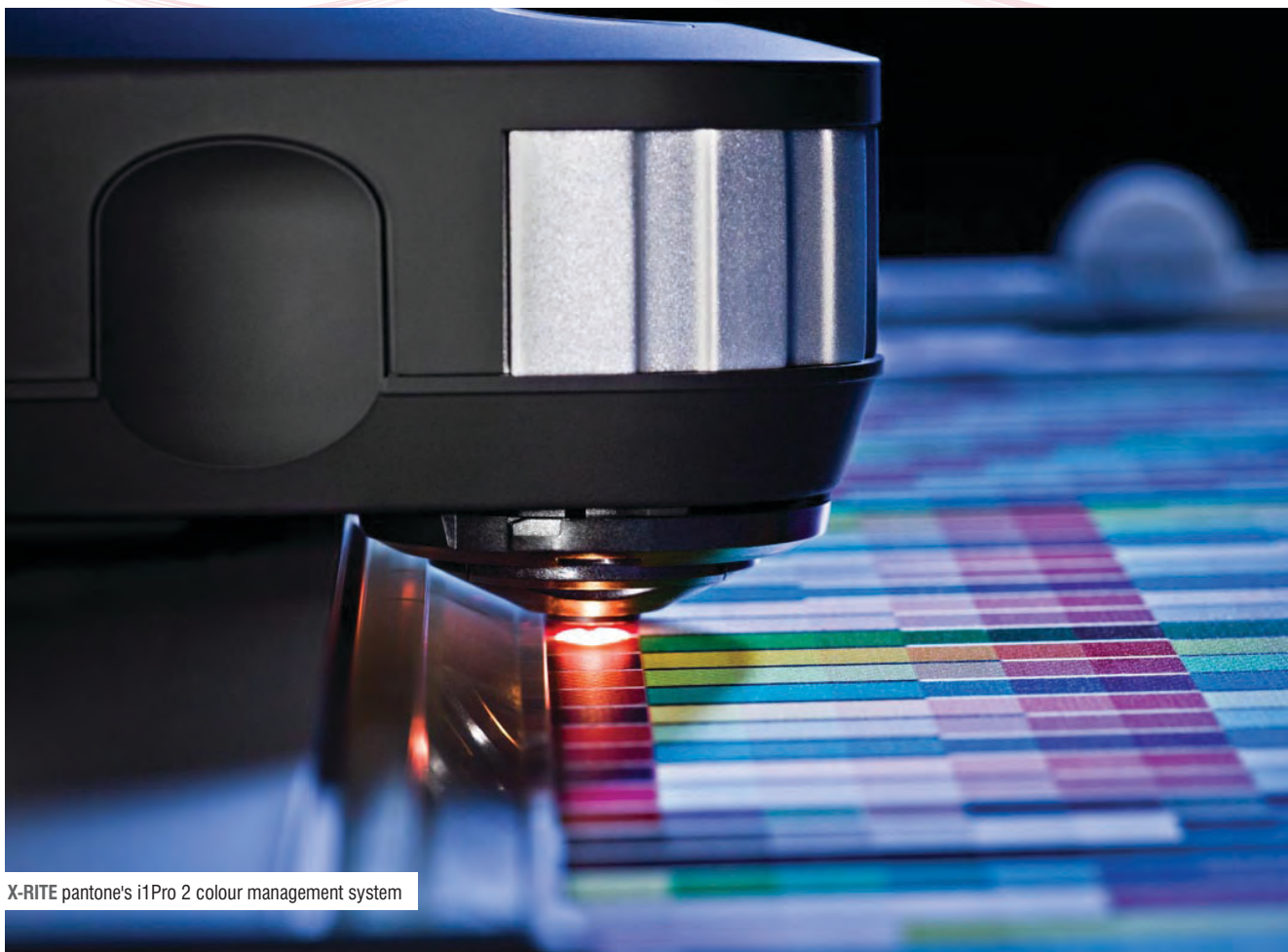
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X-RITE pantone's i1Pro 2 colour management system

WILL/PEMCO/KUGLER-WOMAKO

E.C.H. Will, Pemco and Kugler-Womako will focus on converting digital print in the book and bindery space. Pemco also shows the SHM Digidicut, a highly flexible precision sheeter for digital, cut-size and folio-size formats. The SHM Digidicut processes all types of material from digital printing paper, coated paper and board up to film. Flexible working widths as well as fast changeover times allow for the efficient production of small volumes too, says the group.

WEIFANG DONGHANG

Chinese press manufacturer Weifang Donghang is launching three new presses in Europe as it sets up a European distribution and technical support network and opens a major new manufacturing facility in China.

The intermittent offset press first seen at Labelexpo Asia in Shanghai last year (see L&L 1 p46) is constructed to be sold in global markets, using Rexroth servo motors throughout, automated registration control and a BST inspection system. The company also launches a new flexo press and a digital press using Xaar inkjet heads.

See news pages for a separate feature about Xeikon

X-RITE PANTONE

X-Rite and its wholly-owned subsidiary Pantone will showcase Pantoneive, a cloud-based service to obtain consistent and accurate color for packaging from design to the retail shelves. It applies to standardized and automated workflows applied to multiple packs involving a variety of substrate types. PantoneLive covers all stakeholders, from brand owners and designers through to pressroom operators. Enhanced Pantone color libraries are also featured.

Also new is X-Rite Pantone's i1Pro 2 color management system. The redesigned i1Pro 2 hand held spectrophotometer is combined with the new i1Profiler software v1.3. It incorporates the latest touch-and-swipe navigation technology and intuitive software to allow operators to make quick and easy color measurements based on the latest ISO standards. The i1Pro 2 platforms include the X-Rite Graphic Arts Standard (XRGa). This makes it quicker and easier for companies involved in digital printing to adhere to ISO standards and achieve reliable and repeatable CMYK and spot colors.

ZELLER+GMELIN

From Zeller+Gmelin comes a new UV offset ink, Uvalux U70 designed to give good adhesion on non-absorbent substrates like metalized film or board. Z+G says the ink has high color strength, good ink flow – also in chamber systems – high reactivity and low odor. Two other inks from the Uvalux series will be promoted: Uvalux U40 offset and letterpress inks for universal use on paper, board and synthetics, and Uvalux U40 series for direct mail printing.

Z+G will also show its full range of low migration UV printing inks for food packaging, including Uvaflex Y71 UV-flexo inks formulated for printing labels on paper and synthetic substrates, unsupported film, folding cartons and flexible packaging. The ink is claimed to show improved wet-rub resistance on synthetic substrates. Other low migration UV inks include Uvalux U41 – the low migration alternative to the Uvalux U40 series for offset and letterpress and with equal press performance and adhesion properties. Uvalux U71 is the low migration alternative to the Uvalux U70 series.

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THE HP Indigo 30000

HP launch marks package print revolution

HP INDIGO has leveraged the technical and market strength of its digital technology to develop a new generation of dedicated flexible packaging and carton presses. Andy Thomas reports

HP Indigo is developing two digital presses with a robust build and larger format size to meet the requirements of mainstream flexible packaging and folding carton production.

The 762mm (30in) wide, web-fed HP Indigo 20000 Digital Press and the 750mm (29.5in) wide, sheet-fed HP Indigo 30000 Digital Press use the same 'one-shot' 7-color imaging technology – scaled to twice the size – as the WS4600/WS6600 series presses but have new, industrial strength workflow systems capable of handling standard format packaging substrates.

Some 400 engineers are engaged in this project, which has involved building a new B2+ sheetfed digital press at the same time as developing these two packaging variants, making it one of HP's biggest global R&D projects.

Christopher Morgan, senior vice president, Graphics Solutions Business at HP was quite clear that packaging is a long-term strategic market for HP. 'With these new presses, we can help packaging printers offer their customers the benefits of digital printing and redefine what is possible for the brands they serve.'

Alon Bar-Shany, vice president and general manager at HP's Indigo Digital Press division reinforced that message. He told journalists that packaging and labels already accounts for 20 percent of the company's global business. 'By 2016 a large part of our business will be based on these new presses, and the percentage of HP Indigo's business in packaging will increase.'

NEW CAPABILITIES

The carton and flexible packaging presses will take advantage of a range of new capabilities unveiled for the HP Indigo WS6600 press launched at Labelexpo Europe. These will include in-line priming (ILP) – as well as in-line corona treating

– integrated in the press infeed units. Michelman recently released a new water-based primer for the ILP unit – Michem ILP040 primer – which extends the ILP's media compatibility from paper-based substrates to synthetic media. This will enable the presses to handle all standard package printing materials without pre-coating.

Another significant innovation is Enhanced Productivity Mode. This boosts press throughput by one-third by printing in CMY and dropping the black separation.

With toner-based systems this can often leave a somewhat 'dirty' or 'brown' black, but the print examples seen by this writer at the HP Indigo development facility were truly impressive and hard to tell apart from the CMYK version. Press speed is increased – since each separation requires another rotation of the imaging drum – and total print cost is reduced.

For the pharma market a significant new release is HP's security print package, SecurePack, initially made available for HP Indigo WS6600 and HP Indigo WS4600 model presses, which provides 'a controlled and monitored environment for efficient production of pharmaceutical and security applications'. This will be available to both the package print presses.

THE 20000 UP CLOSE

Scheduled for commercial availability in late 2013, the HP Indigo 20000 is a roll-to-roll digital press designed primarily for flexible packaging.

The press's 762mm (30in) media width and 1,100mm (44in) repeat length should accommodate most format sizes in these market sectors. The HP Indigo 20000 runs at 27 linear meters (88.6 linear feet) in five-color mode – full process color plus white – and at 45 linear metres (147.6 linear feet)



THE HP Indigo 20000

per minute when running in Enhanced Productivity Mode. Material range is from 10 to 250 microns (0.4 –10pt). The integrated rotogravure-based priming unit will allow the press to print on paper, flexible packaging film and aluminum substrates as well as prime labels, shrink sleeves and laminate tubes, all without pre-coating. Materials printed on the press are compatible with dry lamination and form-fill-seal machinery and comply with indirect contact food packaging regulations when used with good manufacturing practices.

Flexible packaging applications require both surface printing on opaque materials and reverse printing on clear materials, and the press' color switching technology allows changing of color and color sequence on the fly. HP's ink scientists have demonstrated a new, more opaque white, which matches up well to current UV flexo whites as a first down without a double bump.

The HP Indigo 20000 press will incorporate an EskoArtwork-driven print server and upstream prepress tools and third-party options are being developed to provide complementary capabilities such as web-to-print, MIS services and inspection/verification of printed content.

For converters wishing to set up dedicated production lines for short-run work, there will be qualified finishing options for the new press. Pouch-making equipment manufacturer Totani has joined the HP SmartStream Solutions Partner program, for example, and is developing a range of flexible packaging finishing solutions.

CARTON SPECIAL

The sheet-fed HP Indigo 30000 Digital Press offers a 750 x 530mm (29.5 x

LABELS&LABELING

20.9in) format size compatible with existing B2+ offset printing presses used for mainstream folding carton production. Scheduled for commercial availability in late 2013, the press offers up to 7-color printing on carton stocks up to 600 microns thick. The press can run up to 4,600 sheets per hour in Enhanced Productivity Mode and 3,450 sheets per hour with regular 4-color process printing. After printing the sheet is immediately available for post-print finishing since there are no drying or set-off issues.

As mentioned, the press will incorporate an in-line priming unit at the infeed and will be equipped with a heavy duty offset press style pile feeder and vacuum transport.

The HP Indigo 30000 features the same EskoArtwork-driven print server and upstream prepress tools as the 20000. Additional production components, such as digital finishing solutions from HP SmartStream Solutions Partner program members, are also promised – including post-print in-line varnishing.

SCALING UP

At the pre-drupa event, HP Indigo focused attention on the launch of the 10000 sheetfed press, which showcases many of the imaging innovations used in the packaging press print engines.

A glance inside the B2+ format HP Indigo 10000 digital press shows how HP has handled the bigger photo-imaging plate (PIP) and blanket required for the larger print format. The operator's life is made much easier with the PIP automated replacement system (PARS) and automated blanket replacement (BARS). The latter works much like a semi-automatic plate changer on

an offset press: the leading edge is fed into a socket on the cylinder, automatically wrapped around the drum, then the trailing edge is locked down. A key advantage of automatic blanket replacement is that the unit does not have to cool down between blanket changes, greatly reducing press downtime.

The writing speed of the imaging head's 28 lasers has been increased to over 2,000 megapixels a second to cope with the wider format. The ink cabinet has been moved to the rear of the press and the capacity of the ink containers doubled.

Significant automation has been added to the 10000 press including automatic color registration on paper, color calibration with a built in spectrophotometer, and full sheet checking of content against an original using the vision scanner. It will be interesting to see how these elements are integrated into the new packaging presses.

SPECIAL EFFECTS

A number of interesting products – primarily for its sheetfed presses – were demonstrated in HP's R&D lab. These included an invisible ink which can only be read under a UV scanner, and a clear toner which can be built up on a special blanket in multiple passes to do sheet embossing. The new 7600 press can deliver 400kilo of pressure at 110degC to perform the emboss or blind emboss, and the mould – which can be built up in minutes – is good for up to 1000 paper sheets.

Another demonstration on a 7600 press displayed a raised, screen-like image formed from printing up to 50 layers of transparent ink.

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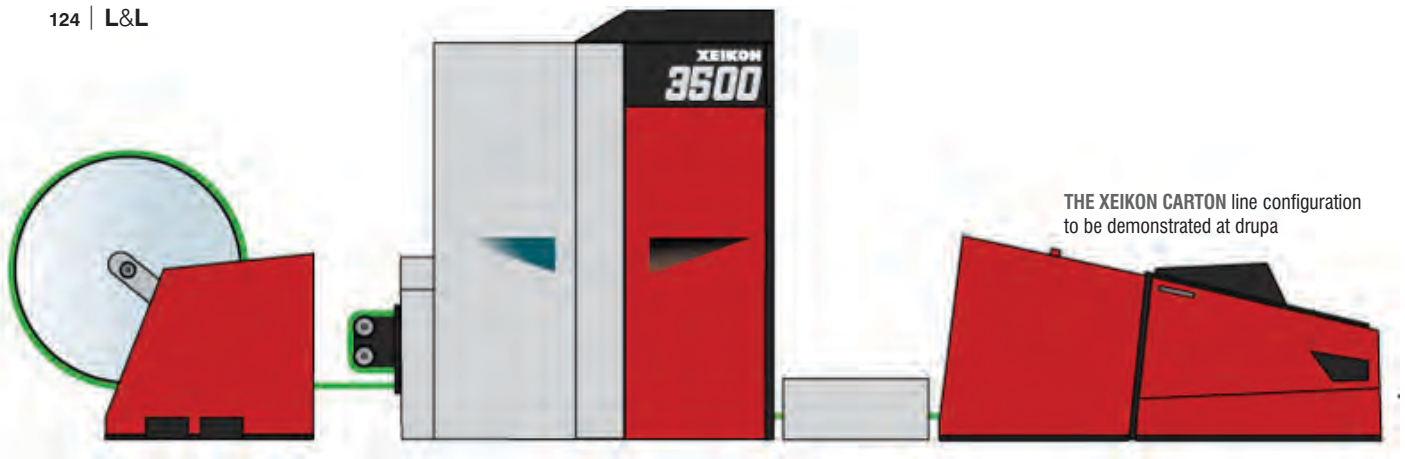


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THE XEIKON CARTON line configuration to be demonstrated at drupa

Xeikon expands to cartons and flexo CTP

DIGITAL LABEL PRESS pioneer Xeikon has expanded its portfolio for drupa with the launch of a dedicated carton line and new flexo CTP technology. Barry Hunt reports

Xeikon features some notable developments at drupa, including a dedicated printing and finishing system for producing folding cartons, and the unveiling of the ThermoFlexX series of platesetters for flexo and letterpress using the Prinergy Workflow acquired from Kodak. The company will also give a glimpse of Quantum, a future hybrid digital imaging technology.

The company promotes three application-specific suites for the label and packaging markets: the Self-adhesive Labels Suite, the Heat Transfer Labels Suite and the new Folding Carton Suite. Each has the established Xeikon 3000 Series of digital label presses at its core, integrated with application-specific toners, workflow software, substrate and equipment components. The presses can print up to 350gsm paperboard (550 micron/21.65mil), with a web width ranging from 200mm (7.8 ins) to 516mm (20.3 ins).

ROLL-TO-SHEET CARTON PRODUCTION

Two Xeikon 3300s will produce self-adhesive labels at the show, whereas a Xeikon 3500 will demonstrate carton production. Its configuration comprises a jumbo unwinder with a web cleaner to collect excess paper dust. A web finishing module (WFM) placed after the print engine reconditions the paperboard. This unit also holds the cutter unit to convert the web into the appropriate sheets defined by the imposition scheme. A stacker collects the printed sheets and separates any type of waste in a separate tray. Modified consumables for carton printing and an in-line densitometer to help maintain

LABELS&LABELING

quality standards are included.

As with all Xeikon 3000 Series presses, an X-800 Digital Front End drives the digital production workflow. An Adobe RIP incorporates post imposition software and color managements tools. To maximize substrate usage, carton designs are nested on the sheets using an X-800 plug-in to create imposition schemes.

Xeikon's Aura Partners, including M-real, Iggesund, Stora Enso, International Paper and Sappi supply the certified carton substrates, none of which require special pretreatment. QA-I toner, a dedicated toner for the label industry, is said to offer significant benefits in terms of image quality, light fastness and food safety. Additionally, the Folding Carton Suite includes a range of other certified consumables providing the best option for varnishing, laminating and other post print processes.

'Self-adhesive labels are common in a roll-fed environment whereas a carton is a single piece, situated in a sheet-fed environment,' said Filip Weymans, marketing director for Xeikon's label and packaging segment. 'The Xeikon press has a distinct advantage in this regard since it can produce sheets of variable length and minimize the amount of material wasted. We have been working in this market for more than 14 years since we first introduced our B2 technology. This has enabled us to gain a wealth of knowledge and experience in folding carton production.'

NEW THERMOFLEXX PLATE SYSTEM

Earlier this year, Xeikon acquired FlexoLaser, a manufacturer of computer-to-plate devices for both flexo and letterpress applications. At the same

time, it also acquired the rights to the ThermoFlex trademark from Eastman Kodak. Drupa will therefore see the unveiling of ThermoFlexX, a series of platesetters, or digital imagers, for flexo and letterpress platemaking. As part of a global reseller agreement, Xeikon includes Kodak's Prinergy Workflow to automate the prepress processes from file creation to finished product. Functions include imposition, trapping, RIP, screening and final assembly of files.

Based on mature technology and proven digital workflow techniques, ThermoFlexX images digital plates at resolutions of 2,540 or 5,080 dpi. User benefits include a clamping design that allows operators to mount plates directly on to the drum, using either vacuum or by magnetic holding methods. The vacuum sliders take plates of any width without the need to cut plates to fit a dedicated vacuum zone.

A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE

Drupa visitors can see a sneak preview of Xeikon's latest technology. Named Quantum, it is said to combine the best of two worlds: electrophotography and inkjet while printing high quality images at high speeds. The new technology platform saw significant development time and capital invested in it before Xeikon acquired the full intellectual property rights. Quantum will form the basis for all Xeikon's future product lines for document printing, currently served by its 8000 Series digital color presses. The toner based and waterless non-VOC technology will allow users to print on untreated substrates that are compatible with the existing paper recycling technologies.



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GRUPO Fibrafil's plant houses 21 machines for the production of shade cloth and tomato twine

New player in Peru

LIMA-BASED Grupo Fibrafil is moving into label production with the purchase of a Gallus ECS 340 flexo press. Backed by strong infrastructure throughout Latin America, the company has ambitions of becoming an important regional player, as James Quirk reports

Grupo Fibrafil, based in the Peruvian capital of Lima, is moving into label production with the installation of an 8-color Gallus ECS 340 flexo press. The company is one of the leading Latin America producers of two agro-industrial products: shade cloth and tomato twine, which are deployed in greenhouses.

The move is representative of a growing trend in Latin America's lesser-developed label markets such as Peru and Bolivia – outlined in L&L issue 6, 2011 – of new players entering the market and investing in high quality machinery to serve local brands accustomed to importing labels from abroad.

But Grupo Fibrafil's impact might be felt beyond its local market. With an existing regional network that includes factories in Peru and Chile and offices in Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico and Uruguay, the company has ambitions to

export labels in the near future and calls its investment in the Gallus press 'just the beginning'.

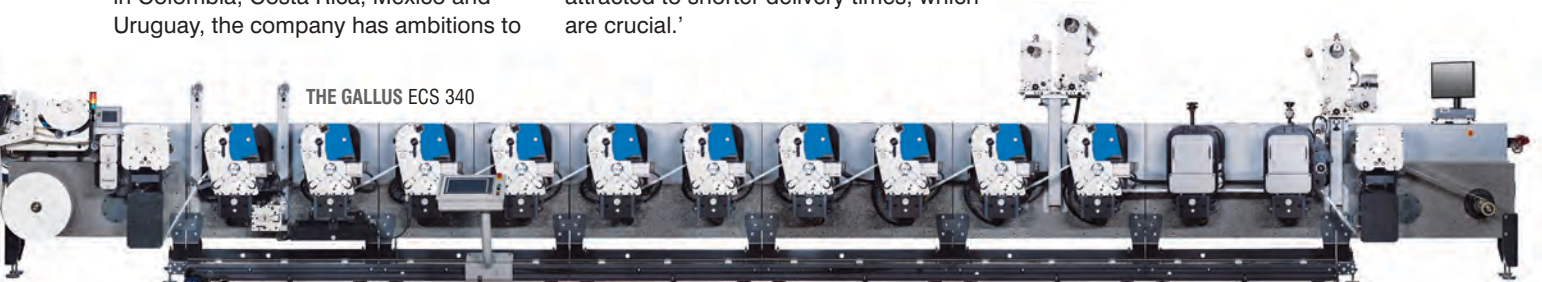
Testing the water

Nicolas Zaidan, Grupo Fibrafil's sales manager, says that the company was encouraged to move away from its core market – for which it produces 1.82 million square meters of products a month on a fleet of 21 machines – because of the 'great potential for growth' in the Peruvian label sector.

A 4-color flexo press from Etirama was installed in mid-2011 to test the water. It was quickly running at full capacity – 24 hours a day, seven days a week. 'The Peruvian label market is not well-attended,' says Zaidan. 'Many labels are still imported from abroad. Producing locally with the Etirama press, we were able to win a lot of business from brands attracted to shorter delivery times, which are crucial.'

The next step was the purchase of the Gallus ECS 340, the Swiss manufacturer's granite-based flexo press. Its eight color units are fully UV and the machine counts on cold foil, hot foil and screen printing among its options. According to Zaidan, the press will be dedicated to the production of prime, security and PVC labels, with an annual capacity of two million square meters.

The Gallus ECS 340 is a short web path, fully servo-driven, multi-pass flexo and cold foiling machine with front loading dies, print and anilox sleeves. The ECS 340 is constructed from recyclable technical granite, which helps eliminate vibration and noise from the press line. The press features a very short web path, which considerably reduces both set-up and running waste,



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NICOLÁS ZAIDAN, Grupo Fibrafil's sales manager

while the technical granite frame allows a design with easy access to the print and processing stations.

The installation is the first of a Gallus press in Peru. Service and technical support will be handled from the press manufacturer's base in Mexico.

Grupo Fibrafil's investment is far from over. A second machine is already being lined up for the end of the year, while the company has also installed a slitter rewinder from US-based Converting Equipment International, which runs at speeds of up to 600 meters a minute; a plate moulder from UK company JM Heaford; and a Flexowash anilox cleaner.

'The investment in the Gallus press is just the beginning,' reveals Zaidan. 'We will be buying more machines in the future: we are considering installing



ASIDE from its agro-industrial products, 30 percent of the company's existing business is taken by production of ropes and threads

three more machines during 2012 and 2013.'

Pre-press will be initially outsourced but brought in-house in the future, says Zaidan. RotoMetrics and Green Bay have been signed up as suppliers, while discussions are underway with Fasson, Bonset and Zeller + Gmelin.

REGIONAL NETWORK

The company's new label printing equipment will initially be housed in a dedicated 1,000 sqm area within Grupo Fibrafil's 15,000 sqm factory. But the company is already in the process of purchasing an 8,000 sqm site nearby, where the label division – which will operate under the name Sigmaflex – will move next year.

After initially targeting the local market – where Zaidan sees particular potential in the cosmetics, pharmaceutical and food markets – the company plans to export to Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica and Ecuador. Twenty-five percent of production will be dedicated to labels for Grupo Fibrafil's agro-industrial products.

The company's existing network of offices around the region will of course facilitate its serving of foreign markets. Zaidan says he will employ a dedicated label salesperson in these other offices to sell directly into their local markets. Even export costs are not a problem, as the company already sends its agro-industrial products around the region, allowing label runs to be added to existing shipments.

'Exporting labels to other countries is complicated if you don't have a network in place,' says Zaidan. 'The client wants its labels tomorrow, but might have to wait 20 days. We will be able to serve foreign clients quickly with local stock.'

Further label presses may be installed in other countries where the company already operates.

Grupo Fibrafil, which employs around 80 people at its factory in Peru, is part of Grupo Zaidan. It is only in Peru that the company is known as Grupo Fibrafil, but the other offices in the region all fall under the Grupo Zaidan umbrella.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST LATIN AMERICA LABEL STORIES

ISYS APPOINTS ARGENTINA DISTRIBUTOR

iSys Label has appointed DeMarchi, a label converter based in Buenos Aires, as its Argentina distributor.

'There are great opportunities in Argentina for the iSys Label line of printers,' said Leonardo DeMarchi, owner of DeMarchi. 'The Apex 1290 has the quality and impression we are looking for within the simplicity of the machine. The software allows the user to have total control of the printer. The Apex 1290 can print on a variety of substrates, without pre-treatment, giving the user multiple output options while saving time.'

DeMarchi specializes in printing pressure sensitive labels, offering flexo, screen, offset, letterpress and now digital printers, with the Apex 1290.

'iSys Label is truly thrilled to add DeMarchi as our Argentina distributor,' said Randy Rickert, director of iSys Label. 'We are confident DeMarchi will present our products and offer quality service to our customer base in Argentina.'

METRICS LAUNCHES ONLINE TRAINING PLATFORM

Brazilian MIS supplier Metrics has launched an online training platform called Metrics Corporate University. The initiative allows clients to participate, at any time and from anywhere, in quick and practical training through online videos and tests.

The tool's objective is to spread knowledge about Metric's management software to all its users, allowing them to gain maximum results and explore all the systems' functionalities.

Metrics Corporate University currently offers free training for its administrative, commercial and production modules.

The company has a team that is dedicated to creating the courses.

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PARTICIPANTS enjoy a wine blending afternoon at Zevenwacht winery

African gateway

THE TARSUS GROUP held its first African label summit in Cape Town in March, attracting more than 300 delegates. Andy Thomas reports

The inaugural Label Summit Africa has been hailed a major success after 303 senior delegates including converters, brand owners and label designers attended. Held at the Cape Town International Convention Centre (CTICC) between 19-20 March, the Summit's program proved thought-provoking and brought new ideas on how to do business across the wider continent. Uniquely for a Label Summit event, there was a major attendance from brand owners.

Organized by the Labelexpo Global Series team, the keynote

address was given by Jay Gouliard of Avery Dennison Label and Packaging Materials. Highlighting the importance of innovation, Gouliard looked at the opportunities and benefits offered by sustainable label systems, whilst outlining that increasing sustainability can maximize profitability. Other presentations included Dr Adrian Steele of Mercian Labels Group who gave a case study on how online marketing transformed a short run label printing business model. HP Indigo's Christian Menegon with Grant Watson from Rotolabel outlined the benefits of digital printing and other digital technologies with

case studies on Coca Cola, Sprite and Wing Man.

Designed to look at fresh and radical ways of doing business, the Summit's content led to detailed and well attended panel discussions. The printer panel discussion addressed the challenges and opportunities facing label converters and examined the requirements of export markets for global competitiveness. The retailer panel discussion, which included panellists from Woolworths, Clicks and Shoprite, tackled private labels versus premium brands and also considered the importance of personalization with the growing demand for short run promotions. The beverage panel discussion comprised of wine producers including Boland Cellar, Boer & Brit and Haskell Vineyards and label designer Fanakalo, looked at brand enhancement and engaging consumers through product promotion.

Supporting the conference, the Summit also featured a table-top exhibition and impactful and innovative social program. Delegates and exhibitors' time was effectively and productively spent with valuable networking opportunities throughout the event. Over 200 delegates attended a private dinner and beach party at Grand Café & Beach in Granger Bay on the opening evening, while over 150 enjoyed wine tasting and a blending, bottling and labeling session at the stunning Zevenwacht wine estate, part of the Stellenbosch Wine Route. The labels were printed digitally by Rotolabel.

Roger Pellow, Labelexpo managing director, said: "Label Summit Africa 2012

has been an enormous success – far exceeding our original expectations. Delegate and exhibitor feedback has been hugely positive particularly about the Summit's content and choice of venue. The event brought the whole supply chain and label industry together with around 15 percent delegates being brand designers or owners like SAB Miller, KWV and Appletiser.'

He continues: 'It is very clear that the program of speakers gave the audience an inspiring and fresh insight into ways of doing business and opening up new opportunities. We're confident that the mix of technology presentations, discussion panels and customer case studies ensured delegates gained new ideas and techniques on how they can successfully further their business across the African continent. We will be returning in 2014.'





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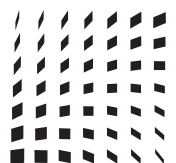
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Peru sees packaging growth

PERU has enjoyed South America's highest GDP growth in recent years, and the country's packaging sector has been reaping the benefits. James Quirk speaks to Juan Pablo Patiño, manroland Latina's general manager, about the local market.

Peru has been one of Latin America's recent success stories, seeing rapid GDP growth over the past few years thanks to a booming export market and free trade agreements within South America and, more recently, with the US.

According to data from The World Bank, the country's GDP growth peaked at 9.8 percent for 2008, while the figures for 2010 (8.78 percent) and 2011 (6.92 percent) were also impressive. 2012 is forecast to see 5.5 percent growth.

Peru's rapid export market growth has been facilitated by free trade agreements between regional trade blocs CAN (which brings together the Andean countries of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) and Mercosur (made up of the Southern Cone nations of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay) in 2004; and between Peru and the US in 2009.

Unsurprisingly, Peru's packaging and labeling markets are reaping the benefits of the increasing quantities of products being packaged locally and then exported. The country has seen a surge in installations of high-quality printing and converting machinery from leading international brands, as local operations spring up to take advantage of the growth.

One such manufacturer that has witnessed this recent shift in the Peruvian market is manroland Latina, which set up an operation in Lima, the country's capital, three years ago following the break-up of its distribution relationship with Ferrostaal. Since 2010, manroland Latina has also represented Danish label press manufacturer Nilpeter in Peru, and as such has been well positioned to take advantage of the growth in the local packaging and labeling markets. Further representation deals are in place for the country with Lamina System, a Sweden-based manufacturer of sheet-to-sheet laminating, folding and gluing equipment, and Brausse, a supplier of die cutting and creasing machinery headquartered in Canada.

According to Juan Pablo Patiño, manroland Latina's general manager, the company has installed three manroland sheet-fed machines for packaging in the last six months, and aims to complete four installations of Nilpeter label presses by the end of the first quarter of 2012.

Patiño sees a shift in the profile of the clients and in the technical specifications of the machines being installed, reflective of the market's increasing capacity and quality requirements and of the number

of companies moving into the sector for the first time.

'In Peru, many printing companies working in the commercial or editorial sectors are moving into the labeling and packaging market – be it flexible or rigid – where nowadays there is much more potential for growth,' he says.

One of the recent installations is at Indupack, which last year installed its second manroland machine, a Roland 204 sheet-fed offset press with a 52 x 74cm sheet size, dedicated to carton printing. The addition of the new machine has helped the company to double its production – which is dedicated to mass-consumption products headed for export such as tea and alcoholic beverage Pisco – and forced a move to larger premises.

When the partnership with Nilpeter was signed in 2010, there were two of the Danish press manufacturer's machines in Peru. Over the next few months that figure will rise to six, with four installations currently underway. In an example of the sector attracting companies from other industries, Ychiformas, a printer of continuous forms, has purchased a seven-color Nilpeter FB 2500 with cold foil as it moves into label production for the first time.

'Rotary offset for form printing and flexo for label production are very different technologies, but the continuous forms industry is losing ground and the company was attracted by the growth in the labeling and packaging sector,' says Patiño.

Peru is seeing two major trends in the packaging and labeling sector, according to Patiño – the increasing desire for value-added products using features such as varnishing and foiling; and a move towards shorter runs with ever more product variation.

'Between manroland and Nilpeter, we have ranges of machines that can cater to both these trends,' says Patiño. 'For example, even commodity products are increasingly looking for added value. And while gravure technology was widely used for long runs of these types of products, now flexo can offer this added value and allows for a gravure unit to be added as well.'



MANROLAND is seeing an increase in installations of its sheet-fed offset packaging presses in Peru

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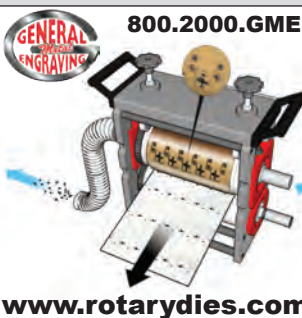
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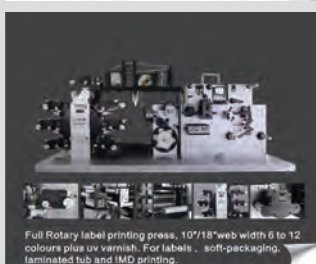
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Worker power

TIMOTHY BEDNARZ argues that empowering employees directly drives bottom line profit

Many traditional managers fail to understand how empowerment can impact their bottom line, as there are a number of hidden costs associated with restricting employee abilities and capabilities. Most are focused on their power and authority and concentrate on ways to maintain their personal power base.

Leaders, on the other hand, understand that tapping into the human potential of their employees unleashes a tremendous source of power, information and expertise that the organization can ultimately benefit from.

ABSENTEEISM

As employee involvement increases through empowerment, most companies experience a noticeable decrease in absenteeism because the individual contribution to the organization is sought, valued and recognized. Empowered individuals are challenged to their maximum capacity and abilities, resulting in an increase in overall job satisfaction. Consequently, the cost of lost productivity associated with absenteeism is reduced and can be directly attributed to a benefit and positive effect of empowerment.

EMPLOYEE TURNOVER

Since empowerment taps the individual resources each employee can provide and focuses on the combined efforts of all employees toward a common goal, job satisfaction increases. As a result, for the first time many employees feel that they are valued, and they come to understand their role in the company's success. They are invited to grow with the company and

expand their personal capabilities. They are rewarded and recognized for their personal contributions, which motivates them to do more and continue to grow.

PRODUCTIVITY

Empowerment sparks new ideas and concepts throughout the organization, including ways to reduce waste and increase productivity and efficiency. While these may be small improvements, in the empowered environment they add up to additional profits over time.

Additionally, empowerment improves the relationships among managers, leaders and employees, which correspondingly reduces complaints and grievances. While these elements are difficult to quantify, the productivity increase attributable to the resolution of these problems positively impacts the performance of the organization.

REPUTATION

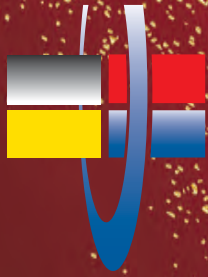
There is a demonstrable relationship between an enlightened workplace and overall performance. Companies who have empowered their employees are more productive, retain more customers and are more profitable. They are able to withstand economic pressures and competitive demands because of overall employee involvement.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Timothy Bednarz is author of Empowerment: Pinpoint Leadership Skill Development Training Series (Majorium Business Press, 2011) 19.95 US dollars

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