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Leading US wine event shows new degrees of creativity and opportunities to add value

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SPIRITS TREND TO PS

Trans-Atlantic converter Eurostampa is making new press investments as spirits market trends to PS

HYBRID PRINTING

Repacorp adds variable - to flexo operation with web-width inkjet unit

L&L THE WIDER WORLD **OF NARROW WEB**

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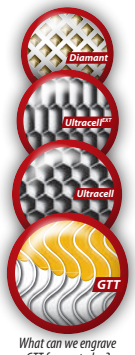

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Owning a complete label application technology enables Smyth to develop highly innovative products

REGULARS

FOOD SCANDAL

The Europe-wide food contamination scandal continues to spread as horse and pig meat is found in more processed beef products.

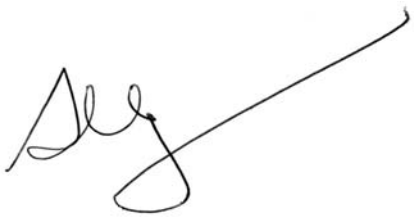
Highly trusted brands and retailers find themselves facing a public relations disaster (though not as yet, thankfully, a public health disaster) and the European regulatory authorities stand ready to prosecute the manufacturers at the center of the scandal, forcing the processed food chain to question the practices which have brought such cheap food to consumers at a time of rising raw material and global food prices.

This raises the question of traceability in the supply chain and why it was not implemented across the EU – one of the world's most highly regulated internal markets. In the case of one of the first contaminated products to be found – 'value' beef burgers – the supply chain was found to be hugely complex, with horsemeat sold (quite legally) from Romanian suppliers to dealers in Cyprus via a buyer in Holland before returning to France to be processed into the final product.

Any reader of *Labels & Labeling* could immediately offer advice on a number of track and trace technologies which could be implemented here. Batch and data matrix codes help food manufacturers search back up the supply chain to identify the sources of any contamination. The laminate suppliers have adhesives designed to stick directly onto carcasses, allowing tracking of meat products back to the abattoir. Remote tracking technologies such as NFC and RFID also have their place in ensuring packed meat products are not diverted down illegal distribution routes.

It already seems clear that adulteration was not accidental but the work of a criminal conspiracy.

Just as with the efforts to combat counterfeiting of drugs, the labels industry has a key role to play in securing the supply chains of food brands and retailers, and this provides an enormous opportunity for converters and suppliers in this key sector.



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INBOX

GALLUS APPOINTS R&D HEAD

Gallus has appointed Georg Riescher as head of research and development for its label business. Riescher was previously head of newspaper production systems at a European web press manufacturer. He was also head of the management team for more than 10 years at a German manufacturing site of the same company. He holds a degree in mechanical engineering and a qualification in business administration. Riescher has experience in engineering and research & development in the international print media industry.

Pictured: Georg Riescher, new head of research and development at Gallus

INDUSTRIAL INKJET APPOINTS SCANDINAVIA PARTNER

Industrial Inkjet has appointed Convertec Graphic Technics as its sales and support partner for Scandinavia. Convertec has been supporting the Nordic packaging industry for over 25 years. The company's offices are located in Gothenburg, Sweden, which enables easy access to all the major cities in Scandinavia. Convertec will offer the IIJ 4-color digital label module for flexo presses and the full range of IIJ ColourPrint and MonoPrint print engines.

PAMARCO EXTENDS NILPETER PARTNERSHIP

Nilpeter and anilox roller specialist Pamarco Global Graphics are extending their successful partnership in the South East Asian region to the Middle East. Graham Harrison, international sales manager for Pamarco, commented: 'The cooperation with Nilpeter Middle East will enable Pamarco to better service their existing label customers and continue to develop the region.'

ANTALIS NAMED EXCLUSIVE UK DISTRIBUTOR FOR UPM RAFLATAC

Antalis UK is now the exclusive stockist for UPM Raflatac's self-adhesive labelstock products in the UK. The UPM Raflatac brand includes a range of coated and uncoated, opaque, semi-gloss/gloss and filmic grades with permanent, extra permanent, removable and ultra-removable adhesives. In addition, there is a full range of digital papers and synthetics in SRA3 approved for HP Indigo and high-speed laser printing.

PC INDUSTRIES EXPANDS NORTH AMERICAN COVERAGE

PC Industries, an Illinois-based inspection system manufacturer, has strengthened its presence in the western US and south-western Canada by signing Vandenberg Resources as a new representative.
Vandenberg Resources has over 30 years of industry experience and will provide a high level of expertise on PC Industries' products.

CHARITY FOCUS

HERMA CHARITY RIDERS PRESS ON

Herma UK's charity bike ride from Newbury in the UK to Labelexpo Brussels has certainly become a test of endurance. Several rides of between 40 -50 miles have seen the team encounter some severe weather during training. But the cold and snow have not dampened spirits and Colin Phillips, Herma UK's MD, is delighted with his team's commitment and hard work. 'We are fully aware that 300 miles leading up to the Labelexpo show will be a very tough challenge and not for the faint hearted, but the thought of raising money for three great charities is enough to motivate the team,' said Colin.

The fundraising is going very well and further donations can now be made on Herma.co.uk (Go to the Fundraising box on the home page). The initial target of £15,000 has already been achieved and a new goal of £25,000 has been set. 'Thankyou to everyone who has already donated and we urge people to continue giving,' said Colin. 'The team will be on view as they arrive at the steps of the Labelexpo exhibition on the morning of Tuesday 24th September to present the cheques.'

EDALE SUPPORTS CUSTOMER COMMONWEALTH GAMES BID

Edale is supporting an employee of one of its UK customers, with sponsorship of his training expenses as he aims to compete in the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

The UK press manufacturer will contribute to the training expenses of Stuart Robinson, production manager at Douglas Storrie Labels, to support his bid to try and gain the Commonwealth Games qualifying marathon time.

Robinson has had a strong start to 2013, recording a personal best at the Inskip half marathon in Preston, Lancashire at the start of the year, where he won the race and in doing so set a new course record of 1:08:25. He has also gained selection for Lancashire in the Intercounties in March, which doubles up as the World X-country trials.

Stuart has also recently competed in the Seville marathon, where he ran 26 miles in 2.22.09 and finished 13th out of 7,500 competitors.

NEWS

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

TLMI ANNOUNCES EUGENE SINGER WINNERS

The Tag and Label Manufacturers Institute (TLMI) has announced the winners of the Eugene Singer Award for Management Excellence, which recognizes excellence in business management measured by an established set of growth and profitability ratios through participation in the TLMI Management Ratio Study.

Centennial, Colorado-based Columbine Label Company won in the small company category for the second time. Company president, Greg Jackson, commented, 'Winning the Singer award again is a really big honor and very exciting for the entire Columbine team. We have a good number of long term employees that take a great deal of pride in their work, and strive to make us a top performing company. To win this award, particularly considering the quality of the other TLMI participants, is really a testament to their efforts and hard work. My congratulations to our entire team, as well as our customers and suppliers who make all of this possible.'

Butler, Wisconsin-based Flexo-Graphics was a first time winner in the mid-range company category. Company president, Tim McDonough, said, 'Flexo-Graphics is honored to receive this award considering how many great companies are involved in TLMI. Flexo-Graphics has used the Ratio Study every year as a benchmarking tool in our quest of continual improvement.'

Aurora, Illinois-based The Label Printers won its forth award in the medium company category. Company chief of operations, Lori Campbell, commented, 'This is really about our employees and our clients who, together, make this award possible. Winning the Eugene Singer award is a great honor, because I know that we're being measured against the best.'

Longwood, Florida-based Consolidated Label won for the 11th time in the large company category. Company president Joel Carmany said, 'It is an honor to win the Singer award again. We thank our team for their dedication and effort in making our business successful.'

TLMI president, Frank Sablone, commented, 'TLMI would like to congratulate this year's Singer Award winners. For the first time in the association's history more than 100 converter members participated in the TLMI Ratio Study in 2012, reinforcing the tremendous value our converter members obtain from taking part in the study.'

EXAMPLES of Spear product makeovers

CONSTANTIA FLEXIBLES ACQUIRES SPEAR

FLEXIBLE PACKAGING giant enters labels industry with global ambitions

Constantia Flexibles Group, headquartered in Vienna, Austria, has signed a deal to acquire the global Spear Group.

Constantia is a leading flexible packaging group supplying international customers in the food, pet food, pharmaceutical and beverage industries. The group has more than 6,500 employees working in 50 companies across 20 countries.

Commented Thomas Unger, CEO of Constantia Flexibles, 'We will be able to serve our customers even better together with Spear, a leading beverage labels business with a highly attractive, global, blue-chip customer base. The group's outstanding technological capabilities present many opportunities for continued profitable growth. We look forward to partnering with Spear's excellent management team to capture the benefits from combining our businesses.'

Spear has pioneered pressure sensitive labeling innovation for the beverage industry since 1982. The company has sales of approximately US$ 195 million with 650 employees located at four facilities in North America, one site in Europe (Wales/UK), one site in South Africa and a sales office in Singapore. Additionally, Spear has a growing business which provides re-sealable products primarily for the food and snack markets.

'We are excited by the increased opportunities that Spear will be able to offer our customers by joining forces with Constantia Flexibles,' said Spear CEO Rick Spear. 'This combination will enhance our leadership position in the technological development of pressure sensitive labeling for primary brand decoration.'

The parties agreed not to disclose the price of the transaction. The acquisition is subject to regulatory approval.

BPIF LABELS held its AGM at the Centre for Process Innovation in Sedgefield

BPIF LABELS ANNOUNCES TECHNICAL SEMINAR DATES

UK LABEL ASSOCIATION technical seminar looks at flexo productivity

The British Print Industries Federation (BPIF) Labels group has announced dates for its Spring technical seminar and golf day. The event will be held on 21- 22 May 2013 around the theme 'cost reductions and efficiencies for flexo' at the Breadsall Priory site near Derby and will include a tabletop exhibition.

The first group of sessions look at anilox roll management and cleaning with Phil Hall, MD of Troika Systems and Lars Holm, international sales manager at Flexowash. A discussion on accurate plate mounting from Richard Warnick of JM Heaford is followed by a session on developments in press technology by Edale's James Boughton. A session on waste management from Jon Hutton at Prismm completes the morning's events.

The afternoon sessions kick off with a presentation on the benefits of lean manufacturing from Chris Ellison MD OPM Group. This is followed by new developments in UV drying from Simon Mitchell, IST; Spotless repro technology from Andy Hewitson at leading repro house R3; and new press design developments from Nick Hughes, Nilpeter.

Fred Hoyland of EFIA talks about the Academy 2 training program for flexo printing, followed by the launch of the BPIF Labels GMP guide to printing labels for food and sensitive products, presented by chairman John Bambery.

Completing the lineup is *L&L* founder Mike Fairley, with a session on industry developments and trends. For more details visit www.britishprint.com.

XEROX ACQUIRES IMPIKA

Xerox has acquired Impika, a specialist in the design, manufacture and sale of production inkjet printing solutions for label and package printing.

Impika offers a portfolio of water-based inkjet presses based on proprietary technology. Its product lines include iPrint, a range of continuous feed production printers operating at speeds up to 375m/min, and iPress, a range of graphic communications digital presses with resolutions of up to 2,400 x 1,200dpi.

Impika sells its products to print providers through its direct sales force and through a global network of channel partners – including Xerox, which has been reselling the Impika brand in Europe since 2011, and recently expanded to several developing markets.

In addition to Xerox's existing xerographic production presses, the company has developed and markets a high-speed waterless inkjet press, the Xerox CiPress. 'A hallmark of Xerox's long-term success is our focus on innovation, and Impika has demonstrated an innovative approach to advanced production inkjet printing that complements Xerox's technology,' said Jeff Jacobson, president of Xerox's graphic communications operations.

Paul Morgavi, president and chief executive officer of Impika, said: 'We've succeeded in developing one of the industry's most formidable product lines. To continue our growth, we need to be part of a leadership organization that has broad global distribution and service, a strong brand, and the same customer-centric culture that we champion.'

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

AWA ANNOUNCES DATES

Leading global conference and market intelligence specialist Alexander Watson Associates has announced its 2013 conference program.

DecTec USA Labeling & Package Decorating Technologies Seminar 2013 takes place on 8 April, 2013 at the Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, Florida, USA. Decoration Technologies provides a review of product decoration in its broader context and features presentations by key industry leaders in the labeling and product decoration industry across the entire value chain.

The AWA In-Mold Technologies Seminar is scheduled for 17 April, 2013 at Park Plaza Hotel Amsterdam Airport, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. This bi-annual seminar will feature presentations by key industry players from all segments of the IML value chain. Subjects include comparing in-mold-technologies in injection and thermoforming.

The AWA International Sleeve Label Conference & Exhibition will be held 18-19 April, 2013 at the Park Plaza Hotel Amsterdam Airport, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. This annual conference provides a review of the global and regional markets by materials and end uses. Subjects covered will include material and equipment developments, sustainability, polymer cost evolution, and environmental impact.

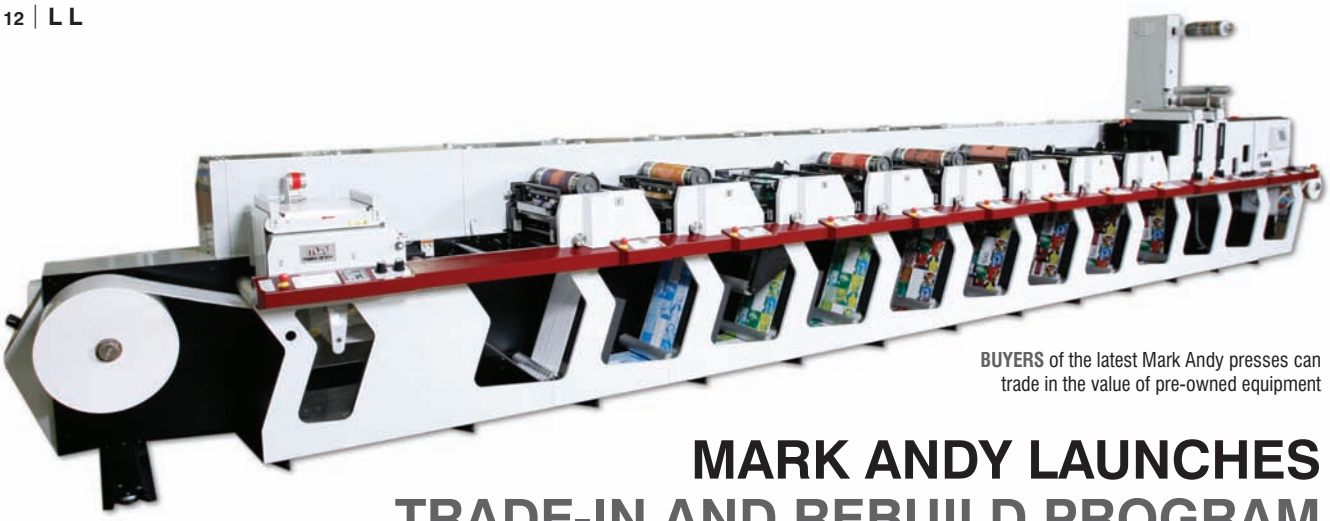
Shrink sleeve expertise

This is followed by an Introduction to Heat Shrink Sleeve Label Technologies Workshop held at the Accraply & Flint Group Facilities in Minneapolis (Plymouth), MN, USA on 11-12 June, 2013.

Rounding off the year is the AWA Introduction to Pressure-Sensitive / Self-Adhesive Technology Workshop, held in cooperation with Chemsultants International from 4-5 November, 2013 at the Hotel Casa 400, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

This introductory workshop is ideal for participants new to the pressure-sensitive/ self-adhesive world. Subjects include the design, manufacture, testing and end-use performance of the self-adhesives used in the tape and label industry.

For more details email conferences@awa-bv.com or visit www.awa-bv.com. AWA reports on the labels and packaging industry can be bought from the Labels & Labeling website www.labelsandlabeling.com.



BUYERS of the latest Mark Andy presses can trade in the value of pre-owned equipment

MARK ANDY LAUNCHES TRADE-IN AND REBUILD PROGRAM

PRE-OWNED EQUIPMENT provides credits towards new machine purchases

Mark Andy has expanded its support offerings to include trade-ins and rebuilds. Under this program, the company will accept select pre-owned equipment and provide credit toward the purchase of a new Mark Andy press or Rotoflex rewinder. Alternatively, converters can search the rebuilt inventory to find a pre-owned machine suitable to their needs. The trade-in program is a direct result of an increase in the demand for new technology, as well as increasing enquiries for second-hand, leading brand equipment in growing economies, says Mark Andy.

A team of professionals will conduct a complete overview and provide a suitable trade-in price or design a rebuild plan to bring the machine to like-new condition. The rebuild team works side-by-side with the OEM team to bring the project to fruition. Each rebuilt machine is fully tested, run through the same acceptance tests, and held to the same standards expected of all new equipment.

Ken Daming, director of aftermarket sales, said, 'Mark Andy recognizes there are times when a capital purchase of new equipment may not be in the best interest of a converter, or they may need to divest a legacy piece of equipment in order to purchase new. In these instances, our Trade-Ins and Rebuilds program is an ideal solution.'

The program is not only for presses and rewinders. It is also a resource for accessories such as laminators, screen units and curing systems. For a full list of available inventory, or to complete a form to submit existing equipment for consideration, visit www.markandy.com/rebuilds.

ANTONIO BARTESAGHI, Omet Group CEO (R), presents scholarships to employees' children

OMET AWARDS STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS

OMET CEO presents employee's children with scholarship awards

Antonio Bartesaghi, CEO of the Omet Group, has presented the first scholarships for children of Omet employees who have distinguished themselves during study at high schools or universities.

'We wanted to establish a scholarship for the children of our employees who have achieved good results in studies with the aim of rewarding the hard work, dedication and the ability to cope with difficulties. We hope that the prize will act as a stimulus to ensure that this commitment is prolonged in the future,' said Bartesaghi.

In addition Omet has partnered with universities in Lombardy to offer internships to industrial marketing students and is heavily involved in local community sports sponsorship programs.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

KURT WALKER, Finat president

FINAT AND VSKE JOIN FORCES FOR 2013 CONGRESS

Finat is joining forces with the German national label association VskE to host the European label industry's annual leadership congress, taking place at the Westin Grand Hotel in Munich, Germany on June 12-15. 2013 marks the 55th anniversary of Finat.

The 2013 congress has the theme 'Label Your Future' and features leading industry speakers such as Don Nolan of Avery Dennison and Jussi Vanhanen of UPM Raflatac, as well as L&L international publishing director Mike Fairley.

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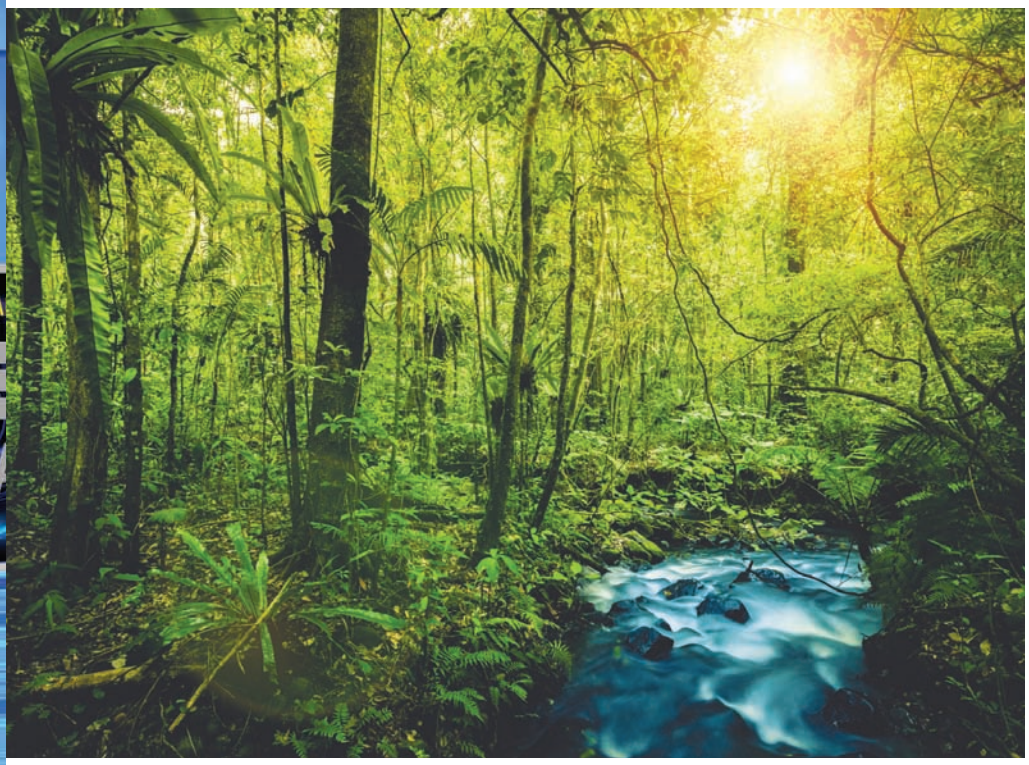


AVERY CONFIRMS RESPONSIBLE SOURCING POLICY

ETHICAL PAPER sourcing commitment will apply to supply chain

Avery Dennison has formalized a company-wide policy to promote responsible paper sourcing and procurement.

Developed with support from the Rainforest Alliance, Avery Dennison's policy commits the company to identifying and disclosing the sources of the pulp, natural fiber and paper in its labeling and packaging materials. The policy aims to reward sound environmental performance on the part of its supply chain partners while seeking to maximize use of recycled content and fiber sourced from forestry operations certified to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) standards.

Dean Scarborough, Avery Dennison chairman, president and chief executive officer, said: 'As a leader in labeling and packaging materials and solutions, we recognize that we have a responsibility to help our customers and our industry become more sustainable. Our policy will guide us in sourcing materials responsibly, using them more efficiently in our operations and developing greener products from them.'

Scarborough added: 'We will review our policy and commitments on a regular basis to ensure they reflect the state of the industry and are based on the best available scientific evidence. Our goal is to help minimize the environmental and social impacts of our sourcing decisions across the entire paper lifecycle.'

TOPP EARNS G7 CERTIFICATION FOR XEIKON PRESS

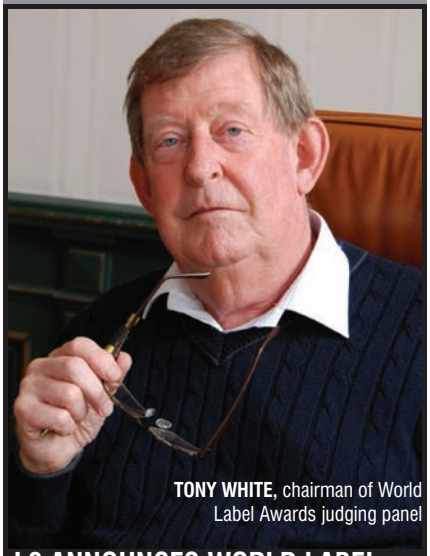
TOPP Digital Label Solutions, a Xeikon 3050 customer in Miami, Florida, has received G7 certification from the IDEAlliance.

The company's Xeikon 3050 press is used for a wide range of added value applications including variable QR codes, security enhancements, and the ability to incorporate RFID features.

Commented Sean Cummins, president of TOPP Digital Label Solutions, 'We're one of the very few digital shops that has gone out and pursued G7 certification. Brands and corporate identity have very specific requirements and the fact that we can produce what they want all the time, every time, means a lot to them.'

HOT OFF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES



TONY WHITE, chairman of World Label Awards judging panel

L9 ANNOUNCES WORLD LABEL AWARD WINNERS

The L9 associations have announced the results of the 2012 World Label awards competition judged by an international jury during Labelexpo in Chicago in September 2012. The L9 is the alliance of global label associations, formulating policies and strategic information in connection with global matters affecting the wo

A new class structure was introduced for this competition with 22 classes covering all the main printing processes and markets. The results are listed in class order with the winners announced first followed by the Honorable Mention (HM) awards.

'This year we saw the quality level rise once more with excellent technical achievement in many of the classes,' said Tony White, chairman of the judging panel. 'The innovation class showed some new applications for the label process from several of the associations.'

The associations taking part were: Finat (Europe), JFLP (Japan), Latma (Australia), PEIAC (China), Salma (New Zealand), and TLMI (North America).

A full report on the competition winners, including photographs of winning labels can be seen in the next L&L Yearbook.

In addition to the awards mentioned above, five new L9 Global awards representing the 'Best of the Best' will be presented during the Global awards ceremony on the first night of Labelexpo in Brussels in September. The winners are selected form the winners of the World label Awards competition within the following classes: Flexo, Letterpress, Offset Litho, Combination and Digital. The identities of the winners will be revealed at the awards ceremony in September and are deemed to be the 'Oscars' of the label industry.

The judging for the 2013 WLA competition will take place before the start of the 2013 Labelexpo event in September in Brussels.

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

GREEN BAY AND LOPAREX LIFE CERTIFICATION

Loparex's Eden, North Carolina facility and three Green Bay Packaging production sites have been awarded TLMI's LIFE environmental certification.

The LIFE program was developed to help TLMI members find cost effective ways to reduce their companies' environmental footprint. Issues addressed include clean production, energy useage and greenhouse gas emissions, use of environmentally preferable materials, and best management practices.

HERAEUS COMPLETES ACQUISITION OF FUSION UV

Following the approval by the relevant authorities, Heraeus Noblelight has successfully completed the acquisition of Fusion UV Systems, headquartered in Gaithersburg, Maryland (USA).
'With this transaction, the leading provider of UV light sources will be created under the umbrella of the Heraeus technology group,' said David Harbourne, president of Fusion UV Systems. The two companies are currently being integrated into a single business unit.

FIFE-500 web guiding system

500 INSTALLS FOR FIFE 500

Web handling specialist Maxcess has announced the 500th installation of the FIFE-500 web guiding system in the nine months following the product's release. The units have been sold to converters in North and South America, Asia and Europe.

Central to the success of the FIFE-500 has been the color touch screen display, which is easy to learn and operate, says the manufacturer, supporting 14 languages with intuitive icon-based operation. 'The FIFE-500 represents an exciting time for Fife – where our increased investment in new technology has started to have an effect in the market,' said Darren Irons, global product manager for Fife.

Maxcess brings together the MAGPOWR, Fife and Tidland brands.

BUNTING OPENS ON-LINE FLEXIBLE DIE STORE

Bunting Magnetics has developed an on-line ordering service for its flexible dies. After entering their equipment once into myflexdies.com, converters can obtain instant quotes on standard die shapes, easily turn quotes into orders, and gain 24/7 access to historical quotes and orders.

Announcing the changes, Bunting Printing Group product manager Michael Wilks said: 'Although flexographic converters have historically relied on field sales personnel to assist them in placing orders for dies, the simplicity of myflexdies.com and the quick turnaround now demanded by label customers makes online entry the preferred method for ordering flexible dies.' Bunting is now using a quality production system featuring the Esko ArtiosCAD software, which reduces die order turnaround time and improves die accuracy.

It has also extended its line of X-treme magnetic cylinders. The new HT cylinder features a two-micron tolerance, designed specifically for thin liners. A new spiral cylinder meets the demands of popular semi-rotary die-cutters.

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

COPAPHARM EUROPE ALLIANCE SPLITS

Copapharm Europe, the 15-year-old pharmaceutical packaging alliance, has been dissolved. A statement issued by the group said: 'The members no longer see value in acting on the pharmaceutical market as an alliance, reflecting tough economic marketing conditions. Previous member companies will continue to operate independently.'

SPINNAKER OPENS SLITTING CENTERS

Spinnaker Coating has held a second Open House to celebrate the opening of two new slitting distribution centers in Atlanta and Los Angeles areas.

The facilities offer one-day transit time to much of the south-eastern and western US and add to the company's other slitting sites in New York, Chicago, and the coating and slitting center in Troy, Ohio.

In addition to providing faster delivery times for a wide variety of trimless products, customer service representatives are now available to take questions and orders until 20:00 EST.

NEWS

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

MERCIAN Labels has invested in Xeikon's Color Control

MERCIAN IMPLEMENTS XEIKON COLOR CONTROL

UK converter Mercian Labels has invested in Xeikon's dedicated color matching system, Color Control. The Cloud-based tool enables printers to offer repeatable and predictable colors and simulation of custom spot colors, matching to both the full Pantone book as well as to hard copies of previously printed packaging and labels provided by customers.

After a target color is printed, the measured values are uploaded to a central server where a new profile is created, together with a library of named colors. 'This is a really useful development enabling us to perform even better when facing color matching challenges from our customers,' said Dr Adrian Steele, managing director of the Mercian Labels Group. 'Nothing will extend the physical limitations of a CMYK color process gamut beyond its theoretical maximum, but using Xeikon Color Control we are really pushing the barriers of color matching to the limit.

In one recent case we were asked to match an injection moulded plastic lid and a litho printed carton to that of a color known to be tough to print on a digital engine, even one as good as the Xeikon. Using Xeikon Color Control we quickly determined that we could get to a ΔE of 3 without printing anything on press. Once matched, that is exactly what it did – with a very impressive color accuracy. Whilst we may have got there eventually with a lot of expensive operator and press time undertaking iterative testing and assessment under different light conditions, Xeikon Color Control makes color matching of digitally printed labels better, quicker and more consistent.'

ROLAND DG relocates manufacturing to Thailand

ROLAND DG OPENS THAI MANUFACTURING PLANT

Roland DG Corporation has opened a manufacturing factory in Thailand. Located in Sinsakhon Printing City & Industrial Estate Phase 2, Samutsakhon, this facility is expected to become the region's major production centre outside of Japan and will serve as the worldwide export hub for the group.

Masahiro Tomioka, president of Roland DG Corporation, Japan, said: 'It was Thailand's good infrastructure and logistics, plus the availability of skilled labour, which made Thailand a very attractive destination for us.'

The Thai factory initially began manufacturing the RE-640/RA-640a wide-format inkjet printer. The production of other printer models, such as the metallic printer VS series, is expected to be transferred from Japan to Thailand in the middle of this year. The company is planning to produce 3,700 units in 2013, and reach maximum capacity of more than 5,000 units in 2014.

AVERY DENNISON AND RAKO WIN WORLDSTAR AWARDS

Avery Dennison has won a 2013 WorldStar Packaging Award for its wash-off pressure-sensitive label, which improves the recycling of Polyethylene terephthalate (PET).

The WorldStar Awards are hosted by the World Packaging Organization and bring into competition the winners of national and regional awards.

The wash-off label releases from PET bottles with no adhesive residue during the recycling process, creating more value added reclaimed PET, reducing carbon dioxide emissions from incineration, and saving incineration expenses.

In addition to the WorldStar Awards, this product won in the eco-package category at the 2012 Asia Star Awards organized by Asian Packaging Federation, and claimed the top honor at the Korea Star Awards 2012.

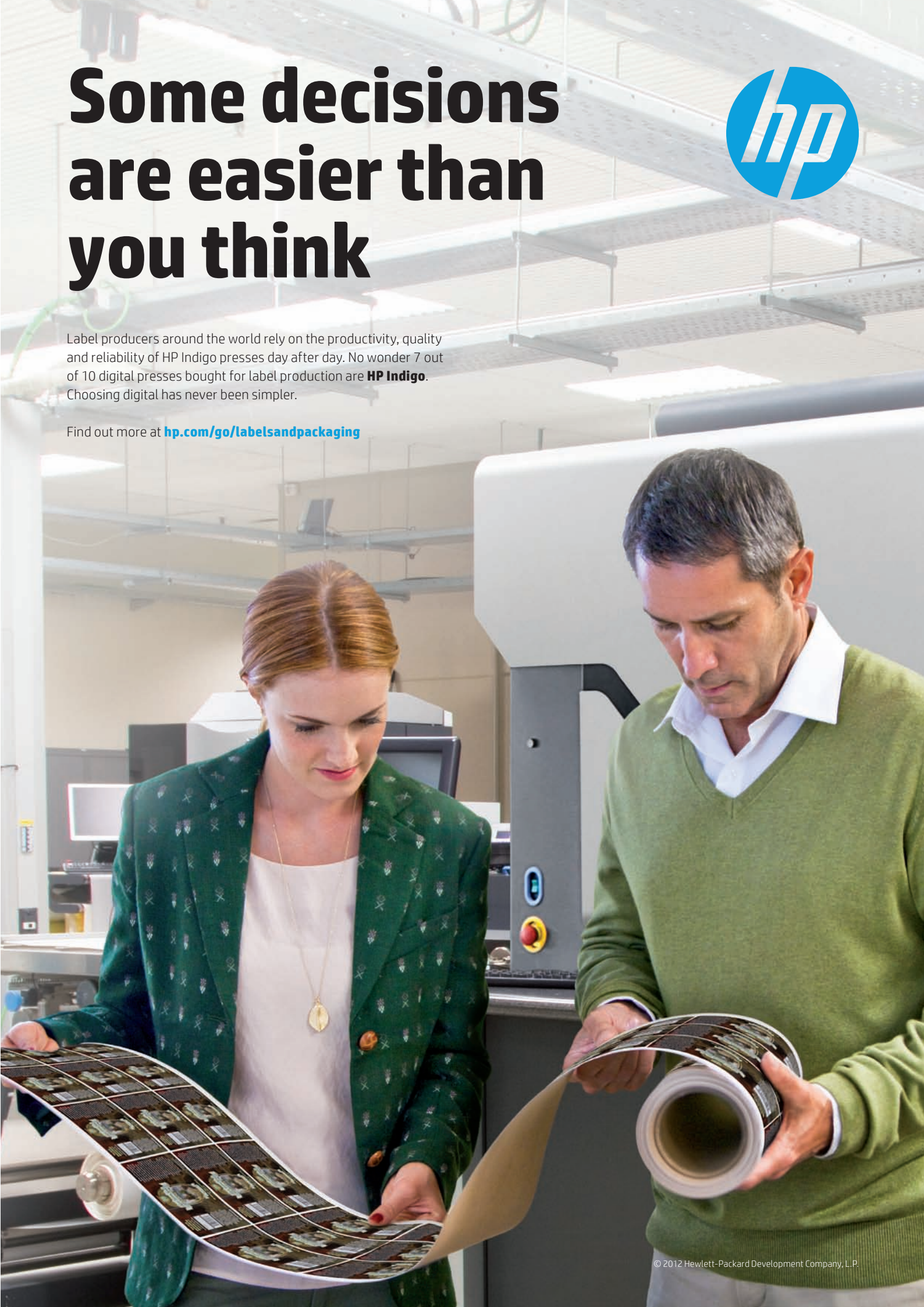
The second labels industry award winner was German-based converter Rako Group, which won a WorldStar for its Lean Label Eco linerless label.

The panel agreed that the linerless solution had both economic and environmental advantages. As well as elimination of liner waste, the number of labels on a reel has been increased, reducing the number of reel changes at the machine and saving transport load. The roll core can be reduced up to 37 percent with the same number of running meters, reports Rako. The application of linerless technology has not reduced dispensing speeds at the end user.

Some decisions are easier than you think

Label producers around the world rely on the productivity, quality and reliability of HP Indigo presses day after day. No wonder 7 out of 10 digital presses bought for label production are **HP Indigo**. Choosing digital has never been simpler.

Find out more at **hp.com/go/labelsandpackaging**



NEW PRODUCTS

1 EXACT SPECTROPHOTOMETER
X-RITE

X-Rite has launched its eXact series of spectrophotometers to make color measurement 'quick and easy' for brand managers, ink suppliers and converters, while solving the widespread problem of measuring and matching colors on various substrates and surfaces.

The eXact instrument allows customers to measure true daylight conditions by supporting all the M Standards inclusive of the complete M1.

'For today's needs of matching proof to press across many substrates, the X-Rite eXact brings to the supply chain a simple-to-use device that is fully compliant with ISO 13655:2009 measurement standards,' said Steve Smiley, owner of SmileyColor & Associates.

'I believe the X-Rite eXact will bring all users together as a common tool for more accurate color communications that can be used across all supply chain partners, from design through converters. For ease of use, the instrument has smart phone, multi-touch screen and Bluetooth capabilities for wireless connections.'

'The new technology complements our current G7 Master Printer process by managing our customers brand and corporate identity through precise color measurements,' said Dean Baxendale, president and CEO of J F Moore Communications in Toronto, who intends to be an early adopter of the technology.

PL 20000 RFID PERSONALIZATION LINE
MÜHLBAUER GROUP

Mühlbauer has launched a high speed chip encoding and print personalization platform for both RFID reel and single products. The PL 20000 encodes information on the RFID chip (HF/UHF) and prints this variable data with a digital printer. With a throughput of up to 20,000 units per hour HF, UHF or NFC products can be personalized. Additional modules include the printing of digital graphics in color, surface plasma treatment, visual inspection and verification of the product, test and verification of the function of the RFID system as well as bad unit reject for labels or tags. The modular concept allows for complete flexibility in final products ranging from dry or wet RFID inlays to labels, tags or Z-folded products.

2 TRUSECURITY TAMPER EVIDENT MATERIALS
TULLIS RUSSELL

Tullis Russell has added a number of tamper evident materials to its trusecurity range of security paper and films.

The new range starts with dry peel mini-void materials which are available in blue, red and silver. These allow a clearly visible void message to be left in the film and on the surface of the substrate if removal is attempted.

Next up are a light weight frangible paper and two destructible acetate films, permanently adhering to almost any surface and fragmenting into tiny pieces if removal is attempted.

The range is completed by a water indicative material, which changes in color from purple to pink when exposed to various liquids, thereby enabling brand owners to identify incidents where fraudulent warranty claims are concerned.

Tullis Russell has specifically designed these materials to allow for numerous customisations, ensuring they are suitable for a wide range of print technologies.

TROJANONE DIGITAL PRINTER
TROJANLABEL

The newly established R&D entity Trojanlabel has launched an 'industrialized' label printer – TrojanOne powered by Memjet. The company joins a growing list of global partners incorporating Memjet's print technology.

Trojanlabel is set up purely as an R&D enterprise which plans to launch a series of 'cutting-edge' equipment for on-demand and in-house color print.

TrojanOne is intended to replace traditional black and white thermal transfer labels.

Mikkel Wichmann, managing director for Trojanlabel, said: 'Our product prints 1600 dpi full color labels at 300 mm/sec, enabling in-house production of crisp color labels. This gives products added value and produces labels which optimize traceability in form of barcodes and color codes. Just as important is the fact that this is done at a cost per label which is significantly lower than what the market has been able to offer up to now.'

According to marketing director Thomas Jensen, the TrojanOne will be sold as a stand-alone machine with optional web cleaner.

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4

3 STANDALONE WEB TIPPING SYSTEM
MULTIFEEDER TECHNOLOGY

Minnesota, USA-based Multifeeder Technology has launched a stand-alone label web-tipping system designed to adhere tobacco tax stamps onto a roll of pre-printed labels.

'This is a cost-effective way to provide value-added labeling promotions prior to the labeling operation. It's an innovative and simple system that allows anyone to convert their own labels,' said Edward Turin, engineering manager at Multifeeder Technology.

The system takes a roll of preprinted labels, unwinds it, applies the tax stamp with hot glue, verifies accurate placement with a vision system, and rewinds the roll. The value-added roll is then ready for a finished product labeling.

4 CDI SPARK 2420
ESKO

Esko has added to its family of CDI flexo plate imagers with the introduction of the CDI Spark 2420. The CDI Spark 2420 is designed for narrow web label converters and combines a different image size with greater plate material flexibility.

Jan Buchweitz, Esko senior product manager, Digital Flexo, said: 'The CDI Spark 2420 fits neatly into our portfolio that includes the CDI Sparks 1712, 2120 and 2530. It provides a more cost-effective solution that better fits plates for those customers that would previously have considered the larger CDI 2530 as the most suitable option.'

The CDI Spark 2420 will image plate sizes up to 609 mm x 508 mm (24" by 20") and also handle a wider range of plate materials. These include digital flexo plates, chemistry free

film, digital foil-based letterpress plates, digital metal-based letterpress plates and digital silk screens. Operation is aided by EasyClamp, which securely holds flexo plates of any thickness on the vacuum drum.

Esko provides an imaging resolution upgrade path on the CDI Spark 2420. Customers can choose the standard 2000ppi to 2540ppi or upgrade to High Res 2540ppi to 4000ppi or HD Flexo 4000ppi in combination with high definition screening. In addition, the CDI Spark 2420 comes with the choice of Optics 7.5, Optics 10 or Optics 15. As performance speed is determined by the optics, customers have the flexibility to choose the optics to match their current workflow and business growth.

NEW SYSTEMS FOR JUPITER AND SATURN
PRATI

Prati is to launch two new finishing systems at Labelexpo Brussels in September – a glue-less turret rewinder, and semi-automatic dual turret rewinds for the Jupiter and Saturn machine systems.

The glue-less turret rewinder can be connected in-line to any printing press where an inspection phase is not required – notably for plain labels or commodity labels that require only slitting, counting and rewinding.

Glue-less operation is achieved by a cradle which helps the slit label lanes wrap around the cores. After the machine senses that all the lanes are wrapped around cores, it releases the cradle and starts rewinding. The rewinder shaft then rotates to the upper position to complete the rewinding process until the final count is achieved.

Semi-automatic dual turret rewinds will now be options for the established Jupiter and Saturn inspection rewinders. The attachment of the slit lanes on the cores can be either automatic or manual. In auto mode the operator makes ready the cores with double-side adhesive tape. During rewinding, the operator extracts the rewound rolls and prepares the new cores on the shaft.

After label count is reached, a pneumatic nipping roll clamps the web and a guillotine blade makes the transversal cut automatically, followed by automatic roll ejection.

HOTMELT UV CURING SYSTEM
COLLANO

Swiss adhesives specialist Collano has launched a new curing solution for UV-curable pressure-sensitive hotmelt adhesives in collaboration with lamp specialist Heraeus.

The system offers significant energy savings over conventional UV curing methods, says Collano. The service life of Heraeus Soluva UVC-Hotmelt modules is 10,000 hours, reducing maintenance and replacement costs.

The UV-curable, pressure-sensitive hot melt adhesives are solventless and suitable for self-adhesive coatings on heat-sensitive materials.

LOW MIGRATION ADHESIVES
UPM RAFLATAC

UPM Raflatac has launched RP 36 FG and RP 36 ML, adhesives, designed to offer improved non-migration characteristics in line with EU 10/2011 standards.

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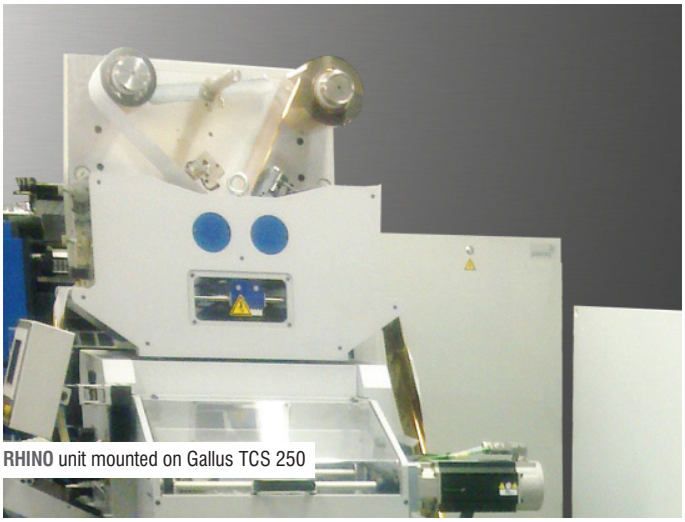
INSTALLATIONS

CEES Schouten, technical director, Geostick, with HP Indigo WS6600



RHINO unit mounted on Gallus TCS 250

GEOSTICK, NETHERLANDS

THREE HP INDIGO WS6600 DIGITAL PRESSES

Dutch converter Geostick has upgraded its three HP Indigo WS6000 presses to the latest WS6600 specification.

All of the new presses include the In-Line Priming (ILP) option, which uses a water-based primer to treat standard paper and also synthetic substrates. 'We had three HP Indigo WS6000 digital presses, which we were very pleased with, but we were ready to upgrade and the obvious choice was the HP Indigo WS6600,' said Cees Schouten, technical director, Geostick. 'Previously, we were priming everything off-line, but knew that inline priming would be much more efficient and enable us to lower costs, so we chose to have this feature on the presses. We can do more in the same amount of time, which means we can offer our customers shorter turnaround times.'

Key end user application include the chemical and food industries and labels for logistics applications that may include barcodes and QR codes read electronically.

Also according to Geostick, the automatic calibration on the HP Indigo WS6600 digital press has improved compared to earlier models, giving the press more stability on repeat lengths.

'One huge benefit of the HP Indigo WS6600 is that the cost of printing has been reduced, so we are spending less per square meter,' said Schouten. 'We can pass that price reduction on to our customers to maintain our competitive edge. The press requires little or no operator intervention, so money is also saved there.'

Recently, the company was able to take on a large project, where a customer requested 20,000 labels to be produced in 24 hours.

Said Schouten: 'We are expecting our sales to increase by more than 10 percent following the installation of all three presses.'

The HP Indigo WS6600 has a printing speed of up to 30 m/min in four colors and also has the new Enhanced Productivity Mode, enabling Geostick to print up to 40m/min in color.

ASET-BIDOIT, FRANCE

PANTEC RHINO IN-LINE FLATBED FOIL/EMBOSSER

French premium wine label printer Aset-Bidoit has upgraded one of its Gallus TCS semi-rotary offset presses presses with a Rhino flatbed foil embossing system from Pantec GS Systems.

Aset-Bidoit already operated with a Rhino unit on a rotary press, and wanted to add this efficiency and quality onto its semi-rotary presses.

'Some semi-rotary presses basically double speed with Rhino when stamping uncoated materials,' commented Peter Frei, chief executive officer of Pantec GS Systems.

CREATIVE LABELS, USA

EPSON SUREPRESS L-4033A

Creative Labels has invested in an Epson SurePress L-4033A to produce high-quality labels for applications including food and beverage, health and beauty, and technical goods.

Creative Labels president and co-owner Sandy Franzen said: 'The current prime label market is very competitive and the Epson SurePress allows us to respond to small run jobs that demand high quality.

'We spent over a year testing label systems that lacked the commercial quality we were looking for. With the Epson SurePress, we are able to concentrate on sales, as we know we are producing labels that are both first class in quality and cost effective.'

Chris Martin, vice president and fellow co-owner of Creative Labels, added: 'We were especially impressed with the quality looking as if it could have been printed on a flexo press, but in perfect register, with no quality problems generally associated with flexo. In addition, the price point is something we can actually see a return on investment from in the short run label market.'

Franzen added: 'We just acquired a new customer that had such complex graphic files for three labels that we would have had to not accept the job if it had not been for our SurePress. These labels had reversed-out four point type in what was supplied as a four-color process graphic file with the label backgrounds done in various screens and shades of either orange, green or brown.

'Printing in Hexachrome made these colors really pop, and when compared to a four-color process print from our press proofer, we were blown away not only by the oranges and greens, but the depth and warmth of the browns as well.'


DICE GT3000 inkjet module on Mark Andy 4140

JSC ESTILITA, VILNIUS
NEWFOIL 3500 SERVO
Newfoil Machines has installed a 3500 Servo flexo press at JSC Estilita in Vilnius, Lithuania.

JSC Estilita is a flexo printing house with more than 16 years experience in producing self-adhesive labels and packaging materials, as well as cardboard, textile labels and carbon ribbons. It serves both local customers and foreign companies.

The 3500 Servo investment was carried out in collaboration with Newfoil's representative for the Baltic States, Itraco. The machine includes one flatbed hot-stamping/embossing station, one die-cutting/embossing station each with a 250mm web width.

PREMIER SOUTHERN TICKET CO, USA
DICE GT3000 INKJET MODULE ON MA4140
DICE Graphic Technologies has installed a GT3000 series digital inkjet printer at Premier Southern Ticket Co. (PST) of Cincinnati, Ohio. The DICE unit was installed onto one of the company's existing Mark Andy 4140 16in-wide, six-color flexo presses in late December 2012 with production printing beginning in January 2013.

PST manufactures various ticket types, including roll tickets, reserved seat tickets, coupon books, valet parking tickets, thermal tickets, promotional and gaming scratch off tickets, barcoded tickets and general admission custom printed tickets

Kirk Schulz, owner of PST, said: 'Our purchase of the DICE GT UV Inkjet printer has enabled us to offer an innovative approach to printing for our clients and positions us way ahead of our competition. We were amazed by the short learning curve, and were running production the first week after installation.'

Schulz originally envisioned doing print runs of 50,000 pieces or less with the DICE inkjet unit but runs of 500,000 have proven practical and economical when compared to the cost of press setup, plate generation and labor.

'That was the biggest surprise, and will greatly reduce our return on investment time period,' said Schulz.

Encoders mounted to the press enable flexo printing to be combined with the DICE inkjet printing in one pass 'with perfect registration including perforating and die-cutting,' according to Schulz.

He concluded: 'With the DICE GT printer integrated into our current Mark Andy press it has transformed our business with an impact not seen around here since the computer revolution in the 1980s.'

HASNET ETIKET LABEL, TURKEY
PRATI SATURN TE 430 INSPECTION REWINDERS
Turkish converter Hasnet Etiket Label, based in Gunesli, Istanbul, has installed two Prati Saturn TE 430 inspection rewinders in its modernized and environmentally friendly factory.

The company was formed in 1995 and provides printed self-adhesive labels and hangtags for the cosmetics, shampoo and liquid soap sectors, with clients including Nike, Next, H&M, New Yorker Group and Street One.

Explained director, Recep Hasoglu, 'Here at Has Label, we produce high quality woven labels, with all the cutting and folding carried out in our plant. We offer our customers complete branding concepts that are tailor-made with worldwide distribution and short delivery times.'

INK MILL CORPORATION & FLEXO ONE, USA
ISYS EDGE 850 LABEL PRINTER INSTALLS
iSys has installed EDGE 850 label printers at North American converters Ink Mill Corporation and Flexo One.

Commented Steve Mills, CEO of Ink Mill Corporation, 'Our business requires many different short run labels. We went searching for a digital label printer and after looking at all the different models, we chose the Edge 850 because of its versatility and speed. Before the Edge 850, we had to order large rolls of labels from an outside label shop. At one point, we had built up an inventory of partial rolls of preprinted labels that was valued at $30,000. Now, with the iSys Edge 850, we have reduced our inventory cost to that of just a few rolls of unprinted labels. The reduction in carrying cost, the reduction of lead time, and the added flexibility and creativity for in-house label design has given Ink Mill an Edge in our market.'

Added Gary Crockett, president of Flexo One, 'The iSys Edge 850 system has helped us in important ways. Since we no longer need to create plates or dies for short run orders, we are more competitive. We are also able to give our customers the quick delivery they sometimes need. Not only are labels printed on our iSys Edge 850 system a profit center, but offering these labels and services to our customers has given us the by-product of an increased number of jobs going to our conventional presses.'

KEM CARDS, INDIA
GIDUE COMBAT M1
Indian converter Kem Cards – part of the TM Enterprises playing-cards manufacturing group – is the first to install a Gidue Combat M1 press following its launch at Labelexpo India last November. Kem Cards was founded 13 years ago to produce beer, liquor and pharma labels.

The Combat M1 is an evolution of the established S-Combat design. It incorporates a modified Flower flexographic print unit combining easier operator access, and a shorter web path. The converting section has been completely redesigned with independent servo motors for each die-cutting unit and easy access to the slitting section. The three servo-driven die-cutting units allow for great converting flexibility, accurate tension and register control.

XEROX, FRANCE
BERKELEY MACHINERY AUTOFLEX EXCEL PRESS
Berkeley Machinery has installed an Autoflex Excel XT340 8-color press at Xerox France, receiving acclaim for its 'quick make ready and superb build quality'. An independent survey of the press undertaken by Xerox said there was 'impressive performance on the machine with 86 percent of the results on the first test being satisfactory', a level achieved by only two other machines on test.

The latest Autoflex XT can be built from 270mm up to 1800mm wide with operating speeds in excess of 300m/min using a motorised quick change sleeve system.

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ILLEGAL logging is targetted by new EU chain of custody law

EU launches tough timber sourcing code

THE EUROPEAN UNION'S new timber regulations will impact all businesses handling paper labels or liners, with chain of custody certification now mandatory. Dr Liz Wilks, European stakeholder and sustainability manager, Asia Pulp & Paper, reports

Illegal timber is a major global problem. The UNEP/Interpol report Green Carbon, Black Trade published in September 2012 calculated that between 15-30 percent of the global trade in timber is from illegal sources, a trade worth between US $30 and US $100 billion, or 10-30 percent of the entire global wood trade. Unlicensed and unplanned forest clearance endangers ecosystems, damages communities and undermines businesses and sustainable forest management. As illegally logged timber winds its way through the supply chain into products such as paper and packaging, illegal timber also poses a reputational risk for businesses worldwide.

Recognizing the threat of illegal timber and the potential power of the EU single market the EU has responded with the European Union Timber Regulation (EUTR). The EUTR is a great step forward, but a major business challenge is the lack of awareness of its implications for EU businesses.

Entering into force on the 3rd of March 2013, the EUTR makes it an offence to place illegally harvested timber or timber products for the first time on the EU market for use in commercial activity. Unlike the EUTR's global equivalents such as the US Lacey Act, the EUTR is focused on the point of entry on to the EU market rather than at source. What this means in practice is that the obligations of the EUTR are focused on European business users of timber and timber products such as the labeling industry. In short, through the EUTR it is now a legal requirement for the labeling industry to do its bit to tackle illegal timber.

The EUTR applies to all timber products – whether imported or domestically produced.

Covering all sources of timber products, the regulation applies to two types of organization within the EU. The majority of the requirements of the EUTR apply to the organization that first places the product on the EU market. This organization is referred to as the operator. An operator organization is anyone who sources timber or timber derived products such as paper from outside the EU single market or any organization that harvests timber within the EU. The second type of organization is a trader.

A trader is an organization that purchases and sells timber products which have already been placed on the EU single market. The trader must keep records for five years which identify the operator that supplied the products and, where applicable, to whom the products were sold.

OBLIGATIONS FOR OPERATORS

It is the operator's legal obligation to ensure that the timber or timber derived products it places on the EU market

through the course of its commercial activities are legally sourced. This obligation requires the implementation of a capable due diligence or risk assessment system. Depending on the level of certification available for a given timber source, this process can be a simple or very complex affair. The competitive advantage will be with those businesses that source timber products from suppliers that can demonstrate legal sourcing all the way to verifiable points of origin through nationally approved certification schemes.

DUE DILIGENCE EXPLAINED

According to the text of the EUTR: 'The due diligence system includes three elements inherent to risk management: access to information, risk assessment and mitigation of the risk identified...'

It may be helpful to imagine establishing a due diligence system as a two-stage process – the information stage and the risk mitigation stage. The first stage, positioned as an information stage, would quickly establish (through information such as the provision of certification or the type of product) the level of compliance with the country of origin's applicable legislation. This requires the operator, among other things, to have access to the description of the type of product and species of the wood used, the country of harvest, the product quantity, and the name and address of the supplier. The majority of this information is already held by users of timber products and is readily promoted by responsible suppliers. This information will enable the business to determine if the source is low risk. The second stage of the risk assessment procedure through risk mitigation would deal with sources that are not proven to be low risk at the information stage – risk mitigation could include the sourcing of additional information (either from the supplier or an independent source) or choosing to switch supply to a demonstrable low risk source.

THE ROLE OF THIRD-PARTY CERTIFICATION SCHEMES

Sourcing timber from suppliers with certification such as through the PEFC or FSC is increasingly popular. Third party schemes such as these are likely to provide a level of assurance that the covered product is low risk. However such certification does not replace the need for a due diligence system as operators will still need to be able to demonstrate that the product sourced is covered by the given certification and that the third-party organization is capable of such assurance.

FLEGT VOLUNTARY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS – THE EUTR GREEN LANE

The European Union recognizes that tackling illegal deforestation requires national cooperation and the simultaneous support of legal national timber product industries. To this end as part of the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) action plan, the European Union is entering into legally binding bilateral agreements or Voluntary Partnership Agreements (VPAs) with timber exporting countries to guarantee the legal sourcing of timber. This will be done through the creation of independently evaluated Legality Assurance Systems (LAS) that enable the partner country to certify via a 'FLEGT' license that each consignment is verified as legal, such a FLEGT license will confirm that the consignment meets the requirements of the EUTR – hence 'Green Lane'. In addition, once the VPA with a partner country is formally concluded the EU will only accept timber from a partner country that is FLEGT licensed through that partner country's LAS. The EU has concluded a VPA with Ghana and is in the negotiation and ratification stage with Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Gabon, Liberia and other timber exporting nations. Until the EU's VPAs are concluded, some timber exporting countries such as Indonesia are stepping up to support their domestic industries through certification schemes that

demonstrate sourcing in accordance with the country of origin's applicable legislation.

THE RELEVANCE OF THE INDONESIAN SVLK

As an example of a country of origin's certification scheme, Indonesia's SVLK Wood Legality Assurance System is a prime example. SVLK guarantees a chain of custody process that demonstrates legal sourcing in accordance with Indonesian law all the way to point of origin. Under the EU VPA with Indonesia which is expected to be formally concluded in 2013, SVLK is recognised as the credible control and verification system to guarantee the legality of timber or timber products from Indonesia. As the first major Indonesian business to achieve complete SVLK certification, Asia Pulp & Paper is well placed when it comes to trading with the EU.

WHAT NEXT FOR THE EUTR?

If ever an example of the European Union's ability to project so-called soft power' was needed, the Timber Regulation would be it. By closing its single market to illegal timber and by placing the onus of due diligence on EU businesses whom the EU can regulate, the EUTR will help to reduce the global problem of illegal deforestation. For businesses such as Asia Pulp & Paper and its competitors, the EUTR is welcomed – it enables fair competition and provides a mechanism for ensuring supplier engagement and compliance.

What then of the 'onus' of due diligence? As demonstrated, depending on timber sourcing the impact of due diligence for operators within the labeling industry will be either very light through information gathering or extensive through risk mitigation. The smart operator will now be busy ensuring that its due diligence requirements are light by working with suppliers to ensure that its timber product, paper and packaging supply chain has demonstrable compliance with the country of origin's applicable legislation. Responsible suppliers such as Asia Pulp & Paper are ready, is your business?

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Buying and selling a label business

PALLE Jestersen looks at the current market situation and future trends in mergers and acquistions

The market for label companies in Western Europe and North America is consolidating. Every month label companies are sold. A few deals are huge like CCL's acquisition of Avery Dennison's label converting business for $500m. Most are much smaller, but just as important for the involved parties. One example of the consolidation taking place: in Denmark, 20 years ago we had more than 50 label companies – now there are less than half left. The same scale of consolidation has not yet taken place everywhere, but consolidation is happening. At the same time new label companies start in the emerging markets, so on a global scale the number of label companies is more or less stable.

WILL BABY BOOMERS FLOOD THE MARKET?

The label market consists of thousands of small to medium sized companies, most of them run by entrepreneurs. In the mature Western Europe and North American label markets these companies are typically 20-40 years old. Time is catching up on the owners and many of them are forced to think about exit strategies.

With Baby Boomers retiring en masse over the next 15 years, a lot of business owners will be heading for the exit not only in the label business, but in many small to medium sized businesses. There are predictions that this will put a damper on small-business valuations, as the supply of businesses will outweigh demand. Business owners should start planning now to position their business for sale in what could become a crowded and competitive marketplace.

"One example of the consolidation taking place: in Denmark, 20 years ago we had more than 50 label companies – now there are less than half left"

BUYERS ARE OUT THERE!

On the demand side, there are buyers out there! We have several companies who are actively seeking to buy label companies. We have observed different groups of buyers in the market.

A prominent group of buyers are made up of label companies with a strategy to expand often within their end use markets such as pharmaceuticals, beverage or food. The biggest examples are CCL Label and MultiColor, but there are several others with clear growth by acquisition strategies. Some do it within their own geographical areas or as part of a strategy to expand to other parts of the world.

A particular group of label company buyers are looking for cheap deals, when 'colleagues' run into difficulties and are forced to sell.

Another group of buyers consists of companies from other industries, who want to expand into the label market. They can come from other packaging industries such as Fuji Seal's acquisition of Pago and Constantia Flexibles acquisition of Spear Group. They can also come from traditional printing, where the market is shrinking and profit levels are lower than in the label market.

Corporate buyers and private equity groups in particular are sitting on record amounts of cash and looking to put it to use through strategic acquisitions and investments.

SHOW STOPPERS

A recent survey among business brokers and merger-and-acquisition professionals revealed that seller value expectations form the biggest deal blocker, followed by bank financing for acquisition of small businesses.

One of the keys to a successful sale is therefore to have a clear understanding of how buyers will value the business, whether it's an individual, a financial or a strategic acquirer. More often than not, that value will come down to a multiple of the business's earnings. In the label industry we have seen many deals made at ratios of three to five to six times the so-called 'normalized' EBITDA = Earnings Before Interest, Taxes, Depreciation and Amortization. With 'normalized' we mean after correction for extraordinary, discretionary and nonrecurring items.

For reasons of comparison, Business Brokerage Press publishes an annual guide to pricing small businesses for sale. Here are some multiples and rules of thumb from the latest version:

- **Manufacturing** (annual sales of one million USD to five million USD)**:** three to four times plus inventory.
- **Commercial printers** (annual sales under two million USD)**:** two and a half to three times normalized EBITDA.

At the AWA Executive Packaging Forum 2012 it was outlined that for packaging companies with critical mass (bigger than most label companies), continued growth and a positive outlook, EBITDA multiples of 6-6.5 for financial transactions and about seven for strategic acquisitions are often being paid.

Some owners get a professional valuator to determine the value of their company. However, at the end of the day, what counts is what buyer and seller can agree in terms of price and how it is paid/financed.

Some deals are fully paid in cash, other deals are more complicated with buyers making a down payment in cash and then pay some or all of the remainder in installments. The outstanding amount could be dependent on pre-determined criteria such as sales and profit numbers. Other buyers offer stock in their company. A willingness to be creative with the terms can go a long way toward a successful sale.

EASIER TO SELL

All companies can be sold if the price is right!! Serious buyers are out there. Owners get the best price when the market is up and your sales and profits are healthy, stable or even increasing. Buyers will have less problems paying for a strong business, but they will scoff at overvalued listings. Companies with unique capabilities and focused on certain markets command a higher price. A broad, stable customer base, not dominated by one or two big customers, reduces the risk.

There are basically two ways of selling – the legal company (limited or incorporated) with everything, assets and liabilities

"Corporate buyers and private equity groups in particular are sitting on record amounts of cash and looking to put it to use through strategic acquisitions and investments"

– or only the assets including the physical assets, goodwill, customer lists, etc. Some buyers prefer an asset purchase as it prevents them from taking over any hidden liabilities in the company. If owners are prepared to accept an asset sale that will make it easier to sell.

Real estate is another key factor to consider. Often it does not get paid its market value in a company sale. Many owners therefore rent or lease the buildings to their label company. We recommend offering a company for sale with an option for the buyer to in- or exclude land and buildings.

Some owners put restrictions on the sale. For instance, they do not want to see their company moved to another location. Before a sale, it is important that an owner thinks through questions such as: Do you have any concerns about who is buying your company? Are you prepared to let a close competitor go through your factory and look through your books during due diligence? What about a venture capitalist, who in many cases wants to cash-in and sell again within a number of years? However, the more restrictions a seller puts up, the fewer potential buyers we will find.

Take the buyers view. Assume s/he will find problematic areas and that eventually all will be discovered. Ensure neat, clean, attractive surroundings, keep machinery well maintained, clarify agreements and contracts, settle minor disputes, update relevant records, get your books in order, etc. Serious buyers want to buy well-run businesses, not neglected ones.

BRACE YOURSELF

Selling or buying a business is serious business, so you want to make sure you take the time and trouble to do it right. It can be a long and hard journey, but one with a very tangible and rewarding light at the end of the tunnel. As you proceed in your process you will need at least a professional lawyer and a certified accountant with experience in M&A on your team.

For the seller, once you've successfully sold your business, savor an accomplishment that not every entrepreneur gets to enjoy. Whether you're lying on the beach or starting on your next venture.

For the buyer, acquisition is often a key element in growing your business. Preparing a clear strategy of what you want to buy, how much you are prepared to pay, secure financing and pulling the right team together is the first step to secure a prosperous future.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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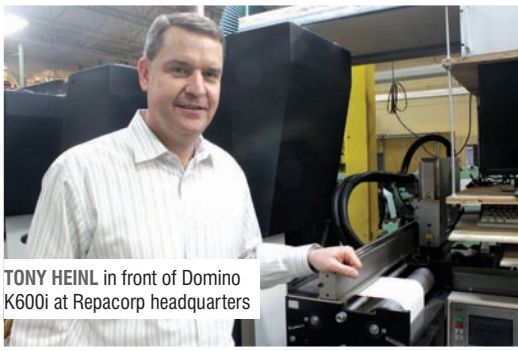
REPACORP is pleased with its new Domino K600i inkjet system



TONY HEINL in front of Domino K600i at Repacorp headquarters

Repacorp embraces Domino black inkjet unit

THE ABILITY TO AUTOMATE COMPLEX WORKFLOWS made Domino a winning investment for Repacorp's high-volume, variable data label production, writes Danielle Jerschefske

Based in Ohio with locations in Wisconsin and Arizona, Repacorp manufactures stock labels and produces custom RFID inlays and digitally printed prime labels for a range of distributors across the country. At Labelexpo Americas 2012 the converter purchased a 13.3 inch Domino K600i piezo inkjet printing system to streamline its production of high-volume, single color (K), variable data labels. The unit sits on an ABG rewinder that can be put in-line with a 13 inch flexo work horse. It offers 600dpi resolution at speeds up to 246 ft/min.

'The ability to automatically clean the jets, helping to avoid jet outs, the continuous flow of ink throughout the printhead and automatic stitching across the web is what sold us,' says Tony Heinl, president at Repacorp.

INTELLIGENT DESIGN

Domino's intelligent Technology (i-Tech) components have been engineered into the K600i, offering great uptime benefits through seamless and reliable automation that requires less operator intervention, reduces waste, runs variable data at high speeds and produces high quality print. With the K600i's CleanCap design, the printhead is cleaned and protected between usages. This reduces the risk of nozzle blockages while giving press operators more time to address process control, and it eliminates the potential for the operator to damage the printhead.

The ActiFlow component constantly circulates the black UV ink around the printhead preventing air bubbles lodging, which is a common cause of jet-out and print quality degradation.

A single module consisting of three printheads are supported by StitchLink automatic motor control. The manual labor of stitching the heads together is no longer necessary, and productivity and reliability is improved.

'With our previous system stitching was probably a bigger problem than jet outs,' says Heinl. 'A lot of our applications are large barcodes and misalignment in the stitching would really show up. If we didn't get the printheads lined up perfectly, the barcode wasn't going to scan. We wasted thousands of feet of material on each job to get it set up and run correctly. So far what we have seen with the Domino, those problems have gone away. It's relatively simple to set up. You turn it on. It prints. It works.'

The converter also found the ability to control the drop size advantageous for getting ink usage down to a science – thereby having a better estimation of cost. Says Heinl, 'You can really get that cost down depending on what you're running. For the most part, you can price it out using a medium ink drop setting, and then once you get on press the operator can figure out how lean the job can go.'

Repacorp is excited about the K600i's capabilities and the performance the system has already delivered to the bottom line. This flexibility to deliver high resolution, high speed VDP meets the growing demand for variable data labeling applications, ranging from simple stock control and anti-counterfeit data, to promotional games, tickets, tags, plastic cards and mailing pieces through to the printing of complete products.

'The quality of the print is high,' says Heinl. The only work completed thus far with the K600i has been high volume variable data labels. 'But it offers a lot more than that. We just haven't been able to market it long enough to do some of the monochrome high-quality work, similar to a four-color process.'

Repacorp's business is growing and Heinl is toying with the idea of adding another K600i system soon. He is also reviewing the performance opportunity of Domino's N600i digital full color printing press.

This is one of a number of K600i installations in the region since last year's Labelexpo. Domino is building up its team in North America to this growth and further adoption of this single color high speed system, as well as its N600i press.

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GIANMARIO CILLARIO, Eurostampa group managing director, in the sheetfed wet glue section of the impressive facility

Global spirits specialist spreads wings

EUROSTAMPA has expanded from its Italian base to highly successful operations in the US and Scotland. Further global expansion is on the cards, as Andy Thomas reports

To succeed at the highest levels of the global label industry requires a relentless pursuit of excellence, regular investment in the latest equipment and the closest possible relations with the final customer.

Italy-based converting group Eurostampa is an excellent example of all these qualities, which explains how it has grown in the last five years into a trans-Atlantic powerhouse with plans to expand into fast growing developing markets.

Eurostampa was founded in 1966 by the Cillario brothers in Salmour, Cuneo province in Italy, with the first factory built in 1971. Over the next 15 years Eurostampa developed its core business of wet glue labels for mineral water, beer, foodstuffs, alcoholic beverages and chocolates. In 1999 the company moved into PS label production and Luciano Cillario acquired full control of the company, becoming president and managing director. His three sons joined the business and today Gianmario runs the Italian operation and Gianfranco the production facility founded in North America in 2009.

CLOSER TO SPIRITS BRANDS

Key to Eurostampa's success has been the ability to work closely with brands in the spirits and beverage industry both in Europe and the US, bringing innovations and best practice from its Italian base to clients in North America and, through a further acquisition, into its Scottish operation.

The new plant in Cincinnati was set up in 2009 as part of a nine million USD investment after Eurostampa spotted an opportunity to shake up the wet glue spirits market with some European innovation (see the excellent article by L&L North American editor Danielle Jerschefske at http://www.labelsandlabeling.com/news/features/italian-converter-succeeds-in-us-heartland).

'We found it impossible to properly service US customers from our Italian factory,' says Gianmario Cillario, now Eurostampa Group managing director. 'Some of our competitors were still using 25 year old machines, where our mentality is to change machines every five to seven years to take advantage of new technologies and features.' The plant is sited close to the Bourbon distilling hubs in the US.

Employees are regularly transferred between the Italian and North American operations and Eurostampa engineers have developed a proprietary ERP system which has consolidated the lines of communication between the two locations.

The US strategy has been enormously successful, with 30 percent growth predicted in 2013.

In March 2011 the management of Scottish spirits label specialist Gilmour & Dean approached Eurostampa with a

(L-R) Massimo Bellingardi (Omet), Gianmario Cillario with a 430mm 8-color Omet X-Flex X6

proposal to become part of the group. The negogiations were successful and Eurostampa gained a base to service the key Scots and Irish whisky markets locally rather than from Italy.

Immediately after the acquisition, Eurostampa implemented its customary strategy of completely overhauling the production machinery and customer service, this time working with the existing management team. 'The company had had multiple owners and was not profitable and had mostly old machinery,' says Gianmario Cillario. 'Customers were happy with the quality but not with the support or service.'

Gilmour & Dean is now growing at 20 percent and Eurostampa has big investment plans. 'The people in this case are the main asset and they are running the operation today directly,' says Gianmario.

Early in 2010 Eurostampa opened a sales office in India, and is considering its strategy in that country. 'India will clearly be an important market in the future, and better than China,' says Gianmario. 'We spent a year talking to Indian companies, but could not yet find the basis of a deal.'

The company has also had an office Brazil since 2004 and Mexico is viewed as a possible strategic opportunity.

MARKET TRENDS

Spirits now represent more than 70 percent of the 13 billion labels Eurostampa produces every year.

"Factors driving the move to PS include the increasing installed base of PS applicators. 'There is a large installed base of older wet glue machines, and when these companies reinvest it is in PS applicators'."

Although the company's original focus was high end wet glue labels, there has been a continuing trend towards pressure sensitive labels in this sector.

In the group as a whole, wet glue labels account for 60 percent of production, against 40 percent for PS. But in Italy it is already 50/50, and in the US 55/45 wet glue/PS. 'Next year as a group we will be 55 percent PS and 45 percent wet glue,' says Gianmario.

Factors driving the move to PS include the increasing installed base of PS applicators. 'There is a large installed base of older wet glue machines, and when these companies reinvest it is in PS applicators,' says Gianmario. 'The move to PS is usually driven by overall efficiency and a lower total cost of ownership of a PS label against wet glue. The wet glue machine you have to wipe down and there are change parts for job changes. So although the cost of a PS label is more than for wet glue, the total cost of ownership is less. If you add the ability of narrow web presses to add screen and hot foil in line and you have the perfect storm.'

Within the PS sector there has been some move from PS paper to film and from glassine to PET liners, though this depends on the particular application. Finat is working on this issue,' says Gianmario.

Customer service is a critical component of Eurostampa's offering, and in 2003 Eikon srl was founded as a company dedicated to graphic design and marketing, working closely with brand owners to introduce innovations to their product lines.

'In an economic crisis in order to grow we have to grow through our customers, and this means supporting them with innovation in good times and with price

COLD DIE PIONEER

Eurostampa Italy was the European beta site for Avery Dennison's ThinStream technology. Launched at Labelexpo Europe in 2010, ThinStream allows labels to be die-cut on liners as thin as 12 microns using a specially designed off-line 'Cold Die' unit developed by Gallus.

in bad times. That is why we are still growing although there is a crisis in Italy,' says Gianmario.

NARROW WEB INVESTMENT

Although originally a Gallus house for its Italian pressure sensitive label production, Eurostampa has since 2009 focused on Omet as its press supplier. The first Omet X-6 press was installed in 2009. It is an 11-color machine with seven UV flexo units, four UV screen, double die-cutting station, two rail-mounted cold foil units, a hot foil unit and Vision-1 automatic inspection system. A de-relam unit and turnbar allows printing unit on the adhesive.

The second 430mm-wide X-6 press was installed last year and has eight UV-flexo printing units, one UV screen station, one cold foil unit, double die-cutting stations and Vision-1 inspection. The press is configured with ancillaries including E+L web guide, Vetaphone corona treater, double-sided Kelva web cleaner and Kocher & Beck URS auto unwind and rewind.

Eurostampa has now confirmed the order for a third Omet X-6 press, this time a combination sleeve offset and flexo machine, incorporating hot and cold foil, lamination and UV screen unit. L&L will cover this development in more detail when the press is installed.

Finishing is carried out on six Prati Jupiter inspection rewinders, with two more on order.

On the wet glue side of the business Eurostampa has six Heidelberg and Roland presses and eight Bobst Foiling machines along with a host of other finishing equipment.

Digital pre-press includes two Afga offset CTP units and a CDI Spark XT paired with DuPont FAST thermal processor to handle digital flexo plate duties. All are driven by an Esko workflow system.

MODERN FACTORY

Both narrow web and sheetfed presses are located in a state-of-the-art 27,000 sqm factory located in Bene Vagienna. The plant was completed in 2008 and a further 27,000 sqm remains available for further expansion. The plant has BRC (British Retail Consortium) accreditation for food grade production for both its wet glue and PS facilities – critical when producing for the food and beverages sectors.

The Bene Vagienna operation includes a fully automated warehouse for paper stocks and finished labels for the wet glue operation, where more than 10 percent of production goes to stock for customer call-off. 'We are now thinking about extending the automated warehouse concept to the flexo press production area,' says Gianmario.

"Eurostampa has implemented a comprehensive track and trace coding system for all materials, ink and other print components"

Eurostampa has implemented a comprehensive track and trace coding system for all materials, ink and other print components – one of the most advanced this author has seen. Customers can specify a discrete data matrix code, or QR code on any Eurostampa printed label, which holds the part number and the job number of the label and brand. All labels are run through a specially engineered Prati conveyer machine equipped with vision systems where the codes are automatically scanned and incorrect labels ejected. This highly effective process eliminates any possibility for labels becoming mixed.

There is comprehensive QC control in the plant, with all label rolls checked with a spectrophotometers to ensure they are within customer specified deltaE values.

Eurostampa runs continuous improvement programs jointly with the University of Turin including sustainability initiatives such as carbon footprint monitoring. There has been a €150k investment in an automated matrix waste removal system for all the plant's narrow web presses.

The Cillario family approach to management is highly personalized. 'I am here in person for any problems our workforce may have. People can approach me any time I'm walking through the plant,' says Gianmario. 'In recent weeks we have held discussions on flexible working times,' for example.'

BRIGHT FUTURE

Moving forward, the future for Eurostampa looks bright. The group as a whole grew by three percent growth during the difficult economic times of 2012 and is looking to accelerate growth to 10 percent in 2013. Add to this the possibility of future expansion into the fast-growing Indian and Latin America label markets – using the experienced gained in the North American and Scottish acquisitions – and this company is clearly a rising star on the world stage.

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Smart moves

CAROL HOUGHTON looks at the latest developments in smart technology

JUICEBURST is claimed the first soft drinks brand to embrace augmented reality

SOFT DRINK EMBRACES AUGMENTED REALITY

Berkshire Labels has completed a major launch for the successful JuiceBurst brand, owned by Purity Soft Drinks, which makes JuiceBurst 'the world's first digitally interactive soft drinks brand.'

The new interactive label utilizes Blippar technology to demonstrate the fruit on each label bursting into life when viewed on a smart phone through the free and easy-to-download Blippar app.

There is also an interactive fruit machine for consumers to play plus videos of more exploding fruit!

The new labels have been printed UV flexo in six colors including two spot varnishes. The latest digital repro and platemaking technology was used to ensure the vibrant, high quality fruit explosions were printed at the highest quality onto a 35 micron unsupported PP film.

Jon Evans, marketing director for Purity Soft Drinks, explains, 'This is a very exciting time for JuiceBurst and the input, support and partnership approach taken by the team at Berkshire Labels has been second to none. From initial pre-production meetings with our designers through to machine trails and the full launch of 20 new lines, Berkshire Labels commitment has been invaluable.'

AURAPRINT developed a complex converting process to produce laminates which detect contamination on food surfaces

LAMINATE DETECTS THREATS TO FOOD SAFETY

Orion Diagnostica, a Finnish specialist in diagnostic testing systems and hygiene monitoring, has worked with label converter Auraprint Oy and VTT, the Technical Research Centre of Finland, to develop the patent-pending Orion Clean Card Pro. The small, hand-held disposable device detects protein on surfaces in food preparation and packaging areas with the help of a self-adhesive label.

When wiped over a moistened work surface, the Orion Clean Card Pro test changes color within 30 seconds if any protein residue is present. This indicates inadequate cleaning, thus helping to prevent the spread of food poisoning pathogens between food, surfaces, and equipment.

Auraprint can produce the Orion Clean Card Pro test in a single press pass on an adapted 10-color rotary letterpress machine, using four materials rolls, four printing units, and three die-cutting units. Tero-Matti Kinanen, managing director, Auraprint, said: 'This is a challenging and complex process, because we must maintain equal tensioning of the four different material rolls accurately throughout the process, and at the same time keep the printing and die-cutting units in register.'

Kinanen continued: 'Without the self-adhesive label laminate, the Orion Clean Card Pro test would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to manufacture cost-effectively and efficiently in large quantities. Our familiarity with the self-adhesive label printing process was certainly a key factor in our success in delivering a first-class product to Orion Diagnostica.'

Combining complex chemistry, materials science, and print technology, the device has already received an Innovation Award in the Finat self-adhesive Label Awards.

SHARP TEAR
PROTECTS DRUGS

Avery Dennison has launched Sharp Tear, an anti-counterfeiting technology that enables serial numbers to be read directly through the label, providing an extra layer of product security for pharmaceutical brands.

The thin and clear co-extruded film is being introduced as the pharmaceutical industry faces new threats from the internet and rapid globalization of the industry. Sharp Tear was designed for tamper-evident applications, where an easy tear is required in the label.

'The growth of internet sales, together with limited supplies of pharma products in some regions and significant price differentials, means that counterfeiting has become a very significant threat to all pharma brands,' said Hans Eichenwald, senior product manager specialty segments at Avery Dennison materials group. 'Today, around 10 percent of drugs sold are already counterfeit, according to the World Health Organization. Sharp Tear offers a rapid and reliable way to secure both product safety and brand reputation without impacting productivity or product margins.'

The product reveals tampering immediately by providing a seal that remains intact during normal handling, but which tears easily in one direction if attempts are made to open the package.

SUN DEMONSTRATES
SUNSCENT TECHNOLOGY

SunScent coatings from Sun Chemical and ScentSational Technologies now allow converters to incorporate scent directly onto a packaging substrate. The scent stays inactive until consumers handle the package, trigger a release, and experience a product's aroma. The scents are available in food grade flavors, as well as fragrances.

Available for flexo, gravure and offset coating units, SunScent coatings can be applied directly onto packaging as a spot coating in-line. Stock scents are available but custom 'Signature Scents' can also be developed.

Bob Lorenz, vice president of business development at Sun Chemical, commented, 'It comes as no surprise that the sense of smell is a differentiator that many brand owners would like to take advantage of. The challenge however, is intriguing customers with the scent while ensuring the packaging is tamper-resistant. SunScent coatings print the scented coating directly onto the package itself so the scent can be released by simply handling the product, rather than scratching.'

SCHREINER PrinTrust technology allows remote authentication of both driver's licenses and now toll fee stickers

SCHREINER SECURES
TOLL FEE STICKERS

CarSecure has been introduced by Schreiner PrinTrust to provide immediate proof of authenticity in toll fee stickers. A specialty pigment is applied to the label during printing which is invisible to the human eye, but can be read through the windshield by a special device. The material is UV-resistant and durable. For additional tamper evidence, other security features such as kiss-cuts or covert void messages can be integrated in the label.

Up to now, the filtering properties of windshields have made it impossible for readers to reliably check stickers affixed to the inside. The CarSecure specialty pigment system could also be applied to parking permits using handheld readers. The mobile reader is simply placed on top of the windshield sticker and activated. An optical and an acoustical signal indicates authenticity of the sticker.

STRONGBOW PIONEERS
INTELLIGENT BOTTLE TOP

Strongbow, the UK cider brand, and London-based digital agency Work Club have worked in partnership to prototype the first 'digitally-enabled' bottle tops.

A tag underneath the foil of the RFID-enabled 'StartCap' is exposed once opened. Signals are then sent to a reader that recognizes the chip and triggers a central computer in the network. This activates a switch, allowing programmed music and lighting to be set off at the point of opening.

'The starting point was to use digital technology to create something of interest that because it was interesting would also be social. Technology allows you to bring product, customer and brand much closer together,' explained Ben Mooge, joint creative partner, Work Club.

Here's one way to make a secure package.

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Coating your success

Measuring inkjet print resolution

AS ONE OF THE KEY MEASURES for inkjet print quality, it is important to understand how print resolution helps define the quality of the output in terms of dpi, effective dpi and greyscale. Mike Fairley discusses these terms with Philip Easton, director, Digital Printing Solutions, Domino

Over the last few years a number of companies have released digital inkjet presses. Fundamentally, the basis of the print quality and productivity achieved by these new generations of digital presses is largely determined by the type of print heads integrated into them; the dominant heads in label printing today being the Xaar 1001 and the Kyocera KJ4.

Mike Fairley: 'Inkjet seems to have introduced a new language to help define the print resolution and quality of the output from different digital print heads, with dpi, effective dpi and grayscale commonly being quoted. So what do these terms mean.'

Philip Easton: 'Print resolution, although not the only measure is one of the key measures for print quality. For those more used to flexo printing this is commonly quoted in the form of lines per inch (lpi) or lines per centimeter (lpc). Inkjet, including the desk top versions that readers may have at home, as well as the numerous UV-curable inkjet-based digital presses that are now rapidly growing market presence, will all tend to quote dpi or dots per inch.

'Dots per inch defines the density of dots that can be printed in an inch. The more dots per inch available, the higher the print resolution of the image; consequently, the more smaller dots that can be utilized, the better the image definition is going to be.

'Another related characteristic that impacts print quality is the range of ink drop sizes selectable for printing, often referred to as grayscale capability.

A grayscale converts an original image (or photograph) to a pattern of dots that simulates the continuous tones of the original. Lighter shades of grey in the original consist of smaller inkjet dots spaced far apart; darker shades of grey typically contain larger dots with closer spacing. The latest inkjet print heads all support grayscales, however generally lower resolution (lower dpi) print heads will be printing more grayscales with on average larger drops being used in order to create the required ink coverage.'

MF: 'Print resolution can also be different in the vertical and horizontal axis of the image. Why is that?'

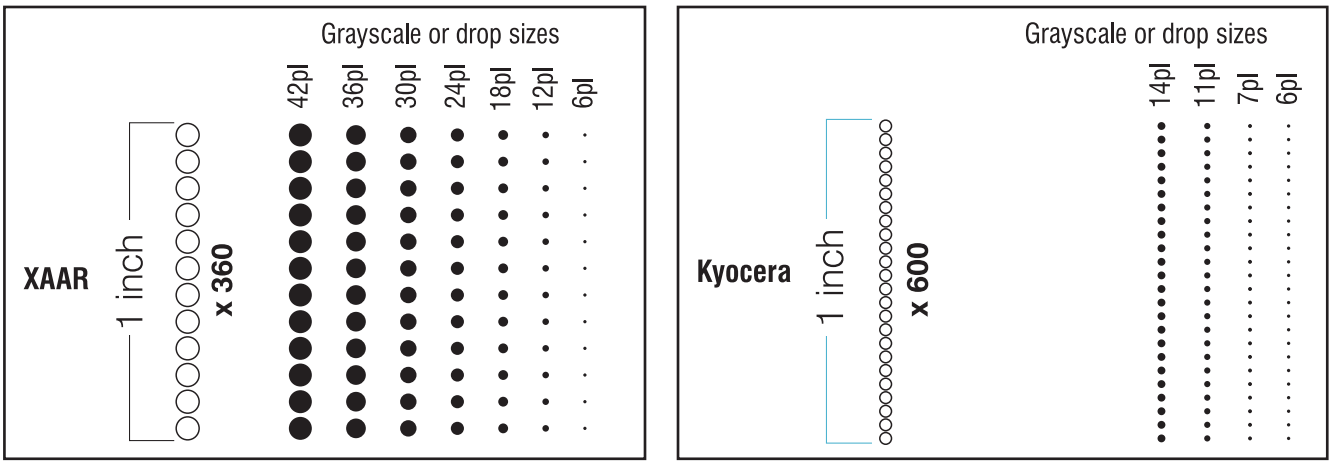
PE: 'On an inkjet press the dpi perpendicular to the material travel direction is fixed and defined by the number of nozzles per inch in the print heads printing the image; not the case if they interlace vertically. In the material travel direction the dpi is determined by the jetting frequency of the print head, the number of grayscales being used as well as the operational speed. Where there are fewer grayscales being printed, print density and consequent color range available will be impacted, but a higher running speed is possible. However, it should be noted that higher dpi presses like Domino have less grayscales but still provide a higher density.

'Also for example, if you halve the print resolution in the material travel direction it can be possible to double the print speed, recognizing the print head has a defined jetting frequency. For this reason in some cases dpi is defined in two axis, for example, 600x300dpi would mean 600dpi in one axis and 300dpi in the other.'

MF: 'There are two dominant inkjet print head technologies being used in digital label presses today: The Xaar 1001, used by companies such as Durst, EFI Jetrion and Stork, and the Kyocera KJ4A used by Domino. How do these head technologies differ?'

PE: 'The Xaar 1001 print head has a native print resolution of 360dpi, typically operating at 25m/m with 360x360dpi and eight grayscales. Xaar have combined the grayscale capability with print resolution and quote "Effective" or as EFI Jetrion quote, "Apparent" print resolution. This is broadly calculated as the square route of the number of grayscales multiplied by the native dpi. Hence Xaar claim an "Effective" resolution of over 1000dpi; albeit there are not 1,000 drops per inch. The print

COMPARING DROP SIZE AND RESOLUTION between Xaar and Kyocera inkjet heads



head has eight (no drop is counted as one of the drop sizes) grayscales with drop sizes between 6pl (pico litre) and 42pl.

'The Kyocera KJ4A print head as used by Domino on the other hand, has a native resolution of 600dpi, operating at 50m/m with 600x600dpi and four grayscales (five including the "no drop"). This would imply an "Effective" resolution of 1,340dpi. Within a square inch there will be up to 360,000 drops compared to 129,600 typically larger drops for the Xaar 1001 print head. The print head has four grayscales with drop sizes between 6pl and 14pl. With more drops available for printing the average drop size is much smaller and it is therefore claimed that fewer grayscales are really required given the higher native resolution available.'

MF: 'What other factors are there that can determine the quality of the output?'

PE: 'There are of course many other factors that will determine the ultimate print quality of the output, such as media, environment, color management, registration control, print density, ink flow, etc; but the print resolution of the underlying head technology will always be a key factor determining the level of detail in the images. The higher the native resolution the greater the detail that can be reflected in the image, lower native resolution print heads will partly compensate for this through offering more grayscales. This difference is especially noticeable for smaller point size text'

"Another related characteristic that impacts print quality is the range of ink drop sizes selectable for printing, often referred to as grayscale capability."

MF: So what is the best way for a label converter to determine what inkjet press, head technology and print quality they should invest in?'

PE: 'Ultimately we would recommend printing a range of different images from any inkjet press, on a range of different stocks, before drawing any conclusion on what is the best print quality for their particular company and range of applications. It will depend on the type of work they produce, their customer quality requirements, desired running speeds, and compatibility of print quality with other printing technologies used, e.g, UV flexo.'

LABELEXPO WORKSHOP

Labelexpo 2013 in Brussels will host an Inkjet Technology Workshop in which up to six different high-end inkjet presses, with a range of print head technologies, will be all printing from the same origination files, on the same substrates, to produce benchmarked food or personal care, pharma and industrial labels.

Visitors to the show will be able to see the different inkjet presses being set-up and run, collect the comparative samples produced on each press, together with a job description sheet for each label design. They will also be able to see comparative electrophotographic toner printed samples of the same origination, on the same substrates. More details on how to see the press set-ups and collect the benchmark printed samples will be given nearer the show.

NEWS EXTRA

WINE LABEL SPECIALIST GROWS WITH ACQUISITION

Tapp Label Technologies, a leading manufacturer of pressure-sensitive labels in the wine and spirits marketplace with locations in Napa, California and Vancouver, Canada, has acquired the assets and hired the employees of Ben Franklin Press & Label Company (BFP&L). BFP&L, which is based in Napa, prints pressure-sensitive and wet glue/cut & stack labels primarily for the wine and spirits industries.

Tapp Label is a fellow pressure-sensitive label supplier to the North American wine and spirits markets. It utilizes waterless offset lithography, flexography and digital offset print processes.

BFP&L president and general manager Dennis Patterson said: 'All of us at BFP&L are extremely pleased to join Tapp Label Technologies because of our like-minded commitment to our customers' success and how we approach serving the wine & spirits marketplace.'

MARK ANDY ADDS DAETWYLER DOCTOR BLADES

The Print Products group of Mark Andy now offers the complete line of doctor blades from Max Daetwyler Corporation.

Mark Andy's print products team has gone through extensive training on the product line to be able to recommend the appropriate blade type or blade coating for the ink it will meter, as well as troubleshoot if there are concerns about score lines, streaking or ink spitting.

Through a recently expanded warehouse facility, most blades are stocked on-site and available for same day shipping.

BRIGL & BERGMEISTER TAKES ON CHAM CCK PRODUCTION

Brigl & Bergmeister is to take over production and marketing of CCK (Clay Coated Kraft) silicone base papers from Cham Paper Group when the base paper production facility in Cham, Switzerland, shuts down. Production will take place at B&B's facility in Niklasdorf, with Cham providing technical support.

The first products will be available during the second half of 2013, giving the Niklasdorf plant an additional pillar to its successful wet strength label papers business. Further investments in capacity at Niklasdorf will be made in 2014.

Brigl & Bergmeister had a successful year in 2012, with sales volume increased by 5 percent to 155,000 tonnes compared with the previous year, meaning that both Niklasdorf and Vevce plants were running at full capacity. By acquiring the ENAGES waste incineration plant, B&B Niklasdorf also has increased its independence from the volatile energy market and improved its carbon footprint.

In September 2013, the PM5 in Vevce, Slovenia, will receive a new film press which will increase capacity by 20,000 tonnes. It will become possible to develop new products in the label paper and flexible packaging range thanks to an improved pre-coating process.

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Chemical labeling faces regulation changes

OKI SYSTEMS UK media application manager Dave Willcox discusses the new Global Harmonisation System (GHS) chemical labeling regulations and how to print compliant labels

For quite some time now the chemical industry across the globe has been at odds when it comes to labeling chemicals and chemical preparations in a consistent manner. The United Nations, through the Global Harmonisation Agreement, has developed the Global Harmonisation System (GHS) to identify the hazardous properties of chemicals and how information about these hazards are passed on through labels and safety data sheets.

Full compliance is required by 2015 and in order to meet the new mandate, businesses and organizations will have to change their labeling processes because the new system involves the hazard pictogram being enclosed in a red diamond, whereas currently hazard pictograms were printed in black over a flood coated orange label. As smaller runs of more bespoke labels are required, having a device that can print the correct number of red diamonds will reduces the inventory and management required and negates financial impact of the new legislation.

The issue of compliance is raised when it comes to the production and printing of labels for shipping classified chemicals around the world. It is all very well having a globally unified system of classification but if the methods for printing these labels are not robust enough, the labels will fail to meet the accepted BS5609 standard, which state labels must be legible after exposure to the elements or, worse still, if lost overboard from ships transporting them.

WHAT'S CHANGING?

GHS require labels to be printed in color on a range of sizes from A7 to A4, with between one and eight pictograms, accompanied by hazard information, which may also need to be in a range of languages depending on where the chemicals are being shipped.

To print fully-compliant chemical labels, the media, adhesive and the printed image all have to meet parts 1, 2 and 3 of BS5609. BS5609 is the standard used to ensure that GHS labeling complies with Global and European directives and ensures that the label and information printed on it will survive the harshest of environments including long immersion (at least three months) in the sea or accelerated wear due to sand abrasion. It is vital that this standard is fulfilled as it acts as the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) certification required for self-adhesive labels.

STAY IN CONTROL

This presents a challenge in terms of label stock management for industries such as transportation and logistics, which need an economic way to print bespoke labels according to each load.

Today, expert print vendors provide a range of printing devices that are not only fully approved to BS5609, IMDG and GHS standards but that come complete with the specialist label media needed to print the self-adhesive labels. Using the most advanced printers it becomes possible to print the full range of GHS chemical hazard labels without the expense of purchasing a separate device for each job or a specialist thermal label printer to ensure that the labels are robust enough. These devices also have the capability to handle all general printing including Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS). As a result, businesses and organizations only need to print the exact number and type of labels required as and when the need arises, while in the meantime the printer can be used for any other daily jobs.

To ensure organizations and businesses produce labels to the recognised standard the printing device and label stock should be certified BS5609 compliant. Selected OKI devices have been independently tested and certified by PIRA (Print Industry Research Association) and carry a certification number. Organizations planning to print chemical labels should check devices are compliant with the legislation.

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SERVO3000 module acting as re-register unit for the production of multi-ply labels

LPP launches Servo 3000

GEAR DRIVEN PRESSES can be transformed with a new servo-driven infeed and re-register module demonstrated at a recent Open House. Andy Thomas reports

A modular unit which adds a high quality servo infeed and re-register capability to gear-driven presses was demonstrated at an Open House organized by LPP, a long established narrow web agency based near Manchester, England.

The Servo 3000 combines registration and web tension control in the same compact unit. At its heart is a specially coated servo-driven pacing roller, which works with gripper wheels – acting as a nip – to prevent any slippage.

In Infeed mode, material is paced into the press at a rate proportionate to press speed. The ratio between speed and web tension is set by a scale divided into 250 micro steps, which covers a wide tension range from thin films to tag stocks. These digital settings are repeatable for different materials and are not affected by variable factors such as temperature, run time and unwind roll diameter, says LPP.

The Servo 3000 infeed greatly increases the general productivity level of the press – for example regaining accurate register on restarts, roll changes, splices and speed changes. 'Also, the press will maintain better registration through the run – how much better depends on the age and condition of the press,' says Les Bradley, managing director LPP. 'Even a new press will have significant and measurable improvements above the press' specifications.'

In re-register mode a sensor reads print marks on the web, allowing the Servo 3000 to pace the web so the print marks are locked in register. LPP quotes +/-005 thou re-registration accuracy at full press speed, effectively turning an 8-color press into a 16-color press or allowing specialist applications to be performed such as scratch off being laid down on top of the pre-printed web in register.

'By allowing older lineshaft presses to register pre-printed rolls through multiple press passes, you can laminate a pre-printed web to the web in the press to produce instant redeemable coupons, extended content labels and game pieces,' says Les Bradley, managing director of LPP. 'You could even convert rolls printed by another company – for example a roll of printed holograms can be converted into a tag for brand authentication.'

Another use of the Servo 3000 is to convert an older conventional press into a digital finishing line capable of processing webs from digital presses.

The Servo 3000 is available in 10in, 16in or 20.5in widths. The unit is built in Florida by Rotary Technologies and there are currently around 220 units operating worldwide. Remote diagnostics are incorporated and a system of icons are used on the control panel to eliminate language barriers for operators.

During an Open House at LPP, a Servo 3000 unit was shown mounted on a Nilpeter FB3300 geared press producing peel& read labels. 'This gives the possibility of using multi-color imagery on each page – or just the top layer could be four color, there are many possibilities,' says Les Bradley.

At the Open House a Servo 3000 infeed was also installed on a 25-year old Aquaflex press, where it is dramatically reducing waste. 'On a 2,000m roll we used to lose on average 2-300m in make-ready and running waste, and this has been reduced to literally zero running waste,' says Bradley. 'Make-ready times have been halved and waste reduced from 150m to 75m.'

MARC BRADLEY, managing director Labelsunlimited

Labels without limits

DIVERSIFYING from self-adhesive labels into the flexible packaging market involved a lot of hard work but has brought great rewards to Labelsunlimited. Andy Thomas reports

Labelsunlimited is a UK-based narrow web converter run by Marc Bradley, which has successfully diversified beyond its self-adhesive label base into the flexible packaging market.

Labelsunlimited began trading in 1996 as Newton Labels and was equipped with a semi-rotary letterpress and 2-color Tackyboy flexo press. In 2003 Marc Bradley re-branded the company and upgraded its machinery with the installation of its first 6-color water-based Aquaflex press. A second 7-color machine was added in 2005.

As the label business continued to expand, customer requests were received for a wider range of filmic facestocks. 'This showed the limitation of water based flexo and in 2011 we installed our first UV press, an 8-color Nilpeter FB3300,' says Marc. This not only allowed Labelsunlimited to enter the filmic pressure sensitive label business, but opened the door to the flexible packaging market.

After a lot of hard work on the FB3300 press and working closely with the company's suppliers, a new business division, LUL Flexibles, was set up. In May 2012, Labelsunlimited was accredited with the BRC/IOP Global Standard for Packaging and Packaging Materials – High Risk (Issue 4) – 'a fantastic achievement,' recalls Bradley.

The flexibles unit specializes in sachets and laminates for a wide range of end uses including food and drink, healthcare and beauty, medical and automotive wipes, horticultural and animal welfare products among others. Materials used include various unsupported films plus standard and bespoke laminated paper and plastic constructions.

'To complement our latest press we have also invested in a new servo-controlled 440mm wide Flexor slitter/rewinder which can handle laminates/flexibles as well as standard label substrates,' says Bradley.

Although longer run repeat business is undertaken, LUL Flexibles' real USP is the ability to undertake short run, high quality work at short notice and with no minimum order.

'We transferred our on-demand labels thinking to the flexible packaging market,' says Bradley. 'Gravure supplier lead times are typically 3-6 months along with 4-6 tonne minimum order quantities. Our typical lead time is 1 to 2 weeks at the absolute maximum with no minimum order quantity'.

In terms of technical expertise, Labelsunlimited's 'secret weapon' is Ken Mann, who now heads up the LUL Flexibles division. Mann has over 30 years' experience in the narrow web packaging industry, including over 20 years at Rotatec and Skanem UK, plus stints in Europe and Australia. His narrow web packaging expertise dates from the 1980s, running the second Arpeco Impressionist narrow web flexo packaging press to be installed in the UK.

Marc Bradley comments, 'Ken's expertise and contacts have taken us into these new markets. It has been a learning process to understand how to handle and convert film and laminates compared to self-adhesive labels, plus we have also worked closely with our suppliers to develop new constructions for bespoke applications.'

Continues Bradley: 'In the flexible packaging market, high integrity and print quality are the big issues. We can now get phenomenal "dot perfect" gravure-like print quality with the latest state-of-the-art water wash plate technology. Our flexographic printing plates are a fraction of the cost of conventional gravure cylinders so our customers can get re-brands without paying a fortune for origination.'

As a consequence, LUL Flexibles is already receiving requests for larger format flexible work, so a wider flexo press could well be the next investment.

Marc Bradley work closely with the company's suppliers to run a lean manufacturing operation. 'Labelsunltd will, if required, deliver customer's orders "next day" as we understand the pressures that customers are under, which is all part of the second to none service that we offer.

'In turn, our suppliers are expected to deliver raw materials the next day if they receive our order before 4pm. For instance, we can order raw materials on a Monday and the printed product can be delivered to our customer on the Wednesday.'

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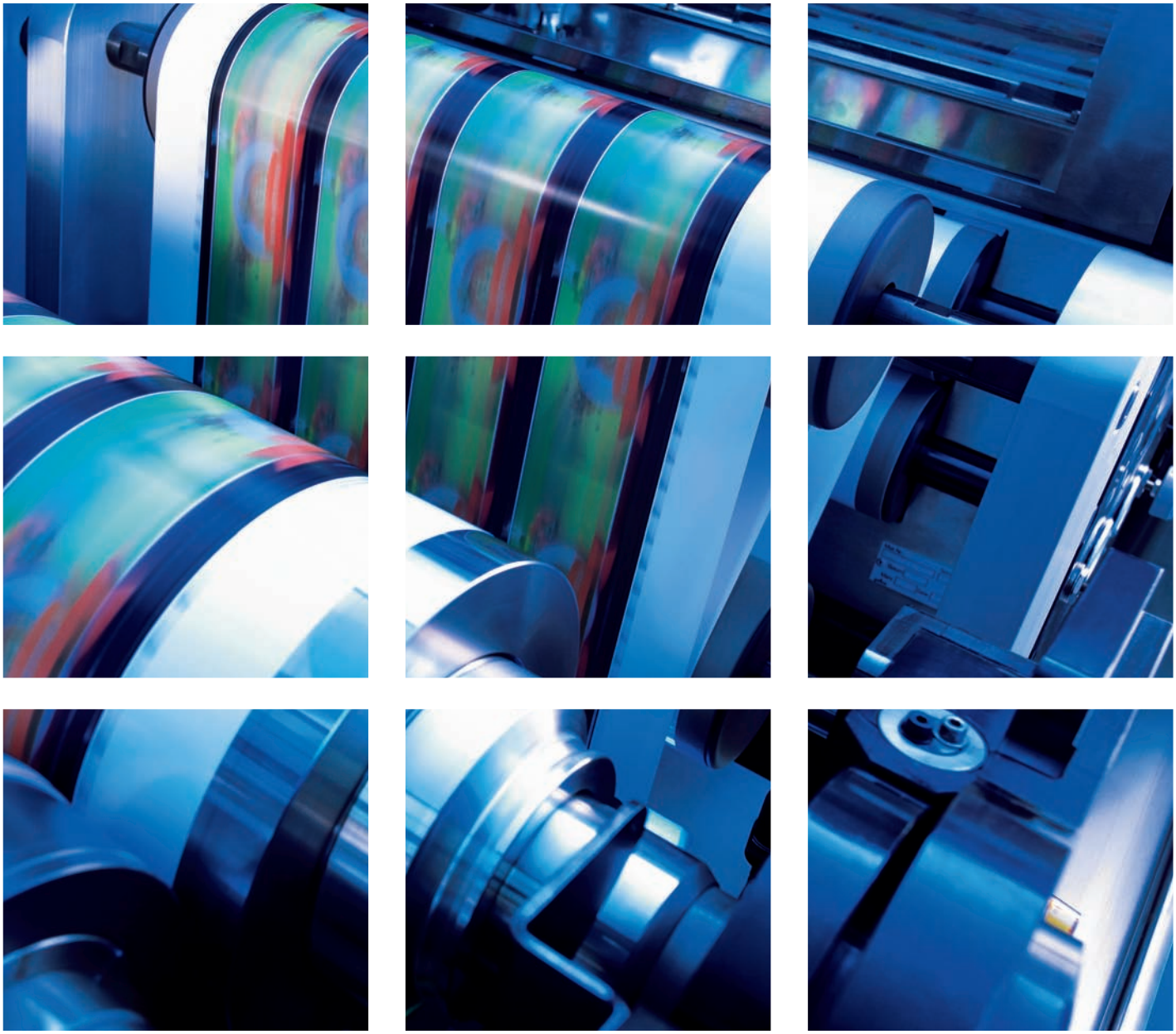

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Synthetic paper provides new converter and end-usage solutions

A GROWING NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS where paper 'is not good enough' have led Arjobex to develop new Polyart materials for in-mold, wet glue, digital, security and high performance markets. Mike Fairley visits one of the company's production facilities to learn more

The label industry of today is a complex mix of different types of labels, different printing technologies, different substrates and a whole range of different end-use applications. No one printing technology, type of material or application can provide the myriad of label solutions demanded by a continuously changing retail and industrial market place.

Whether it is labels for bottles or cans, distribution or warehousing, outdoor applications in agriculture or garden centers, baggage handling, or a wide range of complex, high performance industrial requirements, there are almost certainly materials and technologies today that can provide an answer for the most complex or demanding labeling situation.

Whilst paper labels – uncoated, coated, high gloss, thermal – perhaps make up around 70 percent or more of all labels used, there is also a continuously growing role for various kinds of filmic and synthetic label materials; materials that give higher performance than paper, that offer durability, tear, water and chemical resistance, or provide resistance to extreme temperatures, perhaps as low as – 60 deg C.

Most common of the filmic materials now used in label applications are polypropylene and polyethylene, which are widely found in many volume end-user applications where, in particular, a no-label look is required. However, there are also other applications where the high performance characteristics of film are needed, yet with the printability requirements of paper. Applications such as horticultural labels, clothing labels, logistics labels, direct food contact labels, fish or meat labels, luggage tags, etc.

It is in these high performance and often demanding applications where a synthetic paper, such as Polyart, more than comes into its own. Developed over 40 years ago, Polyart is a synthetic paper material made from a high density polyethylene (HDPE) voided base film which has been stretched simultaneously in both directions by a unique extrusion and stretching process and then made available in both one or two-side special clay coated or uncoated versions for a wide range of applications. See Fig. 1

Polyart materials bring the mechanical properties of film, such as tear, water and chemical resistance, dimensional stability, etc, together with the printability characteristics of paper. What's more, it prints and converts like paper by most common printing technologies, including offset, letterpress, flexo, screen, gravure, VIP thermal printers and the new generations of digital printing presses. Quite simply, Polyart provides label solutions to customers in many situations where paper is not good enough in demanding or specialist applications..

Perhaps traditionally only thought of for specialist, high performance, self-adhesive label applications or for outdoor and industrial tags, Polyart has come a long way in recent years, with an increasing range of new products and applications for in-mold labeling, wet glue cut-and-stack labels, security, authentication, brand protection and tamper-evident labels, as well as embossed and iridescent substrate versions.

It was to look at some of these key developments that are opening new markets and applications for label converters and printers that Labels & Labeling recently visited the Arjobex (a company of Arjowiggins Security) facility in Clacton, England, to talk with Bruno Millery, sales and marketing director, Arjobex Synthetic Papers.

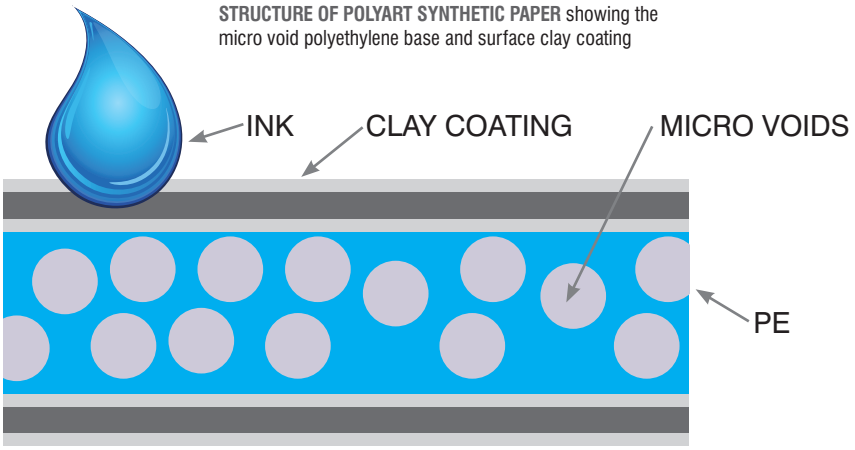
'The past few years has seen Arjobex focus its Polyart R&D facility on developing high performance coatings and solutions for a large spectrum of applications', explains Millery, 'such as textured and decorative materials that will support new growth, new generations of IML materials that eliminate the orange-peel effect, new tamper-evident and security materials, supporting the development of electrophotographic toner and inkjet digital printing technologies, as well as looking to push the limits with wet glue labels.'

Certainly what they have been introducing for wet glue labeling has been impressive. Here, a new white premium synthetic paper specially designed for cold glue cut-and-stack labeling on glass or plastic bottles has proved to be very successful. By incorporating a unique cavitated HDPE film and water absorbent coating it has produced a top-of-the-range plastic wet glue label that has both the touch and feel of the smoothest, premium coated paper.

What's more, it can be applied on existing wet glue labeling equipment, is compatible with conventional paper label adhesives, offers immediate tack, and claims to have the shortest drying time of any plastic label on the market. In application, it has proved ideal for the wet glue labeling of detergents and household products, chemical, motor oil containers, bottles of sauces, wines, spirits, premium spring waters, juices and beers.

Being a company of Arjowiggins Security, a company that specializes in secure payment solutions, banknotes, cheque books, ID cards, etc, means that Arobex also has access to the latest in brand protection, tamper-evident and security technologies, which it is now bringing to self-adhesive label market.

'We now have a new generation of



STRUCTURE OF POLYART SYNTHETIC PAPER showing the micro void polyethylene base and surface clay coating

ULTRA-DESTRUCTIBLE by delamination tamper-evident Polyart

tamper-evident solutions,' says Millery, 'such as Polyart Tamper Evident 60 gsm, an ultra-destructible by delamination material with a high tack adhesive which is an effective substrate for many security applications, such as warranty seals and labels, certificates, tamper proof closures for confidential documents, brand protection and anti-counterfeiting.

'In addition, we are now introducing other new security features, including covert and semi-covert combinations of customized colors and features, such as PolyFibres, PolyDots, PolySpheres and PolyTaggants. Arjobex Security will develop secured labeling solutions for the industry on Polyart base only.

In a further market sector, the range of in-mold labeling materials, initially introduced by Arjobex for blow-molded containers, are now being extended into developing materials for injection molded and thermoformed containers. With a polyethylene base, Polyart in-mold materials are 100 percent compatible with molded PE and PP containers. The latest generation of IML materials is said to eliminate the orange-peel effect often experienced with in-mold labeling.

Other important features of the in-mold range are a wide temperature operating window, a surface coating that reduces static for both easy printing and for 'pick-and-place', dimensional stability to provide uniform shrinkage and improved productivity. It is also said to offer the best drop performance.

'To extend the range of in-mold label materials, as well as create new self-adhesive and wet glue labeling opportunities,

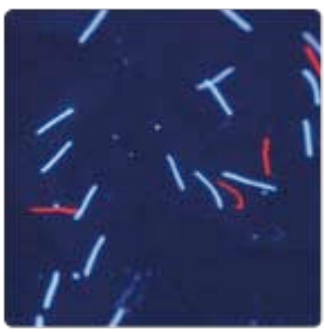
SELECTION of new Polyart security features

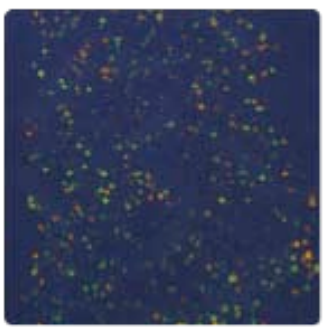
IN-MOLD LABELS that eliminate the orange-peel effect

we are additionally developing and introducing embossed and iridescent Polyart materials, which sometimes could be done on an exclusive basis,' adds Millery. 'Indeed, the no orange peel IML grade forms the ideal base for the iridescent versions that are now being tested.' Examples of embossed and iridescent effects can be seen below.

Without doubt, one of the key areas of application for Polyart is in the whole field of food labeling, particularly where direct contact with food is demanded. The material complies with European directive EU 10/2011 for non-acidic food, withstands grease and humidty and provides sharp definition printing of barcodes. It performs exceptionally well for variable information thermal transfer printing.

'It works with all three major categories of thermal transferribbons', comments Millery, 'whether wax, wax/resin, or resin and, with the smoothness of the coating and the physical characteristics of the base film, provides excellent thermal transfer printability. The dull, non-glare surface of the smudge resistant surface coating offers excellent contrast for barcode readability.'





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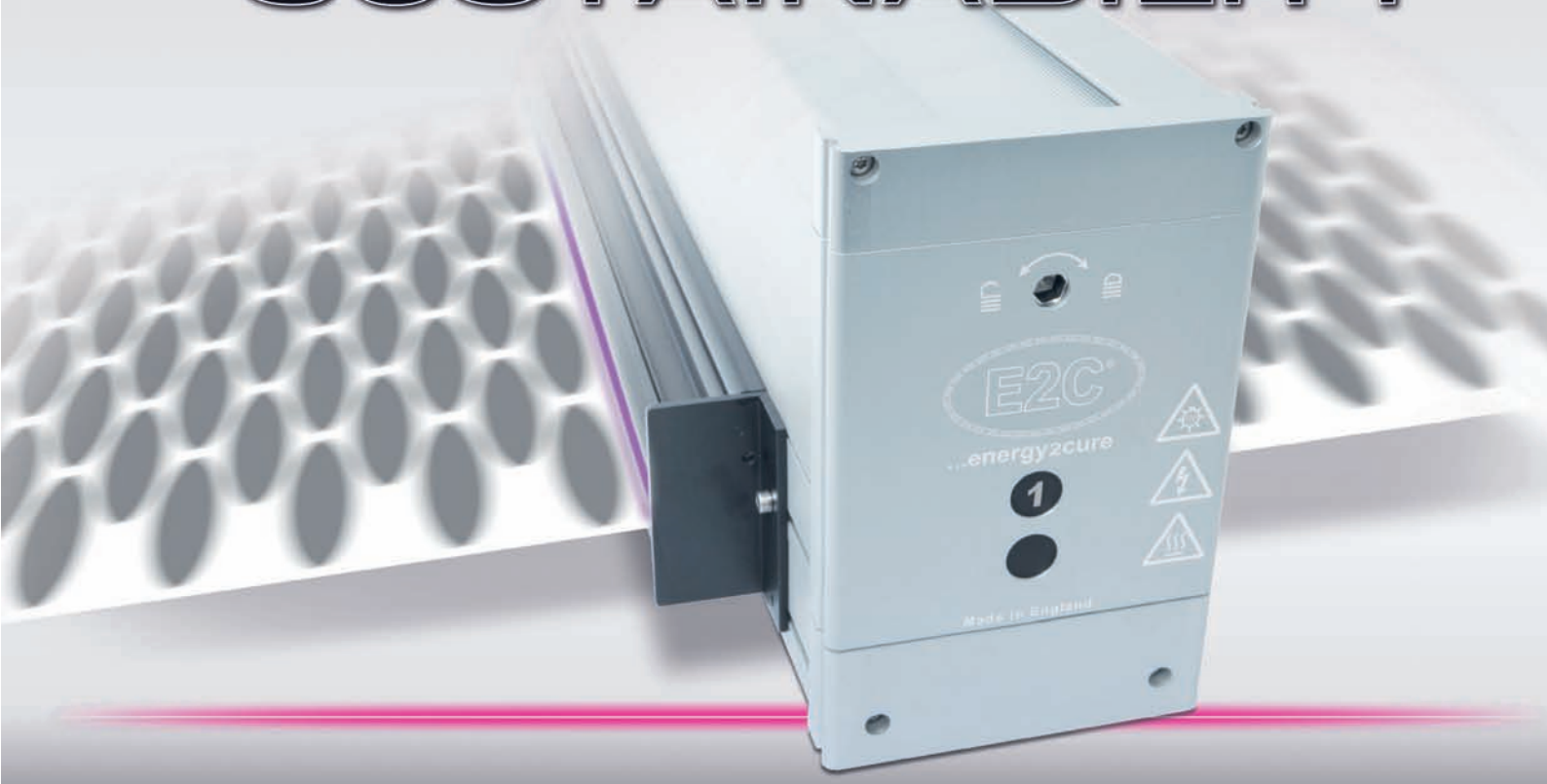

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EXAMPLES of embossed and iridescent Polyart materials coming to the market

With all the recent media attention regarding the traceability of meat and meat products, Polyart comes into its own when used in slaughterhouses for meat identification. Being highly resistent to extreme cold, down to as low as -60 deg C, it enables traceability right through the cold storage and meat distribution chain. It is also suitable for other frozen food labels and for drinks kept in ice, where its water and tear resistance is also valuable.

With the rapid growth in digital label printing over the past few years Arjobex has also developed and introduced a synthetic paper made of high density expanded polyethylene with a specific coating for HP Indigo presses. Easy to print and convert, it can be folded, scored and die-cut easily, has no grain direction and comes ready-to-use off the shelf without the need for a primer.

Like other Polyart materials, the Indigo grade is water, grease and oil resistant, provides for outdoor exposure and stands up to repeated handling. Applications include luggage labels, horticultural tags, industrial labels, shelf hangers and barcode labels.

More recently, Polyart materials have been developed to provide a specific top side inkjet coating receptive for dye water-based and pigmented inks. The material offers good water resistance, has no static issues and die-cuts extremely well. It can also be recyclable with other polyolefine materials.

It is this later feature that perhaps brings us to the end of this review article; that is, the issue of the environment. Extremely important in the label and end-user world today, the whole issue of environmental performance, recycling and re-use is becoming more and more critical. This applies throughout the Polyart production through to end-user chain.

Being pulp-free, Polyart has no impact on forest resources, while the manufacturing process uses up to five times less water than traditional paper production, thus preserving water resources. It does not contain chlorine and when incinerated under the right conditions, is non-toxic. It can also be sterilized, making it safe for sensitive applications, such as in food or medical environments.

In the production process, all Polyart production waste is regranulated and recycled in the production process. Scrap in the printing process can be collected with other polymer products and re-used to make other plastic items and, at the end-user stage when applied to compatible containers can be recycled with the containers, eliminating the need for separation. This is one of the reasons why Polyart is widely used all over the world in labeling technologies such as in-mold labeling.

Although developed more than 40 years ago, Polyart has continued to create new markets and applications. Even more innovations are in the pipeline. What's more, the product has important environmental credentials. Used in demanding and specialized applications worlwide, Polyart still looks set for an increasingly interesting and exciting future.

POLYART meat identification labels

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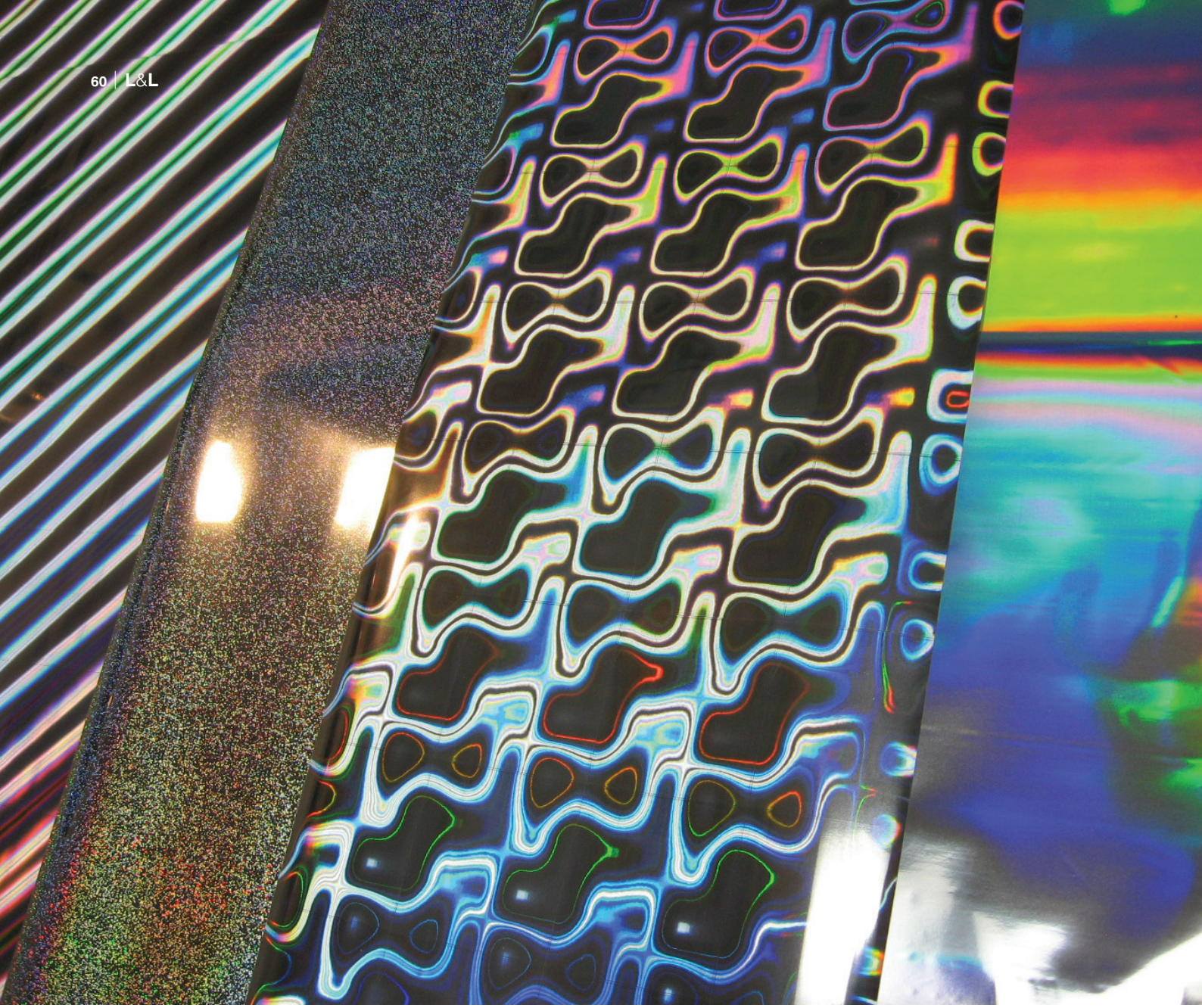

Cold Foil 101

COLD FOILING is now considered standard for most converters, but it still requires adequate preparation and process control, as Tom Brough and Andrew Wasserman explain

More label buyers today expect printers to be able to apply metallic foil to their labels. Foil application is now such an industry standard that a printer may have trouble competing without this ability.

The easiest and most cost-effective way to apply foil on a web press is with cold foil printing. Basically, cold foil is really expert UV lamination. Flexo presses fitted with a UV curing lamp and a laminating tower can run foil and need:

- an appropriate nip roll
- simple press rewebbing
- UV cold foil adhesive
- a roll of cold foil

You now have the basics to start applying foil on your labels.

No1. USE THE RIGHT INKS

Print with inks designed for lamination, such as UVitec's UV inks which are designed for this application. Basic waterbase inks are formulated with waxes or silicones, which are not designed for lamination. Most UV inks are silicone free and are coldfoil-friendly out of the bucket.

No2. WEB THE PRESS FOR UV WET LAMINATION

See basic setups for wet lamination in Michael Rivera's book, 'Cold Foil for Dummies' available from Wiley Press or from K-Laser foils. This text is a prerequisite for any printer serious about cold foil.

Cold foil wet lamination works by flexo printing an image with a UV cold foil adhesive, then nipping foil with a hard nip roll and curing with a UV lamp, then stripping foil waste right after the UV lamp. The process is simple once you master the eight variables.

No3. FIND A PRESSMAN WITH A GOOD ATTITUDE

This must be someone wanting to learn a new process. My father used to say, 'Everything is HARD before it is EASY.' If a pressman believes that something won't work, he work to prove it.

No4. USE THE RIGHT ANILOX

Since cold foil is really expert UV lamination, double check that you have the right anilox for the process. The lines per inch of a roll determines fine image resolution but cold foil needs more coating weight than regular flexo printing because you are trying to wet both the label stock and the foil. Begin with an anilox with a higher bcm count.

For applying cold foil on film stock use a 4.25-5 bcm anilox roll. Paper label stocks should use a 5.5-7 bcm anilox roll. Semigloss papers will need a primer for the best pinhole-free results and more glue laydown.

No5. USE A DOCTOR BLADE

Whatever gives you better flexo printing will give you better looking cold foil. Hard stickyback tape tends to yield excellent solid color results – use medium tape in order to try coarse halftones. Very light kiss impression yields sharp test and image edges.

No6. USE A TRUE COLD FOIL ADHESIVE

Since cold foil cures with UV light through the adhesive, you will want an excellent UV adhesive for the best adhesion, and crisp image detail with few or no pinholes.

Many ink companies make a cold foil adhesive that works with silver and light gold, but once you put a darker cold foil like copper gold in the press the cold foil transfer declines on one side of the web or the other, or stops entirely. At UVitec we have made cold foil adhesive for many years, and have several adhesives for the harder cold foil applications.

No7. SELECT COMPATIBLE LABEL STOCK & PAPERS

Cold foil looks best over smooth substrates, so plan for success as you get started by identifying which film and label stocks work best with your inks and press environment.

Start with white and clear film labelstock, and high gloss paper label stock. Semigloss papers will need a coating for best foil results. Since cold foil is like the ribbons used for thermal transfer, TT label stocks tend to print well with cold foil.

No8. INSTALL A COLD FOIL NIP SYSTEM

Install a cold foil nip system that is suitable for your press and at least 85-90 durometer, very hard. The nip system should mount as close to the UV lamp as possible, and the web path from the nip point should be straight into the UV lamp and exit around a stripping roll right behind the lamp with no turns.

The nip system can be air powered, or manual. The foil should enter the nip from a small idler roll at between a 30 and 45 degree angle around the rubber roll, which will help smooth out the foil before nipping against the newly printed label substrate.

No9. BETTER WEB TENSION

Make sure to carefully inspect the foil web path from roll-to-roll from the lamination tower unwind from idler roll to idler roll, to the nip, from the nip to UV lamp, out of the UV lamp to the stripping roll and from idler-to-idler roll up to the waste rewind. Look for diagonal stress lines from one side of the foil to the other.

From the last idler to the nip the foil should be absolutely mirror-smooth with no wrinkles. If not, the nip and laminating pressure need to be re-set. See if the foil web 'jumps' or skips with every rotation of the foil unwind. Sometimes the brake on the laminating arm has a 'tick' or a bad spot on the brake, or the arm leans down at an angle.

Feel the tension on the operator side and also the gear side of the press to see if one side or the other is baggy. To straighten a leaning lamination tower, loosen the mounting bolts and put one or two pieces of poly tape in-between the bracket and wall of the press to help shim up the arm until it is straight.

No10. ARTWORK REDUCTION

Graphics for the cold foil plate should be cut back between .15 and .2 points, about twice the amount used for bar width reduction for barcodes in order to compensate for image spread. This will allow for accurate graphics and reverse foil images. You will be surprised how good your cold foiling will become with this technique. Be careful to not adjust positive text smaller than 14 point – a bit of common sense in the art department is important here.

No11. CHECK YOUR UV LAMP SYSTEM

Before trying cold foil be sure that reflectors are clean, and make sure you have reflectors, since half of the cure power comes from reflectors. Make sure that the bulb is fairly new, with no ink, foil or debris stuck to the bulb.

Minimum UV lamp power for running cold foil is 400 watts per inch—you should be able to run silver and light gold. If you are serious about cold foil or UV lamination then get a lamp with 600 watt per inch power capability so that you can run darker colored foils, matte foils and run with faster speed when needed.

No12. HIDDEN PROBLEMS

It has been said that if you don't know you have a problem, ask your wife. Just so, if you want to reveal problems with your flexo printing and press, print silver cold foil, and your press defects will be magnified and more visible. Every improvement made for better flexo printing pays off with cold foil.

Eliminate wrinkles (which cause foil voids), loosen the pressure on the cold foil nip and carefully add just enough pressure until you see the foil want to bind, and back off. Check to make sure that the foil laydown into the lamp looks as smooth as a mirror and also out of the UV lamp to the stripping roll.

Try these 12 step techniques with cold foil and surprise yourself with better flexo printing and foil imaging quality.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Tom Brough is sales manager of K-Laser USA. Enquire about the Wiley Book, 'Cold Foil for Dummies'. Reach him at: tombrough@klaser-usa.com.

Andrew Wasserman is vice president of UVitec. Inquire about the tech sheet, 'Using Special Coldfoil Adhesives' Reach him at: awasserman@uvitec.com.

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First Mark Andy P3 installed in Europe

UK CONVERTER LABEL TEC SCOTLAND sees Mark Andy's entry-level Performance press as an alternative to digital. Nick Coombes reports

'It gives smaller companies the best opportunity to compete on added-value jobs from 500 meters upwards,' was how Label Tec Scotland's Paul Dunne described his new eight-color 10" Mark Andy P3 flexo press – the first of its type to be installed in Europe. The P3 is the latest addition to Mark Andy's Performance Series, which was launched in 2009 and has been the company's fastest-selling press series in its history, with more than 165 now sold worldwide.

The decision to choose a P3 was not made lightly, according to Dunne. 'We visited Labelexpo 2011 in Brussels and it was obvious there was a large digital presence there. But in my opinion, the majority of systems were still under development, with the exception of two or three major manufacturers, and these machines required large capital outlays and expensive service contracts to maintain them. The P3 was a safe investment for a small company. Having purchased two Mark Andy presses previously, I had confidence in the company, and having seen the P3 press in action, its ease of operation and value for money, made it a clear winner.'

Dunne and fellow director John Phillips bring 60 years of label experience to the company, which was founded in 1995 as a foiling house. In-house printing followed in 2002 with a Mark Andy 830 that was used to produce a color wash, varnish, and die-cut, and the 10" 2200 was installed following a successful visit to Labelexpo 2006 in Chicago. The 2200 is a six-color press, but with customer demand for process plus special colors, and both matt and gloss varnish, the P3 was ordered as an eight-color line. Both Mark Andy presses are fitted with full UV curing systems.

'The 2200 was a game-changer for us, because it was our first opportunity to add value and produce consistent quality labels,' said Dunne, who explained that last year's £1.25m turnover came from a variety of markets including security, electronics, white goods, cosmetics, pharmaceutical, and food. A major area of growth for Label Tec's new P3 capacity is the premium drinks market, where run lengths can be short, but added value is essential, and margins useful.

The Mark Andy Performance series is upgradeable, and according to Dunne, this was a key issue in choosing the P3, which is the company's largest single investment to date. 'We can retrofit screen and rotary foiling units in the future to suit changes in market demand. This will allow us to provide highly embellished labels in large or small quantities to our ever demanding customers. Most of our output here is a combination of printing and finishing techniques, so the ability to be able to do this inline in one pass will be invaluable.' Substrates run at Label Tec include standard 80 gsm paper stocks, semi-rigid tag material, filmic materials and metallized stock. The P3 press is also capable of handling light board up to 325 gsm.

Listing some of his reasons for pioneering P3 ownership in Europe, Dunne commented: 'The shallow ink trays require only 200g of ink to reach the anilox rollers because the metering roller sits in the bottom of the ink pan. This will encourage us to mix our own ink in-house in the future, make only what we need, and enjoy significant savings.' Being Teflon coated, the ink trays are easy to clean, and the P3's short web path reduces make ready waste and maintains better web tension – both of these grow in importance with the number of units involved and the length of the press.

According to Dunne, the P3 is an operator's dream to run. Its open architecture allows good access to the cylinders and the web shifter makes for easy adjustment. 'It's into register quickly and holds it whatever the speed or substrate. Fine adjustment is easy to learn and there is no need to change impression when changing cylinder repeats,' he said. In fact, Label Tec says the P3 requires less operator skill than any of its other presses. 'It's a machine that gives an operator the confidence to run fast, safe in the knowledge that quality won't be affected,' he added.

With register cameras and web guides and web cleaners fitted, the P3 is now fully commissioned and working in single shift operation. Quality is excellent and has encouraged Label Tec to consider entering some of its premium labels for an award. According to Dunne, the added value offered by the P3 has opened doors with existing customers, and provided new opportunities elsewhere. Estimated to add around 30 percent to the company's capacity in its first full year, the P3 has prompted Label Tec to increase its factory floorspace by 2,000 square feet, which will keep its staff of 17 fully occupied. 'This press brings hope to the smaller label converter, and offers a real alternative to digital,' he concluded.

(L-R) Mark Andy's Paul Macdonald with Label Tec's Paul Dunne and John Phillips at the company's production facility in Airdrie, Scotland

PAUL DUNNE and daughter Natalie

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Top Print dives into Blue Ocean

ASIA-PACIFIC POWERHOUSE Top Print Labels has carved out a value added niche in China through the pioneering adoption of digital print. LL China editor Kevin Liu reports

As Chinese label converters face increasingly fierce price wars, most of them are choosing to produce longer runs as cheaply as possible. But Top Print Labels (Suzhou) Co., Ltd found another way. Using digital label printing technology, the company is offering personalized and high value-added services for customers; they are exploiting a 'blue ocean market' which has led to growth for the whole enterprise.

Although more domestic printers are buying digital label presses, there are still many aspects requiring urgent improvement – especially in application skills and marketing. This was the area of opportunity exploited by Top Print Labels.

Top Print Labels is located in Venture Capital Industry Square, Suzhou Industrial Park. It is a professional label and identification product printing company invested by the Ganda International (Singapore) Group. It was officially granted its printing license by the Chinese Government in March 2002.

Ganda International started in the label business after it purchased Avery Dennison's label printing operation in Singapore from Metal Box in 1992. Its business now spreads over the whole Asia Pacific area and it owns plants in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and China with an annual turnover of nearly 17.5 million US dollars. Currently the businesses of Top Print Labels focus mainly on the electronics, automobile, chemicals and personal care markets.

"Although more domestic printers are buying digital label presses, there are still many aspects requiring urgent improvement – especially in application skills and marketing"

WHY DIGITAL PRINTING?

Top Print Labels obtained ISO9001 certification in 2003 and ISO14000 in 2005, benefiting from the expertise of its Singapore parent company. Most of the managers in Top Print Labels have years of experience in large label factories, and along with technology and capital investment support from the parent company, Top Print has grown with the wind at its back.

The company purchased successively one full set of prepress platemaking equipment, two Lintec LPM-3000 letterpress , one Korean-made full rotary letterpress (6 colors + primer coating), which can print both front and reverse at the same time, along with several blank label die-cutting machines and screen presses. It also built a dust-free workshop meeting the tough cleanliness requirements of the electronics label industry.

Although the Chinese label market as a whole has grown quickly in recent years, it has become increasingly competitive, with label printers investing in similar equipment and product areas, accompanied by a growing price war. Top Print also met a bottleneck in growth after a period of fast development.

For this reason, Henrich Quek chose to go with the leading industry trends and invest in digital printing technology for his companies.

'We were first pushed to consider the installation of digital printing machines by the changing demands of our customers, which occurred approximately at the beginning of 2007,' says Quek. 'At that time, we saw numerous challenges for our company: more and more short-run printing orders were demanded by customers, more and more changes in content occurred even within the same print order; the delivery time required

HP Indigo ws4500 digital label press at Top Print China

was shorter and shorter, and variable data and anti-counterfeit barcode printing were asked for more and more.

'Besides this, we were having plenty of trouble regarding printing quality, overprinting and spot color printing even in our letterpress machines. Given such harsh customer requirements, our profits began dropping instead of growing as it they done before. At the same time, we needed to find a way of cutting costs in areas like waste disposal and inventory, which was difficult to solve in traditional ways.

'After cautiously observing market trends, we found that digital printing abroad had become highly developed. In the mature markets of Europe and America, the need for variable data printing, label prototypes and short-run printing had all led to increased adoption of digital printing. At the same time in China we also found this growing trend of short-run and personalized printing, to which can be added the continually increasing cost of labor.

'We believed that we needed a whole new strategy and solution to cope with the new challenges and opportunities in the market. Therefore, the company purchased its first HP Indigo ws4500 digital label press in 2007 after intense discussion by our management.'

The investment quickly proved a success. 'After the installation of the digital press, we not only met the original customers' requirements and safeguarded our short-run orders and customers, but also promptly developed many new business opportunities, especially the processing of variable data.

'At that moment, our short-run orders were almost completely transferred to digital printing from the traditional letterpress, which also released the letterpress to give full play to its strong points. After a short while, in 2008, we expanded the company's production floor.'

After more than two years of practice and exploration, Top Print Labels purchased its second HP Indigo ws4500 digital label press in 2010.

Comments Quek: 'We now service a lot of famous foreign customers, and compared with them, our domestic customers seem much more critical about product quality. They require good product quality, delicate image/text printing quality and fast delivery times. What's worse, they often force the price of finished labels lower and lower. However, digital printing brought us a good solution to survive these stresses. It easily met the customers' requirements, and more importantly, we could dig down and meet customers' new demands.'

THE CHANGE BROUGHT BY DIGITAL PRINTING

'Since the installation of the HP Indigo ws4500, many short-run orders could be delivered the same day, which won us more new orders,' says Quek,

'We have many famous customers engaged in the electronics industry. The electronic tag seems simple but actually requires high standards of processing. For example, we must have security authentication and serial numbers, the text is quite difficult to process and it requires a high level of anti-counterfeit capability. Sometimes, it needs spot color printing and the raw materials being processed are very expensive. The performance of the HP indigo ws4500 is quite stable, and its high precision processing can easily cope with these issues.'

The powerful data-handling capabilities of digital print are bringing more opportunities for Top Print in the area of smart tags and QR code labels. 'New application areas inspired by digital label printing are far beyond our imagination.'

In 2012, against the background of global economic recession, Top Print got a huge value-added boost from digital printing, with more than a half of its work finished on the HP Indigo digital label presses.

Perhaps the biggest lesson learnt is that digital printing requires the converter to strengthen communications with its customers and requires a faster response to the market. Correspondingly, it demands more from operators and sales staff who need to update their knowledge continuously to raise work efficiency and skills. 'HP did well in this respect. They not only undertake technical training for operators but also for sales and marketing staff. They also hold seminars periodically about the market application of digital products, from which we benefit a lot.'

EXPANDING TO SOUTHWEST CHINA

As its steady growth continued, Top Print Suzhou turned its sights to the fast developing economic region of Southwest China, and established Top Print Labels (Chengdu) E-tag Technology Co., Ltd in Tianfu New District, Chengdu, next to the plant of Wuliangye. Soon after the new company was established, it installed the group's third HP Indigo ws4500 digital label press.

Top Print Chengdu is focused on delivering personalized and high value-added labels to local customers while still engaging in their traditional printing business. This chimes with Top Print Suzhou's mission to meet the processing requirements of both multinational companies and Chinese companies operating across the country.

Concludes Quek: 'The establishment of the new plant in Chengdu is on the one hand to meet present customers' requirements as they exploit new business in Southwest China, while on the other hand – which is much more important – to develop our own new business, such as the QR codes, barcode, RFID tags and hybrid-type solutions to meet our customers' requirements to cut inventory, supply chain track and trace, and develop anti-counterfeit applications.'

Quek also indicated that Top Print is paying much attention to the environmental needs of its customers. In addition, the company is keeping a watchful eye on the trend towards outsourcing in the supply chain and may try internet sales at the right moment.

HENRICH QUEK

Henrich Quek is the founder and deputy chairman of Top Print Labels (Suzhou) Co. Ltd. As an established artist, graphic designer, and art curator from Singapore, he is committed to both the art movement and digital printing in the region and was at the helm of the Singapore Art Society as secretary general. He started his business venture in the labels and packaging industry in China after he moved there in the mid-1970s. Henrich Quek was guest speaker at the South China Label Show 2012, where he candidly shared his business expertise with conference delegates.

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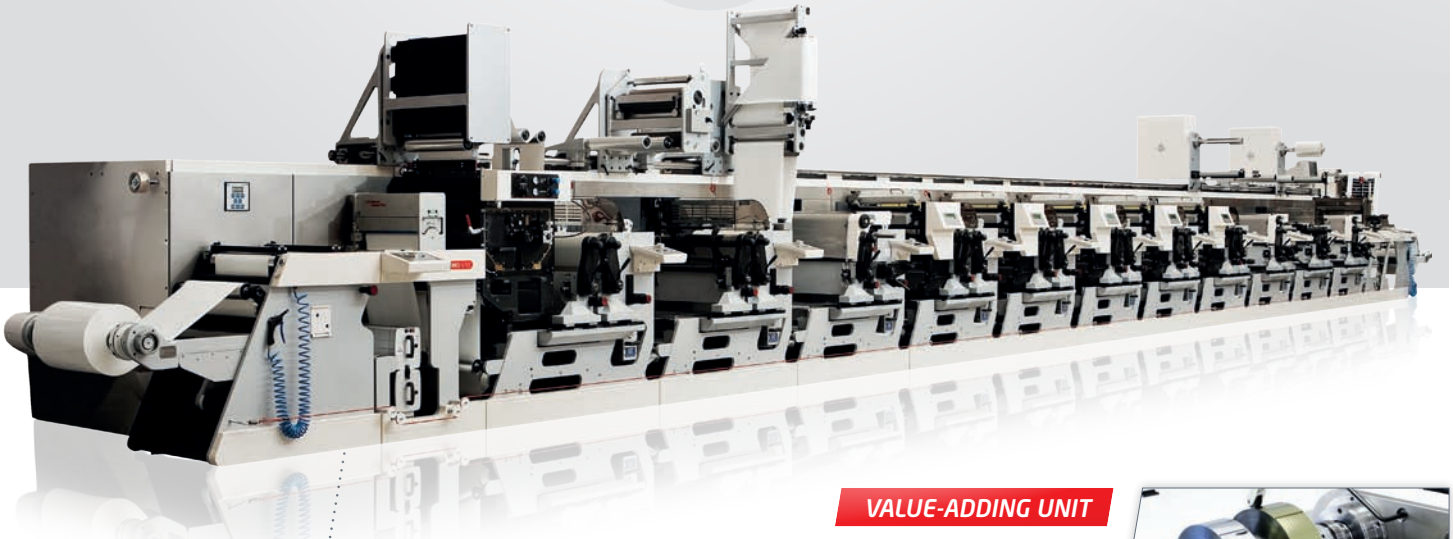

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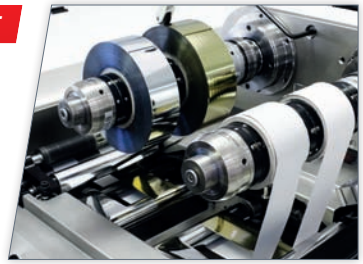

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GEW launches low energy E2C

GEW has launched its new generation E2C low energy UV curing systems, and is claiming major increases in curing efficiency with lower energy input. Andy Thomas reports

UV curing systems are one of the more expensive ancillaries on a printing press, but the true cost of ownership is often not fully considered. The factor which really sets UV systems apart is their energy consumption, which can account for up to three quarters of their total cost of ownership. For label printing companies, UV curing equipment typically accounts for 25 percent of total energy costs. With the majority of electricity still generated by burning fossil fuels, electrical equipment is directly responsible for carbon dioxide gas emissions from power stations and the resultant global warming effect.

Evidence of sustainable practises is today often a prerequisite to win contracts with big-brand customers. This pressure has created a challenge for printers, but also an opportunity for them to reduce their operating costs through improved energy efficiency.

A second challenge for sustainable label production is the advent of low migration inks, which are increasingly required for safe production of food labels and packaging. The principle behind these is modification of the photoinitiator molecules, which are used in all UV ink formulations to start the curing reaction upon exposure to UV light. However they are able to migrate through the print media and into food sources, where they can be harmful. Low migration inks have physically larger photoinitiator molecules which are unable to pass through the substrate, but the downside of this is that they are less reactive and need more UV energy to cure at full production speed, reducing profit margins and sustainability.

Requirements for increased curing power on one hand and reduced energy consumption on the other leaves printers in a difficult situation, and they are turning to UV equipment manufacturers for a solution.

The two options available today are so-called 'low energy' UV systems and UV LEDs. LED curing systems create UV energy by passing an electric current across an array of diodes, resulting in a high intensity output of long wave UV radiation at a single wavelength. Special inks are being developed to react to the output of the LED and facilitate the curing process, which in the future will be able to cure at the same speed as standard inks under conventional arc lamps. In comparison to arc lamp UV systems, LEDs convert a similar proportion of electrical energy to heat, although this heat is not radiated back to the substrate but instead removed by a cooled heatsink at the rear of the array. The lifetime of the LED array is longer than a UV lamp, but the cost of replacing it is exponentially higher.

A low energy UV system still generates ultraviolet light using the traditional electric arc inside a quartz tube, but requires a substantially lower energy input (measured in Watts per centimetre along the lamp's length) to produce an equal or greater UV output than conventional systems. Where arc lamp UV systems typically have a maximum input power in the range of 160 – 240 W/cm, low energy systems operate below 140 W/cm. Initially, these figures could be confusing to printers as there is a common perception that W/cm values relate directly to curing power. A helpful analogy is to consider the internal combustion engine, whose size or fuel consumption alone does not paint a clear picture of the engine's horsepower output. This is equally the case for a UV system, so attention must be paid to the dose and intensity output values to understand its capabilities.

The advantages of using low energy UV systems reach far beyond low operating costs and additionally make the presses they are fitted to become more productive and versatile. Because low power lamps run cooler there is less heat radiated onto the substrate, which is a crucial benefit considering the broad range of synthetic, heat-sensitive materials used for label production today.

GEW E2C

GEW has developed a low energy UV solution called E2C which enables conversion of process inks at full production speeds using as little as 90 W/cm lamp power. For inks with high energy requirements such as base white, silk screen and low migration varieties, power can be increased by more than 50 percent to ensure there is no reduction in production speed or quality, whilst still consuming less than 140 W/cm of power. Label printers can also take advantage of this additional curing capacity to maximise their profitability by running production faster whilst still reducing their overhead. Since Rako Etiketten in Germany replaced an existing UV installation on one of their

THE NEW GEW E2C
quick change UV lamp

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

PURE LABELS BRAND EARNS FAIR TRADE RECOGNITION

Pure Labels – a sustainable label substrate manufactured by the Distant Village group – has received recognition from the Fair Trade Federation as the first PSA label material produced with fair trade paper facestock. Pure Labels are manufactured using facestock made of a wildgrass and hemp paper blend designed to work with any printing process. The company is now completing development of the next generation of sustainable labels, including a 100 percent 'compost-friendly' PSA label and a wet-strength artisan PSA label targeted toward the wine and spirits segment.

HENKEL REALIGNS ADHESIVE PRODUCTS

Henkel has simplified its industrial adhesive technologies portfolio into five technology brands. The company has made numerous acquisitions over recent years, often retaining the original product names. The new brand 'clusters' most of interest to the label industry are Technomelt, which becomes the umbrella for hot melt adhesives, and Aquence, representing the water-based adhesive product grouping.

SIEGWERK OPENS TORONTO OFFICE

Ink manufacturer Siegwerk has opened a new distribution center in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) as it looks to pursue growth in the region. The facility will include local blending capabilities and enhanced warehouse space. The existing sales and distribution center in Laval, Quebec will remain to serve Quebec-based customers.

MULTITEC ADOPTS VETAPHONE CORONA

Leading Indian flexo press manufacturer Multitec has adopted Vetaphone corona treaters as a standard ancillary option on its presses.

'Multitec are exporting their machines and wanted to have good quality corona matching international standards,' comments Pawandeep Sahni at Vetaphone's Indian agency Weldon Celloplast. 'They were already ordering from us products such as anilox cleaners.'

presses with an E2C system, they have reduced the machine's energy use by 35 percent and increased production output by 20 percent at the same time. Reflex Labels in the UK reported a 59 percent drop in electricity consumption following a similar installation.

In addition to energy use, there are other hidden costs of operating a UV system which normally do not become apparent until some months after the equipment is installed. For example the cost, and lifetime, of spare parts and replacement lamps varies widely between suppliers, which can have a considerable effect on maintenance budgets. Fortunately most printers are already evaluating the price of consumables as part of their purchase decision, but there are other 'stealth' costs that still fly below the radar.

This problem is especially prevalent when buyers believe they are getting a system that is energy efficient on the basis that power applied to the UV lamp is lower. This however ignores the electrical efficiency of the ballast that energises the lamp, how much current it draws and, importantly, whether or not it loads all three mains phases equally. Models that load phases unevenly might still be 'energy efficient' but are not cost effective where users are metered on the phase drawing the highest current. Such systems appear cost-efficient in 3, 6 or 9 lamp configurations when the three phases are theoretically balanced, but this changes as soon as one lamp is turned off or several are operating at different power levels.

Inefficient air paths inside some UV dryers also require more ambient air to be extracted through the lamp housing for cooling purposes, resulting in air from outdoors replacing the extracted air. Larger extracted air volumes not only require a more powerful cooling fan but also place additional load on plant heating and air conditioning systems, further increasing energy costs.

GEW claims to have eliminated these stealth costs, as the company's managing director Malcolm Rae explains: 'We ensure our customers never pay for energy that they haven't used by providing phase-balanced power supplies which always draw equal current across the three phases. This is an important detail that, as a manufacturer of energy efficient equipment, we cannot overlook: if our customers save energy but their electricity suppliers don't see this, they are no better off.'

When developing the E2C system, managing the cooling air effectively was another opportunity for improvement that GEW identified, according to Rae. 'Drawing large volumes of treated air through the UV system not only increases the printer's costs but also reduces their press' productivity as more airborne contaminants are drawn over the system's optical components. This results in reduced UV output and press speed, and ultimately the lamps and reflectors need to be cleaned or replaced more frequently.

'What we have done differently is to maximize the surface area of the internal parts so that heat is transferred to the air stream as efficiently as possible. Next, we actively cooled the reflectors from the rear in order to eliminate unnecessary contamination of the lamp and reflector surfaces. This has resulted in air extraction being reduced by more than half, as well as a major extension of the lamp and reflector's life. We then took this even further by developing a new range of energy-efficient cooling fans that complement the reduced airflow requirements and are much quieter in operation. We now use a 2.2 kW fan motor to cool a 10-color E2C UV solution, typically this would be around 7.5 kW.'

Rae says that for the printer, this all equates to an average reduction of 42 percent in energy costs when using E2C instead of conventional UV technologies on a typical production run. 'The resulting impact on the profitability of their business is enormous because the total cost of ownership is reduced by around €100,000 on a 13" 8-color UV press.'

From an environmental perspective, the E2C system is an easily implemented, quantifiable sustainability initiative, according to GEW. The decrease in kilowatt hours (kWh) of energy consumption is easily calculated, which in conjunction with data on how much carbon dioxide is produced to generate one kWh can be used to work out how many tonnes of carbon emissions have been saved. Rae claims that an E2C system on a typical 8-color 13" press saves 328 tonnes of carbon dioxide gas from the atmosphere compared to other UV systems.

'This evidence highlights the power of the low energy UV system as a future-proof investment to facilitate fast, profitable production of high quality labels and packaging which in turn helps maintain a solid base of satisfied customers,' says Malcolm Rae. 'The huge reductions in electricity use and carbon footprint also make them an environmentally responsible decision that has the added benefit of helping label and packaging suppliers qualify themselves to brand owners as sustainable, "green" suppliers and increase their market share.'

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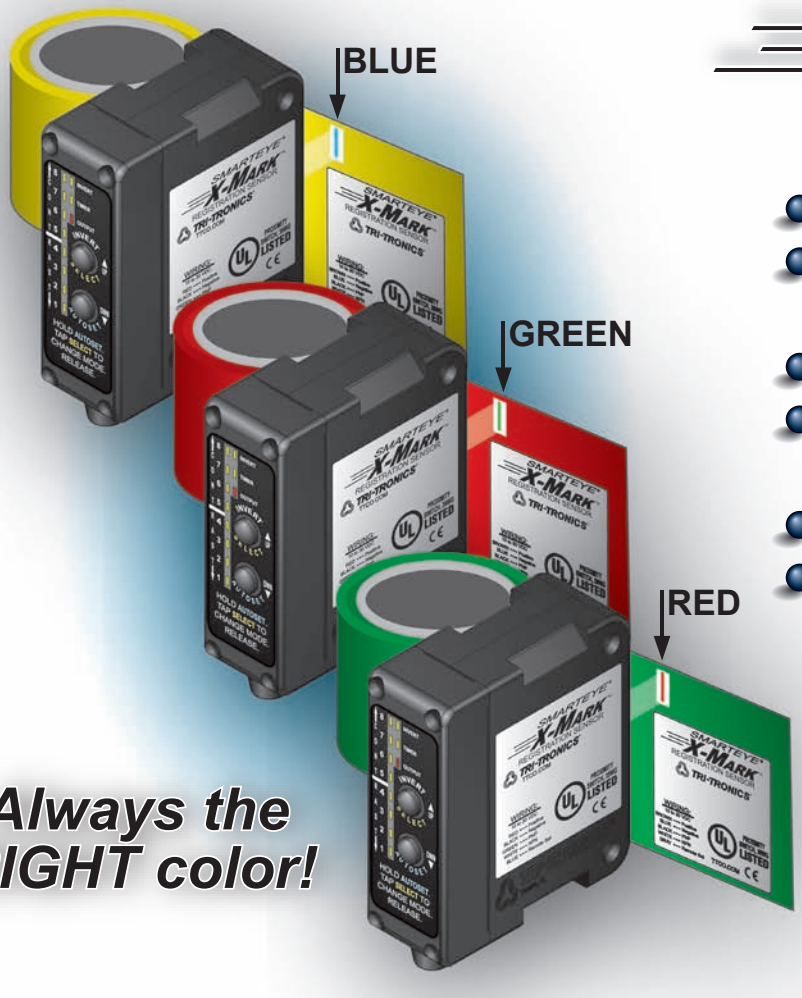

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Creative Wingman

SMYTH'S INNOVATION TEAM helps clients overcome obstacles, employ change strategies and find success with interactive labels, writes Danielle Jerschefske

Printed materials have long served as a crucial avenue for brand messaging. The right look and feel is paramount. Packaging must be persuasive at the first moment of truth.

Packaging and label experts have invested in R&D to print the best graphics on a variety of materials to convey brand appeal at retail. They use advanced machinery and harness vendor support to bring complex constructions like extended content, peel and reveal, and scratch & play labels and coupons to market that touch buyers' emotions, in-store and during consumption. Specialty coatings and unique embellishments incorporated in package design too, enhance brand-to-consumer interaction.

For more than 100 years US-based Smyth Companies has embraced the process of incubating wild packaging concepts that enable brand managers to meet their objectives. The converter is well placed to service large international brands like MillerCoors and Hormel, meeting all production, process and performance requirements, while at the same time, is able to bring unique and custom concepts to market with speed and ingenuity.

Craig Bakken, vice president of innovation at Smyth, leads a team of 10 charged with escorting brands through the process of ideation to implementation. Bakken says, 'We take on the strange stuff that other companies decline and we never say no.'

Bakken's team members are described as the 'cowboys' of the business, like the brazen Top Gun team of Maverick and Goose. They're given challenging missions. They have the audacity to accept them. And often enough find that the project yields further business opportunities.

TEA OF A KIND brand uses four labels to enhance shelf appeal

So when brands choose Smyth to integrate innovative packaging into their product lines, and harvest all that creative delivery has to offer, they won't be flying solo. Smyth will be their wingman.

THE NEED FOR SPEED

Smyth's Red Rock label application business is a key asset for project implementation. Working within the innovation group, skilled engineers and technicians develop custom, high-speed pressure sensitive label applicators for promotional labeling on pouches, boxes, bags and cartons, non-standard packaging shapes, and web printed products like newspapers and flyers.

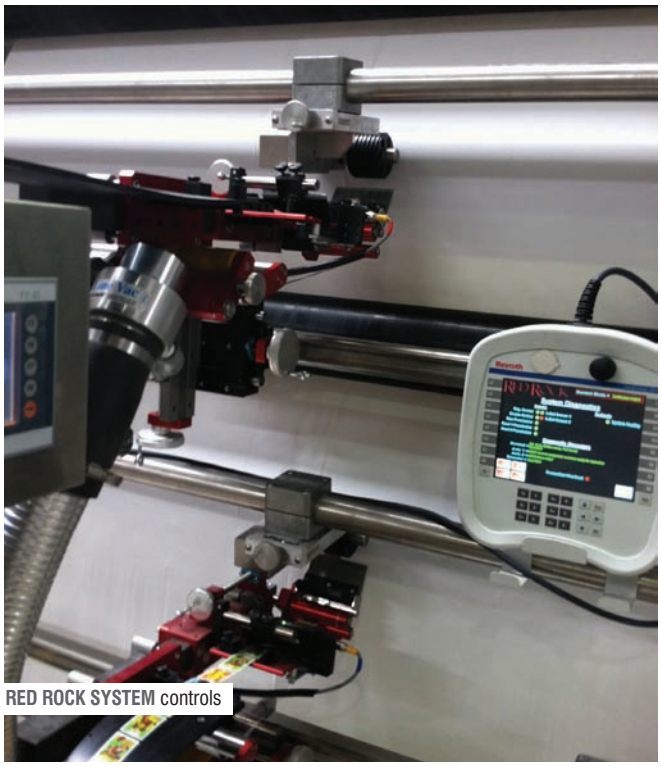
Bakken says, 'The best ideas are only as good as our ability to deliver to the product. Dozens of converters can produce most of the labels we make, and a handful can make everything we do.

'Nobody can deliver the label to the product, at the speed and invisibility to the customer's process, as Smyth.'

Smyth recently installed a Red Rock system for Quad Graphics Plural in Sao Paulo, Brazil. With the largest commercial print capacity in the country, the Plural plant produces three million promotional booklets each month for Natura, Brazil's foremost eco-conscious cosmetics brand with 3.1 billion USD in annual revenue.

Natura values the consumer connection made possible with tangible inserts and advertisements that involve readers with whatever brand its marketing teams choose to feature. Consumers are encouraged to be more responsive. Therefore the brand owner wanted more possibilities for special interaction.

Traditional labelers used in print-publishing production are limited to front, first and last page, and back cover application. Plural needed a flexible application system to integrate more complex promotions within its client's catalogues – on any page



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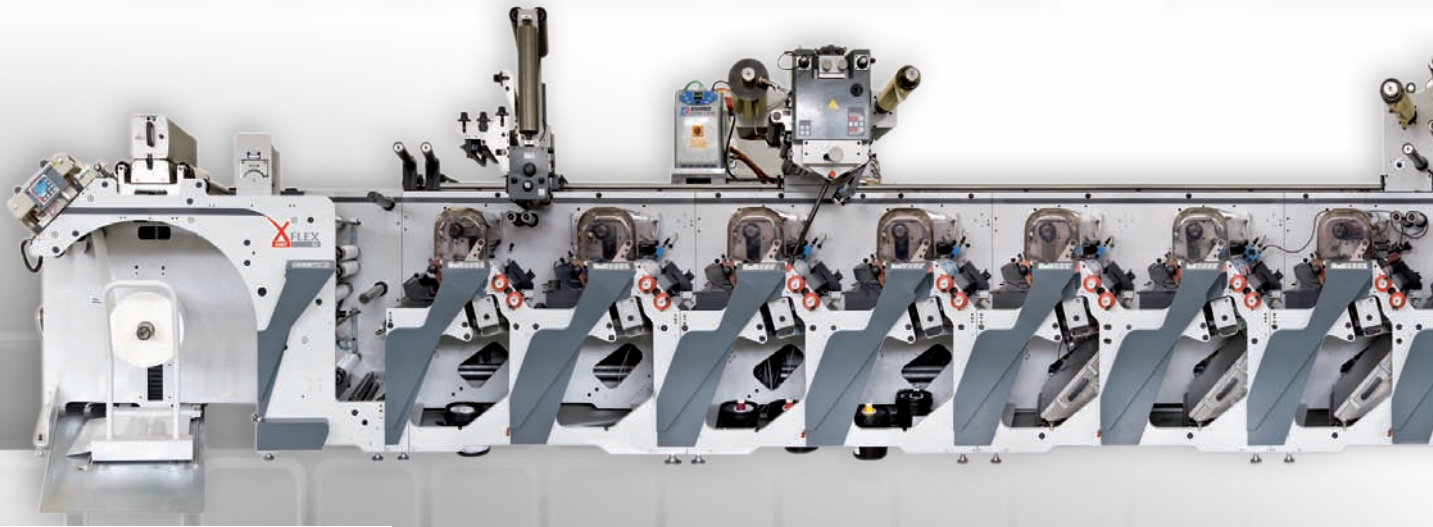

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SMYTH MILLERCOORS promotional samples

RED ROCK label application system on Quad Graphics' Goss machine in Brazil

they wished.

The custom Smyth Red Rock machine is capable of applying as many as 12 labels in-line to any page of the booklet while being printed on a 72 inch Goss press running up to 2000 fpm.

Says Bakken, 'The system allows Natura to apply all kinds of promotional labels – in this case a label that contains actual perfume fluid for sampling – on the press. The labels can be applied on either side of the web, in virtually any location, with as many as three across.

'Typically, the speeds would dictate an offline application, which would limit the location on the printed piece and drive up the cost by adding a process. Lower total cost allows for more use of promotions and the printing of more pieces.'

The system is engineered in a master-slave configuration with three heads, each with a set of applicators. When one of the labelers runs out of labels the next one picks up, and they switch over automatically, allowing application at-speed with zero downtime. The system delivers a 100 percent hit rate and the software behind the mechanics is programed to allow movement within the 546mm application window.

Natura's booklet has a total four signatures each consisting of 18 promotional pages. Each signature can have up to three labels applied on any page, at any position. This system opens the door for significant creativity.

For ultimate position accuracy vacuum boxes hold the labels down during application. Steve Ivens, Red Rock equipment manager, explains, 'The trouble with achieving high speeds is the dance around that can occur tearing labels off or having them pre-dispense. Without dancer rolls there's zero-touch and zero-tension, meaning the labels aren't moving around. Running four signatures means a lot of labels. This project is really an understated success.'

The Red Rock business has taken Smyth into some great positioning points. It's there to support PS label production because, after all, the company is in the business of selling labels.

EMBRACING INNOVATION

'Labels can include all types of interaction, from perfumes to redeemable coupons, to gift cards, game pieces and collectables,' says Bakken. Whatever the customer can conceive, Smyth is willing to convert and apply it.

Last year Smyth opened an Innovation Room that consists of multiple stations with all the elements that make up the package decoration process – containers, materials, inks and coatings, converting methods and application technologies. A simulated bar is at the center complete with shelving, flat screens, soft lighting and tall stools.

Bakken explains, 'The room is set up to generate collaborative innovation and branding ideas. It is a place conducive to intimate creative interaction that allows us to deliver "ideation to implementation", taking customers through each step to find success.'

Gizmo is the latest packaging innovation designed for the widely popular vitamin-enhanced beverage market. The Gizmo is a pressurized nitrogen cap that releases ingredients into the water only when the consumer is ready to drink it. Recent research shows that a higher percentage of nutrients are consumed with on-demand delivery – and that vitamin-enhanced waters often lose much of the added nutrition during supply chain delivery.

Smyth produced all of the labels to launch Tea of Kind, the first brand in the world to use the revolutionary cap. It was important that the brand capture the attention of the growing number of wellness consumers. The caps are being licensed to other enhanced beverages interested in the technology, and the drink line is the best way to demonstrate the benefits.

A single bottle of Tea of a Kind calls for four labels: a shrink sleeve cap that is appealing and serves as a tamper evident seal; a pressure sensitive neck label and a hang tag with social media directions unique to the beverage shelf space. Lastly, a reverse printed pressure-sensitive main label pulls the entire package together.

'The product is pure innovation,' says Bakken. 'The see-through to the primary label design was crafted to feature the drama of the Gizmo cap rapidly discharging its contents into clear liquid.'

The client didn't necessarily know what they wanted. Smyth's capability to take such a project from the ground up while juggling all of the variables involved was vital to the launch. A lot of printers would have to contract out the various pieces.

Tim Klein, a new business development manager at Smyth, explains, 'By providing a single source for all the components and process, the customer was able to focus on implementing the technology side of the package – filling and charging the cap, filling and capping the product. We handled the decoration.'

There's lots of buzz around interactive packaging these days. QR codes, augmented reality, NFC and RFID tagging are picking up in adoption in many sectors – on packaging, in publishing, for retail replenishment and fast payments. Each offers great opportunities to connect with consumers digitally and there's no doubt that this trend will continue.

Says Klein, 'These elements are fast becoming mainstream, to the point where they will be an expected element of the package versus a "discoverable delight". Eventually, the virtual information will be deemed reliable and accessible enough to replace the extended content requirements. This could open up more of the package surface for decoration rather than content.'

While the digital world becomes more a part of our lives every day, the need to connect with consumers physically through packaging will remain and evolve. Smyth has the team and culture for guiding brands successfully through the rules of packaging engagement, no matter what happens between take-off and landing.

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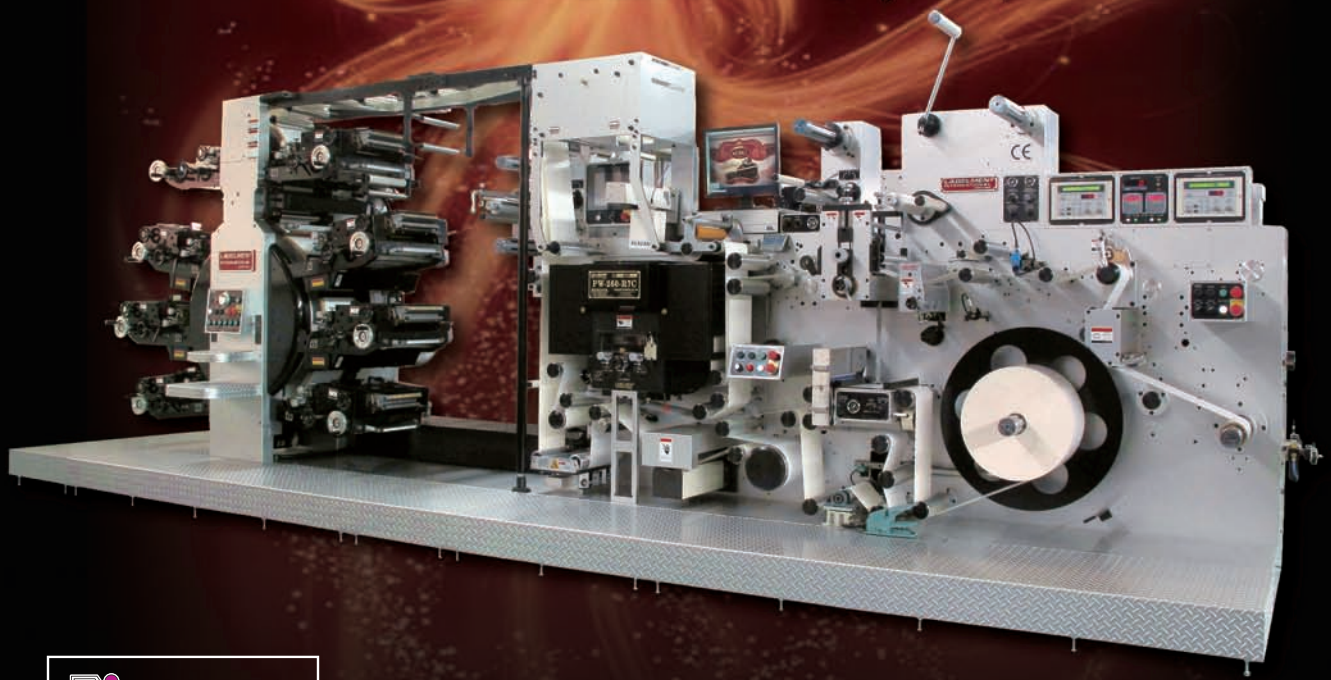

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California's wine gathering

EXPECTING A COMFORTABLE LEVEL OF GROWTH IN THE COMING YEARS, the US wine market is proving to be a profitable category for labels, writes Danielle Jerschefske

For 19 years Sacramento, California has hosted the Unified Wine & Grape Symposium, an event that's now one of the hottest in the wine industry in the Americas. At this year's event, 643 exhibitors from more than 31 countries represented every facet of the wine market – agriculture, production, packaging and marketing. The American Society for Enology and Viticulture (ASEV) co-organizes the event with the California Association of Winegrape Growers (CAWG).

John Aguirre, CAWG president, said, 'People are here because a resurgent economy, growing wine consumption and strong grape prices are fueling industry investment. Those looking to expand production or become more efficient are finding what they need at the Unified.'

During the symposium's State of the Industry keynote panel, experts forecasted a strong year for the US wine market. Other key trends in the market that will help label converters understand how best to service wineries include Millenial connection, red wine blends, thousands of new labels introduced every year and direct to consumer (DTC) distribution, which is growing fast.

Many in the wine industry believe that Millenials will be key to recurring growth. They're already hooked. However, Ciatti, a global wine and grape brokerage, pointed out that boutique wineries are facing fierce competition with the growth of craft beer and craft spirits. Labels will be critical in helping marketers sell more wine.

Red wine blends are growing rapidly. Retailers are dedicating large portions of shelf space to the red blend category.

WINEMETRICS

- US wine market doubled in volume since 1991
- Number of wine brands in US more than doubled since 2000
- Cases of wine exported from US in 2012 up two percent YOY

363 million cases of wine shipped from the US market in 2012, up two percent or 20 million cases. Surprisingly, shipments out of California went down two percent, showing the growing strength in volume for wineries outside of the main market. Moscato and sweet wines, red wine blends were drivers for the growth.

GOMBERG, FREDRIKSON & ASSOCIATES WINE CONSULTANCY

- The TTB (US Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau) approved around 126,000 new wine labels in 2012
- US represents 13 percent of global wine market
- US is world's largest, most profitable wine market

There is plenty of room for growth in the wine category. The beer market is currently three times bigger. The US market has seen +2,600 new wineries open since 201; wine accounts for seventeen percent of America's total spend of alcohol. The share of imports is expected to hit 35 percent in the US, an all-time high.

Direct shipping is the lifeblood of small wineries. With new technology and the ability to connect to the internet with a mobile device and make purchases instantly has changed the game. Starbucks has seen opportunity in the market as is testing selling wine at locations in major markets. Social channels have become a resource for purchasing decisions, requiring brands to participate in the space.

Says Jon Fredrikson of Gomberg, Fredrikson & Associates, 'the wine label is extremely important to the wine industry because it is the primary means of communicating with the consumer. I believe that most wineries share my opinion that their brand names and label designs are of paramount importance.'

RED BLENDS ARISE

Volume sales of red blends rose 19.5 percent in SymphonyIRI channels in the year-to-date through September 9. Pernod's US wine volume was flat at 1.6 million cases in 2011, according to Impact Databank.

The following is an indication of the competition in a growing red blend market:

- **Constellation — The Dreaming Tree**
- **Diageo — Stark Raving**
- **Chateau Ste. Michelle — Indian Wells**
- **Coppola — Diamond Collection**

PERNOD RICARD DESIGNS TOUGH WINE LABEL FOR US FIRST

Pernod Ricard USA launched its first California still premium red wine brand, a 2010 blend of Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Zinfandel, Petite Sirah and Syrah. Pernod's global wine division developed the brand, Deadbolt, with Philip Laffer as chief winemaker.

The blend is wholly new and designed to capture the growing sophistication around the wine demographic in California mostly raised on varietals. These consumers are adventurous, confident— they don't know everything about wine — and want to find their own way in selection. Both the naming of the brand, and the design of the brand's label were critical to Pernod finding success with the launch.

'The Deadbolt brand is about making your own rules and daring to be different,' explains Chris Lehmann, executive creative director and general manager of Landor Associates' Chicago office, a brand consulting firm specializing in creative strategy, design, innovation, and naming. Enlisted by the wine conglomerate to bring this blend to California consumers, Lehmann says, 'The name, the tattoo-inspired design of the label and the production techniques employed to bring Deadbolt to market all combine to express the brand's essence.'

The aggressive Deadbolt name was chosen to entice the male consumer specifically with the idea that women would also buy a label that appears more masculine. The Deadbolt wordmark is custom lettering commissioned specifically for the brand. Lehmann continues, 'As we brainstormed various ways to visually evoke the positioning of the new brand, the idea of a tattoo surfaced. From there it was a no-brainer that we create a tattoo-looking wordmark. You can see how all the letterforms interlock. It is perfect.'

Collotype Labels in Napa, California, a division of Multi-Color Corporation, manufactured the Deadbolt label with silver foil that delivers in a couple of critical ways. Says Lehmann, 'A bright, reflective silver foil like we are using helps to catch the eye of consumers standing in one of the hardest aisles to visually process, given the hundreds of small labels all doing something different.

'Next, the silver adds a bit of sophistication. With a name like Deadbolt, the silver as well as the curves in the letterforms prevent an interpretation of being rough and mechanical – something to be typically avoided in a wine, obviously.' The black pressure-sensitive substrate was coated with a matte varnish while the Deadbolt letters have embossing and a spot gloss varnish to add pop, helping the brand to stand out on the shelf. Initially stakeholders had thought about screen printing directly on the bottle, but the costing didn't make sense. A clear label material was also tested, but did not give the 'permanent' look that the brand called for.

'Deadbolt's packaging and branding, from the cork to the carton, tell a strong story which we feel will really resonate with an adventure seeking consumer who is looking for something different,' says Lauren Simkin, general manager, Pernod Ricard USA, Wines and Champagnes.

The Wine Economist placed Pierre Pringuet, CEO of Pernod Ricard at number one in its 2011 Wine Power List Top Ten. The wine company is the world's fourth largest as the owner of brands such as Champagne Mumm and Perrier-Jouet, Jacob's Creek and New Zealand's Brancott Estate.

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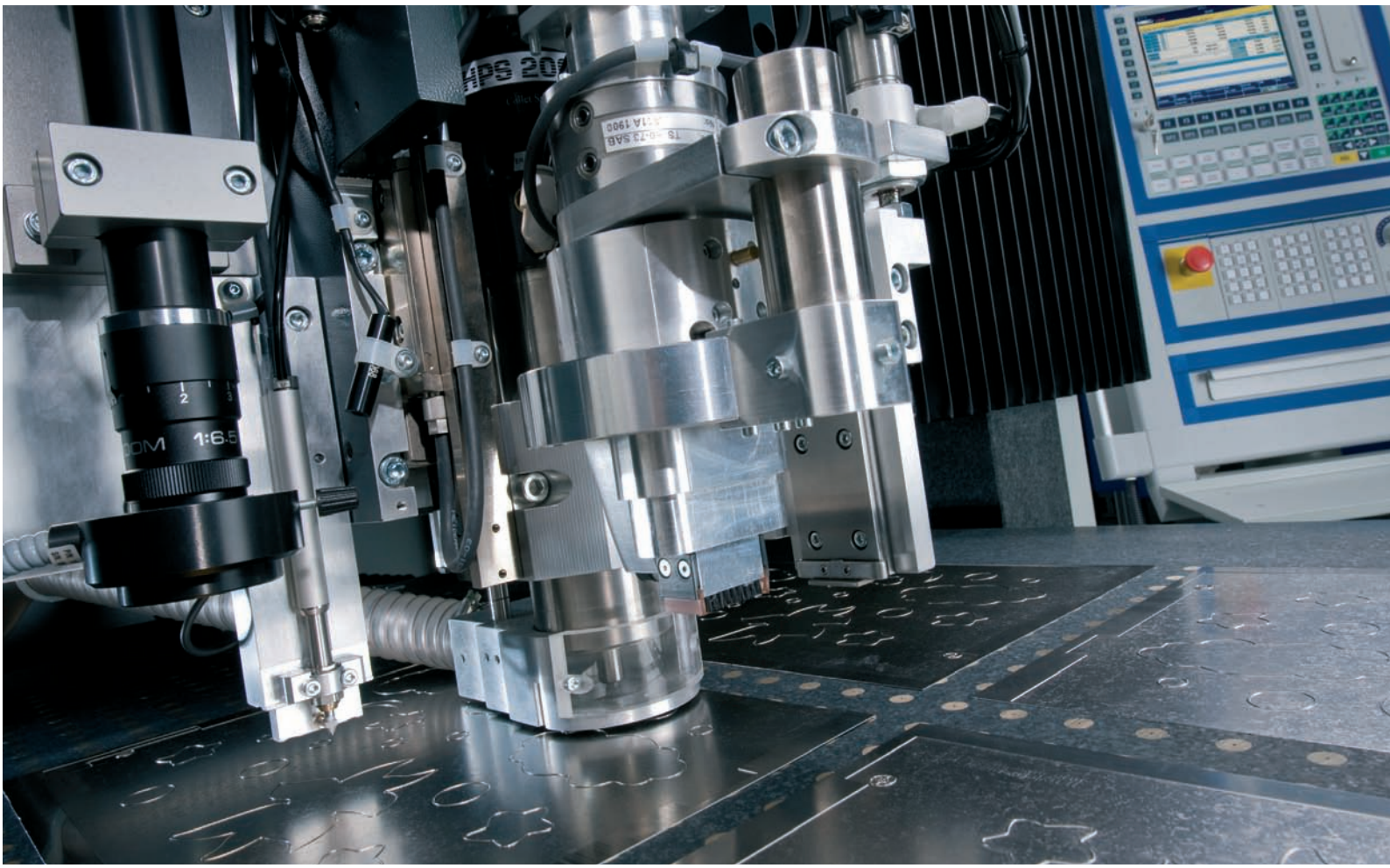

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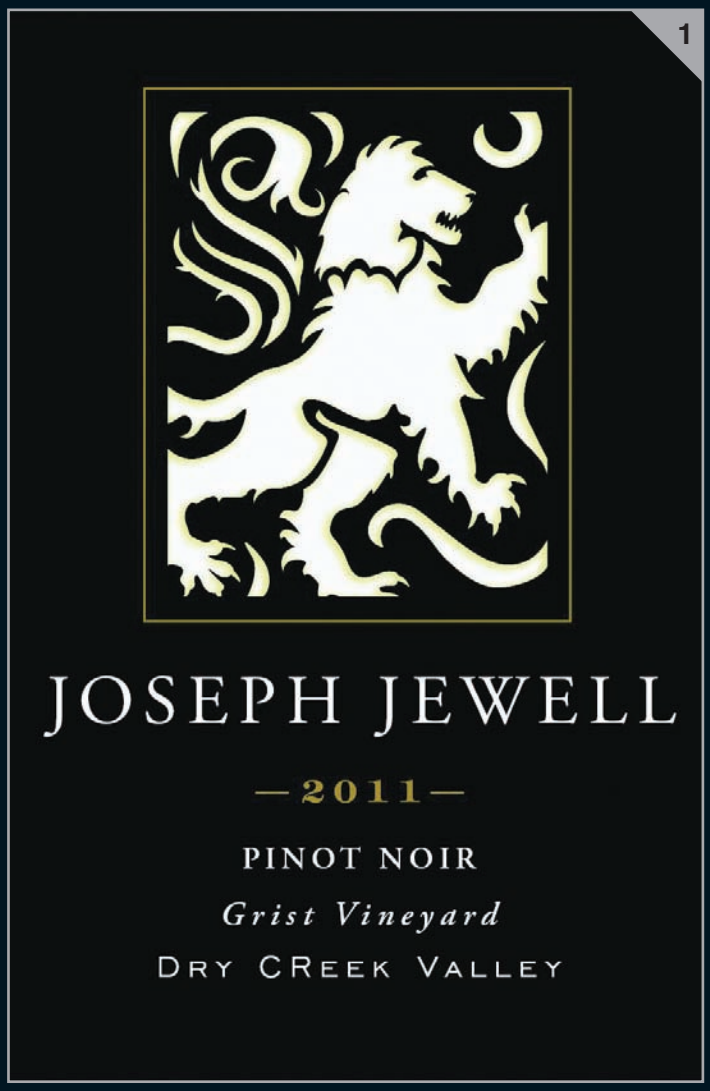


WINE EXPOSURE

REVIEW: a few label producer exhibitors

1. PARAGON LABEL JOSEPH JEWELL 2011 PINOT LASER

Paragon Label talked with attendees about its new partnership with VGR (Vintners Global Resource), offering wineries the opportunities to purchase wine bottles at the same time as labels are ordered. Jason Grossman, president, said, 'We received a strong, positive response here. The smaller wineries particularly like the idea of a one-stop-shop. Paragon recently launched a new website that is visually aesthetic and provides improved information about the label manufacturing process.

The Joseph Jewell label was printed on pressure-sensitive material with an HP Indigo 4500 digital press. It's difficult to see in the photo, but the lion image is burned away with a special laser creating special shapes. The text is embossed and gold foil was applied with an Iwasaki foil and embossing unit.

2. TAPP LE GRANDE COURTAGE

Tapp Label Technologies promoted its capability to produce waterless offset, digital offset, and UV flexographic labels in the heart of Napa, California. The converter's new website puts a focus on its people and craftsmanship. Ben Franklin Label was acquired by Tapp shortly after the event.

The Le Grande Courtage label was produced on an HP Indigo 4500 digital press using Fasson's White Shursheen material with silver foil stamping and embossing.

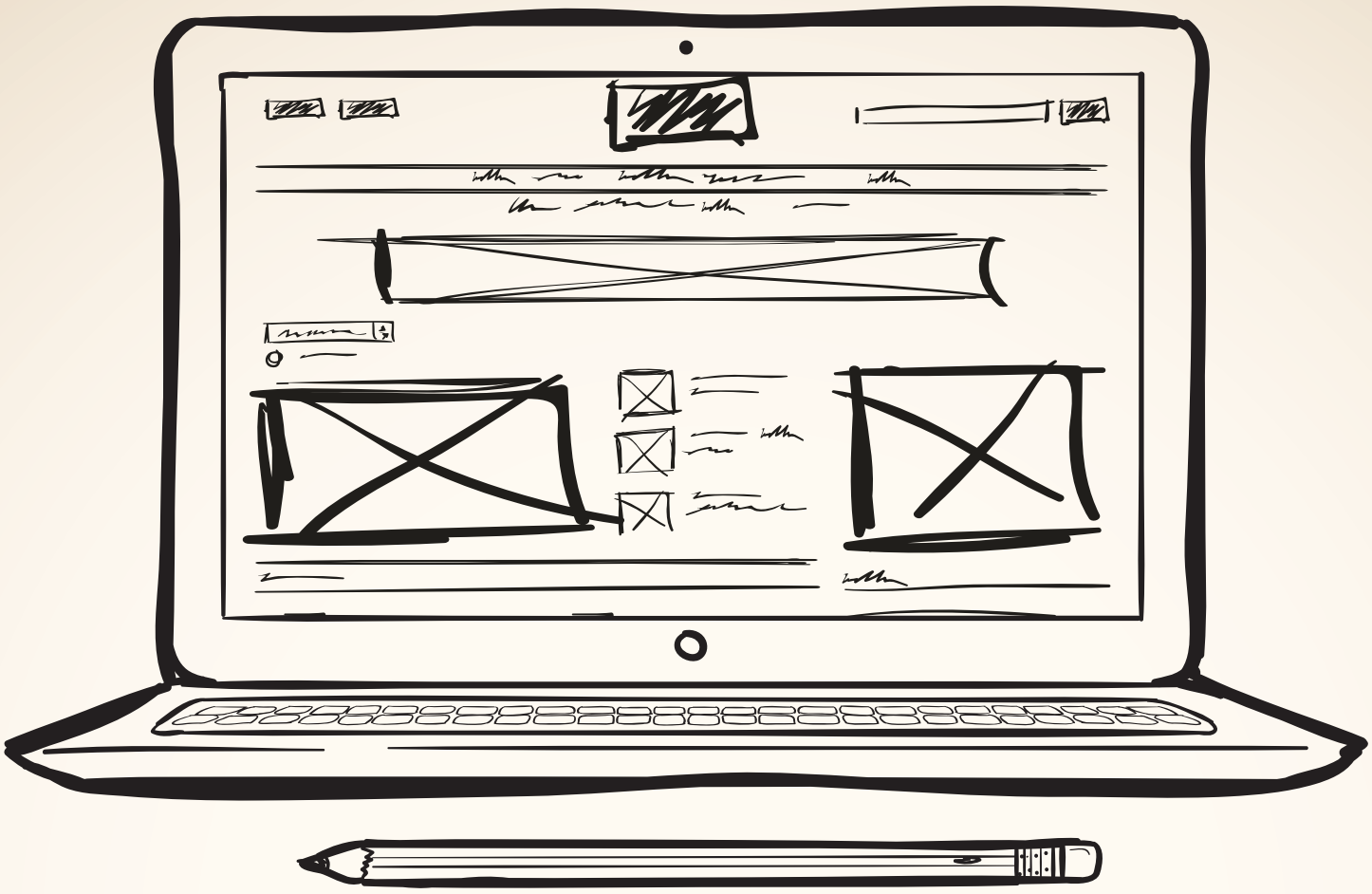
3. G3 ENTERPRISES RODNEY STRONG

G3 Enterprises promoted its Gtree and Gfresh label materials. Gtree consists of a 100 percent post-consumer waste paper facestock that will not grey out or bubble in an ice bucket. Gfresh is a label and closure that's been tailored for lightly carbonated wines.

This Rodney Strong label was printed at the converter's headquarters in Modesto, California on a Mark Andy XP5000 flexographic press. The label is at 200 line screen with ten colors, hot stamping, a layer of screen printing, and is double embossed. The material is Fasson 70# Bright White Felt.

LABELS & LABELING DIGITAL WINE CONFERENCE

Label converters and label industry vendors were sporadically placed throughout the Wine Symposium exhibition space. Conference tracks offered in-depth reviews of marketing and PR tools, and shared business and operations pointers, but there was no focus on the most important marketing piece in the wine industry – the label. In summer 2013 Labels & Labeling will host an online discussion to share technical insights and label manufacturing trends with wineries and designers throughout North America. Contact Tventimiglia@labelexpo.com for more information.



Sometimes high tech needs a simple approach

When we started work on the new Labelsandlabeling.com we went back to the drawing board – literally.

We looked at the core reason why the site is the industry's leader (its daily updated content) and designed everything around that. We researched all the top news websites, looked at the most successful trends in banner advertising and carefully analysed reader statistics from the existing site.

That is why the new **Labelsandlabeling.com** doesn't look like any of our competitors – the focus is on relevant content, without any annoying login, unnecessary links or confusing animation in the way. The responsive design enables you access the site across all devices – seamlessly. No need to download an app or to switch between mobile and desktop versions.

Where we don't have the best solution ourselves, we've worked with partners. The video section has been upgraded to use high quality delivery from **Youtube** and the bookshop now processes payments and distribution through **Amazon.com**.

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LABELS & LABELING

Securing the supply chain

NEIL MATTHEWS, vice president at Checkpoint Systems, examines how smart labeling technology is enabling retailers to boost sales and protect profits

It's an uncertain environment for retailers. News reports speculate on the possibility of a triple-dip recession and the extent to which the increasing popularity of online shopping will affect the high street. Meanwhile, a recent report from the Centre for Retail Research predicted that UK retailers alone would lose more than £1 billion over the Christmas period as a result of shoplifting, dishonest employees and vendor distribution losses.

It is against this backdrop that the importance of advanced anti-theft Electronic Article Surveillance (EAS) and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) labeling technology becomes apparent. From product presentation and security to improving efficiency and supply chain visibility, sophisticated labels and labeling application processes are delivering benefits to retailers that can significantly improve profitability.

SOURCE TAGGING

One example of labeling technology increasing efficiency is source tagging, which involves EAS or RFID labels being applied to products during the manufacturing process.

Because items tagged at source arrive at stores shelf-ready, source tagging helps increasing speed to shelf, or to put it another way, speeds up the process of items becoming available for consumers to buy and, therefore, deliver profits to retailers.

The role source tagging can play in improving profitability goes beyond this. It means store staff can concentrate on assisting customers and selling items, rather than labeling them to protect them against theft. Furthermore, it helps to ensure labels are placed on the correct part of the pack – reducing the risk of expensively designed branding or important ingredient and allergy warnings being obstructed. Additionally, placing security labels in the correct place is key to ensuring a high detection rate.

Given these advantages, it shouldn't be a surprise that source tagging has been shown to increase sales by up to 30 per cent and reduce shrinkage (theft) by more than 60 percent.

CLEAR BENEFITS

Advancements in labels and the application of labels offer retailers many benefits. For instance, just as source tagging helps to ensure branding and key information aren't obstructed, smaller and clear anti-theft labels reduce this risk further still.

This advanced technology is also being harnessed to offer retailers product-specific labeling solutions.

One of the most recent examples of this is the smallest security label for shoes on the market, launched very recently. The 2815 Enhanced Performance (EP) Shoe Label offers enhanced detection and deactivation performance, significantly reducing false alarms, and has been designed to sustain greater tolerance during the manufacturing process.

This development is a good example of how labeling advancements are addressing specific pressing retail needs –

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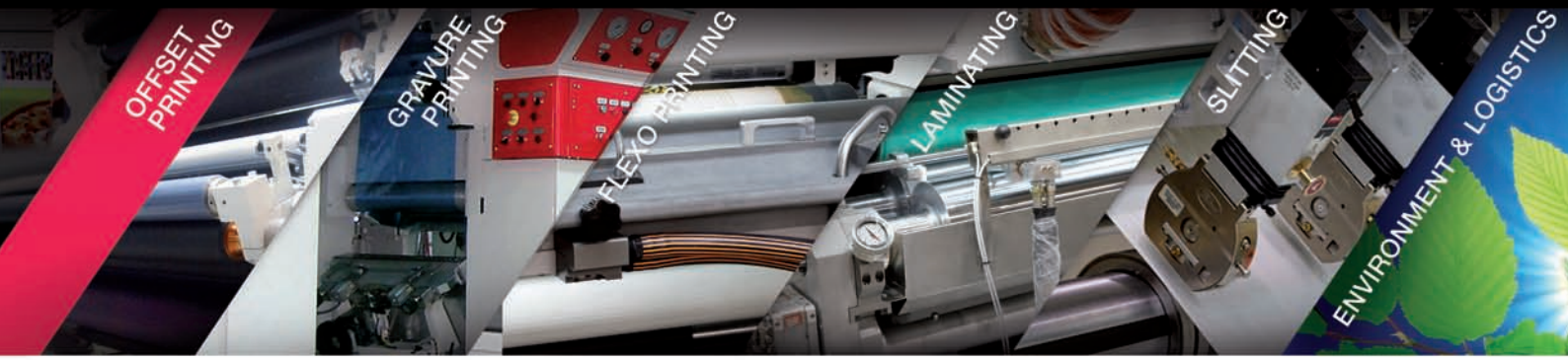

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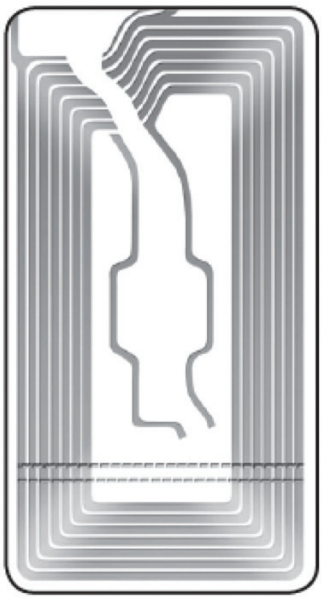

THE 2815 ENHANCED PERFORMANCE (EP) Shoe Label

shoes are high-risk theft items, difficult to protect and display at the same time. The most recent Global Retail Theft Barometer showed that footwear accounts for 0.99 percent of global shrinkage and 0.92 percent in Europe.

Similarly, solutions have been developed specifically for small cosmetics items, such as nail varnish and lipstick, which are also commonly targeted by thieves. Discreet labels are particularly important within the cosmetics sector, in which attractive product display is crucial.

VISUAL DETERRENCE

The Infinite Solutions (iS) product series is another innovation launched at the end of last year.

Initially, the range comprises the iS Pro Tag, which is the first mid-density electronic article surveillance (EAS) tag to offer the product protection benefits of a disposable label with the visual deterrence of a hard tag; along with the iS Surround Tag, which offers retailers a one-time disposable wrap solution with a fixed EAS attachment peg.

During pre-launch tests for the iS Pro – which was designed for use with a range of product categories, including apparel, accessories, shoes and jewellery – retailers noted increased speed at point-of-sale, improved on-shelf availability metrics and increased customer satisfaction resulting from merchandise being available on open display.

The iS Surround also drew praise from retailers, who recognized its versatility, with the solution protecting a wide variety of merchandise, from gift-box perfume, to shoe boxes and small electronics products. The tag wraps tightly around the merchandise and features permanent adhesive on the EAS attachment, ensuring products remain protected even if the strings are cut or tampered with.

RFID

Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) is an increasingly important technology for retailers – offering the potential to significantly improve supply chain visibility and merchandise availability. Because of advancements in RFID labels, more retailers, including many within the apparel industry, are realising the benefits of the technology and are starting pilots at the point of manufacture and in store.

RFID tags combine a product code with a serial number to uniquely identify each item, making product tracking all along the supply chain more efficient and providing brands and stores with improved inventory accuracy.

This improved supply chain visibility means reduced out-of-stock incidents, which can cost retailers dearly, not just because they represent lost sales, but because they can also result in shoppers taking their custom elsewhere.

One example of a recent advancement in this technology is high-speed bulk encoding, which enables RFID tags to be encoded at a distribution center, before being applied onto multiple items in a single box at operational speed, significantly reducing the time needed to encode large quantities of merchandise.

This faster tagging process is complemented by the development of more sophisticated labels, such as full color tags that allow apparel retailers to benefit from the security and supply chain benefits of RFID without the need to compromise on branding.

Furthermore, the development of In-Plant printing means retailers managing their tagging process from remote locations without reliable internet service are able to obtain Electronic Product Code (EPC) numbers needed to print and encode RFID on demand. The complete process, including tag printing and number serialization, can now be managed locally from these sites.

The retail industry has had to contend with difficult circumstances, but those retailers that seize the opportunities offered by investing in the more efficient application of more advance labels can significantly improve their security, product presentation, merchandise availability in store and ultimately profitability.

The return on investment offered by labeling technology should never be overlooked, but when times are tough, it becomes more important than ever.

JMB Labels widens its scope

THE ARRIVAL of a new MPS press and RotoControl slitter-rewinder has boosted production and service efficiencies at JMB Labels, reports Karen Stretch

It was at Labelexpo Europe some ten years ago that Aslam Monia, co-owner of JMB Labels, first laid eyes on an MPS servo-driven narrow-web press.

Fast forward ten years and JMB Labels is now the proud owner of an MPS 410mm narrow-web press, taking pride of place in the company's 1 500m2 Amalgam, Johannesburg, factory.

In addition, the business boasts an all-new RotoControl RSC 440 slitter rewinder to handle its diverse finishing requirements. Both technologies are represented in South Africa by Rotocon, headed by Patrick and Pascal Aengenvoort, based in Gauteng and the Cape respectively, and Akhmuth Sayed in KwaZulu-Natal.

'I couldn't be happier,' states Aslam. 'This heralds a significant shift in our business model and I'm confident that both machines are going to spur new opportunities for JMB Labels in South Africa and beyond.'

ENDURING BUSINESS RELATIONSHIPS

Founded in 1987 by Yousuf Monia, Aslam and Ahmed's father, JMB Labels started life with one Mark Andy 2200 flexographic press. Early success was built on supplying plain and printed self-adhesive labels for the FMCG and retail markets and they soon invested in a second press, a Mark Andy LP 3000, to handle growing requirements.

'We've built strong relationships with our customers, most of whom we've looked after for several years,' Aslam explains. 'As they've grown, so have we. Market trends have also evolved. Many products traditionally bearing self-adhesive labels are now presented in BOPP wraparound or shrink sleeve labels and, as a result, we've had to make changes to our business model to keep one step ahead and meet brand owners' requirements.'

The new MPS has multi-substrate capabilities and can handle material thicknesses from 12µm to 450µm. A 410mm web width makes it ideal for the production of self-adhesive and shrink sleeve labels at speeds up to 200m/min.

Standard features include eight UV ink stations and two hot air driers for water-based ink, double die station, delam-relam and web turner bar, laminating and cold foil station and a film package for unsupported films. It's also fitted with MPS lean inking technology, a single chamber inking system with auto-ink level control. Benefits of this system include low ink make ready and quick ink color changes, as well as swift wash-up times. It also helps eliminate ink spitting or misting, even at very high speeds. Inks are mixed and supplied by Flint Group Narrow Web.

A FINE FINISH

Super-fast and accurate finishing is also a reality at JMB Labels with the introduction of a RotoControl RSC 440 slitter rewinder with servo drive technology, which can run self-adhesive labels and unsupported film for shrink sleeves.

Rotocon has had acclaimed success in South Africa with RotoControl machines and, says Aslam, he took heed of the many positive comments from his industry peers. 'There are several excellent slitting and rewinding machines on the market, so we did our research before making our final decision. There were so many recommendations on RotoControl, our choice was very easy,' he continues. 'It's designed to suit all labeling substrates, each with ease and speed. It was easy to install and has worked perfectly since day one. Our customers have definitely noticed significant improvements in the accuracy of our slits and our faster job turnarounds.'

Service and support goes hand in hand with new and existing printing equipment and ancillary materials and, once again, Aslam reiterates the importance of strong, long-standing and trusted business relationships. 'We've built enduring alliances with all our suppliers, including the entire team at Rotocon. We trust their products and industry expertise and we know we're getting the best for our business and, ultimately, for our customers,' he concludes.

This article first appeared in Packaging & Print Media magazine.

JMB LABELS' servo-driven RotoControl RSC 440 slitter-rewinder handles self-adhesive and shrink sleeve labels

(L-R) Rototec's Patrick Aengenvoort with Aslam Monia, co-owner of JMB Labels, and Ebrahim Mullah, operator of the new MPS press

COMEXI Offset CI8 press

CI offset opens new avenues for film

THE COMEXI GROUP OPEN HOUSE in Girona saw the commercial launch of its solventless CI offset technology. Andy Thomas reports

At a recent Open House held at its production facility in Girona, Spain, Comexi Group demonstrated its ground-breaking EB-cure CI offset press technology. First shown at Drupa 2012, and covered in L&L's sister publication Package Print Worldwide, the Comexi Offset CI8 press is now fully commercialized.

Although targeted primarily at flexible packaging, the press also has potential applications in shrink sleeve and wraparound label work.

The CI8 is based on an arrangement of up to eight EB printing decks around a central drum (CI). The first and/or last station can be a flexo deck for applying background colors or varnishes. The Comexi press designed to print on low caliper PE, BOPP and PET materials.

Not only is Comexi promoting the environmental benefits of the press, thanks to the EB offset solvent-less inks, but also greater line screen for print quality compared to flexo and cheaper and faster platemaking. The introduction of the technology is being supported by Comexi's partners, Heidelberg and Wikoff.

'What we have achieved with CI offset,' says Felip Ferrer, commercial director for Comexi Offset, 'is to develop a press that has a fast job changeover, is a much cleaner printing process, is less expensive to operate, replaces solvent inks for short and medium runs, and has a print quality that we believe equals that of gravure.

'Using servo drive technology, the press offers fast production speeds of up to 300m/min, reduced press downtime with minimum start-up waste, which in-turn reduces printed stock. Indeed, it is running in full register within 30 meters of pressing the button, and prints up to seven colors, plus white or a lacquer, on a web up to 860mm wide.

'With the offset process, it is also possible to achieve fast, accurate pre-press, with origination/pre-press and plate making. The press therefore complements an existing gravure or flexo operation.'

Even with flexo technology, Comexi has again been taking exciting marketing initiatives to identify the meaning of efficiency in sustainable flexible packaging, to reduce greenhouse gases and to monitor and report industrial carbon footprints. The latest Comexi Flexo F2 press, for example, comes with Cingular modules for managing pressure adjustments and registration, while significantly reducing waste. Furthermore, important advantages such as accessibility, easy maintenance, and energy savings are also keys to sustainable printing.

In line with this message, Comexi has also introduced the latest technology in water-based inks with BASF resins. These inks offer improved sustainability and reduced cost in use while maintaining a high level of printability and print quality.

The introduction of electron-beam (EB) technology took place after fiver years of intensive research. 'We believe that the EB process is setting new standards in the converting process for flexible packaging.' comments Albert Negre, business managing director. 'Our in-line configurations and solutions for printing, decoration or finishing of flexible packaging can improve performance and subsequently time-to-market.'

It is not just flexo and offset where innovation is being introduced. At Drupa, Comexi ACOM presented a demo unit for the latest technology in rotogravure printing. This unit featured innovations including Siemens Sinamics Simotion, with controls built into the Comexi ACOM software. These features are aimed at improving registration control during changeover and start-up phases and minimizing waste.

Added to the latest innovations in flexible package printing technology by the Comexi Group are the whole range of laminating solutions, both with and without solvents, under the Nexus trademark, as well as slitting and rewinding equipment for plastic film, paper and aluminum foil offered by Proslit.


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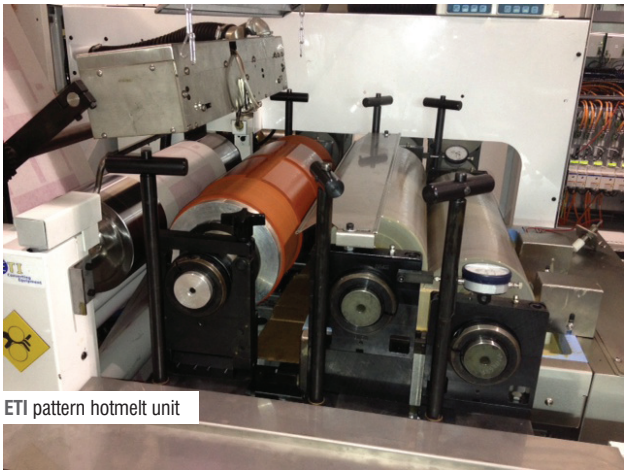


ETI pattern hotmelt unit

ITW film extruder

ETI LAUNCHES HOTMELT PATTERN ADHESIVE UNIT

ETI has launched what is claims to be the first high-speed hotmelt clean edge pattern adhesive unit on the market. The unit can be retrofitted to any existing Cohesio machine and follows the development two years ago of an acrylic adhesive pattern unit.

The new technology handles variable repeats from 16" to 24" with automatic register and very accurate pre-register to minimize waste, says ETI. Full web coating speed is up to 400 fpm with accurate coat weight control.

'Until now, the pattern hotmelt process was unusable at high speed; all edges were not clean due to the nature of the hotmelt,' says Maxime Bayzelon, vice president at ETI. 'With this new unit, the quality of printing edges without filamentous burr and the speed of the unit provide label makers with new opportunities: adhesive spots, coupons and special adhesive forms, including laser sheets. It is up to their imagination, a great marketing tool.'

ETI has already sold units in Japan, Germany and France.

NORDSON SHOWS SLOT DIE ADHESIVE COATERS

Two slot coating systems are now available from Nordson Corporation and its recently acquired Nordson EDI business.

Nordson EDI's Premier Dies Coating Station is a self-contained slot die system. Custom-built to accommodate a wide range of die sizes, the Premier Dies coating station includes flexible- or fixed-lip coating head, die support, fluid delivery unit, and coating rolls. Nordson EDI claims the positioning of the die relative to the coating roll is held within a range of only 2.5 microns.

A modular version of the station can be moved on- and off-line, and can be used to alternate between slot die and conventional roll coating or for switching among several coating stations, each with a different slot die.

The Premier Dies coating station is designed to accommodate supported-web and unsupported-web configurations. Four axes of die adjustment are available. Coating rolls may be either stainless steel or chrome-plated. The station can include a built-in vacuum box to help control the coating bead.

TheTrueCoat TCHP slot applicator for hot melt applications from Nordson Corp.'s Web Coating Systems is designed for stripe or full coating application in continuous web processes. Use of a rotating bar in full coating applications makes possible streak-free coverage and excellent edge control, making the TCHP particularly beneficial for tape and label applications, says the company.

ITW DYNATEC

ITW launches CrossCoat Precision Metering technology, a non-contact, metered slot applicator that produces a precise flow of adhesive for coating applications that require streak-free results. CrossCoat processes hot melt adhesives with coat weights down to one GSM and is designed for clear film and label applications.

The system prevents heat sensitive materials such as thin PP and PE film from contacting the die lip, eliminating damage to the film. A high degree of accuracy is achieved with a cross web distribution of within three percent.

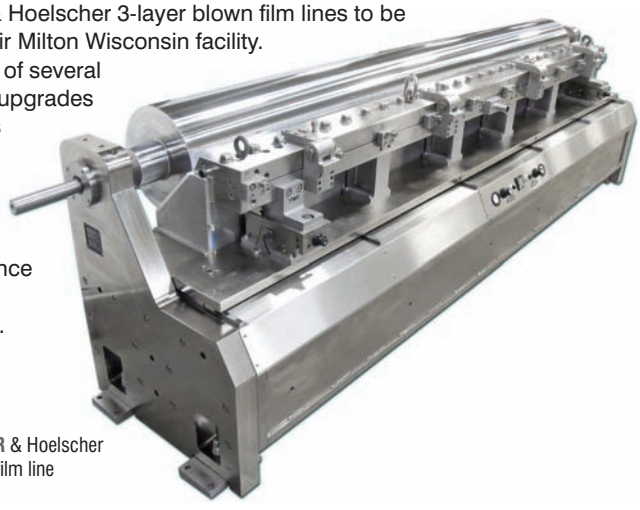
KROENERT SHOWS 5000

Kroenert is introducing its MCO 5000 coating system, manufactured from standardized, modular components to cut down on both delivery and installation times. The line is upgradeable with modules including aqueous and solvent systems.

CHARTER TAKES TWO W&H LINES

Charter NEX films has announced the purchase of two new Windmoeller & Hoelscher 3-layer blown film lines to be installed in their Milton Wisconsin facility.

This is the first of several additions and upgrades Charter NEX is planning as it continues to leverage their expertise in high performance blown film manufacturing.



WINDMOELLER & Hoelscher 3-layer blown film line

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Total Anilox Management

PHIL HALL, managing director of Troika Systems, looks at the benefits of implementing a sound anilox management system

For a long time now the anilox roll has been regarded as the heart of the flexo press and that is for good reason. Any change in anilox volume influences all the main characteristics of a halftone process print; namely solid color density, secondary color, grey balance and dot gain. The more exacting a printer becomes the greater the potential impact of any change.

There is an old adage that unless you measure something you cannot determine if it is changing or the extent of change and as such you cannot predict performance. With an anilox roller the critical factor (key performance indicator) is roller volume because a relatively small change in volume can have a significant influence on the print. Inevitable issues such as surface wear and plugging of the cells with pigment or resin both reduce roller volume.

With industry constantly looking to improve performance, an increasing number of printers are now working with low volume very fine screen anilox rollers in order to produce high definition flexo. These rollers tend to be even more prone to wear and plugging. As a result it is becoming increasingly important that printers regularly measure and quantify the volume of their anilox inventory so that the effects of wear and plugging can be identified, monitored and managed.

If the volume of anilox rollers used for the fingerprint exercise is known and this volume is checked on a regular basis to ensure that it remains within specification, then it is possible to save a significant amount of press time by not having to make as many color adjustments when setting up process print jobs.

CHOOSING A MEASUREMENT SYSTEM

There is no industry standard for anilox measurement and as a result manufacturers are using different devices to quantify their rollers, as are printers. As the measurement accuracy and error factor of the various measurement devices varies, there is a wide degree of variation between different manufacturers' measurements.

The ideal measurement system should have a high degree of repeatability along with a low error factor and should preferably not be operator dependent. In addition it goes without saying that if a system is to be implemented at printers it should be relatively easy to use and be available at an acceptable price.

Instruments for assessing anilox rollers can be broadly divided into volumetric devices and optical devices. Volumetric devices are relatively cheap, are very much operator dependent and tend to have a large error factor, which can be as much

ANILOX MEASUREMENT on press (left) and at the print shop (right)

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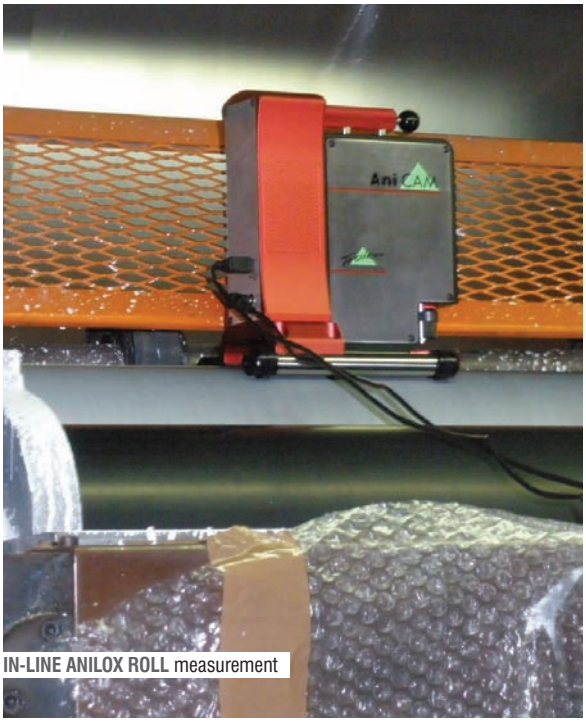

IN-LINE ANILOX ROLL measurement

as +/- 15 percent on low volume high line count rollers. The main challenge with these systems is applying a consistent volume of measuring fluid and then spreading it uniformly so that it completely fills all the cells in the area of the stain.

Optical devices in the form of microscopes with a depth field, like the gravure scope, are more costly but can be very useful when it comes to general roller examination as they are able to identify surface damage, changes to the thickness of the cell wall and wear by means of depth measurements. However it is not possible to quantify volume with these devices, the most important factor, unless the roller has a regular cell structure from which volume can be readily calculated as is the case with old fashioned mechanical engravings.

Where fine screen rulings and irregular shape cells are concerned, the most consistant measuring device is the optical scanning microscope. These instruments have been around for a number of years in one form or another but in the early days the high capital cost of the equipment placed it beyond the means of most printers. In recent years this situation has changed and there is now a 3D scanning microscope, the AniCAM, which is both affordable and able to make precise measurements. It works by capturing an image at various depths as an internal stepper motor moves the camera down in fraction of-a-micron increments. Dedicated software then combines these images to create a 3D representation of the roller surface from which volume can be calculated. A recently developed battery pack makes the device truly portable for use inside the press.

With a system like the AniCAM it is possible to set up and implement a sophisticated system of anilox control that takes into account wear, plugging and refurbishment. Ideally this should work on a cradle to grave principle with the volume of a new roller being quantified upon delivery and then monitored at regular intervals throughout its life span. With experience it is possible for a printer to accurately define the point where predefined performance is going to be compromised.

When checking volume, measurements should ideally be made across the face width and around the circumference of the roller at several positions.

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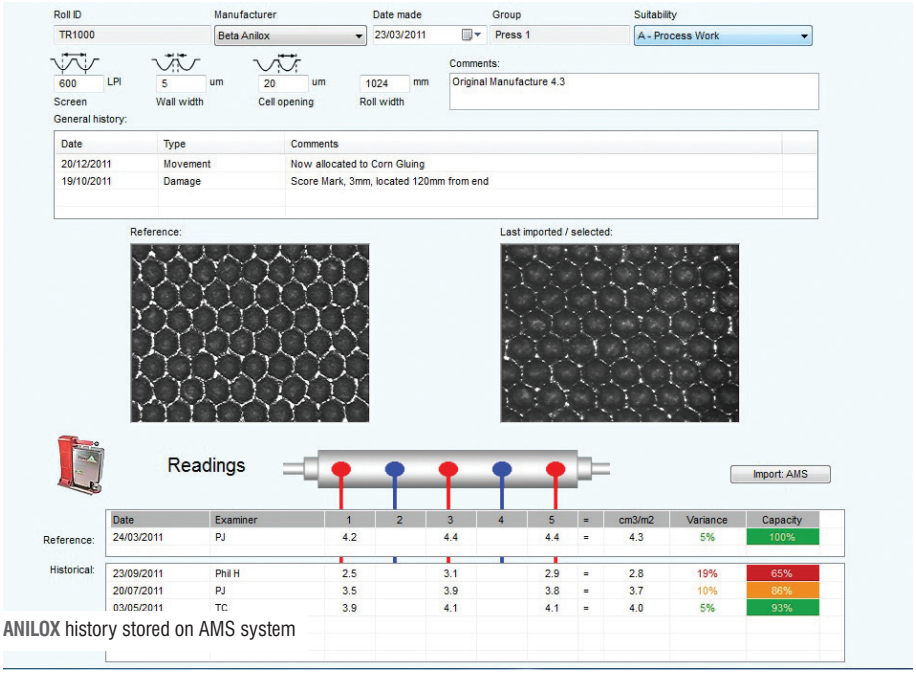

ANILOX history stored on AMS system

BEST PRACTICE

Recommended best practice includes setting and agreeing anilox specifications with the supplier, using an inspection regime to gather historical data for roller refurbishment and evaluating and optimising the cleaning process.

This data needs to be recorded and evaluated and the best way to do this is by employing software specifically developed for the task. Troika Systems, for example, will provide any printer with a free copy of its Anilox Management System (AMS), which is capable of controlling a printer's complete anilox inventory. The free copy supports up to 24 rolls and can be upgraded without loss of data.

With a good volume measurement system it is possible to evaluate how effective the roller cleaning process is and optimize cleaning time required to achieve the best result. The comparative effectiveness of different cleaning systems can also be evaluated. With the size of the engraved cells on the latest high line count anilox rollers being so small – somewhere in the order of 20 microns – these rollers are more difficult to clean. At this level of magnitude it is likely that some cleaning systems will not be able to clean rollers very effectively, so being able to evaluate the efficacy of different systems is very useful.

When the volume of an anilox roller is measured and found to have reduced it is possible that the roller needs cleaning but it is also possible that the roller has worn. In this event, if the roller volume does not return after thorough cleaning, then it is likely that the roller has worn and needs refurbishing.

By taking a cradle to grave approach to anilox measurement and by gathering and recording historical data on the anilox inventory, it is possible to ensure that if one anilox from a set of process rollers requires refurbishment as a result of wear or damage, the new roller can be specified to have the same volume as the pre-worn original.

On delivery the printer can verify roller volume by taking his own measurement to ensure that the roller is in spec before it goes to press. This should enable the same print result to be achieved with the replacement roller and avoid the need for re-fingerprinting the press, saving time and cost.

BENEFITS OF INVENTORY MANAGEMENT

Many printers accept adjusting ink in order to achieve the desired print result as an inevitable part of printing but, while some adjustment may always be necessary, the total time lost is typically far in excess of what can be achieved with volume measurement. By quantifying the volume of the anilox inventory on a regular basis, along with good roller management, it should be possible to ensure that the anilox rollers for a job are within spec before they go to press. Or, if not, by knowing the difference between the optimum roller volume and that which is available, it should be possible for the ink management system to change the ink composition so that the minimum of adjustment is required. With this approach a significant amount of time can be saved and cost taken out of the equation.

Fairly short print runs are the norm these days and as such most printers are running in excess of 20 jobs a week on one press working a single eight hour shift. If, as research has shown, 40 percent of these jobs require color adjustment at 20 minutes per adjustment then this represents 160 minutes of lost time per press per shift each week or 24 hours of lost time every week if three presses are running on three shifts. Even if this time loss is only halved with better anilox management this still represents significant savings. With the average cost of wide web press time, for example, in the order of £400/hr a 12 hour saving per week equates to £4800/wk or roughly quarter of a million pounds a year.

The closer a printer can get to being able to 'print by numbers' the more time he will save, and this not only reduces the cost of individual jobs but also increases production capacity.

THE BOTTOM LINE

With the right approach and effective measurement equipment it is relatively easy to monitor the volume of an anilox roller throughout its life cycle. It is improvements in roller engraving, cleaning methods and measurement systems over the past 10 years that have helped to make this possible.

Any printer that achieves this has already placed himself in a much stronger position than competitors who have not adopted volume control. However, in the total scheme of things, this is only the start of what could be a much more rewarding journey.

With similar presses working with matched process anilox rollers it should be possible for a printer to achieve press fingerprints that are within acceptable tolerance of each other. This then makes it possible to work with a single set of repro conditions for each substrate across all presses, thus increasing versatility and enabling any process job to be placed on any press. For larger printers, with more than one operation of a similar nature, it should, with the right approach, even be possible to work with the same fingerprint across a number of sites in different global locations. This would in turn be a big selling point to the multinational packaging companies who want to print locally while at the same time achieving product uniformity. Any printer that could achieve this would definitely be ahead of the curve.

One thing is for certain. None of these potential benefits will be realised without the proper degree of anilox management, measurement and control.

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Australian view

ALLAN DABSCHECK, president of Latma, looks at how global trends are affecting the Australian label industry

Currently the printing industry in Australia is experiencing some instability, and although the label sector has considered itself somewhat removed from general printing, there is no doubt during the next 12-18 months, LATMA and its members will face some serious issues as a result of our long-term association with the general printing industry.

One such issue is the rapid growth of digital printing.

It is no longer an 'easy' decision to make about our future as it was in the past... 'Will we install another flexo or offset press?' Now we must ask ourselves a more basic question; to go digital or not to go digital, as it appears that our industry is gearing up for the next five to 10 years to keep up with the growing sophistication of label clients. But for some companies in Australia, a 'knee-jerk' reaction to diversify into digital printing could prove dangerous, as the capital expenditure may outstrip any rewards, simply because the process is not clearly understood by management and their staff.

I believe that although some of our members will embrace digital, they will also continue to support their core business and specialities in printing as new developments in letterpress, offset and flexographic machinery successfully compete, offering higher speeds and excellent quality. But these traditional processes need well structured training and apprenticeships, as well as skilled operators. Unfortunately, I believe diversified skills will soon become a major problem in Australia as two government-funded trade institutions who traditionally provided training independent of the employer have now closed their doors. This leaves us with private providers who only support 'in-house' and 'competency based' training.

ALLAN E. DABSCHECK, president

Another issue for our members is... Should Latma form a strategic alliance or merge with another like-minded organisation in an effort to offer members 'more bang for their buck', or alternatively, how will Latma strengthen its goals and membership, enabling it to remain independent?

In the coming years, the Latma Executive will work its way through this and other issues because we see our role clearly as a provider of opportunity for our members.

During 2012, Latma sponsored the second Annual Benchmark Survey for the Australian pressure sensitive market. It is available free to Latma converter members, and, in the same way as with the TLMI benchmark survey, it gives all participating members the opportunity to confidentially analyse the financial results of their company and compare those results to market data in various segments across the Australian market.

Using the same format and program as TLMI, Latma launched the initial survey in 2011 and expects it will become a staple of our program every year. Long term, we are working with other associations around the world in the hope that all pressure sensitive label markets will be included in one consistent format, enabling converters to compare their results not only to local markets but potentially to world markets as well.

Latma will continue to support converter apprentices by offering $500 to each member company which applies for the first year apprentice grant. There were five grants in 2012.

A new initiative for Latma was introduced in 2012. Latma sponsored Ms Tania Mathias of Fantastic Labels in Melbourne with her application to attend the Finat Young Managers' Congress in Berlin last December. The Congress proved successful and Tania has since relayed her experiences to Latma members at two functions during March 2013.

The Latma Executive sees this initiative as a valuable opportunity to assist our industrious young managers to develop their future interests. The Latma Executive has decided that one or more young managers from Latma member companies may be selected at random from nominated applicants to receive Latma financial support to attend the next Young Managers' Congress in Chicago 2014.

Mr Klaus Bachstein, CEO of Gallus Group, attended both these functions and presented a very interesting view of the worldwide label industry from the press manufacturers' point of view.

During 2012, many of our members participated in the Latma Australia Label Awards and the judges selected entries for The World Label Awards. The Latma Executive is pleased to congratulate Multi-Color (Qld) Pty Ltd on winning two gold medals in their section of The World Label Awards and Ultra Labels Pty Ltd for its Honourable Mention.

On behalf of the Latma Executive, I am pleased to report there is definitely a good feeling about the Australian label industry and its continued success.

Print will remain

BENNY LANDA, founder of Landa nanographic print technology and industry icon, talked shop at EFI's user conference in Las Vegas. Danielle Jerschefske reports

The global print workflow and digital printing press supplier EFI hosted its 10th Connect users conference for 1200 customers, team members and vendor partners in Las Vegas in January.

Guy Gecht, EFI's CEO, talks often about the window of opportunity constantly changing. At last year's event Gecht spoke with Shutterfly CEO and president Jeff Housenbold about social media and printing, arguing that new communication tools like Facebook and Instagram will not be the demise of print. Rather, with the ability to save memories easily on mobile phones, print pages are increasing in certain sectors.

EFI says it now has more cloud-based customers than ever before and its inkjet business is growing quickly, achieving nine quarters in-a-row of nearly double digit growth.

The company's business in China more than doubled in size in 2012, and by some 60 percent in all of Asia Pacific, with India and Indonesia as key drivers. Says Gecht, 'the focus on quality has become extremely high in China. They deliver to the expectations of global brands like Apple, Nike and Disney.'

The rapid adoption of EFI's wide format Scitex equipment in China is proof that this shift is happening and the company hopes to find increased success there with its Jetrion line of digital label presses.

EFI Radius MIS software is used by many leading flexible packaging and label converters with multiple print processes and locations. However, smaller label converters require less complex MIS software and EFI is working to close this gap as it looks to gain more market share in the labels and packaging space.

2013 marks the 10-year anniversary of Jetrion, started by the digital division of Flint Ink. It was acquired by EFI in 2006 and now reports fully to the inkjet systems group of EFI.

Jetrion GM Sean Skelly believes the vertical integration of EFI behind Jetrion is a key differentiator for customers. The company's strategy is to make the system modular, like a conventional narrow web press, where units including laser die-cutting can be added as required. A second trend is towards wider web widths.

BENNY DOES VEGAS

In what has become an eagerly anticipated slot, EFI CEO Guy Gecht interviewed Benny Landa, founder first of HP Indigo print technology in the mid-90s and more recently Landa Nanographic Printing, unveiled at Drupa 2012.

When Landa was a student in Canada he was torn between art and science, believing the two were incompatible. It wasn't until he discovered printing that he found technology and art are one and the same. In the wake of this epiphany Landa founded Indigo in Israel to produce color copiers.

After developing Indigo, Landa sold the business to Hewlett-Packard in 2002 and started a new company called Landa Labs to develop the technology to turn low temperature thermal energy into electricity.

Landa said, 'It turned out, to make it happen, we needed to develop nano structures that are only a few nanometers in size. To make these we needed special nano particles.'

After failing to find the right people to develop these ideas, Landa and his team had to develop a way of making nano particles themselves. 'We succeeded and had this breakthrough technology a new way to make nano particles.'

Landa's print background led him to suggest using these nano structures to develop pigment technology. 'I was thrilled to get back into the printing industry!', said Landa.

Landa Labs' nano particle technology has led to other development avenues, including a new and more efficient delivery mechanism for pharmaceutical products.

LABEL TV

Watch Benny Landa talk about packaging during his fireside chat with EFI CEO Guy Gecht on Label TV http://www.labelsandlabeling.com/label-tv/general-interest/benny-landa-on-packaging-at-efi-connect-2013

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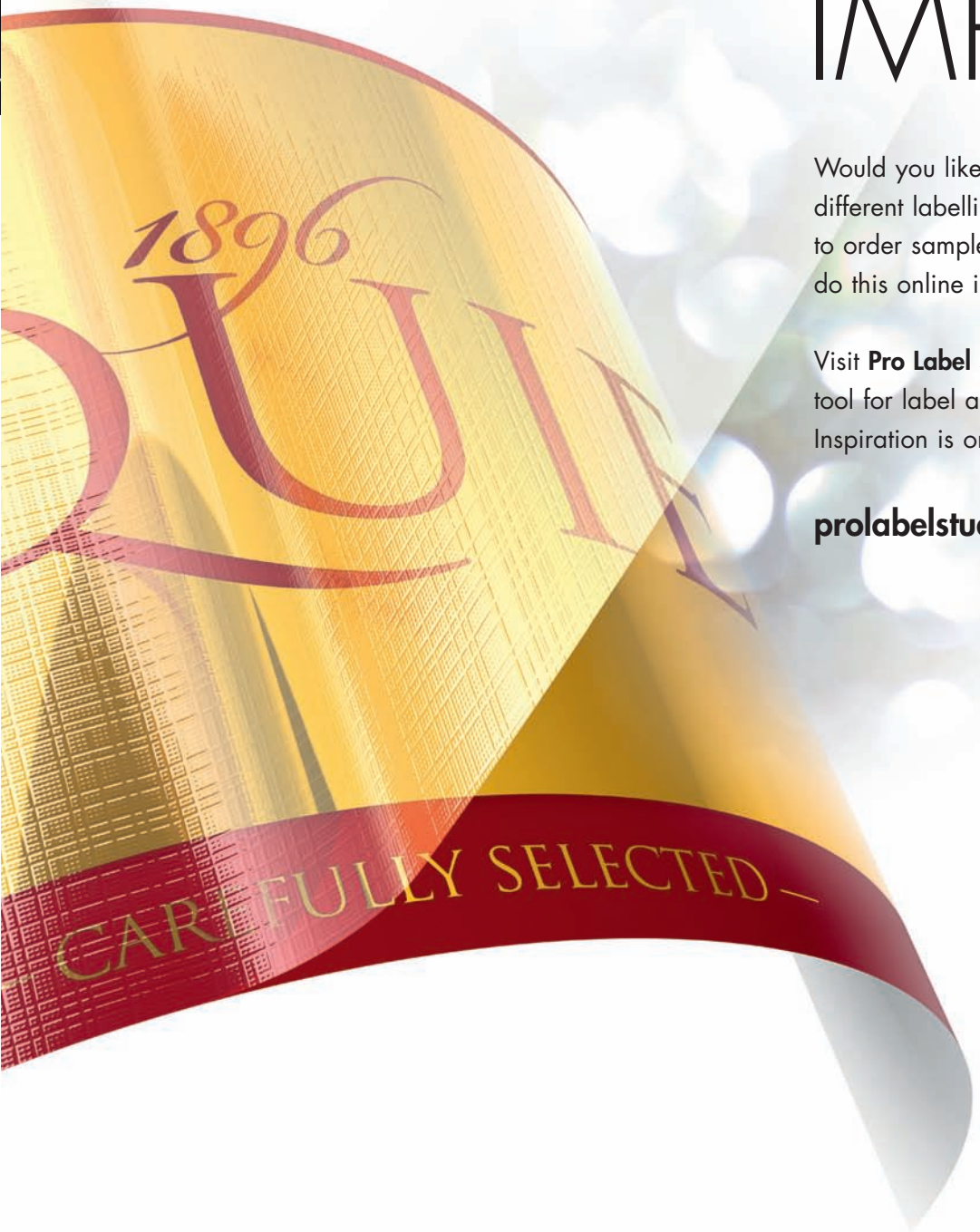

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TWO LEADING EUROPEAN CONVERTERS are switching to low-migration, mono-pigmented ink mixing systems. Klemens Ehrlitzer reports on the challenges and benefits

Moving to low migration inks

Inks are an indispensable necessity for every printing process. Moreover, for customers of label printing plants the exact reproduction of corporate colors and images is counted amongst the most widely discussed quality criteria. In particular, manufacturers of branded goods are extremely sensitive in this regard.

Now two leading European converters, Logo Etiketten and Bandfix, have made a major shift to low migration, mono-pigmented ink mixing systems, supplied in both cases by Zeller+Gmelin.

LOGO ETIKETTEN

Frank Neumann, managing director of Logo Etiketten GmbH in Mahlberg in the Southern Baden region of Germany, describes printing inks and the corresponding operational environment as the heart of a label printing plant which should not be substantially modified without good reason. The implementation of low-migration label production for the food market segment was just a reason.

The Logo Etiketten printing plant, specializedd in adhesive labels and packaging, is part of the Gundlach-group, an association of specializedd companies in the printing and publishing industry with more than 850 employees. At the two locations Mahlberg/Baden and Weinstadt/Stuttgart, Germany, Logo Etiketten generates an average annual turnover of EUR 13m with around 85 employees. The scope of supply ranges from digital prepress via flexographic and screen printing on presses with a maximum of ten inking units and includes finishing options like hot and cold stamping, varnishing, coating and lamination through to further processing such as cutting and finishing.

A relatively high proportion of the clientele comes from the food and beverage sector. Thus, the company regularly had to deal with the declarations of conformity customary within this industry. They continuously received demands from customers to sign generalized guarantees for the supplied labels.

Logo Etiketten rejected each of these requests, but as long ago as 2008 felt obliged

to investigate this topic more intensely. Since European legislation is increasingly focused on the role of packaging with regard to the question of food safety, Frank Neumann is convinced that this will sooner or later lead to a binding rule to prescribe the use of low-migration ink systems. To guarantee acceptable product safety with conventional inks, material and processes will by far exceed the technical capabilities regarding measurement procedures and control methods – as well as the chemical know-how – of most label and packaging printing plants.

FUTURE-PROOF SOLUTION

In 2008 Logo Etiketten started a strategic relationship with printing ink manufacturer Zeller+Gmelin, which already supplied the converter with water-based inks for special applications. In January 2010, the two companies embarked on an ambitious project with an investment in the high six-digit Euro range.

'The amount covers a very extensive complete package,' explains Frank Neumann. 'In the end, with this project we pursued several objectives at the same time. We wanted to convert the entire production to a low-migration operation and simultaneously implement the most resource-saving use of the printing inks and while increasing automation and standardization of the ink mixing process.'

This implied the construction entirely new premises fitted out with a new ink kitchen – including an ink mixing unit with 14 stations from Fluid Solutions – the implementation of X-Rite's Ink Formulation ink management solution and a print-proofing system with UV dryer.

Frank Neumann explains the decision to take the radical step to change over the entire production at the same time.

Running both standard printing inks and low-migration inks on the same press is not a realistic solution, Neumann believes. Even with extremely thorough and time-consuming cleaning, contamination of the low-migration production is difficult to avoid.

On the other hand, the use of a single printing press as an exclusive production line for low-migration orders was out of the question for Logo Etiketten due to the technical set-up of the presses. The web widths and configurations of the individual press lines are coordinated with the order structure in such a way that a concentration of the jobs with low-migration inks on one or two presses was not realistic. The logical consequence was the decision in favor of a complete conversion.

ONE CONVERSION, TWO OBJECTIVES

One project which had already been considered at Logo Etiketten was the changeover from PMS (Pantone Matching System) to a future-oriented concept like the mono-pigmented ink system of Zeller+Gmelin. Since a complete reformulation of all color shades by means of a spectrophotometer and PC was required due to the conversion to low-migration inks anyway, all this could be completed in one go.

'Nevertheless, we had a healthy respect for this decision. After all, we wanted to turn inside-out the heart of our printing plant at two positions at the same time,' admits Frank Neumann. 'We were well aware that with such a complex project it is not possible to remove all obstacles beforehand. But we were reluctant to shoulder the effort for the adaption of the approximately 4,000 to 5,000 formulations twice.'

In retrospect, the transition period of about six months which started in May 2010 with the start-up of the new ink mixing unit went virtually according to plan, even though from time to time unforeseeable obstacles had to be overcome. 'Here, the close collaboration with Zeller+Gmelin played a decisive role,' recalls production manager Michael Jagiella. 'The support in terms of employee training and preparation of formulations was very effective and competent.'

However, for the ink manufacturer this project also proved a challenge. While in the beginning the development of the low-migration inks concentrated on their application in the food sector, the low-migration ink system now had to be made ready in a short period of time to meet Logo Etiketten's requirements across its whole area of operation.

Only with specialities, for example special effect inks, special varnishes and laminating adhesives, was there a need for further development. In the opinion of Ulrich Höfler who as area sales manager for Southern Germany was in charge of the introduction of the new ink system at Logo Etiketten, the work was worth the effort: 'As a result, the low-migration ink system is highly developed with regard to properties like reactivity and ink adhesion so that now label printing plants can use it for their entire production.'

AUTOMATED MIXING

Another key objective for Frank Neumann was increase automation and standardization of the ink mixing process. At Logo Etiketten responsibility for implementing problem-free processing of the low-migration and mono-pigmented inks in the plant lay with two experienced printers with very deep color evaluation experience, working across two shifts.

An important feature was SQ database compatibility so that the dosing system could be directly controlled via the X-Rite Ink-Formulation software. The system is further integrated into the production data acquisition system. This allows the required quantity of individual color shades to be calculated by the system ready for repeat orders.

In addition, the ink manufacturer suggested equipping the plant with an agitator in each container or – like with the Fluid Solutions mixing system – with a recirculation system. This was to ensure that even when mixing inks with different viscosities a more consistent mix could be consistently produced. The mixing system also allowed Logo Etikettenis to reduce the volume of ink residues.

Overall, around 25 percent of the overall cost savings achieved by the converter are attributable to the ink mixing facility, and it has become a key plank in strengthening the company's sustainability profile.

Neumann believes that it is just a matter of time before EU legislation enforces the change to low-migration ink systems, so he remains convinced he made the correct strategic move.

MICHAEL JAGIELLA (left), production manager at Gundlach-Logo, and Ulrich Höfler, sales area manager for Southern Germany at Zeller+Gmelin, at the ink supply unit

FRANK NEUMANN, managing director of Logo Etiketten GmbH, in the warehouse. Most labels converted by the company are supplied to the food and beverage sectors

PROOF PRINT SYSTEM for UV-flexo printing

MARCEL BRITSCHGI, production manager print/process control at tesa Bandfix measuring color in the press room

BANDFIX

Labels for food packaging are a growing business for Swiss converter Bandfix AG, so when the time came to invest in ink mixing technology – supplied by Füll Systembau – the opportunity was taken to move to a Zeller+Gmelin's low migration ink system. The goal of Bandfix management was to standardize the production of special flexo colors from a base of mono-pigmented inks. Key questions posed to Zeller + Gmelin included the color gamut which can be covered by four-color printing – particularly where low migration inks are used – and the adhesion and curing properties of low migration inks.

Repro company COE Carl Ostermann Erben supplied the plates for print tests and performed the colorimetric evaluation as the new system was implemented.

According to Marcel Britschgi, production manager print/process control at tesa Bandfix, converting to a mono-pigmented basic ink system has increased brilliance and color intensity and reduced the amount of ink required. A reduced ink film thickness minimizes the risk of drying problems.

Since the installation of the ink mixing system in May 2010, nearly all special color shades for flexo printing have been mixed in-house at Bandfix with low-migration and mono-pigmented basic inks. About 370 mixes have been reformulated in the past two and a half years.

"Since the installation of the ink mixing system, nearly all special color shades for flexo printing have been mixed in-house at Bandfix with low-migration and mono-pigmented basic inks"

The new mixing system has proven particularly helpful where branded goods manufacturers require a color tolerance card to validate a number of inks used on their labels. After reading the individual colors and the substrate with a spectrophotometer, the software – Ink Formulation from X-Rite – generates a recipe proposal which is mixed and printed. In 70 percent of cases the color shade is already within the tolerance range. For the rest, one correction was generally sufficient.

TIME SAVING

At Bandfix two employees are responsible for ink mixing – one each for the early and late shift. For the second shift, the system automatically recalls the corresponding formulation from memory and mixes the required ink quantity when an allotted ink number is entered.

The mixing system has generated noteable time savings. Previously, around 30 minutes were required for the manual mixing of an ink – and considerably more for new and difficult color shades. Based on the 370 color shades which today are already stored with their formulations, the company has achieved an average saving

EACH MIXED INK is provided with an information label containing important data, for instance anilox roller specification

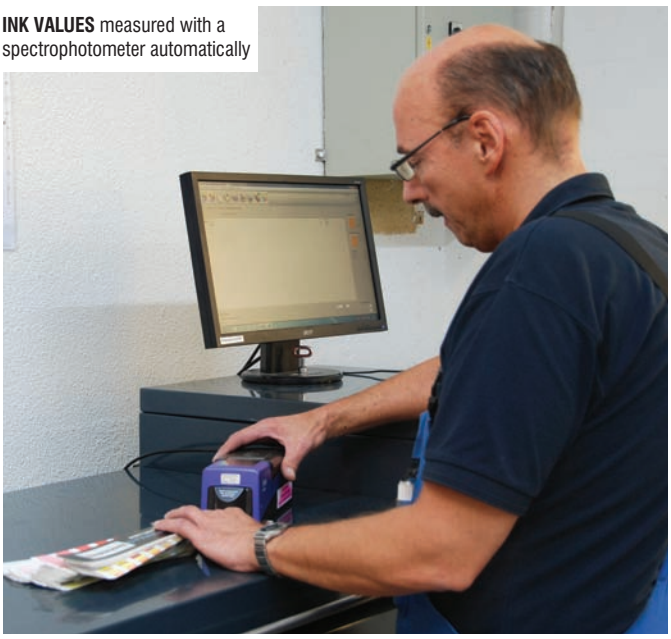
INNOVATION AT BANDFIX

Until July 2012 tesa Bandfix AG (155 employees) was a 100 percent subsidiary of tesa SE in Hamburg/Germany. The company sold the business, including self adhesive labels and labeling equipment to Palero Invest with its head office in Luxembourg. The product range of the new Bandfix AG covers labels for product decoration, promotional products for on-pack applications and functional and safety labels including resealing, tamper evidence and track and trace.

The company's in-house development department is concerned with the design of product specialities. Examples include mirror labels for a striking metallic look, two-face labels for 3D-effects with transparent packing containers or peel&pin promotional labels. For this latter innovation, the company received an award at the SwissStar competition 2011.

The key market segments which Bandfix supplies are cosmetics and body care, food and beverages, chemical-technical products as well as logistics and identification labels. A total of 12 printing presses are used for production, three of which are Nilpeter MO-3300s combining offset, flexo, screen and gravure units. The remaining presses are from Gallus. The latest installation is a nine-color Gallus EM 510S flexo press.

MARCEL BRITSCHGI (left), production manager print/process control at tesa Bandfix, and Andreas Rascher, head of product management printing inks at Zeller+Gmelin



INK VALUES measured with a spectrophotometer automatically

of at least 15 minutes for each mixing process. In addition, the proportion of residual ink decreased significantly.

The mixing system has also helped to improve quality. The high precision of volumetric dosing provides for a repeatability which cannot be achieved by manual mixing. The positive effect for print production is that the color shade is always the same from one print run to the next.

Z+G provided intense technical support including colorimetry and linking the software to the dispensing system.

LOW MIGRATION PRESS

Bandfix has permanently reserved a nine-color Gallus EM 510 S flexo press for low migration printing, and already some 40 percent of all flexo production uses low migration inks. Conventional ink systems are utilised almost exclusively for offset printing, which is widely used for orders from the cosmetics industry.

However, enquiries are now being received even from this market segment for low migration inks, and the first labels have now been converted. Marcel Britschgi assumes that the trend to low-migration inks will continue in the future across all ink systems.

Internally, Bandfix has taken this subject seriously and tried to build a low migration mentality into its employees. For example, every job ticket now includes information about the use of low-migration inks.

Marcel Britschgi reports that the Zeller+Gmelin low migration inks and laminating adhesives have performed well on press, with the print properties largely corresponding to standard inks. 'However, 100 percent identical features can hardly be reached in practice,' says Andreas Rascher, head of product management Printing Inks at Zeller+Gmelin.

'There are basic differences between low-migration and conventional inks which cannot be eliminated in the short term. A significant factor, for example, is the reduced variety of available raw materials, especially regarding pigments or photoinitiators. Nevertheless, it is always our goal to bring the properties of the low-migration ink series like viscosity, color shade and printability as close as possible to the customary properties of the comparable standard ink series.

In retrospect, for Marcel Britschgi it was the right decision to convert to low-migration and mono-pigmented mixing inks. Even though in the long run Bandfix will not be able to abandon conventional inks on labels for specific applications, the company will gradually expand the use of low-migration ink systems – 'at the latest, when other market segments like the cosmetics industry adopt the demands of the food industry.'

MIGRATION – A COMPLEX MATTER

In the label and packaging industry the subject of 'migration' repeatedly comes up at trade fairs and congresses as well as in the media. But although the debate on low-migration label production is welcome, there remains a great deal of uncertainty in many printing plants. Most company managers are not aware of the risks and expense that can result from a careless signature on a guarantee declaration if their label production process does not comply with the complex food law requirements.

In contrast, the printing plants which have already adapted in the exemplary manner of Bandfix and Logo Etiketten to the situation by converting to low-migration ink systems, are facing other economic challenges.

A look across national borders, says Marcus Ruckstädter, sales manager at Zeller+Gmelin, reveals a very different handling of the relevant regulations. Companies like Logo Etiketten are forced to compete with label printing plants from other countries with a more lax attitude to these legal requirements, giving these suppliers more leeway in their pricing. Especially with transnational transactions, this means an obvious distortion of competition. Tolerably fair conditions can only be expected when end customers or authorities demand to see evidence that a signed declaration represents a fully implemented system in practice. The use of a low-migration ink system would, among other things, be part of such a package of measures.

A major obstacle to the widespread introduction of low-migration inks is the considerably higher costs compared with standard UV inks. Label printing plants and ink manufacturers are not able to pass on the total extra costs in the supply chain due to the fact that while end customers are certainly interested in having their labels printed with low-migration inks, they will not accept higher prices.

There are several reasons for the higher expense of low migration ink production. The selection of raw materials is limited and they are considerably more expensive. At the same time, the research and development costs are higher. Zeller+Gmelin, for example, recently used about a third of its R&D capacity for the development and optimization of low-migration ink systems.

Manufacturing set up and production costs for these printing inks and varnishes is also considerably more expensive, which is why Zeller+Gmelin is currently investing in the expansion of low migration production facilities.

Currently, neither the manufacturer of low-migration ink systems, nor the label converters which use them, can make a purely economic justification, and both face the same strategic decision: Conversion to low-migration systems – yes or no? Since in the opinion of Logo Etiketten, Bandfix and Zeller+Gmelin there will be no alternative to low-migration inks in the future, all companies have set the course for a low-migration future.

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Finishing trends

BARRY HUNT examines the issues that are transforming converting and finishing

Like other converting and finishing processes, slitting/rewinding has undergone many changes in recent years. Not least in meeting end-users' demands for dust free, cleanly wound rolls with accurate label counts. After all, the performance of the roll on label application equipment is as equally important as print quality. By the same token, converters seek maximum flexibility and performance from their converting lines when handling variable-length runs produced on either conventional or digital presses.

Typifying these change is the way rotary or semi-rotary die-cutting has migrated from the conventional narrow-web press. It is now commonplace for converters to produce blank label rolls in a single-pass, complete with matrix stripping, on a slitter/rewinder fitted with single or twin die stations. Re-registration devices allow users to process pre-printed rolls. Installing one or more cutter/slitter rewinders allows users to process the output from multiple narrow-web presses, which now have the potential to run faster.

Several manufacturers now offer dedicated cutters with magnetic cylinders to take flexible die plates. 'The latest servo-controlled cutters allow faster speeds with good print-to-cut register,' says Kevin Goulay, business director for Rotoflex, which offers the DLI die-cutting platform. 'This method is also ideal for handling difficult die-cut jobs offline with improved control, while giving users more opportunities to control waste and improve overall quality.'

Other options include embossing/debossing, hot or cold foiling, flexo or inkjet overprinting, as well as laminating and varnishing. As seen later, total inspection of the printed web is widening its reach throughout the finishing world. However, the biggest single development is the gradual switch from traditional pneumatic clutches and mechanical brakes to electronically-controlled servo-drives. This reflects an increased interest in film-based packaging products, which has prompted a new breed of inspection slitter rewinders.

'Fitting servo drives on the unwind, rewind and roller nips achieves a form of closed-loop tension control. They ensure the smooth unwinding and rewinding of self-adhesive laminates and filmic materials, with fast changeovers between substrates,' says Tony Bell, sales director of ABG International. 'Lay-on rollers positioned after slitting can smooth out any air bubbles where film is concerned.'

The latest control technology is practically essential when processing difficult substrates, such as thin-gauge, unsupported packaging films and foils. These are becoming wider and thinner, so good tension control from unwind to rewind is essential, says Goulay: 'As materials get thinner the need for controlling the web becomes more important. An ability to control air entrapment and reduce side-to-side web movement, mostly caused by poor tension control, becomes more difficult. Servo technology gives the capability of providing good motion control and the capabilities of running at faster speeds without giving up control of the web.'

Fast changeovers are also important, says Daniel Carr, sales manager of Bar Graphics Machinery: 'Customers want to be able to switch easily from one job to the next with minimum waste and maximum accuracy no matter what the substrate. Enabling this to be done as quickly as possible is essential to ensuring they offer the most cost effective service to retain their clients and grow their business.' BGM recently introduced the Elite Multiflex inspection slitter/rewinder for handling a variety of paper, film and foil substrates as low as 11 microns at up to 300 m/min.

Servo-driven controls remove the necessity for operators to manually monitor the changing weight, mass and diameters of the unwind and rewind rolls to maintain the right web tension. Taper tension controls, fitted with transducer rollers to sense the torque on rolls, will automatically calculate these parameters and prevent 'web wander'. The result is precisely wound rolls, with the reduced risk of broken webs when stopping the machine at high speed to deal with faulty labels. While fine-tuning production, operators can access electronic counting sensors, and job data recording devices, with touch-screens permitting quick set-ups. Most usually include error displays, label length counts, and accurate batch counting.

THAT VISION THING

Recent developments in 100 percent web inspection lead some to suggest the technology has come of age. As usual, such observations lend more to cost of ownership than they do to improved technology, although the latest techniques to detect print errors and faults over the entire web are no less formidable. The fact is inspection is now firmly allied to slitting and rewinding, with lower-cost systems cementing this association.

One of the latest examples is ABG International's entry-level system designed to run with its servo-driven Omega HSR slitter/rewinder. Manufactured by its Flytec subsidiary, it costs around 17,500 euros (US$23,440). 'As a low cost system it is proving very popular among printers in Eastern Europe, especially in Poland and Russia,' says Tony Bell, sales director. 'They are demanding a higher level of sophistication from their inspection equipment to meet today's challenges. Their customers are getting much stricter with regards to non-readable barcodes and print errors and these can result in expensive fines.'

Les Bradley, managing director of LPP, makes a similar point. His company is the UK distributor for Nikka Research's inspection systems, and a distributor for the Polish-made Flexor inspection rewinders. 'Both offline and on-press inspection/verification systems, are attracting great interest now, partly because buyers are pressuring converters to give practically 100 percent guarantees relating to missing labels, accurate label counts and much else. That means usage has expanded beyond the usual pharmaceutical and security applications, although they remain the prime users.'

Ashe Converting Equipment has introduced lower cost inspection to a new Opal rewinder. It operates either as a stand-alone machine or as a fully reversible doctor rewind machine, with driven unwind and rewind. The camera maps faults, places them on the splice table, and provides the operator with images he or she can check, then accept or reject. The machine then ensures the fault has been corrected before winding on.

The question of whether to finish inline or offline takes on an added dimension when it comes to inspection. While it largely depends upon individual circumstances and commercial viability, web inspection is too complex a subject to take lightly. Many users end up with systems over-specified for their operation, while failing to distinguish the difference between inspection and verification.

In offline inspection, dealing with print errors typically involves a controlled deceleration of the rewinder. After stoppages the machine reverses to place the fault on an editing table while slitting and rewinding cease. An accumulator, or web buffer, feeds fault-free products for splicing by the operator. After resumption of processing, the fault is re-inspected to ensure error-free finishing. Some systems also include inkjet printers for encoding and numbering on the face or reverse of the web for traceability. Obviously this procedure slows the entire operation and may also introduce false defects, despite the safeguards in place.

On-press inspection allows operators to identify and correct errors in real time. Reducing waste at source should lead to fewer reprints, increased productivity and fewer quality issues. Not all defective material will be eliminated, which is why press operators insert flags into the rolls. The latest workflow links that close the loop to the rewinder can integrate fault placement tools in the form of electronic roll maps to flag-up areas of concern. Quality control personnel can then analyze them offline, distinguishing between the relevant and irrelevant defects. Ideally, from there on the entire finishing operation is more predictable and therefore more productive.

An early example was AVT's WorkFlow Link, first developed for Prati's PrintVision/Helios II rewinders. It automatically stores detected defects in a standard SQL database on PrintFlow computers then transfers them to an editing and sorting stage using PrintFlow Manager units. It directs edited defects to the suitably equipped slitter/rewinder which acts upon the roll report.

'The key issue in this link is to uniquely identify the rolls as they come off the press and proceed to finishing', says Brian Ivens, sales manager for US-based Prati Automation. 'It is important to maintain accurate length monitoring and positioning within each roll to ensure that all the areas

of concern are identified and dealt with properly. There still remains a cost/quality requirement justification process. However, waste reduction alone can often have enough of an effect to justify the high cost of on-press inspection even if a mechanical flagging system is used for finishing.'

TURRET REWINDERS

As many know, automatic inline turret rewinding is a practical way of producing small diameter rolls, such as price/weigh labels. Using standard rotary scissor slitting units, the machines create successive rolls of labels on multiple spindles with no slowing of press speed. The labels are wound on plastic or cardboard cores, with a specific number of labels per roll or a specified roll size, and delivered straight to the shipping carton. Printers need only print the quantity specified for each job. Webs are normally affixed to the core with hot-melt glue, although non-glue variants for the direct thermal market offer various methods to start the web to the core. Fugitive glues offer an alternative to ordinary glues to achieve the type of cleaner rolls that glueless systems offer.

Web inspection is not really suited for this level of work. In fact stopping the press to remove identified defects risk creating further errors; better to rewind the material and edit it. 'After turret rewinding, the web has already been slit into individual rolls and the rolls that do include defects must still be identified and edited if possible prior to shipment,' says Brian Ivans. 'The number of rows across the web and the size of the rewind rolls both determine the post-turret editing time. Of course another alternative is to have the finishing machine equipped with a turret rewind to improve throughput while still inspecting and doing fault correction.'

Offline operation using an automatic core loader is possible when running the turret rewinder with a stand-alone unwinder. This method increase the number of options, which on ABG's Vectra range also includes slitting and web inspection to pick up faults flagged up on the press.

THE DIGITAL INFLUENCE

While many of their functions can be found on narrow-web presses, dedicated servo-driven converting lines offer greater flexibility when producing label booklets, coupons and leaflet-labels. Examples include Prati's Vegaplus series, Focus Machinery's Reflex range, Longford International's customized lines, and Edale's Lamda series. Based on customizable modular units, such lines offer UV flexo overprinters, applicators for hot/cold foils, hologram or RFID tag inserters, delaminators/relaminators, coaters for hot melt adhesives, and much else.

Most digital press manufacturers tend to leave finishing systems to the experts. Which at the top-end include variations on converting lines adapted to finishing digitally-printed rolls. Exceptions include Durst, which supports its five-color Tau 330/200 series with the off-line Durst Rotoworx 330 finishing module with semi-rotary die-cutting. Its DIVA module is claimed as the only digital varnishing system for the narrow-web industry.

Typical digital converting lines with 700-mm diameter unwinds include automatic re-registering of webs to handle the overprinting and die-cutting of pre-printed webs for roll-to-roll or roll-to-sheet output. Functions may include servo-controlled semi-rotary die-cutters, matrix strippers, semi-rotary hot foil stamping, flexo flood coaters, slitting and sheeting. In some cases the lines can be run 'near-line' with a re-registration infeed rather than an unwinder. ABG's Standard Digicon Series 2 and Digicon Lite both offer this option to serve the latest HP Indigo web-fed presses. Grafisk Maskinfabrik's DC330-mini can also form an inline extension to a digital press. Inline finishing forms a key aspect of Nilpeter's hybrid Caslon line, which combines UV flexo printing with a five-color inkjet print engine. The Caslon module also runs as stand-alone unit with its own unwind/rewind. The d-Flex from Focus Machinery is a servo-driven hybrid with the usual inline finishing options.

Gallus developed the ECS C digital converting system from the ECS 340 UV flexo press so it shares the same industrial granite base. It is designed to simultaneously handle the output of one or two high-volume digital presses, and complements the Heidelberg Linoprint L inkjet press.

Resembling a conventional press line, Stork Prints' DSI 4330L differs from most by combining five inkjet print units with semi-rotary flexo varnishing, semi-rotary die-cutting and a slitting function. A variation on this end-to-end theme is EFI Jetrion's five-color 4900 series, but using dual-lasers from SEI Laser Converting for cutting and slitting instead of conventional tooling. The INX Evolve NW140 is another full-color inkjet press with inline laser cutting – using a Spartanics module – which again allows single set-ups for each job.

A natural affinity with digital printing has certainly boosted interest in laser technology. Most systems use OEM CO2 laser heads, so innovative software is one area of differentiation. Benefits include significant savings in set-up waste and labor costs, while opening up new types of markets. Laser cutters producing multiple-depth cutting and perforating, kiss-cutting, etching of OCR fonts, as well as one or two-dimensional barcodes and sequential numbering. They can handle most types of substrates, with the exception of aluminium foil and PVC films.

As with finishing equipment in general, various types of stand-alone configurations with re-registering systems are emerging. An example is A & M Kinzel's single-head, automatic roll-to-roll laser cutter that at the touch of a button converts into a semi-automatic sheet-fed machine. In this optional mode a sheet size up to 500mm x 800mm can be edited (cut). The maximum laser working area for roll-to-roll operation is 500mm x 500mm. The combination machine includes an automatic waste rewind, plus slitting unit with a second rewind spindle. Delta Industrial now offers laser slitting as option on the new Spectrum II slitter/rewinder as an alternative to score-cut and shear-cut slitter assemblies. Despite the higher initial cost, the company says lasers can cut changeover time and often represent the best cutting solution for challenging materials like abrasives.

By now it should be evident that label finishing and converting is veering off into all sorts of directions. By utilizing the latest process technologies, such systems give users some valuable flexibility and increased productivity. The level of innovation on offer can act as a potent point of differentiation for users. You could say the post-press processes are no longer the poor relations of the printing world.

LASER CUTTERS: FIVE THINGS TO CONSIDER

by Mike Bacon, vice president of sales and marketing for Spartanics

1. Many laser technology providers purchase laser hardware from the same manufacturers. The difference in capabilities is primarily the software developed to control the laser beam. Algorithms formulated specifically for increased speed and laser control are a key part of the laser cutting process.

2. The spot size (laser beam circumference) is a major factor in the cut quality of a laser cutting system. The ideal spot size for many label stock materials is between 180 – 210 microns.

3. The cutting speed for any laser system directly correlates to the throughput speed for that system. High speed laser cutting systems utilizing 400W lasers regularly cut up to 15,000 mm per second. However, throughput speeds for any given job depend on the size of the parts, width of the web and the material substrate.

4. Different materials require different laser energy settings. Paper and foils absorb more energy than polyester or polypropylene materials therefore requiring more laser power.

5. Laser converting systems may include slitting, rotary die cutting, varnish, lamination, and many other options for your finishing department.

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What's new in slitter rewinders

ASHE OPAL
inspection rewinder

ABG

AB Graphic International has seen demand for its Omega HSR servo driven slitter rewinder for film converting increase significantly, particularly in Eastern Europe with several installation in Russia and orders received for a number of machines in Poland. 'We currently have five HSR machines with twin rewind systems being built on the shop floor, all fully servo driven and specified for film converting,' says sales director, Tony Bell. 'The demand for HSR equipped with 100% print face inspection is also increasing and our new entry level low cost system is proving very popular.'

Available in web widths of 330mm. 430mm and 530mm, the HSR is equipped for 800mm unwind and 600mm rewind diameters. It runs at speeds up to 300m/min. Standard features include electronic web guide with ultrasonic sensor for opaque and clear substrates, scissor knife slitting, auto knife throw off, taper tension, choice of rewind mandrels from 25mm to 75mm. Options include Flytec 100% print face camera inspection, missing label detection, flag and splice detection, crush or razor knife slitting, rotary die cutting, bulk waste rewinder and motorised reel lifting.

ASHE

Ashe has embarked on a program to increase the intelligence of its Opal rewinding machines to allow 'no settings required' operation. For example when the reel core sizes are changed on automatic machines there is a long and skilled routine of changes and test runs to achieve perfect rolls. The Ashe philosophy is to do this with no changes other than entering the core size. The machine will automatically set itself to the required parameters and positions.

Ashe has also developed a low cost 100% inspection system capable of operating either as a standalone machine or a normal rewinder using the technologies found in the Opal rewinder range.

ATLAS

Film converter Bak Ambalaj AS., based in Izmir, Turkey, is among the first Atlas Titan customers to install the new Titan SR9-DT (Dual Turret) slitter rewinder launched in 2011.

Bak Ambalaj's annual converting capacity exceeds 750 million sqm a year, across a wide spectrum of plastic films and includes pre-press preparation, gravure & flexo printing processes, lamination, micro-perforation, stretch & shrink sleeves and stand-up pouches for a wide range of food and non-food applications.

Explained Enver Bakioglu, chairman of Bak Ambalaj. 'Our high volume production runs need a fast, high performance slitter rewinder and the new Titan SR9-DT turret rewinder was perfect for our requirements. At up to 1,000 m/min and minimum stop time between runs, it has far exceeded our expectations and we will be installing two more of these Titan machines – one in the first half and one in the second half of 2013.'

The Titan SR9-DT now in production at Bak Ambalaj is a 1650mm wide machine with automatic knife positioning, servo core positioning and an automatic electronic slit reel unloading system.

The Titan SR9 Series is built from separate machine modules of unwind, slitter and rewind sections, which enables the converter to easily upgrade the machine specification.

BAR GRAPHIC Multiflex

BAR GRAPHIC

Bar Graphic's latest BGM Elite Multiflex servo-driven multiple substrate inspection slitter rewinder operates at speeds up to 300 m/min and slits and finishes a wide range of filmic substrates down to 11 microns, including specialist films and plastics to foils, papers and standard self-adhesive materials. Touchscreen operation enables fast start ups and changeovers and diagnostics.

CATBRIDGE

Catbridge has created an in-house slitting and rewinding lab at its Parsippany, NJ facility. This lab will enable converters to test new slitter designs and technologies and trial their specific materials.

The slitting and rewinding lab features two of the company's most recent and productive slitter rewinders. One is a the high-speed Model 900 duplex center winder with a 32" rewind diameter and broad capabilities to handle materials including labelstock, primary films, flexible packaging, and tapes. The other is the 324FP single-shaft turret winder.

CEI INSPECTION REWINDER
at Syracuse Label

CEI

Converting Equipment International (CEI) now claims the ability to run 1/2" cores up to 6" cores without requiring any gear ratio modifications – particularly important where the need is for an inside/outside wind. The machines incorporate slip differential rewind shafts, barcode scanner for job recall including information on last run speeds and tensions.

Among specialist CEI systems are those dedicated to ECL (Extended Content Label) production for the pharma market. These machines are designed with minimal wraps and larger diameter rollers to avoid any premature label ejection or misplacement. CEI also has the capability to integrate inkjet printers for front or backside numbering.

DELTA

The second generation of Delta Industrial's Spectrum finishing system (Spectrum II) offers the ability to slit, sheet and/or rewind in-line. Score cut slitters are assemblies used in place of the upper roll in a die station to cut the web in the direction of web travel. Pneumatically loaded score cut knives are mounted on a bar, which is bolted between the blocks and fits in the die station slot. The knives are movable along the mounting bar and can cut narrow lanes.

Another option is a shear cut slitter which provides clean, precise cuts on flexible materials. It features two matched, engraved tools – a die and anvil, with offset blades that use a scissor action to slit a web. It also provides the longest blade life. High quality tool steel is used several options are available depending on the application.

Laser slitting offers a tool-free method for slitting many webs. Despite the higher initial cost, lasers can cut changeover time and often represent the best cutting solution for challenging materials like abrasives.

DI ROSSI

The company's latest slitting unit can be fitted to any rotary press and is designed for full cut, half cut (tear openings) and pre-cut applications. The system incorporates micrometric adjustments of the knife-holder slides and anti blade break systems.

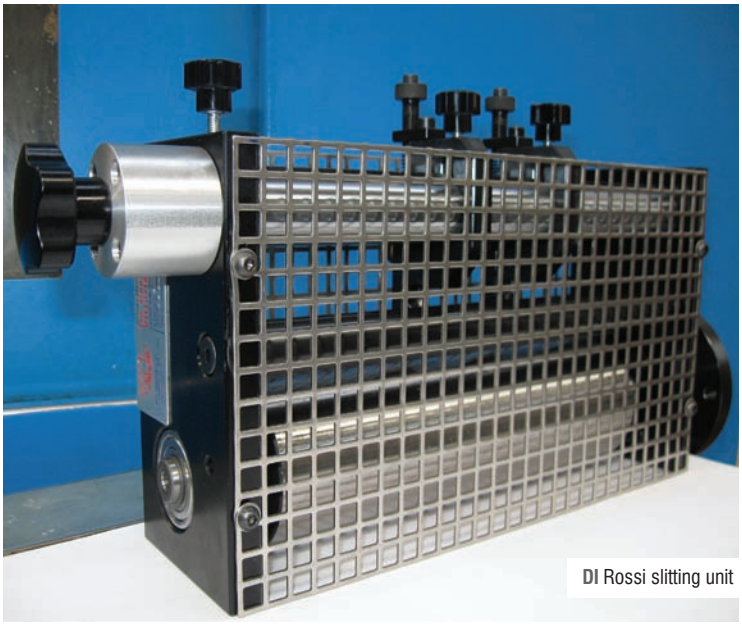
The device cuts from the silicone side, which, says di Rossi leale the residual web stronger and allows an increase in machine speed.

DPR

DPR has developed a new longitudinal slitter able to split a roll of labels up to 8.5" wide and up 10" outer diameter. This device can be used off-line or on-line with the label press. Also new is a reel-to-reel machine for larger label rolls, allowing easy interchange of core holders and reversible working direction.

DELTA industrial spectrum 2

DPR reel-to-reel system



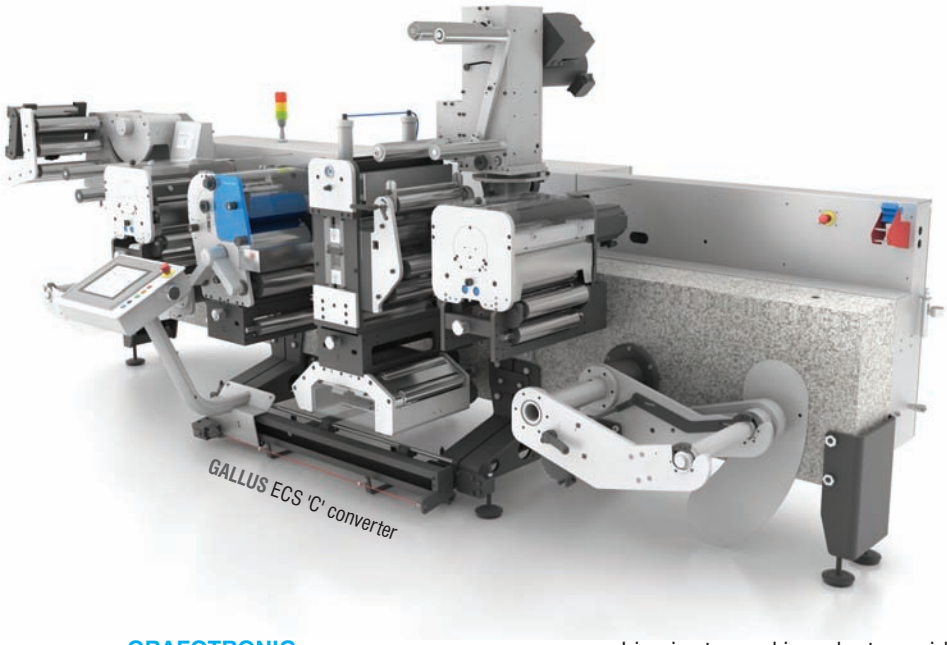
DI Rossi slitting unit

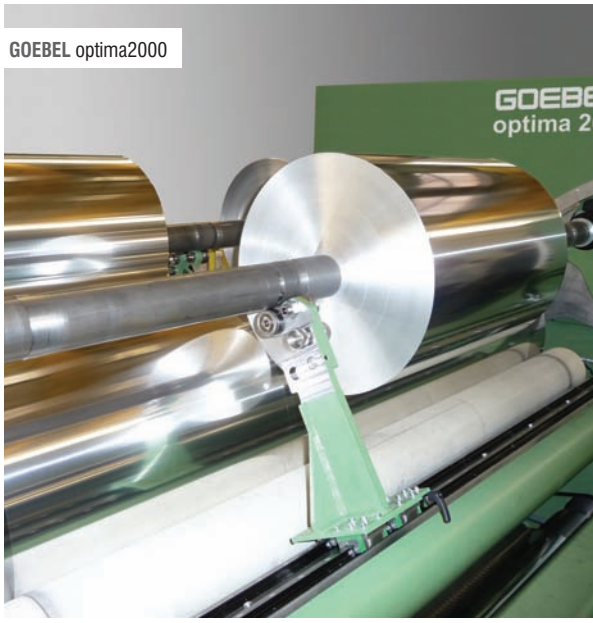
GALLUS

The Gallus ECS C digital converting system incorporates a format-free die-cutter. Minimal changeover times and virtually waste-free job changes are made possible by front loading, a sleeve system, chambered doctor blade, presetting and an extremely short web path. The design is based on the ECS340 technical granite base. The modular structure makes possible a wide range of configurations from the compact version consisting of a die-cutter and flexographic printing unit to a multicolour configuration with finishing processes.

GOEBEL

The Goebel Optima 2000 is the widest slitter rewinder built by the company, capable of handling materials with a thickness range from 9-50 microns with an outer diameter width up to 2,100mm. This required development of a specially modified independent unwind unit with a maximum load capacity up to 14.5 tonnes. The rewind section is designed for a maximum load of 1.7 tonnesThe interchangeable slitting section is designed to minimize the deformation of the back side cutting edge of very thin and sensitive aluminum foils. Within minutes the shear cutting unit can be replaced by a razor blade cutting unit, especially advantageous for very thin webs.


GALLUS ECS 'C' converter



GOEBEL optima2000

GRAFOTRONIC

Grafotronic's R-Series is a horizontal machine system with integrated UV inkjet printing and re-inspection. The compact machine has a servo buffer.

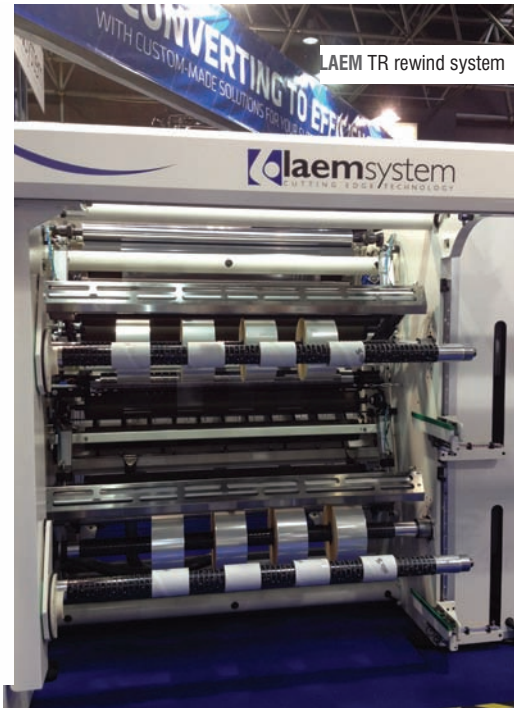
After the last label in the sequence is printed and dried, the web moves back and is positioned with a tolerance of 0.20 mm both in the length- and cross direction. Printed material will always pass under the UV dryer before the machine is stopped in order to avoid wet ink on the web.

The company's Grafotronic CF – Series is a compact new machine (2.5 m) for finishing digitally printed jobs. The machine is equipped as standard with a UV-varnishing unit, servo semi-rotary die cutting, split version slitting unit and servo rewinding of large rolls. The semi-rotary unit also has a rotary mode for production of high volumes of blank labels. Features like laminating and cold foil are options available.

KARVILLE

Karlville Development has introduced two new models in its KSI slitter rewinder series to cover the mid-web market, the KSI 650 and the KSI 1000. The 650 mm wide KSI ProCombi and 1m-wide KSI 1000 slitter-rewinder operate at speeds up to 400 m/min, and incorporate fully

KARLVILLE KSI-450



LAEM TR rewind system

automatic closed loop tension control, and dual bi-directional rewinds. Both KSI models are fitted with programmable logic controller and a touch screen interface operating systems including label counting, multi-lane missing label detection, tag detection, and matrix waste calculations.

KMEC

Kmec has introduced a servo driven two-spindle turret rewinder with a web width up to 20in (507mm) and roll diameter up to 32in (812mm). Transfer speed is up to 750fpm (225m/min) and core size 3in and 6in. The system features automatic transfer to new cores at linear count or roll diameter at line speed. Features include an integrated dancer, taper or linear winding tension, interchangeable pneumatic spindles, roll eject assist and touch screen control with multiple job recipe storage.

LABELTECH

The Labeltech IT350/450 slitter rewinder series is now equipped with a new '2-in-1' slitting system which makes changing between rotary and razor cartridge slitters quicker and easier.

It is now possible to mount and adjust the slitters on and off line, and the removal/insertion of the slitting module will not break the web. Another feature is button-activated slit activation/deactivation on line during rewinding.

A calculation tool integrated in the machine software makes slitter positioning much simpler.

Labeltech has also updated its matrix rewinder. The unit is now fully electronic and can be controlled and set up directly from the touch screen, switching between the matrix rewinder/waste rewinder function in just one touch. A more advanced diagnostics system has also been developed.

LAEM

The new TR series from Laem System is designed around an 'S'-wrap draw roller for a wider wrap angle, which works with the nip roller to ensure stable and precise handling of the web material at high speeds.

When processing delicate materials, like cold-seal laminates, or adhesive materials for labels, the S-wrap pulls the material without the nip roller, protecting the web.

The slitting stations, with assisted or fully automatic positioning, can be equipped with a special lubrication device that keeps the blades clean, while rollers can be covered with anti glue rubber, or plasma coated. The short web path from the slitting to the rewinding group – where a movable carriage moves back while the rewinding diameter increases – gives a high level of rewinding tension control.

Laem System offers also complete handling systems of finished reels, with anthropomorphic robots, conveyor belts, palletisation and automatic storage systems.

MARTIN AUTOMATIC

Martin Automatic has upgraded its LRD automatic unwinder to accommodate roll diameters up to 800mm as standard, with larger diameter models available on request. A touch-screen display allows operators to store and recall the winding parameters of repeat jobs.

The optional inline slitter package is now enhanced to offer lateral adjustment of the slitter and anvil roller assembly for quicker set-up,

LRD with articulating arm

ABG Omega HS servo driven slitter rewinder

fine-tuning and change-over between jobs, and the latest LRD offloads finished rolls automatically via one of several standard doffing ramp designs for full width, multiple ribbon or loosely-wound rolls. If the product rolls are small, or require special handling, an optional articulating arm automatically delivers finished rolls through the front of the unit for easy removal.

PRATI

Prati is to launch two new finishing systems at Labelexpo Brussels in September – a glue-less turret rewinder, and semi-automatic dual turret rewinds for the Jupiter and Saturn machine systems.

The glue-less turret rewinder can be connected in-line to any printing press where an inspection phase is not required – notably for plain labels or commodity labels that require only slitting, counting and rewinding.

Glue-less operation is achieved by a cradle which helps the slit label lanes wrap around the cores. After the machine senses that all the lanes are wrapped around cores, it releases the cradle and starts rewinding. The rewinder shaft then rotates to the upper position to complete the rewinding process until the final count is achieved.

Semi-automatic dual turret rewinds will now be options for the established Jupiter and Saturn inspection rewinders. The attachment of the slit lanes on the cores can be either automatic or manual. In auto mode the operator makes ready the cores with double-side adhesive tape. During rewinding, the operator extracts the rewound rolls and prepares the new cores on the shaft.

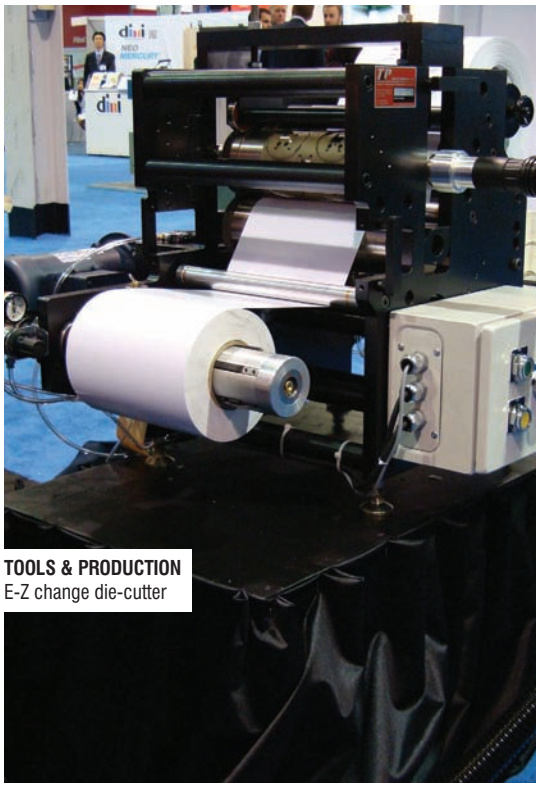
After label count is reached, a pneumatic nipping roll clamps the web and a guillotine blade makes the transversal cut automatically, followed by automatic roll ejection.

ROTOFLEX

Developed specially for film applications, the redesigned Rotoflex VLI is driven by Rotoflex' new eDrive 2.0 web handling system, claimed to deliver increased production speeds and better tension management.

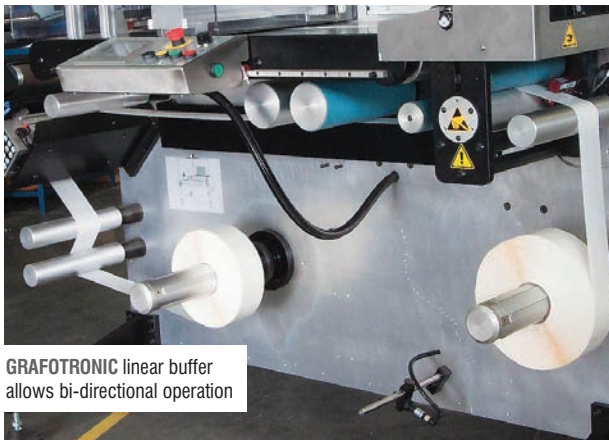
To aid operator ergonomics, the new VLI incorporates a large 15 inch (381mm) monitor with tactile controls positioned for easy access. The lower working height of the machine offers more comfortable viewing of the web, splicing and slitting, resulting in faster edits and job setup. Integrated dashboards with tool pockets ensure key controls and tools are well within reach.

The new web path of the VLI improves access to the web, allowing fault placement in multiple locations and maximizing setup and changeover



TOOLS & PRODUCTION
E-Z change die-cutter

TITAN SR9-DT dual turret rewinder



GRAFOTRONIC linear buffer allows bi-directional operation

efficiency. Most configurations now come standard with a convenient mounting location for popular 100% inspection systems. The VLI is available in widths up to 28 inches (718mm) and powered by Genesis, the Rotoflex advanced control system.

SOMA

Soma Engineering has upgraded its Pluto III slitter rewinder with automatic knife positioning to reduce greatly job setting times.

Automatic knife positioning allows operators to set ten knives accurately in 80 seconds. The exact position of each knife is stored in a file menu in the main Touch Screen control panel. Operators can recall repeat jobs at the touch of a button and the slitter automatically configures the correct running parameters and positions the knives in their precise locations. Blades positioning is through fast clamping grooved segments and is set automatically without manual adjustment. The upper blade holders are set manually on laser holding rods with the help of the blade positioning assistant. These all work in combination with the automatic laser core positioning system that enables the operator to re-load new cores quickly and accurately minimising set-up time and eliminating re-starts, due to incorrect alignment.

TOOLS & PRODUCTION

Tools & Production introduced its E-Z Change Die Cutter at the 2012 Labelexpo Show in Chicago. This compact die cutting machine can take unprinted rolls of material up to 10" wide and convert them through a die cutting process and rewind/slit or sheet at the end of the machine. Running speeds are approximately 100 fpm.

Offset advantage for Brazilian wine label converter

BRAZILIAN CONVERTER DEGRAFICA IMPRESSOS, a pioneer in offset label printing in the country's southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul, has installed the first Codimag Viva 420 Aniflo press in Latin America. James Quirk reports

Brazilian converter Degrafica Impressos continued a long-standing policy of differentiation in its local market when it installed Latin America's first Viva 420 Aniflo offset press from French manufacturer Codimag.

In the 18 months since the installation, the company, founded in 1984 by current owner Decio Demoliner, has won new business from food and liquor brands as well as boosting production in its core area of wine label printing.

Demoliner is a keen advocate of differentiating his business from the competition. This philosophy has been present throughout the company's history: it was a key factor in its very foundation, as well as its moves first into sheetfed and then – with Codimag – rollfed offset label printing. And it is present again as the company prepares to receive in May an advanced finishing machine from Europe, in what will again be the first technology of its kind in Brazil's southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul.

RIO GRANDE DO SUL

Brazil's size means business in the country is often regionalized. Sao Paulo, the country's industrial heartland, is 500 miles to the north. But far from being a provincial backwater, Rio Grande do Sul – which borders Uruguay and Argentina – is one of Brazil's most prosperous states and home to nearly 11 million people. It boasts important industrial centers as well as a rich cultural heritage from its European immigrants, who arrived in their tens of thousands from Italy and Germany during the 1800s and early 1900s.

This cultural heritage extends to wine production. While Brazil's international reputation for viticulture lags some way behind South America's more famous names, a low per capita consumption – less than two liters compared to Argentina's 26 – is offset by a population of nearly 200 million.

There are around 400 wineries in Brazil, the vast majority located in Rio Grande do Sul – largely in the cooler, hilly interior of Serra Gaucha where conditions are most apt for grape cultivation. The part of the country furthest from the equator, its latitude is only slightly higher than that of Mendoza, Argentina's famous wine region.

In Flores da Cunha alone, where Degrafica Impressos is located, there are 140 vineyards. Unsurprisingly, wine labels are the converter's core business, making up 60 percent of production. And it is here that the Viva 420 Aniflo – complemented by a Codimag Viva 340 installed in 2006 – is making particular gains.

Degrafica Impressos spent its early years printing envelopes and business cards on a 1-color Heidelberg letterpress. Founder Decio Demoliner, who had been working in a glass bottle manufacturer in Flores da Cunha, had spotted a lack of local print shops in the area.

In the late 1980s it moved into offset printing with a 1-color Heidelberg Cylinder press. Initially producing folders, it soon became the first company in the area to print sheetfed offset labels for the burgeoning local wine market. Three more Heidelberg offset presses followed, of one, two and four colors respectively, and wine labels became the company's core business. Two Heidelberg hot stamping machines, the first of their kind in Rio Grande do Sul, were also installed. Fifty percent of Degrafica's label production is printed by sheetfed offset to this day.

In 2006 Demoliner saw an opportunity to cater to the increasing number of higher quality vineyards in the region.

THE Viva 420 Aniflo is one of two Codimag offset presses run by Degrafica Impressos

'Traditionally,' he says, 'Brazilians do not drink high quality wine. There are some good whites and *espumantes* [sparkling whites], but the reds are not as good as in Chile or Argentina.' But with quality improving and local consumption rising, some vineyards were turning to label suppliers in Sao Paulo for higher quality printing and a wider range of decoration.

Degrafica's Heidelberg sheetfed offset presses had sufficiently catered to the demands of low- and mid-range wines. But Demoliner wanted to move into self-adhesive label production, while remaining with the offset process with which the company was familiar. 'Offset offers a more sophisticated printing process,' he says.

After meeting Codimag (see boxout), Degrafica installed a Codimag Viva 340 Waterless offset press – the first in Rio Grande do Sul and only the second in Brazil. In 2011 it returned to the French manufacturer for the first Viva 420 Aniflo in Latin America.

'We are a pioneer in offset printing in Rio Grande do Sul,' says Demoliner. 'The first company with semi-rotary and rotary offset in the region.'

VIVA 420 ANIFLO

The servo-driven Viva 420 Aniflo combines the advantages of intermittent-feed technology with the productivity of rotary presses. It has five offset and two flexo units – all with individual curing stations – as well as automatic register and hot stamping, online inspection, UV varnishing, die-cutting capabilities.

With a 420mm web width, a 19in print cylinder base and speeds up to 12,000 impressions an hour in semi-rotary mode, it brings increased productivity compared to Degrafica's first Codimag press, at 340mm.

A key aspect of the machine is its Aniflo inking system. Aniflo is an anilox offset printing unit that can eliminate production variables. As the ink volume is distributed by an anilox roller, it provides perfect control over the ink volume and density, without the need to adjust ink keys. As the Aniflo does not use a relief plate and prints using a rubber blanket, dot gain is not related to the print pressure.

The two Codimag presses now represent 50 percent of production output, and are mainly dedicated to higher quality wine label jobs. The increased productivity of the Viva 420 Aniflo has enabled Degrafica Impressos to successfully tackle longer runs. While wine labels have remained the core business, new clients have been added from the food and liquor industries, and some production also goes to the cosmetics and pharmaceutical sectors.

'The second press has brought us increased capacity and productivity, and allows us to cater to both long and short run work,' comments Demoliner. 'Everything can be achieved in just one pass, which is a big advantage.'

Demoliner describes his core client base as small to mid-range companies. All label production is sold locally, but some clients do export the labeled goods. He is reluctant to give production figures, preferring to focus on profitability – 'which is much more relevant'. Degrafica has carved a deliberate niche for itself as the best-equipped offset label converter in Rio Grande do Sul, and is not interested in trying to compete with the likes of CCL

CODIMAG IN LATIN AMERICA

Pierre Panel, export sales manager at Codimag, believes Latin America is an area of potential growth for the French press manufacturer. With five machines installed in the region – traditionally dominated by flexo printing – Panel says there is increasing interest in offset printing from local converters.

'The interest in offset is there,' he says. 'It takes courage to do things differently. The label market in the region has been focused on flexo for many years, and now the message is orientated towards digital and customers are listening. They understand that the one-technology print shop is a thing of the past. Offset is definitely an option. They need to respond to different markets. The important thing is to have a clear idea about the strengths and weaknesses of each process.

'The region's converters are knowledgeable about print technologies. They know offset. Runs in Latin America are often short, so our technology is easily justified. We offer the Aniflo technology as a bridge between digital and flexo. Aniflo is offset-quality but the cost per job is lower than flexo, because of plate costs and process stability, and lower than digital because of click charges or offline finishing.

'Though Codimag presses are aimed at the niche market of high-end labels, we are seeing offset entering the more traditional prime label markets such as food or industrial. It is hard to justify plate costs for short runs in flexo; offset can offer a cost-effective alternative with very high quality.'

Technical support in Brazil is offered by Coras, which also has an office in Argentina. While Coras follows up with clients and deals with the logistical operations of spare part delivery and technician visits, Panel emphasizes the importance of direct contact with customers. 'It allows us to give a quick and accurate response,' he says, 'and we have support staff who can speak Portuguese.'

He describes how Codimag first met Degrafica Impressos when it was still a sheetfed converter. 'They were keen to move into self-adhesive and were convinced that offset was the right choice. But the process of moving to rollfed presses with inline finishing is a big challenge. Codimag has accompanied a number of projects of this kind, and many questions have to be raised. Inline or offline finishing? Inspection equipment or inline slitting rewinding? What about pre-press?

'Degrafica travelled to Europe, ran some trials and toured various converters to see the press in action. The decision was made at Labelexpo Europe 2006 in Brussels.'

and Baumgarten.

Demoliner admits it took time for the company to feel completely confident with the first Codimag press. 'Learning a new process – in this case waterless offset – is difficult,' he says. A Codimag technician spent a month with the company after the installation. Technical support is also offered by Coras, the press manufacturer's agent in Brazil. But Demoliner reports that the machines are responsive and easy to use. As well as remote monitoring from France, Codimag has four Portuguese speakers among its staff. 'It's a great advantage. I can just ring them up, no problem,' he says.

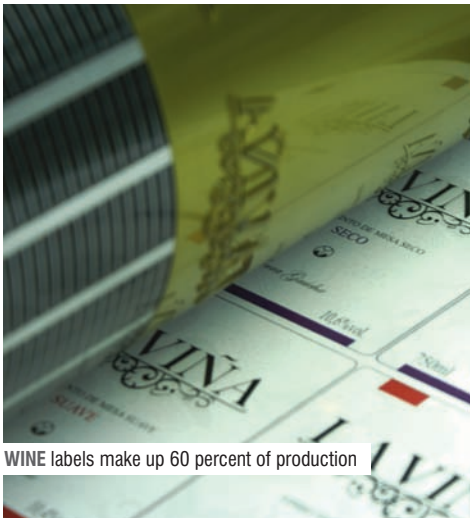
The Codimag presses are complemented by a CTP system from Agfa and water wash plate equipment from Toray. Degrafica's 1,600 square meter factory also houses three rewinders from Brazilian manufacturer Vemax and one manufactured in-house.

The ecological benefits of offset printing – and particularly of Codimag's waterless offset technology – also appealed to Degrafica Impressos, which has been certified to graphics association SINGRAF's 'A Greener Tomorrow' (Amanha Mais Verde) program and holds weekly meetings to fine tune its waste reduction.

The machine's high levels of automation, 100 percent reproducibility and the elimination of production variables by the Aniflo system means that wastage is significantly reduced. The solventless Toray plate system brings its own environmental benefits, while local companies pick up, treat and dispose of different types of waste.

Demoliner reports that there is increasing government pressure when it comes to environmental sustainability. 'If you want to get a loan from the bank, for example, you have to prove you are carrying out certain environmental initiatives. But pressure also comes from us, within the company – it's an important subject.'

Three other member of the Demoliner family can be found among the company's 30 staff. Decio's wife Silvana is purchasing manager; his son Diogo is financial manager; and his brother Juliano recently



WINE labels make up 60 percent of production

OWNER and general manager Decio Demoliner founded the company in 1984

joined the sales department. 'Once we've left the company for the day, we don't talk about work. It's a strict rule,' says Demoliner, whose great-grandfather immigrated to Brazil from Italy in the 1800s.

Digital technology is cited as an area for potential future investment, but Degrafica Impressos is to further differentiate itself with the upcoming installation of an advanced finishing system from a European supplier which will be the first machine of its kind in Rio Grande do Sul and only the second in Brazil.

DEGRAFICA Impressos won a 2012 Fernando Pini award for this label for Santa Colina Cabernet Sauvignon

DEGRAFICA TRIUMPHS AGAIN AT FERNANDO PINI AWARDS

Degrafica Impressos was a winner at the Fernando Pini Awards for the fifth consecutive year at a ceremony held in Sao Paulo in November 2012. Organized by associations ABTG and ABIGRAF, the awards are the highest accolade for the printing industry in Brazil. 'When a prospective client hears we have won these awards, the questions stop,' says Decio Demoliner. 'They immediately know that we are able to achieve a certain level of quality.'

Following wins in 2008 and 2011 and two in each of 2009 and 2010, Degrafica took the 2012 award in the self-adhesive labels without special effects category for a label produced for Santa Colina Cabernet Sauvignon wine. The converter has won awards for both its sheetfed and rollfed work.

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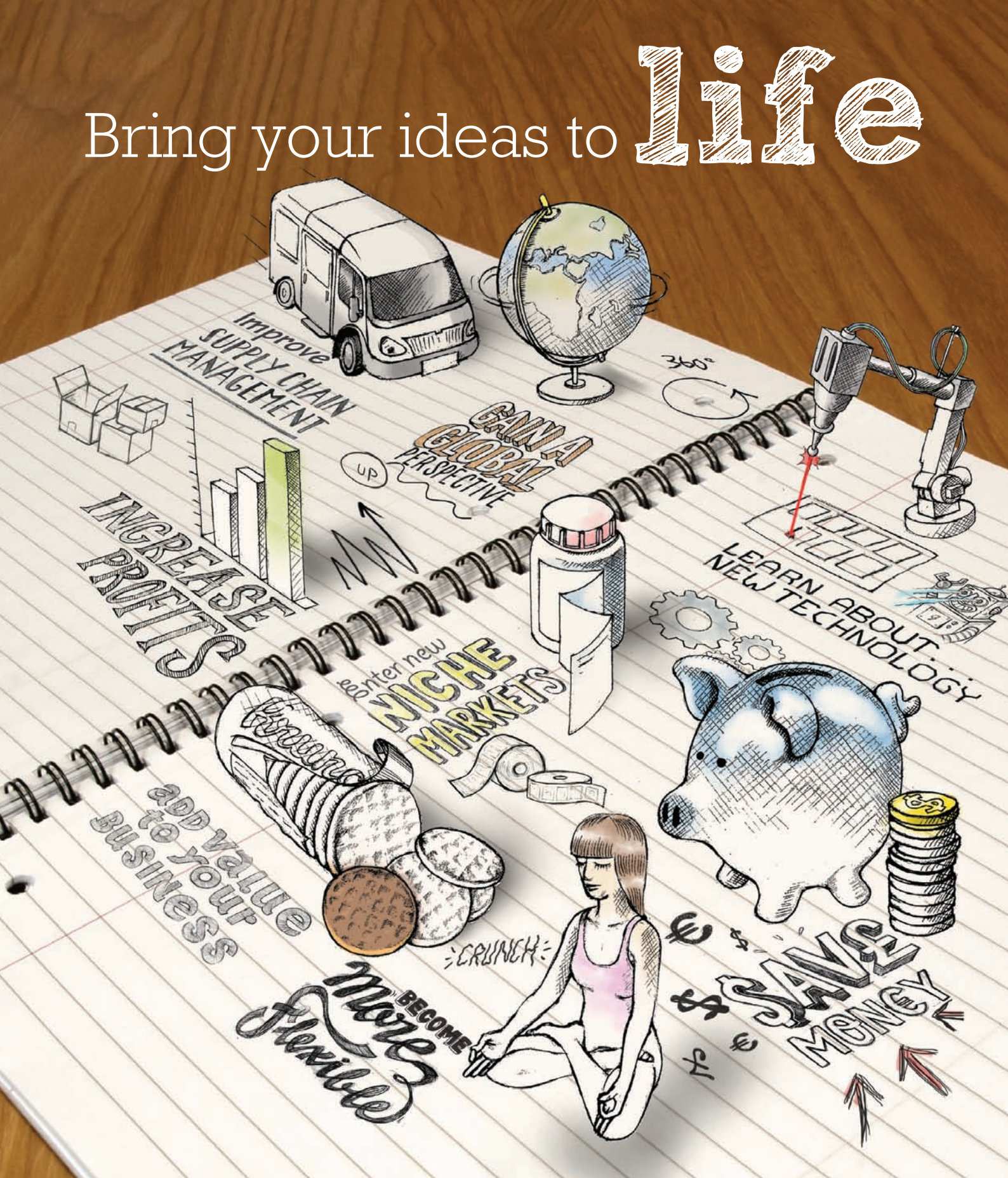

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Analysts paint positive picture

PRINTING INDUSTRY experts and economic analysts are optimistic about growth in Latin America, as James Quirk reports

Following AWA's positive study of growth in the South American label markets (see L&L issue 5 2012), a number of other analysts are painting similarly optimistic pictures both of progression in the region's label and packaging sectors and in its economy as a whole.

A recent study produced by the Graphics of the Americas Expo & Conference (GOA) forecasts a positive state for the print industry in Latin America in 2013. Based on statistics reported by the IMF, the study reveals that the Latin America printing industry remained positive for most of the last decade, with a projected growth of 4 percent in 2013. The projected GDP in 2013 for Latin America and the Caribbean is 3.9 percent.

National economies that are driving the growth include (projected) Mexico (3.5 percent); Brazil (4 percent); Chile (4.4 percent); Colombia (4.4 percent); Peru (5.8 percent); and Panama (7.5 percent).

The GOA study finds that 'the most dynamic sectors of the Latin American printing industry have modernized technologically, and have maintained a significant investment capacity despite fluctuations in growth in the last ten years'. According to the study, the packaging segment has the best outlook within the printing industry.

Another survey, published by Conversión magazine in late 2012, shows sustained regional growth in all three major categories: flexible packaging, labels and folding cartons. The magazine surveyed 145 label converters from 16 Latin American countries. The majority of respondents came from Argentina (11 percent), Chile (14), Colombia (25) and Mexico (22).

Sixty-three percent of the surveyed converters reported increased sales in the first quarter of 2012 compared to the same period during the previous year. Seventy-two percent said sales had risen by more than 6 percent; 47 percent quoted a growth of 6-15 percent; while 12 percent saw a sales growth of more than 20 percent.

Thirty-two percent said profitability had increased in their local industry; 12 percent saw an increase in exports; and 26 percent said they were receiving higher prices for their products than the year before.

Forty-nine percent have increased their production; 57 percent are consuming more materials than in the previous year.

Fifty-six percent cited investment in new equipment as being among their principle growth strategies for 2012, and 40 percent said they intended to go after value-added work in niche markets.

Reuters Breakingviews columnist Raul Gallegos, meanwhile, believes that Latin America can rely on its burgeoning middle class for the next phase of its economic growth.

With some 50 million people estimated by the World Bank to have been lifted out of poverty in the last ten years, the region can count on an army of comparatively new consumers.

Despite modest GDP growth in Brazil, says Gallegos, consumers have been resilient. According to trade group Abrasce, sales at shopping centers may top $58 billion in 2012, the seventh consecutive annual increase, while a record 48 malls are expected to open in 2013.

Meanwhile Mexico, the region's second largest economy, at USD $1.2 trillion, is now the world's biggest soft-drink consumer. Wal-Mart is growing twice as fast there as in the United States.

Though inflation remains a threat and the region isn't immune from slower growth in other parts of the world, says Gallegos, 'the underlying trends suggest a coming spark for foreign investment and local markets'.

LATIN AMERICA ROUND UP

GIDUE'S Latin America distribution network now includes six companies based throughout the region

THE KARLVILLE Prolabel 350 inspection slitter rewinder

GIDUE APPOINTS FOUR LATIN AMERICAN DISTRIBUTORS

Italian press manufacturer Gidue has added to its Latin American distribution and technical support network in Argentina (AGH) and Brazil (Gutenberg) with the addition of four new distributors: Sun Digital to cover Mexico and Central America; RTA Digital to take care of Venezuela and the Caribbean; Quimica Anderson to work in Peru and Ecuador; and Novaflex in Colombia. Gidue will now aim to grow these distributors into 'service points' for local converters.

Alberto Prietro, director of Sun Digital Latin America, commented: 'Sun Digital LA is very proud to be the exclusive distributor of Gidue in Central America. As the leading technology-solutions provider in those regions, we are committed to satisfy our customers' needs with top solutions.'

Diego Guzman, Quimica Anderson's sale director, said: 'The Peruvian market is growing and the forecast for next year is growth of nearly 40 percent. Our customers are enthusiastic about Gidue's presses and we ourselves feel much more confident and strong since we became Gidue's partner.'

Owner of Novaflex Jorge Lagos Caballero said: 'We have been the representative of Gidue for several years and we discovered a well-structured company with a high focus on innovation. We are offering to our market the best possible product, together with an excellent service and extraordinary commercial support.'

Reiner Gomez, RTA digital's director, added: 'We are very satisfied with our collaboration with Gidue, we cooperate as a strong team and the outcome is incredibly positive, both for our profit and for our customers' expectations.'

Adriano Melis, Gidue area manager for Latin America, will work closely with all these companies. 'We are very happy with the immediate acceptance of our products and our team by Latin American converters,' said Melis. 'Every visit shows new applications, interesting projects and a flourishing industry. It is easy to cooperate and this is the best way to give birth to innovative projects.'

MACK COLOR INSTALLS KARLVILLE REWINDER

Brazilian converter Mack Color, based in Sao Paulo, has installed a Karlville Prolabel 350 inspection slitter rewinder for pressure-sensitive rolls with PET liner.

Mack Color sees a trend towards PET liner usage within the food, chemical, pharmaceutical and cosmetics sectors.

'The KSI-Prolabel 350 is a very productive and high performance machine, developed with a Servomotor system that allows for easier operation. The slitter inspection works with multiple types of substrates,' said the company.

EFI APPOINTS INKJET SALES MANAGER IN BRAZIL

EFI has appointed Marcelo Maeda as sales manager for the company's inkjet line in Brazil. He will work alongside Alphaprint, EFI's distributor in the country, in promoting the company's industrial printers for wide format applications, as well as consumables such as inks and spare parts.

Maeda will also handle EFI's Jetrion line of UV inkjet printers for the label market. Working in the printing industry since 1995, Maeda has sales management experience for Kodak, Epson and Océ.

BRAZIL PACKAGING PRODUCTION TO GROW TWO PERCENT

Packaging production in Brazil is set to grow by two percent in 2013 compared to last year, according to a study carried out by the Getúlio Vargas Foundation (FGV) and published by Abre, the Brazilian Packaging Association.

Manufacturers' revenue will be around 48 billion Reais (USD 24.3 bn) this year, compared to 46,1 billion Reais (USD 23.3 bn) last year. The study says that production will rise by 2.5 percent in the first half of the year; for the second semester, projections vary from just over zero up to 1.5 percent. The annual forecast is for growth of between 1.5 percent and 2 percent.

KBA SUCCESS IN MEXICO

Packaging printers have helped press manufacturer Koenig & Bauer (KBA) hit the ground running in Mexico through its newest subsidiary in Latin America, KBA Latina SAPI de CV.

Based in Mexico City, KBA Latina has 47 printing units in its order book for the first business year, with the country's package printers contributing to this total thanks to their investment in the Rapida platform.

KBA described Latin America as an important emerging market, and said KBA Latina's performance in Mexico has made it the market leader in terms of installations, including two seven-color large format Rapida 145 presses which have already been delivered and a forthcoming medium format Rapida 105. Mexican packaging printers that have invested in KBA presses through KBA Latina include Graphic Packaging/Altivity in Queretaro, Smurfit Kappa in Mexico City and Aluprint in San Luis Potosi.

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CORPORATE CULTURE

Where management practices are obstacles to change

Every organization must adapt to change whether they like it or not. Customers, competition and technology compel organizations to adjust. The success and speed of change is dependent upon several key factors that are closely associated with leadership.

However, institutionalized management practices and structures can create formidable obstacles to internal change and can prevent organizations from taking advantage of short windows of opportunity. These obstacles present a challenge to all managers.

In most organizations individuals are taught to manage not by leading but by controlling and directing. Within these organizational cultures, this style of management is often equated with leadership. This key fallacy often prevents organizations from effecting change and taking advantage of afforded opportunities.

Management is a precise set of processes that keeps a complicated system of people, resources and technology running smoothly and, hopefully, without problems. These processes include functions such as planning, budgeting, organizing and controlling. Yet management as leadership goes well beyond these activities to include the set of processes that initially creates an organization and allows it to adapt to a variety of changing circumstances.

It is important for managers to understand the difference between the two processes. Leadership is what defines the future for the organization, aligns people with a vision and motivates them to carry on despite the obstacles. Transforming an organization in the face of change requires a majority of leadership skills and a minority of controlling and directing skills. While management in the traditional sense was required to build and staff the large corporate organizations of the past, leadership is what is required to transform them in the face of change for the future.

The key factors of change within any organization are all leadership-based. In the past, management was essential to internally build and maintain large organizations and bureaucracies. While such management is still important, organizations faced with rapidly changing technologies, markets and competition must focus their efforts externally to effectively handle change and take advantage of the subsequent opportunities. This external focus is part of leadership.

The reasons behind this strategy are self-evident. Internally-focused managers and employees tend to be myopic in their thinking, which makes it difficult for them to identify the external forces presenting both threats and opportunities to the organization. Insular thinking is designed to protect internal bureaucracies and political power bases; thus, it denies the existence of the forces of change that are buffeting the organization.

Since they disregard the forces of change, these managers are highly resistant to alterations and build walls within the organization. These barriers are difficult for managers as leaders to overcome. Before they can emerge to challenge these internal barriers, they must understand how the key factors of leadership compare with the traditional management structure, and how the two vary in style and approach to change.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Excerpt from Timothy F. Bednarz, Ph.D, Facilitating Change: Pinpoint Leadership Skill Development Training Series (Majorium Business Press, Stevens Point, WI 2011) $ 17.95 USD

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