

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS

L&L FOUNDER MIKE FAIRLEY CHARTS THE HISTORY
OF THE LABEL INDUSTRY'S LEADING MAGAZINE

L&L

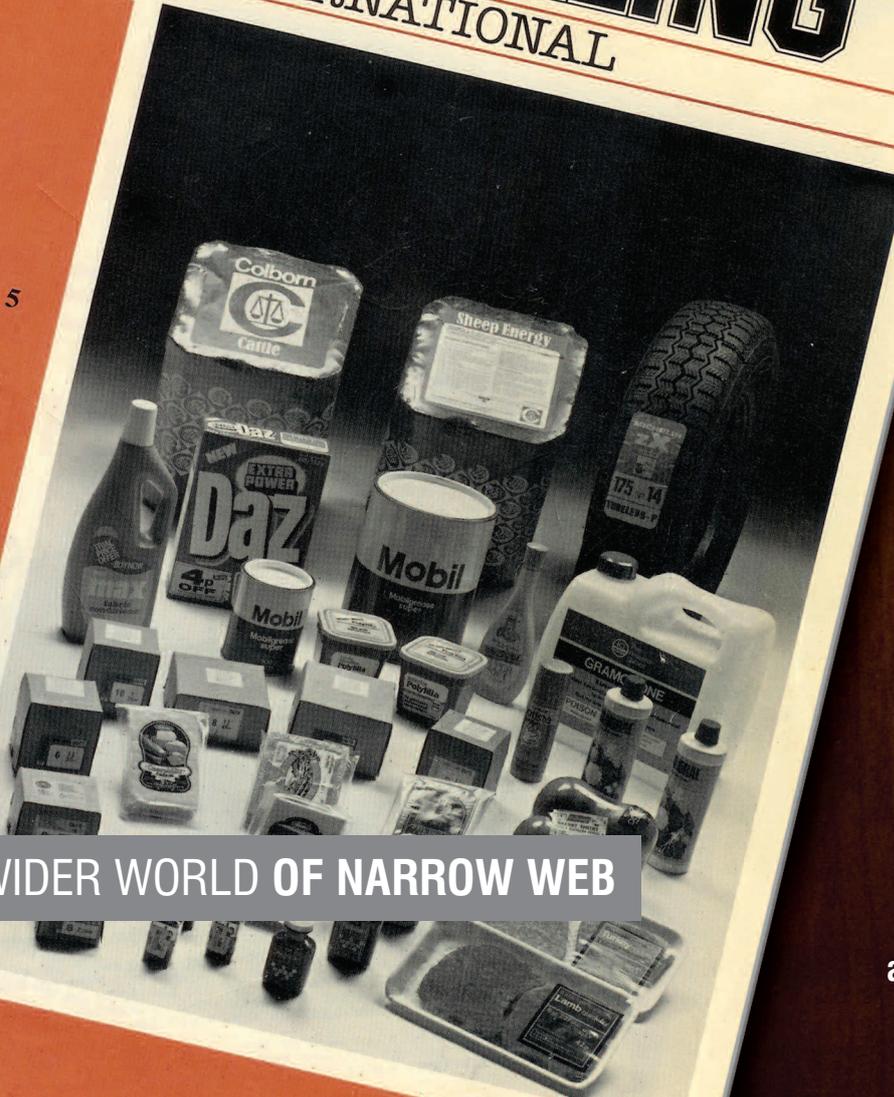
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LABELS & LABELLING INTERNATIONAL

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CONVERTER PROFILES:

Skanem UK, Borble,
S&K Label

TECHNOLOGY FOCUS:

dies, stamping foils,
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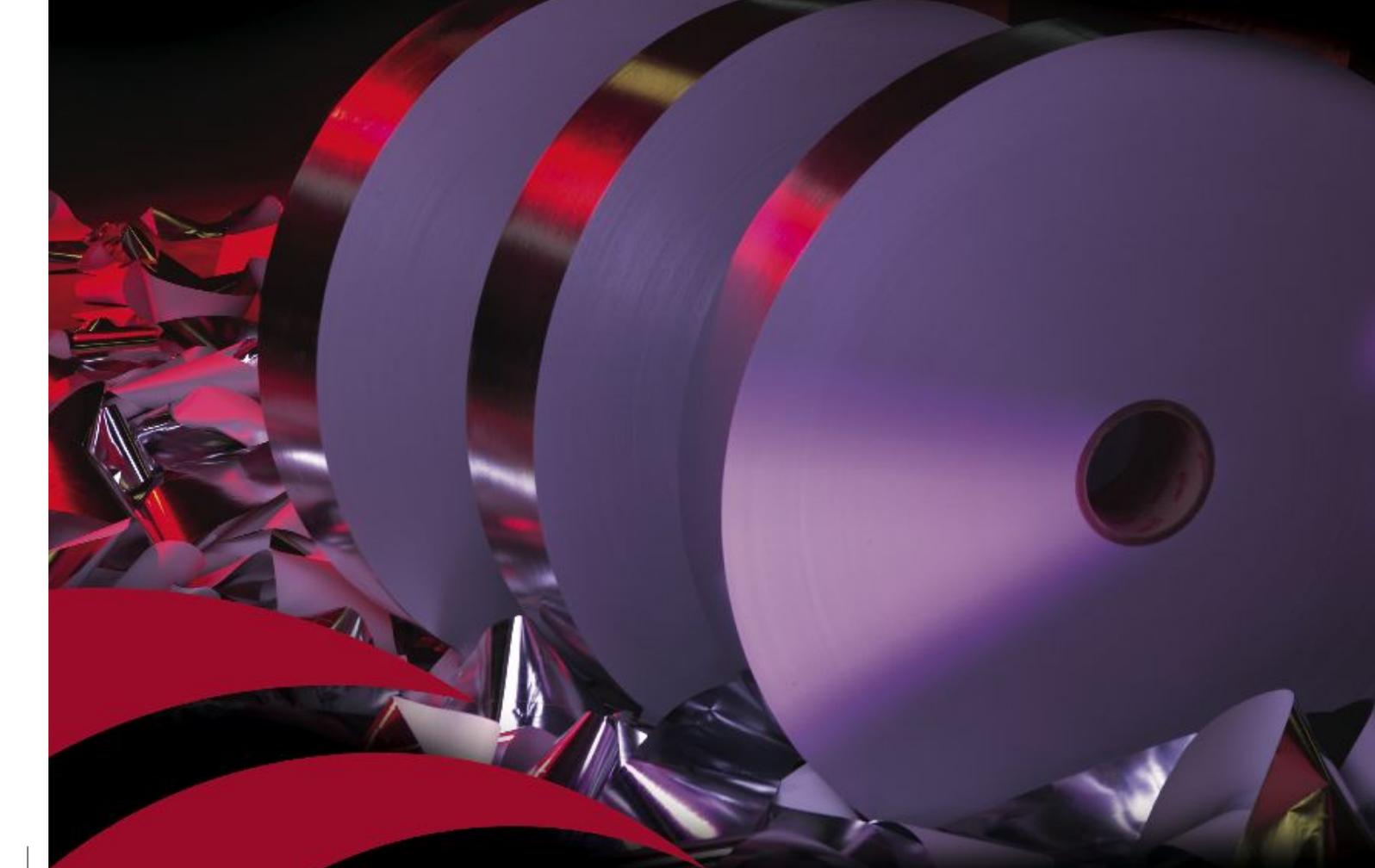
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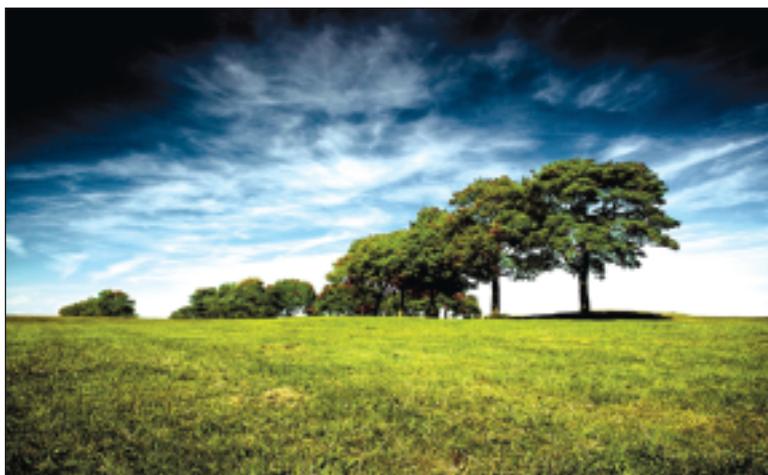
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CONFLICTING RESULTS

In the last two issues of L&L we have reported on two life cycle analyses (LCAs) looking at the same products, but which show completely different results. It's not often that you get such a perfect snapshot of how difficult it is to achieve an objective view of the environmental credentials of a product.

The studies concluded respectively that solvent-based processing is more environment friendly than thermal processing – and that thermal processing is more environmentally benign than solvent.

What is happening here? Both studies were carried out by respected independent institutes, and there is no reason to suspect that they were told in advance what to report.

The problem is that different initial assumptions were made in both cases. Neither is necessary 'right' or 'wrong' – each is valid using its own set of assumptions.

At a time when label converters are being asked to present rigorous environmental assessments of all their operations – carbon footprints, 'sustainability' and so on – it is not helpful to find industry suppliers presenting such contradictory analyses.

No doubt we would see the same results if we asked these two institutes to assess the environmental footprint of competitive ink systems (solvent vs waterbased vs UV), or film vs paper substrates, based on different sets of assumptions.

What we need is a clearly defined and agreed list of metrics which our industry will use to measure environmental performance. But this is at a time when our major global trade associations seem to be going their own ways in defining sets of environmental standards. My colleague Mike Fairley, who founded this magazine 30 years ago (see the historical article in this issue), made a plea for the industry to develop common, global environmental standards at the FINAT congress in Paris last summer. The conflicting LCAs demonstrate just why such a global initiative is essential.

ANDY THOMAS

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L&L EDITORIAL

L&L

ISSUE 6

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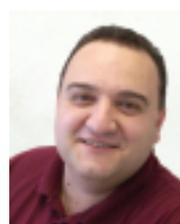
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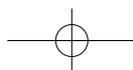
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INBOX

On environmental sustainability

There's no doubt in my mind that the 'green' initiative is (at least among our particular customer base) much more of an opportunity than a threat. The challenge we're encountering – and it's an incredibly frustrating one – is in finding suitable materials that actually address the sustainability issue in a practical way. We've already proven that many of our customers will actually pay more for an eco-friendly label (within reason), so it's not a matter of 'whether' any more. However, we simply can't find a reliable and complimentary stream of components (liners, adhesives, substrates, laminates) that don't compound the problem rather than offer a real solution. Hence, we're stuck with 'token' gestures in the hope that anything is better than nothing.

In short, we are (and always have been) committed to addressing this whole issue – but haven't seen much in the way of useful progress from the major material manufacturers.

Steve Smith, Lightning Labels, USA

It is very interesting to read that in Europe environmental concern is really coming from the printers' side. From our experience in Latin America, there are few companies looking for green suppliers; in fact the big chance to discuss this issue is at start-up facilities with new equipment installations.

I would like to say is very difficult to find 'ears' and serious interest from the printers for changing the way they run. We are very committed with eco-friendly developments for the printing industry, but we find the commitment from the printers is not enough as they prefer to be guided by the enormous marketing budgets of multinationals in the industry. For example, one simple and fast move to going green is changing the solvent plate processing, where not only there are many eco solutions in water washable flexo plates, cheaper and more productive than the solvent solution widely in use worldwide.

Esteban Cambiasso, Leftech, Argentina

This brings me to the subject of filmic label and packaging films that do not use oil-based polymers. As many readers will know, the most common form of these substrate use biodegradable polylactic acid (PLA) resins derived from corn starch. They have been available for several years, but industry acceptance appears to be patchy. This is probably because of the need to balance their higher price with sustainability and functionality within a basically conservative industry. The price equation may change, but are there other factors also at play here? They may relate to printability and on-press performance, also availability within the supply chain?

In respect of market penetration, it seems that PLA films are ideal for shrink sleeve applications. This is because sleeve grades are stable at high temperatures and require only low temperatures in the shrink tunnel. I understand that Plastic Suppliers, a shrink film specialist from Columbus, Ohio, was a pioneer in this respect. It offers EarthFirst, a PLA shrink film, with biopolymer resins supplied by NatureWorks. A different approach to PLA comes from UK-based Innovia Films. Its NatureFlex label facestock films are based on renewable wood pulp, said to be sourced from managed plantations, which either have or are working towards FSC, PEFC or similar certification.

Again, these and the other non-oil film grades seem to press all the environmental buttons. It might be instructional to hear some unbiased comment about the role of these materials in the wider, greener world, if only to gauge the industry's environmentally-friendly credentials..

Barry Hunt, Labels & Labeling

KEEP IN TOUCH

Do you have a comment or question you'd like to put to the editor or the industry as a whole? Would you like to respond to any of the comments on this page? We will publish letters/emails to the editor as well as comments posted on our blogs. Join the debate at www.labelsandlabeling.com/blog.



ON Labelexpo AMERICAS

I want to raise a point about the lack of Latin American suppliers exhibiting at Labelexpo Americas.

The continued growth of Labelexpo Europe is partly fuelled by increasing numbers of exhibitors from the developing markets of Asia and Eastern Europe. While Labelexpo Americas is not as international an event as its European counterpart, there was an increase in Asian suppliers from the event two years ago. Latin American suppliers, however, were conspicuous by their absence.

Labelexpo Americas attracts a significant, and rising, number of visiting converters from Latin America. There were record numbers of press sales during the show to companies from the region. There has been a recent increase of presence in Latin America from international suppliers such as Nilpeter, Gidue, MPS and UPM Raflatac – while Avery Dennison and Ritrama have opened facilities in Chile.

Clearly, the appetite among the region's converters for quality equipment is in no doubt. Top printers have long bought machinery from the US and Europe, and are increasingly competing with companies from these regions. So why are Latin American suppliers not doing the same? The developing markets of Asia, India and Eastern Europe are producing label industry suppliers which are competing at international trade shows; Latin America, it seems, is not.

Are there really no suppliers from the region who believe that they can compete on the international stage? Is the problem a lack of engineering expertise, or are they priced out of attendance at these events?

Brazilian press manufacturer Etirama, a regular Labelexpo exhibitor, may well have had a stand but for its new partnership with MPS to manufacture a new line of machines at its facility outside Sao Paulo.

But given the great strides being made by Latin American label converters, it is surprising that more local suppliers aren't matching them.

James Quirk, Labels & Labeling

NEWS

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST
AAGLOBAL LABEL STORIES

KO-PACK NETWORK REBORN AS NEW PRESIDENT APPOINTED

The companies which manufactured and distributed Ko-Pack presses have been brought more closely together with the appointment of Hideya Suzuki as president of both KPG Corporation (Japan) and Toyokoki Company Limited. Toyokoki manufactured Ko-Pack's rotary presses for over 20 years and since 2006, specialist presses for KPG worldwide. Mr Suzuki is the former technical director of Ko-Pack International.

Suzuki's dual role will further strengthen the relationship between Toyokoki and KPG, which has an established global sales, technology and spare parts support service. As well as KPG Japan, the other main pillars are KPG Europe – also covering Eastern Europe, Scandinavia, India and South Africa – and KPG North and South America.

Toyokoki/KPG will continue to specialize in providing solutions for difficult and unusual printing/packaging applications. Recent examples have included an 18-color 270 Euroflex press for a Polish converter printing artificial food casings on highly extensible polyamide substrates, a line converting and packaging phone cards in-line, and RFID label conversion.

The company has also installed its first press in China through agent the Basch Group, at Tianjin Luzheng Printing Co Ltd.. The press is a highly specified KPG 250 B-Class rotary letterpress. It can be configured either as an 8-color letterpress plus a flexo varnish unit or to print 6-color letterpress on the surface and 2-color letterpress plus flexo varnish on the reverse side. The converting section is equipped with flatbed die cutting, laminating, sheet cutting and conveyor.

LABELXPO ASIA 2009

DATE CHANGE

The dates for Labelexpo Asia 2009 have changed. Asia's leading label show will now take place December 1-4 2009 at the Shanghai New International Expo Center (SNIEC), halls E1 and E2. The show has moved a week earlier to make use of the best halls at Shanghai's premier exhibition venue. Halls E1 and E2 are in a superior position, as they are adjacent to the main entrance.

LABELS & LABELING



ZHOU DONGYAN, manager of Omet's Chinese operations introduces (l-r) Antonio Bartesaghi, operations manager, Paolo Grasso, area sales manager, Alfonso Melesi, technical manager and Stefano Bona, China controller

OMET SHOWS FIRST CHINESE-BUILT FLEXY

ITALIAN press manufacturer presents new machine at open house

At an open house held in Shanghai, Omet presented its first press wholly assembled at the company's 4,000 square meter plant in Suzhou, China. The Flexy press on display was an 8-color, 330mm wide, shaft-driven machine.

'Omet's strategy is to invest into the Asian market – especially China,' said (Joe) Zhou Dongyan, manager of Omet's Chinese operations. 'This market is very important and has the potential to produce high quality machines.'

The Chinese-built Flexy press can be specified in any size configuration, with options including screen, foiling and gravure units. In an attempt to keep costs down for this market, Omet is, where possible, using local suppliers of ancillary

equipment such as UV lamps, corona treatment and video inspection equipment. Some press components, including gears, are also being manufactured locally. 'This certainly makes local technical support easier,' comments Omet's international sales manager Paolo Grasso. 'Other press components will be manufactured here as soon as the quality is good enough.'

Omet will not build servo-drive Flexy 'S' machines in China, says Grasso: 'We do not need servos to print with stability and we have printed down to 20 micron PE on a Flexy, so we do not see this as an issue.'

Grasso says Omet plans to export locally-built Flexy presses outside China: 'Step by step we will move to export to SE Asia and India in the next 1-2 years.'

MARK ANDY ACQUIRED BY MAI HOLDINGS

Mark Andy has been acquired by newly formed MAI Holdings, held by American Industrial Partners Capital Fund IV, L.P. ('AIP'). Finalized on October 8, 2008, the acquisition is part of a planned strategy to strengthen Mark Andy's position and foster continued growth in printing machine manufacturing.

The management and operational structure of Mark Andy will not change. The impact of this transition will be transparent to the company's customers and market.

Paul Brauss, CEO, said: 'Growing aftermarket business and new demand in emerging markets such as India, China and Eastern Europe will continue to drive progress at Mark Andy. We look forward to working with the American Industrial Partners team, and have chartered a powerful future plan and agenda focused on developing new technology, expanding our customer support and aftermarket, and synergistic acquisitions. The Mark Andy team is very pleased to be part of the ownership group.'



TLMI ANNOUNCES CONVERTER AND SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR

TOP prizes awarded to Multi-Color and Multi-Plastics

At the recent annual meeting of the Tag and Label Manufacturers Institute (TLMI) held in Palm Beach, Florida, Frank Gerace, president and CEO of Multi-Color Corporation, was named TLMI Converter of the Year. TLMI also awarded Cheryl Caudill, corporate communications and graphics market manager for Multi-Plastics, as Supplier of the Year.

Before joining Multi-Color in 1998, Gerace (above center) spent 20 years working for consumer packaged goods companies. Since arriving at the helm of Multi-Color, the company has recognized ten consecutive years of 20 percent compound annual growth rates.

Gerace started with Multi-Color Corporation in 1998 as vice president of operations. After turning Multi-Color around operationally, he was promoted to president and appointed to the company's board of directors in May of 1999. Several months later, he was promoted to chief executive officer. Over the years, Gerace has made a series of strategic acquisitions expanding Multi-Color's presence and expertise in the in-mold labeling sector. Multi-Color's portfolio also includes pressure sensitive, shrink, tamper-evident bands, heat transfer labels, glue-applied, peel-able labels, scratch-off coupons and shelf tags.

Cheryl Caudill (bottom right) has been involved in the narrow web industry for more than 15 years

and her experience at Multi-Plastics includes technical marketing of unsupported print on and over laminate films. She served as a member of the TLMI board of directors, and is currently co-chairperson of the industry trends committee.

Upon presenting Caudill with the award, John Hickey, TLMI chairman, said, 'This year's TLMI Supplier of the Year Award goes to a person who has been a dedicated member of our industry for nearly two decades. When we asked her colleagues to tell us about her, they commented on her impeccable work ethic, unwavering dedication and passion for learning. It's a pleasure to present this award to Cheryl Caudill.'



HOT OF THE PRESS

YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST. THE NO.1 FOR INDUSTRY NEWS

FIRST US INSTALLATION OF NILPETER'S MO OFFSET PRESS

US converter National Labels, based in Pennsylvania, has purchased the country's first MO-4 offset press from Nilpeter.

The company reports increased business in high quality labels for the health and beauty sector as a motivating factor behind the purchase of the sleeve-based narrow web combination offset press – and says further purchases may be made in the future.

Jim Shacklett, III, chief executive officer, National Labels, said: 'The new MO-4 allows us to improve our quality and reduce our waste of time, material, and set-up resources. The performance of the Nilpeter MO-3300 Servo is a benchmark in our industry; however, after intensive testing on our new MO-4, we are pleased to see further improved quality and productivity. We now look forward to implementing this new combination machine which will certainly increase our productivity.'

Lars Eriksen, Nilpeter president & CEO, added: 'I am very proud to have National Labels as our valued partner. The MO-4 is a strategic product for us – and I am sure that it will bring a lot of new business opportunities to both of our companies. There is so much new technology available – and we have focused on utilizing it for the benefit of the processes and the press operators. The main focus, however, has been on saving tooling costs, time, and waste aiming this new offset press at short as well as long runs.'

The new MO-4 is compatible with UV flexo, UV screen, UV and solvent gravure, hot foil, cold foil, Caslon UV inkjet as well as numerous in-line converting options.

PROLIFIC WELDON SIGNS FURTHER DISTRIBUTION DEALS

Weldon Celloplast, an Indian producer of self-adhesive labelstocks, has signed a number of recent deals to distribute products from various international suppliers to India and the surrounding region.

The company will distribute Flexo Concepts' MicroClean dry media anilox cleaning equipment and plastic media, as well as the TruPoint and ReNew product lines; German company Matho's waste handling systems; US-based Lederle's rotary cutting dies, printing cylinders and label inspection tables; and Italian company Sys Tec Converting's range of plate mounting, hot foil plate mounting and corrugated cardboard plate mounting machines.

The recent deals add to Weldon's existing distribution deals with PGM Graphic Solutions, Bunting Magnetics and Tailored Solutions.

Founded in 1982 by the current managing director Harveer Singh Sahni, Weldon sells silicone release liners, pressure-sensitive materials, self-adhesive tapes and a variety of coated products under the Fasco brand.

NEWS

NEWS ROUND UP

YOU HEARD IT HERE FIRST. THE NO.1 FOR INDUSTRY NEWS

ARMOR MANAGEMENT BUYOUT

Orfite, a French industrial group, has bought out thermal transfer specialist Armor with the Armor management team, consisting of Hubert de Boisredon and six senior executives.

Orfite becomes the majority shareholder in Armor and, in collaboration with the management, is buying all the shares, taking over from the Rufenacht family.

The new team will take over all the projects and developments and believes that, despite the current difficult economic climate, growth will be guaranteed by the 40 million euros of investments made since 2005 and the decision to turn Armor into a sustainable development company. Armor is building a long-term industrial group worldwide.

The management team will benefit from the industrial and financial experience of Orfite who can boast sixteen years' experience in the acquisition of successful companies. Orfite is said to be confident in the management team and all the workers, emphasizing 'the quality of the management and of the industrial plant, and the privileged position of Armor in both its specialties'.

GRAFICON MASCHINENBAU APPOINTS PARTNER IN ITALY

FDM S.R.L., of San Vittore Olona, Milan, Italy, now has sole responsibility for sales and service in Italy for the products and services of Swiss company Graficon Maschinenbau AG. Graficon Maschinenbau, established in 1993, manufactures narrow web label printing machines and special, custom built finishing-machines, as well as rebuilding, selling and servicing Gallus label printing presses around the world.

DELO OPENS OFFICE IN TAIWAN

Delo Industrial Adhesives has extended its activities in Asia by opening an office in Taipei, Taiwan. Delo entered the Asian market in 2004 with its first office in Shanghai. With 22 percent of Delo's turnover generated in Asia, a new office in Taiwan is viewed necessary in order to support the growing customer base.

In the financial year 2007/2008, Delo had a growth in turnover of 47 percent in Asia. Further Asian representative offices of Delo are located in Shanghai and Singapore.

In Taiwan, Delo will focus on the niche application of adhesives for RFID, smart card and electronic applications.

AVERY EXPANDS JAPANESE OPERATIONS

MAJOR commitment made to Japanese pressure-sensitive market



Avery Dennison has made a major commitment to the Japanese pressure-sensitive label market with the opening of its first distribution center in the country and the appointment of a new president for its combined Japanese operations. The distribution center will be located in Chiba and use the Chiba port for distribution. The 2,000 square meter facility, representing an investment of some USD \$5 million, will include a special applications and testing facility. Materials imported from Avery Dennison's coating plants in China and Korea will include a standard range of paper VIP/ product ID labels as well as higher quality filmic products.

Speaking at the Label Forum Japan, Avery president and CEO Dean Scarborough (above) also announced the establishment of an Avery Dennison Japan headquarters office in Tokyo. The new organization will be led by Gary LePon, who becomes president and general manager Avery Dennison Japan. A former executive for AB SKF in Yokohama with extensive business experience in Japan, LePon will oversee the company's expansion efforts and spearhead the development of new partnerships and strategic alliances.

'With so many manufacturing facilities in nearby countries, we believe now is the time for us to significantly increase our investment and presence in Japan,' commented Dean Scarborough. 'Our strategy and investment in Japan will enable us to serve several important constituencies in one of the most important and vital economies in the world and help them grow not only in Japan, but in other global markets.'

In particular, Avery Dennison's move will allow the company's global customers,

such as Procter & Gamble and Unilever, to access in Japan the same Avery products they use elsewhere in the world. 'Avery Dennison has worked closely with these customers to develop packaging solutions that help market and differentiate their products, but these solutions have been limited in Japan to the products they import,' said Dean Scarborough.

Another important target group is Japanese-based companies with global operations, such as Toyota and Sapporo. 'Avery Dennison's close proximity to their offices will enable it to work closer with them to develop worldwide solutions that can be applied in all of their facilities.'

Andrew Crawford, marketing director Roll Materials Asia Pacific, pointed out that Japan has a relatively low consumption of PS materials compared to other advanced economies – around 8 square meters per capita compared to 11 square meters for North America, for example – which means there are significant opportunities for PS growth against competitive packaging formats. Another sign of the growth opportunities in the Japanese market has been CCL's announcement of a new label converting plant in the country.

Dean Scarborough said there were opportunities to grow Avery's business not only in the pressure-sensitive label arena in Japan, but also in RFID and Retail Information Services. The RIS division is looking to work with retailers who source outside Japan – for example in China and Bangladesh – providing design and sampling services.

Avery will also seek to work in partnership with Japanese-based companies that have significant Asian market share or special technologies, but lack a market presence outside of Asia. 'Avery Dennison intends to form partnerships and strategic alliances with these enterprises that will allow them to access the company's global resources and infrastructure to grow their businesses in Asia and expand into new markets,' said Scarborough.

Avery Dennison had a strong presence in Japan back in the 1990s, when it had a joint venture with Toppan-Printing Co. Ltd. Avery sold its stake in 1996 as part of a global strategy to exit the label printing business.



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IXPRESSIA APPOINTS AIT AS AUSTRALASIAN DISTRIBUTOR

ixPressia, an inkjet software company based in Cambridge, UK, and Advanced Inkjet Technology (AIT), of Sydney, Australia, have announced a distribution alliance to integrate and market ixPressia Print Engine software in Australia and New Zealand. The software enables seamless and simple transfer of data for short run and variable print jobs.

AIT's SquidJet graphic inkjet printers use ixPressia Print Engine software as a single step interface between graphic design and digital print. The ixPressia technology enables processing of jobs from the simplest one off label to a run of thousands of labels of variable data and content. AIT's use of ixPressia Print Engine in its SquidJet has helped make the machine a 'flexible and cost effective' drop on demand inkjet printer.

GERMAN CONVERTER INSTALLS E+L INSPECTION SYSTEMS ACROSS ALL SITES



German converter X-label has decided to equip all the group's printing presses with Erhardt + Leimer inspection technology.

The systems, from the company's Nyscan range of products, guarantee X-label 100% inspection of all of its print production over the entire run time and web width. Dependent on the inspection parameters of the high resolution cameras, all faults found are permanently documented in a roll protocol. These roll protocols are subsequently used in the Nyscan Work-Flow to position the detected faults on the splice table of the downstream slitter-rewinders of the finishing department. The operator is therefore released from the difficult task of visually inspecting printed material.

The core of the X-label workflow solution is automatic roll identification

via an existing BDE barcode, in conjunction with the archiving of all the roll reports of all the presses on a central server, with direct linked connection to the quality control department. This level of integration is claimed a first in the industry, with the QC department in full control of the acceptance/rejection of any faults. The Nyscan Roll:Scheduler software is used to edit each roll on single and repeat faults.

In order to load the correct roll protocol a BDE barcode and hand scanners are used. After editing, the roll protocol the modified file is again stored on the central server by QC, ready to be accessed again by a barcode scanner which is placed at every slitter-rewinder.

The defect stop positions which have been refined by QC are then automatically and accurately positioned thus single faults can be corrected and larger faults will be removed.

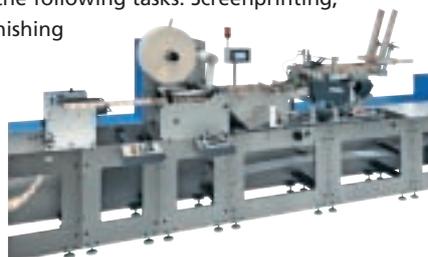
This workflow solution will now be rolled out across X-Label's presses and slitter rewinders across the company's two sites.

Booklet- and Processing-Machines

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FIRST EUROPEAN INSTALLATION OF EFI'S JETRIION DIGITAL PRESS

Following a European launch at drupa, EFI has begun commercial shipments of its Jetrion 4000 digital color label press. The first installation in Europe took place at Commercial Labels in Congleton, Cheshire, UK. The Jetrion 4000 UV inkjet system combines EFI's core strengths of workflow, RIP technology, ink development and machine manufacturing into a single stand-alone narrow web press aimed specifically at the label market. It is particularly suited for those with short runs, or requiring versioning or variable data.

Commercial Labels' managing director Nigel Painton chose the Jetrion 4000 for its ability to turn around short-run jobs: 'The Jetrion 4000 alongside our existing liquid toner-based digital, flexo, letterpress and foil presses just strengthens our position as a one stop shop label printing house. We will now be in the position to handle even the most difficult jobs, with or without variable data, quickly, efficiently and profitably. In addition, the extremely durable "bullet proof" UV inkjet print offered by EFI and our new digital die cutting solution will make us very competitive with no plate and no cutter costs.'

With the Jetrion 4000, Commercial Label Products expects to further expand into the wine and spirit markets as well as the cosmetic, health and beauty products, electronic, oil and automotive sectors. 'We are particularly excited about producing outside decals, due to the high light fastness and durability of the UV inks. We also expect the new machine will be particularly good at producing window stickers, printed both one and two sided,' Painton added.



GLOBAL PRINT SERVICES HOSTS BOOKLET LABEL OPEN HOUSE

Global Print Services (GPS), a print engineering company and distributor for industry suppliers such as Gidue, Prati, UV Ray and Longford International, hosted a recent open house focused on booklet label production at its Boston, UK, facility.

Over a five day period, nearly 50 visitors representing 28 companies visited the event, including converters such as Pago, Stralfors, CCL, Clondalkin Group and Denny Bros.

The event saw a number of suppliers to the booklet label market showcasing working machinery, while GPS launched the Prati Vegaplus for offline booklet label production.

Also on display were a Gidue 8-color Combat press printing base labels and booklet materials and a Prati Saturn rewinder with Atlantic Zeiser UV inkjet heads and UV Braillejet heads – the latter of which were first shown at drupa earlier in the year. Another Prati Saturn rewinder was fitted with a BST Shark video inspection system, while a GM automatic core cutter and a GUK sheeter folder were also showcased.

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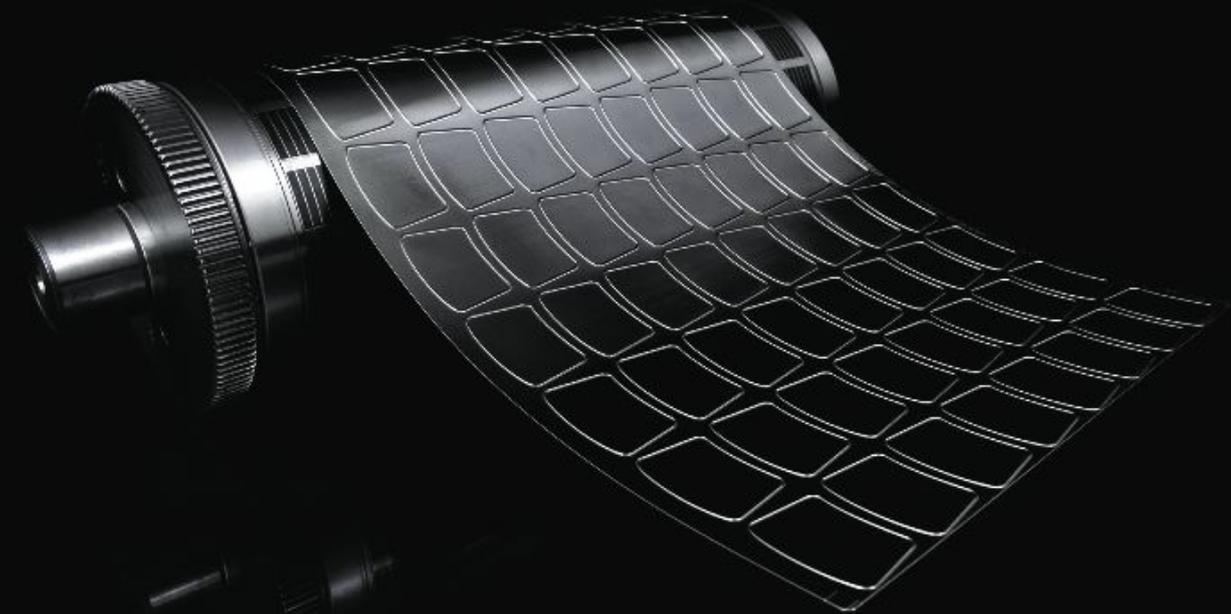
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JOHN HICKEY, board chairman TLMI (I) and Clive Smith, founder of Labelexpo

TLMI HONORS LABELEXPO FOUNDER

Clive Smith, founder of Labelexpo, has become only the second person to be honored by the TLMI with an honorary lifetime membership.

Smith launched the first Labelexpo in London in 1980, later moving it to Brussels. He signed a partnership agreement with the TLMI in 1989 which laid the foundation for the association's sponsorship of Labelexpo Americas for nearly two decades.

Since then, the Labelexpo series has expanded to include Asia, first in Singapore and today in Shanghai, with the first India Label Show about to take place in December 2008.

The TLMI citation said Smith 'has been a fosterer of global unity by bringing together industry suppliers and converters around the world through his exhibition and publishing companies for nearly three decades.'

UPM TO REDUCE SLITTING CAPACITY

UPM plans to restructure its Label Division's European operations in order to secure profitability in a weak economic environment. The company will close down a number of self-adhesive labelstock production lines and reduce slitting capacity in the UK, France, Germany, Hungary and Finland. Approximately 340 employees will be affected, which corresponds to about 20 percent of UPM Raflatac's total personnel in Europe. The restructure should be completed by the end of 2009.

The planned actions are aimed at improving UPM's Label Division's cost competitiveness and profitability. The aim is to reduce operating costs annually by about EUR 25 million. The actions will have no material impact on the division's sales, says the company.

UPM's plans include: permanent closure of two coating lines: one in Scarborough, UK, and one in Nancy, France; further reduction of coating capacity through shift reductions in Scarborough, Nancy and Tampere, Finland; closure of two slitting and distribution terminals: one in Düsseldorf/Ratingen, Germany and one in Tatabánya, Hungary; and slitting capacity reduction in Tampere, Scarborough and Nancy through shift reductions.

'Due to the weak economic conditions, market demand for self-adhesive labelstock is currently declining in Western Europe, and we foresee no short-term change in this trend. We have to take these difficult but vital steps to adjust our capacity to the demand outlook of our customers, and to secure our profitability,' said Jussi Vanhanen, president of UPM's Engineered Materials Business Group.

'Through the proposed measures each site in UPM Raflatac Europe will get a clear and focused role for developing the business for the future. This together with the resulting industry-leading cost competitiveness is vitally important for the future of UPM Raflatac, its employees and customers.'

Negotiations with employees on the proposed closures and reductions will start immediately and they will proceed according to the local legislation in each country. Possibilities for retirement, relocation within UPM and retraining will be handled in the negotiations, too.



MARK ANDY UK HOSTS LEAN MANUFACTURING SEMINAR

Mark Andy UK, which this year celebrates 15 years of trading in the UK and Ireland, recently co-hosted a one-day seminar on Lean Manufacturing with substrate supplier Fasson.

Entitled 'Innovation & Sustainability – a brighter future', the main thrust was an evaluation of the part played by filmic substrates in a world that is growing an ever larger 'green conscience'. With the latest statistics showing that behind Greece and Portugal, the UK and Ireland have the worst record in the EU for recycling and environmentally friendly waste disposal, the move into the new 'bio-plastic' packaging, currently being driven by retailers, cannot come too soon.

The print demonstrations, which were held at the Mark Andy showroom facility in Macclesfield, England, gave the company an opportunity to showcase its servo driven 2200 press, which has enjoyed more than 30 sales worldwide since its launch this year. Two jobs were run off at speeds in excess of 100 m/min. Both featured Fasson 40-micron PE film with a 40-micron liner.

Speaking for Mark Andy, UK managing director Paul Briggs commented: 'The 2200 has been a world leader for Mark Andy over the past 20 years, and the latest servo driven model is a perfect fit for today's lean manufacturing requirements. It is quieter, consumes less power, has fewer working parts, and is fitted with standard electronic components that are easily serviced from anywhere in the world.'

Briggs said that over 270 Mark Andy presses had been sold in the UK and Ireland since 1993, which reportedly results in a 35 percent market share for narrow web modular flexo lines.

NEWS

WORLD LABEL AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The winners of the World Label Awards, which was judged during Labelexpo Americas in Chicago, have been announced. The international judging panel consisted of Mike Buystedt, of the USA, Prof Hanna, of Japan, Peter Petran, of Australia, with Tony White in the chair.

So good was the quality of the winning labels that the judges were unable to agree on which was the absolute best and declined to name any as the 'World's Best'. Judges' chairman Tony White said: 'We could not reach a unanimous agreement but two labels from FINAT members were so good, each could be considered to be the best in the world.'

FINAT, the global trade association for the self-adhesive label industry, holds its own label competition in conjunction with its annual congress, the winners of which go through these world finals which this year saw eight winners from FINAT members, eight from America's TLMI label association and six from Japan's JFLP organization.

The quality of a tiny label, printed in Japanese, from Germany's Schreiner Group for attaching to a pharmaceutical syringe and a large Esso oil label printed by Turkey's Detsan Baski San ve Tic

Company caused the judges' quandary. 'Each was so wonderful that it was impossible to say which was the absolute best,' said White.

Schreiner's syringe label, silk screen printed on polypropylene substrate reproduced extremely sharp Japanese characters within a tiny space, won the Screen Line category. 'Everything on the label, produced for Roche Diagnostics GmbH, was so clear and sharp with extremely small print and it is probably the best I have seen in a lifetime of label printing. It shows what can be achieved with the screen process and the label quality would be hard to beat at any level,' White said.

Esso's A4-sized label, for its Ultra, Ultron and Uniflow Oils for the Russian-speaking market in the Screen Color Process section, was also 'an outstanding example of screen printing on a polyethylene substrate' with a mixture of four color halftone images and a bright red banner with nice reversed-out lettering. 'It was another hard to beat example of a relatively large label,' White commented.

Other winners included: a label for the Basler creative hair style 150ml containers produced by schäfer-etiketten, in the Screen Line & Screen group, was 'a simple design with a couple of contrasting colors produced to a high level of screen printing on polyester film using

UV inks...which showed what can be achieved on a production basis.'

In the Multi Process Line category Dow Industries' label for Insatiable Caramel Kiss won honors for its 'immediate eye appeal'. 'Printed by UV flexo methods on a film substrate with matt and gloss varnish made extremely good use of foil stamping,' said the judges.

A 'neat tag with good clean die cut lines' for Marchesi Frescobaldi Santa Maria won world honors for Arca Etichette S.p.A in the tags section. 'The background tag and the booklet printed by offset were perfectly color matched,' was the verdict.

Teollisuustarra Oy's label for Farnos Powerclean, with its 'contrasty' printing



SCHREINER'S syringe label, silk screen printed on polypropylene substrate

on a very product-orientated brushed chrome foil was 'a very serviceable label fit for use' and won the Flexo Line Screen/Tone group.

In the Letterpress Color Process section, Kolibri Labels B.V.'s label for Greenland Body Wash, which won the Best in Show award at FINAT's June competition, was the only letterpress label to break Japanese domination of these categories. 'Exceptionally well printed on a polypropylene based using UV technology – a very nice label deserving better!' was the verdict.

Among Offset Wines and Spirits labels, Tapp Technologies Inc's product for Lincourt Santa Ynez Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 2005, was a 'clean-looking labels using UV offset litho printed on a paper substrate...and was spot on.'

Skanem Introl SA's label for Royal Velvet Cream was 'a nice job...printed using UV flexo (and) an example of the startling effects which can be achieved with flexo.'

In the Innovation section, the Schreiner Group's Black Panel Effect capacitive sensor – a step on from the normal printed circuit board – consisted of a black layer which showed symbols and a functional layer transmitting electronic pulses. It was 'an achievement printed using UV screen printing onto a filmic substrate in seven passes when the degree of accuracy required is so high' said the judges.

The Digital Printing section saw Tapp Technologies Inc's Auto Moto 2006 California Chardonnay 'evocative yet simple' label win the honors.



ESSO oil label printed by Turkey's Detsan Baski San ve Tic Company

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GIDUE APPOINTS AGENT FOR SINGAPORE AND INDONESIA

Italian press manufacturer Gidue has appointed Drex-Chem Technologies, the Singapore branch of multinational chemical company Group Drex-Chem, as its agent in Singapore and Indonesia.

Drex-Chem opened its operational headquarters in Singapore in 1987 and now runs offices in Malaysia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Philippines, Thailand and China. The company is also planning to open a sales office in Vietnam.

The company's core business is the distribution of specialty chemicals and other raw materials to the electronics market, chemicals to paint and ink manufacturers, presses, printing plates, doctor blades, mounting tapes, solvent

recovery machines, plate making machines to the printing industry, and plastics, resin and rubber products for industrial use. Drex-Chem distributes products for a number of companies from the US, Europe and Asia.

'Singapore printing business is mainly offset and rotogravure-based and oriented to the packaging and carton markets. Indonesia offers the highest potential for label printing in our regions. The health care label sector is very promising as it gives label printers higher margins of profit. The production of shrink sleeves for beverage and cigarette packaging is growing,' stated Ivan Lim, sales manager working in the Group

headquarters. 'Having said that, we see that the largest part of new investments is opting for UV flexo machines, especially in the Singapore and Indonesian markets, where innovation and advanced technology for the production of high-end labels, and Gidue is a master in this respect, are really appreciated.'

Ivan Lim, who was trained by Gidue personnel in the Turate-based factory, will personally take charge of the promotion of Gidue's machines. He plans to recruit a new sales manager to focus on Gidue's products in Indonesia and complement Drex-Chem's current sales force. Gidue currently has three presses installed in Indonesia and one in Malaysia.

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CHADWICKS MOVES INTO SHRINK SLEEVE MARKET

Bury, UK-based pre-cut lid manufacturer Chadwicks is moving into the shrink sleeve market following recent investments. The firm has purchased a selection of finishing equipment, including a DCM sleeving machine with hot melt adhesive application, a DCM Babycat inspection system and temperature controlled storage areas for raw materials.

Production is focused on meeting niche requirements for quick turnaround, short-to-medium-run specialist shrink sleeve products, including tapered cup applications with a selection of hot melt adhesives and Sleeve & Seal for full body applications with easy peel perforations.

Sales and marketing director Martin Hardman said: 'The move into sleeves is driven largely by existing customers' demand for the proven Chadwicks service but providing it in sleeves – there are many benefits of sourcing lids and sleeves from one supplier.

'The plan has been measured and heavily supported by our parent

company, the Clondalkin Group. Clondalkin wanted to expand production of sleeves into the UK to support the market and we have spent considerable time and invested capital in making sure that everything is exactly right to give us a good platform for launch.

'When we recently invested in a new £1.2 million 8-color MPS flexo press, we did so with shrink sleeve manufacture in mind. We are fortunate to have been able to draw on the expertise of our sister company Nyco in Switzerland during our set-up period which has allowed us to enter the market with a premium product right from the start.'

Chadwicks is a manufacturer of pre-cut lids to sectors including food, dairy and beverage markets and exports 50 percent of its output as far afield as the Far East and Australia and New Zealand. Chadwicks is part of the Flexible Packaging Division of the Clondalkin Group which has, over 40 manufacturing sites located across Europe and North America.

NEWS ROUND UP

ASAHI KASEI PARTNERS WITH CORRECT-TOUCH GRAPHIC ARTS

Asahi Kasei Chemicals Corporation has appointed Correct-Touch Graphic Arts as its US distributor, offering Asahi AFP flexographic analog and digital plate materials. CT Graphic Arts has distributed and technically supported Asahi throughout the Western US market for the past nine years and now expands its coverage across the country.

EU CLEARANCE FOR SAPPI'S M-REAL ACQUISITION

On 29 September 2008, Sappi announced the proposed acquisition of M-real's Graphic Paper business for 750 million euros. The EU competition authorities have now approved the transaction.

PULSE AND HI-TECH INKS JOIN FORCES FOR UV

UK-based ink manufacturer Pulse Roll Label Products has appointed Hi-Tech Inks as distributor for South Africa. Established in the late 1980s, Hi-Tech Inks is part of the Speed Bird Investment Holdings Group and supplies locally manufactured liquid inks.

Success Begins with the Finish



When top brands launch a winner, they demand packaging that says "excellence."

More designers are turning away from last year's sparkly gimmicks and opting for the elegant metallic sheen of brushed films and papers made by Brushfoil.

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LABEL EXPOSURE



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1. LABEL WORLD The Best of Show Award at the TLMI Annual Label Competition went to Rochester, New York-based Label World for the company's digitally printed Parkside Smoked Cheddar Sesame Crisps label. The label also won first place in the digitally printed Food and Beverage category; it was printed on an HP Indigo 4050 digital press using silver metalized pressure sensitive paper to allow for a simulated gold appearance. A layer of opaque white backs the label's four color process image, and the label was finished with a full overprinted scuff-resistant varnish.

2. SKANEM Skanem Newcastle recently won the award for Best Print Process at the tenth Anniversary FlexoTech International Print and Innovation Awards. The prize was won in the 'Label and Tag (Process)' category for its Ocean Pure label, which was printed on an Arpeco press using Flint UV inks.

Skanem Newcastle submitted a sample of its print by entering a linerless label printed for a local customer, Cumbrian Seafood, for its own brand 'Ocean Pure Cod Fillets'. According to repro manager Alan Quinn, judges 'regarded Skanem Newcastle's Ocean Pure entry as having crisp clear text, open shadows and exceptionally clean fine highlights utilizing FM screening. These qualities lifted it above the others to win the category resulting in a perfect print.'

3. IMPRESSTIK Sydney, Australia-based converter Impresstik won two major prizes at the recent NSW Print Excellence Awards: the Business Excellence Award for 'Innovation in Business', and a Silver Print Excellence Award in the label category for the Pirramimma 'Pirra' Grenache Shiraz label.

The Silver Award for the 'Pirra' label highlights the power of print excellence. Designed by Barbara Harkness of Just Add Wine, the label displays both excellent shelf 'stand-out' appeal and tactility.

HOW TO GET EXPOSED

If you want to contribute, please send us information about who printed the label, for whom it was printed, and the specifications of the job. It is essential to include a good quality, high resolution image with your submission.

Contact: jquirk@labelsandlabeling.com.

NEW PRODUCTS



1 MIS DATA VIA VISTA DASHBOARD SHUTTLEWORTH

Shuttleworth has launched what it claims is the world's first real time MIS data application for the Microsoft Vista sidebar which runs independently of the printer's MIS, thereby enabling business owners to access their key business information in real time from anywhere in the world via the internet.

The last few years have seen the development of many types of 'digital dashboard' which are simply a summary of information generated from an MIS and displayed on screen. This type of dashboard is now a thing of the past because Shuttleworth can enable business owners to access their key business information in real time over the internet, and completely independent of the printer's MIS application. Therefore users no longer need to be logged into the Shuttleworth System to access this key business information. All they require is access to the internet.

Shuttleworth joint managing director Paul Deane said: 'The potential for this is

enormous as we make more and more management information in the system available through this method. The software has been designed so that it can be available as a "gadget" in a Vista Sidebar, in a browser or in its own application. What this means to the user is that through their sidebar they can now be kept up to date with the day to day activity in their business from anywhere in the world provided they have access to the internet. The user is able to custom design what type of output tools they would like to use such as graphs, dials, histograms and so forth and specify criteria parameters around specific data so that they are alerted when these parameters are reached.' This means that if a press speed falls below a level the user has specified the data can provide alerts such as a pop up warning messages, email notifications, color changes or sound an alarm. The benefit to the user is that this now brings actual real time management information straight to the user's desktop to enable them to be more proactive in their decision making.

2 UNIFLI ALUMINUM ANILOX ROLLS APEX

Apex, a manufacturer of anilox rolls for the flexo industry, has launched its UniFlu range of light weight anilox rolls made of aircraft grade aluminum as strong as steel. By adding a specially developed anodized layer Apex ensures that it will be resistant against aggressive inks and common cleaning liquids.

Advantages of the UniFlu products are said to include fast delivery for standard products (within 10 working days), and 50 percent weight reduction for easy handling.

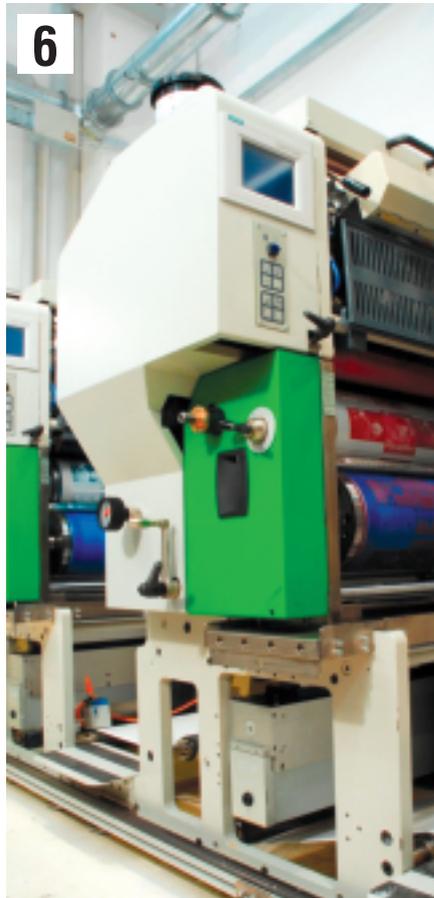
Apex has also introduced a new website focused at the label printer and its needs: FAQs on printing problems, up-to-date information on the products and – coming soon – a webshop for online ordering of the most common machine types.



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5



6

6 WIDER VERSION XPANND GIDUE

Gidue's latest combined offset/flexo press, the Xpannd 450, was launched during an open house at the company's Turate, Italy, facility in late November.

The wider width of the press, 450mm, allows it to print shrink sleeves as well as self-adhesive labels, and therefore brings Gidue's offset and flexo combination machine to a new range of customers.

The flexible, modular machine, which can print of a variety of substrates and can also include silkscreen, gravure and hot stamping units, has met with SID certification from the BVDM (German Association for Printing).

The press contains a patent-pending multi-process organizer, which allows handling and storage of offset cassettes and multi-process heads, thus reducing load handling by the operator.

'Despite the present recession, Gidue has decided to "re-launch" itself in a series of new R&D projects,' stated Federico d'Annunzio, president of Gidue.

4 NEO 2.0 ESKOARTWORK

EskoArtwork has launched Neo 2.0, its native PDF 1.7 editor which offers full-scale PDF editing and full access to all Enfocus PitStop functionality. This standalone PDF viewer and editor allows users to correct both text and object content in multipage PDF files for fast, efficient, last-minute file updates and corrections.

Neo 2.0 integrates Enfocus PitStop Professional with the two applications sharing the same database of preflight profiles and action lists. 'This means that Action Lists can be created and modified within Neo 2.0 as easily, and with the same functionality as in Enfocus PitStop Professional,' added Vyncke. 'We are also aggressively working to leverage synergies between EskoArtwork and Enfocus products to create even better alignment in production workflow. Neo 2.0 is a great example of the culmination of these efforts.'

Neo 2.0 delivers standalone PDF editing, including the ability to edit virtually anything within the PDF document, including fonts, traps and page boxes. This native PDF editing capability eliminates the need to revert to the original document for changes and corrections, saving time and streamlining the pre-press process. Customers report that they have been able to reduce the average time to perform quality control on a large, complex file by 20 percent or more using Neo.

5 INDIGO LABELSTOCKS MACTAC

Mactac, a supplier of pressure-sensitive adhesive products, is helping printers using Indigo web presses achieve optimal cost and production efficiencies with the introduction of its new Indie line of certified labelstocks, specially engineered for Indigo press technology.

'Studies show that approximately 35 percent of label jobs are produced in runs with fewer than 25,000 labels,' said Allison Hazel, marketing manager, Mactac Printing Products. 'Indigo presses offer the best quality and most economical method for printing jobs of this size, but they require special media. To ensure the best possible quality and printability, each product in our new Indie product line has been independently tested and certified by the Rochester Institute of Technology.'

In the past, printers needed to order 60-inch master rolls, slit to their requested size and then top coated in-house for use on Indigo presses. With Mactac's Precise Program, customers can expect next-day shipping of Indie certified stocks customized to suit their needs, while relieving the burden of top-coating and buying full web width, reducing scrap and maximizing efficiencies.

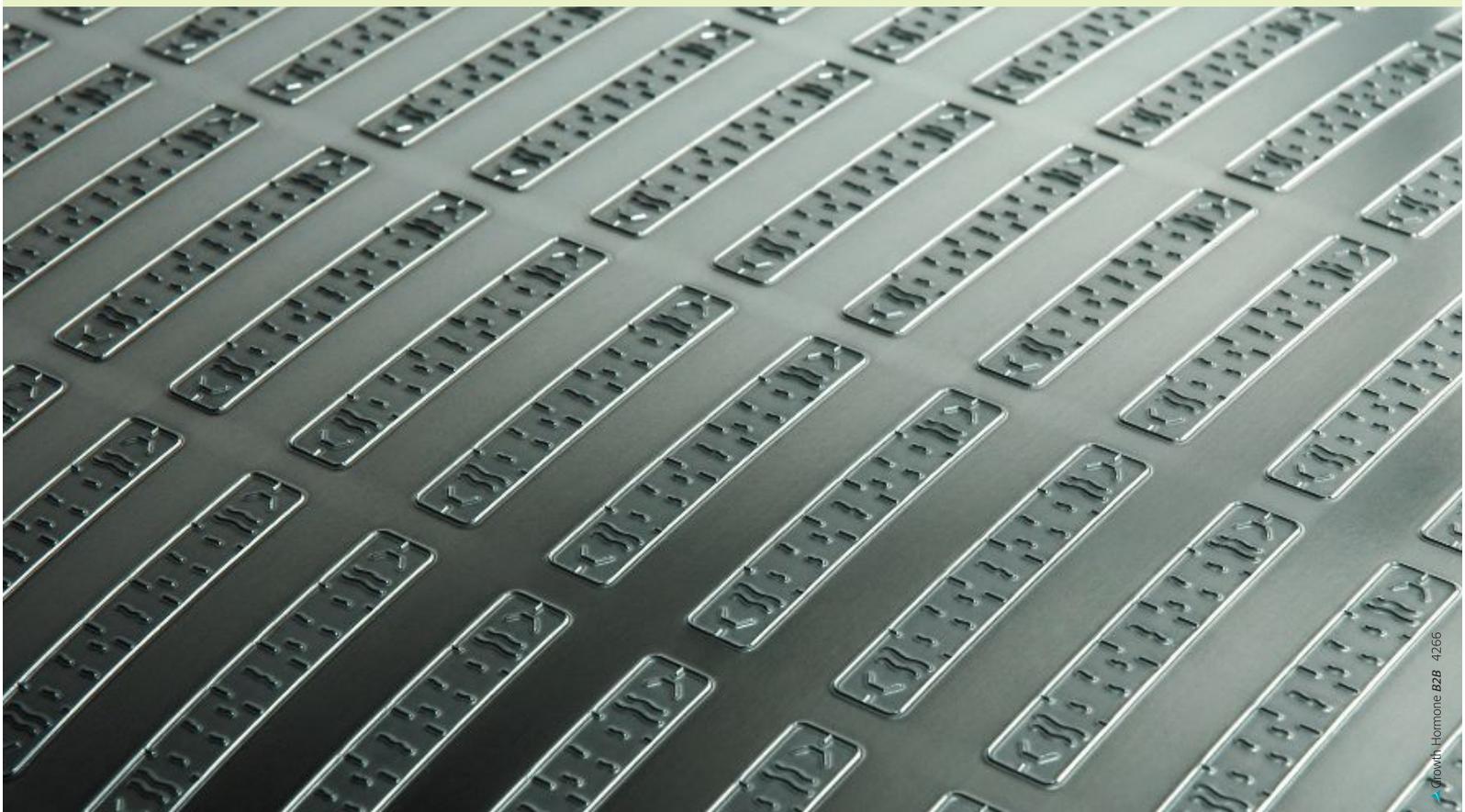
Available with a variety of facestocks that include semi-gloss, high-gloss, matte, wine label, films and eco-aware products, the new Indie product line is suited to a variety of small-run applications, including prototyping, pharmaceuticals, gourmet foods, boutique wines, water bottles and health and beauty products.



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L-R: Joao Adao, Mario Herrera and Don Nolan

Avery expands in Chile

JAMES QUIRK reports from the inauguration of Avery's new slitting and distribution center in Santiago, Chile

Avery Dennison welcomed around 100 customers and partners to the inauguration of its new slitting and distribution center in Santiago, Chile, in early November. The facility will supply its local market with the company's range of self-adhesive products and allows for greater stock capacity than Avery's previous distribution center in the country, which was opened in 1995.

The move underlines the company's desire to continue investing in growing markets despite the financial troubles being experienced in the US and Europe.

The center was opened by Don Nolan, vice president of the company's materials division, Joao Adao, general manager, materials for Argentina and Chile, and Mario Herrera, national sales manager for Chile.

The 2,500 square meter distribution center houses three slitters – each of which can be adjusted between widths of 40cm and 1.5m – and a team of 37 people will serve Avery's base of over 100 customers in the country. Joao Adao explained that expansion in Chile was necessary to ensure a more efficient material flow, while the greater stock capacity will overcome the difficulties of importing materials into the mountainous regions of the country during the winter months. 'The opening of this new distribution center reflects

our commitment to our customers in Chile,' commented Adao. 'We can offer a faster and more consistent service with improved quality.'

'Recent weeks have seen tremendous volatility in the financial markets,' said Don Nolan. 'Avery Dennison has been in the region for nearly 40 years and has been through many financial cycles, both good and bad. But, despite everything, we have continued investing and growing with our customers. We started a new production center with our V6 coater in Vinhedo, Brazil, two years ago; last year we brought new slitters to Chile, Brazil and Argentina, and this year we placed a new slitter in our Argentina plant. I believe that these continue to be truly exciting times for South American label converters – marked with tremendous growth potential.'

Avery Dennison was the first self-adhesive materials supplier to move into Latin America, opening a factory in Sao Paulo, Brazil, in 1969. Further plants were opened in Colombia and Argentina in the mid-1990s, and the company now boasts a presence of three plants, five distribution centers and over 1,800 employees in the region.

Joao Adao and Fabio Astegiano also presented the results of Avery's annual survey, which showed a year-on-year increase in customers' satisfaction, desire to continue buying from Avery, and propensity to recommend the company's products. Adao underlined the company's desire to keep improving its service.

Avery Dennison predicts continued success for self-adhesive technology in Chile's rapidly growing wine market.





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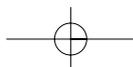
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MARKANDY





A fourth generation operation first established in 1877, US converter Smyth Companies has a long history of innovation. More recently it was the first label printer in the US to adopt CTP technology and, in years past, it was the first printer West of Chicago to use lithography commercially.

Brothers Bill and John Hickey (both also known as: 'Hicks') work together with their team of highly skilled executives and associates to keep the business growing during these stressful global-economic times. One of the ways the company achieves this growth is by regularly investing in new technology. Within its newest additions is a servo-driven Omet UV flexo/rotary screen press which is used to serve the shrink label segment and traditional roll-fed P/S label production. It also just introduced a new generation of its patented world's fastest labeler the Red Rock Gen II which is used for ultra high speed labeling for primary and promotional labels. In 2006 Smyth was recognized by the World Label Association with an Excellence in Printing Award for its Coors Brewing Outlast Cold Wrap label.

Smyth has three operations in Minnesota, one in Virginia and an automated bottle labeling plant in Colorado.

John has served on the TLMI board of directors since 2002 and has been a member of the TLMI since 1994.

Bill was the chairman for LPIA from 1998 – 2000 and has served on the board of directors for 15 years. He was inducted into the LPIA Hall of Fame in 2007, one of seven other industry leaders to be bestowed the honor, including Hicks' father William J. Hickey Jr.

Q&A

DANIELLE JERSCHEFSKE talks with John Hickey, CEO of Smyth and past chairman of the board of TLMI (Tag and Label Manufacturers Institute), and his brother Bill Hickey, owner director at Smyth and immediate past chairman interim of the board for the LPIA (Label Printing Industries of America).

L&L: What do you consider to be the most important characteristic of a successful label company?

JH: Customer intimacy is key.

BH: It is crucial for a successful label company to focus on employees and customers; great operations are also terribly important.

L&L: What is the best personal quality that your brother brings to the business table?

JH: Bill is steady, persistent and deadly under pressure.

BH: John has an outward vision for the company.

L&L: What is your best memory of your brother as a business partner?

JH: Bill always connects with our best customers because customers know he cares, he adds value to the relationship and he's also just good company.

BH: My best memory is working together to purchase a major competitor.

L&L: What do you believe are the biggest threats to North American label converters?

JH: The world is certainly 'flat' which will have long lasting, compelling consequences for the US economy in general and therefore we need to respond with value added technology and services to stay relevant.

BH: All of these issues are threats to North American converters: our customers moving production offshore; fighting off poor competition; inflationary pressures on materials and labor.

L&L: What do you think North American converters must do in order to remain competitive in the global market?

JH: North American converters must stay relevant from a global perspective.

BH: We must buy efficient equipment, regularly train our employees and partner with foreign companies to ensure our successful survival.

L&L: How do you make sure your employee base is trained and remains so?

JH: We pay for training and encourage it.

BH: Trained employees are critical to success, so we track our employee training and do not skimp on it. We have a variety of training needs, skills for operations, employee enhancement training, mandatory training, etc. Training fuels our success.

L&L: Where do you believe North American converters have the most opportunity for growth?

JH: I believe that the most opportunity lies outside North America.

BH: There is a lot to be had in the digital and variable printing arena.

L&L: In the midst of this economic crisis, what do you think is the best way for converters to ensure their survival?

JH: Focus on the core.

BH: We have to crisis manage the balance sheet issues. You must know your costs and manage accordingly.

L&L: How do you make sure that business doesn't impact family ties?

JH: Family simply is a priority to me and business is a distant second.

BH: We try not to bring business home.

L&L: What do you see as the most promising label technologies currently available?

JH: Creative employees who modify existing technology.

L&L: If Santa could bring you one new technology for your business, what would you ask him for?

JH: A fully integrated paperless IT system.

BH: A high-speed, flexible digital press.

L&L: How have you ensured that your respective trade associations help support its members' success?

JH: I advocate for participation which I consider to be a rising tide elevating all 'boats'.

BH: The LPIA focus is to bring great programming to its members. When you leave our meetings you have a lot more knowledge than when you arrived. We work hard and include some fun.

L&L: How has your participation in TLM LPIA benefited your business?

JH: Smyth has greatly benefited from TLM's best practices and through side line conversations with like minded people – together we can become stronger. In working with other TLM members we help to make our industry more relevant to our customers and, thus, make us more profitable.

BH: Smyth is certainly a better company for participating in both the LPIA and TLM. Winning successful companies do not just sit back and watch. Great companies get involved and effectively move the whole industry forward. Smyth has been at the forefront of change. Competing against other winners makes the entire industry better.

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

L&L: Favorite game to play as kids?

JH: We had an open lot next to the house and played the appropriate games for the season i.e. baseball, football, hockey, and generally broke windows throughout the year.

L&L: Who was the trouble maker?

JH: We were literally boy scouts. Heck, Bill is an Eagle Scout.

L&L: What's your favorite dance song?

BH: any rock and roll "Motown"

L&L: What are some of your family's holiday traditions?

JH: The 4th of July used to become a junior Olympics with our 50 some cousins "Up North"

BH: All holidays are aimed at family get-togethers; we have 55 first cousins!

L&L: What's your favorite memory of your brother as a kid?

JH: Bill was always very friendly which fooled many competitors into thinking he wasn't competitive. I watched him vanquish several victims over the years in a variety of sports.

BH: I really enjoyed playing together on the same college tennis team.

L&L: What has been your proudest achievement in your career?

JH: I've been honored to lead a successful business with my brothers and other great leaders at Smyth. That's enough for me.

BH: I have been lucky and have had many proud moments. Specifically, I am very proud of our employees and truly enjoy our interaction.

L&L: Describe your brother with 3 words.

JH: Will never quit.

BH: Smart, charismatic, thinker.

L&L: As a doubles team, each of you must have had a strength to bring to the court. What was your strength?

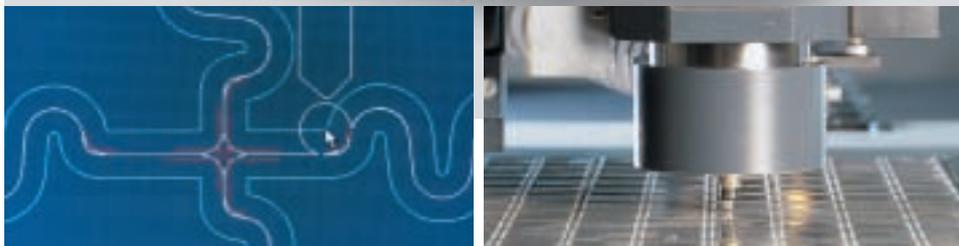
JH: Serve, volley and legs. Bill was steady, persistent and deadly under pressure.

BH: John had great winners; I was solid and controlled

L&L: What was your proudest achievement as a doubles team?

JH: Just being able to play and win together in College.

BH: Finishing a match as friends.



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HANDS ON

VINCENT DITROLIO, president of the DiTrolio Flexographic Institute (DFI), will troubleshoot common practical problems encountered in flexo printing, in this regular series of articles. DiTrolio has worked in the flexographic printing industry for over 19 years, and provides training and consulting through his DiTrolio Flexographic Institute, which is approved by the Illinois State Board of Education and Department of Veteran's Affairs.

Effective Employee Training

Employee training is number 1 priority on most companies agenda. Unfortunately it is usually the first item that gets pushed down on the list. When companies do not prioritize training revenues are lost due to higher scrap rates, product rejects, lower production efficiencies and in some cases lost customers.

Unfortunately, most training takes place during production time which means production is the priority. We can discuss all the reasons training doesn't take place, but instead we're going to focus on several practical tips to begin a training program.

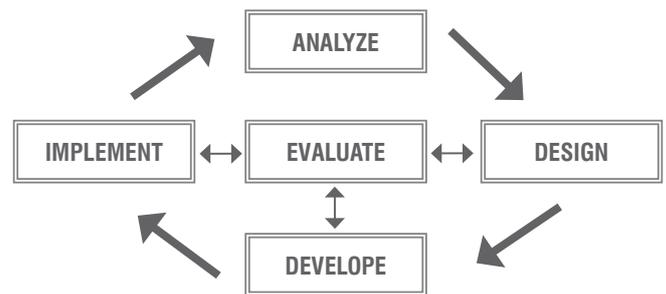
IT'S A BALANCING ACT... PRODUCTION VS. TRAINING.

Let's face it; training typically takes second place to production. Unfortunately, most training is done during production time through job shadowing. Although printing companies have experience operators, most operators do not have the tools or time to train. Experienced personnel have different habits, including the bad ones.

Training practices should include a combination of classroom, structured on the job training as well as refresher courses. Having the appropriate training tools including manuals and sign off sheets will provide a more effective training program. This enables a training program to ensure that all employees have been trained in uniform procedures and best practices with documentation and measurable outcomes.

In order to guide us through the process, we are going to use the ADDIE model which is an instructional design process that is a non-linear five phase process which ensures effective training and performance measures.

ADDIE MODEL



ADDIE: ANALYSIS

During the first phase, analyze requirements of employees/trainees and determine 'gaps' between current skill levels and desired skill levels and efficiencies. The primary objective is to determine training needs and other requirements accurately defined & measurable. The deliverables for this phase include a training needs analysis identifying immediate, short term and long term needs.

During the analysis phase, take the time to review pre-hiring assessments, including but not limited to Mechanical Aptitude, Adult Basic Education Levels, Personality Compatibility tests and any bilingual accommodations. Specifically to flexographic printing, determine base line, set up times, productions times, waste percentages and Employee/process efficiencies which may be part of Lean Manufacturing Initiatives.

EXAMPLES OF PROCEDURES TO INCLUDE IN TRAINING MANUALS



FIGURE 1
 1. Operator side alignment bolted in place
 2. Demonstrating proper operator side adjustment



FIGURE 2
 1. Die Bridge installed

ADDIE: DESIGN

During the Design phase, the primary goal is produce a training program design ensuring the design reflects requirements in needs analysis identify and build team members. During this phase, a design/ training outline should be developed. Considerations during this phase include, identifying training space, in house trainer, and training partners, including but not limited to vendors/ suppliers, consultants, industry training facilities and Associations/ technical conferences. Very often, vendors and suppliers will provide technical support and training sessions for their products at no charge.

ADDIE: DEVELOPMENT

This is the phase when you develop program materials and begin scheduling of sessions. When the implementation plan meets requirements and first phase of training is ready to be implemented, you have met the objective for this phase. The deliverables include training program tools, materials, resources, evaluations, etc.

It is highly recommended to keep it simple! Include pictures of the equipment, procedure or instructions in manuals. By utilizing simple, brief and specific terminology and instructions and include copies of forms, check off lists and other documentation the manual will become a source that is often referenced.

ADDIE: IMPLEMENTATION

It's now time train participants! The objective is for employees to complete the program. Do not forget to collect completed employee assessments, attendance, feedback from employees and trainers

ADDIE: EVALUATION

Evaluations are most effective when they are completed at the end of each phase to confirm that the training is progressing as planned by reviewing and reporting program effectiveness. The objective is to have evaluations which accurately determine strengths and opportunities for improvement. The deliverable is to have a program evaluation report. Specifically for flexographic companies, include comparison of statistics pre-training and post training, employee feedback and industry certification exams, if applicable.

As the ADDIE Model will provide programmatic guidance, remember that in order for any training to be successful you need employee cooperation. It's common to stress the areas of that still need improvement, spend as much or more time recognizing the successes and improvements. Remember to recognize individual as well as department efforts and successes in company bulletins, lunchrooms, etc

KEYS TO SUCCESS! KEEP IT SIMPLE!

Create an environment that will allow for employee ownership by having discussions with staff: review needs of staff, involve in as much of training evolution as possible. Establish a lead person. Provide necessary tools to supplement and support training (NOT business as usual!) Utilize a combination of classroom, on the job training, refresher courses, vendors and out sourced training providers.

LABELS & LABELING

Yves Rocher implements linerless solution

Global cosmetics and beauty company Yves Rocher has 'virtually eliminated' wastage generated from its case and pallet labeling operations thanks to the installation of four linerless versions of Domino's M-Series print and apply labeler.

The M500 systems manage the case and pallet application requirements of individual production lines at Yves Rocher's manufacturing facility in La Gacilly, Brittany. Yves Rocher France envisages all but eradicating its label printing waste, as it predicts a massive reduction from 8300kg to 200kg per year – a decrease of over 97 percent. Unlike conventional systems, rolls of linerless direct printed thermal labels do not require silicon or paper protector, while the need for printer ribbons is also removed. Further waste reduction is enabled at the converting stage by eradicating the matrix around each label.

The M500s, which offer the capability to accommodate variable-sized labels, have replaced eight conventional labelers. "We are enjoying unprecedented levels of waste-saving, which benefits our environmental stance, as well as our bottom line", says Yves Rocher's operations manager Pierre Bouchet. "The paper backing of a conventional self-adhesive label is actually the hardest element to manufacture and equates to around 10 to 15 percent of the cost, but this layer is ultimately discarded," he adds. "Not only that, but as it is non-recyclable, further cost is involved from incineration or landfill."

The M500s can, according to Bouchet, allocate the appropriately-sized label according to the amount of printed text required on each. "This is extremely clever and maintains production workflow by enabling different-sized labels to be selected and applied in real-time", he explains. "We have also witnessed a significant saving on the purchase of consumables. In fact, the quantity of labels used has been halved, as we now achieve the same requirement by applying one label instead of two."

Yves Rocher France also benefits from improved workflow efficiencies thanks to Domino's M500 systems; a roll of linerless labels typically contains around 50-60 percent more labels than its conventional counterpart, so the labeler can run much longer. Line-stoppages for roll changes are therefore required less frequently and can be achieved quickly as only a fully recyclable cardboard core needs to be removed and disposed of. As a result, uptime is maintained and overall equipment effectiveness is increased.



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Some icons from the seventies deserve to be forgotten...

On the 30th anniversary of Labels & Labeling, the magazine's founder, Mike Fairley, looks back to the original publication launch and the early news stories, reviews some of the key industry innovations that have been covered over the years, and highlights the emergence of the magazine into a global publishing and exhibitions group at the forefront of label industry growth.

FROM EARLY BEGINNINGS

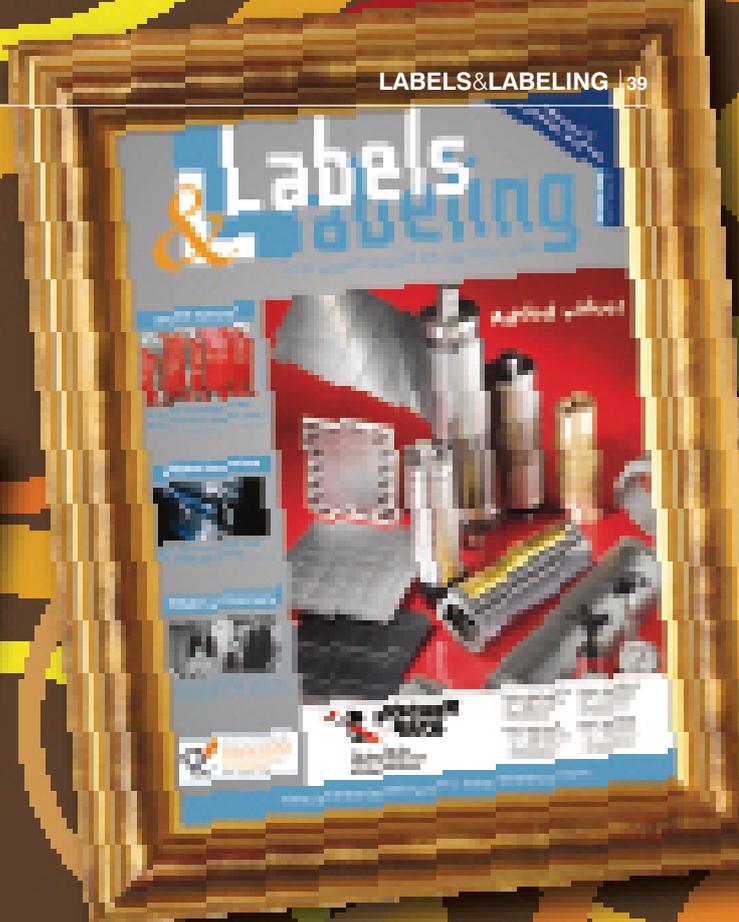
The late 1960s and early 1970s was a time when the label industry was largely a collection of individual companies serving a local or national region. Very few were pan-European and the word globalization was not even in the label industry vocabulary. Some of the first trade associations for the label industry were already in being – such as FINAT and TLMI – while the larger label producers were often members of a relevant national printing federation.

It was a time when the wet-glue label sector made up more than 70 percent of all labels used; when gummed-paper labels still made up over 20 percent of label consumption and self-adhesive labels in the developed regions of the world were

no more than five or six percent of volume usage of all labels. Indeed, the total self-adhesive label market in Europe in 1968, according to the, then recently formed, European Pressure Sensitive Manufacturers Association (EPSMA), was a little over 200 million square meters. Today, it grows substantially more than that amount each year. Key players in EPSMA at that time were companies such as Fasson, Samuel Jones, Mactac, Smith & McLaurin and Ritrama.

Label converters in the early 1970s who wanted to find out about new equipment, products or applications for this new label technology would tend to read the packaging or printing trade press in the hope of finding some label news or a possible relevant article. The same applied to trade shows. The label printer went to Drupa or Ipex in the hope of seeing new label materials and products. The possibility of a dedicated label show or magazine was not even being considered. Even niche label-related conferences were few and far between.

All of this began to change in the mid 1970s. First talk about a dedicated label magazine for the industry began to surface in 1974 at a conference being run in London by Pira, the UK-based paper, packaging and printing industry research



Some don't.

association, which attracted more than 200 delegates. At an open panel discussion at the end of the conference, a number of delegates commented that it was good to have a label conference every few years but the label industry was changing so fast that a specialist label newsletter or magazine would be a good idea. The question raised was 'would Pira consider producing such a magazine?'

Two of the people at that London conference were eventually to be responsible for the launch of Labels & Labelling International in 1978 – Mike Fairley and Ron Spring.

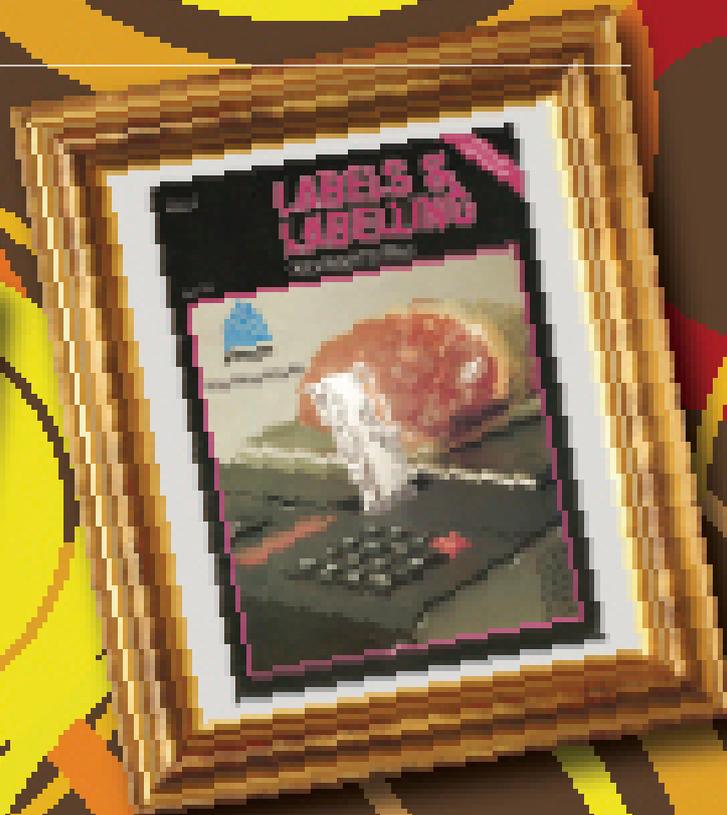
At that time, Mike Fairley – a former higher education lecturer – was the conference and seminar manager at Pira (and also deputy head of training

for the industries covered by Pira) and had a lead role in putting the London label conference and speaker program together. One of the speakers at the conference was Ron Spring, who was then managing director of Gerhardt Engraving in the UK – a manufacturer of engraved rotary and flat label dies, step-and-repeat units, print cylinders and cutter care kits – and a member of the FINAT board. He was therefore in a position to become the contact between a possible forthcoming specialized magazine and the equally specialized trade association.

Although the suggestion that Pira might like to launch a label magazine was reviewed by the organization, it was eventually decided by the management team at that time that this was not

something that Pira should be doing and the idea was dropped. Then, in the spring of 1978, Mike Fairley and Ron Spring bumped into each other at an Ipex show in Birmingham. Over coffee, they discussed the fact that a dedicated label magazine was even more of a requirement for the industry than it had been four years earlier.

Over the next hour the beginnings of, first, an idea and then a plan to launch a label newsletter or magazine began to be mapped out. Mike would be the editor and publisher; Ron would work on compiling mailing databases and supplier (potential advertiser) contacts, industry knowledge and some articles. Both also agreed to make equal payments into a bank account and that if all the money was used up they would



then reconsider the idea of the magazine launch.

One of the early decisions made was to accept advertisements that related directly to labeling. One large supplier was rather put out by this decision but the two founders stayed with this commitment. Without a doubt this proved to be one of the reasons that the industry welcomed the magazine. They knew from the front page through to the back cover it would totally relate to their business. This is still the concept of the magazine today, 30 years on.

Over a period of just a couple of months during the later part of 1978 Labels & Labelling Publishers Ltd had been formed and a mailshot sent out to the initial database. Such was the response to this mailshot it was possible to bring out the first issue of Labels & Labelling International in January 1979 – not only publishing the first issue as an initial 24 page magazine, but also to make a small surplus of income over the production and mailing cost through display advertising, subscriptions and Buyers Guide entries. Having said that, neither Ron Spring nor Mike Fairley took any income from the company over the early years. Mike's wife, Pat, undertook much of the admin and accounts work, again unpaid for the first two years.

Ron took an active part in the production of the magazine until it became more than a hobby. His own company, Gerhard Engraving UK, was growing and required all of his attention. At this point Ron sold his shares in Labels & Labelling Publishers to Clive Smith, who by then was organizing the early Labellex (the forerunner to the global Labelexpo shows) events in London.

THE EARLY YEARS

Look back at the first ever issue of the magazine in 1979 and it contained advertisers which included Gallus, Gerhard and Mark Andy – still advertisers today – as well as Sterling Coated Materials, Whiley Foils, Norprint, Brownett Engraving and Helix Labels & Systems. Some of these have changed names or been acquired over the years. Also in that first issue were news items about a FINAT study tour to Japan at the end of 1978 and the forthcoming 1979 FINAT congress in Tunisia.

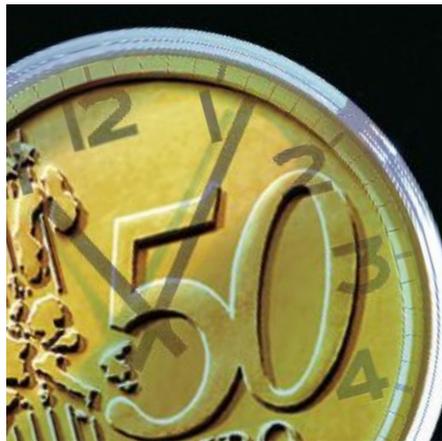
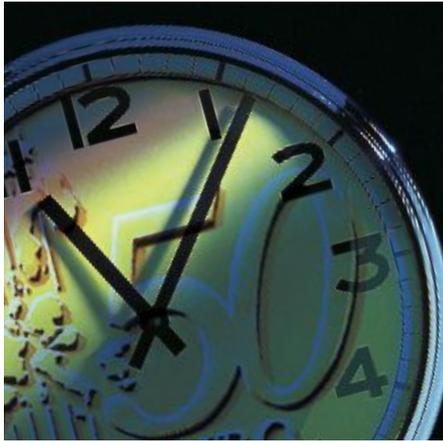
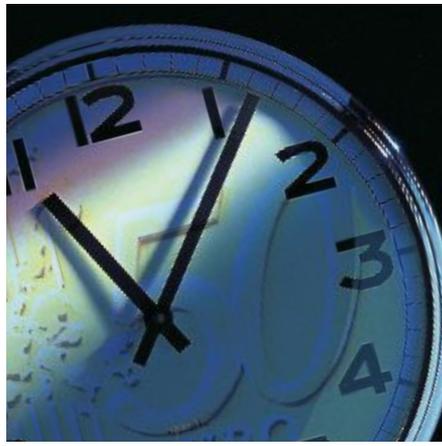
Leonardo Bucchi, chairman of the board of FINAT at the time, also sent a telegram expressing the board's wishes for a successful magazine launch. So began 30 years of liaison and co-operation with FINAT and, later, other major label associations worldwide.

Key articles in the first issue covered 'Foil stamping in label printing'; 'Screen process label production' using a Gallus T180S screen process press; 'Label papers and their uses' and 'Heatset label printing'. Indeed, much of the early history of the magazine was particularly related to informing and educating the – still emerging and somewhat fledgling self-adhesive – label industry about materials, technology and applications.

News items in Volume 1, Number 1, were also quite varied and interesting. Moore Paragon, for example, announced a comprehensive labeling service using WAM's range of mechanical label overprinters designed to handle the fast-growing market for variable information printing on labels. Harlands of Hull had just installed new self-adhesive labeling machines at Birds Eye Foods – replacing gummed paper labels – to provide a more efficient way of labeling multi-packs of frozen convenience foods, while Sterling Coated Materials were introducing the first self-adhesive label substrates that would withstand freeze-thaw cycling and could be adhered to packaged items at -40 deg C.

Retail barcoding in 1979 was also in its infancy. Thomas Forman, a leading UK label printer, was announcing that it had won a contract to produce 60 million labels for a leading chain of retail supermarkets in the UK, Fine Fare. These labels were the first British own-product labels to incorporate barcoding. The order was also the first in Britain to use ANA Symbols and the first time in the world that a velocity code was incorporated on the film masters used for the production of the complex series of dark vertical bars and light spaces which formed each barcode. The Fine Fare group was later sold and then re-branded as Gateway, with some stores also being acquired by Asda, in turn now owned by Wal-Mart.

In terms of developments in press technology, news items in 1979 were talking about the installation of a three-color Gallus



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UPM RAFLATAC: A CLIENT'S VIEW

'The self-adhesive industry has come a long way since the early days, and UPM Raflatac has taken the long journey together with Labels & Labeling all the way from the beginning,' writes Elisa Nilsson, vice president, communications, UPM Raflatac & UPM Brand Management. 'The partnership started with our close co-operation with Mike Fairley, and in the process of time we have also been able to enjoy the expertise of many more professionals at L&L. The co-operation has been very fruitful and brought us a deep insight into the industry and what's happening in it. L&L has been our trusted partner in all our efforts and steps we have taken. We have been happy to see how dedicated L&L has been in following and reporting new innovations, and developing our industry together with all of us in the field. Most of all, L&L has been creating a community within the industry, bringing customers, suppliers and producers closer to each other.'

T180B with inter-unit UV drying at Dolphin Labels, as well as the launch of a new magnetic base for the T180B press, and a sheeter rotary which could be fitted to any Gallus machine having intermittent unit web movement or used a free-standing unit.

Other developments reported in the first issue in 1979 included the launch by Samuel Jones of a new range of 12 standard colors of particle-gummed labels papers, and a new range of delayed action Heatfix label papers for price-weight labeling of wrapped meat, cheese and other fresh foods – two technologies which have since been predominately superseded by self-adhesive label solutions. At the same time, Alcoflex light-fast dye-based flexo label inks were being introduced. These were meths-based inks and could be used with all types of rubber and photopolymer plates. How things have changed today.

Right from this early beginning, the magazine was considered as an international journal for the label industry and within the first couple of years already had subscribers across Europe and in more than 20 other countries, including North America, India, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. This was long before globalization became a buzz word and more than justified the inclusion of 'International' in the magazine title. Today, readership is in more than 120 countries.

Indeed, it was while Mike Fairley was attending a LATMA conference in Australia in the mid 1980s that Syd Staas, then managing director of the Assta Group commented: 'The label industry in Australia always used to be about two to three years behind Europe in its knowledge and implementation of new technology. That's how long information took to get disseminated in Australia. And we thought that Europe was a couple of years behind America. Now, Australia is just three weeks behind Europe and the USA. That's how long it takes each issue of Labels & Labelling International to get to Australia'. Perhaps this comment is a real measure of the impact that the magazine has had on the global label industry.

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A DECADE OF RAPID GROWTH

There can be little doubt that the period of growth from the mid 1980s to the mid 1990s was quite dramatic for the label industry – and for the magazine. It was a period in which major new materials, technology, product and application trends were emanating from the rise and rise of self-adhesives. Each new innovation increased volume usage of this fast-growing technology and all covered by the fledgling and now, fast-growing, magazine which was by now regularly up 60 to 80 or more pages.

Some of these major innovations and evolutions in self-adhesive label substrates came from the early implementation of barcode scanning at retail check-outs and the need to introduce thermally-sensitive label materials (now more commonly known as thermal direct) for the in-store price-weight labeling of supermarket fresh produce and, later, by fresh produce pre-packers. Labels & Labelling International was not only writing about these developments, but Mike – with his consultancy hat on – was also actively involved in bringing substrate, ink, price-weight machinery, converter and end-users together to solve some of the early problems of plasticizer migration, ink key, scratch and scuff, etc, and get new materials and technology adopted by the retail food sector.

Within a couple of years the magazine was also following the whole evolution of thermal transfer label technology and the development of variable information and bar code printing for industrial labeling sectors, for warehousing and distribution, as well as EAN and ANA barcode standards. Inkjet and laser imprintable label materials were also being developed for office and home use through new generations of table-top computer printers.

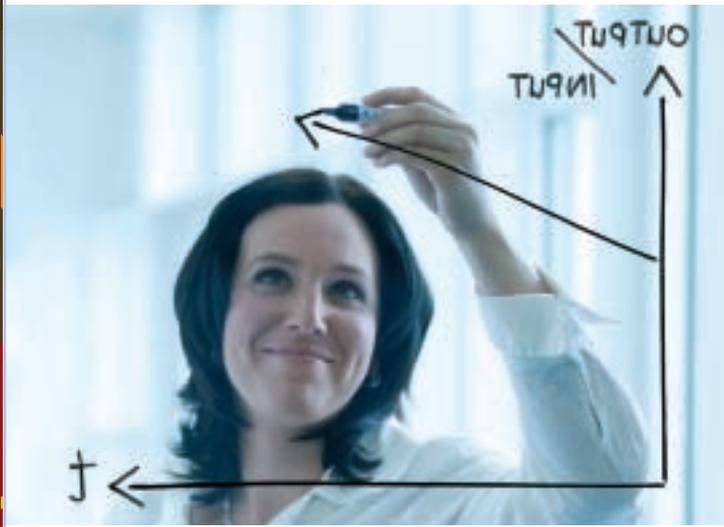
By the late 1980s there were major environmental pressures coming on vinyl materials, the main non-paper substrate used by the pressure-sensitive label sector at that time, and both the magazine and Mike Fairley, with his consultant hat on again, were writing about and undertaking market research on the potential and growth of new vinyl replacement label films such as polyethylene, polypropylene and polystyrene.

In terms of press technology, the 1980s – certainly in both Europe and Australia/New Zealand – was very much about the growth of rotary letterpress printing technology. Indeed, as many as 70 percent of new roll-label presses installed in

the later part of the 1980s were rotary letterpress – predominately Gallus and Ko-Pack machines. Today, rotary letterpress technology makes up less than ten percent of new roll-label press installations as flexo and UV flexo have become the dominant roll-label printing technologies being installed worldwide. From around 1985 the magazine was



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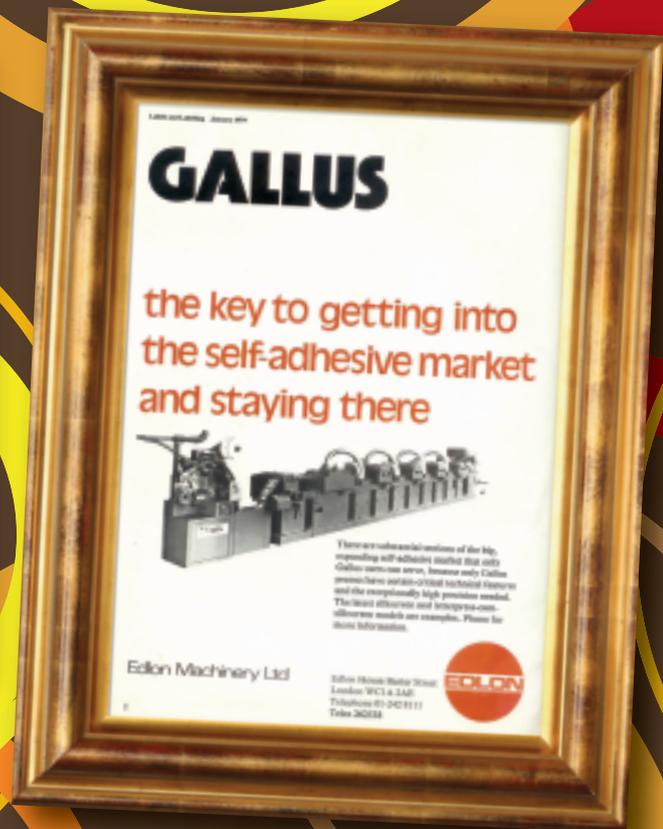
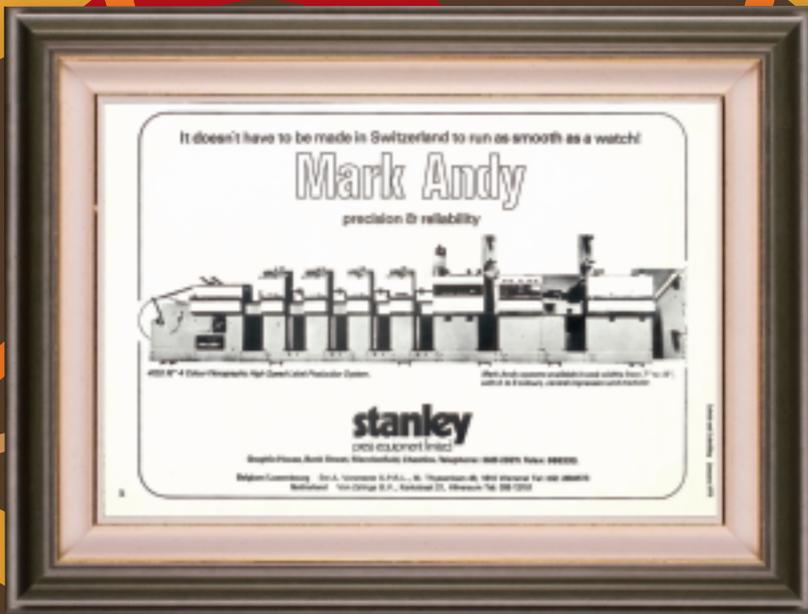
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also frequently writing about new developments in rotary screen, as well as the growing usage of combination process presses. Then there were first steps into the commercial application of computerized digital design and artwork for labels coming from Purrup and DISC (now both evolved into EskoArtwork) that have made such an impact on today's label industry, as well as new developments in stand-alone black-and-white digital presses using magnetography and ion deposition print engines. The digitization of label technology was about to begin.

By the 1990s the magazine was also frequently writing about new label technologies such as in-mold and shrink and stretch sleeve and, later still, the latest innovations in wrap-around film and cut-and-stack film labels coming from companies such as ExxonMobil. Certainly the world of labels has changed over the years.

In the mid 1990s Labels & Labelling International was at the forefront – and still is – of writing about the new technology of color digital label printing. From the very first showing and then installations of Xeikon and Indigo machines in 1995, the magazine has significantly tracked this fast-evolving technology to the point where HP Indigo and Punch Graphix/Xeikon machines between them made up around 14 percent of all new roll-label presses installed worldwide in 2007. Digital will surely continue to grow rapidly, particularly as new generation of color ink jet engines find their place in label production.

Certainly, few can doubt that the magazine has played a crucial role in the education, development and growth of the label industry worldwide in its 30 year history. But it was not all just about the magazine's growth. It played a key part in the evolution of the Labelexpo shows, industry wide conferences (now Summits) and market research on label trends. But let's go back a little while in time to put this into context.

EVOLVING INTO A PUBLISHING AND EXHIBITION GROUP

While Labels & Labelling International was in its early formative years a separate development that was to eventually have a

major impact on the world of labels had also been created – a fledgling exhibition company founded by a former United Trade Press exhibition manager, Clive Smith. Clive had left UTP in 1973 to form his own exhibition company and, in 1976, he launched – amongst other shows – an exhibition for the clothing and related industries – called Clotech. This show was for supplier companies to the clothing industry, some of whom were involved in coding, marking, ticketing and labeling.

By 1979 Clive Smith decided he would like to separate off the coding, marking and labeling elements into a small dedicated niche show – which he was to call Labelex – and which would not just be for garment labels but also include package and product labeling. Sounding out these industries as to the magazines they read he found most of them saying that the only relevant title was Labels & Labelling International. A phone call to Mike Fairley ensued and the two of them met up in London to discuss the possibility of the magazine becoming a sponsor for the new show.

This first-ever Labelex show, now sponsored by the magazine, was held in the spring of 1980 at the old Horticultural Halls near Victoria station in London. Officially opened by the Rt. Hon. John Smith, MP, the principal opposition spokesman on trade, prices and consumer protection, the event also saw the launch of the first-ever 'Directory of Labels & Labelling' as well as a dedicated show conference program organized by Mike in the nearby Royal Westminster Hotel on 'The economics of the total labeling operation'. These activities all proved to be the beginnings of a publishing, exhibition and conference partnership that eventually became the Labelex/Cowise Group in 1990 and, more recently, a key part of the Tarsus Group.

Labelexpo shows in Brussels were introduced in 1985 and have run every two years since then; in Chicago in 1989 and again in 1990 and every two years thereafter. Later came Singapore and, most recently, China. Numerous conferences on all aspects of label materials and technology were run by the Cowise arm internationally throughout this period.

By 1997 the Labelex/Cowise Group had become well



established as a global exhibition, publishing and conference company and looking to expand even further – but needing additional resources and levels of management to continue the global growth. New label technologies such as shrink sleeving, in-mold, wrap-around film, etc, were developing rapidly and it was planned to incorporate these into the shows, while Eastern Europe, Latin America, China and India were becoming core new centers of label growth that needed label events.

In 1998 the Labelex/Cowise Group was reversed engineered into a shell plc company and re-floated on the London Stock Exchange as Tarsus Group plc. Over the next ten years the Tarsus Group expanded rapidly, not just in the world of labels but also into areas such as off-price clothing, education, logistics, packaging, the Dubai Air Show and anti-aging shows, as well as into the world of electronic media with the launch of worldwide web sites (e.g. www.labelsandlabeling.com), electronic book stores, web streaming, web blogs, events and much more – although retaining the label industry as a core element of its activities.

Major label industry growth for the Labels Group at Tarsus in the new millennium has included the launch of Label Summits in Mumbai, New Delhi, Sao Paulo, Mexico City, China and Bangkok, the transfer of the Asia show from Singapore to Shanghai, the running of RFID Smart Label Conferences in Baltimore, Miami and Brussels, the launch of the Label Industry Global Awards and, most recently, the acquisition of the India Label Show.

The publishing of the Encyclopedia of Labels and Label Technology written by Mike Fairley also proved successful and this title, along with the RFID Smart Labels Handbook, formed the beginning of the Labels & Labeling electronic book store. This also markets and sells FINAT, TLMI and other technology and research publications to the label industry.

Now almost 30 years after Labels & Labelling International was launched and 28 years after the first label exhibition in

London, The world of labels continues to grow on a global basis at between 5 percent and 7 percent (the same as it was doing at the launch of the magazine in 1978), far more in the emerging markets. New label materials, technologies and solutions continue to aid this growth; developments in RFID, smart active labels, nanotechnology, etc, create opportunities and globalization sees the world of label grow even bigger.

Certainly the 2007 Labelexpo show in Brussels was to prove the largest dedicated label industry event ever held; over 500 exhibitors (including 145 new first-time exhibitors), nearly 25,000 visitors from some 114 countries, the highest ever Labelexpo seminar attendance, and record sales at the show by exhibitors of machinery, materials and technology. A record show by any standards, and even in a major troubled global financial market the recent Labelexpo Americas 2008 show stood up extremely well in terms of exhibitors and attendance.

Today, there can be little doubt that Labels & Labeling (its new name) and Labelexpo between them have had a major impact over the years on the nature, development, industrialization, growth and globalization of the label industry. The label industry is very much a people industry. Everybody knows everybody else, and few leave the industry for other markets. A dedicated show, conferences and magazine – working together with strong trade associations such as FINAT and TLMI – can provide that extra catalyst for long-term industry success. Long may it endure.

The original small publishing and exhibition ventures formed for the label industry in the late 1970s have now become part of one big plc group, but the ongoing dedication of the Labels Group Team at Tarsus, under managing director Roger Pellow, continues the original ideals of Mike Fairley and Clive Smith, working with the industry associations, suppliers and converters to provide dedicated magazine, conference, show, market and technical resources that will aid ongoing profitable growth for the world of labels for many years to come.

A birthday bash to remember

TLMI celebrated its 75th year supporting the needs of North American label converters and their suppliers at this year's Annual Meeting in Palm Beach, Florida – with style and a focus on sustainability. In an effort to support members' needs to gain more information about global green issues, high-profile presenters such as piano and keyboard entertainer Chuck Leavell, who has published works about forestry conservation, were invited to address attendees. Equally well-known Robert F. Kennedy Jr delivered the meeting's keynote presentation where he stressed the importance of implementing an industry wide Green program.

Project L.I.F.E. – Label Initiative for the Environment – a program of best environmental practices, was unveiled to members for use as a differentiation tool in the global marketplace. This program will only be available to TLMI supplier and converter members at first. They will be able to implement the detailed system to become a certified, recognized participant.

AWARD WINNERS

Avery Dennison accepted the TLMI Environmental Leadership award for its committed demonstration to environmental practices in areas such as solid waste reduction, recycling and its education programs. Wisconsin-based Lauterbach group earned the converter award for Environmental Leadership because of its commitments to scrap and energy management programs among many others. Lauterbach Group is also near completion on its LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – certified new plant set to have full operations running early next year.

Cheryl Caudill of Multi-Plastics won the TLMI Supplier of the Year award winner for her efforts in serving the industry and the association through active participation on the board of directors. Caudill is also the co-chair for the Industry Trends committee.

Rochester, New York-based Label World took the Best of Show award for its digitally printed Parkside Smoked Cheddar Sesame Crisps label completed on an HP Indigo 4050. This is the first time that a digital label has won the TLMI Best of Show award.

RECOGNIZED FOR PAST SUCCESS, NOW THE FUTURE

2008 marks a significant year for Multi-Color Corporation president and CEO Frank Gerace, who is now the association's chairman for the next two years and is the 2008 TLMI Converter of the Year award recipient. Gerace said, 'Well, the world truly is flat,' opening his acceptance speech. He subsequently discussed his excitement in his new leadership role while stressing the importance for members to look outside the North American region in their efforts to succeed in a globalized, interdependent economy and world.

INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

This year's event was astir with lively participation at committee meetings and exciting networking events. Numerous FINAT members – including current president Jan Frederik Vink and president elect Andrea Vimercati – helped TLMI celebrate its long-running success. The attending FINAT group encouraged tighter relations between the European-based label association and its North American counterpart. At its annual meeting this last June in Paris, FINAT introduced its Young Managers Club and it is looking to create the structure for a professional exchange program between the two memberships.

NEW MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT

TLMI's Members Area section of its website went live during the conference. It will serve as a secure area for members to interact on a live forum and obtain important information about Project L.I.F.E and other industry initiatives produced by the association's committees.



Steve Pawlowski, Mei Aives and Raw Matos



Michelle Garza, Tasha Janowski, Ken Meintardt, Danielle Jerschetske



Randy and Geri Wise



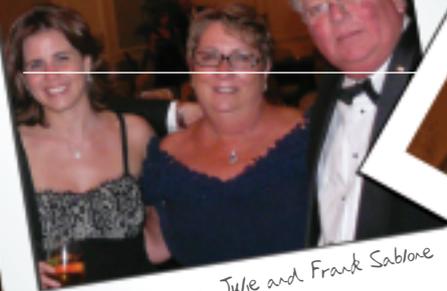
Ivan and Ester Galy



Roger Pellow, Bibiana Rodriguez, Jan Frederick Vink



(L-R) Avery Dennison's Don Nolas, Gray, VP, Roll Materials and Jan, FRNA and Catin Frost, Warzburger, VP & GM, Channeled Resources



Bibiana Rodriguez, Julie and Frank Sablone



Kathy and John Petron



Brian Ludwicks, Randy Wise, Bob, Suzanne and Lisa Zaccaro, Paul Meyers



Mike and Terri Harjiny



Federico D'Annunzio and Rob Smithson



Multi-Color Corporation - Converter of the Year 2008



Rick and Rhonda Mix, Jennifer and Robert Valdes



Tom Singh, Rick Moncrieff and Mike Harjiny

Taking the witch out of the craft

UK-BASED Borble is a dedicated digital label converter which has installed the first of Xeikon's new 3300 press. James Quirk reports

The majority of label converters which have invested in digital technology in recent years have done so from a platform of existing conventional equipment. Not so Rhyl, Wales-based Borble, which established itself almost four years ago as a dedicated digital converter.

Directors Barry Griffiths and Gavin Scott, who have backgrounds in gravure printing, had the initial idea of targeting the wallpaper border market – using a digital press to print personalized, non-repeating designs. But with their experience in flexible packaging and wet-glue labeling, they also realized that the machine would create opportunities for the label market.

Prior to the company's foundation in 2005, Griffiths and Scott gave up their jobs and embarked on an intense, eight-month period of full-time research into digital technology. They visited Holland and Belgium to test different presses. Their research showed them that, despite over-capacity in the UK label market, digital technology could bring a competitive advantage with its ability to produce small runs for a wide range of markets. 'Traditional sheetfed label press technology is geared towards high volume production and requires expensive carrier plates to lay solvent-based inks on to the print stock,' says Barry Griffiths. 'In contrast, digital technology doesn't use plates and the Xeikon machine doesn't use solvents, which makes it relatively green. During our research, all evidence pointed towards a digital future.'

The pair installed a Xeikon 330 in March 2005 and named the company Borble – an amalgamation of the words border and label.

Three years later, their plans have been vindicated. Borble has achieved sales of over GBP £1.2 million this year – up 50 percent from 2007 – and has printed millions of labels, with

30,000 different designs, for hundreds of companies. Now Borble has installed the UK's first Xeikon 3300 digital press, unveiled at drupa earlier this year, to further increase capacity and provide better service.

'The new press operates at almost three times the speed of the 330,' says Griffiths. 'This will further extend Borble's digital footprint into the traditional print domain.'

The 3300 offers 1200 dpi at four bits per spot. With a constant top speed of nearly 20 meters a minute, it includes five color stations – four for the standard process colors and one for spot colors as well as opaque white or a special security toner. The 3300 uses Xeikon's FA toner system, which is FDA-approved for use in certain food contact applications. It can print on a range of substrates from various self-adhesive films including co-extruded film, unsupported film, paper, transparent and opaque foils, and paperboard with weights ranging from 40 to 350 gsm. The dry toner electrophotography imaging process enables the use of conventional substrates without coating or pre-treatment.

The Xeikon 3300 comes with the latest generation of Xeikon's X-800 digital front-end. Based on open standards, the X-800 enables the implementation of fully automated workflows in any production environment, integrating seamlessly with any MIS. The X-800 offers ICC color management, facilitates integration in a conventional print environment and allows post-RIP color adjustment, minimizing downtime.

Both Borble's machines have inline finishing, provided by Xeikon through its relationship with Danish company GM. The company uses standard materials from Herma. 'With an HP press, of course, you'd have to coat first,' says Griffiths.

In between ordering the 3300 and its installation, Xeikon



THE Xeikon 3300 press with inline finishing



A selection of labels produced for local companies in Wales

provided Borble with a second 330 as an interim press. 'With one machine, the business can be vulnerable in terms of capacity, for example,' says Griffiths. 'Having two machines has helped us reach a point of critical mass.'

MARKETS

The walls of Borble's office are testament to the variety of applications for which the company has catered. One framed collage depicts labels printed for large brands, many of which are household names. A second is a collection of products created for smaller, mainly local clients – often entrepreneurial start-up companies which have been able to establish a level of brand identity which would not have been economically viable without digital technology. For Scott, this underlines one of digital technology's key advantages: the ability to cater to clients of vastly different sizes across a wide variety of markets. Just up the road from Borble's factory is CCL Label. According to Griffiths, though, the powerhouse converter is no threat.

Borble's biggest sectors are chemical, food, cosmetics, industrial and promotional labels. While the majority of its sales are in the UK, many products are ultimately exported, providing opportunities for variable data, such as multiple languages, to which digital is so suited.

An excellent example comes from an order from car manufacturer Toyota. Borble supplied Toyota Motor Manufacturing UK (TMUK) with a batch of one million labels, each uniquely identified by a number of variable data fields which allowed the company to implement a traceable workflow for its motor parts across supply lines

throughout Europe.

Borble has built up a storehouse of 30,000 different designs since the company's inception, which allows it to be of further

WHY XEIKON?

Borble director Barry Griffiths explains the decision behind opting for digital technology from Xeikon. 'When working with ISO, we spent a lot of time looking at dot gain, gamut mapping and color curves etc,' he says. 'Gravure is a great process because it places a volume of ink on the web and can print great highlights and deep solids – but the Xeikon is better.'

'The problem with ink carried by a plate or blanket is the dot is flattened and this squeezes color out of highlights and limits the content in solids. We actually went as far as having digital files prepared and printed on different presses and examined with CIELAB and density measurements as well as the mark-one eye-ball.'

'The Xeikon does not use a plate or blanket to transfer ink: dry particle toner is statically attracted to the web to high levels of resolution. This produces great tonal range as well as fine registration, and was the decisive factor for us.'

'In addition, and this has become more important recently, the Xeikon does not use solvent-based inks. We have no wet waste or abatement; we do not require the making of expensive polymer plates or their wasteful disposal, so our approach is environmentally friendly. The toner has a high colorfastness on the blue wool scale and all the work we have printed to date has been CMYK – with no specials needed, nor the set-up cost.'

Scott explained associated benefit from the Xeikon non-contact fusion process as 'not using solvent based ink means the toner is relatively insoluble so where in the past chemical companies had labels with expensive over-lamination to protect the ink, we are finding more companies test labels and opt for a varnish finish saving cost and materials.'

HIGHLIGHTS

MAKE SURE YOU DON'T FLICK PAST ANY OF THIS LOT!

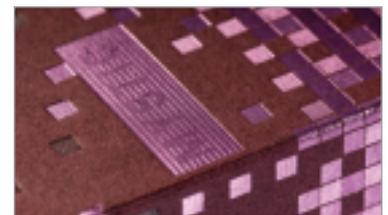
89 DIE INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENTS

A look at important corporate changes in the global die industry, and an assessment of the latest



94 STAMPING FOILS

A review of the latest developments in hot and cold stamping – including lenticular hot stamping and new developments in OVDs



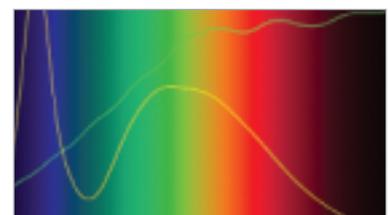
97 IN-LINE PROTECTION

L&L reports on a security technology which can be added to a label with no changes to existing workflow



101 BLINDED BY THE LIGHT

A new study on spectrophotometers reveals differences in instrument accuracy which could compromise agreed 'pass' standards for print jobs





THE XEIKON 330 at Borble's factory



BORBLE founding director Barry Griffiths in front of some of the company's wallpaper border products

service to its clients. 'We try to help people with the design process,' explains Griffiths. 'We have so many samples for so many applications, we can show examples of practically any type of product being labeled. It's a big advantage.' Borble also works closely with design companies, helping them to maximize the potential of the company's digital machines.

As an exclusively digital company, Borble targets jobs suitable to the technology. Fifty percent of its work comes from trade business, which Griffiths describes as the easiest way to get started. The company has kept faith with these trade accounts, which can now offer Borble orders tailored to its machines and workflow.

'You have to be creative with your selling,' reports Griffiths. 'Press proofs are a big advantage: customers can see exactly how a label will look on the substrate. Sometimes a company will want only a handful of labels, for an exhibition for example. If they do them with us, they don't have to pay for a plate.'

Griffiths spent some years working for ISO in gravure standards and, as a European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM) assessor, is committed to best practice. Borble is in the process of implementing ISO certification, and has applied a range of procedures over the last three years. But few manuals exist that are dedicated to digital printing; Griffiths has been able to contribute.

TRAINING THE TEAM

Griffiths admits that adopting the first digital press of its type was a big step, not least when it came to training. 'The skills used in conventional printing are not transferable to digital,' he says. 'The demands are different.'

Borble implemented an extensive in-house program to train staff. Founding director Gavin Scott became the company's first trained operator, while four other staff members are now also qualified to run the machine.

Borble operates the two XEIKON presses across a double shift with both printing and finishing. 'We did not expect it, but the team just engaged with the presses and decided that one operator can run two machines – so that is what we do,' says Scott. 'Technical support is also just right: XEIKON UK [based in Manchester] are just an hour away.' Call-outs are reported to be very limited, however, and press down time negligible.

'XEIKON's modularity and resilience lends itself to easy upgrading and maintenance,' says Griffiths. 'It helps us to see a long life in front of us.'



HOW TIME FLIES...
CONGRATULATIONS ON
30 GREAT YEARS!

UPM RAFLATAC

LOCAL SUPPORT AND THE FUTURE

A variety of initiatives are currently in place to attract businesses to Wales. Borble has benefited from this, receiving support from Venture Wales, founded by the Welsh Assembly Government to fund emerging businesses, and being awarded a grant to aid its purchase of the Xeikon 3300.

Though 95 percent of Borble's business comes from the label sector, the company maintains its belief in the potential for variable data wallpaper borders. 'We're yet to scratch the surface of opportunities,' says Griffiths. 'Education, for example, could be a massive area.' UK retail chain B&Q are said to be on the verge of stocking Borble's range of borders.

In the meantime, Borble has proved itself successful as a new type of label converter able to flourish in the highly competitive UK market. With digital technology now firmly established alongside traditional process in the label market, it is a business model which will surely be replicated.

Griffiths believes digital technology 'takes the witch out of the craft'. 'We entered manufacturing at a time when most people are leaving it, and entered the label market at a time of over capacity,' says Griffiths. 'A few eyebrows were raised, but this is a business for winners.'

BORBLE LAUNCHES WEB-TO-PRINT WEBSITE

Borble has recently launched an e-commerce website dedicated to labels at www.labelsprint.com. The website operates on three main levels. Firstly there is a show window describing Borble's resources and approach with examples, case studies, testimonials, a glossary and other digital label-related content.

In the background, and accessible only by password, are areas for Borble customers, where designers can archive and manage their designs, so only current designs are shown. Buyers can order quantities of specific designs online and these orders then enter the Borble workflow, saving time and minimizing the chance of errors.

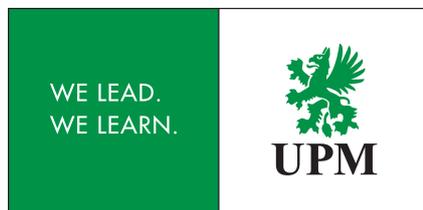
Central to the site is a unique web-to-print service for label users – 'get a quote'. A 'wizard' called 'Stan' takes users through the three steps to getting a quote or ordering labels in a few minutes. In step one, 'Stan' explains the process and gets the user started by selecting a suitable die cutter size. Once label size and cutter have been selected, it proceeds to step two, where materials are chosen along with options for winding and finishing and uploading artwork.

Selected artwork is shown on the right of the screen, and in step three you see a summary of the label materials, thumbnails of

artwork and larger images with cutter profile.

Users do not have to use artwork to get a quote and they can remain anonymous until they require an emailed quote.

'We envisage users engaging in a process where they request samples, get quotes on different materials, maybe buy a press proof and then engage with on-line purchasing,' says Griffiths. 'It is the first such web-to-print process for labels and this is just the start – it heralds a new approach to faster service, saved cost and widespread innovation. Output from orders placed seamlessly on the site merges with our workflow and production processes, with artwork flowing to our Xeikon presses and works instructions following our operating procedures. This saves cost while minimizing errors.'



Over the years, at UPM Raflatac, we've had the pleasure of working very closely with Labels & Labeling International. We both have a passion for labels, are dedicated to developing the industry and have the drive to innovate. We look forward to helping you ensure the continued success of the labelling industry for the next years to come. **Pro Label.**

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BIG ISSUE

Question: What does the industry need to do to recruit and train enough skilled operators to maintain its profitability through the next decade?



JAY SPERRY
RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, SONOCO INSTITUTE OF PACKAGING DESIGN AND GRAPHICS DEPARTMENT OF GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS, CLEMSON UNIVERSITY

The return on investment with training programs can be difficult to calculate, as many of the returns are intangible budget lines. However, the next few paragraphs will provide suggestions for investing in employee training, partnering with training organizations, and discovering the range of training opportunities for the package printing industry.

Engagement of industry representatives and corporations with training institutions and facilities is required to build and continually shape training curriculum, ensure adequate training facilities, and mentor training faculty. We strive to continually update training curriculum and add new training events, but without hands-on mentoring and close association with the end customer, it is difficult to fully understand their training challenges and opportunities to provide peak training programs.

Employee training is a financial investment that should be included in yearly budgets and adjusted based on a percentage of payrolls, or percentage of the operating budget. Anytime a major employee training program is initiated, brainstorm the evaluation metrics related to financial benefits such as press downtime, right the first time, waste, or value-added quality, and try to make a solid paper trail to identify the ROI of training dollars, to ensure continued training in the right emphasis areas for budget planning. A strategically developed and internally marketed training and education

program builds employee loyalty, confidence in problem solving, and stimulates teamwork.

Training opportunities are offered in many formats, ranging from on-site hands-on operational based training, to off-site broad based business improvement development symposia. It is important to find a balance of training methods, including every job function within your organization. At Clemson we have found building operators knowledge base around the entire flexographic workflow ensures they see the value of the pressroom, and understand their importance in the overall success of the business. It is also important for the operator to understand the full capability of the machines, and process control techniques. The variety of skill sets required in today's digitally controlled world reinforces the fact that many training styles, formats, and content areas are required to ensure a well-balanced workforce.

Universities including Clemson, RIT, Cal Poly, and Western Michigan offer technological hands-on workshops, seminars, and symposia, generally focusing on applied understanding of concepts, problem solving, implementation of new technology, and broad-based collaborative programs around flexography and package printing.

Technical Colleges including Fox Valley, Dunwoody, and Central Piedmont Community College also offer workshops, but often specialize in hands-on operator training while the Flexographic Trade Service businesses offer many press and prepress operator training services. Vendors are yet another option for specific product training.

Trade organizations such as the Flexographic Technical Association, and the Tag and Label Manufacturers Institute offer support for training institutions, and their own programs throughout the year for symposia and workshop style training.


DIANE WALTERS

SENIOR CONSULTANT WITH THE FLEXO FOR HIRE (FFH) DIVISION OF NATIONAL PRINTING AND PACKAGING SERVICES (NPPS) IN THE US

Flexo For Hire (FFH) is one of the few recruiters in the United States which actually concentrates on the label and flexo industry nationwide. We think we are in a unique position to witness the shortage of skilled operators today. And it is very real.

Clients call us everyday looking for experienced operators, not trainees. They need people who can start working with minimal training. Of course they often discover that such people are becoming increasingly scarce.

What's missing to attract new blood? Well for one thing – visibility. Few people outside the industry realize such jobs even exist. When we tell non-printers what we do as recruiters, their response is usually 'is that really an industry? Can people make a living doing that? How many labels could companies need printed?'

That means the industry basically only recruits new operators from the small pool of people who already know other printers, or have relatives who are printers, or have worked in or near the industry, etc.

And our anecdotal experience is that the operator pool is also getting older. The bad news: there is no 'youth movement' in flexo. But there needs to be one. The good news: trained operators are happy with their careers and want to stay in it for life.


MIKE FAIRLEY

DIRECTOR, STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT, TARSUS LABELS GROUP

Over the past thirty years the label industry has expanded rapidly as new label materials and technologies are developed and globalization accelerates. But education and training to meet all these new challenges has not evolved as fast as the industry itself. There are limited international education and training standards, poor availability of relevant training modules, and few organized global resources to meet the growth in label industry.

For the past three years L&L has undertaken industry surveys in all the key markets where it organizes exhibitions, summits or conferences. In virtually every market surveyed to date, 'education and training' is identified as one of the main industry needs required to stimulate further growth and development of the industry for the future.

This need for education does not come from a lack of knowledge in the industry, but more from a lack of any formalized international education and training programs or systems that label companies can easily adopt, follow and implement so as to have a global education and training system.


ALEXANDER SCHNELLER-SCHARAU

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, MARZEK ETIKETTEN, AUSTRIA

People are the most important asset in a company, yet at the same time the most complex one. An investment in machinery will deliver the expected results most of the time, as a machine performs the same regardless where it is in the world.

When it comes to people, the choice of the right staff is crucial. I consider personality to be more important than knowledge. With the right attitude anything can be learned. I have employed printing operators who had a lot of experience in general printing and completed printing courses, but in practice their performance was lacking when it came to being able to fulfill the demands of pressure-sensitive reel printing.

When someone believes in himself – even a bus driver or baker by trade, and we have already employed both – he or she can exceed your, and their own, expectations. In Eastern Europe there is still a strong focus on diplomas, as I came quickly to understand in our Hungarian printing operations. Available pressure-sensitive printing operators on the market are limited, so the focus is on the right choice of staff and effective training.

You can greatly enrich their job experience by extending their training to other departments – even for printers. This overlapping experience stimulates interaction later on, reinforces contact, and improves the understanding each has for the other.

Personally, I like to check what the trainee has learned by letting him demonstrate his knowledge. This is an interesting feedback process and it delivers insight into someone's personality. A greater skill base automatically increases the productivity and competence of a company's workforce.

Such a system would enable any label-related company to follow, say, a series of education and training modules that would formalize and track the development of every employee in the industry.

Modules like this would utilize internal company personal to pass on knowledge and skills, monitor and sign off stages of training, so enabling every person entering the industry to have a logbook that records and monitors their development and progress. These logbooks would be transferable between companies and sections of the industry and could follow each employee throughout his working life.

It is to provide this global education resource, with a standardized system of modules, encompassed into an employee's individual training logbook, that I am currently developing an outline industry training program based on my 40 years of experience in education, industrial training, courses, seminars, workshops and in-house presentations, visits to converters and suppliers, and from undertaking all the survey analysis. This initial basic program being created is being based on 20 identified modules.

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THE NILPETER M03300 presses are arranged in facing pairs. The two nearest are servo driven machines

Global player

WHAT are the requirements for a converter which wants to service global multinational brands? Andy Thomas visited the Skanem Group's Liverpool, UK operation to find out

Skanem Liverpool has completed a strategic move from rotary letterpress to combination rotary offset litho and is positioning itself as a primary strategic supplier to multinational brands.

'Our strategy has been to develop our multinational business,' says David Harrisson, multinational sales director at Skanem, and former president of FINAT. 'Two years ago our target was 50 percent of sales to multinationals and we will hit that by the end of this year. We had lower profits as a group last year, but we expected that mainly because of the investment we've made in Moscow and Bangkok. We also developed a disaster recovery program, which is so important to multinational customers.'

Working for a small number of multinational clients presents its own set of challenges. 'Multinationals are centralizing their buying operations for labels and packaging, so the buying source is often in different countries to where the labels are delivered,' Harrisson points out.

Customers often want different solutions for each of their regional plants, and Skanem has been working hard on developing a flexible logistics system, which will be tied together with a common MIS platform.

The push by multinationals to globalize their brands means Skanem has become a global supplier. Over the past few years, plants have been acquired or set up on Greenfield sites in Bangkok in Thailand, in Poland and in Russia. Skanem is looking for future expansion in Asia and Eastern Europe.

At the same time, the company has invested heavily in optimizing its existing capacity. At Skanem Introl in Poland, for example, the company now has five Gallus RCS330 UV flexo/screen combination presses, including the latest, wider 430mm model. In January offset modules will arrive to add additional flexibility.

A key requirement for servicing multinationals is plant redundancy – the ability to recover rapidly from a disaster – and

surge capacity. 'It is very hard for multinational customers to accurately forecast demand, and this requires us to maintain a surge capacity up to 30 percent,' notes plant managing director Steve Dunne. 'It is not just machines but people which can be the limiting factor here. I calculate surge capacity in terms of both in order to ramp up production quickly. This in turn requires commonality between presses and processes to react quickly to the needs of the customer.'

"We want our people to see us as a career and not as a job. If we in the UK do not change and become more flexible and self-assured, we will lose out globally"

Steve Dunne has focused hard on Lean manufacturing, and in particular set-up time, and says this drive has been helped by the company's latest Nilpeter MO3300 'S' servo presses, which print alongside the standard, shaft-driven models. 'With the new Nilpeter presses we have cut makeready times by 50 percent and increased running speed by 30 percent. And this is without Nilpeter's new generation of sleeve offset presses. Wider, 410mm-wide servo offset presses with sleeves are the future.'

BUILDING CONFIDENCE, BUILDING TEAMS

Developing people has always been important to Steve Dunne since his early days pioneering flexo carton printing at Cartonmaster. 'We want our people to see us as a career and not as a job. If we in the UK do not change and become more flexible and self-assured, we will lose out globally.'

The emphasis on developing teams can be seen in the way the Nilpeter presses are organized. The six presses are laid out in facing pairs, each served by a team of two printers and an assistant. The three press teams come together twice a day for planning meetings.



(L-R) David Harrison, multinational sales manager, and Steve Dunne, managing director Skanem Liverpool



To instill a sense of team pride in the equipment, Steve Dunne has implemented what he calls the 'Car Hire' scheme aimed at keeping the presses and press area clean and well maintained.

'I called the team together and told them that when I see something wrong in the press, it's their responsibility, not the previous shift. They have to sign the press off from the previous crew – just like the checklist you sign when you take over a hire car: are the guards in place, are the ink ducts clean and so on. This creates peer pressure to leave the machine in a fit state.'

Constant training and re-training is also important: 'I want to know about any problems so we can fix them - not as a witch hunt but to identify weak points so we can do something about it. Is die strike happening because of the equipment, or is there a need for more training on die setting? This increases our skill base and is another way to tell the operators that they are the guys in charge.' And nobody is specially privileged. 'One thing I have never liked in our industry is the idea that the printer is 'special'. You need to treat printers with respect, but they should also help keep the press clean!'

Skanem Liverpool has extended its training/team concepts to end users. The company offers training to the label

LABELS & LABELING

applicator operators in how to handle the finished rolls of labels. This information is offered in English, Spanish and French and is supported by printed pamphlets summarizing the training information.

A dedicated QC department has reduced returns to under 0.25 percent, and labels generally go straight onto the applicator line without further inspection.

A further area of teamwork is Skanem's relationship with its suppliers. Materials are supplied JIT by Avery Dennison and Raflatoc and great productivity gains have been realized by moving to 4,000 meter rolls. The number of pallets inwards has been cut in half, and the presses have been fitted with Martin Automatic dual unwinds to handle these bigger rolls – which has also helped cut down on waste. Steve Dunne is now looking at the possibility of moving up to 6,000 meter rolls to maximize these productivity and wastage gains.

PRE-PRESS

Last year Skanem Liverpool moved to CTP and a fully digital workflow. 'The real beauty of CTP is that if a plate goes down, anyone can make a new plate and it will always be the same quality,' says Steve Dunne. 'This is completely different to when we used film, when 20 people would make plates in 20 different ways and we were always chasing the image on the press. The print assistants are all

ENVIRONMENT

Skanem Liverpool has implemented a program to reduce its environmental impact by compacting and baling all waste – edge trim and matrix – that comes off the presses and rewinders. The bales are taken to a recycling plant and extruded into new products, while used ink and varnish pots are all sent back to the supplier to be re-used. This program has generated cost savings of around £100k a year.

The company is also offering a release liner recycling scheme, first implemented at a large multi-national customer plant, and now being rolled out across Europe.

trained to make replacement plates. We make twice as many plates now as three years ago with half the people.'

Skanem does not generally get involved in repro work for its multinational clients, and this can lead to some frustration. 'We would love to take over more of the repro aspects of a job, because if the file that comes to us is wrong, we have to send it back to the repro house,' says Steve Dunne. 'The challenge for us is to get closer to the front end of the digital workflow.'

There is in-house ink mixing support from Flint, which helps in the quest to maintain a streamlined color-managed workflow.

“ In the struggle for survival, the fittest win out at the expense of their rivals because they succeed in adapting themselves best to their environment.”

Charles Darwin

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**LABELS &
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HERMA'S new plant was completed in just 14 months

Herma brings €35m coating plant on stream

HERMA has incorporated some highly innovative design concepts and curtain technology into its new plant in Stuttgart, Germany. Andy Thomas reports

Herma is aiming to become Europe's 'third alternative' supplier of the full range of film and paper pressure-sensitive products with the commissioning of a state-of-the-art coating plant at its Filderstadt, Stuttgart base.

The new coating plant represents an investment of €35m, with a further €10m to follow next year, and is the largest single construction project undertaken in the company's 102 year history.

The most extraordinary aspect of the design is that the coater sits directly beside a fully automated high rise warehouse, dramatically reducing the time and distance involved in moving rolls through the production process. And at the heart of the plant sits what Herma claims is another first in the labels sector: a multi-layer curtain coater.

Construction of the plant was driven by the need to expand capacity. 'Herma's self-adhesive materials division has grown at a two-figure rate during each of the last ten years, exceeding the growth of the market,' explained managing director Dr. Thomas Baumgärtner, who leads Herma's self-adhesive materials division.

The company did look at the feasibility of lower cost manufacturing in Asia, but that was considered too far from its central markets in Europe. 'We also considered synergic effects with existing facilities, the need for a highly-qualified workforce to implement these state-of-the-art manufacturing technologies and the extent to which raw materials contribute towards the overall costs, and these were decisive factors,' explained Baumgärtner.

Herma is certainly upbeat about the prospects for the

LABELS & LABELING

European PS sector. 'The European market grew by almost 7.7 percent in 2006, which is 400 million square meters of adhesive material, and by around 4.3 percent last year to a total of 5-5.4 billion square meters,' said Baumgärtner. 'The continuing drive in Eastern Europe and Russia to catch up with the West and the increased demand of logistics labels – due to the growing on-line shopping in Central and Western Europe – gives Herma an excellent base for future growth.'

COATING INNOVATION

The multiple curtain technology on Herma's new coating line deposits a fine vertical curtain from two nozzles simultaneously. This provides for a stable and reliable coating process and allows multiple adhesive layers to be applied simultaneously.

'This opens up completely new areas of application for labels,' says Dr Baumgärtner. 'As an example, two layers of different adhesive could be applied for new adhesive properties like improved diecut-ability'.

This can be achieved, of course, with dual coating heads, but Herma says there are major process and efficiency advantages with multiple nozzles within a single head.

The coater has a range of features which help reduce downtime between jobs. One example is a fully automatic in-line silicon mixing device, which allows new formulations to be delivered without having to stop the coating unit.

The line runs at a maximum speed of 1100-1200 meters/min, some 50 percent faster than the company's existing coater. It incorporates fully automated roll change at full line speed using

only a few centimetres of overlapping web during the splice.

In another key innovation, exhaust heat from the drying system is used to pre-heat the air going into the dryer. Not only does this reduce fuel consumption, since a gas heater can now be used instead of thermal oil, but it also allows the target temperature to be reached more quickly. The system also optimizes cooling processes.

The line is designed to switch rapidly between film and paper, and includes re-moisturising systems with adjustable zones. A compact corona treating system uses two independently controlled electrode 'bundles' to ensure the line can handle a wide variety of filmic materials.

Herma does not yet believe that alternatives to heat drying – electron beam or UV – are currently flexible enough for the diverse requirements of this line.

All process parameters can be stored, allowing repeat products to be quickly and accurately reproduced with a consistent quality.

HANDLING EFFICIENCY

The decision to place the high rise storage facility directly beside the coater was a direct response to the limited building space at Herma's Filderstadt site. But it has enabled Herma to dispense completely with manual transport routes for the rolls, which are up to 2-meters wide and can weigh up to 5-tonnes. The warehouse has a capacity of 1150 paper rolls or 3700 pallets.

All reels are scanned into the system when they arrive at the plant and are placed robotically into the warehouse beside the coater. The control system automatically selects the roll which most closely matches the requirements of the next job, then brings it robotically directly to the coater floor and inserts it into the coater unwind station. After the roll has been coated, it can either be taken back to the warehouse, or moved to processing and despatch – all without manual intervention.

'Reducing the distance rolls travel and eliminating manual handling has dramatically reduced the roll damage suffered in a normal plant, as well as reducing energy expended in moving rolls,' says Baumgärtner. The entire storage and coater system is run by just five people.

Currently, the roll slitting, packing and despatch area is located in a separate building, connected by a bridge to the new coater. There has been significant investment to support the new line, including the addition of a 2 meter wide slitter last year. The



JOINT MANAGING DIRECTORS Sven Schneller and Dr Thomas Baumgärtner

ability to match suppliers' machine widths and to take roll lengths up to 36,000m reduces waste through the supply chain.

Next year work starts on a €10m slitting and packaging center in the new building, which will become a fully self-contained operation.

THE FUTURE

Herma expects the new coating plant to more than double the company's capacity from 300 to 750 m sq metres per year. It is looking to grow at around 10 percent annually, with the share of exports rising from just over half to 70 percent of production.

The new coater is not yet running at full capacity. Coating and automatic splicing could potentially operate at line speeds of 1500 - 1600 m/min. 'We do not want to flood the market,' states Baumgärtner. 'At the same time the line is 'future proof' and can provide extra capacity if required.'

The opening of the new coater has been accompanied by a significant change of strategy at Herma, which is a label printer/converter as well as a materials supplier and applicator manufacturer. 'We are moving away from high value added label printing to avoid competition with our customers on the adhesive materials side, and concentrating on logistics labels and office supplies,' says Baumgärtner, who believes that adhesive materials will account for two thirds of Herma's sales in a few years.

THE COATING LINE built by Polytype runs at up to 1100 m/min with the potential to hit 1500

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Born in the Czech Republic

THE SUCCESS OF S&K Label in Central and Eastern Europe demonstrates how fast the region's label industry is growing – and the opportunities for further expansion. Andy Thomas reports

Founded in 1990, S&K Label is the Czech Republic's biggest label converter, accounting for 25 percent of the country's pressure-sensitive label output.

As with so many successful converters in the fast growing markets of Central and Eastern Europe, S&K Label has grown rapidly over the last ten years, more than doubling revenue between 1997 and 2007. In its drive for expansion, S&K Label has been able to call on the resources of its 30 million euro parent company, S&K Group, which consists of six companies specializing in a range of industrial applications.

S&K Label started out as a small advertising agency handling commercial print and promotional labels before taking the decision to print labels itself, operating from a rented building in central Brno. Interestingly, S&K had an international outlook from its earliest days, and was the first Czech company to join FINAT way back in 1993.

In 2006 the need for extra capacity saw S&K take the decision to build its own state-of-the-art facility in the Kuim industrial zone. The new plant opened at the end of 2007 and production began a few months later.

On a European scale, S&K already counts as a medium-sized label converter, with 12 flexo and UV flexo presses and one digital press, 150 employees and a 2007 turnover of €14 million. Last year the company converted 16.5 million square meters of PS material – three times the figure for 1997.

'Our aim is to achieve 28 percent share in the Czech market while increasing our exports,' says S&K's sales and marketing director Ladislav Koutnak. Exports currently account for 12 percent of S&K's turnover – up from 7 percent in 2002 – and the target is 18 percent. Not surprisingly, central European economies such as Slovakia, Hungary, Austria, Germany and the Netherlands are among S&K's most successful export markets, although a significant amount of business is done in the Middle East and North Africa, particularly Egypt and Tunisia. In South Eastern Europe, Serbia and Montenegro are growing export markets. Looking to the future, Koutnak sees the fastest export growth coming from countries outside the EU – particularly to the East.

S&K counts among its customers an impressive list of global brands, including Procter & Gamble, Unilever,

and Kimberly-Clark. A great deal of S&K's production is supplied to foreign markets indirectly via the Czech branch offices of these multinational companies. S&K also works with the major global retail groups like Tesco and Ahold, which account for around 13 percent of sales. On the industrial side, major customers include Skoda Auto, Bosch Diesel, Invetec and Andrew Communications

"On a European scale, S&K already counts as a medium-sized label converter, with 12 flexo and UV flexo presses, 150 employees and a 2007 turnover of €14 million"

While S&K's key end use sectors are food – representing around one quarter of sales – cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and chemicals, some 20 percent of the company's business is in blank label production. This involves converting self-adhesive label sheets and fanfold labels for the office market, and direct thermal and thermal transfer label blanks for retail customers.

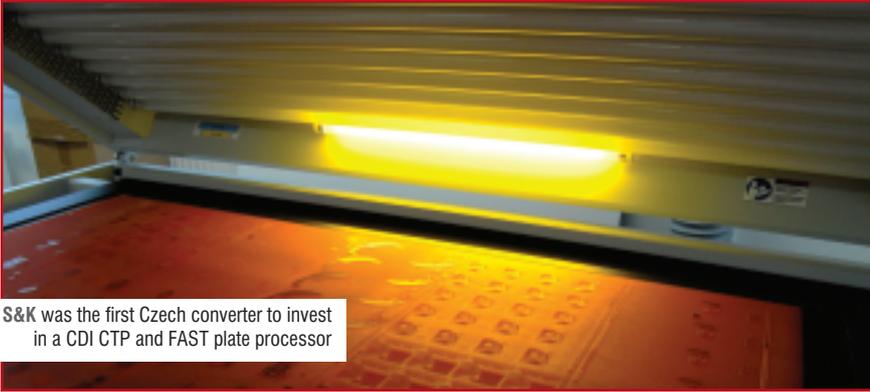
One market where S&K Label has



A RECENT investment in Cobra plate mounting technology has increased print quality



10-COLOR Nilpeter FA4 specified for unsupported film as well as PS



S&K was the first Czech converter to invest in a CDI CTP and FAST plate processor



COMPLETED early 2008, S&K Label's purpose-built label plant

recently become active is the provision of functional labels for durable goods, in support of the growing manufacturing base in the Czech Republic of 'white goods', electronic items, and automotive components. This is certainly a specialty field, as such labels must conform to international safety specifications, and stay, legibly, in place throughout the life of the product.

'This is an area where we plan to grow out business, and we are working with Avery Dennison in Prague to do so,' says Karel Sehnal, managing director at S&K. One area where we are currently benefiting from their technical support is printing durable labels on Fasson labelstock on the new HP Indigo ws4500 digital press we have just installed.'

TECHNOLOGY

S&K started out as a letterpress house with a Nilpeter B200 installed in 1991. The move to flexo was made four years later with the purchase of an 18-unit Comco Commander press, and in 2000 the company invested in its first UV flexo press, a Nilpeter FA 3300. Screen units were added in 2003 to allow S&K to enter the cosmetics label sector.

S&K celebrated the move to its new plant with the purchase of a 10-color Nilpeter FA4 UV flexo press with the capability to convert not only self-adhesive labels, but also unsupported films. Print trials with shrink sleeve labels are now under way

LABELS & LABELING

and the 400mm-wide press has been successfully printing a range of white, transparent, metallic and pearlized BOPP films.

'We are hoping to extend our relationship with Avery into the realms of the Fasson Rapid Roll portfolio, which offers such unsupported films,' says Karel Sehnal.

To support the FA-4, S&K purchased a RotoflexVLI 500E rewinder with a razor cut capability to handle film slitting. A VLI 330 slitter rewinder was also purchased, along with an Alphasonics Mia 1100 anilox roll cleaning machine.

S&K recently moved into digital printing with an HP Indigo ws4500 7-color press, only the second such machine installed in the Czech Republic. It was supplied with an off-line Omega Digicon series 2 converting line incorporating priming, varnishing, laminating, die-cutting, slitting and hot-foil stamping.

S&K is currently developing its own digital printing swatch and looking at projects which focus on small batches, such as wine labels. 'There are 200 wineries in our region and these are usually custom-printed labels,' says Martin Sedlacek, S&K area business manager. 'We adjust the colors to match flexo and we find that for short run applications it is a low cost option, as we do not need to make plates. We are testing doing our own coating, although Avery does have standard coated wine label stocks.'

In terms of pre-press, in 2006 S&K Label was the first Czech converter to install an EskoArtwork CDI Spark 4835 flexo CTP system, along with a Cyrel FAST 1000TD thermal processor. A Heaford Cobra table top plate mounter was also installed.

LEAN AND GREEN

S&K Label has done a lot of work in the area of Lean Manufacturing and in promoting a more efficient and sustainable workflow. The company was recently awarded ISO 9001 and ISO 14001. It is currently putting in place systems for recycling waste and conserving energy.

The company runs a K2 MIS, which allows continuous monitoring of production operations from entering of the job order to dispatch. 'The system has led to a radical reduction in error rate, a significant increase in through-put, and online delivery tracking of products from the warehouse,' says Martin Sedlacek.

Print quality control is another obsession at S&K, which has installed an ALIS CII off-line inspection system to check print quality. The system is capable of finding and evaluating even small deviations in color, and of checking color register and content accuracy.

PARTNERSHIPS

Central to the success of S&K has been the close partnerships forged with industry suppliers. When L&L toured the new plant, Kocher & Beck director Martin Stierle was visiting. K&B supplies S&K with magnetic dies and cylinders. 'We realized that extremely tight tolerances on die-cutting plates is a must, not an option and Kocher & Beck have always been able to meet our needs for tight tolerances and quick delivery,' said Martin Sedlacek.

All S&K presses are fitted with K&B's KMS-2 pressure setting systems. 'There are some customers whom we have to convince about the need for pressure control systems. But people here were always clear that it helps the printer to control what he is doing and so helps to control quality,' commented Martin Stierle.

Avery Dennison has been another key partner for S&K. 'Special labeling solutions are often a requirement of our customers, and Avery Dennison is always willing to help develop a solution for a particular project,' says Karel Sehnal. S&K Label also helps Avery Dennison by trialing new materials.

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Customizing high-tech converting

DELTA Industrial offers label and packaging converters tailored converting equipment, most recently bringing together inkjet and laser die cutting into one system. Danielle Jerschevske reports

One of the big buzzes at Labelexpo Americas last September was the rise of inkjet. A central question is how inkjet technology will be integrated into converting systems to add value to a converter's operations. One company with a very interesting answer is Delta Industrial Services, Inc., headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, which demonstrated an in-line, fully digital print and finishing system incorporating Xaar print heads and an Edge laser die cutting module.

Established in 1977 as an automation specialist in the computer/servo drive machine tool industry, Delta quickly expanded into manufacturing servo-driven control systems for web handling machinery. By the mid-eighties Delta was focusing on its modular technology, Delta Mod-Tech, which was quickly married with its servo-driven systems to produce flexible mechanical converting equipment.

'At Delta, we build robust, well-engineered products around our customer's needs,' says founder Dave Schiebout. 'This allows our customers the latitude to be in control of production.'

Delta sees its systems meeting the growing demand for better track and trace systems and more complex product authentication verifiers. Its systems are highly modular, so the digital print module could additionally be added to its Spectrum finishing system – using semi-rotary technology for cutting and a coating module for finishing - or a user's own system.

The Edge laser die cutting module provides a way for converters to cut costs and increase flexibility. 'We saw that short run converters needed to reduce tooling costs and the logical solution was this 'digital replacement' for hard tooling,' Schiebout explains. 'Laser cutting works for details, perfs, deep cutting, etcetera.'

A particularly versatile module is Delta's island placement unit, which allows the user to pick and place high value components onto a web with extreme accuracy. This has been used, for example, to apply transdermal medicated adhesive patches or RFID tags.

Delta can offer both read and write RFID modules, and when combined with digital printing, a system can be configured to integrate 2D and 3D

barcodes with RFID tags to provide related sequential data throughout a supply chain.

'We look ahead of the trends and oftentimes we come up with a solution for a customer in one industry that can be translated into success for a customer in another one,' says Schiebout. 'This allows us to get into new niches and provide our customers with the capability to produce a variety of products and packaged goods that they've never dreamed they could do.'

The design and quoting process is integral to the successful manufacture of Delta's equipment. While around eighty percent of the parts needed to fabricate a customized machine are pulled from one of the 'plug and play' standard modules, the remaining components can often require more innovative design, further engineering and/or personalized IT development, and subsequent testing. Each machine's modules can be independently programmed, providing more flexibility, orchestrated precision, tight tolerances and better overall control.

During this development period, the engineering department identifies customer specific trouble areas to ensure that solutions can be provided within the given quote. 'We have solid design concepts in place when we quote a project,' says Jason Newville, design engineer. Any risky processes are proven up front before manufacturing begins. This both protects Delta's customers and eliminates risk for the company. Delta strives to release quotes within one week; the average manufacturing time is around 29 weeks.

The formula certainly seems a successful one. For the last decade the company has grown at an average of 20-25 percent annually. 'Until recently, ninety percent of our client base was repeat customers,' concludes Schiebout. 'But now, only 58 percent of our customers are repeat and we have become much more diversified.' Already one quarter of the company's sales are outside the US.



LABELXPO AMERICAS 2008

At Labelexpo this year, Delta sold three machines and acquired as many quality leads in one day as it had over the entire show in 2006. 'It was a hot show for us,' Schiebout says. 'There was a lot of diversity, with interest from all over the world – Russia, South America, India and the US.'



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ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS



AVERY DENNISON WINS TLMI ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP AWARD

The Fasson Roll North America division of Avery Dennison Corporation has been recognized with the 2008 Environmental Leadership Award from the TLMI. Since 2003, TLMI annually awards the leadership efforts of a both a converter and supplier member company that can demonstrate its commitment and quantitatively measure good environmental practices.

'Avery Dennison is taking an active, leading role in the implementation of industry sustainability initiatives,' said Calvin Frost, TLMI environmental committee chair. 'The company has created a multi-pronged strategy which has improved their products and processes.'

Sustainability initiatives recognized by TLMI include:

- doubling the Fasson EcoFriendly portfolio offering that includes pressure-sensitive and Rapid-Roll renewable and post consumer waste (PCW) options. Many of the product offerings carry chain-of-custody FSC and SFI certifications.
- Giving converters access to service programs – Fasson Exact, Ready Width, Optimum Performance – that can improve productivity and reduce waste, along with creating better inventory management. These services have grown in synch with demand.
- Introducing, in partnership with Channeled Resources Group, Recycled Solutions, a liner recycling program that ensures all liner products – including paper and PET silicone coated – can be reused or recycled with regional collection centers and simple logistical solutions.
- Continuing education vehicles such as regional road show events and webinars to help converters understand how they can engage in green behaviors that drive value. Topics ranged from waste hierarchy, to using life-cycle analysis and data-driven information for informed decisions making, to looking at trends and opportunities.

AVERY DENNISON ACHIEVES SFI CERTIFICATION AT MULTIPLE SITES

The Fasson Roll North America division of Avery Dennison Corporation has achieved certification to the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) for a number of North American coating and distribution locations.

The following locations were chosen to support products that carry SFI certification in the expanding portfolio of Fasson EcoFriendly products: Peachtree, Georgia; Greenfield, Indiana; Fort Wayne, Indiana; Greensboro, North Carolina; Rancho Cucamonga, California; Sacramento, California; Mentor, Ohio; and Neenah, Wisconsin.

HOT OF THE PRESS

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL STORIES

INNOVIA EXPANDS NATUREFLEX RANGE

Innovia Films' NatureFlex range has now expanded to bring the pressure-sensitive label converter a choice of clear, white or metalized sustainable label facestock films. As with the clear NatureFlex facestock film NVL, the new films in the range, white NVLW and metalized NML, are based on renewable wood pulp sourced from managed plantations, which either have or are working towards FSC, PEFC or similar certification.

NatureFlex films are both sustainable and biodegradable and are fully certified to EN13432 and the corresponding USA equivalent ASTM D6400. In addition, NatureFlex films are suitable for disposal in home compost environments and can carry the 'Home Compost' logo, having passed the requirements of AIB-Vincotte International.

Being based on renewable wood pulp, NatureFlex Films have a renewable or biobased content of circa 95 percent as determined by ASTM D6866.

3 SIGMA ANNOUNCES NEW WATER-DISSOLVABLE LABELSTOCK

3 Sigma, a supplier of pressure-sensitive and other materials to the label industry, has launched a water-dissolvable labelstock. The product consists of a 40-pound supercalendered paper and WD-1 adhesive, both of which dissolve quickly and wash away in room temperature water. The new 3 Sigma labelstock is ideally suited for marking and identifying food trays, water toys, sports equipment, watercraft, or returnable containers. 3 Sigma product development manager Paul Benson commented: 'Many manufacturers and end users seek a temporary label product that is environmentally benign and can be easily removed. This labelstock has great potential for new and innovative applications, and was enthusiastically received by label producers during beta testing.'

TORRASPAPEL EXTENDS PEFC ACCREDITATION TO ALL ITS MILLS

Following the PEFC Chain of Custody certification of its cellulose pulp, coated paper, and uncoated paper mills and the extension of this certification to all its merchants and subsidiaries, Torraspapel, part of the Lecta Group, has now achieved Chain of Custody certification of its specialty paper and self-adhesive mills. With this action, all nine of the group's manufacturing sites now hold PEFC certification, and its entire range of products – pulp, coated paper, uncoated paper, carbonless, thermal, cast-coated, metalized and self-adhesive – is covered by this certification. Furthermore, PEFC multi-site certification enables Torraspapel's distributors and sales offices to guarantee the traceability of the products they sell, meaning that the wood used in manufacturing the pulp and paper comes from responsibly managed forests.

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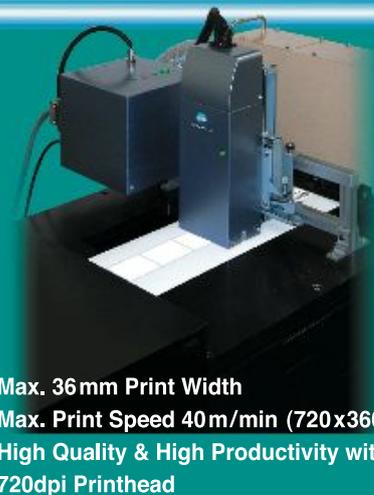
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The essentials of imaging



Industry group raises paper's profile

WITH a recent survey of print buyers revealing negative attitudes towards the environmental impact of paper products, a UK trade body has launched an initiative to address the criticisms. James Quirk reports

The paper industry is facing criticism from some environmentalists who point to shrinking forests, excessive energy consumption and overflowing landfill sites. With around half the labels printed globally using paper, this has important ramifications for label converters and end users.

The UK-based National Association of Paper Merchants (NAPM) last year commissioned a survey of print buyers, 80 percent of whom said that environmental considerations play a role in their paper purchasing decision. Worryingly for the paper industry, almost half of respondents believed that paper production is a major cause of deforestation and has a negative impact upon the environment. A further 70 percent believed that recycled paper is better than virgin fiber grades and 58 percent admitted they do not know enough about paper's carbon footprint and environmental impact to make purchasing decisions.

'For some years now, we have become increasingly frustrated at the barrage of misleading information that continues to hit the headlines regarding the impact of paper on the environment, which has adversely affected the print and paper industries,' said Alistair Gough, president of the NAPM and managing director of Robert Horne Group. 'Despite all the misconceptions, there are two sides to every story and paper as a product has a great environmental story to tell.'

FOREST DESTRUCTION?

The NAPM has embarked upon an initiative called 'Two Sides' to combat what it sees as the 'myths' surrounding paper production, starting with the 'destruction of forests.' The NAPM points out that papermaking and other industries which depend on trees need thriving forests. In managed forests, for every tree cut down, three to four are replanted.

Even in countries where natural forests are used, like Russia and Canada, logging accounts for only a tiny share of annual tree growth, says the NAPM.

The NAPM estimates that there are 25 percent more trees in the developed world today than there were in 1901, and in Europe alone forests are increasing annually by an area equivalent to more than 1.5 million football pitches.

Deforestation is happening in the tropics, but this is mainly caused by agriculture or the need for domestic fuel, which between them account for almost half of the trees cut down worldwide. This is often associated with conflicts over land rights and the conversion of natural forest to industrial plantations.

'The Two Sides initiative supports a reduction in such activity and recognizes the need to support products which can clearly be traced to sustainable sources,' says the NAPM.

ENERGY AND EMISSIONS

Turning its attention to paper's energy and emissions impact, the NAPM report says that it takes on average 500 kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity to produce 200kg of paper – the average person's annual consumption. This is equivalent to the energy consumed by a typical household leaving its electronic equipment on stand-by for a year.

Producing this amount of paper creates between 130–250kg of CO₂ annually, depending on the source of energy, says the NAPM, and this is roughly equivalent to the CO₂ produced by an average family car over a distance of 600 miles. Nuclear, hydro, biofuel and geothermal energy are all heavily used by paper making countries and are all claimed to be low carbon energy sources. At the same time, young, growing trees are prime absorbers of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and this CO₂ remains 'locked' inside paper products for as long as they remain in use, or when they are recycled.

RECYCLED VS VIRGIN

The NAPM says recycled paper is not necessarily more environment friendly than virgin paper. A modern paper mill producing virgin fiber paper using nuclear, hydro or internally bio-fuelled may well have a lower carbon footprint than a mill making recycled paper powered by fossil fuels. A good supply of virgin materials is also critical to retain a recycled paper supply, as paper fibers cannot be recycled more than six times.

The average recycling rate across European countries is over 62 percent, representing more than 50 million tonnes of used paper collected each year.

LCA finds for thermal process

DUPONT has commissioned research looking into the life cycle impact of the flexo process and thermal processing. Andy Thomas reports

DuPont Packaging Graphics has published results from two peer-reviewed environmental Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) studies which indicate significant non-renewable energy and greenhouse gas emission reductions from use of its Cyrel flexographic print and thermal platemaking processes. The full report, Life Cycle Assessment: Flexographic and Rotogravure Printing Comparison & Flexographic Plate Imaging Technologies, is available at www.cyrel.com.

The two LCAs compared the environmental footprints of flexographic printing to gravure printing, and the footprint of thermal platemaking to solvent platemaking for flexography.

The data comparing flexo and gravure printing indicate that use of the flexo process alone results in significant reductions in both non-renewable energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions of approximately 50 percent when converting flexible packaging plastic films, says DuPont. In simple terms, reports the company, for every 1 million square meters (~10 million square feet) of printed plastic substrate switched from gravure to flexo, 'the resulting savings in non-renewable energy would be equivalent to approximately 25,000 gallons of gasoline, while savings in greenhouse gas emissions would be equivalent to removing approximately 40 typical U.S. passenger cars from the road for one year.'

DuPont says the results of the second study comparing thermal platemaking to solvent platemaking for flexo indicate that thermal imaging 'results in a reduction in non-renewable energy of approximately 60 percent and a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of approximately 51 percent. Or, for every 10,000 square meters (~100,000 square feet) of flexo plates imaged, the resulting non-renewable energy savings would be equivalent to approximately 8,800 gallons of gasoline and the savings in greenhouse gas emissions would be equivalent to removing approximately 16 typical U.S. passenger cars from the road for one year.'

Commented Lisa DiGate, global business director, DuPont Packaging Graphics: 'DuPont has a long heritage of developing sustainable products for the packaging industry, and a Life Cycle Assessment is one of the most rigorous ways to examine our business' environmental footprint. We chose to use the LCA process, which is based on ISO standards, because of its broad industry acceptance and the rigor and objectivity of its external peer review requirement.'

The report includes a comprehensive summary of the LCA findings prepared by a panel of external reviewers, which states that the users that participated in the studies were representative of the industry and that the depth and rigor of the data collection process made the study 'a fair indication of the principle differences between the different technology (platemaking and printing) options.'

Results from the LCA include data from suppliers and customers and takes into account raw materials, energy, waste and emissions from image carrier manufacturing to the printed packaging substrate. The LCAs were conducted in accordance with ISO 14040 and 14044 and peer-reviewed by a panel of five independent experts coordinated by Five Winds International (www.fivewinds.com), a global consultancy recognized for its expertise in sustainable development.

LABELS & LABELING



FIGURE 1. Average Analog Flexographic Plate Manufacturing and Imaging Impact

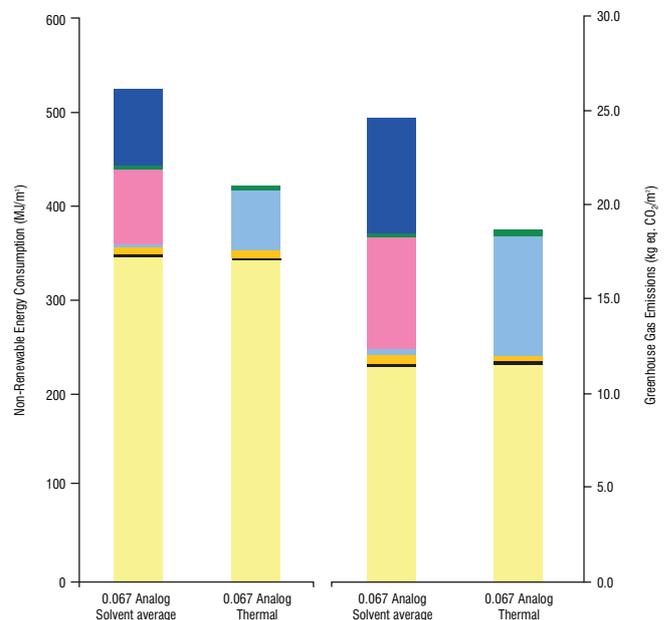
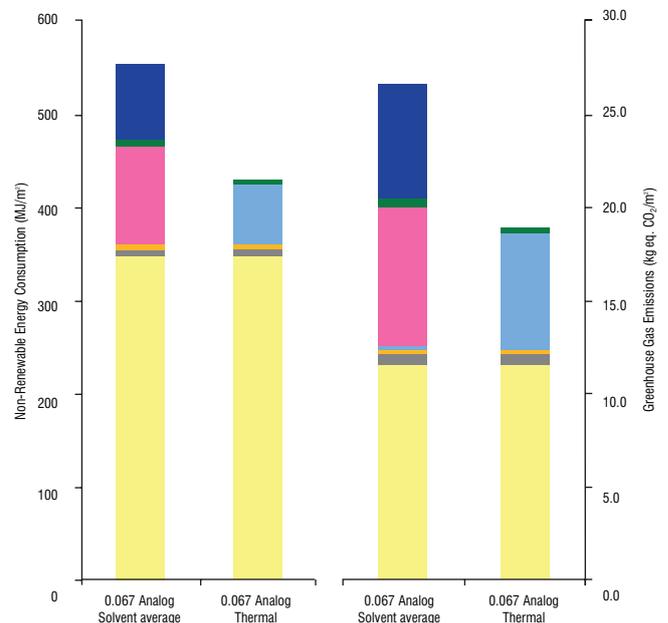
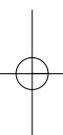


FIGURE 2. Average Digital Flexographic Plate Manufacturing and Imaging Impact





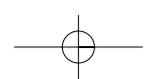
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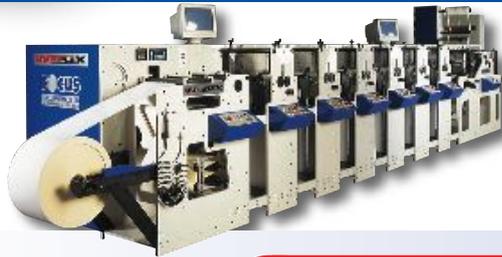
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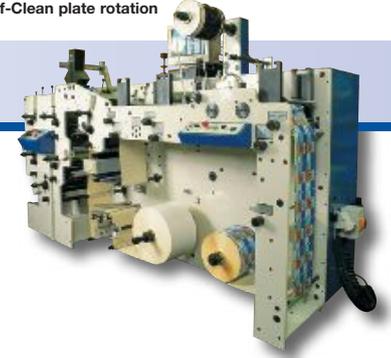
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ARMOR'S La Chevrolière site just south of Nantes

Armor signs sustainable development charters

FRENCH thermal transfer specialist Armor hosted a recent open day for the signing of the UN and ICCA charters – the latest in a series of sustainability initiatives. James Quirk reports

Armor recently organized an open day to highlight the company's focus on sustainable development and host the signing of the UN's Global Compact and ICCA's Responsible Care charters.

Present at the event were Konrad Eckenschwiller, the permanent representative in France of the UN's Global Compact, Alain Pierrat, the UIC's sustainable development representative, and Jean-Luc Favre, president of the UIC West Atlantic area. The Armor Group was represented by Hubert de Boisredon, CEO, Christophe Derennes, director of the Armor Industrial Coding and Printing La Chevrolière site, and Régis Thébaud, director of operations at Armor Office Printing. As well as the signing of the charters, the event incorporated a round table conference session on sustainable development and a tour of the company's La Chevrolière site just south of Nantes.

These latest commitments continue Armor's global responsibility strategy begun five years ago. In 2007 the company was the first in the Pays de Loire region to be accredited the triple AFAQ certification for Quality, Safety & Health and Environment – just weeks after moving to its La Chevrolière facility.

The UN's Global Compact aims to create a link between globalization and human rights. The pact invites businesses to adopt, support and apply in their sphere of influence a set of fundamental values concerning human rights, working and environmental standards and the fight against corruption.

The ICCA's Responsible Care charter is the chemical industry's initiative to improve health, safety and environmental performances. Launched in Canada in 1985 and developed by the Canadian Chemical Producers Association, the Responsible Care charter has been adopted by businesses the world over. The Global Responsible Care Charter was launched in 2006. Going beyond the original objectives of Responsible Care, it highlights the new challenges introduced by the emergence of a public debate on sustainable development. Companies which have signed up use performance indicators in the areas of health and safety at work, water, air, waste, transport, investment and communication.

Armor's Industrial Coding and Printing division has implemented a series of sustainability initiatives to manage waste and control energy. Armor's incinerator burns solvents to produce energy that is reused on site: the company has lowered its gas consumption by a third in the last five years. Waste production on site has been reduced by 25 percent; 65 percent of all waste is recovered. Armor has set itself an ambitious target of reducing by 15 percent the quantity of greenhouse gases it emits within the next three years – to put this in perspective, the European Community has fixed a reduction of 20 percent by the year 2020.

Further initiatives include integrating the company into the community – for example, Armor supports projects in local schools; a car sharing scheme used by 20 percent of the workforce; and sourcing of paper and visiting cards made from 100 percent recycled paper.

Armor, which employs 1,400 people in seven production sites around the world, is now committed to extending its sustainability initiatives globally.

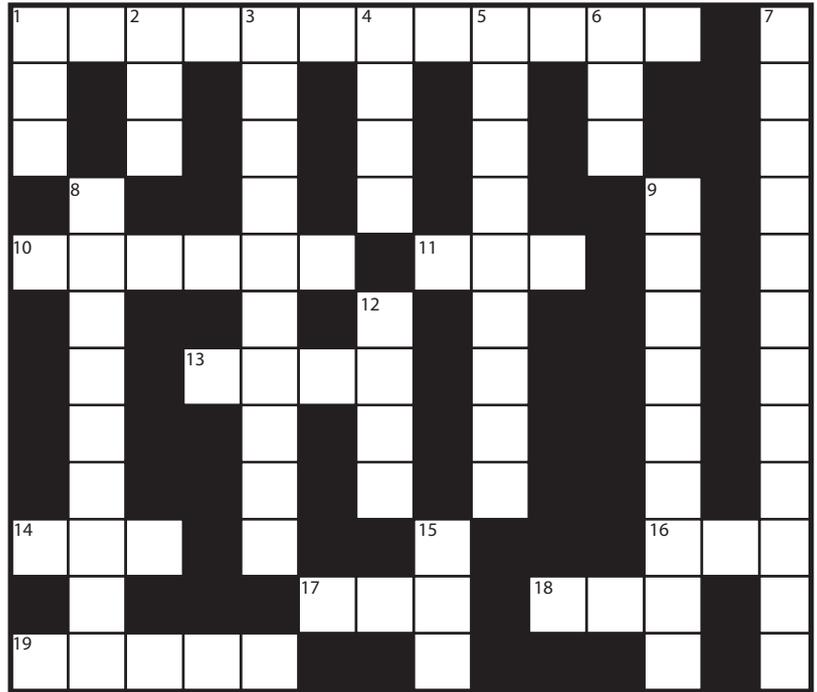


L-R: Alain Pierrat, Union des Industries Chimiques' (UIC) sustainable development representative; Hubert de Boisredon, CEO of Armor; Konrad Eckenschwiller, permanent representative in France of the UN's Global Compact

If you can't complete this crossword...

DOWN

- 1 The individual element in the halftone printing process (3).
- 2 The contact point between two driven rollers (3).
- 3 The image transferred from the printing plate or cylinder to the label substrate (10).
- 4 Occurs when the adhesive squeezes out from under the backing in a pressure-sensitive laminate (4).
- 5 The process of raising a design or image above the label surface using a set of matched male and female dies (9).
- 6 Estimated time of arrival (3).
- 7 A set of characters or bars in a bar code which represents both alphabetic and numeric characters as well as symbols (12).
- 8 The areas of a printed image which are nearest to white (9).
- 9 Metal roller or drum that is cooled internally with water (5 and 4).
- 12 Abbreviation commonly used for capital letters (4).
- 15 Label placed inside the mold before a plastic bottle is blown (3).



ACROSS

- 1 A photoelectric instrument that measures reflected or transmitted light on colors or printed products (12).
- 10 A term used to describe various printing defects, such as spots or imperfections in the printing (6).
- 11 International Organisation for Standards (3).
- 13 The administration in the US Department of Labor that ensures a safe and healthy workplace (4).
- 14 The acronym or abbreviation used for primary colors of light (3).
- 16 A method of reading (scanning) printed text copy with software capable of recognizing and converting the scanned images into an electronic equivalent (3).
- 17 Original equipment manufacturer (3).
- 18 Thickness measurement of thin materials used in some countries (3).
- 19 Material to be printed or converted. Also referred to as the substrate (5)

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A DEMONSTRATION of the latest Xeikon 3300 press at the Label Community Day

Comeback kid

XEIKON is intent on reclaiming a leading position in the digital label press market, as Andy Thomas discovered at the company's recent label community event

Xeikon can rightfully claim to have been one of the pioneers of digital label printing, installing its first press in 1994. But when the company went into receivership in March 2002, HP Indigo rapidly assumed a dominant position in this fast growing market.

Xeikon was rescued by one of its component suppliers, Punch International, which set out to develop a digital press capable of taking on HP Indigo's all-conquering ws4500. This became the Xeikon 3300 press, launched at drupa, and its entry-level sibling, the Xeikon 3000, first seen at Labelexpo Americas in September.

Heading up the relaunch of Xeikon is Filip Weymans, Xeikon's global business development manager, labels and packaging.

'Xeikon has a great brand name and people still remember us,' Weymans told L&L. 'The traffic on our Labelexpo booth was three times what it was the last show. The product is now there to match HP and people are longing for competition, but we know we have a lot of work to do in putting ourselves on the map. Winning the Label Industry Global award for New Innovation certainly helped.'

Weymans is determined not to repeat Xeikon's original mistake of competing with its own OEM partners. 'We will compete as a wholly-owned brand – we are not going back to an OEM model.'

Xeikon is currently setting up a global sales and support network, announcing partnership programs with RBCOR LLC, a leading North American distributor of photopolymer printing plates and plate processing equipment, and JV Imaging Solutions Incorporated, a systems integrator which specializes in workflow solutions, and which has particularly strong links among East Coast converters.

"The traffic on our Labelexpo booth was three times what it was at the last show. The product is now there to match HP and people are longing for competition"

Xeikon's converting partner is long-time Danish supporter Grafisk Maskinfabrik, which has built a dedicated factory extension to produce modular finishing systems for the 3000 series presses. Xeikon is selling the GM equipment into the label market and also providing local service.

Explaining Xeikon's decision to produce an 'entry level' digital press alongside the 3300, Weymans said: 'The 3000 press is for people who want lower cost access to the marketplace, or who need to dedicate a press to a particular packaging application such as paperboard or textile transfer printing, and where capacity is not initially the main requirement.'

PARTNER PRESENTATIONS

Another element of Xeikon's strategy is to build a global community of label converters around the 3300/3000-series technology. Its first Label and Packaging Community event was held at Xeikon's impressive new manufacturing headquarters in Antwerp in October. Present were a core of label converters who had pioneered the Xeikon press, as well as new converts to the Xeikon cause. The atmosphere was extremely positive, and it is clear that the renaissance of the Xeikon brand is welcomed by its user base.

Also present were Xeikon's industry partners Fasson, Raflatac, EskoArtwork, Kodak and Grafisk Maskinfabrik, delivering 'hands-on' presentations on materials, workflow and finishing.

- North American printer Odyssey Digital Printing, one of the first companies to order the Xeikon 3300 press, gave an interesting insight into its digital business model. The company was established in 1996 in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and today has 57 employees and sales last year of \$7.9m. The company is a dedicated digital house, with four small format printers – including Xeikon 5000, 50D and 50SP digital presses and a PressTek 52DI50D - which represent more than half of its turnover. It also runs five large format printers, two UV flatbed inkjets and three solvent inkjet printers. Odyssey focuses on point of sale work for convenience stores, restaurant chains, mass merchandise

3000 AND 3300 COMPARED

The Xeikon 3000 is essentially a stripped down version of the 3300, costing roughly 30 percent less. It retains the same imaging resolution of 1200 dpi resolution at four bits per spot, but is slower, with a top speed of 31.5 feet/min and a monthly duty cycle of 1.5m feet against the 63 feet/min and duty cycle of 2,3m feet of the 3300.

While the 3300 is fitted with GM's modular in-line finishing system or rewinder, the 3000 has a simple rewind.

Both presses are equipped with the latest generation of Xeikon's X-800 front-end software, open and modular allowing seamless integration in existing workflows and providing maximum flexibility to address all functionalities the Xeikon press has to offer. The press can handle the same range of substrates weights from 40 gsm (27 lb text) to 350 gsm (122 lb cover). The 3000 can be upgraded to the 3300 in the field.

and specialty retailers and wholesale food service companies, as well as providing a bespoke packaging service for applications like custom golf ball packaging, CDs and DVDs.

The case study involved Acushnet Golf, a manufacturer of leading brands such as Titleist and Pinnacle golf balls, and which specializes in limited editions for country clubs and corporations.

Odyssey explained how it had developed a range of templates for the cartons, which are digitally printed and UV varnished on 16pt (350 gsm) Iggesund board before die cutting and fold/gluing. Turnaround time is five days from receipt of order.

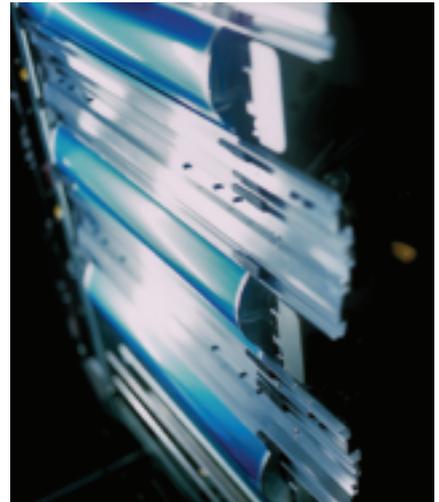
Annual orders for custom golf cartons have increased from 14 in 2002 to almost 850 a year later when the first digital press was installed, and to well over 2,000 orders in 2007.

- Xeikon's Filip Weymans looked at the emergence of a 'web (internet) to print' business model, in which users upload data directly into an automated digital print workflow. Weymans explained how Xeikon customer Ganket, in Denmark, offered this service for Tuborg beer. The Vedett pils brand increased sales growth from 4 to 24 percent in a declining West European beer market after introducing the ability for consumers to go on-line and download their own images onto the pils labels. 'These success stories are gradually giving brand managers the confidence to pursue individualized communication strategies, while meeting their need for more flexibility in design changes and lead time reduction,' said Weymans.

Weymans stressed that in this model, converters must integrate the press directly with MIS and pre-press systems to cope the volume of order taking/processing and to handle artwork updates.

- Xeikon's Gert Saey looked at opportunities for growth in digital label printing. Saey suggested that while 90 percent of runs under 25,000 are already produced digitally, the biggest potential for future growth lies in run lengths between 25k to 75k, where digital is already starting to make an impact.

Saey said the FA (Form Adapted) toner developed by Xeikon for its 3300/3000 press required 10 percent less coverage than the V3 toner used by the Xeikon 330. The FA toners are



XEIKON AND RBCOR ENTER PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Xeikon, manufacturer of digital color presses, and RBCOR, LLC, a distributor of photopolymer printing plates, photopolymer plate processing equipment and ancillary items, have entered into a joint referral partnership program. Through the partnership, RBCOR will be able to offer its clients the Xeikon 3300 and Xeikon 3000 digital label color presses.

'We are thrilled to enter into this partnership with RBCOR. They are a true pioneer in the labels and packaging space,' said Michael V. Ring, vice president of sales, chief marketing officer of Xeikon's North American operations. 'We are confident that this partnership will further strengthen the market position of both our companies and allow us to better serve our customers.'

FDA/ISEGA approved for indirect food contact – and some colors for direct food contact. Saey drew attention to the high opacity of the white FA toner, which does not require multiple hits on clear-on-clear and other film applications.

Saey made a point by point comparison with the HP Indigo ws4500 press, claiming the Xeikon 3000 was twice as productive in terms of monthly capacity, with the 3300 delivering four times the capacity and at a under half the cost (cost/capacity in euro/1,000 linear meters). 'Even with the availability of the ws6000 in 2009 we will still print faster on 5-colors,' said Saey. 'We are now 'the' alternative to HP.'

Saey announced an ongoing substrate certification program with Fasson and Raflatac, as well as with suppliers of board and films to confirm they can be printed without additional priming.

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Challenges in pharmaceutical labeling

A RECENT CONFERENCE in Barcelona highlighted some of the key challenges faced in pharmaceutical labeling. James Quirk reports

Around sixty representatives from pharmaceutical companies and label converters attended a recent seminar in Barcelona – 7th Annual Pharma Packaging and Labeling 2008 – organized by ViB events.

Pharmaceutical products represent a key sector for many label converters around the world: 42 percent of European printers who responded to a recent L&L survey said they were involved producing labels for the sector.

The conference tackled a number of different areas, including brand protection and legislation – two of the sector's key drivers. Counterfeit medicines are a growing problem in developed and developing countries alike. The World Health Organization estimates that in areas of Africa, Asia and Latin America up to 30 percent of pharmaceutical products on sale are counterfeit. The Center for Medicines in the Public Interest, based in the USA, predicts that counterfeit drug sales will reach 75 billion US dollars globally in 2010 – an astonishing increase of more than 90 percent since 2005.

Legislation, meanwhile, is affecting pharmaceutical labeling requirements. A 2004 EC directive, for example, introduced the requirement for Braille on pharmaceutical packaging and labeling.

One of the recurring themes of the conference, however, was the disparity between legislation and practical solutions. 'It is increasingly being recognized that healthcare user requirements concerning labeling and packaging will exceed

that required by current EU medicines regulations,' said Bruce Warner, senior pharmacist for the UK's National Patient Safety Agency. He outlined the content of a recent Council of Europe report, which stated there was little recognition of the importance of the human factor in the selection and design of drug names, labels and packages in order to minimize the potential for error and enhance medication safety, neither within the pharmaceutical industry nor among the medication regulatory agencies.

The current designs for labeling and packaging, said the report, prioritize industry concerns instead of considering the context in which the pharmaceutical product is used.

Warner explained the need for EU medicines regulations to be updated to include consideration of patient safety when designing labeling and packaging – errors frequently occur because of similarities in the labels and packaging of different

THE POWER OF THE HUMAN MIND

"Acccdrnig to rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oredr the ltteers in a wrod are, the only iprmoatnt thng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit a porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe. Amzanig huh?"



"The European directive was well intentioned, but was introduced without giving sufficient consideration to how it should be implemented"

medicines.

'The packaging of medicines intended for use in ambulatory [outpatient] setting in Europe should have space for a dispensing label,' he said.

Jean Francois Roy of Global Vision highlighted the important role that packaging workflow has to play in the pharmaceutical industry, revealing that according to the FDA over 51 percent of product recalls in a six month period were the result of mislabeling. 'It seems that many pharmaceutical companies do not properly regulate their workflow,' he said. 'The human mind is not programmed to proof manually – you can be the best proof reader in the world but you will still make mistakes.'

He demonstrated two solutions offered by Global Vision: the Docu-Proof automated text comparator and the Digital-Page automated artwork comparator, products which address Braille dot measurement needs for packaging and can successfully monitor change requests.

Dave Taylor of Prisym ID spoke of the changing demands on label space and legally required label information, as well as meeting the challenges of global label management. He highlighted the importance of the label in educating the user, achieving compliance and promoting a brand, but cited increased directives and the need to comply with various legislations and policies as things competing for 'label real-estate' – or space on the label. He outlined various technologies offered by Prisym ID to help manage processes.

John Gill, chief scientist of the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), spoke about the challenges in labeling and packaging for blind and partially sighted people.

In the UK, around 16 percent of the population is over 65 years old – an age at which only one third as much light reaches the retina compared to the age of 20.

In general, partially sighted people will find it easier to read labels if the text is printed on a solid background color with good contrast. It is preferable to avoid the use of italics or underlining and not to use all capital letters.

Recent developments in packaging have not always been of benefit to people with disabilities, he said. Standardized sizes of packages have reduced manufacturing costs but made it harder to differentiate products by touch.

He spoke of the introduction of Braille legislation and the importance of not missing a single dot, since that could significantly change the meaning. 'The European directive was well intentioned,' he said, 'but was introduced without giving sufficient consideration to how it should be implemented.'

Caroline Borremans, global clinical supply manager for Johnson & Johnson, described how labeling requirements and legislation for Investigational Medicinal Products (IMPs) differ greatly from those of marketed products, and therefore present their own unique challenges.

'In the clinical trial environment, there are a lot of different stakeholders with their own wish list and preferences with regard to the packaging and labeling of clinical trial material,' she said. 'How do we combine these wishes and preferences which sometimes seem incompatible?'

Labeling of IMPs is likely to be more complex and more liable to errors:

mistakes are difficult to trace due to the often blinded studies, while labeling is often a manual activity in medicinal trials. It has been number one of the FDA's list of reasons for product recall for many years. Borremans highlighted the importance of the label design – early identification of key text and consideration of the type of trial being undertaken.

Denny Lee-Frost, head of operations for the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency's enforcement group, highlighted the severity of counterfeit medicines and described how the organization is working to keep the UK supply chain clean from penetration of fake products.

There have been nine recalls of counterfeit batches of medicines in the UK since 2004, he reported, with four of these coming in 2007. In developed countries, counterfeit medicines are more commonly available through the unregulated supply chain, usually the internet. Less frequently, but more worryingly, they are sometimes available through the regulated supply chain via wholesalers, distributors and pharmacies.

The MHRA has developed an anti-counterfeiting strategy which involves educating the public and encouraging everyone in the supply chain – manufacturers, packagers, distributors and retailers – to conduct thorough due diligence.

Presentations were also given on subjects such as blister packaging, packaging design and brand security. A series of roundtable discussions also took place, on areas such as artwork management, Braille requirements and child resistant packaging.

ViB's next pharmaceutical packaging and labeling event will take place in February in Philadelphia, USA.

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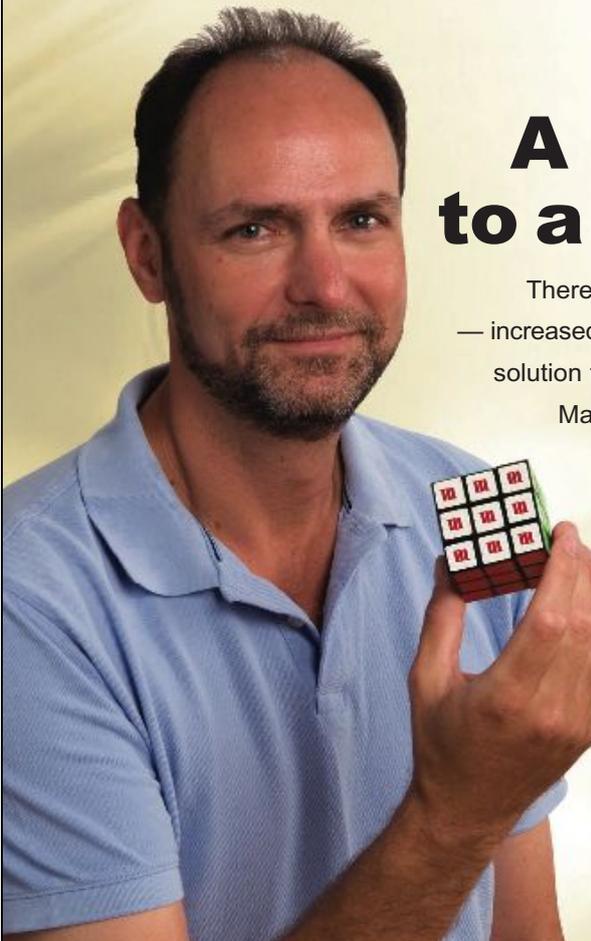
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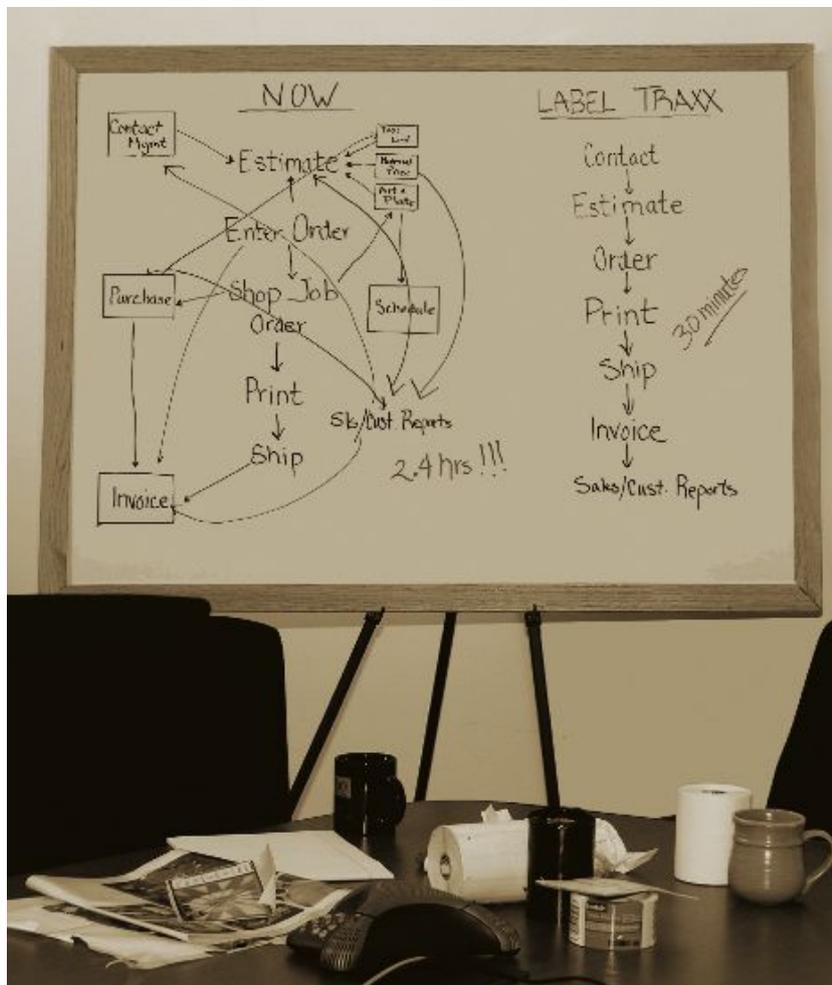
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OKI installs first Degrava printer in UK

THE first UK installation of OKI Printing Solutions' Degrava printer has transformed a food and beverage label converter's business, as James Quirk reports

Founded in the early 1980s, JC Printing is a family-run specialist printer supplying cut labels primarily to the wholesale food and drinks markets. At the outset, the company operated a lithographic press, which was subsequently complemented by a second flexographic printer and the company continues to use both technologies for longer label runs.

'However, it became clear that in today's digital age we required a more flexible solution in order to remain competitive,' says managing director Pete Culliford, 'as customers were no longer willing to pay expensive plate costs for shorter label runs.'

As a result, in early 2008 JC Printing installed a Degrava printer from OKI Printing Solutions. 'The decision to go with OKI has transformed our business,' says Culliford. 'Not only has it enabled us to retain our largest customer, whose business was under immediate threat, but

the dramatic gains in speed, productivity and quality already achieved has opened up significant new avenues for business development moving forward.'

FLEXIBILITY

Over a period of three weeks, JC Printing undertook a number of tests to check out the printer's capabilities and the relative cost of printing different quantities of labels. At the same time, Culliford made three trips to OKI's Slough, UK, office, where he met US-based Degrava's technical director.

'This was to be the first Degrava installation in the UK and so we had no access to local testimonials as to the performance and ruggedness of this leading-edge technology,' Culliford says. 'However, Degrava is becoming well-established in its home US market as well as in Europe and our confidence was also boosted by the first-class

consultancy advice and support we received throughout from Avon Graphics, OKI and Degrava.'

The Degrava prints on a variety of pre-cut label shapes – including tapered, square and rectangular – adjusting the registration in each case to extremely fine tolerances using the integrated Onyx print program. Its digital printing technology also provides total flexibility: having entered the artwork as a PDF, set-up is rapid and color settings can be adjusted simply and easily to ensure they are both spot-on and consistent.

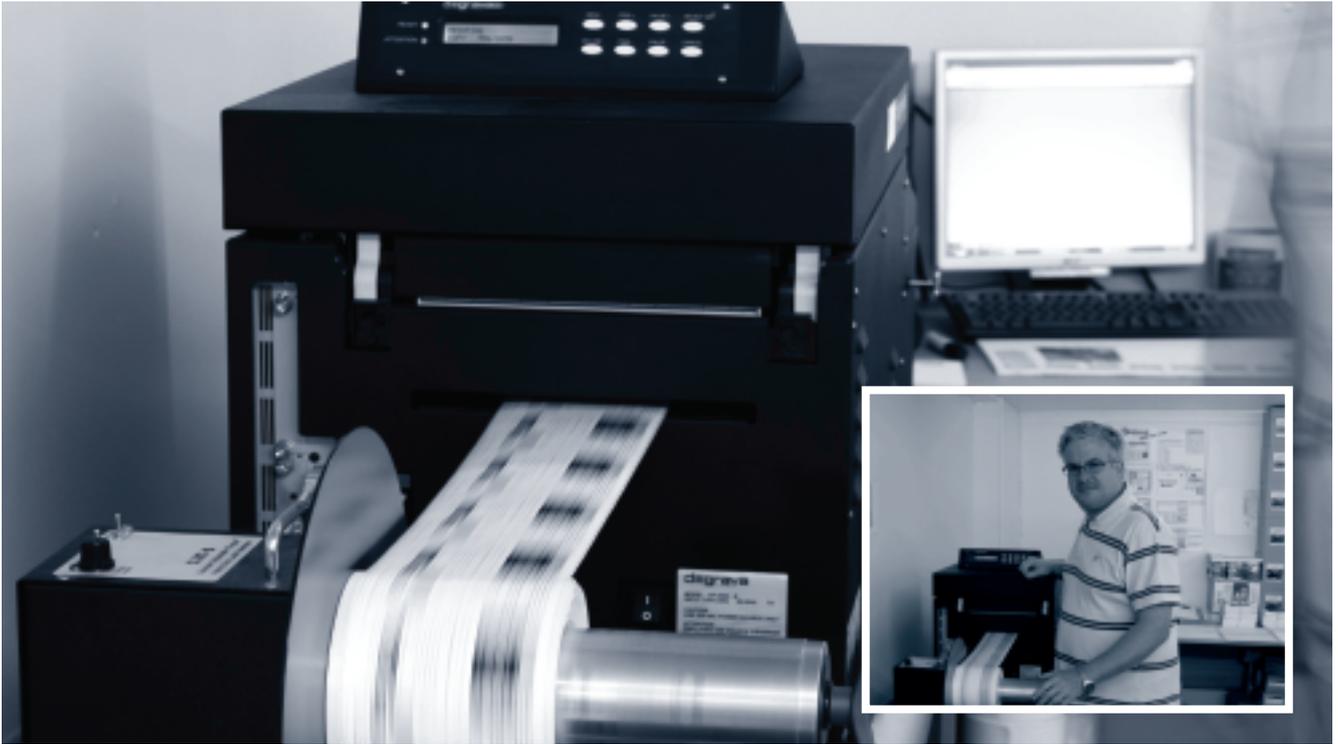
'Color control on the Degrava is second-to-none,' believes Avon Graphics' Andy Banks, 'and contrasts with some digital sheet-fed machines in which colors can vary slightly from one day to the next.'

FAST TURNAROUND

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requirements of JC Printing's wholesale and manufacturing customer base.

Label designs are typically intricate and clients insist on printing quality at least equal to that on products appearing on supermarket shelves. At the same time, from a cost control perspective customers do not wish to hold large label stocks: equally, as ingredients lists can change fairly frequently, this also reduces the risk of write-offs in the case of out-of-date labels.

Ideally designed for print runs of up to 2,500 labels, the Degrava meets these demands head-on. JC Printing provides a weekly delivery to most customers and typically turns round label orders in five working days: however, utilizing Degrava's highly flexible digital technology, batch orders for four-color labels can now be produced and delivered to the warehouse ready for use on the production line in as little as 24 hours, if required. Similarly, when an ingredients list is revised, in the case of four-color flexo printing it can take up to 48 hours to make new plates, together with significant attendant manufacturing costs. By contrast, by utilizing the digital process, artwork for a recent client was emailed to JC Printing, prepared for use on the Degrava machine and labels printed and delivered the next day.

Support was of critical importance at the time of purchase as JC Printing was under severe threat of losing two of its largest customers, for reasons of cost and inflexibility.

During the period of negotiation with OKI, we acquired a small inkjet label printer as a short-term emergency measure, as we needed to produce short label runs electronically,' says Culliford. 'However, on receipt of the Degrava printer it became imperative that we went into live production as quickly as possible in order to meet key orders from our number one client. It was only through the outstanding technical expertise and full-blooded commitment of our supplier partners that we were able to retain this critical part of our business – a real

baptism of fire.'

Avon Graphics maintained on-site support for the first week to ensure full operational effectiveness and complete training of relevant JC Printing staff. 'The Degrava, which incorporates an OKI print engine with Degrava's own feed and registration functionality, is simple to run and maintain,' says Banks.

'The key is to set up the feed and registration correctly at the outset, which can then be saved as a series of "quick sets", including specified label size and repeat margins. For any subsequent print runs therefore, it is then simply a case of setting the correct start position and the job can be underway in a matter of minutes.'

In the three months since installation, the Degrava has proved both robust and trouble-free in operation, despite the heavy demands placed on it. Fully 30 percent of the company's flexo work – up to 100 repeat jobs – have already been transferred permanently and the Degrava is typically running 16-18 hours a day, five days a week.

Customers too are benefiting from substantial savings as a result of the move to digital label printing. 'We have already saved one customer more than GBP £12,000 in plate costs,' says Culliford. 'Equally, in the case of a recent new product launch for another customer of some 25 years' standing, we saved £7,600 on one job alone.'

Looking ahead, as part of JC Printing's business development strategy, the company has created a new website, www.jcprinting.co.uk, which will help promote its four-color capability for those food and drink manufacturers who cannot afford the plate costs associated with short label runs.

Culliford has been impressed with both the performance of the Degrava printer: 'There is no doubt that, in a tough market, we would have struggled to maintain our competitiveness without our investment in digital investment,' he says. 'For us, OKI and Avon Graphics have proved a winning combination and have rapidly transformed our business.'

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BUNTING Magnetics has opened a state-of-the-art flexible die manufacturing operation



Die industry developments

ANDY THOMAS looks at important corporate changes in the global die industry, and assesses the latest technical developments in dies and stamping technology

Since our last review of the global die industry, there have been some important changes, including the entry of a new player in the market in the form of Bunting Magnetics, the merger between Xynatech and Atlas, and changes in Kocher & Beck and Gerhardt's Iberian organizational structures.

At the same time, we have seen the introduction of some interesting technology developments, including a closed loop pressure setting system from Kocher & Beck and Rotometrics launch at Labelexpo Americas of a single piece carton die.

Bunting Magnetics' new, state-of-the-art flexible die manufacturing division is located in a custom-built facility in Newton, Kansas.

'This expansion of our product line perfectly complements our existing magnetic cylinder products,' comments Robert J. Bunting, company president. 'This was a strategic decision to accentuate the strength and quality of our overall product offering to the printing industry.'

Bunting makes the point that the company already has, through its cylinder products, an understanding of converters' needs, 'and will be able to get the order completed right and on-time.' Commenting on the technology at the plant, Mike Wilks, Bunting's flexible die division general manager, says the company 'is using the finest equipment in the world and has capabilities only a few companies in the industry currently feature.'

Bunting is using exclusively Computer-to-Plate (CTP) technology which

eliminates the need for photographic film and the one generation transfer of the film image to the plate. 'This in turn increases sharpness and accuracy and also allows plates to be produced faster and more consistently,' says Robert J. Bunting. Bunting is using a CNC mill dedicated to sharpening flexible dies – there is no hand working.

'With tolerances that mirror those of the

"At the same time, we have seen the introduction of some interesting technology developments, including a closed loop pressure setting system from Kocher & Beck and Rotometrics launch at Labelexpo Americas of a single piece carton die"

X-Treme cylinder, our new X-treme dies only need to be machined on one side,' states Mike Wilks. 'No back grinding is needed to hit tolerances.'

Following the hardening process, all dies are proofed with a die cutting module. Proof sheets are checked under a high power magnifier for cleanliness of cut and a malachite stain test examines the liner for evidence of unwanted liner penetration. In another important development, the narrow web flexible and specialty die business of Xynatech has been merged into Atlas Die, creating one of the largest producers of narrow web flexible dies and specialty cutting dies in the Americas.

'I am pleased for our customers that an agreement could be reached with Atlas Die,' stated Jim Redd, president

of Xynatech. 'Competing against them through the years, I know our customers will be well taken care of given Atlas Die's product depth and technical knowledge.'

Kenneth Smott, president and CEO of Atlas Die, added that he will be working closely with Xynatech to ensure a seamless transition. Atlas Die is a producer of steel rule, flexible and solid rotary tooling servicing all aspects of non-metallic converting. Its corporate headquarters is in Elkhart, Indiana, and it has manufacturing facilities in Palmer, Massachusetts; Charlotte, North Carolina; Elkhart, Indiana; Glendale Heights, Illinois; Wood Dale, Illinois; Atlanta, Georgia; Greensboro, North Carolina; and Richmond, Virginia.

Turning to the important Spain/Portugal region in Europe, Kocher & Beck is now being distributed and supported by Tecnocut, which previously worked for Gerhardt. Gerhardt has set up its own wholly-owned operation for the Iberian peninsula.

Tecnocut supplies cutting and printing equipment in both Spain and Portugal. Founded in 1993, it is headquartered in Barcelona, with a sales office in Madrid.

'Kocher+Beck has been active in the Spanish and Portuguese market for many years,' commented Martin Stierle, managing director of Kocher+Beck. 'Spain especially is known as a very demanding and competitive market. Kocher+Beck is now able to support Spanish and Portuguese customers with a wide range of products, combined with on-site service delivered through a group of highly qualified and motivated Tecnocut team members.'



XAVIER Vilas, Gerhardt's new Spanish sales director

Gerhardt will now be dealing directly with Spanish and Portuguese customers, just as it does in other major European markets.

Commented Klaus Damberg, president and CEO of Gerhardt: 'In these markets, we cannot allow any barriers between ourselves and our customers. It is crucial that we advise the optimal cutting solution every time and that we prioritise our customers' long term success higher than the profit or commission on every single order. This move enables us to improve our consultative services, improve our response times and pass immediate cost benefits on to our customers'.

Gerhardt has appointed Xavier Vilas, a veteran in rotary cutting tools, as Spanish sales director. He is currently establishing a sales office in Spain. Luci Cardoso has been appointed director of Gerhardt's Portuguese sales organisation.

Gerhardt has meanwhile strengthened its position in Australia with the announcement of a partnership with Jet Technologies, one



LUCI Cardoso, director of Gerhardt's Portuguese sales organization

of the country's leading suppliers of machinery and consumables to the narrow web market.

With sales offices and warehouses based in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide and an extensive sales network, Jet Technologies will provide service and support to existing customers whilst developing the business primarily for flexible dies and magnetic cylinders.

Mark Simpson, Gerhardt customer service manager, will continue to support customers for Jet Technologies and assist in providing training for Jet personnel. Ian Sarney, who was previously employed as Gerhardt's sales manager in Asia Pacific, recently moved to Jet and will play an integral role in ensuring all customers benefit from this strategy.

Commented Klaus Damberg, 'From Gerhardt's perspective an alliance with Jet provides us with an extensive sales network supported by the wide ranging knowledge base. This will ensure our level of service to the Australian, New Zealand and South East Asian market is second to none.'

KAMA HOLOGRAM STAMP OPTION IN DIECUTTER MODULE

German automatic die cutter manufacturer Kama GmbH now offers a unit that can stamp holograms onto labels (below).

Kama's hologram embossing module works with two separate rolls of foil which are guided by laser sensors, an additional motor and a specially developed steering system. In addition to hologram foils and individualised security foils, the unit can also process any kind of hot foil.

Kama claims short changeover times - from embossing holograms to die cutting takes less than ten minutes. That means that even small and mid-sized print runs can be processed and finished quickly and cost-efficiently. In addition to finishing options such as cold embossing, hot foil stamping or combined embossing and hot foil stamping and hologram stamping, the ProCut 74 and the ProCut 105 also die cut, crease, nick, perforate and kiss-cut. As a further option, the engineers in Dresden have developed a module for the precise die cutting of plastic that works with heated die cutters (hot-cut).

The company's latest machine development is the ProCut 53 for A3-size work, for which a hot foil module is under development.



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ROTOMETRICS Multi-Score
flexible carton die

Die technology developments

ANDY Thomas reports on the latest developments in die technology, including a single carton die from Rotometrics and a closed loop pressure control system from Kocher & Beck

Rotometrics has developed a single flexible die system for folding carton applications, which, the company says, opens up new opportunities for converters to diversify their product line.

First seen at Labelexpo Americas, the Multi-Score flexible die combines patented scoring technology with a flexible die, which runs on a magnetic cylinder cutting against an anvil roll.

The process allows converters whose presses have die stations without removable anvil rolls to run folding carton jobs. A specific magnetic cylinder is required which uses a combination of high-strength and standard magnets, and which has a minimum repeat of 16" (406.4 mm). Standard label magnetic cylinders are not suitable for use with Multi-Score dies.

Rotometrics says the Multi-Score system is ideal for short-run folding cartons converted on digital printing equipment. It can also be used with both narrow web presses and sheet-fed presses cutting from the reverse side.

The die must be run as an 'undercutter' – it must cut with the anvil positioned above the die - unless the converter is able to use a turn bar to flip the web. Standard plate height is .035" (0.89 mm).

Rotometrics says converters will need to rotate the carton dieline slightly, so there is no true cross blade on the die, configured at approximately a 5 degree angle on the layout. Optional pin mounting is also available

K&B CLOSES THE PRESSURE LOOP

Kocher & Beck has launched a closed loop die pressure control system to help tackle the most common headaches among

narrow web converters - including material wraps, damaged dies, inconsistent cuts, waste and short die life.

'The all new closed loop control system has been the result of a marriage between the basic principles of hydraulics and sophisticated electronics,' says company director Martin Stierle.

The system will automatically compensate for changes in die cutting pressure, relieving pressure when there is an increase due to heat build up, and adding pressure if there is a loss. It will detect material wraps and instantly stop the press, as well as automatically maintain equal pressure on both sides of the web throughout the run. This in turn minimizes the amount of time spent on set up.

The concept of equal pressure is similar to automotive systems which keep front ends aligned to get even thread wear and maximize the life of car tires. The experienced press operator likewise seeks to quickly catch pressure changes and realign both sides of the web with equal pressure as conditions change throughout the run.

'However, unless you have a rather tall operator with long arms who is dedicated to monitoring changes and can safely reach over a 16 inch wide running press to manually adjust the pressure screws to maintain equal pressure 24/7, the tools frequently do run under uneven pressure before they are caught,' says Stierle. 'The result is premature and uneven die wear and increased spending in tooling.'

Another major issue for narrow web converters, is that broken webs wrap around dies so rapidly that even the quickest of operators are not fast enough to minimize these costly occurrences and prevent damage to tooling. Optical

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KOCHER & BECK'S new closed loop pressure control system

web break detectors have been available for a long time, but these are simply an optical camera pointed at the web, and do nothing related to die cutting pressure. 'In fact they are quite unreliable due to the fact that they rely solely on what this tiny camera sees or does not see,' says Martin Stierle. 'There are many occasions where the lens view is blocked by dirt, a broken piece of the sticky web or the waste sticks on the camera, fooling it to think that the web is still in front of it.'

Stierle stresses that the new system is designed to empower press operators of all skill levels to achieve optimum conditions for longest die wear with minimum effort. 'All the operator has to do is set the desired optimum and the maximum allowed pressure, nothing else.' Pressure changes that occur during the run across the web are automatically corrected by an electronics system directly linked to die cutting pressure via hydraulics.

'This automatically keeps the system at the desired pressure level throughout the run, and keeps it equal on each side of the press,' says Stierle. 'We relieve die cutting pressure and e-stop the press in milliseconds if the preset maximum allowed pressure level is exceeded.' The pressure settings can also be wired remotely from a workstation away from the actual press. The complete unit comes with a digital control panel, bridge plate and its own internal pump. The pressure ranges and final design of the product are custom made for the specs of the materials being converted, and it can be retrofitted to existing presses. The pressure ranges available are from 25 pounds to 15,000 pounds of down force for very thick materials.

WINK ADDS LASER-HARDENED MC DIES

wink Stanzwerkzeuge has added laser-hardened dies to its MC-coated

flexible die system for cutting abrasive materials such as thermal substrates.

Both MC-coating and laser hardening can be combined with wink's non-stick coating, which was introduced to the market in 2006. The non-stick coating protects the flexible die from glue and ink residues on the cutting edges. This can substantially reduce machine downtime and improve productivity by reducing the need to clean dies.

The non-stick coating is now available in black or silver, with both options being optimised for different kinds of materials. By applying the non-stick coating in addition to MC-coating or laser hardening, flexible dies can take advantage of the benefits of both processes. This means that glue- and ink-resisting properties of the non-stick coating and a higher lifespan of MC-coating or laser hardening can be combined in the same flexible die.

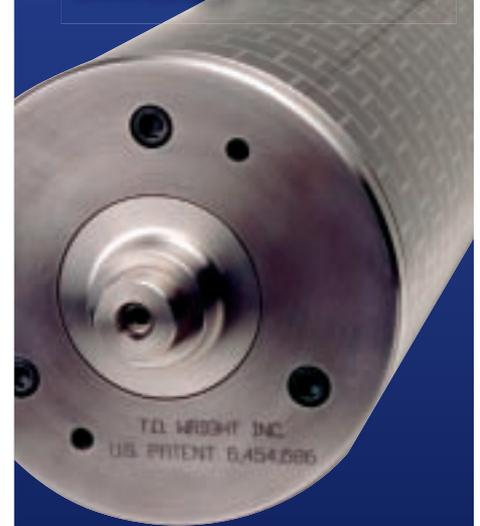
wink is offering its customers an advisory service before production starts to prevent problems arising. Troubleshooting advice is also available through wink's own publication 'ABC of cutting tools'. This helpful pocket guide has recently been incorporated into the German Label Association's (VsKE) compendium 'The World of Labels'. The publication is available for free in English, German, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Polish.

CASLON ADDS A3+ FOIL BLOCKER

Caslon has added to its range of foil blockers the NSF A3+ Pro, designed to fill the needs of customers who require a bigger sheet size and image area than currently available from the company.

The NSF A3+ Pro operates in the same way as the NSF A3+ and processes a 457mm wide x 311mm sheet with a maximum print area of 445mm x 257mm, allowing 2-up jobs to be run at speeds of up to 4,500 iph.

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Stamping foils

ANDY THOMAS reviews the latest developments in hot and cold stamping – including lenticular hot stamping and new developments in OVDs

KURZ

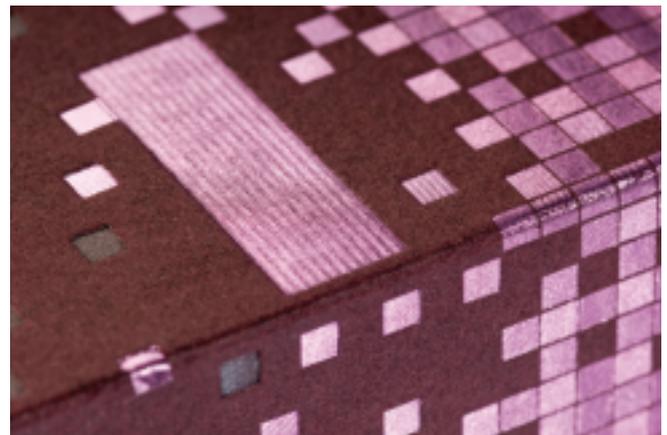
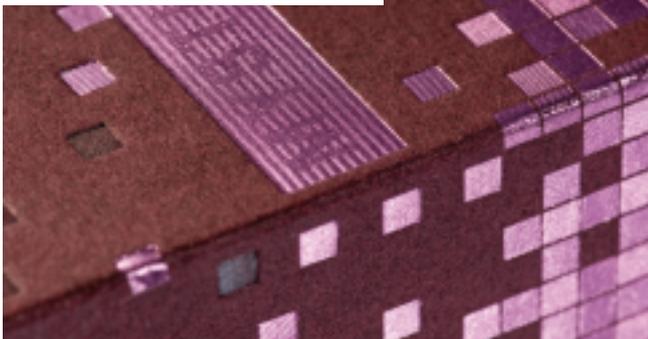
HOT STAMPING LENTICULAR SYSTEM AND NEW 'TRUSTSEAL' OVD

Stamping tool manufacturer Hinderer + Mühlich, a member of the Kurz group, has developed hot stamping dies capable of creating lenticular images. The stamping dies create either a flip effect that makes an image appear or disappear when viewed from different angles, or the ability to see two different images depending on the angle from which the image is viewed. It is also possible to simulate movement using two varying images.

Lenticular images are generated by engraving fine lines into the brass stamping die, so that the lines are set against one another in such a manner as



KURZ Lenticular stamping die system can make images appear at different viewing angles



LABELS & LABELING

to permit light to be refracted at differing angles.

'These new stamping dies provide the opulent appearance that hot stamping offers, the fine surface feel of structured stamping and a change in image that catches one's attention,' says Kurz.

Applications include design elements which can 'call out' product names, signets and logos. Hinderer + Mühlich is able to implement customized images within reasonably short lead times. Flip effects, for example, can be realized within just a few days, says the company.

Kurz has also further developed its Trustseal optical authentication device, making it substantially more difficult to counterfeit.

Trustseal is created using diffractive optical structures generated by means of a proprietary, computer-based method available only from Kurz. Three additional elements have now been added to the range of OVD features: Nanopic; Latent Contrast; and Overlapping Dynakey.

The Nanopic feature consists of images with a resolution, in part, of over 50,000 dpi (dots per inch) that can be combined with existing Trustseal features, and authenticated

using a simple high-powered magnifier.

Dynakey is a hidden element that becomes visible only when a special filter is placed over it. The new Overlapping Dynakey feature is superimposed on the main Trustseal

motif, without obscuring the main visual design, and shows a striking movement effect when viewed through the filter.

Latent Contrast is a further

development of the earlier Contrast Trustseal element, a naked-eye feature which exhibits a positive-negative light-dark contrast inversion when rotated by 90 degrees. The new Latent Contrast element is invisible when the OVD is viewed normally, and takes up no space from the main naked-eye design. However the feature suddenly appears when the OVD is tilted to an extremely low viewing angle. When the design is turned by 90 degrees at this low angle, the contrast inversion is seen as a secondary effect.

UNIVACCO

SHEETFED COLD FOILS AND SEAMLESS HOLOGRAPHIC FOILS

Univacco has launched two new foil products. CF5.0 foils are designed for high speed sheetfed offset presses with in-line foiling modules. They can be over-printed and applied on non-absorbent surfaces. Univacco's seamless holographic foils will work with both hot and cold stamping foils and do not exhibit shim lines.

WESTERN DECORATING TECHNOLOGIES

PIGMENT FOIL SPECIFIER

Western Decorating Technologies has introduced a new Foil Specifier, with eight new metallics and four new pigment colors. The company has pigment foils to match any PMS color with a minimum of five rolls 24" X 1000'. At Labelexpo Americas WDT demonstrated a pigment color match made for a J-LO (Jennifer Lopez) perfume line.

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In-line protection

WITH anti-counterfeit solutions high on the agenda of both converters and brand owners, Andy Thomas reports on a security technology which can be added to a label with no changes to existing workflow

In every global survey carried out by L&L, brand protection is seen by converters as one of the most exciting possibilities for future business growth. At the same time, global brands are losing billions of dollars to counterfeit products or fraudulent market diversion.

The problem is that brands want protection for mass market products without the additional costs of secondary labeling or packaging operations, which has generally ruled out solutions like RFID except for high value added merchandise.

A new solution, which seeks to add effective brand protection at zero on-cost, comes from Swiss company AlpVision. The company's patented Cryptoglyph system can be applied either as a pattern of printed micro dots invisible to the naked eye – in any color used to produce the label – or incorporated into the coating in the form of micro holes generated in the varnish, which are also invisible to the naked eye.

Counterfeiting and fraudulent market diversions are developing today through globalization of trade, the increase in the complexity of supply chains and the huge profit opportunity achievable at relatively low risk, simply through the lack of adequate protection. This is in particularly true for medicines, but also for other consumer goods of all kinds. In other sectors like banknote printing, it is well known that such value documents contain several layers of protection to make the task of defrauders extremely difficult.

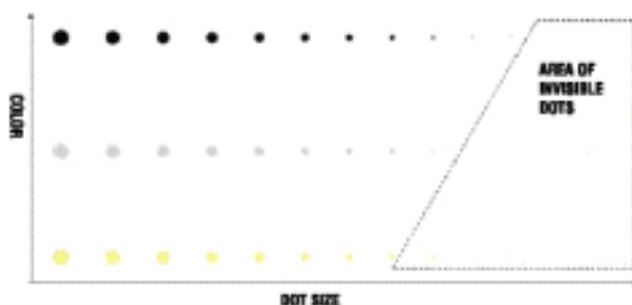
These value documents are individually serialized to enable quick identification. They contain visible anti-counterfeiting features such as metallic strips or holograms. But the really effective features, allowing clear differentiation of genuine banknotes from fakes, are not visible to the naked eye and are only known to specialists in security.

Can such a covert security policy be applied to fast moving consumer goods? At first glance the answer would be no, because it is too expensive and too complicated to manage at the consumer product level.

However, invisible or covert security is nowadays affordable for product packaging or labeling, because it does not produce extra production cost or any modification of the production flow and it does not slow down the production speed. These are the key characteristics of the AlpVision Cryptoglyph solution.

How does it work? The human eye has a physiological

FIG 1: AREA OF MARKING PRINTED WITH STANDARD VISIBLE INK, INVISIBLE TO THE NAKED EYE



"It looks like 'dust' or 'noise'. This is a key issue, because it allows the pattern to be camouflaged amongst the imperfections of the printed material"

property which means it cannot distinguish a printed mark when the contrast and size are below a certain level. Current industrial printing processes are capable of printing very small dots, and the Cryptoglyph technology takes advantage of this capability to apply covert features, invisible to the naked eye, with standard printing processes – offset, rotogravure, flexography and inkjet – and standard visible ink.

If the same principle is applied to the coating, it is enough to generate microscopic holes in the varnish layer to invisibly mark a label. During design of the label, provision can be made for these holes to be created at the prepress level. If the label is not coated, then micro dots will be printed instead. The aim is to avoid modification of the production process and to ensure that a security label incurs no extra production cost over a normal one.

How can a label be marked with micro dots or a pattern of micro holes which will totally exclude the possibility that defrauders can replicate the marking? This is where the digital imaging technology comes into play. The pattern used to invisibly mark the label does not contain any organized shape. It looks like 'dust' or 'noise'. This is a key issue, because it allows the pattern to be camouflaged amongst the imperfections of the printed material, whether they paper,

FIG 2: EXAMPLE OF A PATTERN OF MICRO HOLES OR DOTS SERVING TO INVISIBLY MARK A LABEL OR A PACKAGING

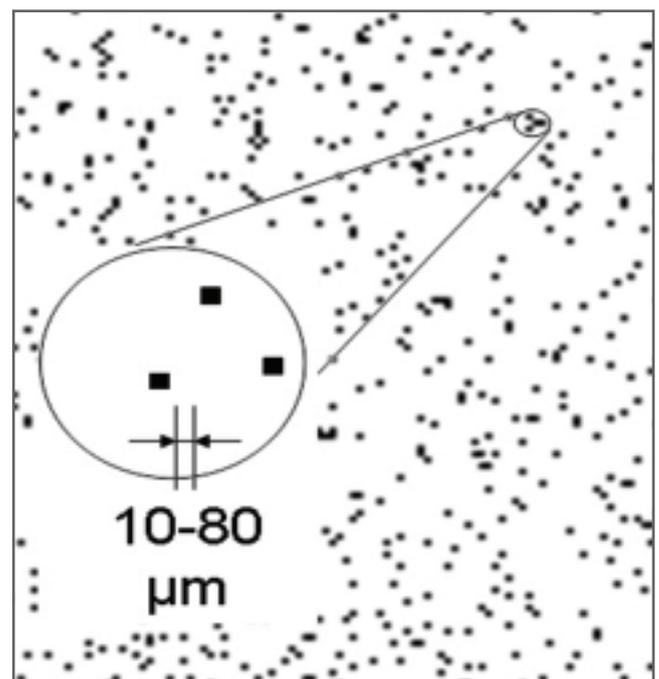




FIG 3: EXAMPLE OF MICRO HOLES PRESENT IN THE COATED VARNISH LAYER

aluminum or polymer. With a magnifying glass, dots and holes of all kinds can be seen, but it will be simply impossible for a defrauder to ascertain which ones are part of the invisible marking and which ones result from the imperfections of the printed material and process.

This patented feature of AlpVision's Cryptoglyph solution allows generation of a high level of covert security at no extra production cost. To generate the invisible pattern, a 128 bit digital key is used, providing hundreds of billions of different possible patterns. 'This is a real breakthrough in comparison with traditional security printing processes based on special security inks or taggants and dedicated printing processes,' says Roland Meylan, co-founder of AlpVision.

The generation of invisible marking is just one element of a security solution. It is also necessary to be able to determine if the marking is present (genuine product or label) or absent (fake product or label), anywhere and anytime.

AlpVision's Cryptoglyph is a machine readable covert security solution which requires no special expertise to carry out a 'genuine or fake' authentication of a label. One only needs to have at one's disposal a standard image capture device, which can be purchased on the open consumer electronic market or which could already be available for other purposes. This key feature, a significant advantage of the AlpVision solution, saves the branded product manufacturer from reliance on a single source of detection devices. This is very important when deploying an anti-counterfeiting program worldwide.

The easiest way to evaluate if a label is 'genuine or fake' is to use a standard low cost office flatbed scanner to capture an image. Alternatives are a digital camera or a camera phone.

For evaluation of a label as genuine or fake anywhere in the world, AlpVision provides branded product manufacturers with a secured server placed in a secured location under the management of the brand owner. Via internet or mobile networks, the 'genuine or fake' evaluation can be performed anywhere in the world by any authorized person. Simply send the captured image of the label to the server, which will automatically analyze the image with the AlpVision proprietary

LABELS & LABELING



FIG. 4: PDA DIGITAL CAMERA USED TO AUTHENTICATE THE PRESENCE OR THE ABSENCE OF THE CRYPTOGLYPH INVISIBLE MARKING

"The easiest way to evaluate if a label is 'genuine or fake' is to use a standard low cost office flatbed scanner to capture an image. Alternatives are a digital camera or a camera phone"

detection software; the verdict 'genuine' or 'fake' will be returned after a few seconds.

In conclusion, the development of an anti-counterfeiting product protection program by a brand owner is not just a matter of selecting a security technology. It is more a question of a system to be linked with the manufacturer's own product management system. To be efficient, the solution must comply with both health and food authorities' requirements, where medicines are concerned, and with severe quality assurance and industrial production requirements of the branded product manufacturers. At the label printer level, no extra implication beyond a quality printing process will be required. The AlpVision Cryptoglyph coating solution withstands any label printing and production environment, such as a breach of the flow for cylinder cleaning or varnish management.

'The AlpVision solution is commonly found to be the easiest to integrate into an existing production workflow, as well as the simplest to manage,' says Roland Meylan. A single license contract is concluded between AlpVision and the brand manufacturer, who is free to mandate any label printer of its choice to produce the covert secured labeling or packaging.

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Blinded by the light

A new study on spectrophotometers reveals differences in instrument accuracy which could seriously compromise agreed 'pass' standards for print jobs. Andy Thomas reports

A series of tests on spectrophotometers conducted by the Flemish Innovation Center for Graphic Communications (VIGC), has found deviations up to a delta E of nearly 4. Customers typically demand a maximum delta E of 2 for high quality print jobs.

'Color quality is the biggest challenge in the printing industry,' says Eddy Hagen, managing director of VIGC. 'Graphic arts companies will try everything to get the colors as desired by the customer. Those customers will use it as the most important criterion to accept, or reject, a print job. Which makes the devices to measure that color quality quite essential. So you would expect that the quality of those devices is top class. But it isn't.'

VIGC started testing devices in the summer of 2007 after noticing deviations between the spectrophotometers that its clients were using. The tests were set up using the GretagMacBeth NetProfiler test chart as a reference. This is a test chart which comes with a certificate stating the L*a*b*-values of the different patches, measured with a high end spectrophotometer. The certificate is valid for 12 months only. 'We then measured the 13 patches on the test chart with different spectrophotometers,' explains Fons Put, senior consultant with VIGC. 'For two patches we also measured the repeatability of the devices, meaning ten measurements in a row.' Over the past year, VIGC has tested over 20 different devices in the field, rather than review units supplied direct by manufacturers.

The VIGC study revealed deviations up to $\Delta E = 3,77$ for specific colors. On average the deviation per instrument of all 13 patches is 1,56.

"We know that some devices performed bad because the optics or the calibration tile were dirty," explains Put. "Spectrophotometers need regular calibration and also periodic cleaning"

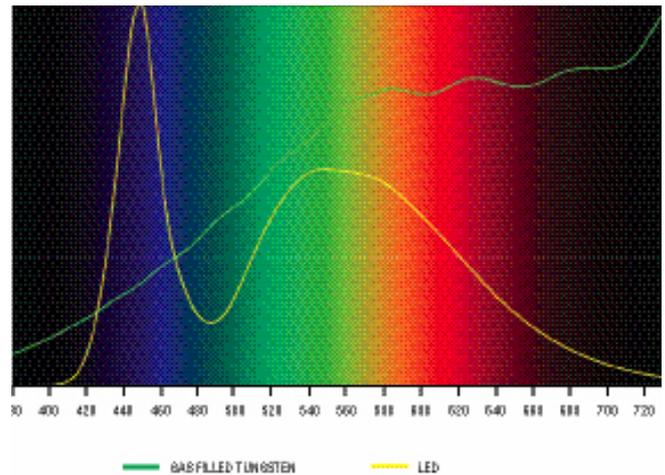
DIFFERENT TYPES, DIFFERENT CAPABILITIES

In the study VIGC encountered multiple devices of the same type or the same brand. Fons Put says that in general, the newer types of devices performed better, but there were no clear divisions. 'With devices that were a few years old, sometimes we got good results with the first one and bad results with the second one. Our own main spectrophotometer, which is calibrated regularly on that NetProfiler chart, was the best of them all. Another device, the same brand, the same type, more or less the same age, performed really bad.'

When the measurements of all 13 patches were averaged per device VIGC found deviations from the exact value ranging between ΔE 0,45 for the best device and 2,74 for the worst one. The highest deviation for individual patches was a ΔE of 3,77. 'Also interesting – or disturbing if you like – was that one brand had quite strong deviations in the red and orange,' says Put. 'We found this on multiple devices of that specific brand.'

Even within a certain type of device, VIGC found very big differences. This can be seen from Figure 1, which shows the deviations from the absolute value for seven devices of the

VIGC STUDY: 2 DIFFERENT LIGHT SOURCES USED IN SPECTROPHOTOMETERS



same brand, the same type.

WHAT CAUSES THE DEVIATIONS?

With the older devices one major reason can be maintenance. 'We know that some devices performed bad because the optics or the calibration tile were dirty,' explains Put. 'Spectrophotometers need regular calibration and also periodic cleaning.'

Another reason can be the light source used, explains Put: 'No light source has a perfect spectral power distribution. And if you don't have much power in certain wavelengths, not so much color can be reflected in that region, which limits the accuracy of detecting small variations in that color region. An LED light source has a completely different spectral power distribution from a gas filled tungsten bulb. And both are used in spectrophotometers.'

WHY NOT DELTA E 2000?

There will clearly be major problems if customers are demanding a ΔE of 2, but their measurement device might be of a ΔE of 3. VIGC says a simple solution for the industry would be to accept ΔE 2000 as the formula to calculate color differences. When people talk about ΔE , they usually refer to ΔE^*_{ab} , also known as ΔE 1976, says Hagen. This is also the formula that is mentioned in the relevant ISO standards. 'But this formula is very inaccurate when it comes to small color differences. I can show you a pair of colors with color difference of ΔE 5 which is barely noticeable. Take a 100 percent and a 95 percent process yellow from ISOcoated. The deviation is just noticeable, but if you calculate it with ΔE^*_{ab} , you get a figure of 5. ΔE^*_{ab} doesn't really conform to the human perception of color differences. The newer ΔE 2000 does. Take the same yellow color pair and you will get a ΔE of approximately 1, which conforms to the initial idea of ΔE : a ΔE of 1 is the smallest noticeable color difference.'

In fig 3, the color difference between left and right channels

yields a very high delta E*ab, although the difference is barely visible. When the VIGC test results are recalculated with the newer delta E 2000, the figures become much more realistic. The overall average of all devices on the 13 patches is a rather bad 1,56 when delta E*ab is used, but a very good 0,39 when calculated with the more recent delta E 2000.

Hagen continues: 'The bizarre thing is that some experts don't want to use delta E 2000 because it is not that good when it comes to rather large color deviations. In those cases the old delta E*ab performs better. But who is interested in the accuracy of large color deviations? I want accuracy in small color deviations. That is where the battlefield is, where print jobs get rejected. Not because the colors look very different, but because the delta E formula states that they are different. The printing industry would benefit a lot if the delta E 2000 formula would be the official formula for calculating color differences.' All relevant ISO standards only seem concerned with delta E*ab, says Hagen. 'Even the ISO 13655 on color measurement, which has just been rewritten, only talks about delta E*ab, which is not in favor of the printing industry or its customers.'

CONCLUSIONS

These VIGC test results seem to show that the measurements from spectrophotometers in use today are not absolute. There can be variations between different devices, while devices need to be calibrated on a regular basis and maintained properly. 'Periodical cleaning by the vendor may seem expensive, but what is the cost of a perfect print job that gets rejected due to the fact that the spectrophotometer was lacking maintenance and therefore showing a wrong figure?' argues Hagen.

Secondly, standards organizations need to consider using delta E 2000 as the reference to calculate color differences when judging print quality. 'For small color differences delta E 2000 conforms much better to human vision than delta E*ab,' says Hagen. 'Rejecting jobs because of color differences should be about seeing differences, not just about measuring a certain number.'

VIGC

VIGC (Vlaams Innocatiecentrum voor Grafische Communicatie) is a not for profit graphic arts consultancy organization with a core competence in color. VIGC is a member of the Ghent PDF Workgroup, where it performs compliancy testing on preflight applications. For more information, visit www.vigc.be

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PAMARCO APPOINTS KOREAN REPRESENTATIVE

Pamarco Global Graphics has appointed JaeYoung Stomax as its Korean representative. JaeYoung Stomax was formed in 1999 and has offices near Seoul and in BuSan allowing coverage of the entire country. Pamarco Global Graphics provides the flexo, gravure, offset and embossing markets with more than 2,000 products in over 60 countries worldwide.

SANI-BLAST TO MOVE TO NEW FACILITY

Sani-Blast, a manufacturer of automated on and off-press anilox roll cleaning systems, has moved to its new facility in Minneapolis, Minnesota, combining the headquarters with the manufacturing and distribution facility. The new facility includes a showroom for full demonstrations of equipment.

DUPONT DENIED INJUNCTION AGAINST MACDERMID

MacDermid has announced that for the second time the Federal District Court in New Jersey, USA, has denied DuPont's motion for a preliminary injunction.

This decision is part of a 2006 photopolymer plate patent infringement law suit in which DuPont sought preliminary injunction against certain MacDermid thermally developed flexographic printing products. MacDermid markets its thermal equipment under the LAVA trade name.

Michael Siegmund, president, MacDermid Printing Solutions, said, 'MacDermid is a technology-based company that makes a considerable investment in R&D. Our philosophy, culture and business practices are such that we would not, and do not, knowingly infringe any valid patent.'

KODAK JOINS VERDIGRIS AS FOUNDER SPONSOR

Verdigris, the environmental initiative from Digital Dots, the graphic arts research group, has announced Kodak as a founding sponsor. The digital giant joins Agfa Graphics, Canon Europe, drupa, Fujifilm, HP, Ricoh, Screen and Unity Publishing in their support for the project. Verdigris is a not-for-profit research initiative designed to understand the environmental impact of print. The goal is to evaluate the carbon footprints of a wide range of media products from the point of file creation via prepress to final output on paper or screen to disposal.

UPM RAFLATAC OPENS RFID MANUFACTURING SITE IN CHINA

UPM Raflatac has opened a new RFID manufacturing site in Guangzhou, China. The company now manufactures tags and in Asia, North America and Europe.

In Guangzhou, the initial annual production capacity will be 100 million pieces including high-frequency and ultra-high frequency passive RFID tags and inlays. The factory's capacity is scalable to hundreds of millions of pieces annually, according to market demand.

Manufacture in Southern China's Guangdong province provides definitive advantages, such as being close to existing and potential customers and direct access to the Chinese market. It also eliminates the need to import products from other factories. 'The opportunity to operate locally gives us a solid base for growth in the Asian market and at the same time validates our position as the globally leading manufacturer of RFID tags and inlays,' said Christer Härkönen, senior vice president of UPM Raflatac's RFID business.

In the Asian market, UPM Raflatac serves several RFID end-use areas including apparel, ticketing, supply chain management, pharmaceutical, media management, transportation and industrial. In addition to better serving the domestic market, UPM Raflatac will manufacture tags and inlays in Guangzhou for exportation.

GERHARDT ESTABLISHES CENTRAL EUROPE ALLIANCE

Gerhardt International, a supplier of rotary tooling, has formed a strategic alliance with Rotometal of Poland. Rotometal will supply Gerhardt with magnetic and print cylinders for its converting customers in central Europe.

Rotometal is an experienced manufacturer of cylinders and is located just 40 kilometers from the German/Polish border – close to the German market.

'We will get much closer to our customers on the German market with this new partnership,' said Klaus Damberg, CEO of Gerhardt International. 'At the same time, it's a good bridgehead to support our goal of expanding in Eastern Europe. Our production capacity is being increased considerably so we'll be able to meet demand from German and Polish customers, as well as offer a better service.' Gerhardt's new collaboration covers magnetic and print cylinders, with Rotometal supplying Gerhardt customers in central Europe. At the same time, Rotometal becomes the new representative for all of Gerhardt's products on the Polish market.

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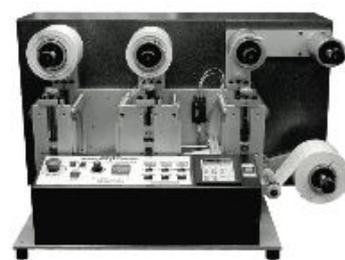


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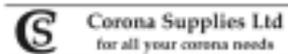


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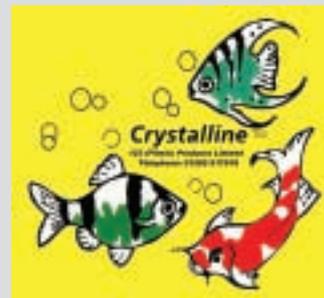
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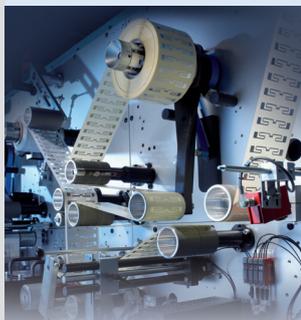
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- 1997 COMCO CADET**, 10" Web, Corona, 7 Flexo, IR & UV Drying, 3 Rotary Die, Back Slitting, Matrix & Product rewind, Sheet Delivery, Good selection of cylinders. Ref:387
- 2005 MARK ANDY 2200 13"**, 2 unwinds, Corona, 8 flexo units, hotair and UV drying, cold foil, over lamination, 3 rotary die, rewind, sheet and fan fold deliveries. Ref:391
- 1996 MARK ANDY 2200**, 10", 10" web, 6 flexo, UV + Hot air, 2 rotary die, matrix & product rewind. Ref:376
- 2008 OMET FLEXY 255**, 255mm Web, Unwind, Corona, Web Cleaner, 6 Flexo, UV, Chill Rolls, 2 Rotary Die, Matrix & Product Rewinds, Ref:376
- 1994 MARK ANDY 830**, unwind with web guide, 7" web width, 3 colour flexo + 1 additional drop-in unit, hot air + 1 UV, 3 rotary die, matrix and product rewinds, good selection of tooling. Ref:400
- 1998 CODIMAG VIVA 340**, 340mm Web, Corona, 6 Semi Rotary Letterpress, 1 Flexo Varnish, UV, Rotary Die Cut, Matrix & Product Rewinds, Sheet Delivery. Ref:377
- 2002 CODIMAG VIVA 340**, 340mm web, 4 Offset, 1 Letterpress, Hot Foil, Flexo Varnish, UV Drying, Rotary Die, Matrix & Product Rewinds. Ref:378
- 2004 NILPETER M03300**, Unwind, 5 Wet Offset, 22", 23", 24" & 25" Cylinders, 3 M Platforms + 3 Flexo Units, Cold Foil, Auto Register, Flat + 1 Rotary Die, Matrix & Product Rewinds. Ref:301
- 2005 ALDO BERRA S2 HOT FOIL**, 250mm Web, 2 x Independent foil feed units, Flatbed die station, 1 Laminating station, 1 x Waste rewind, Re-register capability, 1 Rewind. Ref:388
- 1992 ARPECO TRACKER**, 16" web, web guide, splice table, strobe, total length/label counter. Ref:397
- 2004 ASHE OPAL PLAIN LABEL CONVERTER**, Unwind, web guide, single die cutting unit, slitting, 4 spindle glueless turret rewind with tail gluing, 76mm, 70mm, 40mm, 38mm shafts, web turner, matrix waste & product rewind. Ref: 403

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CORPORATE CULTURE



STRATEGIC PLANNING DELUSION

BY Don Schmincke

How best to execute strategic planning? In the death zone; that altitude above 26,000 feet where lack of oxygen threatens long-term survival, climbers behaviour resembles that of CEOs.

Research has found that executives who create and execute great strategies in the face of extreme challenges – let's call them high altitude leaders – walk a different path. Rather than apply newly discovered methods, they succeed instead by recognizing and surviving specific dangers. Dangers always emerge when executives take their companies to higher levels. In the most extreme situations, on battlefields or mountains, these dangers can result in death. Four dangers threaten every executive team when they engage in strategic planning:

FEAR OF DEATH.

Unconscious anxiety about the death of a project, product line, sales target, market, career, or strategic goal causes executives to freeze. When this happens, strategic breakthroughs are jeopardized as managers shirk great decisions, avoid taking risks, stop challenging each other, and resist changes.

High altitude leaders free up strategic thinking by embracing death. This unleashes innovation versus preserving the status quo, creates new opportunities versus resisting the inevitable death of a cherished product or market. Ancient and contemporary leaders call it 'dying before battle.' What decision is your strategy team avoiding?

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SELFISHNESS.

In strategic planning selfishness kills new ideas and covers up problems as executives let personal agendas drive strategy development. High altitude leaders inspire a higher passion in others by creating a compelling saga (from the ancient Norse term). Passion is profit. When passions are greater than selfish agendas, creative strategy emerges. Is your team driven by a passionate saga or just empty words in a mission statement?

TOOL SEDUCTION

Tools make people feel like they have the right answer. High altitude leaders don't get seduced by tools, and avoid the seduction that diminishes intuition. This helps fuel team passion for the challenge ahead instead of derailing the team with useless meetings, lingo, and processes.

COWARDICE

Cowardice dangerously stops both mountaineering and corporate teams from challenging the status quo. High altitude leaders develop bravery, which allows them to achieve the risk-taking, commitment, and truthful communication necessary for innovating strategy. Do your team members whisper about uncomfortable issues outside the meeting?

Now visit www.HighAltitudeLeadership.com for a free team assessment exercise.

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