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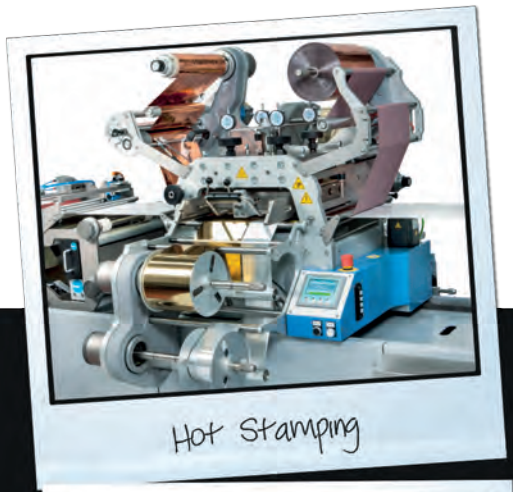

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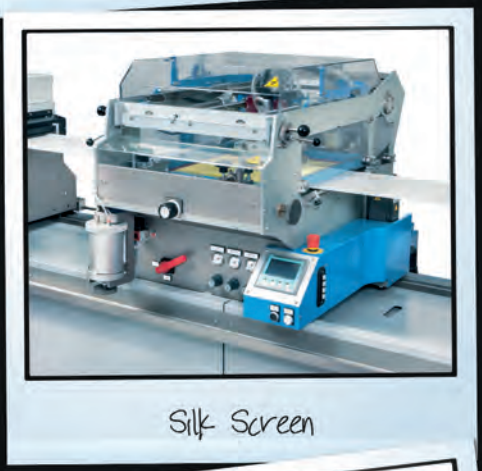
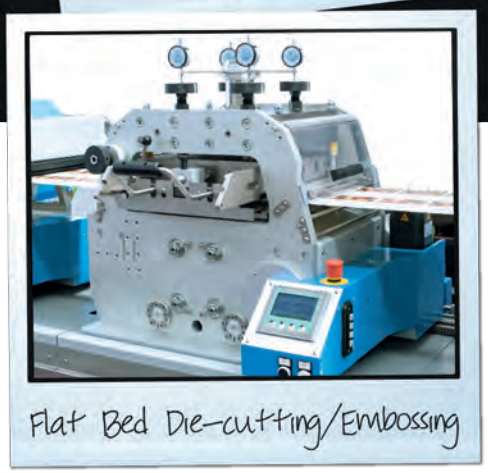
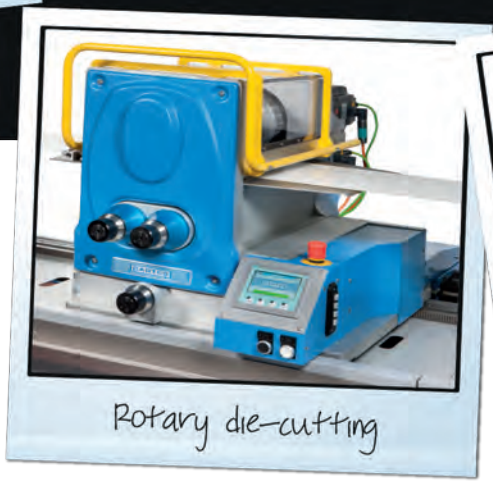


Silk Screen

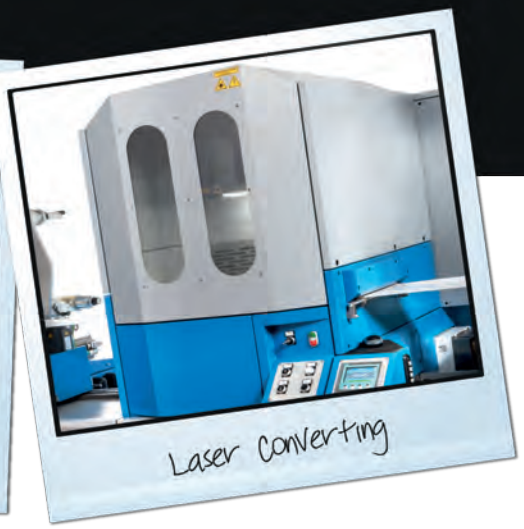
Flexo Varnishing



Flat Bed Die-cutting/Embossing



Rotary die-cutting



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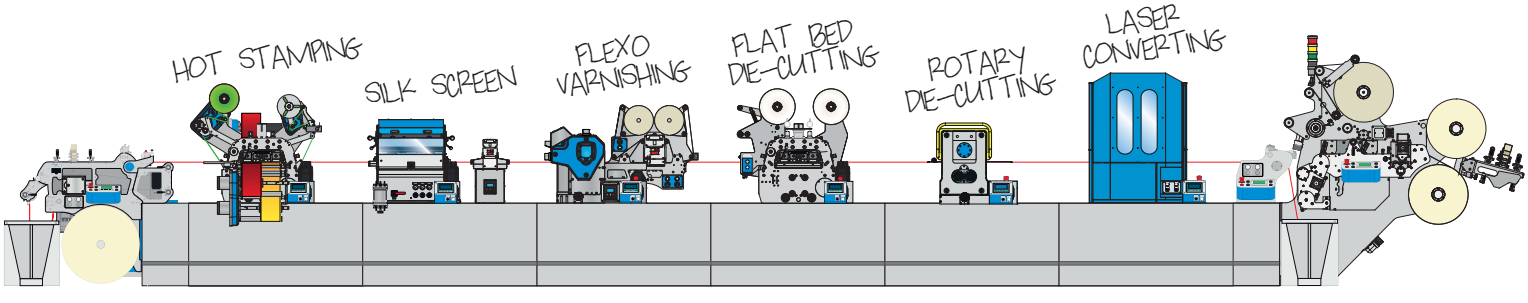

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Armor is making major investments across its business as it targets becoming the leading global supplier in the thermal transfer market in the next five years

REGULARS

LABELEXPO AMERICAS 2014

Labelexpo provides the pulse of development for the labels industry and this year's event in Chicago between September 9 -11 is no different.

Starting on the digital front, HP is using the show as a platform to show its HP Indigo 20000 press in the US, and to launch the successor press to the established WS6600, the WS6800. The key advance for the WS6800, apart from a larger print frame, is an in-line spectrophotometer which opens up new possibilities in automated color matching and closed loop color control.

And Mark Andy shows for the first time the capabilities of its Digital Series hybrid flexo/digital press based around the Performance press frame.

Other firsts in the North American market include the Graphium hybrid flexo/inkjet press; Epson's first single pass LED-UV inkjet press, the SurePress L-6034VW; EFI Jetrion's new LED-curing inkjet press, the 4950LX LED ; Screen's Truepress Jet L350UV; Durst showing its established Tau330 with in-line laser die cutting; and much more.

There will also be the latest edition of the now established Inkjet Trail, with presses from multiple suppliers printing the same label designs on the same substrates to show what this technology is now capable of.

New at this year's show is the Smart Mart where visitors can see host of cutting-edge smart and interactive label technologies from NFC/RFID to temperature indicators, QR authentication systems and much more.

There are also new launches in the conventional space including Omet's new 'entry level' XFlex X4 in a 17in (440mm) format and Nilpeter's first showing of its FP4 in-line flatbed foil/embosser as part of a fully loaded FA-4* press line.

We also see a much bigger commitment to package printing at this show. There will be a dedicated pack print workshop featuring a Xeikon press producing short run cartons with variable print, digital varnish and in-line converting; and a Delta Industrial Mod-Tech converting and packaging line producing fully finished and packed medical parts.

For end users, the show brings two new features: the Craft Beverage Day and Brand Manager Master Class.

Ensure you make plans to stay for the whole show!

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L&L ISSUE 2

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INBOX

ADAM Woodhead of Anglia Labels was in 2nd place and 3rd was Ian Woodhead also of Anglia Labels

KEVIN Paszek (center) receives his award

HERMA AND NILPETER GOLF DAY 2014

Writes John Davy: Friday 13th – unlucky for some! However, luck was on our side this year for the 72 golfers attending the Herma/Nilpeter golf day who enjoyed glorious sunshine and an immaculate course in the beautiful surroundings of Donnington Castle in Berkshire.

Organized with the usual precision and complete attention to detail, a full English breakfast awaited all golfers upon registration. The team working at Donnington Grove went out of their way to help and provide tremendous catering for breakfast, a ploughman's lunch and then a formal dinner, very well led by the manager Charlie.

A morning of nine holes of Texas Scramble was followed by 18 holes of stableford team and individual scoring in the afternoon. All levels of golf were on display, from near scratch players to 30 handicappers, all well balanced in selected teams.

Colin Phillips MD of Herma UK said: 'The event just seems to grow from strength to strength and this year was no exception with Domino and Teknek joining the list of sponsors. We are extremely lucky and very grateful not just to have our main sponsor, RotoMetrics, but also GEW, Flint and Tarsus, along with several smaller sponsors who all contribute to making this one of the highlights in the industry's calendar.

Mission Labels sponsored the afternoon competition which kept everyone on their toes when it was their turn to play their Mission Balls!

Nilpeter's sales and marketing director, Jakob Landberg and Colin Phillips presented the prizes to the winner – Kevin Paszek of Tungate. Adam Woodhead of Anglia Labels was in second place and third was Ian Woodhead also of Anglia Labels.

Finat also presented a special prize to Kevin Paszek, which was an invitation to attend the Finat Congress in Amsterdam in 2015.

Next year's event has seen RotoMetrics, GEW, Tarsus all agreeing to continue their support along with new sponsor TTS.

olfers attending the Herma/Nilpeter golf day who enjoyed glorious sunshine and an immaculate course in the beautiful surroundings of Donnington Castle in Berkshire.

VELVET TOUCH FOR L&L COVER

The front cover of this edition of Labels & Labeling has been laminated with a special BOPP-based 'velvet touch' thermal matte film supplied by India-based global group Cosmo Films, which is a leading provider of laminating solutions and polypropylene films.

Cosmo Films' velvet film is a BOPP-based, one side velvet feel matte coated and other side extrusion coated, both sides treated thermal laminating film. The film has an extrusion coated surface with a low temperature melting resin, which enables the lamination of film to paper products by heat and pressure. The film can be laminated within a temperature range of 100 to 120 degC, with the optimum conditions selected based on the lamination speed (dwell time) and dimensional stability. The printed surface must be well dried before lamination.

Thermal lamination of this film is possible on all kinds of printed and unprinted paper and paper boards, including book covers, posters, magazines and diaries. This film is specifically recommended for lamination of cartons used for luxury perfumes and soaps, wedding albums and high end paper and paperboard-based stationary.

Various decoration printing techniques can be performed on the surface post-lamination. This includes hot foil stamping, embossing and screen printing etc. It is recommended to do the any post-lamination operation after 24 hours.

Key features of the material include fiber-tear bond strength with paper, high degree of scuff resistance and superior depth of color. The film is available in variants including: BOPP-based wet lam velvet; BOPP-based thermal lam velvet and Nylon-based thermal lam velvet.

For more information contact Cosmo Films Limited:

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NEWS

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

BLIPPAR BUYS LAYAR TO CREATE AR LEADER

Augment reality (AR) system develop Blippar has acquired Layar, described as a 'key pioneer in bringing AR to mobile devices since 2009'.

Layar's technical insight and practical know-how are to be combined with Blippar's knowledge and extend Blippar's ability to deliver the highest quality AR experiences to the maximum amount of consumers'.

With the acquisition, Blippar said it has established one of the biggest data footprints for consumer AR use around the world – 'another exciting step on the path to turning the physical world around us interactive', and which 'sows the seeds' for mass consumer adoption.

Blippar chief executive officer Ambarish Mitra said: 'We started Blippar with the vision of delivering high-quality, engaging, ubiquitous consumer augmented reality through a browser of the physical world.

'In only 33 months we've gone from building prototypes in the living room of my flat to connecting millions of consumers to thousands of brands around the world, making the verb "to blipp" synonymous with AR experiences.

'To me, Layar has always demonstrated that it shares this vision of an augmented world. Now working together as one team, we will further define what consumer augmented reality needs to be, and what will be required to deliver it on a global scale as an intuitive daily behavior.'

Find out more about AR in the Labelexpo Americas 2014 Smart Mart feature area (see pp. 153-155 for more info, and visit the show to experience Smart Mart first hand).

TLP EXPANDS INTO MEXICO

Tailored Label Products has opened a new multi-client distribution and fulfillment center (DFC) located in Tijuana, Mexico, which expands its global footprint and strengthen its local service presence.

The center provides regional distribution of high-performance custom labels, UL/CSA labels, short- and long-run labels, and die-cut adhesives and protective films.

It enhances the company's North American coverage, which also includes manufacturing facilities in Wisconsin and Georgia, and sales offices in North Carolina.

FOLLOWING an exchange of shareholding, Heidelberg has become the 100 percent owner of Gallus

HEIDELBERG TAKES FULL OWNERSHIP OF GALLUS

Following an exchange of shareholding, Heidelberg has become the 100 percent owner of Gallus, with the immediate aim of working on the accelerated development of a digital label press.

The shareholding manoeuvre sees Ferd. Rüesch AG, a Swiss company controlled by Ferdinand Rüesch, contributing its 70 percent stake in Gallus Holding AG as contribution in kind into Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG against the issue of new Heidelberg shares. After the transaction, Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG will hold directly and indirectly 100 percent of the Gallus Holding AG shares.

Ferdinand Rüesch will hold approximately nine percent of the shares of Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG and become an 'anchor shareholder'.

Heidelberg has owned one third of Gallus shares 1999, during which time there has been co-operation both on technology and sales and marketing.

A statement issued by the two companies said: 'The planned complete takeover of Gallus Holding AG accelerates the development and use of Heidelberg's digital products in the growing labels sector. In September of this year, Heidelberg and Gallus will be unveiling at the Gallus Innovation Days a new digital printing system for the label market that incorporates Fujifilm technology.'

Gallus will continue to operate under its brand name and under its current management, said the statement. 'Gallus will continue to focus on development, production and sales/service of narrow reel- fed printing presses targeted for the label printer as well as on wide reel-fed printing presses and die-cutting machines for folding carton converters.'

ILS LEADS US 'SHARE A COKE' LABELS PRODUCTION

Coca-Cola has launched its 'Share a Coke' campaign in the US, and contracted Innovative Labeling Solutions (ILS) to lead and coordinate the production efforts of this popular marketing campaign.

ILS managed the production of the millions of Share a Coke labels with six other print facilities across the US. Coca-Cola's custom label revolution was highly successful in Europe last year and is already a hit with US consumers sharing photos and discussing the labels throughout social media channels using #ShareACoke.

ILS was responsible for validating the production process, training printers, managing graphics files for all printers involved, driving the 10-week production process, coordinating data, communicating between stakeholders, and resolving quality issues.

ATLAS Converting Equipment is to host an event to mark the 50th anniversary of the Titan slitter rewinder brand

ATLAS TO MARK TITAN'S 50TH BIRTHDAY

STANDFIRST

Atlas Converting Equipment is to host an event to mark the 50th anniversary of the Titan slitter rewinder brand.

The anniversary Open House will take place in Bedford, UK on September 17 and feature two Titan slitter rewinders running under production conditions. This will see a Titan SR9-DT dual turret winder and Titan ER610 Compact slitter rewinder both demonstrated processing 30-micron printed BOPP film.

There will also be demonstrations and presentations from associated partner suppliers Ga.Vo (core cutting), Koch (automated reel handling), BST (web inspection) and Dienes (slitting technology).

Atlas Converting Equipment acquired Titan Converting Equipment in 1981, before going through a series of takeovers and acquisitions itself. The company returned to private ownership in 2010 after a management buyout from the Bobst Group. Current managing director Alan Johnson will speak as part of the Open House.

Customers, agents and representatives from the business media are invited to attend the event. An anniversary dinner will also be held on September 16.

SCHREINER MEDIPHARM DEVELOPS FLEXI-CAP

Schreiner MediPharm has developed Flexi-Cap, a label and cap combination anti-counterfeiting system that features a first-opening indicator designed to prevent the illegal reuse of medicine containers under the guise of being unopened, original products.

Flexi-Cap comprises a label combined with a cap – which is similar to the cover for wine bottles but adapted to the specific requirements of the pharmaceutical industry.

The film cap is positioned over the closed container before the label is applied without covering the peel-open tab of the opening strip. Once the strip is opened, the bottom part of the cap, together with the label, remains attached to the container. Attempting to remove the rest of the cap destroys the label, eliminating the possibility of unnoticed illegal reuse, Schreiner MediPharm.

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

SIGMAQ ACQUIRES CHIPPENHOOK

SigmaQ Group, a producer of labels and packaging based in San Salvador, El Salvador, has acquired Chippenhook Corporation, a US-based designer and provider of visual merchandizing, packaging and fixture products, as it looks to increase its market presence in the US and Europe.

SigmaQ is a multi-national supplier in Central America and the Caribbean. With over 2,000 collaborators, 10 factories in Central America and eight sales offices in Central America, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, the US and France, SigmaQ is an integrated manufacturer of flexible, plastic, corrugated and luxury packaging, labels and pre-press products for a broad range of Fortune 500 customers and regional clients.

Chippenhook was founded in 1973 and is a widely recognized name in the jewelry, watch, optical, and international luxury brand markets for custom visual merchandizing, packaging, and fixtures. Chippenhook is headquartered in Lewisville, Texas with a further presence in Hong Kong, China.

Chippenhook is the second major acquisition in this market segment in the US by SigmaQ, after Bufkor, one of the original manufacturers of jewelry and display packaging in the US, which it acquired nearly three decades ago. Bufkor display and packaging products which are fabricated at SigmaQ's Specialty Products production facilities in El Salvador.

Barry Rutherford, former chief executive officer of Chippenhook, will become managing director of SigmaQ Luxury Products, a new business unit, which will comprise of Bufkor, Chippenhook and SigmaQ Specialty Products. He will be based in San Salvador.

Henry Yarhi, chairman and chief executive officer of SigmaQ Group, said: 'We are very pleased to have Chippenhook join our family of companies. Its global supply background, positions our core group currently serving Central America and the Caribbean for an expanded presence increasing market share in the US and Europe.

'Barry Rutherford brings over 35 years of experience in leadership positions in the US and Hong Kong, and will be a welcome addition to our management staff in San Salvador.'

Rutherford said: 'This is a time of dynamic change in the global supply chain world. As we look forward, we could not have possibly found a better partner than SigmaQ.'

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

PETERLYNN UPGRADES TO XEIKON 3300

PeterLynn has upgraded its 2012 Xeikon digital color press purchase in order to cope with the increased volume of label production being demanded by its customers, with a field upgrade enhancing its existing 3030 machine to the productivity levels of the top end Xeikon 3300 model.

PeterLynn manufactures custom roll labels, plain paper labels, laser labels, tickets and tags. It provides a range of products for specific applications, including synthetic materials, write and seal labels, mobile printer labels, high temperature and cryogenic label products.

PeterLynn installed its Xeikon 3030 in 2012 at the same time expanding the company, including adding the adjacent business unit on the Willowbrook North Industry trading estate. This additional space was used to house the Xeikon press.

The Xeikon 3300 digital label press hardware offers variable web width ranging from 200mm (7.9in) up to 330mm (13in). The machine now offers PeterLynn a top speed of 19.2m/min (63ft/min).

James Lindsay, general manager of PeterLynn, said: 'The Xeikon has performed exceptionally well for us in the 18 months since it has been in production. Our own sales efforts have managed to fill the capacity offered by the original configuration to the point where we needed to evaluate our best move forwards.

'The ability to field upgrade the Xeikon was part of our initial decision making process when we selected the 3030 label press, and it seemed the logical move for us to make in order to increase our production capacity.'

Vicky Waine, sales and marketing manager for PeterLynn, added: 'The original purchase of the Xeikon machine meant that we were able to offer our customers high-quality, short-run four-color labels without incurring expensive plate and set-up costs.

HIGHCON ADDS LABELS TO EUCLID OFFERING

Digital folding carton finishing specialist Highcon has added self-adhesive labels to the list of products its Euclid system is capable of handling.

The Euclid was launched at drupe 2012 as a digital finishing system that allowed creasing and cutting of folding cartons using lasers and Highcon's DART technology. A number of converters have installed the Euclid since its launch, such as Glossop Cartons in the UK and Anro in the US, and their experiences and feedback have allowed Highcon to extend the capabilities of the Euclid.

One area of development has been substrate thickness and type, with customers having produced work on materials beyond the initial specifications, including self-adhesive labels and stickers, so offering new substrate cutting possibilities for converters and printers. Highcon has also developed the Light Editor software tool, which allows Euclid operators to take full advantage of the digital technology by enabling last minute editing of crease and cut lines, partial cutting depth control and sharp angled cut control.

HIGHCON has added self-adhesive labels to the list of products its Euclid system is capable of handling

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NATIONAL flexographic associations from across Europe are to work in closer cooperation in order to bring together the European flexo industry under an umbrella organization to be known as FTA Europe

FTA EUROPE TAKES SHAPE

National flexographic associations from across Europe are to work in closer cooperation in order to bring together the European flexo industry under an umbrella organization to be known as FTA Europe.

Representatives of associations from Italy, France, Sweden, Poland, the UK and the Dutch-speaking regions of the Benelux countries met in Brussels, Belgium on June 25 to outline their shared thoughts and knowledge from their respective countries, and to discuss the opportunities of working together to coordinate their activities and initiatives through a representative "voice of the industry". They are all agreed that this is an important step in the development of the flexo industry in Europe and further afield.

The Brussels meeting was hosted by EFTA-Benelux and was a follow-on from a meeting arranged by ATIF, the Italian flexographic association, in Bologna, Italy on November 19, 2013. The next meeting of FTA Europe is to take place during Emballage in Paris on November 17-20, while a website and logo will be designed and unveiled in the coming months.

FTA Europe has made education and standardization of the flexo process key targets of its initial work in order to enhance and promote the flexographic process as a competitive printing technology, especially for packaging. It will also be undertaking a survey of those involved in the European flexo industry to ascertain what they see as being important topics for the fledgling group to address.

FTA Europe will act as an umbrella organization for the European flexographic industry with national associations from across the continent as members, supported by industry suppliers. The June 25 meeting was sponsored by Esko, Sun Chemical and Uteco Group. The FTA Europe board is to be made up of nominated representatives from national member associations

Rogier Krabbendam, secretary-general of EFTA-Benelux, used education as an example to describe how this will work in practice. 'As a group we want to raise the overall level of training and education in the European flexographic industry, but it will be those on the ground that are able to organize and deliver the training that will make this a reality.

'This will help create a harmonized level of knowledge and technical competence across the European flexographic industry.'

Krabbendam added: 'Harmonizing the work of the different European flexo associations will provide a way to help the flexo market to continue growing.'

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NEWS

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

MIKE HENRY TAKES OVER CONSTANTIA'S LABELS BUSINESS

Mike Henry has assumed leadership of the Labels division of Constantia Flexibles, with Alexander van ´t Riet stepping down from his executive vice-president position to take up other professional duties.

Henry has been part of the leadership team of Spear Group since September 1999 and, in addition to his finance director position, he leads operations of the Spear Group in the UK and South Africa. Before joining the Spear Group Mike Henry started his career at KPMG and served on the board of various industrial companies.

As executive vice-president for labels, Henry will become a member of the executive board of Constantia Flexibles, reporting to chief executive officer Thomas Unger.

LABELONE ACQUISITION STRENGTHENS ADAMS

Adams Label Company has acquired LabelOne Connect as part of a program to strengthen its position in the wine label market and provide additional geographic footprint in the industry.

Adams Label Company is a new entity that is focused on acquisitions of wine, spirits and beverage label printing companies. In the immediate future it has an aggressive plan to strategically align and make acquisitions within the key wine regions of the US. LabelOne Connect is Adam Label Company's first acquisition.

Adams Label Company is part of Adams Wine Group, which was established in 1997 and is a vertically integrated sales and marketing company operating in the wine market. It includes Adler Fels Winery, Pack n Ship Direct, Sonoma Estate Vintners, Vinesse and Adams Label Company.

LabelOne Connect, family owned and operated by Wilfredo and Ardie Rabanal, was founded in 1983 and has built a reputation for high-quality wine label printing and strong relationships with long-standing winery customers.

This acquisition will support Adams Label Company's business plan to acquire companies that strengthen its position in the market and provide additional geographic footprint in the industry.

David Bowyer, chief executive officer of Adams Label Company, said: 'LabelOne Connect is complementary to our company not only from a regional perspective but to create new growth opportunities for the Adams Wine Group with world-class wine label printing.'

GRAPHIC Label Solutions has become the first converter in the US to install EFI's Jetrion 4950LX LED inkjet narrow web press

GLS OVERHAULS PRESSROOM WITH EFI INKJET PRESS

FIRST LED-UV EFI Jetrion press installed in the US

Graphic Label Solutions (GLS) has become the first converter in the US to install EFI's Jetrion 4950LX LED inkjet narrow web press, and has replaced all of its existing press technology with the digital printing machine.

The modular EFI Jetrion 4950LX installed at GLS includes in-line flexo varnish and lamination, slitting and laser die-cutting, as well as video inspection technology that checks for variances in color or registration.

As a result of this investment in inkjet, GLS has sold off its previous production equipment – including a narrow web flexo press, a screen printing press and a roll-to-roll solvent inkjet printer – replacing it all with the new, 13.5in wide EFI press.

This is part of a strategic move by GLS, including enhancing its sustainability efforts to meet its customers' need for greener, more environmentally friendly supply chains. The Jetrion 4950LX press is key to GLS's environmental offering.

GLS founder and president Deb Warner said: 'The brands we work with are all setting goals for sustainability, and they want suppliers who share that commitment.

'When I first saw EFI Jetrion UV-inkjet technology a few years ago, I knew it would help us offer a high quality while reducing waste. LED was the missing piece I needed to really address what our clients are looking for from a sustainability perspective.'

The 4950LX press is the first Jetrion product compatible with a full range of flexible packaging and shrink-sleeve substrates, which opens the door to new applications at GLS, and EFI's 'cool cure' LED UV-inkjet curing technology gives GLS the ability to run thin and challenging stocks ranging from 0.5mm up to 30mm-plus. The press also reduces costs with lower energy usage and LEDs offering a significantly longer lamp life compared to traditional UV lamps.

The Jetrion 4950LX LED press prints on the same substrates GLS previously used on its conventional equipment, providing a level of flexibility that Warner can use to expand the company's offerings in multiple new markets, with a major focus on sustainably managed, cradle-to-cradle applications.

GLS is currently developing 'attractive, innovative and sustainable products' with its Jetrion press, including a point-of-purchase 'shelf talker' tag printed on a completely biodegradable, paper-like substrate made of stone. GLS is also using the press to develop new UL- and cUL-approved OEM labels and decals.

Warner added: 'The Jetrion 4950LX not only offers a small environmental footprint, it has an excellent white ink and, at 720 x 720dpi, it produces very crisp text and images, and allows us to run an unlimited number of colors.'

Stephen Emery, vice-president of EFI's Jetrion and ink business operations, said: 'As the very first EFI Jetrion 4950LX user in the country, GLS is establishing a competitive advantage for itself with LED while showing how the label and packaging industry can continue evolving along a sustainable path.'

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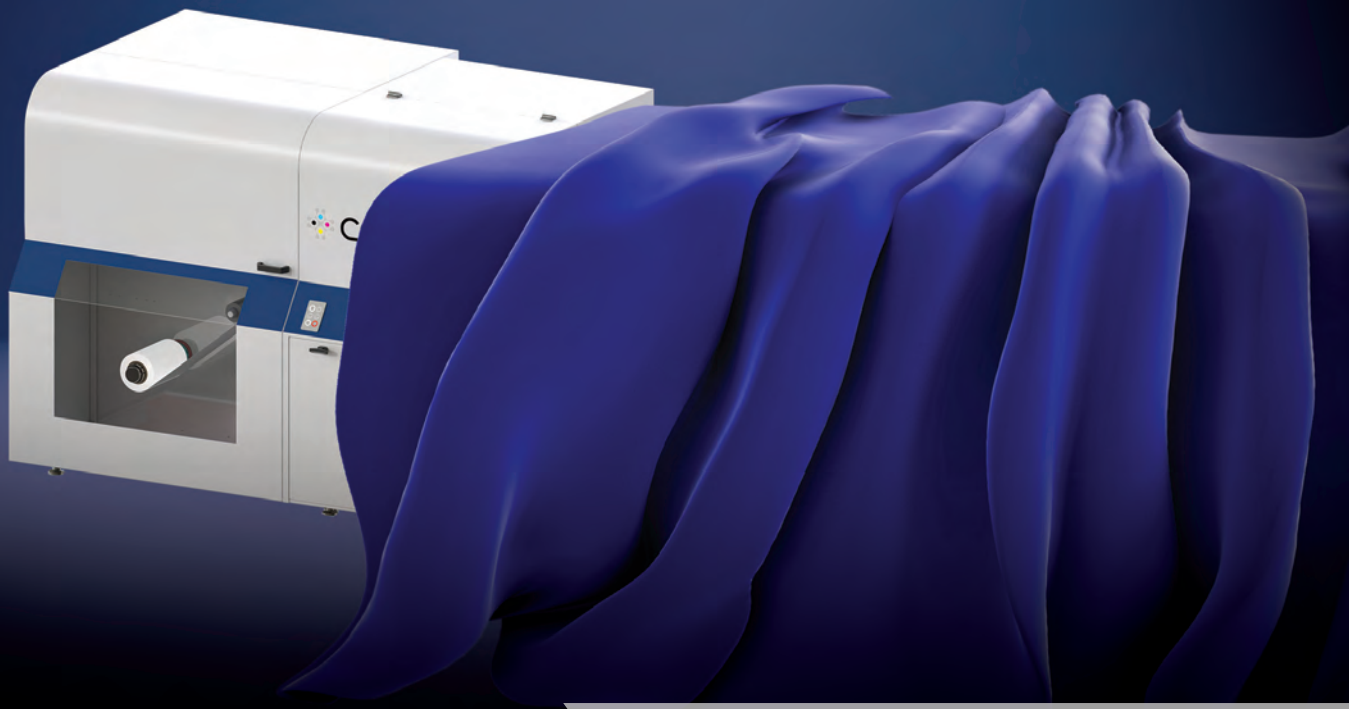

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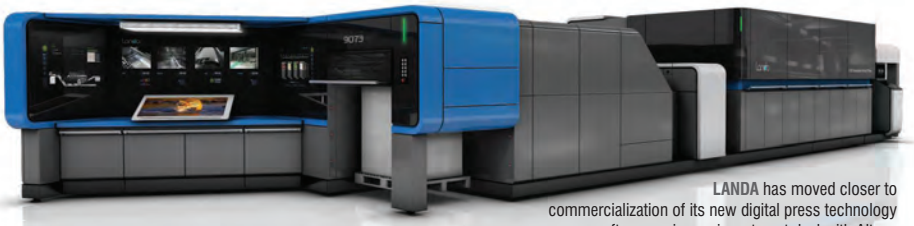


LANDA has moved closer to commercialization of its new digital press technology after agreeing an investment deal with Altana

LANDA SIGNS ALTANA DEAL

Specialty chemicals group Altana and Landa Corporation have concluded an equity financing agreement under which Altana will invest 100 million EUR (135 million USD) for a minority stake in Landa Digital Printing.

In a statement the two companies said they 'see the agreement not only as a financial investment, but also as a starting point for a long-term strategic partnership to bring digital printing solutions to the commercial, packaging and publishing markets'.

Other units of the Landa Group, including Landa Labs and Landa Ventures, are not included in the transaction.

The proceeds will be used for completing the development of Nanography, Landa's water-based digital printing process, including engineering and production ramp-up of printing presses and building of manufacturing plants for Landa NanoInk colorants.

Altana is expected to be an active partner, drawing on print industry expertise gained from its divisions including BYK Additives & Instruments, Eckart Effect Pigments, and ACTEGA Coatings & Sealants.

'We are extremely excited to be partnering with an industry visionary like Benny Landa,' said Dr Matthias L. Wolfgruber, chief executive officer (CEO) of Altana AG. 'We speak the same language in terms of innovation.'

'I am confident that we are investing in a game-changing technology that can enable the printing industry to thrive in the 21st century and help our customers position themselves well for the future.'

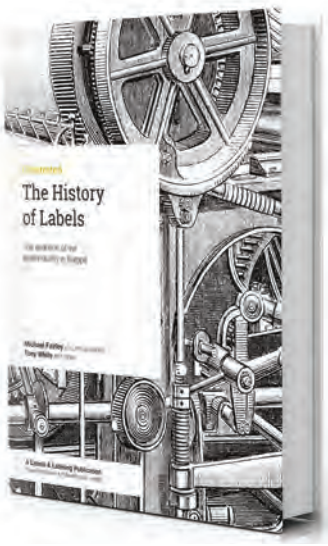
Benny Landa, chairman and CEO of Landa Corporation, said: 'We see our alliance with the Altana Group as a key milestone for our company and a strong vote of confidence in our mission to bring digital printing to mainstream commercial, packaging and publishing markets.'

This agreement marks the third strategic partnership made to bring Nanotechnology to the global printing market. Komori provides the platform for sheet handling and EFI will develop front-end software. Altana brings 'the last piece to the puzzle' with financing, and back-end support and global manufacturing ramp-up expertise.

'Altana is an amazing company,' said Benny Landa. 'There's a great cultural fit and we're thrilled to have the deal. The company is a strategic investor with expertise in our markets – in fact, we're already using some of their materials – but they're not in any competing markets either, which is ideal. They have experience in scaling up huge global manufacturing facilities, and that is something that we'll have to do, so we'll leverage this.

'Without funding we haven't completed the picture. They are an essential piece of ramping up the infrastructure, the last piece to the puzzle – and now we are ready to race to market.'

Landa Digital Printing is focused on the mainstream economics of printing, rather than specialty jobs.



L&L TO LAUNCH LABEL ACADEMY

Labels & Labeling will launch a new training and certification program for the label industry at Labelexpo Americas 2014. Its aim is to ensure that specialised knowledge is available globally and that those in the industry are able to demonstrate their proficiency in a particular area.

The Label Academy will consist out of a series of online modules, covering various technical and business topics. Each module will be supported by printed and electronic textbooks and links to relevant videos and articles. The first modules will cover conventional and digital printing processes, origination and sustainable labelling. There are up to 20 modules planned over the next two years.

After completing the study of a particular module, students will be able to complete an online examination to earn a certificate.

In additional to material written by Mike Fairley (who developed the Academy), other training organisations including 4impression and Converting Technology International are also contributing modules. Label Academy material will also be available to support existing training programs and educational institutions.

The Label Academy has already received the endorsement of FINAT, the TLMI and the LMAI.

LABEL INDUSTRY HISTORY CHRONICLED

The History of Labels: The Evolution of the Label Industry in Europe is a new book that explores the development of the label industry, from its humble beginnings in the 1500s, through the formative years of the Industrial Revolution to the industry of today.

It covers the first wooden hand presses, hand-made paper and inks, the early mass produced labels and the recent advances in digital printing.

Written by Mike Fairley and Tony White, it is the result of years of research at institutions such as the British Museum, the St Bride's Printing Library and Frogmore Paper Mill. The 220-page book also looks at the wider influence of labels, including the impact on branding and the way in which consumer products are used.

The History of Labels is available for purchase from Amazon.com and its affiliate sites.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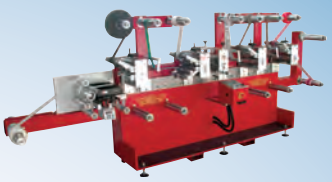
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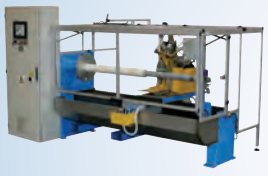
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THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

BLIPPAR BUYS LAYAR TO CREATE AR LEADER

Augment reality (AR) system develop Blippar has acquired Layar, described as a 'key pioneer in bringing AR to mobile devices since 2009'.

Layar's technical insight and practical know-how are to be combined with Blippar's knowledge and extend Blippar's ability to deliver the highest quality AR experiences to the maximum amount of consumers'.

With the acquisition, Blippar said it has established one of the biggest data footprints for consumer AR use around the world – 'another exciting step on the path to turning the physical world around us interactive', and which 'sows the seeds' for mass consumer adoption.

Blippar chief executive officer Ambarish Mitra said: 'We started Blippar with the vision of delivering high-quality, engaging, ubiquitous consumer augmented reality through a browser of the physical world.

'In only 33 months we've gone from building prototypes in the living room of my flat to connecting millions of consumers to thousands of brands around the world, making the verb "to blipp" synonymous with AR experiences.

'To me, Layar has always demonstrated that it shares this vision of an augmented world. Now working together as one team, we will further define what consumer augmented reality needs to be, and what will be required to deliver it on a global scale as an intuitive daily behavior.'

Find out more about AR in the Labelexpo Americas 2014 Smart Mart feature area (see pp. 153-155 for more info, and visit the show to experience Smart Mart first hand).

TLP EXPANDS INTO MEXICO

Tailored Label Products has opened a new multi-client distribution and fulfillment center (DFC) located in Tijuana, Mexico, which expands its global footprint and strengthen its local service presence.

The center provides regional distribution of high-performance custom labels, UL/CSA labels, short- and long-run labels, and die-cut adhesives and protective films.

It enhances the company's North American coverage, which also includes manufacturing facilities in Wisconsin and Georgia, and sales offices in North Carolina.

SOMA OPENS VILA GLOBE

Soma Engineering has officially opened its Vila Globe conference facility, a 500 sq m (5,400 sq ft) addition adjacent to its Soma Globe Training and Demonstration Centre.

Located just a few metres away from Soma Globe Training and Demonstration Centre, the former private dwelling and cold store was especially converted for training purposes and forms part of an up to one million EUR (1.4 million USD) investment program.

THERMOFLEXX has hosted an event to details its development plans

THERMOFLEXX DETAILS DEVELOPMENTS

ThermoFlexX has outlined some of the corporate and product developments since its launch at drupa 2012, including those designed to 'provide a total pre-press solution for the flexo market'.

At a press event at its manufacturing headquarters in Belgium, entitled ThermoFlexX Revelation, sales and marketing director Christophe Lievens spoke of the enhancements the company has made since parent Xeikon acquired FlexoLaser and the ThermoFlex brand from Kodak, such as the launch of the ThermoFlexX 80 at Labelexpo Europe.

This product is to be further developed later this year with the launch of a new dual-head imaging feature alongside redesigned versions of its 60 model.

The dual-head imaging feature, available from August, will enable output speeds of 12 sq m an hour at 2,400 dpi, making the ThermoFlexX 80 the fastest flexo imager in the world, the company said. Each ThermoFlexX imaging unit allows imaging at five different resolutions, with the imaging speed dependant on the specification of the system, and a maximum resolution of 5,080dpi achievable although at a lower speed of six sq m per hour with the dual-head system, or three sq m per hour in single-head configuration.

As well as enhancing its own products, ThermoFlexX has formed partnerships and working relationships with the likes of Swiss cutting specialist Zund, AV Flexologic and Hybrid Software in order to develop an ecosystem for the flexo pre-press process. ThermoFlexX said these developments represent an important strategic move that provides customers with a host of new ways of improving efficiency in the pre-press department.

Lievens said: 'This gives us the ability to handle with great effectiveness every element of flexo pre-press, from design, screening and ripping using Hybrid Software's ground-breaking Packz and Cloudflow suites, exposure on a ThermoFlexX imager, cutting on Zund equipment and mounting via an AV Flexologic system.'

Both Hybrid Software and Zund were present at the Revelation event, demonstrating their technologies, such as Zund's S3 M-800 and Hybrid Software's new PatchPlanner module for the corrugated market.

To extend the availability of its products, which are already used worldwide by those producing flexible packaging, folding cartons, corrugated packaging and labels, ThermoFlexX has added resellers in India, America and Portugal, with plans to add more across Europe, Asia and Latin America.

During the summer the company will create a technology center, offering customers the opportunity to bring their own flexo plates and have them exposed and processed in the factory. ThermoFlexX experts will be on hand to examine results and provide advice on finished plates, which can be taken away by the customer to print test on their own presses.

Lievens said: 'The flexo industry has made great strides over the last few years in terms of quality and market share, with several commercial litho printers installing flexo presses. In 2012 some people questioned the wisdom of Xeikon International, best known for producing digital presses, moving into the flexo industry with an imager product.

'However, the industry has proved to be largely resistant to the recession, which was one of the reasons for the move, and with Xeikon already a major player in key areas such as packaging and labels ThermoFlexX was immediately in an ideal position to serve these markets. We anticipate that the synergies between the two will become greater while our customers will increasingly be the same companies.'

Lievens added: 'It's an extremely exciting time to be involved in the flexo industry, which is moving away from traditional analogue processes at an ever greater pace.'

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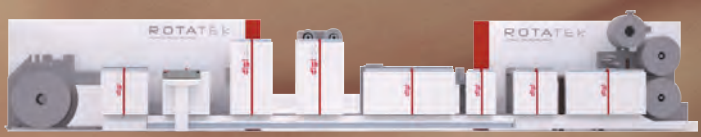


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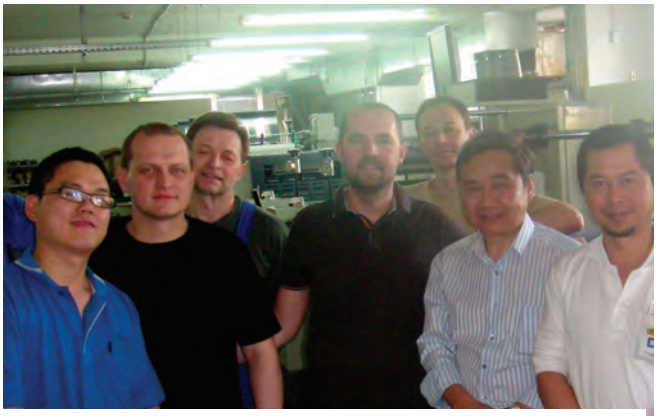

ORTHOTEC has installed a CFT3536 intermittent offset printing press at Papfin in Moldova

ANILOX roll manufacturer Sandon Global has installed its fifth thermal fiber optic laser supplied by ALE

ORTHOTEC CFT3536
PAPFIN, MOLDOVA

Orthotec has installed a CFT3536 intermittent offset printing press at Papfin in Moldova. The CFT3536 at Papfin features rotary hot stamping and embossing.

Papfin has already produced a number of sophisticated wine labels using the CFT3536 and its features, and is reported to be 'pleased that the CFT3536 is a high-end machine not only in productivity, but also in quality'.

Papfin has already expressed an interest in purchasing a second CFT3536 from Orthotec, and has confirmed an order for a DLL4040 die-cut/hot stamping machine from the manufacturer.

EPSON SUREPRESS L-4033A
KANAE, JAPAN

Japan's Kanae has ordered the 100th Epson SurePress L-4033A sold worldwide since its launch in 2010.

The 6-color SurePress L-4033A can print on a variety of label substrates, such as standard self-adhesive label substrates, semi-gloss, gloss and matte paper stocks, BOPP and PET, using Epson's proprietary Micro Piezo inkjet technology and SurePress AQ inks. A printing speed of up to five m/min can be achieved at a resolution of 720 x 720dpi on paper, with a web width of 80-330.2mm, adjustable to support any width in this range.

Since launching in October 2010, Epson has worked to raise the performance of the SurePress L-4033A through ongoing discussions with customers, and building up a strong sales and service network worldwide. In December 2012, Epson increased sales further after launching the SurePress L-4033AW with white ink.

DOMINO N610I
LAUTERBACH GROUP, USA

Lauterbach Group has invested in a Domino N610i UV inkjet printer as part of a program to revamp its services in order to 'eliminate vulnerable moments' in the label making process.

Lauterbach Group has said that packaging is now more complex than ever and regulations are hard to keep up with, especially in the food labeling industry, so it has developed a system intended to eliminate any vulnerable moments for brands.

It said that the most vulnerable moments happen when the product is in the logistical stage and mobile, and with many companies not operating in-house printing capabilities, they expose products to scratches, dents, fading, peeling and other problems that might occur out of house.

The Domino N610i investment is intended to overcome such issues, allowing the company to print 10 separate jobs at once, and to track every aspect of each job and store the information in a central database.

ALE THERMAL FIBER OPTIC LASER
SANDON GLOBAL, UK

Anilox roll manufacturer Sandon Global has installed its fifth thermal fiber optic laser supplied by ALE.

The system uses new materials and technologies in beam delivery optics that refine production and optimize manufacture. The technology is said to enable consistency and quality of anilox engravings at higher screen counts.

Sandon Global managing director John Millington said: 'We have been working in partnership with ALE on new concepts in laser technology to meet our high demands for some time.

'The new laser will give us the ability to carry out some exciting new product developments. Sandon Global is determined to constantly evolve engraving concepts through on-going experimentation. The fifth laser is crucial in driving these latest developments by utilizing its technological advancements and also increasing our capacity so that we can dedicate increasing time to research and development. The new laser will be capable of producing greater latitudes of engravings aiming to increase line counts whilst maintaining greater volume capability than previously available.'

A sixth thermal fiber optic laser is also on order for commissioning in August 2014.

SHIKI PJ250A
ELIM ETIQUETAS, SPAIN

Spanish label converter Elim Etiquetas has invested in a PJ250A UV inkjet press from Japanese manufacturer Shiki.

Elim Etiquetas made the decision to invest in the Shiki PJ250A shortly after Labelexpo Europe 2013, where the PJ250A was shown, with its managing director Eliezer Romero noting that this investment was the result of a careful search over a five-year period and the desire to incorporate digital label printing in its operations.

The installation was handled Martinez Associats, by Shiki's distributor in Spain and Portugal.

Romero said: 'After a process of analysis, consultations, visits, tests, etc., and after ruling out options that were not optimal, we

BRAZIL'S Flexcoat Labels has invested in another Gallus RCS 430 press as it prepares for further growth

MULTITECH of Indonesia has installed a Nuova Gidue Combat M1 flexo press

decided to go for the machine from Shiki, Japan, finding that its features were very appropriate to the objectives.'

GALLUS RCS 430
FLEXCOAT LABELS, BRAZIL

Brazil's Flexcoat Labels has invested in another Gallus RCS 430 press as it prepares for further growth.

Gallus and Flexcoat Labels have worked together since 2011 when the label printer purchased two Gallus EM 280 presses and its first Gallus RCS 430.

The latest RCS 430 purchased by the Brazilian company based in Louveira is equipped with five flexo, six offset and six screen printing stations, and both cold foil and hot foil embossing units for surface finishing. t for relief embossing, a die-cutting unit with cutting depth adjustment (including rewinding), two unwinding units and two conditioning units with web-cleaning system and corona treatment.

The newly acquired Gallus RCS 430 will be installed in the Flexcoat Labels production halls at the end of this year.

DG PRESS MACHINES THALLO
VUYE FLEXIBLE PACKAGING, BELGIUM

Belgium's Vuye Flexible Packaging has signed up to be the second beta site for the new DG press MachineS (DGpM) Thallo web offset press.Vuye Flexible Packaging specializes in producing in-mold labels, roll-fed labels and shrink sleeves.

Lieven Vuye, the owner of Vuye Flexible Packaging, said: 'We have years of experience with variable size offset and know the advantages, however the development of the Thallo addresses key bottlenecks which we face in our day-to-day business.

'The initiatives DGpM has taken for waste reduction are a very important aspect of increasing profitability of our production.'

At the end of 2013, Wesselink Drukwerk signed a letter of intent to acquire an 850mm-wide Thallo.

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ROTOCONTROL RSD
ASL PRINT FX , CANADA
ASL Print FX of Ontario, Canada has purchased an RSD series unit from Rotocontrol for label slitting, rewinding and finishing.

The RSD series from Rotocontrol is based on an S-Drive servo driven die-cutting station with 750mm unwind, cartridge shear/razor slitting and rewind system. Turret rewinders, multiple die stations and a complete line of finishing options are available, including flexo and lamination stations.

ASL Print FX is an award-winning converter that operates 12 presses and offers a range of print and finishing options to its customers, including variable data printing, lamination, effect varnishes and foiling.

Features of the RSD finishing machine for ASL Print FX include a modular design, with integration capability for a Rhino in-line hot-foil embossing unit from Pantec GS Systems for the application of hot-foil on rough or textured paper. ASL Print FX also received a second retrofit system from Rotocontrol with the addition of cold-foil and varnishing capabilities.

NUOVA GIDUE COMBAT M1
MULTITECH, INDONESIA
Nuova Gidue has installed a Combat M1 flexo press at Indonesian converter Mutitech, following the earlier installation of a Combat M3 with Maju Jaya Agung Labelindo in Jakarta.

Based in Lippo Karawachi, Multitech specializes in the printing of packaging, labels and stationery and was founded in late 2003 by Bony Jamono. After less than a decade of profitable work, Multitech decided to move to a new and bigger building covering an area of more than 20,000 sq m, and in early 2014 made the decision to invest in a Nuova Gidue flexo press.

The Combat M1 press purchased by Multitech has been installed with a configuration of 370mm width, nine flexographic print units, nine UV lamps, Snowball, combo laminator and cold foil.

ROTOCONTROL RSD
FELGA LABELS, ITALY
Italy's Felga Labels has placed an order for a Rotocontrol RSD series finishing machine with die-cutting that it will use to expand productivity.

With headquarters and a manufacturing facility in Italy, and a sales office in Germany, Felga Labels has over 50 years of experience in the production of weather-resistant tags and labels that are suitable for a wide range of applications including plant tags for nurseries, loop labels, stick-in labels, hanging tags, food labels, polyester labels for laser printers, adhesive labels and more.

The Rotocontrol RSD series on order for Felga Labels is designed with flexibility to provide punching, printing and standard die-cutting from roll-to-roll or roll-to-sheet, and is pre-configured for inkjet printing and lamination. It is also flexible for a wide variety of materials offered by Felga including PE, PVC, PET, Tyvek, PP and Polyart.

LEMORAU EBR-260
WIBORG-INFORM, RUSSIA
Lemorau has sold an EBR-260 die-cut to register machine to Russian customer Wiborg-Inform.

Features of the EBR-260 for Wiborg-Inform include full servo drive, web guiding, dual rewinder and register speed up to 120 m/min.

The machine can be used to produce blank labels and as a slitter rewinder machine.

Wiborg-Inform Ltd first met with Lemorau at Labelexpo Europe 2013, with the sale agreement confirmed a few months later.

AB GRAPHIC/EDALE DIGICON 3000
INNOVATIVE LABELING SOLUTIONS, USA

UK-based technology partners Edale and AB Graphic have installed a Digicon 3000 digital finishing system at Ohio-based digital packaging specialist Innovative Labeling Solutions (ILS).

ILS operates a number of HP Indigo presses, and has been an early adopter of HP Indigo's fourth generation press technology in the form of the 20000 model.

The Digicon 3000, developed in a partnership between Edale and AB Graphic, is a 762mm-wide (30in) digital print finishing system that enables printers to convert pressure-sensitive labels and flexible packaging when run in-line with the HP Indigo 20000 digital press.

G3 ENTERPRISES MAKES NILPETER INVESTMENT
NILPETER

G3 Enterprises in Modesto, California has added an 11-colour Nilpeter FA-4 multi-substrate flexo press to meet the specific needs concerning flexibility and printing quality to exceed that of offset printing.

The press features Nilpeter's Cleaninking quick-change inking system as well as the QC-Die quick-change die unit for fast job changeovers.

The press is also equipped with the FP-4 flatbed unit for high-quality in-line hot foil and embossing and Nilscreen for high-quality special effects and opaque white.

G3 worked alongside Nilpeter engineers to custom-build the new press to provide a state-of-the-art printing system.

LEOMAT DIGITAKT
IMPRIMA, ITALY

Imprima has placed an order for a LeoMat DigiTakt finishing machine for digitally and conventionally printed labels. Imprima is a manufacturer of badges and self-adhesive labels, and specializes in the printing of holograms.

The LeoMat DigiTakt SFR on order for Imprima is a fully modular, versatile finishing machine with a rich standard feature set including a fully integrated flexo printing station and a semi-rotary die-cutting unit with high accuracy register control, for the finishing of digitally printed and other labels from their HP Indigo digital press.

SPGPRINTS DSI
EKS-LABEL, GERMANY

German converter EKS-Label has invested in an 8-colour DSI UV inkjet press from SPGPrints in order to meet the growing demand for short runs of self-adhesive labels.

The custom-built 13in (330mm) DSI press features the standard CMYK plus orange and violet, enabling reproduction of 90 percent of visible colors, a digital primer and opaque white.

With top-speeds of 14ft/m (35m/min) and including converting technology from AB Graphic, the press has provided EKS-Label with a productive single-pass system. Further, Esko Automation software provides simplified file management with minimal manual intervention, allowing several jobs to be scheduled at once and significantly cutting pre-press times.

The press will relieve EKS-Label's existing letterpress and offset presses of production runs in the 100-3000 linear meter range, allowing the company's analog printing operation to focus on long-run work.

EDALE and AB Graphic have installed a Digicon 3000 digital finishing system at Ohio-based digital packaging specialist Innovative Labeling Solutions

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At Labelexpo Americas, Durst will introduce the Tau 330 inkjet system for digital labels and specialty packaging. The Tau 330 employs inline state of the art **Laser Finishing Systems**, and is the only digital UV-inkjet system on the market with **High Definition Print Mode.** The Tau 330 also uses Durst's new **Low Migration/Low Odor Inks**, which are suitable for primary food packaging and meet requirements in food and pharmaceutical sectors for Low Odor printing. This capability expands the range of suitable applications, and opens new markets and growth opportunities for label and packaging print providers.

Durst is a world-class manufacturer that supplies solutions and systems to their customers that enable them to produce higher quality goods more economically, and create new business opportunities. The Tau 330 is suitable for a full range of primary labeling applications as well as industrial / durable labels and unsupported foils, such as in-mold, blister packs and seals. Durst Image Technology has a proven track record of reliability and service and offers a better overall value proposition for digital labels and specialty package printing.

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NEW PRODUCTS

1

1 SUITE 14
ESKO

Esko has released Suite 14, a major software update of its productivity suite for packaging pre-production and management.

Esko said Suite 14 is 'more than just a software update', and enables better connections throughout the supply chain, improves workflows, achieves higher consistency and quality, and helps operators to work smarter with templates and intuitive operator tools.

Suite 14 features new and updated software designed to give brand owners, pre-media houses, converters, sign and display producers and commercial printers the resources they need to manage today's complex pre-production environment.

Suite 14 includes WebCenter 14, an updated ArtiosCAD editor, Imaging Engine 14, enhanced 3D visualization tools, Chili Publish integration to bring to market the world's first in-browser editor dedicated to packaging design, ArtPro+ as a tool for quality control of artwork and pre-press files.

Other elements of Suite 14 include FlexProof, a new, task-driven, wizard-style user interface to fine tune and optimize proofer device profiles, and i-cut Layout+ , a next-generation layout editor with a task-oriented user interface.

FILM LINERS
AKRONN INDUSTRIES

Akronn Industries, a silicone release liner and coating business launched last year by Stellar Films Group, Malaysia, has conducted a 'significant' expansion of its product range with the launch of a series of new 'technically-advanced' film liners.

These include a 30µm MOPP, 19µm MPET, and 40µm and 50µm BOPP. All are available one- and two-side coated, and offering different release levels.

Akronn Industries produces the films at its purpose-built facility in Nilai, near Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Akronn's products complement the high-performance cast embossed release films that are central to Stellar Films Group's global product offering.

2

2 LECTOR 620 OCR
SICK

Sensor specialist Sick is launching an optical character recognition (OCR) version of its Lector 620 scanner for packaging applications, making combined alphanumeric character and barcode reading, quality checking and matching, faster, simpler and more reliable than was previously possible.

The Lector 620 OCR combines OCR, optical character verification, 2D and barcode reading in a single device. It permits plain text letters, symbols and numbers at distance between 30-300mm to be detected both while stationary and at speeds of up to four m/s. A range of standard fonts are supported, as well as barcodes and data matrix codes, ensuring both legibility and placement for essential quality control. The device incorporates a microSD card for image storage and parameter back-up memory.

EKOCURE UV LED COATINGS
FLINT GROUP NARROW WEB

Flint Group Narrow Web has launched a new line of UV flexo coatings for UV LED curing under the EkoCure brand name, in response to market demand for coatings that provide value-added attributes.

Flint Group's EkoCure coatings have been developed using specially selected raw materials that match the narrow and targeted wavelength area that is typical for UV LED lamp output. It added that they are the first commercially available UV LED coatings available in the market.

The range of EkoCure UV flexo coatings available include gloss and matte coatings, product resistant coating, low COF shrink coating, cast and cure Coating, rotary screen tactile coating, primer coating for non-topcoated films, primer coating for various shrink films, a non-yellowing coating and coatings with or without optical brighteners.

ARROW 216
ARROW DIGITAL

Arrow Digital, mainly a distributor of a range of material and equipment for the digital printing and cutting market, has unveiled its 216 digital roll-fed label printer and finishing equipment. The Arrow label press 216, which runs at 9.3m/min, is a desktop-sized digital printer using a single-pass LED color laser engine. The web station is designed for precise control of registration with ±0.3mm width-direction variance, with supporting gap sensors and black mark sensors.

3 PG2401PT
BENQ

Global LED monitor manufacturer BenQ has launched PG2401PT, the first product in its Pro Graphics Series of print-certified monitors, that is said to offer colors 'so true that it makes soft proofing and professional photo editing simple' and reduces the need for hard copy proofs being sent for sign off.

The BenQ PG series has been tested against standard printing conditions and real printing house results to deliver the most accurate color match in those areas. Using these test results, the BenQ PG series specializes in color reproduction for tones with a Delta-E value lower than two.

The PG2401PT is Printing Industry Colour Certified according to the international ISO standards that improve design and proofing efficiency.

HERMAINKPRINT
HERMA

Herma has launched HERMAinkprint, a self-adhesive label range designed for the production of low- and very low-volume label runs on extremely economical inkjet printers with water-based inks.

Whereas conventional self-adhesive materials are generally adequate for UV-curable inks, water-based ink requires a special paper coating that can absorb the ink better. The two grades included in the range, HERMAinkprint glossy (grade 211) and HERMAinkprint matte (grade 137), are said to deliver 'outstanding results' on standard inkjet printers, such as Canon, Epson, HP Indigo, etc. with both sheet and web printing.

They are also suitable for use with Memjet technology which, with its static, page-wide print-head, combines the advantages of an inkjet printer with those of a page printer. Even at speeds of over 300mm per second, images, codes and identification symbols can be printed crystal-clear and distortion-free in conjunction with the new HERMAinkprint range.

FLEXOTOOLBOX APP
FLINT GROUP FLEXOGRAPHIC PRODUCTS

Flint Group Flexographic Products has presented its new FlexoToolbox app for iPhone, iPad and Android devices, which is now commercially available.

FlexoToolbox is an interactive collection of tools that incorporates many different functions for simplifying and standardizing flexo pre-press, platemaking and process control.

The app can assist platemakers with tasks ranging from the calculation of plate distortion, the control of processing parameters, such as solvent balance or monitoring UVA intensity, and the determination of sleeve diameters.

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4 EMMENDINGER MASCHINENBAU
DS 520 HIGH SPEED DIE-CUTTING AND EMBOSSING MACHINE

Emmendinger Maschinenbau launched its newly designed DS 520 high speed die-cutting and embossing machine at interpack 2014. The DS520 processes unprinted or printed aluminium or plastic foils, as well as paper, which can be unwound and cut into smaller shapes. These shapes can be used as covers, sealing lids, lids, labels, in-mould labels, ice cream cones or bottle neck labels for applications in the packaging, food and beverage industries. They can be embossed, perforated, formed, domed or pre-formed. The modular system will process web widths from 300 up to 520 mm. Modules include a print mark sensor with teach-in function, counting and stack marking systems.

FILM LINERS
AKRONN INDUSTRIES

Akronn Industries, a silicone release liner and coating business launched last year by Stellar Films Group, Malaysia, has conducted a 'significant' expansion of its product range with the launch of a series of new 'technically-advanced' film liners.

These include a 30µm MOPP, 19µm MPET, and 40µm and 50µm BOPP. All are available one- and two-side coated, and offering different release levels.

V-01 ADHESIVE-BACKED LABELS
FLEXCON

FLEXcon has launched a range of products for prime labeling applications using the company's new V-01 higher shear, permanent acrylic adhesive.

Available as part of the optiFLEX, optiFLEX EZ, optiFLEX CONCEAL, optiFLEX CONFORMmax, THINflex and DigiPRO PRIME product lines, in addition to the original sureFLEX line, FLEXcon's new generation V-01 adhesive offers problem-free performance by running without build-up on converting or dispensing equipment.

V-01 resists moisture and exposure to product contents and passes soapy squeeze testing, making it suitable for the health and beauty, food and beverage, and household chemical markets. It is compliant with FDA 175.105 for indirect food contact.

NEW PRODUCTS

5

6

5 INTEGRA 9580 MONITOR
LABEL VISION SYSTEMS

Label Vision Systems has released its Integra 9580 handheld linear and 2D barcode verifier.

The Integra 9580 is designed for off-line barcode verification to ISO/IEC standards. Featuring a high-resolution five megapixel camera, the Integra 9580 reads and analyzes 1D and 2D codes up to 3iN (76.19mm) wide and up to 2.25in (57.15mm) tall.

The Integra 9580 verifies multiple barcode types, including any combination of linear, matrix (data matrix, QR code, and Aztec code), and stacked linear (PDF 417, micro PDF and composite codes).

Powered by a 10ft (3,048mm) USB 2.0 cable, the Integra 9580 verifies bar code labels located on a wide range of surfaces including corrugated cardboard boxes, shipping containers and on a web.

CRAFT BEER LABEL CONSTRUCTIONS
AVERY DENNISON

Avery Dennison Label and Packaging Materials has expanded its Craft Beer portfolio with eight new label constructions, including a semi-gloss paper with a wet-strength additive that delivers added protection against peeling and tearing, to help brewers stand out in this growing market.

The Avery Dennison Craft Beer portfolio consists of paper and film materials with adhesives that stay on surfaces with heavy condensation, so allowing brewers to deploy unique label shapes, and printing and finishing capabilities enabled by pressure-sensitive technology. Brewers can also benefit from the faster changeovers, reduced waste and easier clean-up associated with pressure-sensitive labels.

6 BLOOD BAG LABEL
RITRAMA

Ritrama has launched RI-337 White AP970 WG62, a conformable, easy to print product that it said offers 'the perfect blood bag labeling solution'.

RI-337 White AP970 WG62 carries ISEGA approval according to DIN EN ISO 3826-1 for plastic collapsible containers for human blood and blood components, which certifies that the adhesive components of the material have been found not to migrate through the plastic into the bags, so making it a safe and suitable choice for blood bag labeling.

RI-337 White AP970 WG62 has been designed to withstand the challenging environmental conditions associated with blood bag labeling. This includes the processes of testing and storage, with the label remaining positively attached during the entire lifespan of the bag. Centrifugation, cryogenic freezing, refrigeration, manual handling and a change in temperature exposure are some examples of the required performance of the label.

The high level of conformability of RI-337 White AP970 WG62, a matte white synthetic paper is said to be ideal for application to a pliable surface, such as a blood or plasma bag, and due to excellent resistance to plasticizers, Ritrama's AP970 adhesive ensures a secure bond with the bag's surface.

It can be printed with traditional printing techniques, such as UV letterpress, UV screen and UV flexo, before thermal transfer printing is used to apply variable data information to record patient and transfusion details. Ritrama said legibility is an 'absolute must' for blood and plasma bag labels, with identification of blood groups, barcodes and expiry dates essential to preventing complications for patients.

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ENVIRONMENT NEWS

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

MICHELMAN WINS AWARD FOR WATER-BASED PRODUCTS

Michelman has been named as a winner at the 2014 Manny Awards, held June 18 in Cincinnati, Ohio, for its introduction of a family of water-based products for use in food packaging. Using technology licensed from Dow Chemical, Michelman has developed and introduced a series of new products using water-based polymers that are more environmentally friendly, non-flammable, and that can be applied in smaller, more precise amounts.

SUSTAINABILITY AWARD SHORTLIST

Bio4Life and The Stone Paper Company will contest the Award for Sustainability, sponsored by Xeikon, to be presented as part of this year's Label Industry Global Awards (see p156 for more information).

OKI URGES GHS COMPLIANCE

OKI Systems UK has urged chemical manufacturers and downstream users not to put off compliance with global harmonized system (GHS) regulations for chemical labeling until just before the deadline in 2015.

Developed by the United Nations as a way to bring into agreement the chemical regulations and standards of different countries, GHS is an international approach to hazard communication, providing standardized criteria for the classification of chemical hazards, as well as a standardized approach to label elements and safety data sheets.

OKI Europe business development manager Dave Willcox said a last minute rush to update and integrate software and deploy suitable printers could cause confusion, with those failing to meet the deadline putting their business at risk.

FLINT GROUP DETAILS SUSTAINABILITY PROGRESS

Flint Group has published its 2014 Sustainability Report, which provides economic, social and environmental data detailing the group's sustainability performance over the last few years. 'I take great pride in the progress we made last year on our sustainability journey,' said Antoine Fady, chief executive officer of Flint Group. 'Flint Group has a long tradition of developing no-nonsense approaches to the things we do.'

LOPAREX GLOBAL PRESENCE 14001 CERTIFIED

Release liner specialist Loparex has confirmed that its US corporate office and global manufacturing plants located in Apeldoorn (The Netherlands), Silvassa (India), Guangzhou (China) and in the US are now all ISO 14001-2004 certified.

According to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) website, 14001:2004 specifies requirements for an environmental management system to enable an organization to develop and implement a policy and objectives which take into account legal requirements and other requirements to which the organization subscribes, and information about significant environmental aspects. It applies to those environmental aspects that the organization identifies as those which it can control and those which it can influence.

The ISO 14001-2004 environmental management system has assisted Loparex in developing specific programs that minimize the environmental cost and impact of its products on customers, employees and communities in which they operate.

Loparex said its pursuit of registration under ISO 14001-2004 has demonstrated its 'total commitment' to operating an efficient business that is focused on manufacturing excellence, thereby providing the highest quality of products to their customers and a safe work environment for all employees.

Loparex has a corporate environmental policy in place that is designed to 'lead, promote and maintain environmentally responsible practices for the benefit of our customers, employees and the communities in which we operate'.

This policy puts a focus on material and energy efficiencies, pollution prevention and minimization programs, waste reduction and diverting materials from landfill.

Loparex is also registered under ISO 9001-2008 for its quality management system. That quality management system allows Loparex to exceed customer expectations by continually improving products, services and responsiveness.

KOPCO GRAPHICS RECEIVES TLMI L.I.F.E. CERTIFICATION

West Chester, Ohio-based Kopco Graphics has recently become L.I.F.E. certified, making it the 54th facility to achieve TLMI L.I.F.E. certification.

The L.I.F.E. program was developed in order to assist TLMI members in finding cost effective ways to reduce their companies' environmental footprint. L.I.F.E. is a program designed specifically for the narrow web marketplace and addresses four key elements of the narrow web printing and converting industry: clean production, energy and greenhouse gases, product and environmentally preferable materials, and management practices.

Kopco president and chief executive officer Walter Zeek said: 'Kopco Graphics has always been mindful of the environment and the L.I.F.E. program keeps our company focused on good environmental practices. During the L.I.F.E. certification process, we learned new ways where we can have a positive impact and have raised the awareness level throughout the company.

'By having the L.I.F.E. certification we hope to validate Kopco as a good steward of the environment and have influence on others to do the same.'

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- **LABELROBO DLC1000:** a digital label finisher with the functions of laminating, free size and shape cutting, waste matrix removal, slitting, and re-winding.

The **LABELROBO LCX1000** platform allows users to create a variety of labels of necessary quantity on demand. The system resolves the problem of label inventory along with the higher costs and delivery issues typically associated with outsourcing.

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Best-before dates under fire

PHIL DALTON, head of regulatory, Legal Impackt, Sun Branding Solutions, looks at how current EU proposals might actually increase food waste

Best-before dates on our food packaging are under fire. European Union countries have recently highlighted concerns that the labeling contributes to the waste of millions of tons of food every year – from kitchen cupboard items such as tinned goods to olive oil. The result is a call from minsters in The Netherlands and Sweden to abandon the labeling of long-life goods with 'misleading' best-before dates.

The current rules and the upcoming Food Information Regulation (FIR) require a date of minimum durability, or use-by date on pre-packaged foods. The FIR exists to ensure that consumers are provided with the details they need to make informed and appropriate food choices, and to ensure they can make safe use of the food they buy. It is the latter that is the principle purpose of durability dates.

There are only a limited number of exceptions to the requirement to include durability date codes. These are mainly for foods that are themselves used to preserve other foodstuffs, such as salt or vinegar, or which do not deteriorate over time, such as alcoholic beverages that are over 10 percent alcohol.

The FIR does not require any information to be given on labels explaining to customers what to do if the date code included in the minimum durability has expired. It also omits details on the criteria for setting the date code (or shelf life) of products. In fact, there is no information – from an official source – that advises businesses on the setting of date codes or informs consumers on what to do with their food if it is out of date.

This decision is left to individual product manufacturers and consumers – and more often than not manufacturers will code on the cautious side so that the date passes before there is the possibility of the food deteriorating to a degree that would be significant to consumers (providing that it is stored as recommended, of course). We know that consumers usually throw out of date food away.

When it comes to details about storing goods, there is now a requirement in the Food Information Regulation to state, if relevant, storage requirements and a period for use after a product has been opened by the consumer. It is likely that this will compound the waste problem, with additional quantities of part-used products discarded at the end of what is likely to be a very conservative period recommended by the supplier. After all, why should the manufacturer take risks?

Official concerns about best-before labeling are not unfounded. There is a common perception and some actual evidence from consumer surveys by WRAP and others that the rigid application of date codes is driving food waste. Something needs to be done to address this issue, and the current proposal being explored by the EU commission is to increase the number of foods that are exempted from the date coding requirement.

In reality, this appears to be avoiding the issue, rather than dealing with it head on. There is extensive evidence that UK consumers, for example, lack knowledge about food – including the risks associated with spoilage. The vast majority of consumers are not well-enough equipped to decide themselves if food is safe to consume, which leads to blind reliance on the date codes provided – both use-by and best before – as an expiry date. They end up throwing away food reflexively to ensure they are safe.

In practice, most date codes are set with a wide safety margin and there would be little risk associated with eating a 'best before' food shortly after its date code. These foods spoil before they become dangerous.

The best answer is to provide the knowledge consumers currently lack using all means including social networking.

It is disingenuous to remove information that many consumers find useful (and would find even more useful with more understanding) in the hope it will avoid waste. The reverse is equally likely. Consumers finding products in their cupboards with no clear idea of when they were purchased and no knowledge of how to assess their suitability for consumption are unlikely to eat those foods. They will simply throw them away.

PHIL Dalton, head of regulatory, Legal Impackt, Sun Branding Solutions

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Five mistakes private companies make that reduce their value

BY BOB CRONIN, The Open Approach

There is definitely an irony about it. The very things that can keep your business thriving while you own it can be the same things that decrease its value when you sell. This is a concept that often surprises business owners and inspires a lot of contention. While it does seem counterintuitive, the transaction sale process is entirely different from the daily sell. Ownership transfer is complex, and acquirer issues – objective, financial, and emotional – must be appeased.

Whether you are considering an imminent sale or are looking to exit somewhere down the road, you need to understand the realities of the experience. Anticipate what will transpire so you can determine how to best defend your situation or position yourself around it. Either way, you need to address these issues head-on. In mergers and acquisitions, like in Boy Scouts, it is best to be prepared.

If your exit rests on a family succession plan, this can be of even greater importance. Entrepreneurs who pass down the reins to a son or daughter have more invested in the company's future than someone who is walking away. Making changes now can improve the likelihood of ongoing success and longevity of the family brand name. And the heartache and headaches you'll save your heirs will be priceless.

With that in mind, I have pulled together the top five company "positives" that can become mistakes during a sales endeavor. Logically, these hover largely around your sales initiatives. Consider these before you begin an offering, and think through how and when you should remedy.

1. HAVING A MANAGEMENT-LEVEL SALES REPRESENTATIVE

At most of the companies we advise, there is the long-term sales representative who sells two to three plus times more than anybody else and has carved him/herself out an invaluable position. Sometimes, this simply means a great paycheck and parking space. Other times, the rep has won out in getting a sales/marketing manager title or spot on the executive team. While this move is understandable, it can cause more damage than good.

Certainly, sales leaders' ego and drive are what makes them successful, but these two traits revolve around the individual's goals – not the company's. Heavy-hitters don't want to train new recruits or help less-experienced reps land sales. Just ask your account executives for their candid review of the last time they went out together.

In my experience, the top sales rep is more of an Opera singer than a trainer; the focus is 'Me, me, me, me, me…' Nonetheless, they are good for your business – and good role models – but be very, very careful to elevate them to something else.

What gets trickier during an ownership transfer is that the c-level team members are often the only people "in the know" and the ones who champion the process – be it developing your offering materials, handling management presentations to potential suitors, or producing accurate (and hopefully positive) financial projections. People in general do not like change. Those who have enjoyed the top spot under a particular owner

tend to get a bit territorial and may not be that cooperative.

2. EVALUATING A REP BASED ON ACTIVITY VERSUS RESULTS

A good sales rep tells a good story. Some of the best stories I have ever heard are based on what activity is allegedly transpiring versus what results are being produced. When the numbers were the weakest, the future always somehow looked the brightest. It's easy to get caught up in this – I've done so myself. But after you come down from the sales meeting high, remember that "activity" (even when not exaggerated) does not always translate into performance.

It might not be a popular notion, but in this business, you need to look at a salesperson as CAPEX. Just as you analyze the ROI of a piece of equipment, the same should be done for each sales rep. Compare total compensation (and expenses) versus margin delivered, and see what type of return you are achieving on your investment. Moreover, consider what type of business they are landing and how these customers' size, industry, project type, payment terms, demands, and CSR time affect your business model, growth objectives, and bottom line. Sales people should not be judged only on volume but also on the profitability – and applicability – of the business they produce. In many cases, the sales rep with the largest volume is not the one who is most valuable to your business.

3. VIEWING CALL REPORTS AS CLIENT SECURITY

Comprehensive call reports are essential. They outline numerous things – sales activity, customer status, projects, key contacts, sales drivers, trends – the best data you can get on your accounts. Unfortunately, these are typically penned by the sales rep.

Because these can be lengthy, many owners don't question the data; they take the report itself as assurance of a solid customer relationship. Yet, many relationships get bound closely to a particular rep, which makes it difficult to ensure their loyalty during a transaction. Reps get anxious when their employer is being sold, and start looking and talking with clients. Deals may take time to close, and larger clients leaving can put the best deals in jeopardy. If you're under an earn out provision, the difference can be devastating.

Stay abreast of your call reports and know the in's and out's of your top 20 customers (at a minimum). Ask your reps to ride along with them during their next client visit and see if you create the same call report. In addition to building more links to the customer (and them feeling personally valued by the owner), you may be able to resolve some roadblocks along the way.

It's amazing what can happen when you confront an issue based on reality versus assumptions. Assess the true position and activity of your accounts and use that information to inspire positive change.

4. MAKING A NEW SUPERSTAR HIRE

Owners tend to get super-excited when they lure that superstar sales rep from their competitor. This event, however, must be approached with super-caution. Privately held label companies do not publish their client revenue volume, so the value of X customer's business is a self-report. Additionally, while you may know who the top sales guys or gals are at a particular company, you do not know their actual take-in. Or what their take-in might be now that they have abandoned the brand that they have pushed indefatigably in years past and are now all of a sudden gung-ho about yours.

Superstars agree to bring over their established book of business, in exchange for a large draw and your patience. Take your time in checking these people and their performance out.

Consider: 1) How sure are you that the specific customer can indeed come over? What bonded them to the other business – offerings, credentials, certifications, etc.? Do you have these? 2) What do you know about the purchasing habits/history/supplier loyalty/financial outlook of these clients? 3) Was there a non-compete or other agreement that will affect this salesperson's move? And finally, 4) Make sure you know the reality of why they are leaving their former employer in the first place.

Don't be fooled. In my role overseeing new business development, I can tell you that results from a "superstar" are 50-50. But you can strengthen your odds in your due diligence. Limit timeframes for performance, and limit expenses. Offer fair compensation with outstanding, performance-based perks. Think through how their position in their client accounts may affect your company's position with those same accounts. Moreover, stay on top of these individuals' activity just as you would a brand-new rep. A great sales rep (and good fit for your business) will demonstrate their performance within 90 days. If you are still left wondering after 180 days, cut bait and walk away.

5. NEGLECTING TO LIMIT ENTERTAINMENT EXPENSES

Many entrepreneurial owners are still quite generous when it comes to the entertainment budget. First, it makes it easier for reps to attract new clients, and second, it can elevate your brand image as a high-level provider. However, generosity can become a roadblock when it comes time to sell.

Just as it is with your equipment, capabilities, competitive differentiators, and other assets, how and what you have established financially is equally – if not more – important. The argument that a new buyer "can change it if they want to" isn't that easy. The leeway, leverage, and expectations of your sales reps get deeply ingrained into your culture.

Your financial acumen is one of the most important things evaluated by a buyer. While there is always a little boat-rocking in an ownership transfer, it is kept to a minimum when a buyer and seller share the same values. Customers will expect the same treatment and perks they are accustomed to. Buyers tend to cut these down quickly; private equity buyers, sometimes completely.

It's not just a matter of recasting financials with add-backs. Large entertainment expenses signal two things to a potential acquirer: customers are buying from you for the wrong reasons and your reps are not as loyal as you say. Either way, it is prudent to take steps to remedy this situation before you start thinking about an exit. Taper your budgets at a realistic pace. Talk with your reps about what's really important. And, determine what you realistically need.

In our business, entertainment has always been a part a relationship. Lunches are a great tool to develop a better understanding of the customer, and sometimes free tickets are indeed the only way we are going to land that whale. But, be careful with your outlay. Not only will a smaller entertainment budget boost your profitability, but it will speak to your value. Without the hullabaloo, you can demonstrate that what you deliver is truly prized in today's marketplace.

These five mistakes represent my short list. As always, I am happy to discuss these and other issues in greater detail. Contact me at any time. Until then, happy selling!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bob Cronin is managing partner of The Open Approach, an investment banking/M&A firm focused exclusively on the world of print. The firm's proven results have made it the exclusive member-recommended firm of PIA/GATF and IPW.

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JESUS Leyva, Javier Carrillo, Waldo Durand, John Vigna (Mark Andy), Ricardo Stone

EiM chooses ProLED

EIM, based in the Sonoran desert of Mexico, is leading the adoption of UV LED curing technology for flexographic label printing, as Danielle Jerschefske discovers

Etiquetas e Impresiones de Mexico (EiM) was established in 1997 to produce and supply the labeling needs of the orange juice manufacturing business of Grupo Sago, a holding company based in the desert of Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico. Today EiM services the food, beverage and industrial products markets across Northern Mexico and America's Southwest. In fact, today, more than half of the business revenue comes from the US.

Ricardo Stone, EiM co-founder and general manager, says, 'Competing in the US market requires high quality, premium service, and ample training. Most of our clients are meticulous about their brand value and the market's perception of the brand. Therefore, we must continually use new technology to our advantage.'

EiM signed the purchase order for a 17-inch Mark Andy Performance Series P5 8-color press equipped with the integrated ProLED system at Labelexpo Europe 2013. Already familiar with UV LED technology – it prints Harvest Mark VDP codes on produce labels using an Atlantic Zeiser UV LED inkjet system – EiM's Stone comments, 'We had LED curing units on our inkjet system; I figured why not have it for flexo? I've always been a firm believer in investing in the latest technology.'

Mark Andy ProLED was beta tested and demonstrated with success in 2012 at Labelexpo Americas. The system was commercialized for the narrow web label and packaging market in early 2013. Some of the key benefits claimed to be found with UV LED curing versus traditional mercury (Hg) lamp systems are: reduced energy consumption, longer life bulbs, lower heat generation, fewer equipment failures and the elimination of harsh environmental ozone emissions.

Mark Andy's ProLED system is the result of an initial cooperation with Flint Group and Phoseon Technology. Making its first inroads into conventional label printing, UV LED has been used as a curing alternative to Hg curing since 2002 in the digital technology sector, with numerous systems integrated into digital printing presses from manufacturers such as Domino and SPGPrints. Realizing the efficiency and low-maintenance advantages of UV LED, Mark Andy made the strategic decision to fully integrate the curing technology into their narrow web flexo machine lines.

CHOOSING LED

Seventy percent of EiM orders require pressure sensitive material. The rest of the work calls for BOPP or unsupported films, with some 10-point carton stock work mixed in. The converter's sales force is just being unleashed to drive more flexible packaging revenue.

The newly purchased Performance Series P5, installed in late 2013, has standard servo drives on each print station and includes the Mark Andy QCDC rapid die changing system and the fully integrated ProLED UV curing system. Jesus Leyva, the lead operator for EiM's P5 press has previously worked for two years on the company's Mark Andy P7 which was purchased in 2012. It is also a 17-inch wide machine but equipped with GEW's E-brick conventional UV curing system. Servo driven in both web transport and registration, the P7 is regularly used to produce film work at speeds of 700-750 feet per minute. Paper constructions run on average at 500 feet per minute.

Describing the differences, Leyva says, 'We've found that the P5 press has very good control for self-adhesive paper, and the P7 performs best with unsupported film printing. The die cutting system (QCDC) is much easier and faster than the traditional kind. The ProLED lamps are quieter and they give off less heat. And the lamps are drying the material faster, so we're running at faster speeds with paper materials.'

With simple round die cuts, the P5 press has hit production speeds of 600 feet per minute. For more unique and square shapes, speeds hover around 500 feet per minute.

The Mark Andy ProLED lamps are controlled separately from the machine, so production management is able to make adjustments to the output as needed. Chillers are incorporated to cool the curing system components. There is little heat generated by the lamps.

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EIM'S Jesus Levya running the ProLED Mark Andy P5 press

P5 press in action

Stone explains, 'With ProLED on the P5 we don't often use the material chill rolls. Because of the low amount of heat produced from UV LED, there's no need to reduce the temperature of the material, particularly when printing on labelstock. Often we're using only the ProLED cooling system to maintain temperature consistency of the lamps.'

QUALITY

For pre-press, the converter produces plates internally using an Esko CDI system and DuPont solvent wash out. It has a distillation system for the solvent, cleaning and reusing as much as possible.

EiM has talent in-house where its lead designer has worked for eight years. There, all incoming artwork is checked and modified as needed to work best with different press fingerprints. There is often a requirement to match gravure quality when competing for flexible packaging business.

Matching print output from the two curing systems, UV LED and traditional mercury UV, has not been problematic. Both systems behave in a similar way. Anilox volumes and line screens generally remain the same when shifting from one press to the other. Stone says, 'In print comparisons we've found only small differences that we adjusted by slightly changing the BCM volume on our anilox rolls.'

Javier Carrillo, EiM production manager says, 'We have created a fingerprint for each of the presses to compare the printing output of each and will continue this regularly as we get accustomed to the two systems. Initially the tones for the LED machine look brighter.'

For the ink sets, the converter is running trial production with both Flint Group and Nazdar UV LED inks. While Nazdar inks cured properly at 60 deg. F, EiM found Flint Group inks to perform best at 75 deg. F, and has found it useful to add a small amount of additional photoinitiator to the black ink. Nazdar currently has custom color mixing available in Mexico. Flint Group supplies custom color in the US and will make it available in Jalisco, Mexico in a few months.

The same tooling can be used across all Performance Series presses so any tool can be easily interchanged between machines, providing more consistency and efficiency in the operation.

INVESTMENT

The Mark Andy P5 with ProLED was more expensive than a comparable press with a traditional UV system, but EiM was able to offset some of its additional cost by taking advantage of a government endorsed opportunity for rush depreciation on manufacturing equipment.

It took one week to install the press and Mark Andy provided one week of training. The P5 press has been producing saleable work since.

'In another year we will add another P Series machine exactly the same with the ProLED,' Stone comments. 'Machinery turns obsolete so quickly these days, it's important to get ahead in adopting new introductions, and to continue doing so.'

At the moment, the price of UV LED inks is higher than traditional UV formulations. EiM isn't concerned since ink accounts for such a small amount of the overall cost to produce each label.

SERVICE AND SAVINGS?

Mark Andy has made strong claims around the ProLED technology: energy input 50 percent less than traditional Hg systems (sometimes communicated as 50 percent carbon footprint reduction); maintenance costs reduced by as much as 85 percent (LED systems do not have shutters or mirrors, only LED light heads); and increased bulb life by as much as 10x (estimated 20,000 hours as compared to Hg at 2000 hours).

While Stone and his team haven't yet measured the energy consumption and costs of production for the ProLED press versus the conventional UV press, it's always better to consume less energy if possible, and the cost models are shifting. The converter has plans to undergo formal energy consumption measurement and documentation in the fall.

The desert can reach extreme temperatures. It reached 50 deg. C during L&L's visit. To cool the conventional UV system, energy must be pulled out of the facility air conditioning system. Says Stone, 'This energy figure is not easy to calculate or to measure because there are so many variables to account for like outside and inside temperatures, pulled-out air temperature, peak times and more.'

Over the summer and during the rainy season there can be many power outages in Hermosillo. The ability to flip the ProLED on and off without any warm-up or cool down delays has a proven advantage in energy and time savings.

Logistics and servicing challenges arise when located in the far northwest of Mexico. EiM can't afford to have a lamp head break down, pinching production time. Traditional UV lamps are fragile and complex, and demand a regular cleaning schedule; LED units are simple and easier for in-house maintenance teams to attend to.

EIM conveyer delivering finished rolls to shipping department

EIM Shipping label with QR code

As EiM advances, the converter is confident in its selection of ProLED UV curing technology. The performance has proven comparable to that of traditional curing systems and the production team has experienced few hiccups with the start and ramp-up. Only time can tell us about maintenance requirements, energy reduction and bulb lifetime. Until then, the new technology will take its course.

'In the end, service is the name of the game. If we can produce quality work, at less cost and exceed our customers' expectations, we win,' says Stone.

LABEL SOLUTIONS FOR THE US

Before EiM purchased its first press, a Mark Andy 830, the investors closely reviewed a study on the label market in the northern states of Mexico. The number one complaint about labels was the service.

Stone comments, 'At the time, the average lead time was two weeks at best. We didn't realize the lack of quality until we started on our own.'

The group's orders filled a mere 10 percent of the machine's capacity. It made sense to look at other potential markets to the North.It's a four-hour drive to Tucson, Arizona and six hours to Phoenix, which is only a one-hour flight. From Mexico City to Hermosillo, a flight takes nearly three hours. In 2004 EiM made its move.

Stone recalls, 'At first it was tough. Our US development lead, Fabian Valenzuela, diligently knocked on doors and didn't sell anything for six months. It's a different culture in the US. Once we started working on it in the American way, we started to sell labels and have established a positive reputation as a service provider.'

EiM adjusted its marketing strategy for penetrating the US market, turning towards direct mail, which has historically proven to deliver positive results in lead generation and sales. The move won business with both traditional and Latin-focused businesses in the Southwest.

AUTOMATION, WORKFLOW AND BORDER RUNS

In late 2013, the converter expanded its operations by 500 sqm. This has greatly improved workflow. Now there is a clear path from master roll delivery, slitting, ink and tooling preparation, print production, inspection and shipping.

From early on the converter has tracked the performance of each machine operator, returning a dividend based on production efficiency and waste reduction. Every machine in the plant is connected to a main system that monitors makeready times, production details and changeovers.

Says Stone, 'It was such a simple advancement that made a real impact on our business.'

A conveyer belt runs along the backside of the building behind the finishing and inspection machinery to deliver completed rolls of labels to the shipping department. There a shipper applies a label to the core with job information while another label is placed on the outside of the shrink-wrapped roll. The outside label has a QR code that is scanned into the system. When it is scanned, it tells the user what percentage of the job the roll accounts for and shows with a bar chart how much is contained in the shipping box, for example 20 or 70 percent of the total order. It's highly visual, easy to understand and reduces error.

EiM will roll out custom, internally built management information software (MIS) over the coming months. Employees are in training now.

Each process within the operation will incorporate a scanning system that links each production step together. The system will drive efficiency on the floor, improve lead times and enhance cross border service and delivery. It will support more accurate job estimates and more closely manage inventory. Team members will have access to the history of every job. There will be more accountability.

Job tickets are already color-coded and this has been incorporated into the software system: highly urgent – red, urgent – orange, on schedule – blue. Says Waldo Durand, sales manager, 'If a customer calls by 10:00AM we're typically able to send the order out in the same day. Since the expansion and workflow improvement, we have far fewer rushed orders.'

Delivering orders across the border can be tricky. The MIS workflow will expedite the process further. When the shipping labels are printed out and placed on the box, the inventory paperwork is automatically generated and emailed to border authorities. Matching inventory sheets are also posted on the outside of the boxes so that inspectors can easily control and confirm a vehicle's inventory.

Materials inventory management will be automated. It can take up to two weeks to receive roll materials in Hermosillo. The converter has improved response time by managing roll cutting in-house, allowing for a consistent turnaround time of about three days. HCI converting machinery slits and rewinds materials to order. 'This is a major strength of ours,' explains Stone.

The converter uses more than 20 types of materials. It too incorporates a color-coding system to make each type of material easy to distinguish and pull from storage.

MORE ALTERNATIVE INVESTMENTS

The business will continue to adopt other new technologies besides machinery that will make the company more efficient, improve operations and reduce its environmental footprint. It's currently using a solar reflector system from SolaTube in the materials warehouse. The tubes bend sunlight beams through a focused channel to provide ample natural lighting inside. The SolaTube system is connected to automated lighting controls that dim and brighten as needed. Solar panel installation is in the bidding process.

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SUZANNE Zaccone

Lifetime winner and Chicago shortlist revealed

SUZANNE ZACCONE is the acclaimed winner of the R Stanton Avery Lifetime Achievement award and other shortlisted companies have also been announced. Andy Thomas reports

Suzanne Zaccone, executive vice-chairman and formerly president and co-owner of GSI Technologies, has been awarded the 2014 R. Stanton Avery Lifetime Achievement Award.

Sponsored by Avery Dennison, the R. Stanton Avery Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes the values and vision of Stan Avery and his pioneering efforts and is designed to honor the outstanding contribution to the promotion and growth of the label industry the winner has made.

Zaccone is the first female recipient of the award, which is presented as part of the Label Industry Global Awards, and joins an illustrious list of previous winners, including Ritrama's Tomas Rink, Steve Lee of RotoMetrics, Helmut Schreiner, FLEXcon's Neil McDonough and Terry Fulwiler of WS Packaging Group.

At the same time, the shortlist of entries for prizes to be awarded at this year's Label Industry Global Awards has been announced.

Now in their 11th year, the Label Industry Global Awards judging panel met in Monaco prior to the opening of FINAT's annual congress, to review nominations across the three award categories – two for innovation and one for sustainability.

The shortlist for the Award for Innovation (over 300 employees), sponsored by Flint Group Narrow Web, features Avery Dennison, Durst and Xeikon, while the shortlist for the Award for Innovation (under 300 employees), sponsored again by Flint Group Narrow Web, includes CMC DayMark, ETI Converting, ITW Dynate, K.T. Labels, Nuova Gidue and Stephanos Karydakis.

The Award for Sustainability, sponsored by Xeikon, will be contested by Bio4Life and The Stone Paper Company.

The winners will be announced at the Label Industry Global Awards ceremony and dinner on September 9 after the conclusion of the first day of Labelexpo Americas in Chicago.

POPULAR WINNER

Suzanne Zaccone is a well-known and popular figure in the North American labels industry. Together with her brother Bob Zaccone, she founded GSI Technologies in 1985 to produce prime and anti-counterfeit labels and polycarbonate overlays. Today, these applications represent only 15 percent of GSI's business, with GSI now widely recognized as a world leader in emerging technology, producing advanced functional printed products including strips to measure glucose for diabetics, electroluminescent lamps, smart card displays, sensors and automotive circuits.

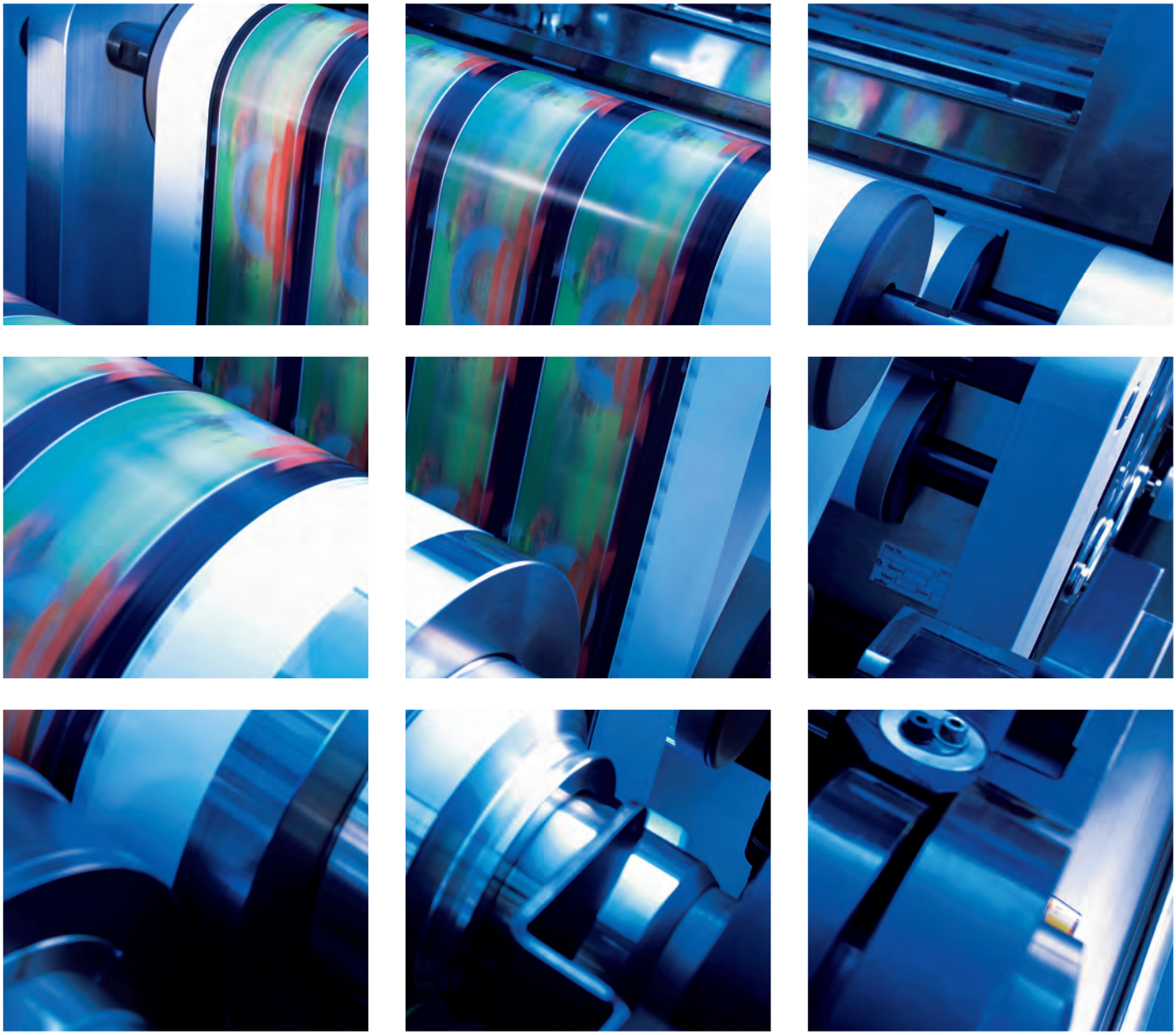
From 1998 to 2000, she also served as TLMI's chairman/president. The first female in that role in the organization's history, she continues as a strong mentor for other women in the TLMI and women in the label industry in general, using her leadership skills to help young people in the medical field and other business areas.

Further, Zaccone has been president of the board of directors to the DiTrolio Flexographic Institute since 2000.

In her personal life, Zaccone beat breast cancer in 2009, publishing her book, 'A Random Interruption: Surviving Breast Cancer with Laughter, Vodka, Smoothies and an Attitude' in 2010.

Mike Fairley, chairman of the judging panel, said: 'Suzanne has been an inspiration, mentor and role model, particularly to other women in the world of labels. I am delighted that Suzanne has achieved such an accolade and I look forward to the presentation of the Lifetime Achievement Award trophy to her at the awards evening this coming September.'

Zaccone will be presented with the award during a dinner and ceremony on September 9 at the end of the first day of Labelexpo Americas 2014, when the other award winners will also be announced.



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(L-R) The operator of Omet Varyflex V2 with the director Sanjeev Sondhi and Archana Gurung, senior manager operations at the production floor in the Dehradun plant

Zircon invests to keep ahead of pack

AAKRITI AGARWAL REPORTS on developments at Indian converter Zircon Technologies, which is aiming to become a major regional player with a series of investments across labels and package print sectors

Zircon Technologies, based out of Dehradun, a hill station in North India, is poised to make a total investment of three million US dollars (about Rs 18 crore) in the current financial year. This will see it open its fourth plant in Dehradun that will sit alongside its existing operational headquarters and two other plants in the same city along with an established factory in Chennai. Sondhi, director of operations at the company, said, 'This investment includes machinery and construction of the new plant in Dehradun which will be spread across an area of 30,000 sq. ft. We intend to start production by September 2014.' The new plant will be dedicated to board printing and expansion of label printing.

The headquarters of the company, which also houses a label printing manufacturing facility, sprawls across 30,000 sq. ft. It is further being expanded by 14,000 sq. ft for a dedicated shrink sleeve unit. The total plant size would be 44,000 sq. ft. after the expansion. Another small plant in Dehradun is in an area of 8,000 sq. ft. 'We are building for future capacities and expansion,' Sondhi said. There is an ongoing discussion of building a research and development centre for print research in Dehradun.

Zircon Technologies is targeting a turnover of 12.5 million USD (Rs 75 crore) in 2014-15 and is aiming to cross the mark of about 16 million USD (Rs 100 crore) by next fiscal. Sondhi said, 'We want to be a 50 million USD (Rs 300 crore) company in next five years.'

He believes that the label industry in India is worth 300 to 400 million USD (Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,000 crore) and Zircon Technologies has two and a half to three percent share of this market. Sondhi aims to get at least five percent of the total label printing market share in next five years. He does not see this growth coming only by printing labels. Thus, the company is expanding to board printing, shrink sleeves and flexible packaging. Sondhi believes that turnover to the tune of 25 to 30 million USD (Rs 150 to Rs 180 crore) will be generated by labels and the rest will come from other categories of packaging printing.

The company is making inroads in shrink sleeve and carton printing markets. 'To be able to grow, we have to widen our portfolio and expand into packaging print,' said Sondhi.

Shrink sleeves is a high focus area for Zircon Technologies and the company has placed an order for a Stanford machine for this segment. A 70mm JM Heaford plate mounter dedicated to shrink sleeves has been installed in Dehradun in July. However, Sondhi pointed out, 'We have been trying to understand this market since last six months but knowledge is not easily available. The technology needs to be understood in detail so the jobs can be done to perfection. So we are trying to learn before installing the machine.' The company is trying to standardize the carton printing business on a flexo press and is doing a lot of research and development in this direction.

Training and constant development of employees is the way to grow. The company works with its partners such as Mark Andy, Omet, Flint and Esko for getting the workforce trained. 'This is a very capital intensive industry as far as turnover ratio is concerned and one is never sure of the profits. Thus, the top management needs to push the bar all the time and ensure good training of the employees for better productivity,' said Sondhi. Many press hours are spent on research, development and training. A lot of raw materials including labelstock, plates,

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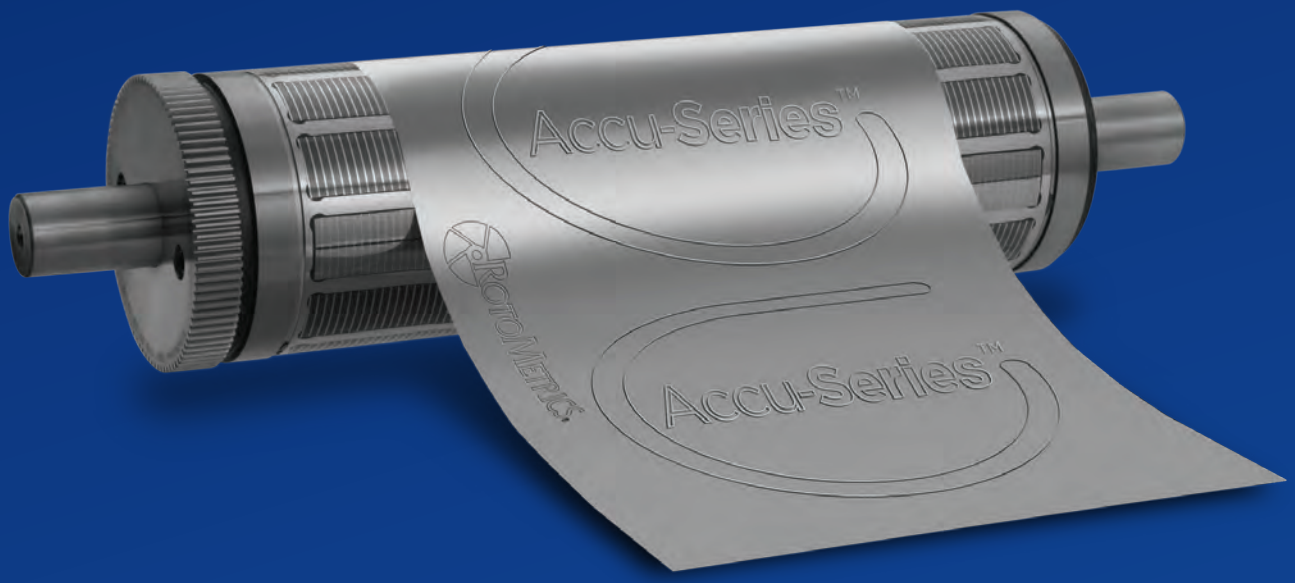

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ONE of the three plants of Zircon Technologies in Dehradoon

"Zircon Technologies houses complete prepress in its Dehradun plant and was the first label printing company in India to get full HD flexo and HD screening certification from Esko"

inks and other consumables get used in the process. 'Some say it is a waste but to us it is the investment in the future. Without this one cannot achieve what we have achieved. It is a constant learning process for us to ensure growth,' he said.

More than 30 percent of the employees in Zircon Technologies are women. The Omet Varyflex V2 is run by a woman who is new to the industry and is constantly learning on the press. The company hires and develops local talent. 'We want people from close by areas so they grow while living with their families thereby bringing a lot of stability to the company. I have a very good and supportive team,' said Sondhi.

Labeling, packaging, technology and security are four main divisions at Zircon Technologies. Barcoding and RFID are one of the company's core strengths as the company started with it in 2005 and then shifted to labels in 2006 with a Mark Andy press. The company started out producing prints with 175 lines per inch with non-digital plates, while most of the industry was printing 133 lines per inch at that time. Zircon Technologies started working with some of the big brands such as Calvin Kare, Emami, Dabur, Bajaj, Reckitt Benckiser and Marico amongst others.

Understanding the need to be present in various regions to cater better to customers, Zircon Technologies will start constructing a new label printing plant in the Vadodara-Valsad belt in Gujarat. The construction is slated to start after the completion of the company's fourth plant. Sondhi said, 'We have been thinking to start a label printing plant since more than two years now.' All plants are run 24/7 and a new machine is added when 70 percent capacity is reached to ensure an adquate buffer is maintained.

Sondhi believes in having all operations in-house for better quality, productivity and for promoting continuous innovation. Zircon Technologies houses complete prepress in its Dehradun plant and was the first label printing company in India to get full HD flexo and HD screening certification from Esko. The printing plant in Selaqui, Dehardun, has a plate making unit from Flint, Germany for both flexo and letterpress and EskoArtwork's CDI with inline UV.

'We went through a learning curve and had our share of problems. But today we are more confident of our work,' says Sondhi. 'Detailing is very important to us, thus we want everything to be controlled by us. We can support our customers

ROTOFLEX VLI at the production floor at Zircon Technologies in Dehradun

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SANJEEV Sondhi in front of the Lord Shiva temple in the plant premises in Dehradun

well because of prepress in-house and we are also further expanding our pre-press graphic team.'

The company ordered two Omet presses last year, one of which, an Omet Varyflex V2 narrow web flexo printing press, was installed in September 2013. With a width of 17-inches, the press possesses ten flexographic printing stations and is capable of handling substrates from 12 micron films to 600 micron board, so can convert cartons, labels, flexible packaging and lami-tubes. The press is a combination of flexo, movable rotogravure and foiling.

The second Omet Press is expected to be installed this year. 'We are finalizing the configuration and understanding the press. We are very happy with the performance of the press,' Sondhi said. However, he is quick to point out that Omet needs to focus more on a servicing network in India. 'I understand that it is not easy for a company to build customer support with such few machines in a country, but they have to build it to be able to sell more presses in the country, and I am confident that Omet will build world class service and support team in India.'

Two Rotoflex VLI 440 inspection, slitting and rewind systems were installed in June and July 2014 in Dehradun. The VLI 440 has a 100 percent inspection system and is suitable for unsupported films such as shrink sleeves, which are highly elastic. The equipment comes with multiple slitting options and gap control rollers. Two Rotoflex VSI 330 inspection and rewind machines were also ordered. One of these were installed in Chennai in July 2014 and the other will be shipped next year. All these units have been sold by Flexo Image Graphics (FIG),the Indian representative for Rotoflex machines. Impressed with FIG for technical support, service, guidance and print application, Sondhi said, 'Selling a press is easier than supporting a printer but they do it. They never refuse for anything and are always ready to attend to our problems.'

Zircon has been growing at 40 percent year-on-year and aims for better growth in the current fiscal. 'Growing at this rate is a challenge but we have to grow faster. We are also looking at how the market expands with the new government,' he said. Sondhi feels that the weak rupee has been a deterrent for people to invest in the industry. 'The industry is already over supplied. There is excess capacity in the market. Instead of increasing the same capacity, now is the time when new technology should come in the market.'

Talking of digital label printing, he said, 'It is a good technology but the problem with digital is that it changes very fast and requires heavy investment. Also, digital technology requires a different business model. We are not interested in small jobs. We are looking at mass production and big volumes. We placed an order for a digital press last year but re-considered and pulled out of it because our focus is not there now. Also, the quality of digital has to match flexo printing.'

The company has started a networking office in Belgium and the US. 'We are testing these markets for our specialized products and are coming up with a separate plant for specialized products,' Sondhi said. The US is being considered for high end applications of brand security. 'We are miles ahead of the industry in brand security. There are a very few companies across the globe who can match what we are doing,' Sondhi claims.

The company is looking at re-entering pharmaceutical industry with track and trace solutions and other niche products. 'We are in touch with large pharmaceutical companies and some MNCs and have received good response,' he said. Counterfeiting is a big menace and duplicate prints are easily available. 'People are more interested in counterfeiting regular products such as water bottles. Any security technology that is not self evolving is no use. That's why Zircon Technologies has invested in combating counterfeit and has come out with unique solutions. And it is giving us good returns. This is one area that we are looking at with our specialized products. If we get successful with our products, we may start a plant overseas,' concludes Sondhi. The company is also exploring opportunities in new and emerging markets such as Middle East and Africa.

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FEDERICO D'ANNUNZIO during job change on M5 Excellence press. See the REVO Technology' live demonstration, during REVO Open House at: http://www.labelsandlabeling.com/video/ancillary-equipment-digital-printing-finishing-and-converting-systems-inks-coatings-printing

Revo team drives digital flexo 'revolution'

NUOVA GIDUE and seven leading industry partners have launched a complete UV flexo package that allows conventional print to fight back against digital on short runs. Andy Thomas reports

As digital continues to challenge conventional narrow web press technology for short-run work, the longer term question arises: how is conventional print going to survive, given the continued trend towards ever shorter runs?

Federico d'Annunzio, president and co-founder of narrow web press manufacturer Nuova Gidue, is unwilling to give up on what he sees as a battle with digital. 'Digital has set the bar to a different level,' says d'Annunzio. 'We are presenting an alternative to digital for converters who buy into this new value proposition.'

d'Annunzio has spent the last two years working on a Digital Flexo concept which starts from the idea that if you can automatically control the key variables of flexography, a converting platform could handle short runs with the same waste as digital, and with all the advantages of in-line converting. The first installation, covered by Labels & Labeling, was at Adare Group and a Digital Flexo press was formally launched at Labelexpo Europe. The M5 press in Brussels was built around 7-color process printing, automated pressure and register setting and automated exchange of print cylinders on-the-run.

But to bring the concept to market, d'Annunzio saw the need to provide a complete turnkey solution which converters could buy 'off-the-shelf', in which all elements from pre-press to anilox, plates and inks were fully standardized, allowing converters to take full advantage of the automation on the press.

A group of seven key industry partners were invited to Brussels to see the press in operation and to form the 'Revo' group, in which each supplier's technology could be fully optimized around the Digital Flexo press platform. The Revo partners are: Flint Group Narrow Web (inks), Esko (color management), DuPont (plate technology), Apex (anilox rolls), AVT (inspection and automated pressure setting) and UPM Raflatac (materials). Validating and proving the technology in practice, Adare Group is a key Revo member.

'Digital automation in flexo presses means a complete digital chain from pre-press, to plates, to inks, to anilox and finally to printing and converting, to achieve a full Revo digitalization of the flexo process,' says d'Annunzio. The results were unveiled at an Open House held at Nuova Gidue's manufacturing and development center in Florence, Italy.

7-COLOR STANDARD

Revo is a described as 'a set of technologies to digitize and automate the workflow, set-up and run of a UV flexographic press'. The first Revo press on the demo room floor was a 430mm-wide M5 Excellence press. It included not only the automation elements seen in Brussels, but also Nuova Gidue's new Infinite Flower print head technology and fully automated die change.

The key to Revo is to always run the press with the same seven extended-gamut process colors (CMYKOGV), meaning there is no wash-up between jobs and no change of inks or anilox.

'The starting point for automation is not to change inks and not to make ink matching on-press,' says d'Annunzio. 'And to achieve this you need to be able to print at 80 lines/cm, which is not possible with water-based and solvent-based inks, otherwise you see the screen. The inks must therefore be UV

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flexo.' All Revo inks are qualified by Flint and are, as standard, low migration.

Automated spot color matching is carried out by Esko's Equinox software. The Revo press can simulate over 90 percent of the Pantone color book out of seven colors to a delta of less than two. 'We have a wider gamut than digital printing – either inkjet or HP – because UV flexo inks are more stable and because the close connection between ink supplier, anilox supplier and plate supplier allows for maximum transfer of ink and the same ink transfer every time,' says d'Annunzio.

7-color process printing also calls for fully consistent ink release. This led Nuova Gidue to develop a (patent-pending) heating system as part of its Infinite Flower printhead which softens the ink film, and helps it flow out from the anilox cells and from plate to substrate. The temperature profile changes with the speed of press. Comments d'Annunzio: 'We see from 10m/min to 180m/min the same density and the same LAB values – which before was impossible.'

In-line density measurement on the Revo press is handled by AVT's latest motorized camera system, which allows an operator to check the density on any part of the image based on information set by the pre-press operator using the original PDF file.

AUTOMATED JOB CHANGE

The press demo started with printing of a sheet of 112 pantone colors with no die-cutting. This was followed by a 90lpc process job. Full changeover was achieved without any manual intervention, including automated change of plate cylinders (ExcelPrint) and automated engagement of die-cutting. 'We do not stop the press at any time, so the tension does not change, and because we are using the same process colors there is no down time,' comments d'Annunzio.

Waste is only produced in the time it takes the press cameras to pick up the new marks and automatically set pressure and registration. Job change is sequential, so the cameras continue to control the previous job until the new one is loaded and ready to go.

New on the Excellence press is automated change of cylinder-mounted flexible dies without having to cut the matrix and re-web. In operation the web is automatically cut and taken onto a vacuum drum – exactly as an operator would do it – and the anvil disengaged. The anvil is then reengaged when the new die-cutting cylinder is in place and die-cutting starts again. The company names these processes ExcelDie and ExcelCut.

The third job change once again involved printing solids and with a change of die-cutting cylinder, again all achieved with no manual intervention.

Job changes were completed – including change of plate cylinder and die-cutting unit – in under one minute, which would equate to 95 percent uptime over a shift. Waste levels were as low as 10 meters.

'Waste and set-up time are significantly lower than those performed on digital presses, as all the printing and converting operations are 'digitally' performed in one pass, keeping all the variables under control,' says d'Annunzio. 'Revo standardisation will win against digital at runs between 250 – 300 meters, but 200 meters if you reuse plates. This amounts to four jobs an hour on average. Waste is the same as digital, or less if you consider off-line finishing. So plate costs are the only variable factor and the inks are cheaper.'

IN-LINE solventless laminator

FLEXIBLE PACKAGING

A second press shown at the Open House was a wider Revo M5 press with in-line solventless laminating. This press featured AVT's latest automated pressure setting system. While Gidue's HD cameras take a pressure reading from each side of the web, based on the density of a printed pixel patch, the AVT system – adapted from its wide web CI technology – takes an additional measurement from the center of the web . 'We recommend this system for wider webs,' says d'Annunzio. 'It does increase slightly the waste, from 10-50 meters, because you need to control color-by-color.'

This press was delivered to Adare after the Open House. The Revo team is currently looking for flexible packaging partners to join the project. 'We see a big possibility in the short run flexible packaging market, particularly among gravure people who sell quality and repeatability for the big brand owners,' says d'Annunzio.

COMMENTS FROM REVO PARTNERS

Niklas Olsson, Flint Group Narrow Web: UV flexo inks

'UV Flexo is the ideal process to become digital: UV inks are inherently consistent as there is no VOC evaporation to 'disturb' the printing process, furthermore inks do not dry on the plates so waste is reduced and quality consistency increases. UV flexo inks' printing quality is superior to water and solvent-based flexo inks as less ink is transferred (the ink is full solid, without VOCs). Dot gain is reduced and ink densities are higher. The Revo process

REVO AVAILABILITY

The Revo system is sold as an 'off-the-shelf' product with a defined protocol of consumables, software and hardware technologies supported by all the partners on a global basis.

In the case where a label converter does not have in-house pre-press and platemaking, Esko will help identify platemaking shops which have both Equinox and HD platemaking capability.

The Revo team says that its full range of standards and protocols will be made available to the wider flexo industry six months after the project's launch.

Comments Federico d'Annunzio: 'Revo is a group of companies which have achieved a standardized result and we all want this technology to be distributed to all industry players. It's an industry move.'

needs top printing quality and high color density to achieve the best performances. New generation low migration UV flexo inks support the Revo Digital Flexo revolution with high pigmentation, consistent ink transfer, consistent density properties, giving to Revo projects a wide range of graphic possibilities, and excellent consistency performances.'

Dan Pulling, Esko: Extended gamut printing

'Extended color gamut is the most logical solution for the flexo industry going 'digital'. Seven inks always in the press. No need to change anilox or ink. No special colors, no color matching, no waste of substrate, no press downtime. Most PMS colors can be reproduced by printing seven colors on top of each other. With seven-color separation pre-press can 'digitally' reproduce 90-95 percent of PMS colors. A new era can be predicted for flexo, fully integrated in a digital workflow, as it happens already with digital presses. The same file can be printed on a digital or on a Digital Flexo press, with consistent 'digital' print quality, and equivalent costs and productivity on both presses (with flexo keeping a wider range of applications in medium-to-long runs). Revo technology also provides greater design flexibility as the same job can be printed with a virtually unlimited number of PMS colors. Or two or more jobs can be interlocked on the same web, with total different PMS colors. Revo opens a wide range of new possibilities for graphic designers and production managers.'

Friedrich Wolf, DuPont: HD digital plates

'New digital flexo plates allow for extreme consistency and print quality. New plate qualities and modified processing workflows results in high image resolution and excellent ink transfer. The solvent free plate processing technology supports the environmental awareness of the Revo project. Fine screen rule of 80 lines per cm (2,000lpi) is the new standard, changing again the rules of our industry. The new generation digital plates provide the requested quality, thus a wide gamut of PMS colors can be reproduced, without changing the inks in the press. The final printed quality is also more vibrant, with more 'natural' greens, reds, oranges and blues. New graphic opportunities are available to labels and packaging designers. Further to 'digital' consistency and cost reduction, Revo technologies can reproduce 'real' colors which could never be achieved before.'

Nick Harvey, Apex: anilox rolls

'UV flexo ink and digital flexo plates deliver fantastic and consistent quality. But inconsistent ink transfer, and inconsistency between anilox rollers might endanger the 'digital' consistency of the Revo standards. In a seven-color separation a key factor is to provide accurate consistency of the laydown of the colors. New engraving technologies are able to overcome some of the inconsistencies of standard anilox designs. Revo standards need a predictable ink density which can be achieved thanks to the 'open slalom' ink channel geometry which delivers an ink transfer with less than one percent tolerance. This technology provides a fundamental contribution to the new Revo 'digital' standards. With Revo technology less ink transfer is needed to achieve the same level of opacity. By overlapping seven vignettes instead of using full solids, ink transfer is reduced, as well as ink consumption. Ink costs, curing costs are reduced, and the whole PMS process is consistent and repeatable.'

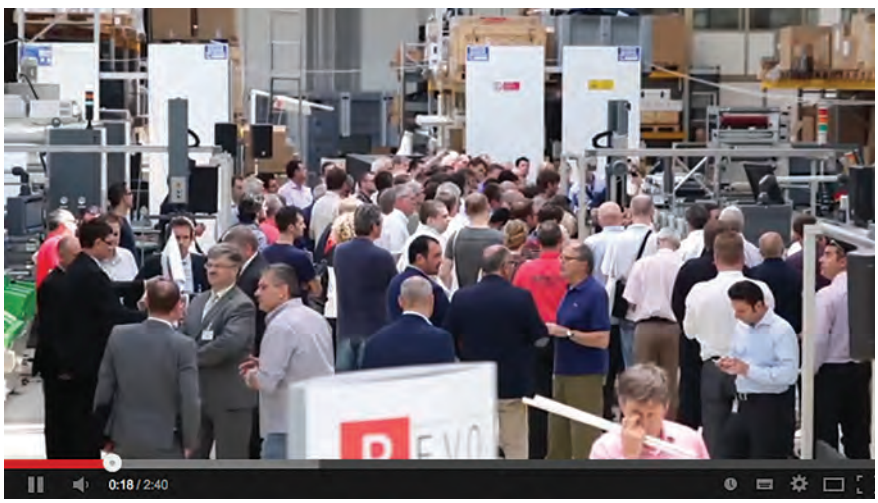
Daragh Whelan, Adare: Converter perspective

'If you can measure it, you can control it, and if you can control it you can reproduce it and this is one of the many advantages Revo gives to the converter. Having digital control of all of our variables ensures brand consistency and enables Adare to emulate pantone shades out of seven colors. With Revo's 'digitally' optimized technologies we are quicker to market and have also reduced the minimum order quantity for laminated flexible packaging products to as little as 5kg. It is like having a digital press with flexo costs.'

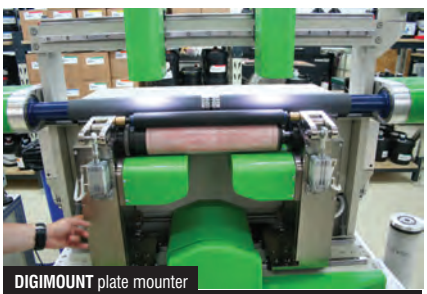
All the Revo partners agreed that the most refreshing aspect of the project was the ability to work together in a positive 'no blame' environment.

Apex's Nick Harvey agrees: 'This is the first time we have sat down with an ink supplier and plate supplier and looked at all the elements working together. And with the plate, the DuPont UV flexo FAST plate releases ink very well, especially at the beginning of the run. We then optimized our engravings for each color to make sure that the Esko software had enough color strength to work with.'

'Here we had a group of people round a table looking at the problems and making collaborative adjustments which adds to the success of the project,' adds Esko's Dan Pulling.



SEE the video of REVO Digital Flexo Open House at: http://www.labelsandlabeling.com/video/ancillary-equipment-inks-coatings-plates-platemaking-printing-presses-software-and-workflow



DIGIMOUNT plate mounter

PLATE MOUNTING

Nuova Gidue demonstrated its DigiMount semi-automated plate mounter as part of the Revo package. The unit can read a QR code on the plate which holds the plate's history, including when it was last washed and how many revolutions it has run, so if it needs to be remade.

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(L-R) Volker Röhr (Müller Martini), Marco Berg and Ingo Pauw (NovaPrint) and Bernd Schopferer (Martin Automatic)

NovaPrint offset investment targets gravure

THE INSTALLATION of a second VSOP 850 press at NovaPrint-Oldenburg, with automated Martin roll handling, has opened new product and market opportunities for this specialist label converter. Nick Coombes reports

NovaPrint-Oldenburg, close to the old Hanseatic city of Bremen in northwest Germany, is part of the Bagel GruppeGroup, which includes divisions for publishing, property management, and finance, as well label printinga 200 year-old family owned company for printing and publishing. Four plants for packaging printing are located in Germany and Scandinavia and serve the label and the flexible packaging market.. There are four label plants in total, including beside Oldenburg further locations in Norway,/Denmark and Finland, as well as a security print production capability in Mönchengladbach. , and a sales and service agent in Poland. The label division includes sheet fed offset capability, with three B1 size Heidelberg Speedmaster presses, each with 8-color capacity and inline coaters, and on one press, with an inline FoilStar unit, . , as well as a 10-colour Fischer & Krecke CI flexo press. as well as web offset, flexo printing and gravure printing. The Oldenburg plant covers 4200 8,000 square meters metres, employs 110 people, and in 2012 generated a consolidated turnover of more than 20m EUR. As the numbers suggest, this is no ordinary label converter.

Technical director Ingo Pauw explains why the company had chosen to invest in additional rotary offset capacity, when clearly it still has a major involvement in the wet-glue label market and three busy sheet fed presses. 'We noticed a trend that production was drifting away from gravure printing. This was especially noticeable in the market for beverage labels, but also included flexible packaging and in-mold products for the food industry.'

The latter was significant for NovaPrint, because the region surrounding the plant is famous for its food production, especially cheese, including sausage, , and other meat products. In addition, the company has developed a good business in the medical market.market. by supplying containers for used hypodermic syringes.

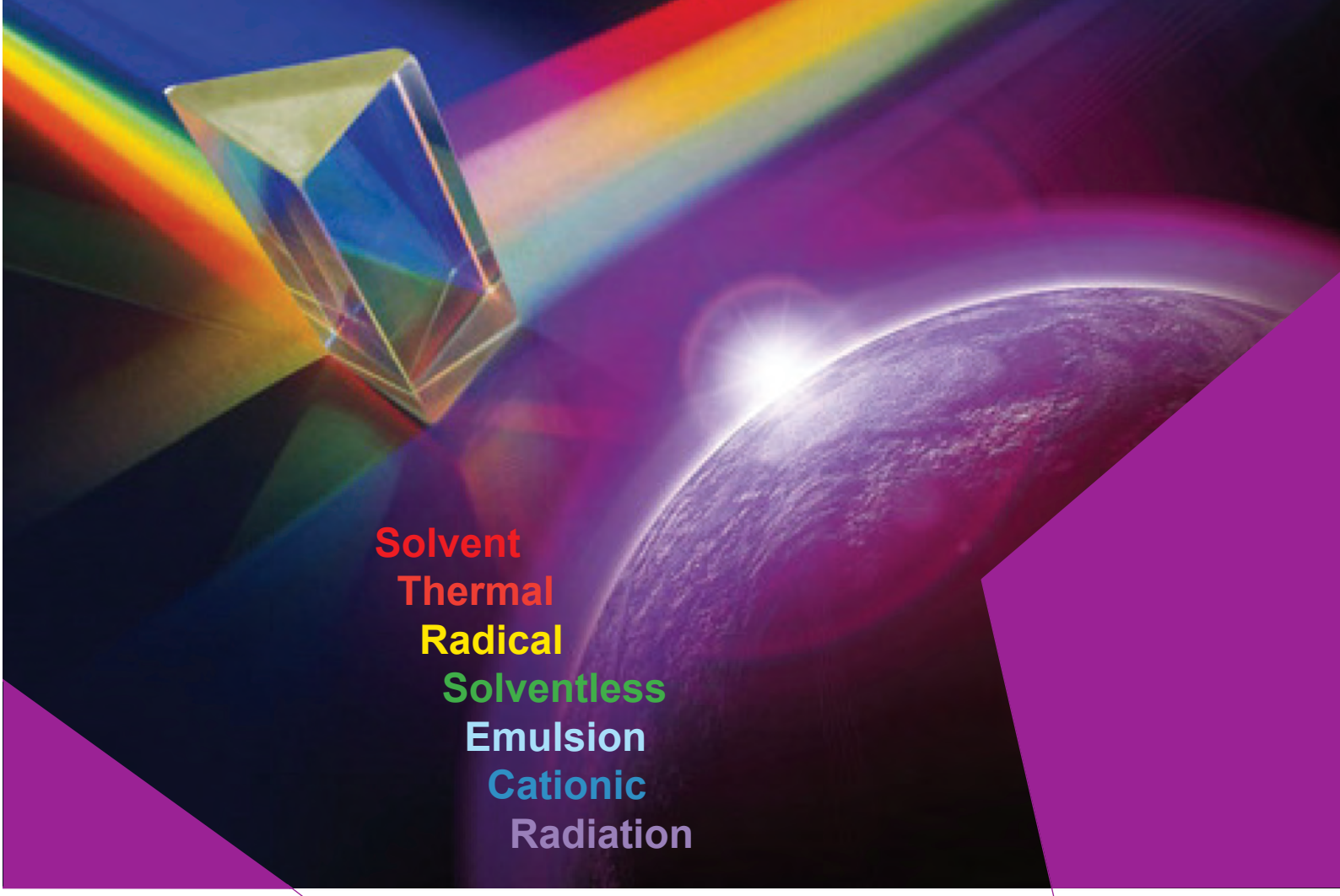
While business grew briskly for the company's first VSOP 850, installed in 2006 and specified with eight offset units and subsequently retrofitted with an Eltromat 100 percent print inspection system, it posed a problem for NovaPrint.

'We knew we needed additional capacity and the back-up insurance of a second press if we were to convince customers of our commitment to growing their business. The second machine would also give us the opportunity to diversify our product capability,' explains Pauw.

With this in mind, the new press, a Müller Martini VSOP 850, which was commissioned at the beginning of 2014, was specified as a 10-color offset press including two convertible offset/flexo units , with one dedicated flexo unit and full UV curing and hot air drying capability.

'We chose to fit the new machine with Spectral color measurement in addition to 100 percent inspection. This maintains consistent quality by monitoring ink density and image fit, and works with the automatic register system. It allows us to produce high quality proofs for customers, which have become useful sales tools,' explains Pauw.

The flexibility offered by being able to combine offset and flexo techniques in one pass, also highlighted the need for increased automation to maximize the production capability of inline manufacture when compared with sheet-fed printing and offline converting. 'For the first time we began to combine work from different customers on the same job run. This results in fewer make-readies and longer runs,' he explains.



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A Martin Automatic LRD completes the line at NovaPrint

By combining up to 16 different jobs across the 850mm web, and slitting afterwards, NovaPrint can make better use of the new VSOP's performance on run lengths that are typically 10,000 – 14,000 running meters per single roll. But, in making the runs lengths longer, with fewer machine stops, it needed to address the subject of waste control, and called in Martin Automatic to provide system solutions at the beginning and end of the press.

'On our older VSOP press we manually accomplish between five and 10 roll changes per shift, and with each one taking around 10 minutes, we are losing significant production time, and creating significant amounts of residual waste at the end of rolls,' says Pauw.

The solution was to fit a Martin MBSF MBXF unwind splicer (the 'F' denotes film capability) and a Martin LRD turret rewinder. The Martin machines were available for quick delivery and so could be timed to coincide with the press commissioning by Müller Martini.

Although still in the early days of commercial production when this writer visited the plant, the effect the Martins were having was marked. 'We estimate we are saving around 200 meters of substrate per roll change, which, as many of them are costly to buy, will deliver a fast payback on the investment,' says Pauw. Already down to 25 meters of waste per change with the MBXSF, NovaPrint has the potential to hit an even lower number, according to Bernd Schopferer, Martin Automatic's sales manager in Northern Europe.

In addition to reducing material waste, the non-stop production facility offered by Martin technology also brings benefits in terms of consistent quality. By allowing the VSOP to run continuously and at a steady speed, all print issues associated with slowing down and ramping up the press either side of a manual roll change are removed. 'The result is a happier customer,' says Pauw.

The combination of offset and flexo printing on the new press allows NovaPrint to be more creative in its design work and include, for example, the use of metallic inks, special varnishes, and opaque whites, which can be laid down first, or printed on the reverse. According to Ingo Pauw, the majority of work on the press is with filmic substrates, and consists of wraps, shrink sleeves and in-mold labels for the beverage market. 'From one basic design we might produce many adaptations or promotional variations, which we would run off in combination,' he explained. Typically running 35,000 linear meters at average running speeds of 180m/min, jobs are printed 8-color (to match the capability of the older VSOP), with two of the colors used for the redemption logo required under the DPG scheme for re-using bottles.

Most of the work at the Oldenburg site, like the other printing plants in the Bagel GruppeGroup, is for local or national customers, and NovaPrint has a portfolio of well-known brands that stand testimony to the quality of its work. The new VSOP handles substrates from 35-micron OPP, PET and self-adhesive stocks to 250gsm light board, which, with the continuous running offered by the Martin Automatic technology, has allowed NovaPrint to move into the growing market of carton sleeve production. 'For the first time, we can switch easily from substrate to substrate and job to job, and can take on work that was previously printed by gravure presses. UV-offset is cheaper, more flexible for short run work, and produces a commercially acceptable quality. This bodes well for our future,' comments Pauw.

Looking ahead, NovaPrint sees the need to replace its older VSOP, and the likelihood is that the new press will have both combination print capability and automated roll handling. 'The recent installation has been an eye-opener for us. The added flexibility and production efficiencies offered by the Müller Martini/ Martin Automatic combination will allow us to develop new markets for our business, including those in cartons and flexible packaging – and that's what makes a good investment even better,' he concludes.

THE Martin Automatic MBXF has film capability at NovaPrint

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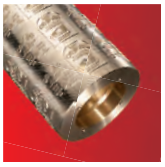

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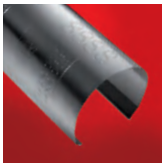

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Troubleshooting lamination

TOM KERCHISS at RK Print Coat Instruments looks at common problems in laminating and how to trace the causes

Many of the inconsistencies that arise with in-line and off-line coating/laminating can be resolved, or even avoided, if appropriate systems are in place for trialing new materials and resolving issues associated with quality.

Take, for example, the following coating challenge. In an out-of-line application a heat seal coating is applied to foil for the purpose of providing adhesion to polyester. The heat seal coating is applied to one side of the foil using a standard coating unit. The coated foil then travels through an oven and the dried coated foil is wound up onto rolls.

So far so good. The roll is then stored until the converter is called upon to engage in further processing. The roll is unwound and combined with the polyester foil by passing two substrates through a heated nip to effect the bond. Again the material is rewound with the foil/heat seal coating/polyester ready for shipment to the customer.

A number of factors can influence the effectiveness of the process in this example. To begin with, any coating or primer must be dried completely. Retention of any of the coating vehicle could make the material tacky. This means that when the roll is wound up on itself this material will adhere to the backside making subsequent unwinding for further processing impossible.

Another problem arises when the coating material or primer is not fully compatible with the substrate. If any ingredients such as plasticizers or low molecular weight materials migrate from the substrate to the coating during storage, the coating may once again become tacky. This blocking effect will once again make unwinding a stressful process.

The migration of an ingredient in a coating onto the surface of the substrate can also be problematic when rolls are stored. This will contaminate to some degree the backside of the material, in many instances rendering the product unacceptable.

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH INNOVATION

In a recent label conference keynote speech at a beachside resort south of Sydney, UPM Raflatac Environment & Sustainability specialist, Dr Carol Lawrence outlined the lifecycle of self-adhesive labelstock products, *writes Henry Mendelson.*

Addressing the down-under label association, LATMA's annual conference, Lawrence held the conference enthralled with a crisp summary of UPM Raflatac's Label Life concept, a web-based tool delivering reliable information to help label converters and brand owners make more sustainable choices.

According to Lawrence, Label Life has been designed based on the industry's most comprehensive Lifecycle Assessment (LCA).

'This new user-friendly tool will help label converters and brand owners, understand the lifecycle impacts of different labelstock products, and receive credible information on the environmental performance of their labels,' she stated.

She went on to explain that it covers every stage of the label's lifecycle from raw material sourcing through to end of life, in a true 'Cradle to Grave' study and assists in making sustainable label choices as it provides, at a glance, easy to use and simple to understand Environmental Impacts of over 300 UPM Raflatac labelstock products.

'The effect of liner recycling versus incineration or landfill can be assessed and the data calculated for each product shows the impacts in terms of energy, water and CO_2,' according to the UPM exec.

Lawrence continued: 'We have developed a methodology that is consistent with assessments used by major brand owners to evaluate their own environmental impacts. Label Life provides information to consider environmental impacts in product design, understand the lifecycle impacts of different label constructions, evaluate the end-of-life impacts of liner recycling versus disposal by incineration or landfill; and compare label materials and make sustainable choices.'

Alongside this Label Life web-based tool, Lawrence emphasized UPM Raflatac's commitment to source paper products from sustainably managed forests.

'UPM Raflatac supports and uses reliable forest certification schemes, and has built a global Chain of Custody (CoC) model to monitor and report the proportion of certified fiber in its products. The system meets both FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) and PEFC (the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) requirements,' said Lawrence whose experience in the packaging industry spans over 20 years, starting with a technical role that underpinned the selection of the most appropriate label material to complement the packaging.

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

HERMA WATER-BASED INKJET SUBSTRATE

Herma has launched a self-adhesive material optimized for low- and very low-volume label runs on inkjet printers using water-based inks. Whereas conventional self-adhesive materials are generally adequate for UV-curable inks, water-based ink requires a special paper coating that can absorb the ink better.

The two grades included in the range, HERMAinkprint glossy (grade 211) and HERMAinkprint matt (grade 137), are suitable for printers using Memjet technology and Epson's SurePress L-4033A.

'Even at speeds of over 300 millimeters per second, images, codes and identification symbols can be printed crystal-clear and distortion-free in conjunction with the new HERMAinkprint range,' said the manufacturer.

THIN ALLIANCE BRINGS INTERNET OF THINGS CLOSER

Thin Film Electronics (Thinfilm) and Evrythng, a software company that makes physical products smart by connecting them to unique digital identities on the internet, have announced a collaboration agreement to bring together printed electronics, near-field communication (NFC) and cloud-based software to make everyday objects smarter by connecting them to the web.

Through the agreement, Evrythng will integrate its cloud-based, software-as-a-service platform with Thinfilm's suite of printed electronics products, including the NFC Barcode and Smart Label product families.

Thinfilm's NFC Smart Label platform combined with Evrythng's software will enable organizations to address markets in which globally unique identifiers are combined with real-time sensor data to add a new dimension to mobile data collection and user interactivity. Temperature sensing labels, for example, can be used to monitor shipments of vaccines, insulin and other sensitive pharmaceuticals.

On the ground, mobile devices provide a real-time window to product batch information and temperature conditions, while scanned data is simultaneously pushed to the cloud to enable analysis and reporting of actionable insights. Likewise, perishable foods can be monitored to improve overall safety, enhance supply chain diagnostics and reliability, and give retailers – and even consumers – a new window into the history and status of certain products.

Thinfilm's NFC Barcode product – either on its own or as a component of a Thinfilm Smart Label – will connect to Evrythng's software through NFC-enabled mobile phones and tablets to address a wide range of important markets, such as healthcare, manufacturing and consumer goods, for applications such as brand authentication.

SOLVENT CHALLENGES

Laminating also throws up its own challenges. For example, in situations where solvents from the adhesive are being absorbed into the laminate inks, coatings or substrate, the solution generally is to change the adhesive system.

Changing the substrate may be the way to go, although usually this is not an option as the type of application dictates what type of substrate has to be processed. Experimenting and changing to a less aggressive solvent or water-based adhesive is the preferred easy option.

Should this option not be possible for whatever reason, problems may be resolved by increasing the dryer speed. This is an option that is perhaps the least favorable, as many substrates are heat sensitive. It is important to note that if solvents are involved and these have been absorbed into the substrate from an adhesive they will take some time to dissipate.

Coating operatives may come across a problem of a hazy appearance becoming apparent when a two-ply bonded laminate comes off of the machine. This may be perplexing, especially if the same substrate and adhesive is being used as in a previous run.

The clue to the problem lies in the hazy appearance. If an adequate amount of adhesive is not applied to the primary substrate, high and low spots will allow air bubbles to develop in the laminate, causing the haze. Generally, if the adhesive coating weight is increased, the haziness will disappear.

PROCESS OF ELIMINATION

Often it is necessary to work through possible causes of a problem in a process of elimination. Take the following example: as laminated paper/PET sheets cure, the edges of the sheets begin to curl – a situation that seems to get worse as the laminate ages.

The cause of the problem is probably too much curing agent in the adhesive, or maybe the viscosity of the adhesive is too high? It could be that the laminator tension is too high. Most likely the source of the problem is tension related. When the tension is too high, even a material such as PET can stretch. Following its travel through the nip, the film will naturally relax and shrink. Most adhesives also shrink as they cure, and with both the material and the adhesive shrinking, sheets will curl. A tension guideline listing can be obtained from the web handling manufacturer or compiled in-house for various machines and jobs. Product monitoring and quality control devices can also be useful.

A combination of forethought and good housekeeping practice can also help reduce problems. Take, for instance, a laminating job that is undertaken fairly regularly and which generally goes smoothly. All of a sudden the problem of low initial bonds starts to occur.

Could it be a badly adjusted doctor blade or a tension imbalance, or something as simple as a dirty gravure cylinder? If the adhesive has dried and cured in the gravure cylinder, the amount of adhesive transferred to the substrate will drop. Even though the amount of adhesive used seems adequate, the coating weight is reduced and results in the low initial bonds. This is where good housekeeping comes in. To overcome this problem, cylinders and laminator should be cleaned following each run, while coating weights should be routinely evaluated.

PROCESS CONTROL

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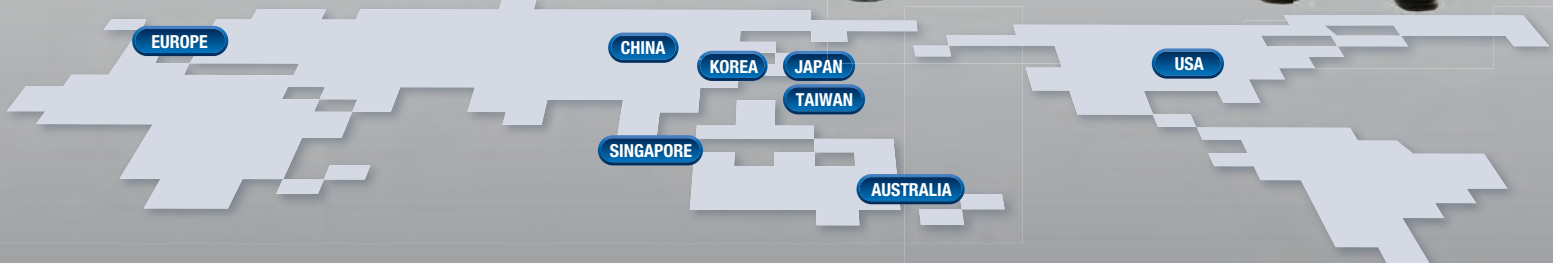

HERMA'S completed Lean coating and logistics center

Forward roll

WITH THE COMMISSIONING OF ITS NEW LOGISTICS CENTER, Herma has completed an investment in Lean manufacturing technology which is a model for the wider labels industry. Andy Thomas reports

At Herma in Filderstadt, near Stuttgart, Germany, it is a normal morning: in the course of the next few hours, between 150 and 200 label printers from all over Europe will be ordering self-adhesive materials – and will expect delivery overnight in many cases.

Around 500 metric tons of self-adhesive materials – roughly equivalent to a fully-laden Airbus A380 in weight – leave the plant by truck from noon onwards every working day, distributed on average on some 600 pallets.

In return, they are replaced by the influx of approximately the same volume of raw materials every day. The associated logistics are seriously challenging, given that Herma supplies all its customers in every corner of Europe from its Filderstadt plant.

'Nevertheless, we have deliberately chosen to have a single, central production site, where we can oversee all processes directly and achieve efficient manufacturing based on short distances,' says Herma managing director Dr. Thomas Baumgärtner.

Herma has been expanding rapidly not only in Germany, but also internationally, at a quicker rate than the market as a whole. Today nearly 70 percent of its revenues from self-adhesive materials originate outside Germany.

A major contribution to this success has been product innovation, particularly Herma's multi-layer technology. But the focus on streamlining logistics has also been been key, as Andrea Vimercati, chief executive of leading Italian converters Pilot Italia confirms: 'The impressive speed and reliability of its deliveries distinguish Herma on an international level. We are consequently able to reduce our own stocks of self-adhesive materials considerably. That boosts our competitiveness.'

STREAMLINED FOR EFFICIENCY

L&L has written extensively about Herma's highly automated coating operation at Filderstadt. This includes incorporating the raw and finished goods warehouse in the coating plant itself – an industry first – and setting up redundant manufacturing and dispatch systems. The new logistics facility investment brings a computerized picking facility for rolls; a real-time pallet locating system – a kind of GPS for rolls of self-adhesive material; and a 24-hour laboratory service.

The entire material flow is based on the concept of minimised handling distances. The coating plant and 28 meter-high interim storage facility for raw materials and finished products form what is, in essence, a single unit. The interim storage facility supplies the machine directly with raw material by means of a special conveyor system, removes the rolls laminated and coated with adhesive again or dispatches them straight for slitting and on for shipping. These operations are performed by automated manipulators on rails and overhead cableways. As a result, manual handling is dispensed with entirely.

'This not only achieves a considerable time saving, but also contributes to quality assurance,' says Herma managing director Dr.Thomas Baumgärtner. 'Our rolls of self-adhesive material weigh up to five metric tons and are up to two meters wide. Their value alone means that they require particularly sensitive handling. When shifted by hand, damage can never be entirely ruled out.' A team of five employees per shift is sufficient to operate the warehousing systems and coating plant.

GPS tracking system in logistics center

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DR. Thomas Baumgärtner, Herma md

NEW PACKAGING LINE

When Herma commissioned a completely new packaging line two years ago in a purpose-built extension, it reached another milestone in terms of optimized production processes. 'Since then, we have been running two fully-equipped coating plants that operate completely independently at the same site,' says Dr Baumgärtner. Herma has completely refurbished its older facility, known as coating plant I, together with slitting and packaging operations. 'These dual systems enable us to offer customers maximum security of supply and punctual deliveries.' Among the highlights of the packaging plant is the computerized picking facility. Here the different rolls of self-adhesive material making up an order are automatically assembled in stacks up to two meters tall, which can weigh as much as two metric tons. Sixty individual stacks an hour can be wrapped in shrink film on pallets and forwarded for shipping.

ACCURATE TO 15CM

To ensure efficient production and speed up the shipping process, Herma seldom manufactures all of the products for a single consignment consecutively. 'It is therefore very important that all the pallets that make up an order are assembled quickly and reliably in the shipping buffer zone, so that they can be made available to the forwarder in a single batch – while at the same time occupying as little space as possible,' says Dr Baumgärtner.

Since pallet sizes can vary greatly, a conventional system with permanent grid markings on the floor had to be ruled out. 'We would have required a very large surface area, which was simply not feasible for cost and environmental reasons.'

Instead, Herma now relies on real-time technology to track pallets that are ready for dispatch. Its real-time location system (RTLS) serves as an advanced form of optimized production planning. RTLS operates rather like a local GPS navigation system. It does not depend on satellites, but is controlled by speaker-sized sensors suspended from the hall ceiling. All the lift trucks in that area carry four tags that continuously transmit signals to the sensors on a special ultra-wideband frequency. This allows the position of each lift truck – and therefore the position of each pallet – to be determined exactly to within 15 centimeters. An on-board display tells the lift truck operator in real time where suitable storage bays are available, and how to group the pallets efficiently. RTLS thus achieves a high degree of flexibility, as regards both space and time, and optimises the internal flow of materials.

'To get an idea of the scale of the efficiency gains this brings, let me just illustrate this with a few figures,' says Dr Baumgärtner. 'The shipping buffer zone, which has a capacity of around 350 conventional pallets, can be used with RTLS easily for up to 800 pallets.'

Not only is the risk of mistakes minimized, but rolls require considerably less handling, further reducing the risk of inadvertent damage.

OVERNIGHT ANALYSIS

'To an increasing extent, labels are produced just-in-time nowadays, and label users expect to receive orders within shorter and shorter timeframes,' says Dr Baumgärtner.

Reducing the time taken to analyze converter orders and ready materials for dispatch has consequently been a critical part of the new logistics investment.

'We are now generally able to issue a qualified statement just 24 hours after the specifications are received,' says Dr. Baumgärtner. 'We can thus recommend products which ideally match the relevant application and answer customers' technical questions concerning the Herma materials they are using much more quickly.'

In conclusion, Herma's now-completed lean manufacturing investment looks to have paid off handsomely, and increased efficiency benefits all parts of the supply chain including the converter.

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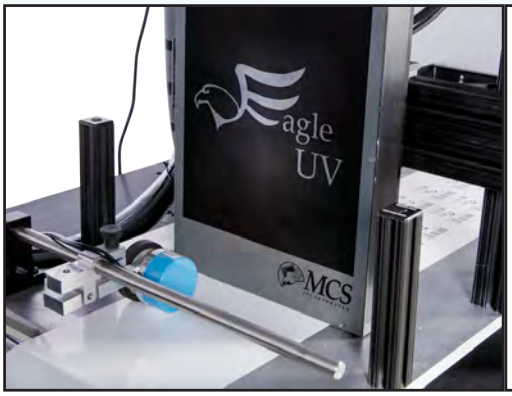
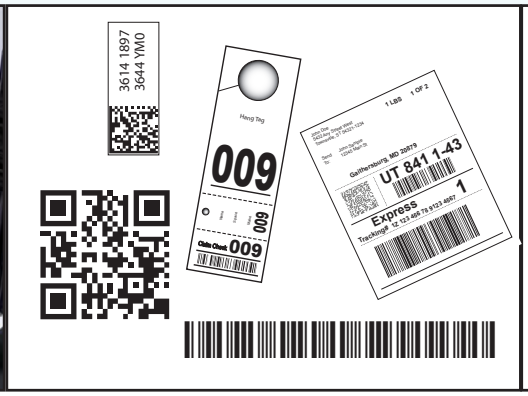
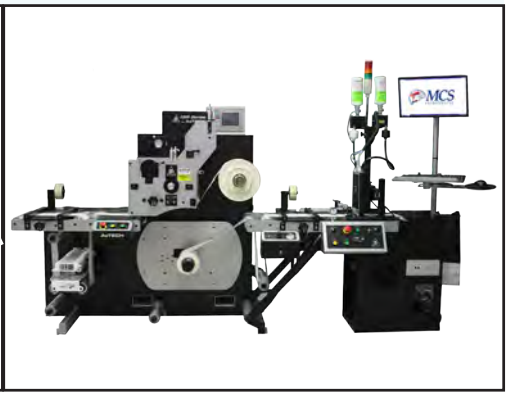






Anilox measurement advances

A JOINT PROJECT BETWEEN TROIKA SYSTEMS and Swansea University has led to a significant move forward in the accurate volumetric measurement of anilox rolls. Troika managing director Phil Hall reports

We now have a proven method of volumetric measurement for anilox rolls which reaches previously unattainable levels of accuracy. This breakthrough is a direct result of considerable development by Troika Systems and the WCPC department at Swansea University.

Although electronic measurement devices have a proven level of consistency and repeatability, typically ±0.1cm³/m², for process anilox rolls, accuracy of measurement has been subjective up until now.

This has been a point of contention between the different anilox manufacturers, who rightfully defend their own historic (analogue) methods of measurement. But a 2007 study showed significant variations in measured volumes – often over 50 percent – between manufacturers on different bands of a 12 banded test roll.

Therefore the need for accurate volumetric measurement was recognized and requested by printers who wanted a proven reference from which to measure their anilox inventory, and as a volumetric reference point when ordering replacement anilox rolls from any manufacturer.

Achieving the correct densities in process colors is the most costly part of press set-up due to the need to achieve correct color density, and is therefore a good starting point. In various studies it has been shown that process anilox rolls engraved to within 0.4cm³/m² or better of each other will achieve a color accuracy of typically 3DeltaE. So if the inventory is within 0.4cm³/m² the printer will achieve the desired color target faster and minimize waste. Therefore a suitable target for the measurement instrument would be to have a repeatable accuracy of ±0.1cm³/m² for the range of process aniloxs, and of ±0.2cm³/m² for coarser screen counts.

The new method of proving accuracy reported here, is through simple mathematics and spheres. If the diameter of an accurately ground sphere (ball bearing) is known in its X,Y and Z dimensions, its volume and surface area and any other parameters can be calculated through simple maths. Extrapolating that data makes it possible to calibrate the electronic scanning microscope very accurately to within ±1 micron, and subsequently accurately define the volume of the sphere. Once the 3D scanning microscope (AniCAM) is calibrated to the sphere, the analysis program (Anilox QC application) will correctly measure the volumes of any anilox to be measured.

PROVING THE THEORY

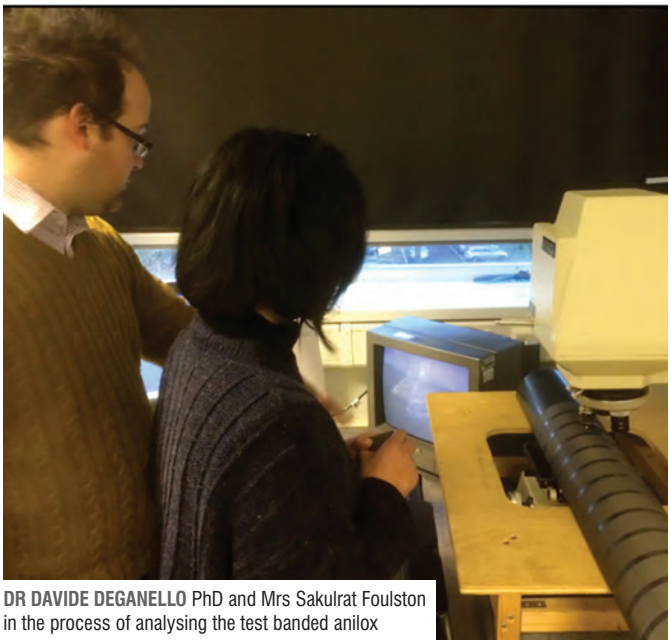
In February of this year, working in conjunction with WCPC at Swansea University under Professor Tim Claypole, Troika undertook a project to test the depth and volumetric accuracy of a sphere calibrated AniCAM against the WCPC's high-end interferometer measurement system on a 12 banded anilox, engraved from 1500 lpi / 600 lpcm down to 100 lpi / 40 lpcm. Both devices used different mathematical models to calculate the volumes on the 12 different anilox engravings used for the test.

The correlation of measurement between the two systems was exceptionally close, as Dr Davide Deganello stated: 'As there is a recognized variability of volume due to surface roughness, minor variations in measurement were expected. However, there is a very high degree of consistency between the two systems. The accuracy of the measurement systems is certainly well within the required measurement requirements of the industry.'

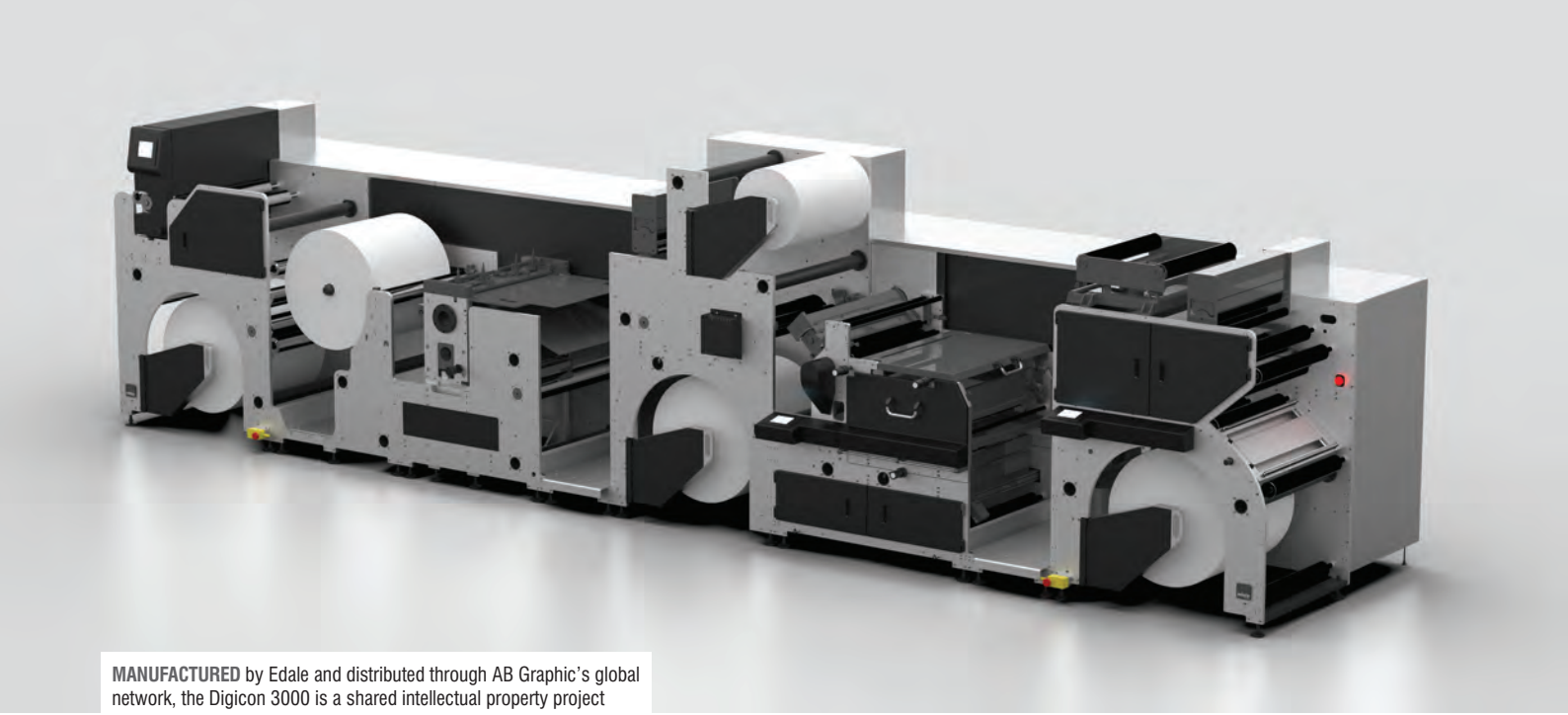
For printers, a standard of volumetric measurement has now been scientifically proven with a practical instrument that can be used on the shop floor. Printers and anilox manufacturers alike can now have the confidence that measurements are realistic and based on credible data, from which the industry can work from as a proven point of reference.

It is also anticipated that it will contribute to future developments in electronic printing and allow the ongoing development of ink release characteristics to be calculated from different engraving shapes and styles – and consequently the optimizing of ink rheology for different cell structure.

Troika gratefully acknowledges the contribution of Swansea University to this study, and in particular to Professor Tim Claypole, Dr Davide Deganello PhD and Mrs Sakulrat Foulston in taking the measurements, computing the results, and compiling their report.



DR DAVIDE DEGANELLO PhD and Mrs Sakulrat Foulston in the process of analysing the test banded anilox



MANUFACTURED by Edale and distributed through AB Graphic's global network, the Digicon 3000 is a shared intellectual property project

Edale and AB Graphic's finishing touch

THE DIGICON 3000 FINISHING LINE, the result of a collaboration between AB Graphic and Edale, is now starting to hit the market as the latest generation of HP Indigo presses reach the first customers. But that's just the beginning of the story, as David Pittman finds out from Edale managing director James Boughton

The Digicon 3000 is a 30in finishing system for pre-printed labels and flexible packaging. It was seen last year at Labelexpo Europe 2013 as part of HP Indigo's presence at the show, Print Your Future, which was hosted in association with a number of partner suppliers from across the label and package printing supply chains such as Avery Dennison, Highcon, Karlville, Scodix, Tresu, Michelman, AVT and AB Graphic. This area housed an HP Indigo 20000 model, with which the Digicon 3000 is compatible and can be installed in-line with.

The HP Indigo 20000 press is a 7-color, 30in-wide roll-to-roll digital press that can produce labels, shrink-sleeves and flexible packaging on paper or film *(see the L&L digital press market report on p122 in the third issue of 2014 for more)*. In response to demand from customers for a converting system for this new model, AB Graphic and Edale entered into a collaborative agreement in 2012 to develop such a product, resulting in the creation of the Digicon 3000.

Manufactured by Edale and distributed through AB Graphic's global network, the Digicon 3000 is a shared intellectual property project, which brought the two established manufacturers together – Edale offering its expertise in wider web widths and flexible packaging, and AB Graphic its knowledge of die-cutting and converting. Together, this equates to more than 100 years of technical knowledge and experience, and has created a finishing system to meet the demands of those looking to buy a new HP Indigo digital press.

The Digicon 3000 features a host of finishing and converting systems, including: a hybrid flexo station; corona treatment and web cleaning technologies; UV, IR and hot air drying capabilities; Cast & Cure; automatic slitting blade set-up; thermal, solvent- and water-based lamination; back slitting; waste stripping; and more.

"Manufactured by Edale and distributed through AB Graphic's global network, the Digicon 3000 is a shared intellectual property project, which brought the two established manufacturers together"

By application, this includes cold foiling, kiss cutting, sheer and crush cutting, waste stripping and rewinding for label converting, and inline digital print encapsulation, lacquering, hot lamination, sheer or razor slitting and multi-lane rewinding for finishing of packaging, including those for direct food contact. The application of a white overprint and a slip varnish, inline perforation and sheer slitting make the Digicon 3000 suitable for shrink-sleeve production. POS/POP finishing, with gloss and matte vanishes applied via the flexo station and shingle delivery, complete the Digicon 3000's application potential.

Other features include automatic loading and unloading of

THE DIGICON 3000 is a 30in finishing system for pre-printed labels and flexible packaging

flexible dies, and automatic synchronisation of printing and die-cutting with semi-rotary technology helping to achieve perfect re-registration and reduce set-up waste and tooling costs. Roll lift and core sleeve adapters mean the unit can handle a range of substrates.

With the first HP Indigo 20000 presses now installed at beta sites in Europe and the US, the first Digicon 3000 finishing lines have been installed also, with Innovative Labeling Solutions (ILS) being the first to install and commission the finishing line. This has been followed by another unit going to an as-yet unnamed customer, also in the US, and one to Germany's Rako Group.

The Digicon 3000 installed at Rako Group will be used mainly for converting labels at its headquarters in Witzhave, Germany.

Roger Gehrke, Rako Group's digital print manager, said: 'The array of options including laminating, foiling, vanishing and printing with different technologies (water, solvent and UV), bring a huge amount of value to our narrow web equipment. The whole concept of the machine is well designed so we can expect a lot in terms of availability, accuracy and productivity.'

These units have been well accepted says Edale managing director James Boughton.

However, it is not only those early adopters of the HP Indigo 20000 that are showing an interest in the system, says Boughton. As the Digicon 3000 can be run as an offline finishing system, it is suitable for both digital and conventional printing technologies, and so picking up interest from conventional markets, such as those printing flexible packaging using print process like flexo and gravure.

'HP Indigo spurred the project on but it has quickly grown its own legs,' he says. 'We are seeing lots of interest coming from the flexible packaging market, which is not somewhere we had expected to see such high levels of interest early on. As it is able to convert and finish both digitally printed and conventionally printed products, they are extremely interested in the capabilities of the Digicon 3000 to suit the needs of their existing production environments, particularly when it comes to adding value to shorter run packaging jobs.'

"The Digicon 3000 also offers room for future development, with JDF compatibility to allow the unit to set and specify key characteristics of the finishing based on data extracted from a pre-press file"

Boughton points to the ability to provide water, solvent and thermal hot lamination with the use of heated nip rollers, and to encapsulate digital print via inline lamination to enhance migration protection as being of particular interest to the flexible packaging market, as well as the ability to minimize the risks of offsetting by lacquering and laminating in-line.

The Digicon 3000 also offers room for future development, with JDF compatibility to allow the unit to set and specify key characteristics of the finishing based on data extracted from a pre-press file. Stored data is already used when operating the Digicon 3000, such as that used to recall die-cutting configurations at a later date, and an auto-set sheer slitting system that recalls cut positions from job data to reduce set-up times.

'The ability to call on pre-specified job data will allow the Digicon 3000 to automate large parts of the set-up process, and to optimize the finishing capabilities of printers and converter by reducing set-up times and the amount of waste produced.

Boughton adds that, 'this kind of development places the Digicon 3000 firmly in a position to assist in the establishment of digital print environments.

'Digital finishing in a single pass to optimize productivity and add value is a big bonus to those looking to capitalize on the benefits digital can offer, particularly in the flexible packaging market.'

THE Digicon 3000 can be installed in-line with the HP Indigo 20000 press, as well used offline with other digital and conventional printing technologies

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THE panel at Label Summit Latin America in Medellin featured converters from five different countries from South America's Andean region

Andean label converters feature in Summit panel session

A PANEL SESSION AT LABEL SUMMIT LATIN AMERICA in Medellin brought together converters from Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Peru and Bolivia. James Quirk summarizes the discussion

At Label Summit Latin America 2014 in May, held for the first time in Medellin, Colombia, a panel session brought together converters from across South America's Andean region: Fredy Gallón, supply chain manager at Servibarras (Colombia); Francisco Arias, general manager of Sismode (Ecuador); Kevin Blanco, managing director of Etiflexo (Venezuela); Jaime Yoshiyama, MD of Kuresa (Peru); and Juan Carlos Zamorano, MD of Flexo Print (Bolivia). Here are extracts from the panel discussion.

L&L: What do you see as the main challenges in your local market? And which end user markets are showing most growth?

Fredy Gallón, Servibarras (Colombia): Colombia currently has an open economy and maintains trade deals with all the countries in the region. But not all these countries reciprocate. It is a challenge therefore to be able to work in those markets; markets which are protectionist, which affects global competitiveness. Locally, there is a trend towards growth in the food, beverage and pharmaceutical sectors.

> "In this region per capita label consumption is very low when compared to Europe or North America, which further demonstrates that there are opportunities for continued growth"

Francisco Arias, Sismode (Ecuador): The main challenge is to recognize the needs of a changing market. We are being asked for shorter runs and for personalization, and these requests don't only come from multinational brands. Smaller companies in the sector, local companies, are increasingly manufacturing sophisticated products and this can be seen throughout the retail market. And these products need better quality print, colors and designs. In Ecuador, there is a new – and younger – class of consumers, so the growth we have seen has been in food and beverages, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic alike.

Kevin Blanco, Etiflexo (Venezuela): Nowadays multinational brands want to have the same quality everywhere, which obliges us to have up-to-date technology, prime materials, and equipment that allows us to offer the client what it is expecting for its image at an international level. The growth we have seen and experienced has come in pharmaceuticals, beverages, detergents and mass consumer goods: areas where the image and the label are worth a great deal at the point of sale.

Jaime Yoshiyama, Kuresa (Peru): The Peruvian economy has been growing steadily in recent years by around eight percent per annum, so there is a much more powerful middle class than five or 10 years ago. This increases the consumption of labeled products. Our

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challenge, faced with the growth of this new middle class, is to stay alert to the arrival of new competitors. We try to differentiate ourselves through innovation in the products and services which we offer the market. A further challenge is retaining trained production personnel, as in Peru there aren't formal graphic arts schools. So the talent we have in our company is coveted by our competitors. In terms of growth in the local market, we have seen a significant upturn in food and beverage, cosmetics and pharmaceutical products.

Juan Carlos Zamorano, Flexo Print (Bolivia): The main challenge is increasing internal demand with the country. Bolivia has seen growth in recent years, but the level of consumption hasn't grown at the same level. In this sense, we as a company are trying to accompany our clients throughout the process, showing them what can be achieved. With regards to markets, we have seen strong growth in the beverage sector, specifically in the area of shrink sleeve labels.

L&L: Do you think the label industry trend towards consolidation will continue? Is there still room for the smaller, independent converter?

Francisco Arias, Sismode (Ecuador): The trend will continue. More and more companies in the region are being integrated into multinationals. This is already evident in countries such as Colombia, while in Ecuador we've not yet seen the first acquisition. But the turn of smaller countries such as Ecuador will come. What we have seen are the wide web converters and offset printers moving into narrow web, and narrow web companies moving into film conversion. But, irrespectively, the market continues to grow, as do its needs; diverse needs which can be handled by small companies. There is still the opportunity for small converters to compete and be profitable. The proof is out there: machines keep being installed and new companies keep arriving to compete in the market. But it is important that these companies know how to approach the market: that they position themselves to address a specific niche, a specific client, with added-value services. The small companies who want to take on a multinational converter will have difficulties.

"There is room for both big and small converters, as long as they adhere to manufacturing and quality standards and deliver excellent service"

Kevin Blanco, Etiflexo (Venezuela): The trend will continue because brands are looking for integrated suppliers who can service the needs of a demanding international client. And competition exists not only between packaging manufacturers but also brand owners, who want their product to have the best possible image on the shelf. There is room for both big and small converters, as long as they adhere to manufacturing and quality standards and deliver excellent service. We shouldn't forget that although industrialization has led us to optimize our sector, it remains an art. We create a costume which is bespoke to each client and each product. One client can have four different products which all need different images and focuses and which are all aimed at different sectors. We must optimize processes and invest in technology, but without ever forgetting client service and the fact we are carrying out artistic work for each and every one of them.

Fredy Gallón, Servibarras (Colombia): The market will continue to consolidate. Brands have more competition on the shelves, and the way to stand out is through what we do, through the label and packaging, which is what persuades the consumer at the point of purchase. And there's no virtual competition which can threaten the communication which we provide for the product through its label and packaging. There is certain information which has to be printed on the product's label or packaging. With regard to self-adhesives, in this region per capita label consumption is very low when compared to Europe or North America, which further demonstrates that there are opportunities for continued growth.

L&L: What are the challenges of serving foreign markets within the Andean region, and how do you overcome logistical issues?

Jaime Yoshiyama, Kuresa (Peru): The main problem is logistical: how to get the label from the factory to the end user. Latin America has a difficult geography, which is often without suitable motorways and railways to transport the product. This raises costs and puts us at a disadvantage when compared to manufacturers in the Far East. A second problem is the excessive bureaucracy and red tape involved in exportation: there are many restrictions, the processes are not always clear and the time-frames are not always predictable. One has to allow a wide time-frame for exporting from one Andean country to another. At Kuresa, we have incorporated strategic partnerships and logistical

JUAN Carlos Zamorano, MD of Flexo Print (Bolivia)

KEVIN Blanco, managing director of Etiflexo (Venezuela)

FREDY Gallón, supply chain manager at Servibarras (Colombia)

operations in the main cities outside of Lima where we have clients. This gives us an important logistical platform which also serves as a warehouse and distribution center, and although it implies an additional cost for us, we believe that it is the only way to provide the service that our clients expect.

L&L: It is said that the printing sector needs to move from a craft industry to one where technical processes are automated and service becomes the key element. Is this happening in your local market?

Juan Carlos Zamorano, Flexo Print (Bolivia): These events show us that technology and knowledge are within everyone's reach. Service is one of the few variables that remain, and without doubt it will be the key element which can make a company stand out from the competition.

Fredy Gallón, Servibarras (Colombia): There is definitely a trend in the graphic arts market which is moving us from art towards science. And this is happening in all processes of the graphic arts supply chain: It is a reality which will continue to evolve.

L&L: Please give examples of how your company has diversified its product and service offering.

Kevin Blanco, Etiflexo (Venezuela): We have followed market trends by producing different types of labels, from wet-glue to self-adhesives and now shrink sleeves and different types of finishing with high gloss or matt varnishes. Following trends and responding to our clients' needs, we have developed technology hand-in-hand with suppliers in order to keep ourselves at the cutting-edge. We have diversified our offering in order to provide our clients with an integrated service.

L&L: What are the benefits of being involved with industry trade associations?

Jaime Yoshiyama, Kuresa (Peru): We are members of FINAT, the European self-adhesive label association. Although it can be difficult for us to attend all the events they organize, there are some which we consider very important. Every year FINAT organizes a label competition for all members across all countries, to which we submit examples of our work which are reviewed by a panel of judges. For us, as a South American converter, it is important to have these opportunities to evaluate the quality of our labels. As well as bringing opportunities for networking and meeting fellow converters with similar interests and visiting different plants, it has been very beneficial to be able to compare our quality in a particular printing process against work by converters in other parts of the world.

FRANCISCO Arias, general manager of Sismode (Ecuador)

JAIME Yoshiyama, MD of Kuresa (Peru)

THE INSIDER

A ROUND-UP OF THE LATEST GLOBAL LABEL STORIES

GESA BEGINS FLEXIBLE DIE MANUFACTURING IN CHILE

Chile-based Gesa Magnetic has added flexible dies to its product range. Manufactured in the company's plant in Santiago, the flexible dies can be delivered anywhere in Chile within 24 hours, said Manuel Quiroz, operations manager. The company can also serve clients throughout South America.

The family-run company has operated for more than 30 years in the Chilean graphic arts market, supplying tooling and zinc, magnesium, copper and bronze plates mainly to the local wine label industry.

Cristian Salinas, general manager, said: 'We can rely on the highest European and American quality standards, a great team ready to serve all requirements, and cutting-edge technology. All this makes us the best option for the Latin American market.'

COLOMBIA TO HOST CONLATINGRAF CONGRESS

CONLATINGRAF, the Latin American graphic arts confederation, and ANDIGRAF, the Colombian graphic arts association, will jointly host the 24th edition of the Latin American Graphic Arts Congress on October 23-24 in Cartagena, Colombia, at the Hotel Las Americas convention center.

CONLATINGRAF is made up of 14 local graphic arts associations in the region. The event features two days of conference sessions covering a wide range of topics and extensive networking opportunities with converters from around the region as well as international suppliers. Afternoon sessions are divided into three streams: packaging, wide-format digital printing, and book and magazine printing.

The Theobaldo de Nigris graphic arts awards winners will be announced at a dinner on the night of October 23. For more information and to register for the event, visit www.andigraf.com.co.

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Newfoil Machines has appointed Ferrostaal Chile as its agent. Sales manager Harold Libuy will handle sales of the UK-based manufacturer's finishing equipment in Chile.

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Q&A

"One of the projects I'm particularly excited about is establishing the Mexican Label Awards, which will be launched around Label Summit Latin America 2015"

Keren Becerra, president of Ametiq

KEREN BECERRA, operations director at Etiquetas Lobo Impresores, has recently begun a two-year term as president of Mexican label association Ametiq. She talks to James Quirk about the Mexican label market and the association's plans – which include the launch of a local awards competition

Keren Becerra, operations director at Mexico City-based converter Etiquetas Lobo Impresores, is the new president of Ametiq, the Mexican label association which counts more than 40 label converters and industry suppliers among its members. Becerra served on its advisory board and held the positions of treasurer and head of the marketing committee and public relations before beginning her two-year term as president in June.

Etiquetas Lobo Impresores, which celebrates its 31st anniversary this year, was one of the six founding members of the association. It has been recognized by Semarnat, Mexico's environment ministry, and AMEE, the country's packaging association, for its environmental initiatives, and this year was awarded two honorable mentions at the 34th edition of the National Graphic Arts Awards, organized by Uilmac, a local offset printing association.

L&L: What are currently the main challenges for label converters in Mexico, and where do you see particular potential for the local market?

Keren Becerra: Among the main challenges facing Mexican converters is increased local competition – with ever-greater numbers of companies moving into the label market, whether start-ups or converters from other graphic arts sectors. We are also under constant pressure from brand owners to lower our costs. Further challenges include the proliferation of second-hand materials and the entry of materials whose prices have been negotiated abroad and are much lower than what is available in Mexico. This results in an uneven playing field. There have also been important fiscal reforms in the country.

We all have to find our own strategies, but it strikes me that there is lots of potential to further strengthen our local industry. Local knowledge is crucial, and we will continue to see mergers and alliances. And it is very important to continue to work hard to bring value to the label as a crucial part of a product's packaging.

The graphic arts industry, taken as a whole and including all printing sectors, is an important part of the Mexican economy, with 18,434 companies employing some 132,233 people. Ninety-seven percent of these companies are small or micro-sized. In the last three years, the import/export balance of Mexico's graphic arts sector has been in deficit – that is to say, a higher quantity of printed products are imported into the country than are exported to foreign markets.

> "A crucial way for us to contribute as an association is by providing tools for people to learn and develop"

According to Canagraf, the National Chamber of Graphic Arts, around 2,200 printing companies have closed down in the last three years. Some have moved into different areas of the graphic arts sector, including labels. The result, and a big problem for the graphic arts sector as a whole, is that this has led to a price war. There has been an over-capacity in the market.

As part of the graphic arts sector, we in the label industry cannot think that we are immune to these challenges. Directly or indirectly, they affect us too, and must be considered when making decisions. I believe we must continue to improve communication not only between label converters but also the graphic arts associations.

L&L: Talking of market statistics, tell us about Ametiq's plan for a national survey of Mexican label converters.

Keren Becerra: At the moment in Mexico we don't have reliable data which specifically relates to the label sector. I believe this is vital, so we are working on launching an annual survey of Mexican label converters.

A crucial challenge is to win the trust of our fellow converters, as we are all in competition – they mustn't be afraid of sharing the information with us. Ametiq is part of the L9 global group of associations, so we have talked to associations from other parts of the world about this challenge. Following their advice, we are currently in talks with the same company which carried out TLMI's converter survey in the United States.

This will mean that the data supplied by the surveyed converters will be exclusively handled and protected by this company, and at no point will be in the hands of any of the association's advisory board. The resulting report will allow us to provide a more complete vision of the state of the local market, and to understand better where we should place our focus.

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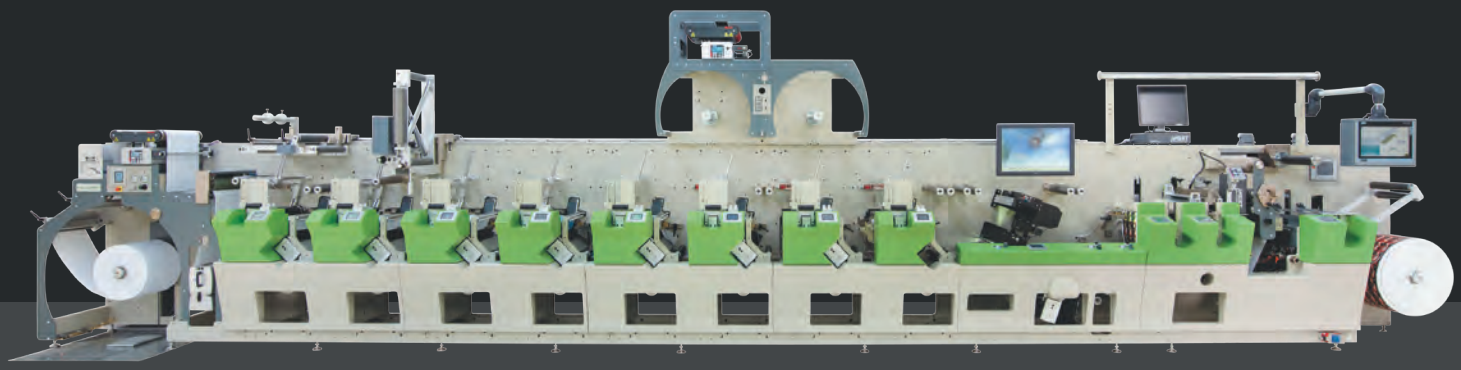

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"We have ambitious plans which include the expansion of the association into other parts of Latin America"

L-R at Ametiq's recent board of directors meeting: Fabian Silva, Keren Becerra and Jesus Ramirez. Ramirez and Silva were the association's previous two presidents

L&L: What do you see as your main objectives as president of Ametiq?

Keren Becerra: One of the projects I'm particularly excited about is establishing the Mexican Label Awards, which will be launched around Label Summit Latin America 2015 in Mexico City. It will be open to Ametiq members and non-members alike. To have the opportunity to participate in these awards seems to me to be fundamental for Mexican label converters. In Mexico there are many different national awards competitions in the graphic arts sectors – which of course we as an association will continue to support – but we need a dedicated competition for the Mexican label industry.

A key point – similar to the survey – is that the awards will be organized so that the labels submitted by local converters will be exclusively evaluated by a panel of international, globally recognized judges. They labels will not pass through our hands directly. And the winners of the awards in Mexico will have the chance to compete against other winning converters from around the globe in the World Label Awards.

Aside from the awards competition, we mustn't forget our original motivations for creating Ametiq: to strengthen the local label sector and to look for ways of providing our members with benefits which really help them in their businesses day-to-day. The association must be a reference point for industry standards and should supply the local market with information about what is going on in the sector in other parts of the world. I also see it as important that Ametiq continues to work closely with other graphic arts associations. In a globalized world, we must seek strategic alliances which allow us to collaborate on points of common interest.

L&L: How does Ametiq support training and development in the Mexican label industry?

Keren Becerra: One of the most fundamental things we are focusing our efforts on is education and training in the local industry. A crucial way for us to contribute as an association is by providing tools for people to learn and develop. This is especially important because in certain areas of the Mexican industry there is a lack of first-hand knowledge and few places one can go to properly prepare oneself. It isn't easy to find skilled technicians and operators; most have to learn on the job.

Ametiq is constantly working on these types of projects. Our annual congresses provide delegates with excellent conference content, and we organize workshops which are given by suppliers to our converter members as well as to students and teachers from the Fidel Velazquez University. We also want to continue our commitment to support the Fidel Velazquez University, where we have already installed a flexo press for students to use.

I also believe it's important not to focus only on one area of the country. Therefore, this year we are working on the 'Ametiq Tour' project, which will allow us to be much more inclusive with regards to companies based in other states. Accompanied by supplier members, we will offer conferences and technical workshops which will cover a variety of key industry topics around the country.

L&L: How do you see Ametiq's involvement in the L9?

Keren Becerra: For a number of years Ametiq has been a part of the L9 global group of label associations, and our involvement has been very positive. It has been enriching to share experiences with other associations and to work on areas of common interest – areas which by their nature transcend borders and require a united focus so we can reach agreements and make decisions for the benefit of the global label industry. This is something which we want to continue to focus on.

L&L: Do you see potential for Ametiq to open itself to label converters in other parts of Latin America?

Keren Becerra: One of the reasons for creating the association was to strengthen the lines of communication between us industry converters. The initial focus was on Mexico City, where the project started. But we don't limit our reach to any one city or region: on the contrary, Ametiq continues to grow and now has a significant number of members from other parts of Mexico. I'm personally committed to sharing these efforts with different regions, hence working on the new Ametiq Tours, as well as other projects.

Furthermore, I think we shouldn't only limit our actions to Mexico: we have ambitious plans in the medium term which include the expansion of the association into other parts of Latin America. Cooperation and communication can benefit the industry across the region, and one possible way of encouraging this is through Ametiq. We have talked to a number of converters from other countries in the region who are actively interested in becoming members and taking part in the association.

AROUND sixty people attended the open house in Bogota

NILPETER'S Rubens Wilmers at the coffee station

L-R Luis Fernando Herrera of Impresos & Acabados and Juan Pablo Patiño of Nilpeter

VISITORS took home with them freshly printed boxes filled with coffee

Colombian converter hosts open house

AN OPEN HOUSE AT IMPRESOS & ACABADOS, based in Bogota, showed inline production of coffee boxes and multiple-substrate coupon labels on a Nilpeter press. James Quirk reports

Impresos & Acabados, a Bogota, Colombia-based folding carton and label converter, hosted around 60 visitors at an open house held the day after Label Summit Latin America 2014. Invited by Nilpeter, the attendees – who came from Colombia, Paraguay, Ecuador, Chile, Uruguay, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela and Argentina – witnessed demonstrations of inline production of coffee boxes and multiple-substrate coupon labels on a FB-3300S flexo press.

The 8-color Nilpeter roll-to-roll flexo press is equipped with hot air dryers, four UV-lamps, a double in-feed system, corona treater and suction web cleaner. It was installed at Impresos & Acabados to meet a pharmaceutical customer's need for multilayer coupon labels.

The box printed at the open house measured 14 x 8 x 3 cm. It was printed, die-cut and sheeted inline on 200g cardboard, laminated with 10-micron metallic film, in a four-color process with coating. The coupon label was attached to a 125 gram bag of coffee, which was placed in a box for each visitor. A barista from local company Café Cultor was on hand to fill the bags and freshly printed cartons with coffee beans, while giving visitors a taste of various blends.

Support also came from other industry suppliers: Esko equipment handled pre-press; Nazdar provided the inks; RotoMetrics sent dies and solid cylinders for the folding carton job; Avery Dennison provided the labelstock; Daetwyler supplied the doctor blades. Impresos & Acabados used its own carton material.

Previously dedicated to sheet-fed offset printing, Impresos & Acabados' move into flexo label production has been a success. Today, coupon labels represent the majority of the converter's flexo business, as well as wrap-around carton labels for yogurts. Colombian graphic arts association Andigraf awarded Impresos & Acabados with the 2013 Best of Flexography Labels award for its 14-point carton stock label for Gloria yogurt, a Peruvian dairy brand.

'I believe that we have proven that it is entirely possible to make the leap from sheet-fed offset to roll-to-roll flexo,' said Luis Fernando Herrera, production director of Impresos & Acabados. 'In our case, the flexo press has allowed us to expand our market reach by adding coupon labels and wrap-around carton to our capabilities. The press is constantly fully booked.

'We are more than pleased with the Nilpeter press and the support that they've provided us in making the transition into flexographic printing and multi-ply labels. We're excited to invite regional converters to our facility to see what the machine is capable of producing.'

The business is further expanding into other material conversion. With the support of Avery Dennison, Impresos & Acabados is producing polypropylene, one directional film to effectively wrap around a squeeze tube container for cosmetics, health and nutraceutical products.

Juan Pablo Patiño, manager of the Andean region for Nilpeter, said: 'This kind of event is very important because it allows converters to see different types of production which they can employ in their own markets. Impresos & Acabados is a reference point for the whole of Latin America in multi-layered coupon printing, and it's very important that local companies like this are growing in the region and being supported by manufacturers like Nilpeter.'

Patiño says that throughout South America's Andean countries – Peru, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela and Bolivia – there is a trend towards increased local label production, with lower quantities of labels being imported. 'As a result, the number of press installations is rising. We at Nilpeter have shown commitment to the region by opening our own local offices, with our own technical service, rather than operating through agents.' Patiño reports that Nilpeter has installed more than 30 presses in the Andean region.

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JONATHAN Bourbonnière, founder of Multi Action Labels, with DSI Press

Call to Action

MULTI ACTION LABELS has entered short run label and prototyping markets with SPGPrints' digital label converting workflow. Adrian Tippetts reports

Multi Action Labels of Quebec City has undergone an extraordinary transformation. Today the company runs three flexo printing presses, in-house coating, a new digital printing line, and with a workforce of 50 serves Canada's food, beverage, home care and industrial markets.

The business owes much to the 'sweet tooth' of its founder. As a teenager in 1993, Jonathan Bourbonnière started selling packed candy to local stores in the city, firstly from the family home, then from purpose-built premises.

The purchase of a thermal printer saw Jonathan and his newly joined younger brother Anthony, transition to product identification and decoration for the province's fresh food suppliers.

In 2003, the company purchased two ETI Labeline presses, both with eight flexo stations, cold foil and screen; one also included in-line lamination. A second lamination and converting line followed in 2010 making Multi Action one of the few companies in North America capable of high-volume label manufacturing, rather than just printing.

IN-HOUSE LAMINATION

'The essence of our business has been about keeping our offer unique, intimacy with the market's needs, and keeping as much control over the process as possible,' says Jonathan Bourbonnière.

Laminating in-house has enabled Multi Action to meet a growing need for custom-engineered labels that are more eco-friendly, and function and stay looking good through the product life, in difficult situations.

'While others may find it challenging to achieve the right laminate, we can perfect coating weights with stronger, thinner or more resistant materials. And, with a streamlined way of producing a finished label from component parts, we bring extraordinary products to market faster,' states Bourbonnière.

This approach fuelled growth, and won business from major retailers and brand-owners. Notable innovations are removable labels that make a clean separation from recyclable PET bottles, humidity-resistant PET constructions, thinner natural kraft liner constructions, and – where Multi Action is a big Canadian player – freezer-grade labels.

With orders for jobs that frequently ranged up to one million linear feet, the business model, based on the flexo/screen combination process, worked well. Running at over 500ft/min, the ETI flexo presses were – and still are – ideally suited for the company's long-run operations up to millions of labels, and for which there remains strong demand.

DIGITAL IMPERATIVE

From around 2009, a clear trend towards shorter runs under 1,000 linear feet emerged. To cut stockholding costs, brand owners moved from bulk-buying to placing more frequent orders in smaller volumes, with only a few days' notice. Product diversification, with products in a greater choice of sizes, also increased the workload in the prepress department.

Derek Gobeil, Multi Action's director of marketing, comments: 'This was a problem for our traditional flexo presses, because the cost of the plates and the long lead times make last-minute changes costly and time-consuming.'

The solution was to divert all shorter runs to digital, and enable the flexo operations to focus exclusively on long-run lamination and converting.

UV-inkjet technology was chosen because it offered superior performance on filmic materials such as BOPP, PP and PE films. The ink's resilience made it a natural choice for industrial applications.

After comparing all UV-inkjet systems on the market, the decision was made for an SPGPrints' DSI (Digital System Integration) press.

'SPGPrints inspired us because they offered not just a high-specification press but, as producers of the inks too, a comprehensive, controlled digital workflow, tailored to our needs,' states Bourbonnière. 'The DSI's robust frame, high degree of modularity, high gamut

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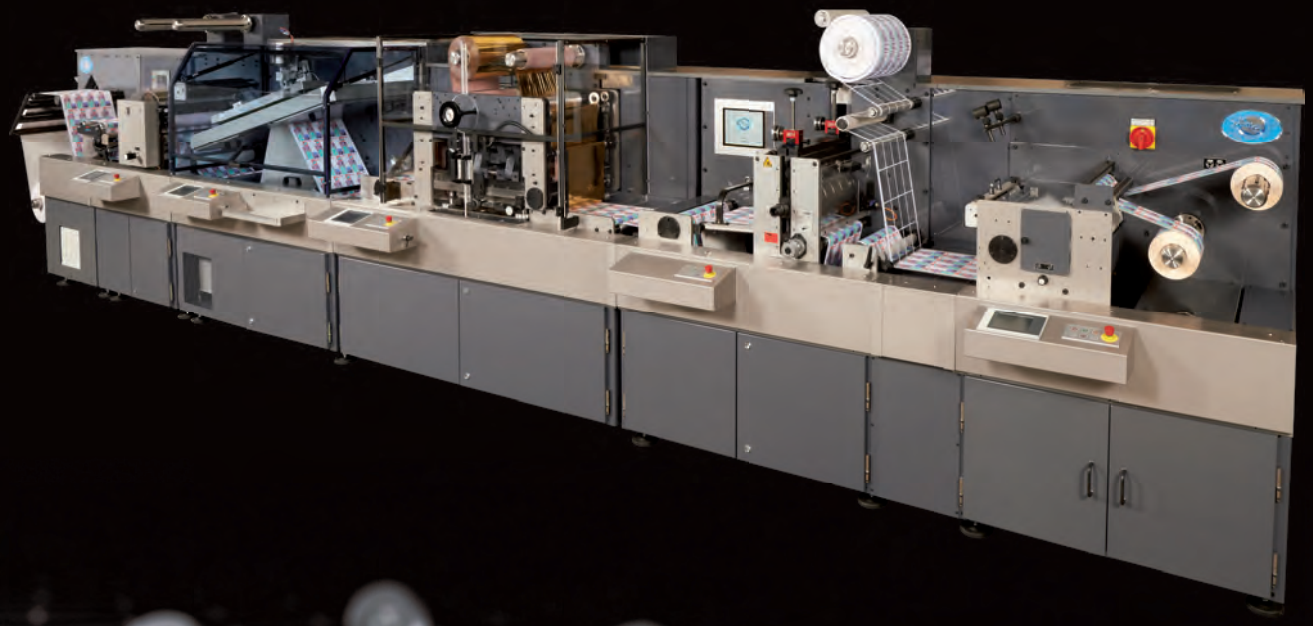

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coverage and choice of finishing options, gave us a solid base to compete in the short run label markets, and get identical results to our flexo press.

Multi Action chose an 8-color 330mm DSI press, with CMYK with digital primer, opaque white, orange and violet, a flexo station and AB Graphic's semi-rotary die cutting technology.

HIGH SPECIFICATION

The integrated chill drum, standard on all DSI machines, controls web temperature without the need to slow the press down. This is important because about a quarter of Multi Action's output comprises temperature-sensitive film substrates, including unsupported PET, polypropylene and polyethylene (the rest is paper, with a tiny proportion of carton for smoked fish packs). Typical film thicknesses are currently two mil; the chiller makes Multi Action well prepared to handle thinner gauges expected by increasingly environment-conscious customers.

Intermediate LED pinning between sequential color stations controls the print quality, enabling crisp, small characters and fine linework, without the need to alter the press speed. Pinning provides optimal color generation, due to optimized spreading of the new UV LED-skinned base color on top of the previous color.

The primer station installed on the Multi Action press increases substrate flexibility, including on machine coated papers. There is no need for more expensive, specially treated facestocks: application is controlled and restricted to the intended image area, minimizing waste. As a result of the feature, Multi Action is achieving high-quality results on Kraft, and in the case of VDP barcode printing, wove paper.

This localized, controlled application of the primer – for instance, for a brand name, icon or pattern – also offers quality advantages. It is brand-enhancing, because it sharpens the contrast between the UV inkjet color's natural vividness and the uncoated surroundings. Embossed-look features have proved popular with wine producers and home-care brand-owners (see 'Genest' label photograph). Furthermore, with the primer, the chance of pinholes is minimized, making it ideal for adhesive-free electrostatic window stickers.

The inherent durability of UV inks makes the UV-inkjet process especially suited for industrial applications, and any situation where the labels are likely to encounter difficult conditions. With high chemical and scratch resistance, and BWS-7 light fastness values, the DSI's proprietary UV-inks are valued highly by Multi Action's customers in both decorative and industrial label markets.

Derek Gobeil comments: 'The durability of the inks is important because there is no need for a protective coat on top of the ink. From the customers' standpoint, especially in industrial situations, having a label that will remain readable through humidity, contact with blood, grease, water and extreme weather is also very important. With SPGPrints' UV inkjet inks, we can be sure our labels will not fade or deteriorate in these demanding conditions.'

For Bourbonnière, the fact that SPGPrints manufacture the inks as well as build the press is a great plus. 'It is vital that the ink works perfectly with the print head,' he says. 'Poor ink quality can result in ink head breakage. It gives us confidence to be on close terms with SPG's own chemists, who are involved with the ink, working closely with the machine builders, in the same building. I think it provides a good platform for innovation, especially on opacity, and the reach of the color gamut. From our experience, we have had no limitations in pastels or bright colors.'

The inclusion of orange and violet heads enables reproduction of over 90 percent of the Pantone gamut. This in turn allows for easy replication of psychedelic, fluorescent graphics seen on the label promoting a children's card game, Animo Boogie (pictured). It is even possible to simulate gold foil on metallics.

The brilliance and opacity of the inks has helped Multi Action win orders, as in the case of a bacon burger label where the company was able to deliver greater brightness than the existing in-mold labels. The bacon burger sales doubled, and the trial order secured a long-term contract.

The opacity of the SPGPrints white – 93 percent optical density – prevents corruption of visible colors on no-label look designs, and offers clarity for small characters. 'With the high-gloss, opaque white, we achieve sharp, clear results,' says Bourbonnière. 'In order to get the best contrast, especially for, small text, we print the white on white paper as well.'

FINISHING

The inline flexo station on Multi Action's DSI is generally used for applying a matte varnish, creating a contrast with the glossy surroundings. This extra station ensures the digital gives identical results to flexo.

The press includes the same type of AB Graphic semi-rotary die cutting system that features on Multi Action's ETI presses. 'The key feature is that we can use our flexible die cutting plates, switching from flexo/digital without extra tooling costs,' Bourbonnière says. 'There is no limitation on bleed, and they are compatible with all substrate types. SPG gave us the technical support to help us master the process, too.'

ESKO AUTOMATION

Thanks to Multi Action's own management information software (MIS), together with Esko Automation, the company has a streamlined digital workflow that fits seamlessly with the flexo operations. Setup times on the DSI are 15 minutes, compared with an average of 90 minutes for the flexo press.

The company's MIS is a secure internet-based system, custom-made by the prepress staff in order to schedule and account for a lamination process that is made complex by the wide range of face stocks, adhesives and release materials. For digital jobs, the XML file is extracted from the MIS, complete with job specifications and step-and-repeat information, to Esko Automation, where an approval PDF file is generated, without the need to duplicate inputs.

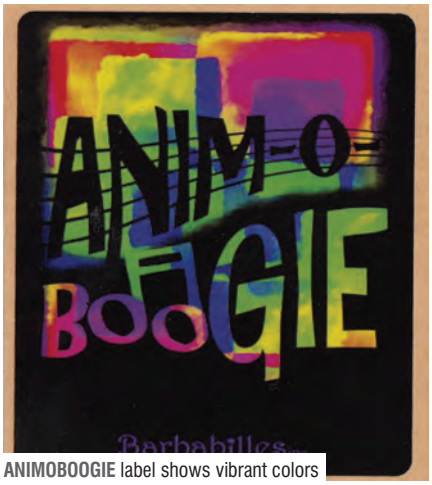
'My step-and-repeat is done because my automation engine takes all the information from the MIS and prepares the job automatically,' says Émilie Berthiaume, head of prepress at Multi Action.

The approved file is sent straight to the DSI press's digital front-end server, which manages several jobs at once. The number of jobs ranges from 100 to 130 a week.

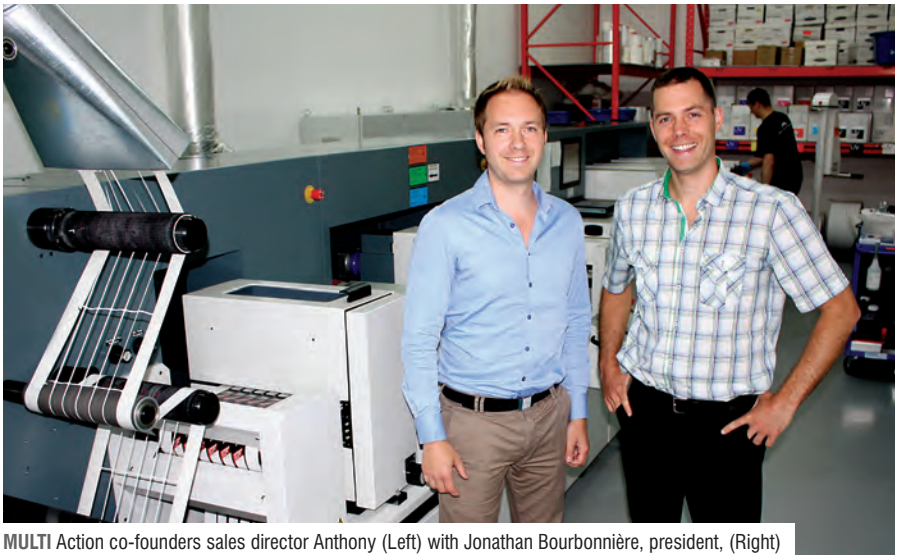
Of the 1200 jobs performed in the six months to June 2014, a large proportion were repeat orders, usually for food customers. These offer the greatest efficiency improvement as initiating them simply requires a 'click and send' action.

LOCALISED application of primer results in high impact branding for a local farm

VITALITE wine label shows high gloss with matte varnish



ANIMOBOOGIE label shows vibrant colors



MULTI Action co-founders sales director Anthony (Left) with Jonathan Bourbonnière, president, (Right)

IMPROVED PRODUCTIVITY

Maximum DSI Printing speeds are approximately 35m/min (114fpm). However, the sequencing of jobs on the press, with minimal downtime, is arguably the greatest boost to productivity.

'The average production run on the DSI is 850 feet (approx. 259m), but almost everything up to 10,000 feet (3048m) goes on the DSI,' states Gobeil. 'We are able to change production to within a few inches on the press. That would be unthinkable on a flexo press, where you need several hundred feet bring the print work to register and color accuracy. For our digital press, we can change almost instantly from one job to the next, and the register is almost right on.'

With minimal prepress and setup times, Multi Action usually offers digital work with 24-hour lead-times. However, the added flexibility means that urgent jobs can be turned around, sometimes within only a few hours.

Installing any new press involves a learning curve, and especially so when incorporating a digital workflow for the first time. Prepress can be a particular challenge, given that Émilie's four staff have to manage twice as many jobs in the space of three years.

'We started from zero, and it took us about six months to master it,' recalls Bourbonnière. 'But soon after we signed the contract, we discovered that with the professionalism and passion of the SPGPrints support staff, we had dedicated partners who made our transition as smooth as possible.'

Multi Action takes advantage of SPG's free technological and technical first line support. 'If we need to exchange a filter or change the press settings, they give us fast response. It may seem like small details, but this support keeps us up and running and gives us high uptime.'

NEW MARKETS

Thanks to the DSI press and the guidance from technical staff like Arno Steenkamer, Multi Action has been able to offer new added-value services, like variable data, for serialized labels for competition coupons, or for tracing goods through the logistics chain, as well as samples.

Derek Gobeil adds: 'Recently, for the Quebec government, we did one million different bar codes, allowing warehouse staff to easily find and trace products. We are delivering a precise, reliable technology that delivers efficiency improvements and ensures safety throughout the logistics chain. And that's all thanks to a unique UV inkjet label that withstands industrial environments and that will stay readable for many years.'

RAPID PROTOTYPING

The decision to go digital has been justified by the company's own statistics. The number of jobs per year at Multi Action rose sharply from 2,500 in 2010, to just over 4,900 at the end of 2013. That number is expected to top 6,000 by this year's end.

Derek Gobeil says the digital workflow invites customers to explore new markets and ideas: 'Our sales people are actively encouraging customers to explore possibilities such as prototyping with their marketing departments. Whereas flexo prototyping was done with Photoshop and mock-ups, now we can do the actual run on the press, in minutes, with the exact inks, adhesive and facestock. And if any last-minute changes are needed, it's all numerical anyway: we just go back to press. In this way, our digital workflow greatly speeds up the client's decision-making process at R&D stage.'

During this author's visit, the team were scheduling ten sample jobs, each comprising 30 prototype labels, commissioned by a marketing agency, for fresh tomatoes that were intended for the catering market. The samples were printed and dispatched within 24 hours of order placement, in time for the tomato grower's marketing conference, where they were declared the winning design. Since then, the tomato grower has made the quality of the DSI press the standard for all its labels.

With new opportunities opening up, Multi Action expects to run the DSI press for two shifts per day from the fall of 2014, and is considering a second DSI press. 'If the trends continue,' Bourbonnière says, 'we believe that, in five years, digital will be the preferred process for most prime labels. With the equipment, workflow, support, and of course the passion of our staff, we have the resources to succeed in a fast-changing market.'

FUTURE PLANS

That fearless yet calculating determination to take Multi Action into uncharted waters prevails. The team has launched a label application equipment sales and leasing service for fresh food producers, and after ten years of R&D is offering linerless labels across North America, through its own dedicated website, www.linerless.com. The company is recruiting resellers, in order to expand into Europe as well as into the USA. And with the DSI's arrival, combined with Esko Automation, Bourbonnière is evaluating the opportunity to offer web-to-print (WTP) service, to the general public as well as B2B customers.

LAMINATING DIGITAL MASTER ROLLS

The lamination of materials destined for the DSI occurs on the same ETI presses responsible for the flexo-printed output. Bulk lamination of digital label stock is necessary because the DSI accounts for almost half the number of jobs, yet only five percent of the total production output. To minimize disruption, Cynthia Marcoux, head of the planning department, schedules the lamination of seven of the most popular papers for the digital press, as well as a number of white and clear films, with either a removable or permanent adhesive. Special papers are available, but with minimum order requirements. Each master roll is sufficient for up to two months of production, which is recalled as necessary.

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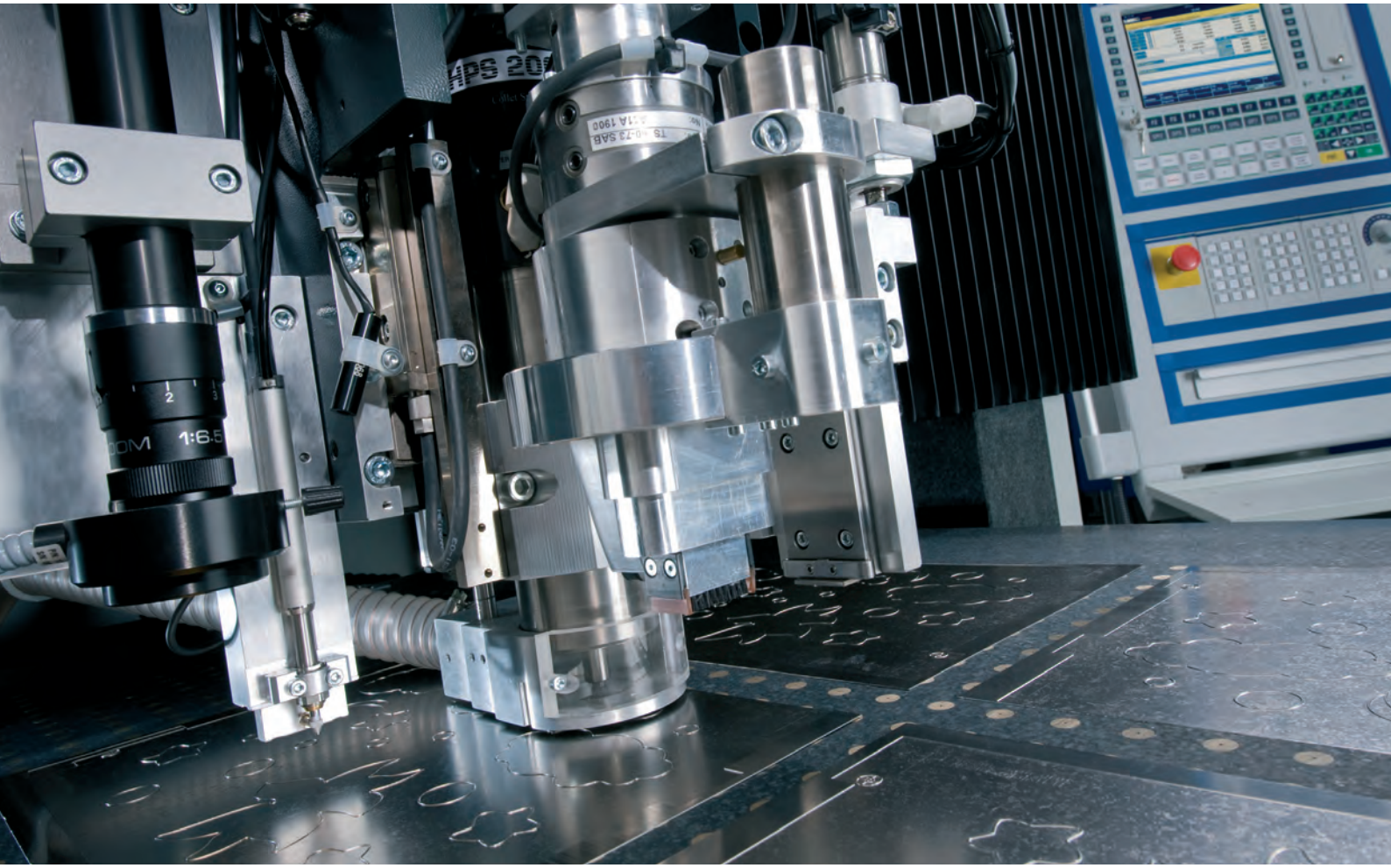

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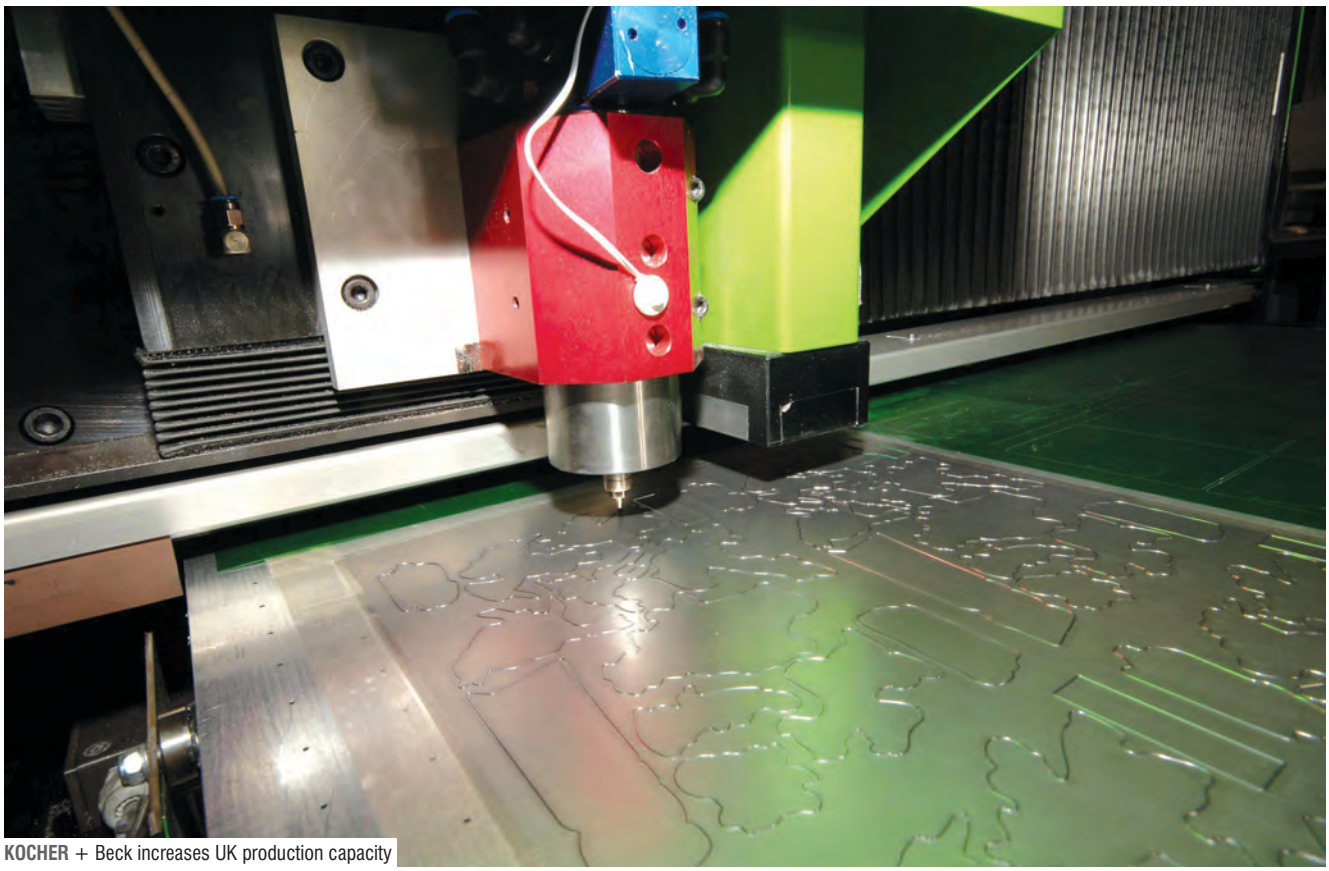

KOCHER + Beck increases UK production capacity

Kocher + Beck diversifies

ONE of the founding companies of the self-adhesive label industry, die specialist Kocher + Beck is diversifying into web handling and screen printing systems. Andy Thomas reports on the company's transformation

Kocher + Beck Rotationsstanztechnik was one of the founders of the self-adhesive labels industry, specializing in the production of dies, cylinders and other rotary tooling products. Today K+B has evolved into an international company with production sites in Germany, the UK, the US and Russia. The company has a workforce of around 550 employees a turnover of around 60 million Euros.

Today the company has expanded the range of products it manufactures at its Pliezhausen, Germany, headquarters to include not only cutting tools, dies, and magnetic and printing cylinders, but also silk screen printing plates, automatic winding systems and customized converting machinery.

HISTORY

Kocher + Beck was founded by Erich Kocher and Rolf Beck in 1965, originally to engrave trophies and stamps before diversifying into cutting cylinders for label presses. In 1981 the company began producing flexible dies and magnetic cylinders and in 1989 moved into new premises in Pliezhausen, which remains its global headquarters. Its first sales office outside Germany was opened near Leicester in the UK, which three years later became a production facility for flexible dies.

Arguments about the company's international focus then led Erich Kocher to leave the company, with Rolf Beck becoming sole managing partner. Under his management the company diversified into areas including envelope production using magnetic cylinder technology, and laser-hardened flexible dies.

At this time, the company developed the ground-breaking Gapmaster system and magnetic printing cylinder.

In 1996, Rolf Beck's sons Lars - current managing director - and Peer (who left in April 2012), were appointed as company managers. At that time, flexible dies accounted for 60 percent of overall turnover, with almost half exported.

The company's internationalization continued with the establishment of a production plant in Shawnee, Kansas, in 2001. By 2006 continued growth drove a move to a new and bigger production facility in Lenexa Kansas. Also in 2006 a production facility with 27 employees was founded in Moscow for the manufacture of flexible dies and hot foil stamping cylinders, with Kocher+Beck sharing a building complex with Avery Dennison and CCL Label. In 2007 K&B acquired US competitor ADT with 70 employees in Suwanee, Georgia.

This year, K+B is planning further capacity expansion, investing EUR 3.7 million in property, plant and equipment and EUR 2.1 million for the expansion of buildings. These include a 300 sqm logistics center in Germany, a further production hall of 1,200 sqm in Pliezhausen for the manufacture of its roll changing equipment, and the purchase of a 22,000 sqm plot of land in the United States for future expansion plans.

All subsidiaries are mirror-image production facilities, with identical machine systems. Every day the company produces over 1,500 flexible dies, all made from the same German steel. The company boasts customers from 70 countries - exports from the Pliezhausen headquarters account for around 65 percent of total production. In 2011, Kocher + Beck was certified as an 'Authorised Economic Operator', granting it privileges under European Union customs law.

TECHNOLOGY

The range of flexible dies available from Kocher & Beck include: Laser Long Life (3L) series with a hardness of 65-68 HRC; Chrome 24 , with a layer of chromium with a hardness of 70 HRC suitable for abrasive substrates such as paper-based adhesive materials; Nanotec flexible dies are coated with a hard micro-coating (more than 80 HRC) which also gives reduced glue and ink adhesion on cut profiles. For applications requiring dies with anti-adhesion properties, Kocher + Beck has developed Gluex flexible dies.

GapMaster is a variable format impression cylinder which enables the height of the magnetic or cutting cylinder to be adjusting during production, ensuring that substrates with every type and thickness of base material can be reliably processed. In addition, the correctly set gap dimension reduces wear to the dies and components.

Automation of the die handling and setting process is a major focus for K+B. The latest AM (Auto Move) GapMaster systems allow die pressure/gap to be automatically maintained using a closed loop system and servo motors during the press run.

These systems are employed in a range of cutting units, as well as in systems that Kocher + Beck has developed in-house for various printing press manufacturers. These include the quick-change cutting station for cutting and magnetic cylinders which is available as an option for Nilpeter FA and MO label presses.

DIVERSIFICATION

Kocher & Beck diversified into silkscreen printing plates with the development of its TecScreen technology, produced exclusively at the company's Pliezhausen headquarters. The stainless steel meshes are nickel-plated, wound and then coated with photopolymer in UV-protected clean room conditions. Finally, a transparent base film is laminated on to protect the mesh from mechanical damage during subsequent work operations. Processing can take place in conventional pre-press systems using film, or in digital UV exposure devices. Kocher + Beck also supplies a complete range of peripheral devices and accessories, such as the film punching machine, welding bar, squeegee, rinsing unit and silk screen end rings.

2010 saw a further diversification, as Kocher & Beck turned its engineering skills to the development of automated web handling equipment. The UR Precision systems are servo-operated splicers and rewinders which enable webs of multilayered or mono-materials to be fed or wound without interruption. The splicer features an integrated roll lift for loading the material. Additionally, a servo-driven buffer system and isolating cutting roller separate the downstream process to ensure problem-free splicing with an automatic butt splicer.

The winding system automatically cuts the completed roll and transfers the web onto a prepared core. The roll is then pushed out pneumatically and deposited on a mobile lift truck. An integrated tension controller ensures optimum winding. A web edge control system is also available as an option.

In the last three years, over 60 of these systems have been sold in Europe and the US. A new 1,200 sqm extension to the Pliezhausen site will be dedicated to the production and further development of the UR systems.

NOT A COMMODITY

Despite this diversification, dies, and particularly flexible dies, remain the core business at Kocher & Beck. The business continues to grow at a healthy rate, particularly in the US, where the move from solid to flexible dies continues to gain momentum. K+B is also seeing good growth in the developing regions, particularly SE Asia.

Martin Stierle regrets that flexible dies have become a 'commodity' product in the mind of most converter customers. 'Fabricating high quality flexible dies is in fact a complex, multi-stage process, particularly where hardening is required. And because die manufacture is a serial process – so only one die can pass through each process at any one time – in order to accommodate a rush order we have to postpone production until that die has passed through.'

Thinking of dies as a commodity means they are increasingly ordered at the last minute, and often required for next day delivery. 'Printers regularly contact us for next day delivery, and we can achieve this by changing the priority in our production system,' says Stierle. 'But it is still a multi-stage process, and at the end of it we have a very rigorous quality control check, which the dies sometimes fail and have to be remade. In that case next day delivery is of course impossible, but this is not always understood.'

Another result of the 'commodity' mentality, says Stierle, is that converters are less prepared to pay a realistic (commercial) price, sometimes refusing to pay above the cost of production. This, again, is because the process of die production is not properly understood, Stierle believes. 'In some cases we have offered to take converters around the plant to see the complex serial production process in operation.'

K+B invests heavily in developing its own CNC tooling systems. 'We know better than outside suppliers what we require from our machines specific to producing flexible dies, and we keep this knowledge in-house when developing new tooling machines,' says Stierle.

This depth of engineering knowledge is supported by a comprehensive apprentice program, with successful applicants versed in all aspects of flexible die production - including manual working - in K+B's own dedicated 'schoolroom', equipped with manual lathes and tools.

Another indication of the depth of mechanical expertise at Kocher + Beck is the classic car restoration operation. The Historische Feinmechanik Beck was founded in 2009, and specializes in the production of technical components and assemblies for cars from the pre-war period. This is now set to become a separate business.

KOCHER + Beck launches screen printing mesh

THINNER LINERS

The move by material suppliers towards thinner liners is now well established – and the challenges for die cutting are also better recognized. Martin Stierle is often invited to seminars discussing how to cut on thinner liners and thinner gauge filmic face stocks, particularly to answer the question 'how thin can we make our laminates and you can still cut them.'

'The answer is, with a tolerance of 2 microns on our dies we can cut a 23 micron liner under perfect production conditions. But there are other variables you need to take account of: the cutting cylinders have a certain tolerance - 3 μm maximum in the case of our cylinder - as does the material itself. When you add these tolerances together - particularly where we are talking about an older, or poorly maintained press - then no, we cannot guarantee cutting ever-thinner substrates under all conditions.'

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RETROFITTED Mark Andy with Martin Automatic splicer and AB Graphic custom rewinder

Family business LTI continues legacy of value

LTI celebrates partnerships, investment and business growth at its renovated facility in North Carolina, Danielle Jerschefske writes

In April, Labels, Tags & Inserts (LTI) celebrated 20 years in the flexo labels business at its newly refurbished and expanded facility in Burlington, North Carolina. Amongst esteemed family, friends, customers and supplier partners, the small business demonstrated the value it places on automated production and the importance of putting the customer's needs first.

Leroy Baker grounded this business acumen in 1974 when he opened a flexo plate-making business and continued the model in 1994 when he sold his plate house to invest and move into label manufacturing with his son and daughter.

Says Rhonda Baker, LTI president, 'We try to not only meet our customers' needs, but to also anticipate them. Being proactive both helps turn-around time and helps to create a higher quality product. Leroy has shown that developing a relationship with the client requires a person to go above and beyond to show that their business is appreciated.'

Over the last five years, LTI has increased sales by 60 percent. 'I believe this is partly due to our makeup of machinery,' Baker explains. 'We're built to be highly efficient. We invest in end-to-end equipment – the press, the splicer, waste removal and turret – that will keep our machines performing and reducing waste, with as little intervention as possible.'

CUSTOM PARTNERSHIP

LTI first became acquainted with Pitney Bowes at a WBENC (Women's Business Enterprise National Council) meeting. After gaining trust over the course of a year and a half, Pitney Bowes, a global provider of shipping, mailing, and e-commerce solutions, awarded the family-run converter with a contract.

Today LTI is a key supplier to Pitney Bowes for meter tapes and labels. There is great variance in the products available – materials, adhesives, themed holiday prints and fast-changing designs. Kate Keyoskey, global direct procurement at Pitney Bowes, says, 'When choosing to partner with suppliers, the most important aspect to us is quality products. We also strive to partner with suppliers that are dependable, ethical and environmentally responsible. They must deliver on time or slightly early, and meet the standard required.'

To win the contract, LTI needed to produce various lengths of tape with printed color strips at a specific location, signifying to a cashier when the tape is getting low and needs to be changed. These strips would always need to be the same length and at the same placement on the tape, regardless of finished roll length or machine speed.

LTI approached Mark Andy with this requirement, resulting in an investment in the retrofit and automation of an existing 13-inch Mark Andy 2200 press that will engage and disengage when required for the non-stop production receipt papers. The machine is equipped with a customized AB Graphics turret rewinder and a Martin Automatic roll splicer.

Baker explains, 'Non-stop automated machinery allows for maximum efficiency and lower costs for the company. These

RHONDA Baker and her daughter Nikki Capps, with her parents and business founders Leoma and Leroy Baker, and nephew and facilities manager Jim Baker

costs savings are passed on to the client along with a higher quality product.'

John Baer, regional aftermarket sales manager for Mark Andy, dealt directly with LTI on this upgrade, working closely to confirm requirements, then building a custom retrofit for the 2200 consisting of a programmable control system with HMI where the operator can enter the required quantities and length(s) of tapes to be run.

Explains Baer, 'Once the start button is pressed, the length count begins and at the specified point, based on receipt length, an air-actuated solenoid is activated which engages and disengages the print cylinder for the print stations.

'First the black is engaged for a specific length, then within milliseconds, the black cylinder retracts and the red cylinder engages to lay down a strip of red immediately following the black. This was a complete integration of pneumatic, electrical and mechanical functions, which is a significant feat.'

In addition to the press requirement, LTI also invested in a custom ABG finishing unit to slit and cut the tapes to their required size. This involved the Mark Andy system communicating with the ABG system to ensure marks were placed and referenced appropriately for the end product to be finished accurately. The ABG is synched to follow what the Mark Andy does. The turret incorporates a special feeder to place plastic cores with different shapes on each side perfectly on the rewind cylinders. Production was a multi-step process for the former receipt paper supplier.

Continues Keyoskey, 'This press investment has certainly strengthened our relationship. We recognize the investment made to service our needs as best as possible. It allows LTI to be even more flexible than they were.'

"Pressmen are responsible only for running the press. Plates are mounted and all materials, dies and inks care compiled together for them by a support team. This team is charged with thoroughly cleaning anilox rolls with a Flexo Wash system"

PRODUCTION

When LeRoy first invested in two Mark Andy presses, a 7-inch and a 13-inch, he also purchased seven print cylinders for each machine ranging from 56-tooth to 96-tooth. At the time it was the largest order that RotoMetrics had ever received.

Most likely a company will purchase print cylinders as it grows. Baker says, 'My father took a stance from the beginning that we were not going to have the problem of cylinders being used on a press that are required for the next job. We've never been one to sit back and say – is this an investment we can afford? Rather it's, is this an investment we cannot afford?'

Pressmen are responsible only for running the press. Plates are mounted and all materials, dies and inks are compiled together for them by a support team. This team is charged with thoroughly cleaning anilox rolls with a Flexo Wash system, with cleaning plates and tending to tooling every single day. It's all of these pieces put together that makes the converter efficient.

Jim Baker, Rhonda's nephew and LTI facilities manager, learned a lot about the mechanics of advanced machinery from his father. He's charged with maintaining the equipment. When there's an issue, even if it's small, it's immediately corrected so that the tight ship is continually well-greased and sharp to move accordingly.

The converter has six presses in total, equipped for both UV and water-based production. Assets also include three Martin Automatic butt splicers, and one Martin Automatic turret.

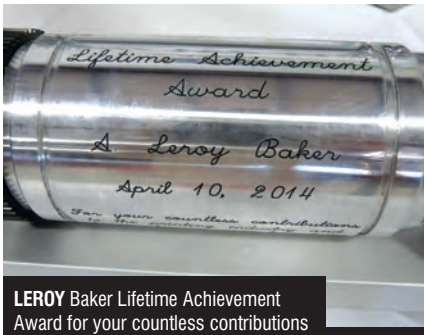
In 2009 LTI invested in the Kodak Flexcel NX flexo plate making system. Prior to that, it sourced plates from Roto-Plate, LTI's former plate house. Baker emphasizes that each job is reviewed for what will make it look best when printed.

FAMILY FORWARD

LTI has expanded twice to increase production and warehouse storage. It also built new modernized offices to enhance customer relations. LTI has always made the customer its priority and will do anything to ensure that the customer is happy.

Baker's experience with her father, watching the machines operate and learning the basics of how the business operated instilled a passion for the family business. She says, 'We are proud to still be a strong family business in a growing world of consolidation because we can treat every employee as a family member.' The converter offers a matching IRA, long and short-term disability, dental and life insurance, and covers 90 percent of medical insurance costs.

Baker concludes, 'At LTI we always try to stay ahead of the curve, whether that means investing in new machinery to meet different needs of the customer or expanding the business to accommodate for more jobs.'In the future we want to get a wider press, 20 inches and we want to go digital too.'

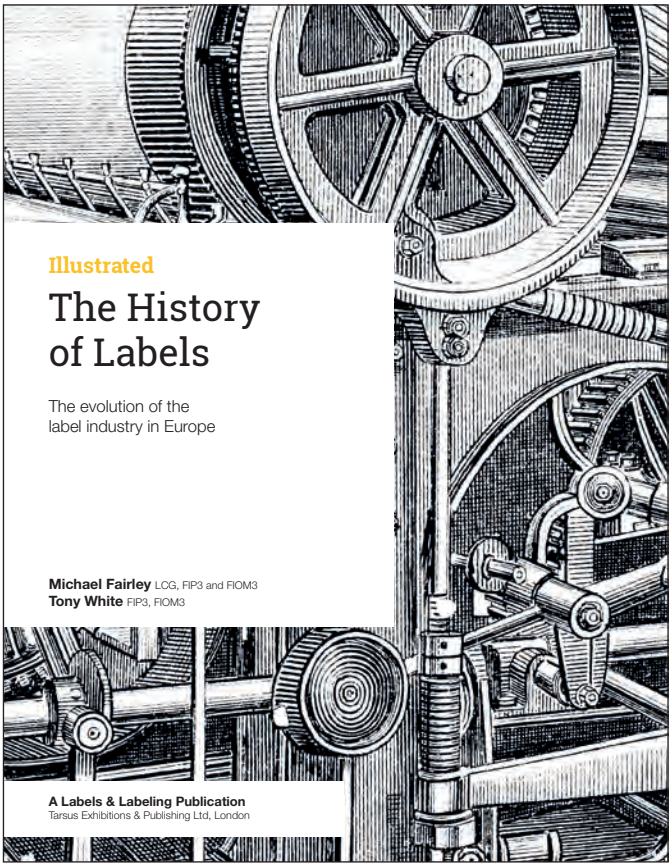


LEROY Baker Lifetime Achievement Award for your countless contributions

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

RotoMetrics and Mark Andy presented Leroy Baker with a Lifetime Achievement Award at the event, acknowledging the things he has accomplished and contributed to the industry. Says Baker, 'It serves as a reflection of both the dedication of my father as well as the standard that we strive to hold ourselves to at LTI.'

Understand the past to create the future



With detailed illustrations and explanations, The History of Labels is a comprehensive and invaluable reference source on label development, beginning over 300 years ago. Know the history of the industry and understand how label technology and demand progressed, to create better solutions, more accurately predict future growth areas and demonstrate your expertise to clients.

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Plastic coatings, step aside

USING traditional extrusion coating equipment, Smart Planet Technologies' mineralized resins are replacing plastic coatings, offering production efficiencies, enhanced performance, low costs, and recyclability, writes Danielle Jerschefske

Polyolefins are inexpensive, readily available, easily used in manufacturing, and provide performance as a barrier layer in paper and label packaging applications. On the down side, paper packaging with plastic coatings cannot easily be recycled with standard recovery equipment.

Despite the widespread collection infrastructure for packaging materials, recyclers typically decline to accept plastic coated cartons and cups and large quantities of those materials are diverted to landfill. The plastic layer creates processing problems at many recycling mills.

The cities of Portland, Oregon and Minneapolis, Minnesota do not accept plastic coated boards in their municipality recycling program for this reason.

'A lot of poly coated stock is high value solid bleach board (SBS),' explains Johnny Gold, senior VP of the recycled fibers division at Newark Recovery and Recycling. 'It's great fiber, but as soon as poly is on it, it's contaminated. Recyclers shy away because it will clog up our systems without additional chemical and mechanical processing.'

Smart Planet Technologies has developed a way to mineralize commonly used plastic coatings, such that barrier-sealed boards can pass standard industry recycling tests. Georgia Tech's Institute of Paper Science Technology (IPST) has completed third party testing, which demonstrated high yields, good processing attributes, and re-pulpability.

EarthCoating delivers key advantages, including improved barrier and heat seal performance, potential cost savings and a reduced environmental footprint. Various packaging supply chain stakeholders have successfully tested EarthCoating across a broad range of applications, including hot and cold beverage cups, salad and hot bar food trays, frozen food boxes, chilled wine labels (see case study on pp. 103) and ice cream packaging.

Gold continues, 'The coating that Smart Planet has created breaks up in the pulper and disappears, and we don't have the problem of gumming up our equipment. It could be a real boon for our industry.'

Chris Tilton, chief technical officer at Smart Planet Technologies, comments, 'It's important to understand the magnitude of the technology. EarthCoating is a real solution for the long-standing challenge of recycling barrier-board and other coated paper materials, including corrugated boxes.'

WHY PLASTICS?

Polyolefin coatings such as polyethylene and polypropylene provide two key capabilities to the packaging manufacturer: heat seal-ability and barrier protection. Heat seal-ability is a key performance measurement because forming cups and cartons at very high speeds is done by sealing along the side or bottom of the container. This is done at speeds up to 500 packages per minute, at temperatures up to approximately 1,000 deg.F. The coating layer provides a medium allowing the packaging surfaces to adhere to each other, forming a tight bond with good fiber tear.

Polyolefins are flexible across a wide band of heat ranges, adhere well to paper and are machinable under the most demanding heat-seal requirements. Without the coating, the fiber surfaces will not bond to each other and the package would fail. Additionally, the plastic coating provides a barrier to both water and moisture, maintaining product quality and packaging integrity.

MINERAL POSSIBILITIES

EarthCoating technology is based on the mineralizing of polyolefin extrusion coatings – by weight between 30-60 percent. The mineral content is highly refined calcium carbonate, evenly dispersed throughout the resin. In the past, resins with higher mineral content often had poor dispersion, leaving large clumps of minerals that would not properly extrusion coat on mainstream converting lines.

The calcium carbonate is wet ground into small particles and compounded into the resin during production at Standridge Color, the manufacturer of EarthCoating.

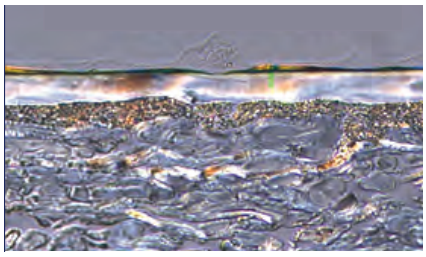
The technology can be applied to polyolefin and other plastics coatings, including polyethylene, polyester, bio-polymers, bio-derived polymers, and polypropylene.

BARRIER PERFORMANCE

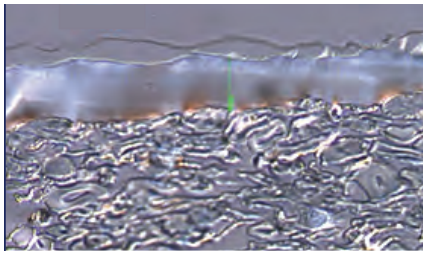
The evenly dispersed particles in the resin compound ensure high performance and ease of processing during extrusion. The dense nature of the minerals prevents percolation through the layers. Water and moisture molecules are repelled and re-directed by the mineral particles, protecting the product enclosed within the packaging. The resin also delivers high resistance to fatty acids and oils.

SMART PLANET COATWEIGHT COMPARISON SIDE VIEW

100% Polythylene coating

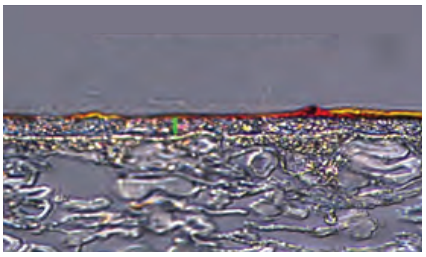


Exterior coating layer

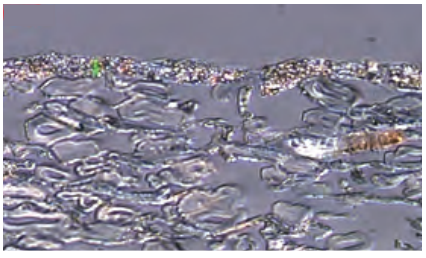


Interior coating layer

Earth coating EC-40



Exterior coating layer



Interior coating layer

Tilton says, 'This not only makes EarthCoating suited for production using standard extrusion equipment, but the minerals themselves build a barrier, a three-dimensional matrix confined within the packaging barrier layer.'

HEAT-SEAL-ABILITY

Minerals have highly efficient heat diffusion properties. The result of this efficiency is equal or better fiber tear during high demand heat sealing processes.

Tilton comments, 'The hot tack cycle shortens and the existing EarthCoating polyolefin content is used to optimum efficiency, with high levels of chain crystallization. This optimization results in less overall coat weight requirements.'

PRINT-ABILITY

Generally, the flakes from EarthCoating will be more opaque because they incorporate the mineralized content. Additionally, the surface attributes of EarthCoating are quite different from a plastic or bio-polymer type coating. Because of the high mineral content, under magnification, the surface appears coarse and rough. However, to the consumer the coating appears exactly like a plastic coated surface.

The rough surface provides good ink adhesion and the coefficient of friction (COF) is suitable for ink wettability. Also, surface energy levels, such as the dyne level, is higher than say, polyethylene. These features create a surface that can deliver premium print quality.

COST

Todd Gasparik, director of marketing, Smart Planet Technologies, says, 'The combination of lower material costs and the ability to down-gauge coat weights serve as a great way to engineer cost savings.'

Existing coating machinery extrudes EarthCoating without retrofitting the extrusion coating or die-cutting equipment. In addition, paperboards coated with EarthCoating may be converted using standard folding and scoring equipment,

THE mineralized resins on the left are more opaque, white

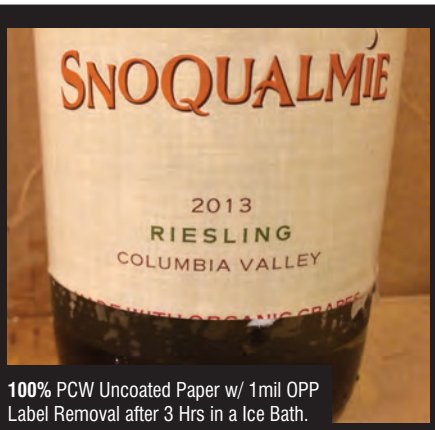
as well as, hot and cold glue and heat-sealing equipment. Because of surface energy levels and physical surface characteristics, Earth Coated boards can outperform plastic coatings in high speed cold and hot gluing processes. When used as a barrier layer for wet strength requirements in wine labels, all of the conventional add-value embellishments have tested successfully in label conversion and application.

Since certain grades of fibers with EarthCoating can be recycled comparably to an uncoated board grade, there is an additional opportunity to sell the trim and cuttings from the package converting process back to recyclers. EarthCoating resin is readily accessible at production facilities in the US, Asia, and Europe.

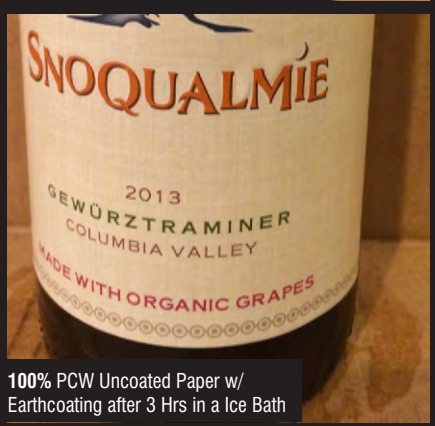
SUSTAINABILITY

The reduction in plastic content – directly replaced by minerals – has proven to be beneficial in extruded polyolefin Life Cycle Analyses (LCAs), demonstrating a positive environmental impact.

More impressive is the ability to recycle paperboard with mineralized resin coatings. The small, dense particles process out of the fibers through common industry screens and in centrifugal cleaners, where



100% PCW Uncoated Paper w/ 1mil OPP Label Removal after 3 Hrs in a Ice Bath.



100% PCW Uncoated Paper w/ Earthcoating after 3 Hrs in a Ice Bath

STE. MICHELLE DRIVES EARTHLABEL

Les Wallace is the packaging manager at Ste. Michelle Wine Estates. Operating under the procurement group, Wallace is responsible for all wine packaging development and approval of what's selected – capsule, cork, labels, shippers, bottles.

Ste. Michelle's Snoqualmie Winery, which uses sustainable and organic practices in its winemaking, uses 100 percent post-consumer waste (PCW) facestock with EarthCoating and 1.2M PET release liner, which replaces a one mil OPP laminate for moisture barrier. Wallace explains, 'EarthCoating gives us the moisture and cold performance we need, and greatly reduces the amount of plastic we're using.

'Sustainability is important to our organization. Overall from a packaging standpoint, we work on best practices and try to find reduction in materials while maintaining quality,' Wallace explains. 'This coating fits with our strategy to continue to reduce the footprint we are leaving with all of our products.'

Collotype Labels USA successfully commercialized the label construction, called EarthLabel, on the West Coast. The material is produced for the converter at Coating Excellence International in Wrightstown, Ohio.

Collotype Labels worked with its supplier to conduct trial coatings, making adjustments to achieve solid coat weights and insure proper paper selection for optimum printing and good bonding strength with mineralized resin. Once extrusion performance was verified, the material's endurance was tested further to meet critical supply chain requirements.

Wallace explains, 'We started with blank labels including some design elements, embossing and texture in the paper. The first steps went extremely well and we quickly moved into production trials. We also ran trials on our bottling lines to insure productive label application. The EarthCoating really almost becomes a part of the paper and improves the performance quite a bit both during label application and in wet-strength.'

Initially Ste. Michelle made a soft transition to EarthLabel. Now 100 percent of the Snoqualmie Winery white wine brand labels use the material. Already other Ste. Michelle brands that require labels with wet-strength have transitioned to EarthLabel, and this will continue where Wallace and his team sees the opportunity.

EARTHCOATING running through an extruder at Fibre Converters

DESIGN for Recycling Pizza Box label

they're washed out as a contaminant.

Gasparik says, 'Now that the economic value is proven, the existing infrastructure can now be used. Imagine the potential impact of recycling the millions of tons of premium fibers that might otherwise end up in landfills.'

SCIENTIFIC TESTS

Institute of Paper Science Technology (IPST) scientists used samples of EarthCoating extruded paperboards, including control samples, when testing re-pulpability of the technology. The materials were first weighed and documented. Next the samples were put through a process that mimics commercial re-pulping and disintegration. The disintegrated pulp was then screened using a screen with 0.01" sized openings.

Two groups of material emerge from the lab pulping equipment: the Rejects are non-fiber material considered contaminated and filtered out. The Accepts are the good clean fibers that can move forward into the paper machine to make new products.

The IPST report results indicate that the bleach board with EarthCoating shows high accepts yield (80+ percent by weight) and nearly 100 percent overall yield. And while some of the Accepts have plastic and mineral fragments, they are much smaller than one mm in size and should easily process through normal industry systems. Tilton adds, 'Also, the mineral containing fragments are very dense (20-30 percent more than water), making them particularly easy to separate in post-screen processing systems such as centrifugal cleaners.'

WHY NOT MINERALIZED RESINS?

Only three percent of Clearwater Paper's total output uses EarthCoating. Despite the success found with High Liner's adoption of EarthCoating for its frozen seafood cartons, the supplier has experienced no increase in demand. It has conducted trials for customers and has extruded the resin on other substrates, but adoption is slow. As sustainability continues to play a larger role in end users' packaging decisions, Clearwater feels EarthCoating is an alternative it must offer.

Gold admits, 'It's going to take time to sell this whole thing. To me, if the costs are the same, if it reacts the same when you're manufacturing it and it responds better in recycling equipment, why not adopt it?'

Millions of fresh produce, frozen food, beverages and other products found in North American retail grocery outlets are packaged today using EarthCoating. As awareness improves, and consumers continue to reward businesses that make environmental considerations, adoption should progress.

However, there remains reservation at all levels. Stakeholders are concerned about consumer expectations, particularly at the retail level, for them to collect, sort and direct the packages away from the landfill. However, it is important for the retailers such as coffee companies, to understand that EarthCoating can potentially replace all polyethylene coated cups and folding cartons. In this scenario, collection can be implemented after retail use, relieving the stakeholder from retail level separation and collection costs.

There is anxiety about upsetting the balance between negotiated low costs within the packaging supply chain and the possible use of an unknown new material. Tried alternatives such as biopolymers contaminate plastic waste streams, and aqueous coatings and emulsions do not have the heat-seal-ability or the capability to extrude at high speeds. There's also fear that environmental claims might be disproven.

Gasparik says, 'Some resistance to change takes place at the packaging converting and printing facilities. As margins have compressed in recent years and the converting market continues to be ever more competitive, converters fear any change to the delicate balance of maintaining good customer service and workable profitability. A minor change in materials specifications, they fear, can upset production and possibly reduce margins and extend lead times.'

Numerous commercialization projects are on the calendar for this fall. Hansol, a large Korean paper manufacturer and Metsa Board of Finland through Case Paper, will begin piloting EarthCoating in the US on several paper grades. These pilots can potentially support future plans of running mill direct EarthCoating grades in both Asia and in Europe. The Atlanta-based Global Paper Solutions (GPS), a division of Asia Pulp and Paper (APP), will begin pilot production this year.

EarthCoating manufacturer Standridge Color is making an investment too. It's opening a multiple machine, single and tandem coat, twin-screw extrusion coating facility dedicated to producing high volume cup and food packaging stock providing various EarthCoating resin choices to the market by mid-2015.

Fibre Converters has expanded its EarthCoating product offerings. It partnered with Custom Paper Tubes in Cleveland to produce 40 percent mineralized hyper barrier (HDPE/PE) tube liners for high moisture and oil barrier. In this application, EarthCoating replaces materials used for laminated tube linings like foil and BOPP.

As EarthCoating is offered more and more by large, integrated packaging companies at the mill level, the value chain infrastructure around the technology strengthens without threat to current cost structures. A handful of bold leaders have taken the step to find and adopt new technologies that both meet their packaging needs and their objectives to reduce environmental impact. Who else will lead the change?

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I first learned about poly-coated board and its recycling issues through a collaborative 'Design for Recycling' project hosted by Earth911 at Sustainable Brands '12. Teams were given one of five products with packaging that caused problems in our current recycling streams. Our team's pizza design was voted the winner for its clear three-part message to consumers. With technology like EarthCoating, a frozen pizza box finds renewed value in the waste stream.

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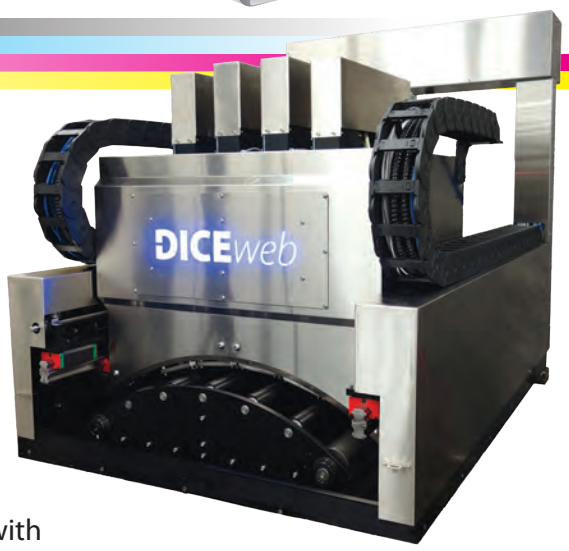

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Moving to flexibles

TRADITIONAL narrow web suppliers discuss the essentials for successful diversification into flexible packaging with Danielle Jerschefske

As consumers continue to find high value in single serve packets, in functional pouches that support families eating on-the-go and in an increasing variety of products, the flexible packaging market holds great opportunities for traditional PS label manufacturers. Indeed, entire product categories have shifted almost entirely to film packaging, for example baby food and tobacco products. Still, only a small percent of narrow web print production, less than 250M US dollars, contributes to the 26B US dollars flexible packaging business in the US alone.

Data from TLMI's 2013 North America Label Study (NALS) reports that its label printer membership believes that shrink sleeve labels, pouches and other flexible packaging formats hold the biggest opportunity for organic enterprise growth. Participants in the study reported that in 2012 around 12 percent produced flexible packaging, but predict as much as one-third of their production shifting to these high growth formats by 2015.

PRESS SELECTION

Says Denny McGee of Multi Print Systems (MPS) North America: 'With shrink and traditional flexible packaging application run sizes continuing to trend downwards, wide web converters are unable to print the smallest run sizes economically. There are many narrow web in-line style printing presses that can handle such production.'

MPS offers a number of fully servo-driven machines in narrow web widths and up to 26 inches wide. Servo drives and controls help overcome the main challenges that have historically plagued the flexo market, such as gear marking and baring.

MPS uses what it calls solid lock technology where the plate cylinder position to anilox and impression cylinder is automatically set. With a free running, rubber covered impression cylinder, there is no baring in the print. Dot gain is reduced with the use of a non-steel impression cylinder.

'It produces dots closer to offset print,' McGee says. 'All together the system perfectly matches the speed of the material to produce beautiful graphics on film.'

Much of the flexo printed flexible packaging produced globally uses wide web (+38 inches) central impression (CI) presses. Well-known manufacturers can be seen narrowing their machinery to service the efficiency needs of their traditional clients.

Windmoller & Holscher has launched the Miraflex S CI flexo press aimed at printing shorter runs of unsupported films and laminated film structures for a variety of packaging applications. The press is 26 inches wide and capable of reaching production speeds around 900 ft/min. Changeover time is claimed to be around 15 minutes with as little as 70 ft of waste for set-up.

The Flexotecnica EVOXDs/n is a gearless CI press available in a width down to 24 inches. The press has automatic impression to printhead setting, an automatic wash-up system and in-line ink viscosity control. Flexotecnica was acquired by KBA in 2013 in a strategy to expand its strength in the folding carton market and to penetrate the promising flexible packaging business.

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Generally the flexible packaging market prefers solventless lamination since the chemistry is rather simple and the applications broad. Solventless lamination requires mixing two components together. The adhesive mixture is known for its short pot life, and is therefore normally completed off-line to maintain operational efficiencies. It has a lower cost than alternatives and cures well at room temperature.

Raul Matos, VP of sales and marketing, Karlville, says, 'There are less than five narrow web label printers in the US that have invested in solventless lamination capability, but this will change.'

Karlville has introduced a mid-web compact laminator with a maximum web width of 40 inches and minimum of 16 inches. Intended for building three-ply structures, users can slit master rolls into two 20 inch rolls for production. Karville will demonstrate the Solventless Pro at Labelexpo Americas.

In the interest of label converters accustomed to converting a roll of a material in a single pass, narrow web press manufacturers have developed chemistries and engineered designs that are said to control solventless lamination in-line. Those interested in such capabilities should follow-up with Mark Andy and Nuova Gidue.

MPS offers in-line lamination for water-based dry bond

SINGLE use packets of Miracle-Gro plant fertilizer simplifies garden care

adhesives by incorporating a heated nip. 'We see more water-based dry bond in the narrow web market today,' says McGee. UV lamination can also be used in-line, but the choice is more costly and the end use markets are limited.

MATERIAL SELECTION

Material needs are just as critical in this market category as they are in label applications. Therefore the product that the package will contain and the value chain environment are taken into consideration when lamination processes are selected and material constructions put together.

Avery Dennison offers a full line of pre-made surface printable flexible packaging constructions. Cindy Collins, FlexPak business development manager at Avery Dennison, says, 'When it comes to narrow web opportunities for converters, it's important to get into the right applications and to stay within the confines of the substrate. Stick packs run in the machine direction in multiple rows across the web. If narrow web converters can provide on-demand service for several different flavors, it's a great opportunity.'

Paper face constructions are a nice point of entry, typically used for dry goods like sugar, seasoning, soup mix and hot cocoa. Constructions between three to four mils can be surface printed with a varnish. By adding overlam, the material provides better stiffness and puncture resistance.

Knowledge around barrier protection is crucial for servicing the market. Suppliers must be able to provide the right sealant for a given application and be able to support clients with fitness for use testing.

Collins says, 'The value proposition for narrow web guys is: short runs, speed of delivery and service. There is a wide breadth of products out there that require high end graphics and packaging options, and we really see the growth here.'

Glenroy is another resource for flexible packaging materials. ExpressWeb is a line of surface printable films available as narrow as 40 inches and compatible with most water-based, solvent-based and UV ink systems. There are seven different foil laminations available.

Substrate surface preparation is key to achieving high quality print. Most plastics – polyethylene, polypropylene and polyester, have chemically inert and nonporous surfaces. Corona treatment is a popular option used to increase the surface tension of a given material to promote adhesion.

FINISHING

Initially, converters may outsource pouch-making services. There are a number of companies in the US that specialize in pouch conversion. Says Matos, 'Making pouches is complicated and it takes time to develop. However, we are starting to see the narrow web guys installing their own pouch machines because of lead time.'

For the mid-web market Karlville offers its KSP Standup Pouch machine with half the footprint of the company's existing machines to convert material widths up to 800mm (31in).

SUSTAINABILITY IN PACKAGING

Flexible packaging experts shared their insights at Smither Pira's Sustainability in Packaging event in Orlando, Florida. Said Emily Erickson, R&D sustainability manager for Happy Family Brands, a provider of natural, nutritious foods in pouches, 'With any Life Cycle Analysis (LCA), the pouch always has a lower environmental footprint as a whole against a glass option.'

Flexible packaging is credited with evacuating more of a product out of a container, somewhere between 95-99 percent. Rigid containers are said to leave as much as 14 percent of a product behind. Kraft Foods has won design awards for its salad dressing pouches for the food service industry. Schwann's ice cream in a pouch is the first to switch within the product category.

'More than 1.3B tons of food is tossed away each year, which could be as much as half of all that's produced in the world,' John Baumann, CEO of Ampac, a flexible packaging manufacturer, told the audience. Ampac is working to reduce food waste through packaging. He said, 'We want to extend shelf life through the use of active and intelligent barrier materials.'

Wayne Wegner, director of sustainability at Bemis, agreed with his peer, 'Active packaging presents real sustainable opportunity. Oxygen scavengers can be incorporated into material layers to eliminate oxygen from the interior of the package as well as retarding oxygen migration through the package. Odor absorbers can be used to hunt confinement odors, removing them from the package and enhancing the flavor profile of a product. Already there's films tailored to the organic properties of specific products to greatly increase shelf life, manage spoilage and reduce food waste.'

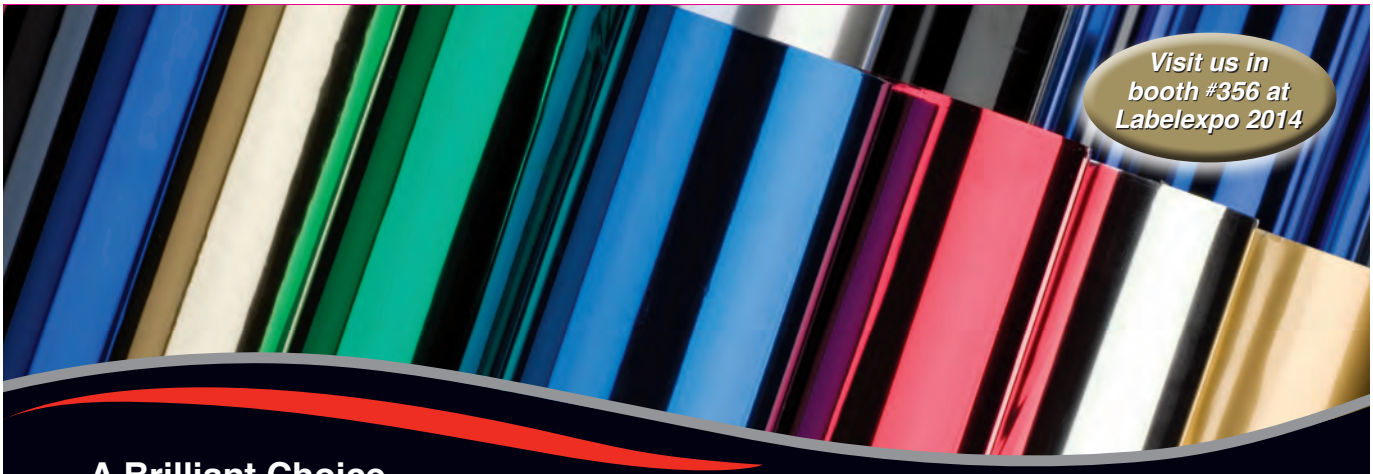
Generally, MRFs (materials recovery facilities) in the US are built to process 80 percent fiber and 20 percent containers. Today, 35 percent of what MRFs receive is containers. On top of that, traditional waste recovery business models are based on processing by volume and gaining revenue by weight. Needless to say, MRFs are in a treacherous economic position.

Said Susan Robinson, federal public affairs director, Waste Management, 'We're seeing a replacement of tin, plastic and other containers moving to flexible packaging, and we are trying to adjust to this. We see so much more single serve plastic materials than we've seen in the past, and it's expensive to process these kinds of structures in single source collection programs. Light weighting is difficult too since we're not able to get the revenue off of the back end.'

ONLINE RESOURCE

Packaginglaw.com is an online resource for the global packaging industry. Sponsored by law firm Keller and Heckman LLP, it provides a wide range of information on laws and regulations, both in the US and throughout the world, that affect packages and packaging materials.

TABASCO has started selling single serve packets of hot sauce



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CONVERTERS saw two different jobs demonstrated on the VSOP line

BOTH flexible packaging jobs were cured using the Electron Beam unit

Web offset makes mark in pack printing

MÜLLER MARTINI DRUCKMASCHINEN marks its 50th anniversary in 2014. Nick Coombes attended the company's celebratory Open House in Maulburg to see what the company has to offer today's package printing market, and hear an informed debate on the problems involved with primary food packaging

'We are dedicated to offset printing and have recently completed a six million EUR investment plan to make Maulburg a state-of-the-art manufacturing, training and demonstration facility – I'd call that making a serious commitment to the technology and the markets we serve,' said Müller Martini managing director, Bernd Sauter, as he welcomed more than 100 converters to the two-day Open House event.

Designed to show the versatility of Müller Martini's inline presses, the event also afforded an opportunity for two of the company's customers, CPM Internacional SA (Spain) and GPS Packaging/Rotomet (Italy) to present their first-hand experience of using the technology in a commercial environment. A selection of 25 complementary suppliers was also assembled and provided with tabletop display facilities, and two of the company's presses, including the flagship VSOP, ran live demonstrations on a variety of work.

THE TECHNOLOGY DESIGN

The VSOP (Variable Sleeve Offset Press) is not a new concept, but it is still considered cutting-edge in terms of what it offers the package printing market. The press on display at Maulburg had a 850mm web width, and was fitted with six offset print units and two flexo stations, with the first offset unit being a convertible hybrid allowing offset or flexo. There were three options for curing/drying: full UV (in this case supplied by IST), Electron beam (provided by ESI) and a hot air unit (supplied by Tresu) on the second flexo unit.

Specified to run flexible packaging and labels (there is a CB version for folding carton production), the VSOP 850 is designed for producing primary packaging, where the contact with food is direct, and the potential for ink migration is high. The modular construction allows each converter to specify the precise combination of printing and drying/curing technology that its customers' products demand. The substrate range runs from paper (30 – 200gsm) to film (9- to 150-micron) and foil (10- to 50-micron), with laminate foils up to 300gsm. Each of these can be fully tested at Müller Martini's new Print Technology Center, which was hosting the Open House.

THE TECHNOLOGY IN ACTION

Andrea Cerisara, CEO of GPS Packaging/Rotomet Division explained how the company had grown from being Italy's largest supplier of wet glue labels for bottles to offering a broader product range via its Rotomet subsidiary, which it launched in 2000. With 22 (yes, twenty two) CI flexo presses and now four VSOP lines, the company converts a variety of sleeves and in-mold labels, as well as roll fed and cut and stack labels. Highlighting the superior quality and flexibility of offset, combined with simpler pre-press, Cerisara claimed that the VSOP lines had played a significant part in opening new markets for Rotomet.

Speaking for CPM Internacional, the family run company in Madrid, sales manager Javier Marina explained how the company has built its business converting flexible packaging with rotogravure presses and then CI flexo. But, in 2006 it made the decision to invest in web offset technology and installed an 8-color VSOP, and later added an 8-color Alprinta. Today, with two gravure and two offset presses, Marina said the company is well placed to evaluate the relative merits of each. For long runs and repeat work it uses gravure, where the cost and time taken for cylinder engraving, coupled with color consistency throughout the run pays dividends. But with its shorter lead times, easier changeovers, cheaper printing plates, and better environmental credentials, offset offers significant advantages in a market where run lengths continue to decline.

To conclude the morning session, these two testimonials were followed by live demonstrations in the new Technology Center. The two jobs run on the VSOP were a pouch for nuts, and a shrink sleeve for a beverage. The pouch was printed on a 520mm wide roll of 38-micron Treofan with 20-micron stochastic screening. The 26in format image was printed CMYK offset with a flexo opaque white and reverse printing. It was EB cured and run off at 200 m/min. The press was then stopped and changed over to run the sleeve. This was also a 26in format, but printed on the full 850mm wide web on 12-micron Bilcare PET, again with 20-micron stochastic screening. Printed CMYK plus Reflex blue offset, with an opaque flexo white and reverse printing, it was also

CHANGING jobs showed how light and easy the sleeves are to handle

PRINTED packaging produced on Müller Martini web offset presses

EB cured and run off at 200 m/min.

THE FUTURE FOR FOOD PACKAGING

The afternoon session began with a panel discussion on the problems involved with primary food packaging. The two experts were Dr Ulrich Hebring from the Hebring Institut and Dr Heinz Schweiger of Zeller + Gmelin. Dr Hebring explained that ink migration had come into the public conscience only in the past 10 years, and largely as a result of some high profile legal cases. While legislation exists to monitor and control the situation, he said there are many gaps, and that consumer expectation is currently far outstripping supply chain capability, which needs better coordination both up- and down-stream. There is, he said, no room for secrecy.

Dr Schweiger reminded the audience that new legislation is due to come into force in Germany in 2016, and it is anticipated that it will flow out to the other EU member states. Described in simple terms as a standardization of Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), it recommends that converters 'check, check, and check again, because of the number of variables, including changes in the environmental conditions under which the packaging is produced.' More obvious practices like 'don't mix low migration with other inks on the same press' strikes at the heart of GMP, but it is, he said, alarming how little some food packaging producers actually understand, and that ignorance is no defence in the eyes of the law. The danger is that we will end up with 'trial by media', which acts as a driver, but is not the best solution.

Dr Hebring added that some types of print techniques are clearly better suited than others for primary packaging. The combination of ink type, curing or drying method, and print process all bring different variables, but he commented that there is no reason why, as long as strict control is enforced, most types could not be used safely. Converters, he believes, need to become more scientific in their approach so they can manage the risk more effectively. The problem is defining who or what is the ultimate authority. Currently, legislation is being driven by Consumer Protection Law, but life is becoming more complex with individual nations beginning to set their own standards to plug the gaps in the EU statute book. The knock-on effect of this will be the unfortunate and undesirable erection of trade barriers. He claimed the whole subject will become more diverse, and urged everyone to keep their knowledge as up to date as possible, and utilize the resources of trade associations and ink and substrate manufacturers.

THE FINISHING TOUCH

Returning to the production cycle, the final presentation of the day was given by Neil Gregory, project manager from the Achilles Group, which has 15 production sites in Germany and four more in Eastern Europe, and produced 184 million square meters of laminated product last year. Gregory said that packaging can be divided largely into two areas where lamination played a key role: visually, through the use of gloss, matt, metallic or holographic effects; and protectively, where it provided a barrier against odor, light, and fat contamination.

Working principally roll to roll, Achilles offers double and triple layer lamination that is all barcode controlled for 100 percent traceability. Its in-house test laboratory, which is ISO 9001-2000 certificated, measures laminate bond strength and seal security as a first stage for new jobs prior to moving to contract production. The company's adhesive systems are based on polyurethane for laminating paper and board to film, and on a twin compound adhesive for foils, laminated films, and aluminium foil laminates, while there are both solvent-free (PUR) and solvent options to ensure resistance to sterilization and the effects of aggressive fluids and essential oils. Gregory closed by saying that, to meet current market demand, his company converts 1000mm diameter rolls in webs widths from 300 to 1300mm at speeds up to 450 m/min.

Concluding the Open House, Bernd Sauter emphasized the case for offset printing in primary packaging. He said: 'Since the heavy costs of compliance with the latest environmental requirements do not apply with UV or electron beam printing inks, web offset printing is ideal for food packaging. There are neither residual inks nor residual solvents, and no requirement for explosion-proof storage or a wash-up system for machine parts, cylinders and inking rollers. That leads to far lower insurance costs for a production site.'

There is another important benefit of web offset – the growing range of printable substrates. Sauter added: 'Until recently, certain substrates such as polyethylene could not be processed, or required special knowledge. Today, advances in technology enable the stable and reliable printing of these substrates using web offset.'

In a flexible packaging market for so long dominated by rotogravure and CI flexo printing presses, the growing capability of web offset brings a new and welcome approach.

THE panellists Dr Ulrich Hebring and Dr Heinz Schweiger seen here with Müller Martini's Managing Director, Bernd Sauter

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(L-R) Gary Falconbridge, Colordyne; Peter van Leeuwen, Label Tech; Steve Hubbard, Delphax Technologies

Colordyne steps into Europe at Label Tech

DIGITAL PRESS MANUFACTURER Colordyne Technologies (CDT) is making a commitment to the European market with master distributor Delphax Technologies and its first European installations. Andy Thomas reports

Dutch converter Label Tech has installed the first Colordyne Production Class digital label presses in Europe, and is set to become a demonstration and production hub for the manufacturer's European operations.

The installations were unveiled at an Open House at Label Tech's IJsselstein, Utrecht plant, and follow the appointment of Delphax Technologies as Colordyne's master distributor for Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Delphax has over 30 years experience in the high-speed digital print market, particularly for business forms and variable information labels.

Label Tech has installed two CDT Production Class inkjet label presses: a CDT 1600-PC Laser Pro, complete with in-line laser die cutting, flexo varnishing, lamination and matrix rewind; and a CDT 1600-PC Sprint, the same print engine but without in-line finishing. The Sprint is capable of printing full bleed on either pre-diecut labels or on continuous rolls for offline finishing.

Both Production Class presses share the same Memjet-based CDT color engine, delivering a resolution of 1600 x 1200 dpi and speeds up to 160 ft/ min (49 m/min).

Joining the Production Class presses at Label Tech are Colordyne's 1600-S (sheet) and 1600-C (continuous feed) industrial benchtop printers.

INDUSTRY VETERAN

Label Tech owner Peter van Leeuwen is an industry veteran, attending his first Labelexpo show back in the mid-1990s. Mike Fairley wrote his first L&L article about the company in 1998.

Label Tech is one of three business units under van Leeuwen's direction. The oldest is Label Form, set up in 1987 to supply blank labels and later to print barcode labels and forms. Label Med focuses on specialist healthcare applications – blood bags for example – while Label Tech, formed in 2004, widened the company's capabilities into chemical and industrial labels, with a particular focus on RFID and logistics management. The company buys RFID chips and antennae and uses its in-depth knowledge of adhesives to build smart labels.

'We provide the full service from data management to print,' explains Peter van Leeuwen. 'We can load data onto the chip or we can print full color data labels. Label Tech is all about R&D.'

Label Tech exports its expertise and products all over Europe, from simple 4 x 6

MATERIALS AND INKS

The Colordyne 1600-PC presses use Memjet's proprietary aqueous dye-based inks, which are close to water-based flexo inks in performance.

As in water-based flexography, specialized coatings are required on synthetic substrates to absorb the water and fix the dye. Because the inks are absorbed and dried by air movement alone - without requiring dryers - heat sensitive materials like thermal paper can be run.

'We already have a customer asking if we can run polyethylene, and we are now testing that,' says Peter van Leeuwen. The lack of additional heat and the non-contact print method means RFID labels can also be run on all the Colordyne presses.

Colordyne is also looking at the possibility of developing its own in-line priming station where substrate top coating is required.

in. smart labels to more complex applications for returnable cases.

This strong focus on innovation sees Label Tech employ a dedicated R&D manager with a team of up to four staff from a total of 25 employees.

'This is the future of the label industry as I see it,' says van Leeuwen. 'The label industry is at a mature point in its cycle, and not growing as it was 25 years ago. The only way we can survive is to be more advanced and innovative and service related - and less price sensitive.'

The Colordyne presses will enable Label Tech to extend its offering from these specialist industrial markets into prime label areas such as beverages.

Van Leeuwen has been following the evolution of digital color printing since the pioneering days of Benny Landa's Indigo, but only made the jump after meeting Colordyne founder and CEO Gary Falconbridge two years ago.

'I was looking for a press that did not require special inks, and I wanted to use any material, so I was more interested in inkjet,' recalls van Leeuwen. 'UV inkjet presses have arrived in quality but for me they were still too expensive.'

The Colordyne deal was signed at Labelexpo Europe last year. 'Gary and I agreed to move forward and cooperate together. We took the decision to buy two machines and to match that with a high level of commitment to make them enhance Label Tech's businesses.'

COLORDYNE TECHNOLOGY

Colordyne founder Gary Falconbridge recalls his excitement at first seeing a Memjet technology demonstration. 'It looked like a disruptive technology, but at the same time a complementary technology to flexo, because it has the same look and feel and was highly cost effective.'

Colordyne Digital Technology (CDT) signed an OEM agreement with Memjet in 2009 and later added AzTech as its partner on the converting side. The AzTech modular finishing system comprises a wide range of options, including lamination, aqueous or UV coating and rotary tooling stations.

The CDT Production presses use Memjet's Waterfall printhead technology. Each printhead is 8.77 in (222.76 mm) long and mounts some 70,400 nozzles printing aqueous dye-based inks at 1.2 picolitre drop size.

This allows the press – following a recently announced upgrade - to achieve a native resolution of 1600 x 1375dpi at speeds up to 225 ft/min (69 m/min), allowing for sophisticated half-toning effects.

The fineness of the inks requires that the heads are continuously moistened to prevent blocking, and the heads themselves are consumable items. Software monitors the heads' usage and prompts users to change them, which is a simple plug and play operation.

On the Colordyne Production Class presses the heads are organized one per color vertically across an A4+ press width. There are five color stations – CMYK plus one spot color. A limitation for clear film applications is that white cannot be printed on the fifth station, although a flexo station can be incorporated for this purpose. CDT estimates the Waterfall CMYK technology can simulate up to 78 percent of the PMS gamut.

Peter van Leeuwen says an important reason for choosing Colordyne technology was color matching with his flexo presses. 'We will make Colordyne our color standard, because it is easier to match this on the flexo press. UV inkjet, on the other hand, is not interchangeable with flexo. It has the density of screen print and does not look like what the customer is already buying.'

LABELTECH'S CDT 1600-PC Laser Pro

LABELTECH'S CDT-1600-PC Sprint

LASER IN-LINE

The CDT 1600-PC Laser Pro press at Label Tech is configured with a LasX V400 in-line laser die cutter, a 400W sealed CO2 laser unit rated for 20,000 hours 24/7 operation. The system is self-monitoring with an integrated air purge, and apart from cleaning the optics, is virtually maintenance free.

Las-X founder and CEO Bill Dinauer, says the project with Colordyne started five years ago and a high level of integration has been achieved. The die cut area, for example, appears simply as one layer of a PDF inside the CDT workflow.

The Laser Pro press holds a library of laser power settings for different face stocks, and Label Tech is now testing its own materials and adding these to the database.

'It takes five minutes for us to build a new file, and what we call Nudge on the Fly allows the system to be adjusted in real time and the results saved,' says Bill Dinauer.

As well as die cutting, the laser can be used for edge cutting, etching variable information and micro perforations.

'We recently did a job with variable print and color and intricate die cuts, which could not have been done conventionally,' says Peter van Leeuwen. 'We can also run material through press without printing and use it as offline finishing for our conventional presses. The laser has even functioned as a slitter.'

Re-registration is achieved either via an eye-mark, or a camera programmed to identify a target image in a PDF layer.

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FAMILY shot Graphium labels

Specifying a digital press

ANDY COOK, managing director of FFEI, outlines some of the questions printers and converters should be asking before making a major investment in digital printing

To really focus on 'fit-for-purpose' requires a full understanding of the final product and what important characteristics are required during its lifetime. Let's take for example a label needed for harsh environments, like a paint can. Fit-for-purpose in this application means being scuff and scratch resistant, oil resistant and probably having a good lightfast capability.

So when evaluating a digital press that will be required to produce labels for a harsh environment, it would make sense to thoroughly test these areas of the label, as well as image quality. We always encourage people to develop a good set of durability tests that can be used to compare different digital labels. Simple aspects like the way curing is managed can have a huge impact on ink adhesion – something that can only be identified with proper scratch testing. Undertaking this level of due diligence during the purchasing process can flush out the hidden but important aspects of a system not always highlighted in the product's brochure.

To develop a system that really does deliver fit-for-purpose labels requires a very deep expertise in several critical areas such as: ink and curing systems, printheads, media transport and digital color control. The key is to fully understand and utilize the interactions of these technologies as a system.

Developing a digital print system is all about the optimization of these various components to achieve a result, rather than the specifications of the individual components themselves. So for example there is a lot of discussion and misunderstanding about inkjet head resolution and its impact on image quality. The reality is that it is the combination of ink, head resolution, transport system and software that fully determine image quality (sharpness, color, tonal smoothness, etc.). The head resolution plays just a small part of the overall delivery. So, in product development the clever part is knowing how the individual components behave in different system environments. With this in mind it is difficult for a single supplier to have the depth and experience in all areas and so the better print systems have tended to be developed as a consortium of expert companies as FFEI did with Graphium, where the combined expertise of Fujifilm, Edale, Xaar and FFEI ensure a totally optimized system.

In terms of a development process, we always start with a detailed study of customer needs, especially understanding the types of environments and requirements their final products have. This sets the minimum product requirements that designs are then tested against. It can be a long and expensive process, but by driving a system design from customer and application requirements definitely produces better products. Customers have a great habit of pointing out the obvious things, which sometimes highly technical development engineers can miss. Some time ago we had a customer ask us 'why does it take so long to start printing?' Our engineers realized actually there is no reason, so redesigned the software to work parallel activities, allowing an operator to stop and start printing with no time delays at all. A small change, which actually creates a huge operator benefit to the way the press operates.

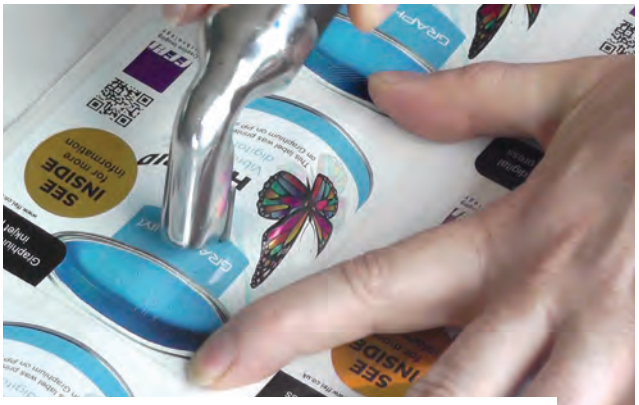
CHALLENGES

In the many years we have been developing inkjet label press technology, we have been asked to test a number of weird and wonderful applications. The range of substrates has been very broad, from foils, plastics and paper, to wood veneer. We had one customer wanting to produce double-sided labels for an outside application, on a rather heavy but clear PP material. This is something they hadn't been able to produce on any other digital press, especially registering images front to back.

Other challenging product testing involved confirming a label could withstand over 30 cycles in a dishwasher. They were looking to see what lifetime could be expected before any degradation was noticed. Quite a long process, but it did result in a perfectly looking label that was exceptionally clean.

Another of our customers ran a range of tests on their car stickers and decals jobs. They put them under an accelerated light test to ensure it wouldn't fade, as well as extreme heat tests to check they could withstand baking temperatures cars have to endure. This customer performed these tests well before they considered selling them to be absolutely sure they met the warranties being offered. Having products that might get

THE decision to invest in new technology isn't about whether the press is fit-for-purpose, it's really about whether the products it can produce are fit-for-purpose



THE way curing is managed can have a huge impact on ink adhesion, and is something that can only be identified with proper scratch testing

returned just isn't an option so the 'wise' customers we know tend to thoroughly test things first.

When we first launched Graphium one of its strengths was our high opacity white. In terms of appearance today most white inks seem to look similar, however it's not until you start subjecting them to durability testing does the real picture emerge. White is hard to cure through, so its adhesion to a substrate can be weak, making it vulnerable to scratching. Understanding issues like this is essential to avoid expensive and time consuming issues later.

As we interact with different prospects, their whole focus is on the environment that their products end up in and that they are fit-for-purpose, which makes a lot of sense. It's often a little disconcerting when you put wonderful samples in front of a client and watch them screw them up, scratch them and then critically inspect them under a loop. It's only when they have actually done this that they might actually take a look at it as a label.

THE QUESTIONS TO ASK

Converters and printers of labels need to think about more than 'what do I want to print?'. They need to consider 'what am I going to convert?' or 'what product am I going to produce and how and where will it be used?'.

It is only when you begin to think about the end product – what it will look like and how it will be used – that you can gain a full appreciation of the different market opportunities that are open to you. All of which have specific requirements that you need to make sure your chosen press can accommodate.

Converters also need to look beyond the specification sheets of the different presses. If you have decided to invest in digital, for example, because of the benefits it can bring, make sure as part of that decision you build a due diligence process which concentrates on system objectives not just head line specifications. Take for example productivity. A system objective might be 'x' number of jobs per hour. To confirm this will require more than just checking the print speed; it needs media changeover times, stop-start cycle times, image processing time, etc. The fastest printing speed does not always produce the highest productivity system.

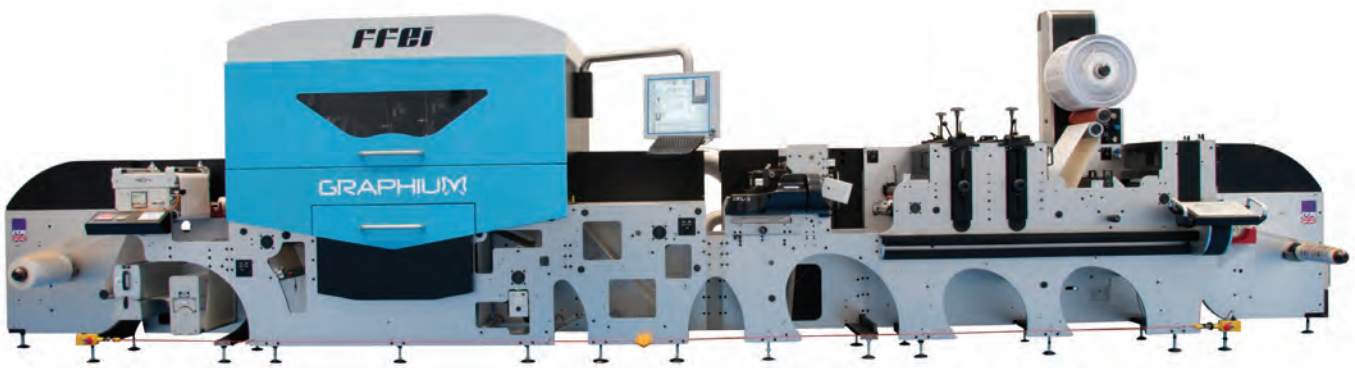
Additionally specify in advance: What markets are you targeting? What are the requirements and expectations of the end users in that market? If you are targeting the health and beauty sector, it is critical that the labels are water and oil resistant – it doesn't matter how fast they print if the labels can't withstand a hot shower. So ask questions such as do you need a primer, or do you have to add a varnish to make it waterproof? Can you varnish over the digital inks, as not all digital inks can accept a varnish? Will your die-cutter be able to finish labels with a varnish?

THE NEXT STEP Once you have specified your requirements and selection criteria you then need to consider how you will test the label samples you request from you shortlist. A great way to test the durability and robustness of a label is with a proper scratch test. Also testing it in the environments it is to be used in can be useful. If it is a warning label for dangerous substances, it needs to be tested in a range of chemicals and be lightfast, so that important warning symbols don't fade. If it's a shampoo bottle it will again need to be tested against different ingredients and in hot, wet, steamy conditions.

In some situations a label that isn't fit-for-purpose could be life threatening – consider for instance a 'Do Not Touch – Electricity' sticker that fades in sunlight so can't be read.

Developing a process to ensure you purchase the right technology doesn't only makes sense from your business's perspective but it's also good for the industry. Doing all the thinking upfront before entering a purchasing cycle, will help you make a decision faster and with more confidence.

Printers should also follow due diligence on the associated consumables. Take a supplier of adhesives, and how their product could affect the performance of a label as an example. It might be that an error or change in their mixture could have a detrimental effect on the label's performance, which is wrongly associated with your press. Do your research, and make sure every component that goes into your chosen press is fit-for-purpose too.



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Tianjin Zhongtian Shengtong Machinery Co.,Ltd. Mainly produces Hot-melt adhesive coating machine series, water-adhesive coating machine series,silicon liner paper coating machine series,tape hot-melt adhesive coating machine series,hot melt adhesive (EMS)coating machine series, self-adhesive labeling machine series, self-adhesive material slitting machine series, self-adhesive die cutting machine and chip separating machine series,adhesive material and paper cutting machine, tape re-winding machine series, cutting board series and so on.

1125 hot melt adhesive coating machine

Tianjin Zhongtian Hongda Paper Co., Ltd. was established since 1997 , has developed more than 100 products, adhesive products , thermal adhesive series , etching , offset sticker series, membrane type stickers series, security stickers series, all kinds of tape series and a variety of hot melt adhesive series . Products enjoy a good reputation among customers .

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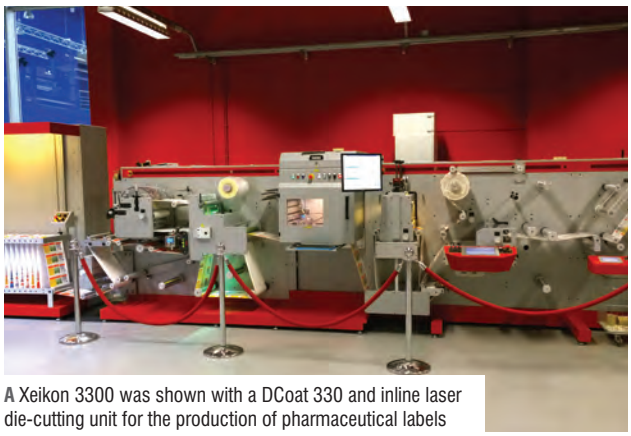
PVC、PPself–adhesive material series

AB Graphic had a Digicon Series 2 converting line running off-line throughout the duration of the event



A Xeikon 3300 was shown with a DCoat 330 and inline laser die-cutting unit for the production of pharmaceutical labels

Xeikon Café shows digital pack printing potential

DAVID PITTMAN reports on the recent Xeikon Café Packaging Innovations event, where the digital press manufacturer demonstrated the potential of its technology in a host of label and package printing applications

Digital press manufacturer Xeikon sees massive potential for the digital production of different types of labels and packaging, as demonstrated at its recent Café Packaging Innovations event, which took place towards the end of May at its headquarters in Lier, Belgium.

The event promised something for everyone, with demonstrations of Xeikon's own equipment naturally at its heart but supported by a mini exhibition featuring partners from across the label and package printing industries' supply chains, and two conference programs.

In total, 15 applications were demonstrated, from pharmaceutical, heat transfer and in-mold labels to folding cartons and paper cups, and included various models from its press portfolio running and printing work. They were printing using consumables from a range of suppliers preceding it in the supply chain, such as Treofan with its EUH 70 film and Iggesund Paperboard's Incada Exel 235gsm folding carton material, before being rewound or sheeted, depending on the application, for conversion by those in the post-press arena. The 'pressroom floor' featured three 3500s, a 3300 and two 8000 series models printing the jobs, as well as an open print engine to show the inner workings of Xeikon's presses.

Xeikon has already stated its intentions to grow in key markets, such as folding cartons, where it sees huge growth potential and has been a regular feature of Package Printing Workshop feature areas at Labelexpo events in recent years, and will feature once more at Labelexpo Americas 2014 *(see pp. 162-200 for the Labels & Labeling show preview)*. It also sees big growth opportunities through in-mold label printing.

In-mold labels were a keenly showcased and discussed element of the Xeikon Café Packaging Innovations event. Many were directly discussing their products for in-mold labeling, such as Michelman's new DigiPrime 4453 primer, launched for use on Xeikon digital presses when producing in-mold labels. This primer was developed by Michelman after testing that determined the need for a primer to increase dry toner adhesion to make digitally printed in-mold labels produced on Xeikon presses suitable for wet environments. Dutch manufacturer Rietstack, which was attending an exhibition for the first time, demonstrated its IRS 440 that was being used to convert labels being printed during the event.

A Xeikon 3500 was printing in a roll-to-roll configuration using its ICE CMYK toner to print the in-mold labels. An in-mold label design for Albaquerque cream cheese tubs was printed on Treofan EUH 70, using the Michelman primer and Actega Terra water-based varnish, applied in-line using a MiniUCoat, itself fitted with Meech antistatic bars. These labels were then converted on the Rietstack IRS 440.

Another in-mold label job shown was for two liter pails for Belgian toy manufacturer Clics. This was printed on Treofan ETR 57 preconditioned with a Squid Inks primer using ICE CMYK toner, as well as ICE opaque white toner, with a water-based varnish again added by means of the in-line MiniUCoat equipped with antistatic bars.

Clics was at the center of the folding carton demonstration of the Xeikon 3500, with CMYK and Durable Clear used in the production of personalized Clics boxes, which were printed in a roll-to-sheet configuration on Iggesund Incada Exel, with both Kama and Bograma on hand to carry out die-cutting of the printed sheets.

Other notable machine demonstrations included an inline DCoat 330 and a laser die-cutting unit being used on a Xeikon 3300 for the production of pharmaceutical and medical labels, with one job printed live at the show on Raflabrite Opaque Black FSC RP51 HG65 and another, using 3M self-adhesive

ATTENDEES were keen to see a Digicon Series 2 in action

RIETSTACK made its event debut with its IRS 440, which was being used to die-cut and stack in-mold labels printed on a Xeikon 3500

alabelstock, pre-printed, die-cut and on display.

Outside of the main machine room, AB Graphic was running a Digicon Series 2 converting unit off-line, with UV varnish, screen printing, foiling and embossing being added to pre-printed wine labels using a matte structured substrate. These were die-cut using tools from RotoMetrics before being slit and rewound. A Xeikon 3300 was used to pre-print the labels, with its Alpine fuser drum used in the press configuration to optimize the print quality.

Other suppliers exhibiting in the mini exhibition area included workflow specialist Hybrid Software, and Advanced Track & Trace, which was demonstrating anti-counterfeiting and product identification systems.

A technical conference delivered a variety of supplementary discussions, including workflow, consumables, printing and converting, and finishing, with the likes of CERM, Label Traxx, UPM Raflatac, Iggesund, Treofan, Michelman, Xeikon itself, Highcon, Kama, RotoMetrics and more presenting as part of the program.

Jan Denies, Michemlan's industry manager for digital printing, printing and packaging, explained in more detail why a primer for Xeikon presses had been developed, with testing in wet conditions showing that toner adhesion when producing in-mold labels could be greatly improved with the use of a primer, so opening up digital dry toner to a wider range of applications. With a limited selection of pre-treated materials available, he said that Michelman and Xeikon are investigating the potential of developing in-line priming. A unit of the 3500 could be used to apply the primer before printing, although this has obvious limitations, since the press would need to be reset for printing. Off-line units traditionally used for preparing materials for gravure or flexo printing, already offer viable options, said Denies.

DigiPrime 4453, he went on, has an unlimited shelf life, so materials can be primed and stored well in advance before printing.

Advanced Track & Trace's presentation examined the company's security and product authentication technologies. Chief technology officer Zbigniew Sagan outlined its Seal Vector authenticating system, a secure and unique code that measures variations in print quality and enables authentication, identification and serialized traceability of a product or a component.

VARNISH was applied to in-mold labels using a MiniUCoat, installed inline and equipped with Meech antistatic bars

Seal Vector is based on the variations between a digital file and the same information once it has been transferred to a media, meaning it is possible to detect copies as they will contain less data than the original. Seal Vector is a visible and/or invisible, copy-sensitive digital data container embedding a great quantity of encrypted, secured information on a very small surface (from a few microns to a few square millimeters). It can be applied on all types of materials, from secondary and primary packaging, to the product itself, using a variety of print techniques, including digital toner.

A business conference provided real-world examples of applications and printers that have benefited from using digital, including The Label Makers, Kohl Pharma and C&P Packaging. You can read more about C&P Packaging's use of a Xeikon 3500 to produce just-in-time folding cartons in sister publication *Packprint World* (published exclusively online at www.packprintworld.com).

IN-MOLD labels for two-liter Clics pails were on display

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THE new export plant of Cosmo Films at Shendra in Aurangabad

New Cosmo Films facility extends global reach

AAKRITI AGARWAL visits a new export plant built by Cosmo Films in Aurangabad and talks to the team about future expansion plans and growth in Indian and international markets

Cosmo Films, India's largest BOPP film manufacturer and exporter, has opened its third plant at Shendra, a greenfield site in the Special Economic Zone in Aurangabad. The company has two other plants, one in Waluj, Aurangabad, and the other close to Vadodara in Gujarat. The new plant spreads across an area of 19 acres and has been built with a total investment of 40 million USD primarily to cater to the export market. Pankaj Poddar, CEO at Cosmo Films, said, 'The BOPP market has high growth prospects and is currently growing at four to five percent globally with a consumption of six and a half to seven million tons worldwide.'

Other than these three factories, Cosmo Films has one plant each in the US and Korea and a sales and distribution network in Europe. The plants in the US and Korea have one extrusion line each along with slitting units while Japan houses a slitting facility. These lines in the US and Korea were acquired four years ago from GBC and are mainly for lamination. Cosmo Films mostly supplies speciality films for lamination, packaging and label films. It is directly supplying wraparound films and material for in-mold labeling and blow-mold labeling to printers. The company also supplies label film to self-adhesive label stock manufacturers and direct thermal film to either label stock manufacturers or printer as required.

The new export plant has been designed by Sanjay Chincholikar, vice president – global sales head, lamination films and domestic markets at Cosmo Films. He has ensured a good amount of light into the plant at all times in the day. Three cranes that can run the length of the plant are installed for lifting jumbo rolls from one part of the factory to another.

This facility houses one 8.7 meter BOPP line and three extrusion coating lines. The production capacity of BOPP in this plant is 40,000 tons a year and the current capacity of three extrusion coating lines is 800 to 850 tons a month which translates to about 10,000 tons a year. By the end of 2014, one more extrusion coating line, one 2.1 meter wide chemical coating line and one metallizer will be installed in the new facility. After the installation, the value-added extrusion capacity will go up to 13,000 tons a year, chemical coating capacity will be 3,000 tons a year and metallizer will be 7,500 tons per annum (TPA). Cosmo Films is currently running a total of nine BOPP lines, 10 extrusion coating lines, four chemical coating lines and two metallizers. The total installed capacity of the company currently stands at 1, 36,000 TPA for BOPP, 40,000 TPA for thermal laminating films, 6,000 tons per annum TPA for coated films and 8,000 TPA for metalized films. This doesn't include the new capacities planned at Shendra facility.

Cosmo Films has a strong portfolio in labels. The company has a three star rating from HP Indigo for its HPI (DP) product. A research and development centre in Aurangabad is also being planned.

Cosmo Films aims to become one of the top five players in the BOPP business globally in the next three to five years. Sandeep Dutta, general manager, marketing and global head for specialty films, said, 'India has a major advantage of a low manufacturing cost base with a huge repository of knowledge and technical competence which we want to transfer to our customers across the world.'

INTERNATIONAL SHORES

Export contributes to 65 percent of company's turnover which translates to 50 percent in terms of volume. Though Cosmo Films supplies material to more than 100 countries worldwide, it is focusing on the US, Europe and China markets. After acquiring GBC, Cosmo Films has been driving thermal lamination sales in the US to the tune of 30 to 32 million USD. Tanuj Agarwal, senior vice president for sales, marketing and international operations, said, 'We are now focusing on growth in the packaging and specialty verticals. A packaging team has been added to the US office to drive that market. We will launch products for these verticals in a big way at Labelexpo Americas 2014.'

Cosmo Films is also looking at either having a slitting unit in Europe or adding a distributor to the region. The company is now exporting material directly to Europe from plants in India.

Cosmo Films is the only Indian BOPP film manufacturer supplying to China. For the last two years, Cosmo Films

THE Cosmo Film's team inside the new export plant at Shendra in Aurangabad

has been supplying directly to some printers in China. Dutta said, 'We do not have very good penetration in China as of now but we are developing the market.' The company has hired some Chinese speaking sales force there and a distributor in South China for slitting operations of its jumbo rolls. 'It's a huge market with about 144 running BOPP lines. One has to research thoroughly to be able to do well. We see scope in the East China industrial hubs including Shenzhen, Beijing and Guangzhou,' he said.

Dutta believes that Cosmo Films will be the harbinger for lacquer coating in China. 'We are strategically developing that market. There is competition from the Taiwanese, but our products are of better quality. Labelexpo Asia 2013 gave us huge leverage to understand the potential of this market which is now as big as Europe even when it is not as developed.' he said.

Cosmo Films sees growth in Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries and south-east Europe. However, Dutta points out that high end lacquer coating is Western Europe's forte. According to his estimate, the global market of coated films stands at 25,000 to 30,000 tons a year with the growth rate of 10 to 12 percent. 'Labels are a small part of this segment which is growing primarily because paper labels are shifting to films. Therefore, 60 percent of label market is opaque or white films. The clear labels market is only about 20 percent and it is poised to grow,' he said. The company has made in-roads in high quality markets including Germany and Sweden. 'Italy has a lot of scope and we are working towards getting a bigger share in the country,' he said.

Explaining the demand in different markets, Poddar said, 'The developed world demands highly specialized labels. They are more advanced in terms of technologies and extra value addition is required on films. Compared to a developing market, presses are run at higher speeds so they require low COS, SIT and other such factors.' However, he pointed out that developing markets continue to change rapidly. Cosmo Films manufactures specialized films catering to both markets, allowing them to work for various applications and perform well on a range of presses.

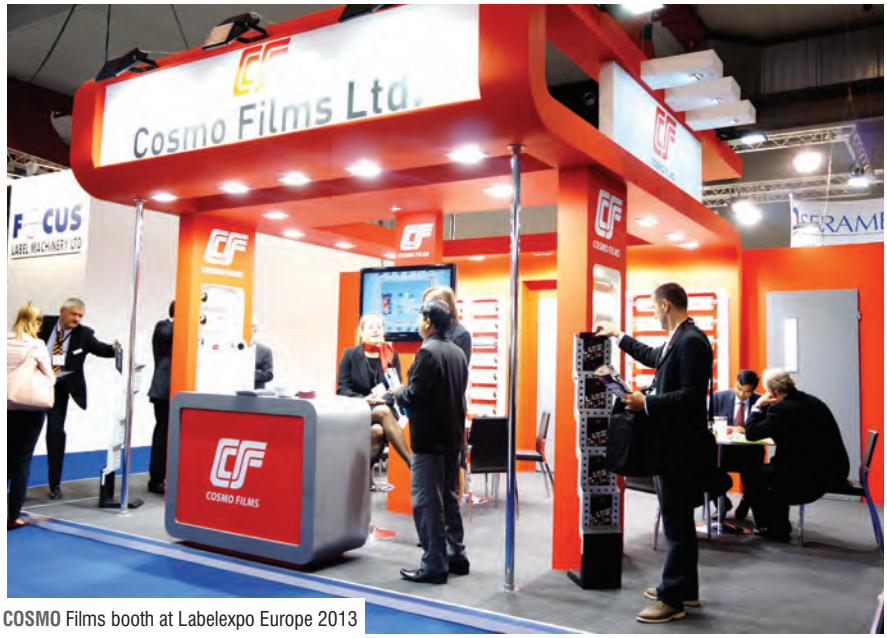
Globally, the company grew by 20 percent in the packaging segment and about 80 percent in speciality vertical in last fiscal. Agarwal said, 'Going forth, I see same growth globally in speciality segment for Cosmo Films.' The company is looking at strategically supplying material to big players in the industry for better growth.

INDIAN MARKET

'The domestic market is growing at 12 to 15 percent with total consumption of about 2,50,000 to 3,00,000 tons a year,' Poddar said. Chincholikar explained that the consumption translates to about 21,000 to 25,000 tons a month which includes labels, packaging and textile packaging.

Chincholikar said, 'The volumes in the Indian market are much lower than China because of less food packaging. Three years ago, the consumption of BOPP was only 15,000 tons a month. The market is now growing fast as a result of growth in organized retail.' Indicating towards the growing domestic market, he pointed out that pressure sensitive labels in India were mostly all paper till about five years ago. Cosmo Films started working with its strategic partners to replace paper with films. 'The market size of paper labels is about 4,000 tons a month. Today, Indian consumption of film on pressure sensitive labels is growing at a rapid pace. It is expected to double in next few years. That's why we are focusing on investing in coating capacities worldwide,' Chincholikar said. 'Pressure sensitive labels are printed with special techniques like UV flexo and digital prints etc so they require special coatings to be able to use films on top of the label,' he said.

Talking of other applications, Chincholikar said that 90 percent of wraparound labels in India use BOPP films. 'Wrap around labels have picked up in last six to seven years because of the increased consumption of aerated beverages,' he said. Shrink sleeve will continue to grow in proportion as companies like Coca Cola and Pepsi use this technology heavily for bundle packaging of some bottles. In-mold labeling has a bright future too as the technology is evolving in the Indian market. Chincholikar said, 'Our focus is to have universal IML film which is compatible with all kind of plastics. We have developed that film but the market is still evolving. The problem with IML is that inventory leads to high cost. The cost of failure is huge in this market as the end packaging gets affected.'



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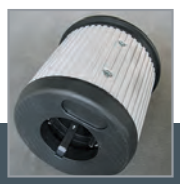

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H.B. Fuller works together with OEM partners and machine manufacturers in both the development of new adhesives and optimizing production line efficiency

Investing in adhesives

A GLOBAL INVESTMENT PROGRAM has seen adhesives manufacturer H.B. Fuller increase both its manufacturing and R&D capacity. David Pittman reports

H.B. Fuller has undertaken a multi-million euro investment program to strengthen its position in the label and packaging markets.

This year it has opened a manufacturing facility in Colombia to support the expansion of its business in the Andean region of South America, and reopened its Blois facility in France following a major investment in the plant and laboratory as part of its work to enhance its operations in Europe, India, the Middle East and Africa. In addition, it will open its state-of-the-art Lüneburg technical center in Germany later this year.

Stuart Jenkinson, business director at H.B. Fuller, says: 'Our 70 million EUR investment program in Europe, India, the Middle East and Africa is coming to fruition this year. We've been streamlining our operations and developing and improving facilities. This investment strategy means we are in great shape to meet the needs of the industry's predicted growth and innovation requirements.'

H.B. Fuller's product portfolio includes a wide range of adhesives, from hot melt types to solvent-based products, to suit different requirements and market needs, as well as products designed for specialty applications, such as diaper hook and loop tapes, tear strips and permanent document security bags.

The company has seen a continuing trend towards water-based adhesives and has put a lot of R&D work into developing products with high performance characteristics. 'We offer a comprehensive range of water-based adhesives to meet the industry's needs under our Fulltak brand,' Jenkinson continues. 'We have extended expectations for adhesion, cohesion, water resistance and ageing characteristics, amongst other benefits. We also offer water-based adhesives targeted for customers needing reliable performance across wide temperature ranges and products that demonstrate excellent clarity for clear-on-clear labels.'

While Jenkinson acknowledges continued pressure to cut costs, he sees great scope for label converters to improve their performance. 'The market is recovering well in the more established regions, such as Europe, North American and Japan, partly due to the growth in the convenience food market. In the emerging markets of Asia, South America, the Middle East and Africa, population growth and increasing disposable income are creating growing market opportunities. However, there is zero tolerance for quality issues, which can be costly and negatively affect brand perception. So, converters need to be using the best products and processes on the market to keep them competitive, and this is where high-performance adhesives play a key role.'

This in turn has pushed companies like H.B. Fuller – which, as an adhesives manufacturer, is further down the labels supply chain – to become more of a partner than merely another supplier. 'We have always believed in a customer-centric, partnership philosophy,' says Jenkinson. 'It is fundamental to the way we approach business. This is more relevant today than ever, with some of the best solutions being delivered through partnerships that connect the whole supply chain. Whether you are looking to cut costs of raw materials, find alternative feedstocks to improve supply assurance and sustainability, or increase the speed on your production line, the industry is stronger together.'

As such, H.B. Fuller works together with OEM partners and machine manufacturers in both the development of new adhesives and optimizing production line efficiency. 'Making sure you have the best possible line efficiency is vital. And, this is where high quality adhesive solutions, combined with technical support, make such a difference to our customers. When the adhesive is clean running, you can reduce product consumption, reduce waste and reduce the cost of both scheduled and unscheduled downtime. Driving costs down and profits up – that's why we spend time with customers fine-tuning their production performance.'

H.B. Fuller's customers also benefit from research and development programs that operate on a global scale. 'Our high performance adhesive solutions for labels are based on our in-house polymerization capabilities,' says Jenkinson. 'We have a team of scientists who work with customers to develop solutions to differentiate them in the marketplace. Our chemists develop polymers with a tailored blend of performance characteristics and continue this customized development through the compounding stage. The result is a portfolio of adhesives with a distinctive set of properties, enabling H.B. Fuller to offer unique solutions to the PSA tape and label industries.'

STUART Jenkinson, business director at H.B. Fuller

ARMOR'S TTIEC facility in France features a variety of technologies for manufacturing and processing thermal transfer rolls, including robotics to automate the preparation and shipments of jumbo and slit rolls

Armor shapes up for thermal transfer growth

ARMOR is making major investments across its business as it targets becoming the leading global supplier in the thermal transfer market in the next five years. David Pittman reports

Armor is predicting big things in the coming years, driven by investments and enhancements to all elements of its operations, from products and production to increased regional representation in key markets around the world.

2013 saw Armor Group record a two percent growth year-on-year, with turnover approaching 220 million EUR. Its thermal transfer business contributed the lion's share of that result, 155 million EUR, representing a seven percent growth year-on-year in that business division.

This, says Mark Day, Armor's managing director in Asia, is a 'pleasing result' during a time of volatile exchange rates and marks a good end to a three-year period, with 2014 on track to deliver similarly positive growth. Tino Bocciolini, Armor's vice-president of sales and marketing, adds that, in a market with a volume of around 3.8 billion sq m produced annually, 2014 will see Armor become the first manufacturer to invoice for more than one billion sq m of thermal transfer ribbon, a target it very nearly achieved last year.

Armor has the ambitious target of taking top spot as the global supplier of thermal transfer ribbons in the next five years. It already claims this position in Europe and Asia and next aims to grow its market share across the Americas.

'Thermal transfer maintains a lead in many respects due to cost, reliability and quality differentials,' says marketing director Yohann Froment, 'and there are constant developments being made to increase the capability and versatility of thermal transfer. It is an established market but one that is still growing, and we want to grow our business in volume by 50 percent in the next five years.'

Evidence of the work going into enhancing Armor's product offering is APX FH+, which is the latest development in its wax/resin offering. APX FH+ is a high performance wax/resin ribbon with multi-receptor compatibility. The ribbon structure allows printing on a wide range of receptors, from coated papers to synthetics, and printed image offers very high smudge and scratch resistance combined with heat resistance up to 150 degrees C. The ink provides excellent printing quality for all types of barcodes, very small text, large characters and logos, at a blackness up to 2.1 (ODR). These characteristics remain at speeds up to 300mm/s, and with 200dpi, 300dpi and 600dpi printheads.

APX FH+ will replace the existing APX FH product over the coming months, with seamless transition to the new product promised to customers already using APX FH.

The equipment used to manufacture ribbons has itself been a focus of investment for Armor, with new, more efficient coaters and processing equipment coming on-line and replacing older, less efficient capacity.

Technology investment has extended to the automation of various parts of Armor's handling and packing operations.

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Robotic units, many of which have been developed in-house by Armor, are used to load and unload slitting machines, pick and pack crates of slit reels and create pallets for shipment to customers. The picking and packing of jumbo reels is now largely carried out by robots, with gigantic arms able to easily lift and move 250kg rolls in preparation for overseas shipment. Strapping is also carried out by machine, before the prepared shipments are rolled onto a pallet wrapping line, where loads that are multiple jumbo rolls in height are quickly wrapped.

The production is carried out at the Armor TTIEC, a 90,000 sq ft facility near Nantes in western France, where jumbo reels are processed and prepared either for distribution to European customers, whereby they are slit into the roll sizes required by customers, or to its network of regional slitting centers that supply customers around the world.

This includes subsidiaries in Asia – which celebrated its 15th anniversary in 2014 – the USA, again marking 15 years in business this year, and China, celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2014. This year has also marked the establishment of Armor India, part of an expansion program that will see the company add further operations in key markets around the world in the coming months. These sites support its aim of having a 50/50 split of business coming from Europe and overseas, which has shifted from an 80/20 split 10 years ago, and to maintain its ethos of never selling semi-finished rolls while also providing local support and service.

Process automation has been focused at its main production site in the first instance, although there are plans to roll it out to other global sites, as and when demand warrants the technology. It has not resulted in any job losses either, with Bocciolini noting that Armor is now able to use its workforce's mental expertise rather than physical strength.

Sustainability is an area where Armor is deploying significant resources. This includes no coated film waste going to landfill and its REC'PET PET film recycling initiative in France, where thermal transfer ribbon waste is collected at end-user sites and diverted from landfill, mostly being used as solid recovered fuel (SRF).

ATC attendees listened to updates on the thermal transfer market and Armor's growth ambitions

Thermal transfer isn't the only area where Armor is making environmental investments, with its Sustainable Energies (ASE) business making strides in developing organic photovoltaic (OPV) products through the Beautiful Light project.

François Barreau, responsible for business development at ASE, says work on the Beautiful Light project is moving forward to turn light into an energy source. He adds that synergies exist with the thermal transfer arm of the business, as OPVs can be very sensitive to atmospheric conditions such as humidity, so need to be coated to provide protection while remaining productive and efficient.

Many of these points, and more, were discussed at the recent Armor Technical Club 2014, which attracted more than 100 customers and partners from around the world to France for two days to discuss the thermal transfer market and share their thoughts and knowledge. Armor's global team were in attendance, from Mark Day and UK sales manager Daniel Barnes to Prabhat Seghal, who is leading its new presence in India, to guide and support customers from Europe, South America and countries across Asia-Pacific, including Vietnam, the Philippines, South Korea and Japan.

Partners were also present, including Fasson, which delivered a presentation on its technologies as part of an educational seminar/workshop program to educate attendees on the wider thermal transfer market.

All those attending the event concurred that it had been a worthwhile exercise in gaining new insights and knowledge of developments within Armor and the wider thermal transfer market.

And with its ongoing developments and investments, few left doubting Armor's intentions to fulfil its aspirations of being the leading global supplier of thermal transfer ribbons within the next five years.

Mark Day best sums it up when he describes a change of ownership in March, which saw Hubert de Boisredon take charge of the business with the backing of key investors that have already guaranteed funds for the next three years to support Armor's growth. 'We have control of our own destiny,' he says.

THE 2014 Armor Technical Club welcomed attendees from across the world to discuss the latest developments in thermal transfer

IN-MOLDED ice cream containers for export to Sri Lanka printed on Yupo's synthetic paper

IN-MOLDED Sani Fresh bottle

Yupo focuses on IML in India

YUPO Corporation, represented by Mitsubishi Chemical Holdings Group, is focusing on growing in-mold labeling in India. It has already captured the top ten brands in the country, as Aakriti Agarwal reports

Yupo Corporation, manufacturer of synthetic paper, is focusing on growing in-mold labeling in India. It has already captured the top 10 brands including Unilever, Amul, Dabur, Pidilite and HPCL.

Yupo claims an 80 percent market share in in-mold labeling in India and 100 percent in blow-molding. According to Prashant Mandewal, general manger business development, Mitsubishi Chemical India, there are more than 25,000 blow-molding machines in India ranging from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 2 crore. Indicating the scope of growth, he points outs, 'Per capita consumption of synthetic paper in India is 0.25 gms while in Japan, synthetic paper consumption is 30 gms'. The company has two manufacturing lines in Japan and one in the US. The material is imported into India from Japan.

Yupo Corporation provides brands with the technical know-how to set up an IML plant and takes full responsibility for the project till the product hits the market. The company interacts directly with brands.

'We explain the more cost effective and sustainable process of IML as compared to pressure sensitive labeling,' says Prashant Mandewal. 'Brands look at the cost of a complete packaged product and not just the cost of a label. Brands like Amul are cost sensitive and have opted for IML for some products. Dabur has saved 5,000 trees in just six to seven months by shifting from PS to IML. We are looking at converting 20 to 30 percent of the brands using PS to IML by 2017-18.'

IML is also gradually replacing PVC shrink sleeve technology. Mandewal cites examples including Amul, which has changed its shrink sleeved food products to IML. GSK also wants to come out of shrink sleeving and Dabur is changing the packaging of the Chawanprash (a food product) bottle to shift from PVC shrink sleeve to IML, says Mandewal.

Last fiscal, Yupo grew by 100 percent in India and expects similar growth in the current fiscal. Sixty to 70 percent of the company's turnover comes from the label industry. The total consumption of Yupo paper in India is 200 to 300 tons, of which 160 to 170 tons is from the label industry. Mandewal said, 'We are hoping to double the supply in this segment in 2014-15.'

However, India is a price sensitive market. Yupo, therefore, assists brands by providing a complete IML solution from paper, robotics, machine vendor to suitable printer and free technical assistance. Mandewal said, 'We have developed robotics at approximately half the price of Chinese technology. Initially, robotics was more expensive than machinery – a road block for IML in India. We ensure that everything gets executed smoothly till the product reaches the market.'

Continues Mandewal, 'In addition, we have developed software to print variable QR codes for each IML label which, when scanned, informs the brand of which location the pack has been sold along with the customer's mobile number. Brands like HPCL are re-designing packaging to push customers to scan the QR code, eventually helping them understand high consumption consumer markets and improve production and supply chain management. The QR codes also make it very difficult to duplicate the product, eventually increasing sales.'

Brand interest is maintained by not making Yupo paper available to everyone. 'This road block was created to avoid counterfeiting when using Yupo paper,' Mandewal says.

Yupo also provides material for wet glue labeling and claims this requires only half the glue needed for standard label papers.

Another innovation developed by Yupo is Octopus, a micro-suction technology used on one side of the paper, enabling it to stick to any smooth surface. The paper can be applied to, or taken off, any surface many times without affecting quality – and stays 'active' for up to 18 months.

Says Mandewal, 'The price of Octopus is 10 times that of PS, but if cost be calculated based on usage, it's negligible. We are proposing this technology to brands such as McDonalds, Pizza Hut, etc.'

Mandewal also handles other Asian markets for Yupo Corporation, and says that Sri Lanka and Thailand are both potential new markets for IML. 'Customers have already requested IML in Sri Lanka and we expect the sentiment to grow in a year or so' he said. Yupo started two IML projects in Sri Lanka in May 2014.


PRASHANT Mandewal, general manger business development, Mitsubishi Chemical India

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UV Graphic constructs new plant

INDIAN MANUFACTURER UV Graphic Technologies is expanding its production base and will re-introduce printing presses to its program when the new capacity is established. Aakriti Agarwal reports

UV Graphic Technologies is constructing a new plant in Noida. Spread over an area of 75,000 sq. ft., the plant sprawls across seven floors of which six are dedicated to machinery manufacturing. Equipment such as CNC milling machines and laser and water jet cutting machines will be installed at the new facility. Abhay Datta, director at UV Graphic Technologies said, 'We are modernizing our existing equipment and buying new machinery to compete in international markets.' Datta believes that the business will double in size in two years after shifting to its new facility.

UV Graphic Technologies was registered as a private limited company in 1996. However, Datta started manufacturing machinery from a garage of a printing plant in 1990. 'Labels, at the time, were non-excisable while machinery was excisable. To take advantage of the label excise benefit, I moved to a small rented facility,' Datta remembers. With a workforce of 40 employees, the company today manufactures ancillary equipment including UV coating machines, offline coating machines, offline rotary and flat-bed foil stamping machines, die cutting, embossing, silk screen printing machines, video inspection machines, core cutters, UV systems and laser-assisted video plate mounting machines.

Customization is one of UV Graphics' unique selling propositions. They sold 30 UV coating machines in the last fiscal and have a monthly sales average of two UV coaters, 25 to 30 curing systems, four to five plate mounters and 10 video inspection systems. 'UV coaters and UV curing systems are the best selling products in our portfolio and our plate mounting machines are very well accepted in the market,' said Datta. The company supplies UV curing systems to international and domestic markets. Some of its customers in India include OEM's and leading printing companies like Jupiter Laminators, Skanem Interlabels, PPL, ITC, Parksons and Any Graphics.

The company used to manufacture the Ultraflex label press until a few years ago, but it stopped production due to space constraint in their four rented facilities in Okhla Industrial Area, New Delhi. 'We will re-start manufacturing of label printing machines in the new facility where we will have the infrastructure, skilled manpower, technology, expertise and machinery in place,' said Datta.

The company is working towards showcasing its label press at Labelexpo India from 29 October to 1 November at Pragati Maidan in New Delhi. 'We plan to launch a concept version of our Ultraflex with only the basic printing units at the show,' said Datta. The other equipment at the show floor from UV Graphic Technologies would include new models of plate mounting equipment, video inspection machines, 100 percent defect inspection equipment and offline coating machines.

UV Graphic Technologies was the first in India to launch an LED UV curing system as far back at Labelexpo India in 2010. There were no buyers for it at that time but the recent development of LED UV curable inks has put the company in the driver's seat. The company says LED UV is environment friendly and low on maintenance. It produces minimal heat and the lamps could last over 30,000 hours making them highly cost effective. 'Ink manufacturers around the world are working closely to make this technology economically successful and viable and we are ready to offer this technology to printers across the world at a reasonable cost,' said Datta.

The company also participated at Labelexpo Europe and got orders from Germany, Italy, France, Holland and Africa. 'Labelexpo Europe is a good platform to interact with people and make contacts. We had a good show in Brussels last year,' he said.

The company exported its first machine in the year 2000 and has sold over 250 worldwide in countries including Germany, Poland, Russia, Bulgaria, France, Italy, Thailand and UK. Twenty five to 30 percent of company's turnover is attributed to exports. UV Graphics has six distributors in Australia, UK, North America, Europe, Thailand and UAE.

Talking of new and emerging markets, Datta said, 'I have exported seven machines to the Middle East but we need to be more aggressive in this market. As for Latin America, I have yet to visit and assess the market.' 'Datta met Daniel A Coetzee of Price & Pack based out of Germiston near Johannesburg who eventually bought a plate mounter, two video inspection systems and a hot stamping unit from him. He further added, 'We can think about venturing into new markets from the new facility where we have more space and production capacity. I don't think we can expand within the existing set-up. Secondly, from a manufacturing point of view, small printers don't come to me because my machines are expensive and quality oriented.'

Datta believes that about 70 percent of label printing business in India is unorganized. 'I sell two to three used presses every month to printers who come from both organized and unorganized markets. There are many small printers in Sivakasi, for instance, who have installed big presses but are printing simple fire cracker labels on them. A small printer in Yamunanagar has recenly bought a 6-color Lintec press with in-line screen, foil stamping and die cutting units and he prints sophisticated plywood and liquor labels on this press. There is a lot of scope and growth in villages and small cities.

ABHAY Datta, director at UV Graphic Technologies with Daniel A Coetzee of Price & Pack at Labelexpo Europe 2013

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PRINTER panel (L-R) Andy Arto of Satyamitra Labeljaya Pratama, Ajanta Packaging's Ramesh Raju and Ben Testa from Labelhouse in Australia

Summit demonstrates Indonesian growth

HIGH LEVEL NETWORKING and open exchanges of information characterized the second Indonesia Label Summit held in Jakarta. Andy Thomas reports

Label Summit Indonesia 2014, which took place in Jakarta in June, attracted almost 300 attendees and saw a range of suppliers showcasing their products at a tabletop event. Held for the first time in Jakarta, the second edition of this two-day conference covered a lot of ground.

Xeikon's Filip Weymans' keynote presentation looked at trends towards pack personalization and how brands are integrating social networking.

Another highpoint was the free and frank exchange between the printer panelists Andy Arto of Satyamitra Labeljaya Pratama, Ajanta Packaging's Ramesh Raju and Ben Testa from Labelhouse in Australia.

Sharing common challenges they discussed how best to supply end users in different parts of the region by forming strategic partnerships and the difficulties faced in sourcing raw materials which are easily available in Europe. Prompting many questions from the audience, they also discussed the pros and cons of digital printing.

After the session, Ben Testa commented: 'Label Summit Indonesia gave us the opportunity to get a snapshot of the global, regional and local markets from a variety of perspectives. The other speakers I spoke to were very informative and comfortable to provide additional information on their topics in private. As a label printer I found the environment more conducive to developing relationships with suppliers than other events as it is more intimate and focused. As a speaker I found the process to be very rewarding and have quickly developed relationships with other speakers in the panel I was involved with.'

Day one's content was heavily focused on an analysis of flexo printing technologies. Chris Bodger of Mark Andy and Nilpeter's John Andersen looked at how to select flexo and combination printing systems relevant to converters in the region.

A series of short presentations explored niche technologies in more depth. Alpha-Cure's Steve Haines looked at optimizing UV systems by preventative maintenance and effective trouble-shooting; GEW's Marcus Greenbrook compared LED and 'conventional' mercury lamp UV systems; Nigel Heaford looked at developments in automated plate-mounting systems; and Kodak's Vidhu Gautam looked at the latest high definition flexo plate technology and extended gamut printing.

Marco Ogliengo of Zalora Indonesia – the region's leading online only fashion retailer – gave tips on how to transform your business using online marketing and social media platforms.

Also popular was the event's closing session on sustainability. Jouni Komulainen of UPM Raflatac talked about the importance of measuring environmental impact across the label supply chain. Ditto Santoso of Tirta Investama (Danone Aqua) shared details of Danone's worldwide sustainability policies and how they have been implemented in Indonesia; successful initiatives have included reducing water consumption and the taking weight out of plastics bottles.

Federico d'Annunzio president and CEO of Nuova Gidue shared the stand with local converter Bony Jamono, director and owner of PT. Multitech Advanced Printing Indonesia. Jamono shared his experience switching from letterpress to flexo with the installation of Nuova Gidue press (see boxout).

Digital printing is taking its first steps forward in the region, and Xeikon's Josep Roca made a joint presentation with Alex Tan, founder and of Orient Quality Print about his experiences with digital.

Ariana Susanti, business development director of the Indonesian Packaging Federation shared statistics on regional packaging growth and Rajesh Pantsachiv pharmaceutical market manager, Asia Pacific/Avery Dennison looked at market developments in his area of expertise, focusing particularly on anti-counterfeit technologies.

MUTITECH ADOPTS FLEXO

During the summit it was announced that Nuova Gidue has installed a Combat M1 flexo press at Indonesian converter Mutitech, following the earlier installation of a Combat M3 with Maju Jaya Agung Labelindo in Jakarta.

Based in Lippo Karawachi, Multitech specializes in the printing of packaging, labels and stationery and was founded in late 2003 by Bony Jamono. After less than a decade of profitable work, Multitech decided to move to a new and bigger building covering an area of more than 20,000 sq m, and in early 2014 made the decision to invest in a Nuova Gidue flexo press.

The Combat M1 press is 370mm wide with nine UV print units, combo laminator and cold foil.

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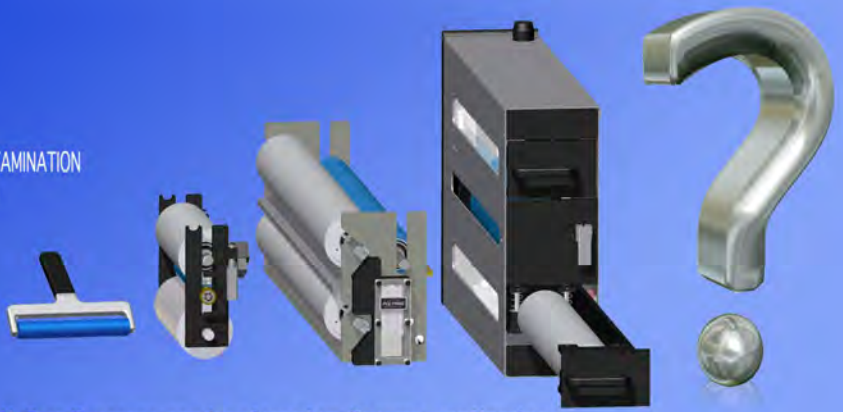

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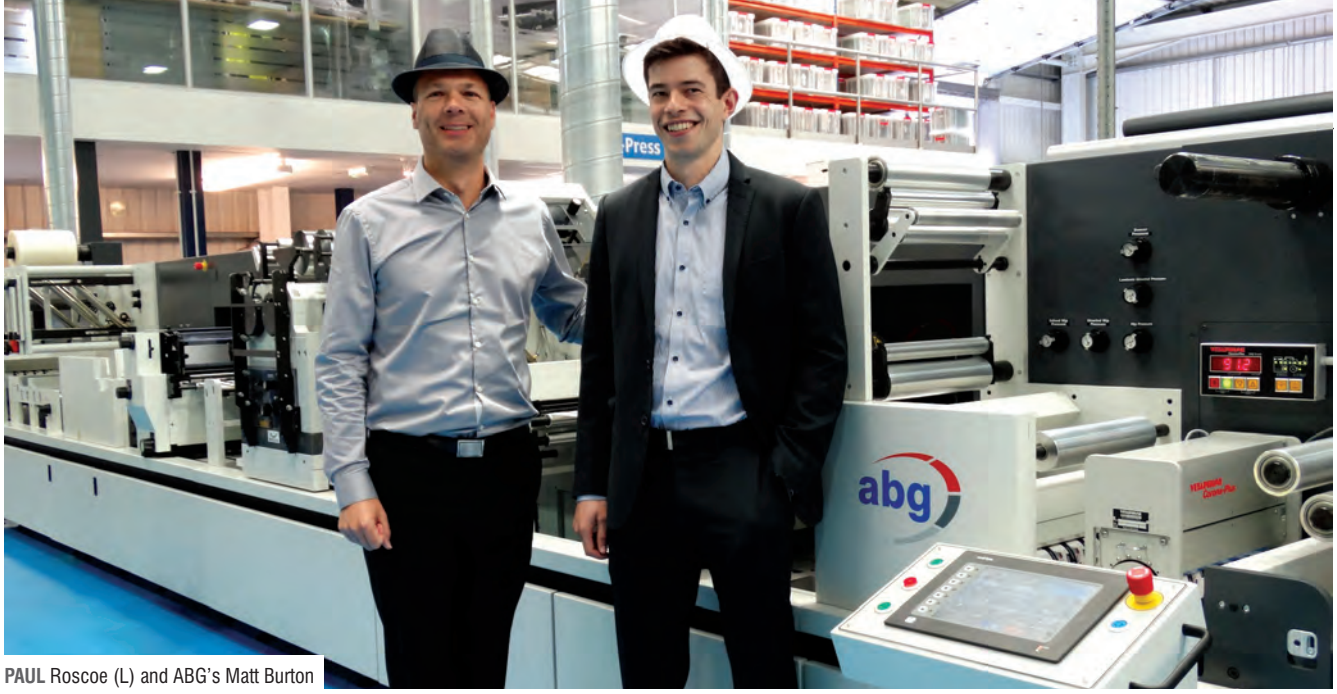

PAUL Roscoe (L) and ABG's Matt Burton

Berkshire automates digital finishing

UK converter Berkshire Labels is running an HP Indigo press in-line with a highly automated ABG Digicon system, as Nick Coombes reports

Over the last four years, Berkshire Labels has invested over two million GBP in a high quality digital print operation to complement its top-of-the-range flexo presses.

The first machine, installed in 2011, was an HP Indigo WS6000 press with an ABG Digicon series 2 line to convert the printed webs. The Digicon provided semi-rotary flexo, laminating, die cutting, slitting and rewind capabilities.

Once the company had a clearer picture of how to maximize the potential of the digital press, it installed a second ABG line – this time a Digicon Lite, with flexo, laminating, die cutting, slitting and rewinding facilities, and moved production to three shifts.

In 2013 Berkshire Labels installed an HP Indigo WS6600 and upgraded its WS6000 line. Interestingly, the new press was to operate in-line with a JDF/JMF-enabled ABG Digicon to raise its single pass capability to that of the company's flexo lines.

Converting in-line brings many benefits, notably less downtime, less work in progress, and the need for fewer operators. 'In-line finishing gives us superior control and greater efficiency, and we now have one of the most automated lines in Europe,' says Paul Roscoe, managing director at Berkshire Labels.

The inline Digicon is specified with automatic die loading and unloading, automated slitting, and electronic i-score back slitting. A JDF job file drives the entire line.

Lean manufacturing principles and automation are high on Roscoe's agenda, and these recent installations fulfil this by stripping out previously required processes, and increasing the value added contribution. They also offer single pass production with one operator in control of printing and finishing.

Contrary to accepted practice, Berkshire Labels has not separated its flexo and digital printing presses, deciding instead to operate the production area as one big clean room. In reality, this required little change to the company's long entrenched housekeeping practices, and provides an environment in which substrates from 20-micron film to 450gsm board can be handled with equal facility.

This gives Roscoe a direct comparison of the two production processes, with some interesting results. 'In the early days we saw the crossover point between digital and flexo at around the 1,500 meter mark. Now, with inline automation that figure is closer to 10,000,' he explains, adding that jobs of up to 30,000 meters had been run on the latest HP Indigo.

ABG's Matt Burton has been responsible for specifying the package of converting equipment, valued at close to one million GBP, to the Hungerford plant. 'In the case of Berkshire Labels, automation has reduced make-ready from hours to minutes. This means that a typical working day will see 50 jobs produced instead of 35,' says Burton.

With printing speeds rising on digital presses, he estimates that each now needs one and a half Digicon lines to cope with output. Although the vast majority of the 1,000 Digicon lines already installed are working off-line, Burton foresees a rapid growth in demand for online solutions now that they have been proven to work in demanding commercial environments where quality is paramount.

'In addition to the Digicon lines, Berkshire Labels has invested around one million GBP with ABG over the past 18 months on an HSR twin rewind and RTS sheeter to work offline with the company's guillotine. It's clear that automation is central the company's philosophy of improving quality and productivity.'

The latest technology has certainly blurred the margin between digital and flexo, and Berkshire Labels' strategy is to produce added value products using whichever technology is most appropriate. Although digital technology has lifted company turnover from four and half million GBP to seven million GBP since its arrival – and showed a four-year ROI – Roscoe insists his next press will be an 'all-singing, all-dancing' flexo line. 'It's all a question of maintaining the ideal balance of production capability. For now, we believe we have taken our investment in digital technology to its optimal point, and although its current 35 percent of our turnover will grow to 50 percent, we will need to grow our flexo capacity to compete.'

In addition to the inline finishing unit, Roscoe has recently installed a fourth high-spec Digicon series 2 offline unit that features all of the automation mentioned above, but has in addition hot/cold foiling capability, twin laminating stations, two flexo heads and the facility for three-ply digital coupon production.

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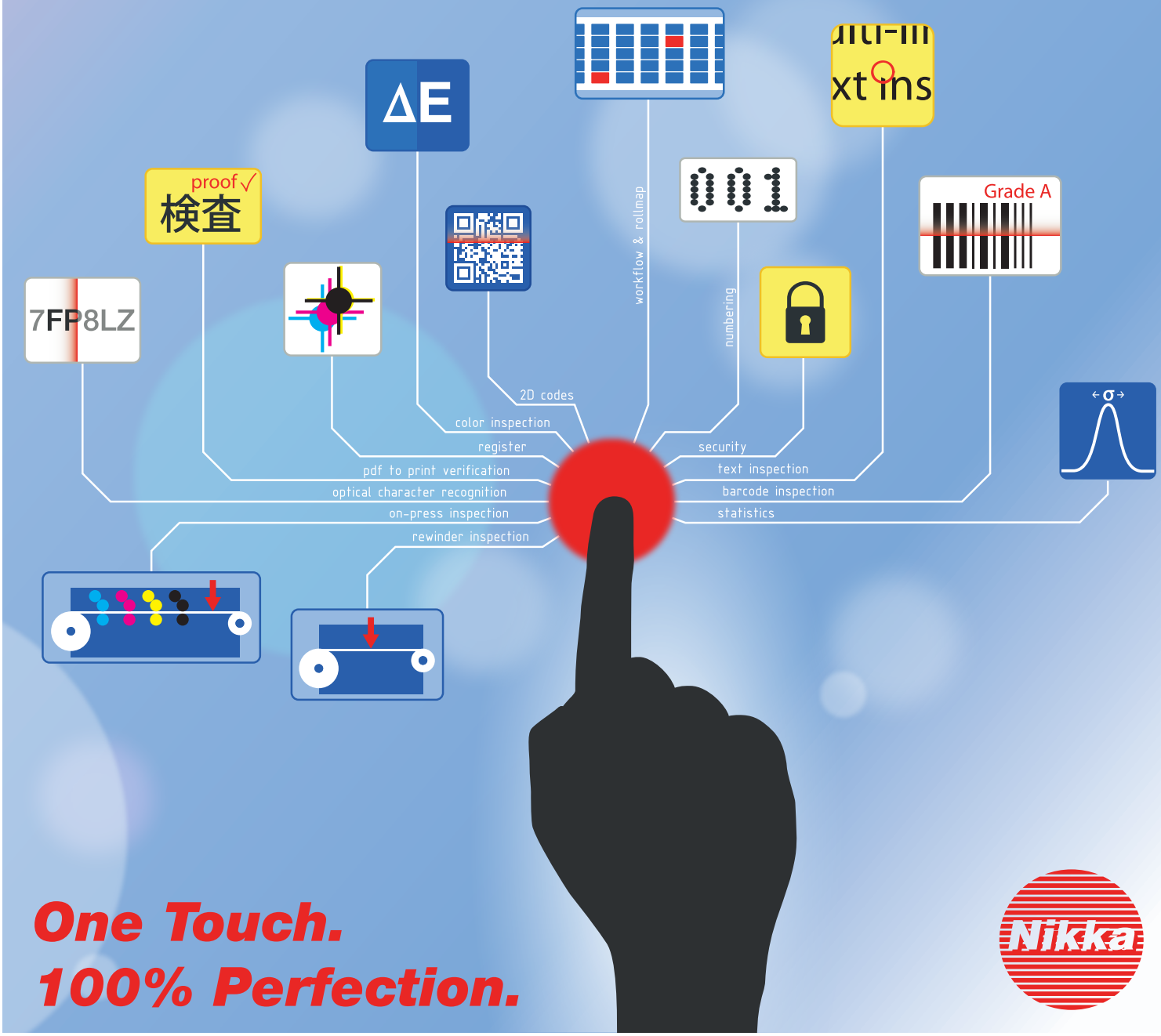

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FINAT president Kurt Walker opens the Monaco congress

FINAT Congress expands label horizons

THE EUROPEAN LABEL ASSOCIATION'S annual congress looked at how narrow web converters can help brands achieve their marketing goals. Andy Thomas reports

The origins of FINAT lie squarely in the self-adhesive label market. But this Congress, held in the principality of Monaco, broadened the association's horizons to include all the decoration options available to brands – and how Finat members might diversify their offering to meet these new requirements.

The battle for shelf space today involves not just multiple package print formats and print processes, but extends into smart phone interaction, track-and-trace and authentication, all areas where FINAT members are building a growing expertise but outside the traditional confines of the self-adhesive label.

This made the contribution by this year's motivational speaker all the more relevant. Bertrand Piccard made the first non-stop, round-the-world hot air balloon flight in 1999. Piccard encouraged delegates to explore alternatives with courage and a pioneering spirit. It is a real challenge to take a new, unmapped direction, but it is important to realize, he said, that, in fact, 'We need fear. Never be afraid of it: it's just a signal that we are moving out of our comfort zone – a moment of waking up, of awareness.'

Managing director Jules Lejeune emphasized that FINAT would build on this inaugural event in the coming months through a new web-based knowledge and learning platforms, including 'our expanded definition of the label.'

Moderator Marc Büttgenbach, worldwide sales director for Bizerba Labels and Consumables, used his in-depth expertise to skillfully guide the two days of debate around these broader themes, and with great success.

The core of the two-day event were two panel sessions which helped lay out the new territory.

DECORATION BATTLE

The first panel sessions brought together three companies from across the package print supply chain – Joseph Mayer from applicator manufacturer Krones; Geert-Jan Kolkhuis Tanke representing Avery Dennison; and Raul Matos of shrink sleeve and flexible packaging converting specialist Karlville Development.

Raul Matos talked up the benefits of shrink sleeve labeling and pointed out that only a relatively small percentage is currently printed on narrow web presses. This opens up huge opportunities for narrow web combination presses outputting short runs of high quality decorated product. An opportunity for digital label printers lies in prototyping, with entry levels seamers costing little more than 50,000 EUR, said Matos.

Matos emphasized the importance of quality control before label rolls leave the converting plant and also building high levels of operational expertise.

Matos addressed the difficult issue of shrink sleeve recycling. This follows reports from the post-consumer recycling community of problems recycling shrink sleeved containers.

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ISIDORE Leiser, Stratus Group MD, accepts World Label Award from LL's Mike Fairley

PETG and PET have the same density so cannot easily be separated. Matos said resin manufacturer Eastman has formed a coalition to find materials-based solutions, while technology solutions include electro-static charged plates which can separate materials using different polarities.

Matos also made a passionate pitch for label converters to move into flexible packaging – 'They can transform this market like they have the shrink sleeve market'. Just five to 10 percent of pouches are currently produced on narrow web equipment, but this sector is growing at 30 percent.

Delegates were interested to hear from Joseph Mayer at Krones about the prospects for direct UV inkjet decoration of PET and glass containers on the filling line, something demonstrated by the company at the Drinktec exhibition in Germany. Mayer said the technology for printing on a 3D shape is still developing. 'We are at the first step and we still have a lot of work to do, as our customers have no experience of printing. The target is not to find a way for every bottle to be direct printed, but it will become another route to implement marketing ideas.'

The biggest trend Krones sees is end-users buying modular applicators, giving them the chance to change between different decoration technologies. Meanwhile the move from wet glue to PS continues. 'Up to five years ago PS was only for one-way glass and PET bottles. But now we have a solution to remove PS labels and adhesive, the brewers they are able to use PS on returnable glass bottles.'

WAITING FOR LINERLESS

Avery Dennison's Geert-Jan Kolkhuis Tanke discussed the prospects for Linerless labels. The advantages are well known in terms of sustainability and productivity, but the big question remains how to bring the technology to market, given that special applicators are required. 'Potential customers say "your idea is interesting but who is your competitor"! The purchasing department will ask: "can we get this from a different supplier". So the idea is good but it's not yet successful in the market if you are the one company doing it.'

Trends to thinner materials were discussed. Mayer at Krones said thinner materials and liners made their process window smaller, meaning materials must be of absolutely consistent quality and kept in the correct storage conditions.

Mayer issued a plea to see new materials at an earlier stage in case they raised issues raised on its application equipment. 'The first I know is when the customer rings to report a problem with a new material I have not seen.'

BRAND OWNER PANEL

Then it was time to hear the brand owners' viewpoint on 'The future of product decoration'. This panel included Olivier

OTHER DEBATES

Along with the panel discussions were several other presentations of great interest.

- Keynote speaker Rik Olthof, brand strategist at international branding and packaging design consultancy Cartils, explained that success on the shelf is driven primarily by shape, both of the pack itself and its logo. Although color is a secondary consideration it is of great importance in shaping emotional response.
- An overview of trends in the French label market was delivered by Dominique Durant-des-Aulnois, vice president of UNFEA, the French label association, and general manager of label maker Paragon Identification. France's self-adhesive label industry embraces around 400 production sites and 7,000 employees – mostly SMEs and, geographically, remains fragmented.
- The UK's Centre for Process Innovation (CPI) is a consortium of major companies committed to enable the widespread adoption of low-cost NFC devices using printable electronics. The CPI is currently running a project focused on enabling smart phones to connect with labels and other packaging.

  Alan McClelland, head of business development at CPI, showed how packaging can employ printed electronics to deliver 'smart' interactive brand features, as well as track-and-trace, stock reordering, tamper-proofing and anti-counterfeiting.

  What is missing is investment by brand owners, retailers and pharmaceutical manufacturers, who are waiting 'until the technology is there'.

ROSS MacDonald, operations manager at Unilever accepts FINAT's first end user Recycling Award

FINAT RECYCLING AWARDS

FINAT announced the winners of its first Recycling awards competition during the Monaco congress.

In the converter category, the winner was Hagmaier Etiketten & Druck, which impressed the jury with its high recycling rates for both paper and film liner, the communication efforts made both inside and outside of the company, and the solutions offered for other secondary materials. The company also offers to take back its customers spent liner.

The end-user category was won by Unilever, which demonstrated a clear commitment to a zero waste to landfill policy. Not only is this clearly communicated on the company's website and in its sustainability report, but it is also reflected in Unilever's long history in liner recycling and its impressive liner recycling figures.

Delataulade from L'Oréal; Brendan Kinzie, G3 Enterprises; Arno Melchior of Reckit Benckiser; and Jesper Toubøl, Lego.

Arno Melchior of Reckit Benckiser said the company now changes the design of its products 'at least twice a year'. Producing the same products in local language variants – particularly where product warnings have to be incorporated – is a real challenge. 'We are looking at how digital printing might help. But we have such huge volumes this is a challenge.'

In terms of decoration technology, Melchior said in markets like India run lengths justify IML, while in the EU IML has become too expensive as product variants multiply. 'We don't care about the process, as long as the labels are delivered on time and in the right quantities.'

Melchior said the next 'logical step' for Reckit Benckiser is to move label suppliers as close as possible to the company's factories to shorten the supply chain. 'We have only a few days to respond to our competitors.'

He conceded that 'the label comes too late in the process', something he is working to change. 'The design agency might come up with a nice pack design, but nobody cares about how the adhesive might work until it comes to production. Or if you're designing a bottle for a shrink sleeve you need to know early how to design the shape accordingly. We should bring the label converter much earlier into this process.

'If label converters are more closely integrated into our production processes, we can easily do, say, 20,000 labels for Serbia and another 50,000 for Germany and without generating waste. In our packaging department label converters could advise us on line optimization.'

Olivier Delataulade from L'Oréal agreed: 'We have to work more closely and in the last two to three years we have started to integrate label printers at an earlier stage.'

This was good news for G3 Enterprises' Brendan Kinzie, as the company is both a converter and a leading brand manager in the wine labels sector. 'Most decisions are already made by the time the artwork arrives with us. At that stage, how can we make the label more effective or avoid problems occurring on the bottling line?'

INNOVATION ROADBLOCKS

The panelists agreed that the three biggest problems with introducing innovation to brands are: cost pressures, lack of an innovation culture, and inertia.

Arno Melchior said it is little use trying to get purchasing departments interested in innovation, as their only goal is reducing cost. 'You need the design or packaging manager to bring innovation into the process and make it part of the briefing for the project'.

And this has to be done at the same or lower price. 'If your innovation is at too high a price you need to look at the whole package, which means, we can persuade the consumer to pay more, which often depends on the product category. Only if the consumer will pay the retailer more will the retailer accept higher prices from us.'

Overcoming inertia within the supply chain is another issue: 'Our factories are not paid to innovate. They would like to run the same product all year round!'

Jesper Toubøl said Lego has a great need for innovative packaging, with at least one fifth of the Lego range renewed every year – but the labels industry is not responding. 'For example in pad printing suppliers they are bringing a lot of innovation to compete against other decoration technologies. It's not about cost, but what you can offer that's unique – and other industries are way ahead of the label industry in this respect. We will pay if innovation works – and we can very quickly check if it works with the kids who buy Lego.'

Toubøl urged delegates to think creatively about how to promote a range of new product features and how today's children are influenced by what's happening on-line as well as in the real world. 'It's more fun to discuss innovation – at the moment (labels are) just a commodity.'

Brendan Kinzie from G3 Enterprises looked at the quickening pace of innovation in the wine sector, where, he said, the label rather than the wine sells between 80-90 percent of product in the US.

Kinzie noted that the last five years have seen a 'dramatic shift' from wet glue to PS in North America, along with a big move from offset to flexo printing. Digital is used mostly for 'tasting room' applications. Kinzie said more than 3,000 new brands were launched in the US last year alone, so the ability to respond quickly has never been more important, 'and for that you have to be located close to the customer'.

Kinzie said the Millennial generation is already 'standing marketing rules on their head'. Whereas previous generations were very loyal to brands and traditional packaging formats, this is no longer the case. 'For example there is widespread acceptance of screw caps, bag-in-box or Tetrapaks. So how can you solve problems for the new kind of consumer and take that solution to the label customer?'

Olivier Delataulade said L'Oréal is operating in a more traditional market where high- end products are still direct printed. To meet the challenges of regional markets and the need for more information, the company is making much more extensive use of booklet labels. 'We want to decrease the number of SKUs in this way.'

SUSTAINABILITY – DOES IT MATTER?

How important is sustainability for these brands? L'Oréal's Olivier Delataulade said: 'We have to do something about liner waste – possibly look at linerless.'

Reckit Benckiser's Melchior confirmed the company has a CO2 footprint reduction program which generated a 20

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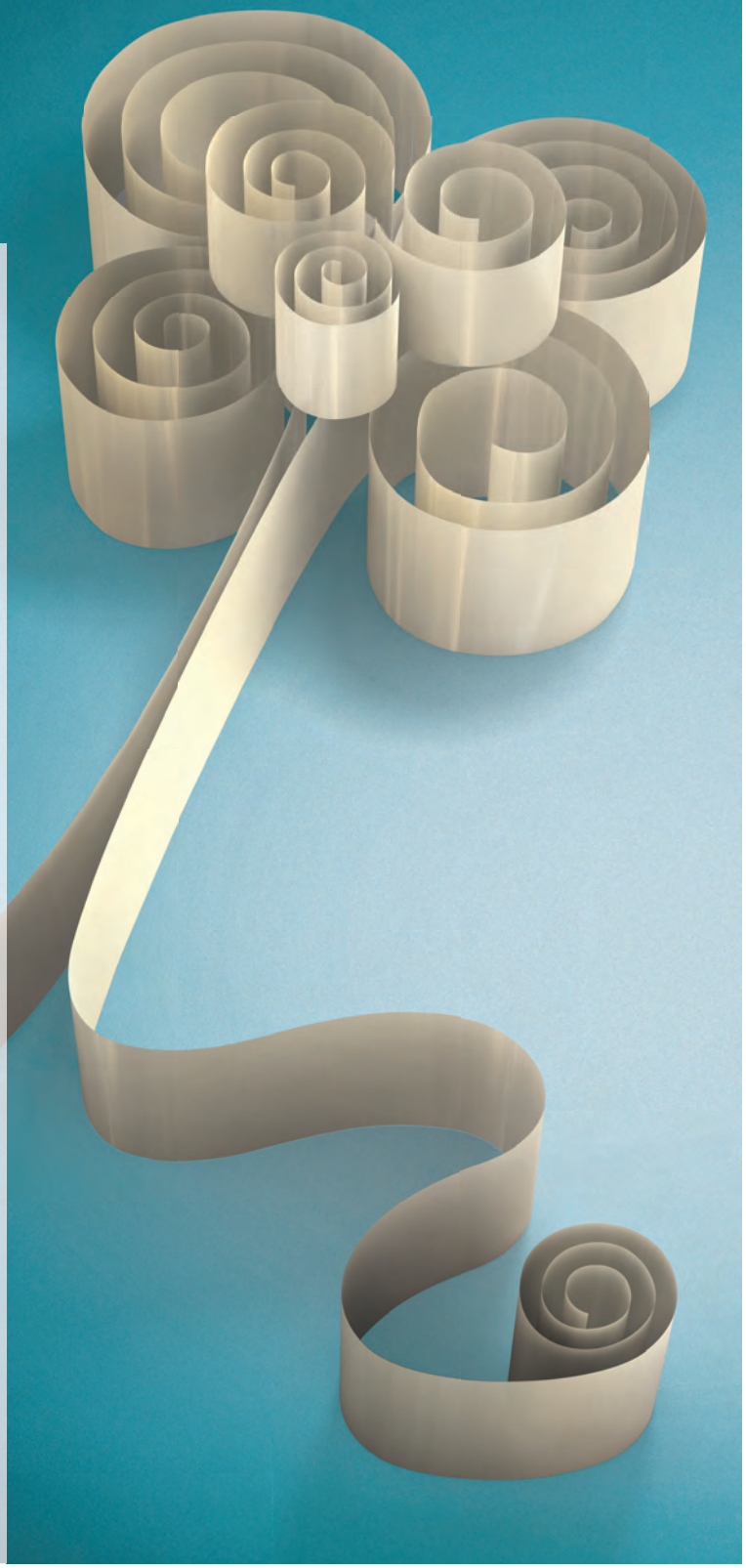

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"Melchior also said more products could move into pouches and other flexible packaging formats, 'including products that today you are not thinking about. It is a threat (for labels) because there is a major CO2 reduction when liquids move to flexible packaging"

percent cut in greenhouse gas emissions in 2012 alone. 'Every product has to be at least as good or better in terms of carbon footprint if it is to go ahead.' This is internally driven – there is no evidence the consumer is asking for it.

'I would sum up our priorities as: packaging weight reduction; cost reduction; and reduction of C02 impact.' One problem with using thinner materials is that the retailer will simply demand a price reduction – "you've reduced AL foil from 12 microns to seven microns? Great, then reduce our price!"'

Jesper Toubøl said Lego does not use sustainability in its marketing. 'It's just part of our mindset – something you simply should be doing anyway.'

G3's Brendan Kinzie said wine consumers will not pay for Green. 'Brands which have tried this approach have not succeeded.'

On liner waste, Melchior said: 'I have some problems to convince our own factories to separate liner waste, though I'm working on it. We have so many waste streams and each is collected by a different company.'

LEFT: Best in Show and Printing Processes Group Winner Multi Labels, UK. Right: Marketing End Uses Group Winner Collotype Griffith

THE FUTURE

Looking to the future, it was accepted that end users might look at installing their own near- or on-line digital printing equipment. Commented Arno Melchior: 'Krones will move direct printing into production, and others will follow.' Label converters need to be in a position to meet these new requirements and take control of the process.

Melchior also said more products could move into pouches and other flexible packaging formats, 'including products that today you are not thinking about. It is a threat (for labels) because there is a major CO2 reduction when liquids move to flexible packaging.'

Brendan Kinzie said he could not rule out wine in pouches. 'People are trying all kinds of things. A few years back people said wine would never use shrink sleeves, but today this is not the case. It is all driven by the need to differentiate.'

VIRTUAL MOMENT OF TRUTH

An interesting contribution to the brand impact debate came from Mike Ferrari, founder and president of Ferrari Innovation Solutions, and for 32 years a key figure in Procter & Gamble management.

Ferrari considered how the virtual world is impacting brands in the real world.

P&G's 'first moment of truth' – originally the first eye contact with a packaged product on a retail shelf – is a different matter in a world where 70 percent of purchasing decisions are no longer made in store, and where the world's six billion cellphones interact with smart features on packaging. Today, a product's first sales message might be anything from a friend's Facebook message to a printable coupon that generates 'stop, hold, and buy' in-store.

Ferrari noted that in last year's earnings call, Procter & Gamble's chairman-CEO estimated that the company now spends up to 35 percent of its marketing budget on digital media.

The key to continuing brand success, however, remains in the consumer's experience of the product in use and, if that experience is good, in repurchase.

Mass production has also spawned mass customization – like the 'personalized' Coca-Cola bottles, featuring popular male and female first names, which have graced retail shelves in 32 countries across Europe and represent the longest digital packaging print run ever.

So what is there in this new world for the label converter, asked Ferrari? To be shopper/consumer-focused was at the top of the list. The need to consider the shopper journey beyond the retail shelf came next. Label printers should redefine their role more broadly – as solutions providers and marketing companies.

PS GROWS IN EUROPE

Despite FINAT's embrace of other decorating technologies at the Monaco summit, PS remains at the core of the association's concerns and expertise, and managing director Jules Lejeune delivered another of his comprehensive reviews of trends in the European PS label market based on surveys of FINAT members.

Lejeune said that 2013 had seen labelstock demands increase by three and a half percent, accelerating through the second half of the year and strongest in Q4. The European PS industry has now reached the six bn EUR benchmark, double the figure of 1997, though the growth rate has declined noticeably in the last 10 years.

All European regions are sharing in this growth. Eastern Europe is again growing most strongly at 6.9 percent, but the best prospects for growth lie in Southern Europe.

Filmic PS rolls continue to grow faster than paper, at 5.9 percent and 3.3 percent respectively, a trend that has accelerated since 2012.

Looking forward, Lejeune said: 'In 2014 we are seeing an improvement of business prospects and also record levels of business confidence.'

But there was less good news from FINAT's Radar converter survey, with profitability generally below sales, demonstrating intense pressure on margins. The highest growth rates are found in the food, household chemical and cosmetics sectors, with the transport/logistics sector lagging well behind.

LABEL AWARDS

The full FINAT awards winners will be covered in a later edition of L&L. Some highlights included Best in Show and Printing Processes Group winner Multi Labels, UK, for the Irishman Single malt label, and winner of the Marketing End Uses Group Collotype Griffith for the La Boheme Act Four wine label.

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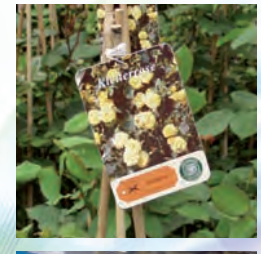

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HENRICH Quek and Yeo Hock,co-founders of Top Print Label

Top Print opens SW China technology hub

TOP PRINT LABELS' new Chengdu plant will develop the south-west China market and act as a digital and RFID technology hub. Kevin Liu reports

May 18, 2014 witnessed the opening ceremony for Top Print Labels (Chengdu) E-tag Technology in Jinniu Hotel located in Jinniu District, Chengdu. Labels and Labeling was invited to attend the ceremony and visited the new plant in Tianfu Venture Park to see the latest developments.

Top Print Labels is an overseas-funded enterprise in China owned by Ganda International (Singapore), specialized in labels and packaging product printing. The company opened its first labels plant in Suzhou Plant in 2002 (See L&L China 1, 2013).

Ganda International started in the label business after it purchased Avery Dennison's label printing operation in Singapore from Metal Box in 1992. Its business now spreads over the whole Asia Pacific area and it owns plants in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and China.

Top Print vice president Henrich Quek was full of enthusiasm for his latest Chinese venture when he spoke with L&L: 'Recently there are two good pieces of news for Top Print. One is the establishment of Top Print Chengdu, which constitutes a significant part of our development in West China; the other is that Top Print won the Asia Award for Industrial Labels at Dscoop Asia. We are very proud to be the first Chinese label printers to get this honor.'

Choosing to build a plant in Chengdu has been part of Top Print's plans for many years. 'Though the intention is to meet customer demand for local supply, more importantly, it is part of our future development,' said Quek. 'Personally speaking, I think the label market in the south-east coast region in China has become saturated. West region, especially Chengdu in the south-west, is at a rapid development stage, bearing a resemblance to the south-east coast region many years ago.'

Henrich Quek is from Singapore and has lived and worked in China over 20 years. Now he has become a 'China Hand' and is able to grasp the economic and industrial development trends in the country.

Data issued by the National Bureau of Statistics also verified his statement. In 2013, in contrast with the overall economic slowdown in China, the economy in Sichuan has grown at more than 10 percent for several years, with per capita GDP and consumption growth exceeding the national average – and much lower labor costs compared to the eastern region. Quek and his investors believe they can take advantage of the new development opportunities in western China, just as Top Print did building a plant in Suzhou more than a decade ago.

Top Print Labels (Chengdu) E-tag Technology, located at No.2 Tianyu Road, High-tech West District, Chengdu (in Tianfu Venture Park), has installed an HP Indigo WS4500 digital label press, Wigang ZX320 intermittent offset press and RFID E- tag printing machine, along with post-processing machinery and other ancillary equipment.

'The plant of Top Print Chengdu is not large, which corresponds with our positioning of Top Print,' says Quek. 'We do not need large-scale production but we do need to be smart. We produce high value added products, rather than blindly pursuing large scale operations.'

Top Print Chengdu positions itself as a specialist in the security digital printing business, including RFID, E-tags, ESA

HENRICH Quek picks up the Industrial Label award at the HP Digital Print Excellence Awards 2014

anti-theft tags, anti-counterfeit tags, barcode, electronic supervision labels, anti-counterfeiting technologies and various kinds of security papers. It cooperates both with the Singapore company and the Suzhou company, and will become Top Print's high-tech digital printing hub in China with modernized production and management systems.

It is such a vision that attracted Mr. Wang Daxun to join Top Print Chengdu as general manager. Wang Daxun has many years experience in the printing and smart card industries in Chengdu.

'Mr. Quek has a deep understanding of the labels industry so we have a lot in common,' says Wang Daxun. 'The labels industry in Chengdu started late but is enjoying a rapid development. Printing facilities here are mainly traditional intermittent letterpress and offset machines and there are many similar facilities in this region. Top Print Chengdu does not want to win market share by joining a price war with these companies.'

Wang Daxun points out that the company's HP Indigo WS4500 is the first HP Indigo rotary press in south-west China. 'With it, we can make Top Print's specialist products. We want to help customers realize their requirements by means of high value added products, and this is how we will finally win customers. By producing differentiated products, we can avoid direct competition with our friends in the same industry. Because of this, customers often turn to us for help for short-run orders or making proofs and prototypes.'

Top Print not only prints, but also offers a package development service, including advice on anti-counterfeit technology, developed along with key customers.

RFID GROWTH

Besides its traditional business in electronics and automotive industry labels, Top Print Chengdu has another important business developing RFID labels.

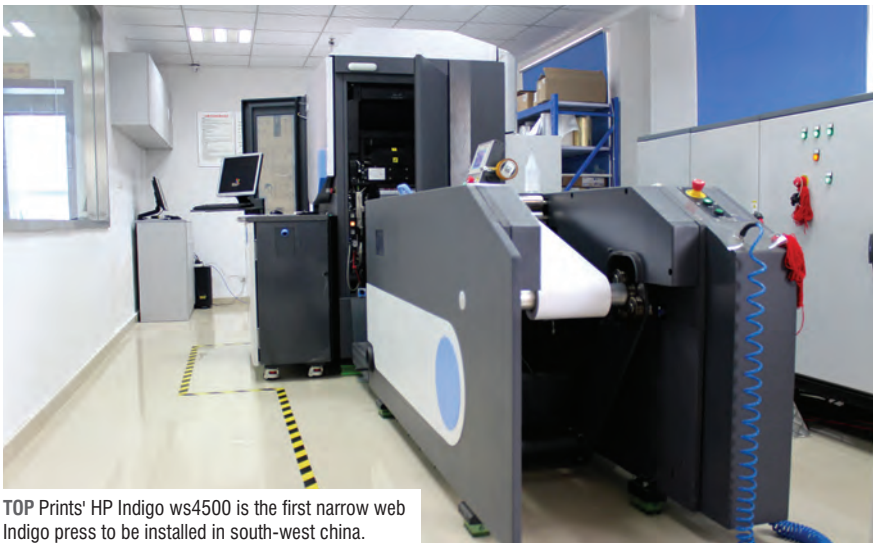
According to an introduction by Wang Daxun, RFID labels enjoy wide-scale adoption in a range of fields, including: logistics for tracking (cartons, pallets and containers); luggage management; supply chain management; industrial process applications (product tracing, production process monitoring, quality control and warehouse management); and in retail and anti-counterfeit brand protection.

Wang Daxun notes that in recent years, 'food and drug safety', 'liquor security' and other slogans issued repeatedly by the China state government demonstrate a clear direction for industrial applications of RFID technology, and these have been followed by a series of major policy announcements.

'The use of RFID in anti-counterfeit and track-trace systems has become an unstoppable trend in food and drug safety management,' confirms Wang Daxun. Sichuan is a big province for food production and the biggest province for producing liquor in China. This means it has the largest concentration of liquor brands, such as Wu Liangye, Jian Nanchun, Quanxing, Tuopai, Langjiu and others. Now Wu Liangye is using RFID tags on its bottles.

'We hope and believe that RFID is bound to have exponential development in the liquor industry in the next few years,' says Wang, displaying great confidence in the future.

RFID tags require a systems-engineering approach, meaning that if printers want to have a share in the RFID market, they need to cooperate with other suppliers in the industrial chain. 'We are establishing cooperation agreements with other companies in the RFID industrial chain, playing to our strength and providing a complete anti-counterfeit solution for our customers,' remarks Wang Daxun.



TOP Prints' HP Indigo ws4500 is the first narrow web Indigo press to be installed in south-west china.

DSCOOP ASIA AWARD

At Dscoop Asia held in Bali, Indonesia on 12 June, Top Print won the Industrial Label award. 'The fact that Top Print won the industrial label award shows the industry's acknowledgement of Top Print,' said Henrich Quek. 'As printing is one of the four great inventions, our printing technology and printing level should not lag behind that of foreign countries. I am very pleased that Top Print can, on behalf of China, win such honor in the international community. We believe this is a good start and hope that Top Print can make more creative products for our customers.'

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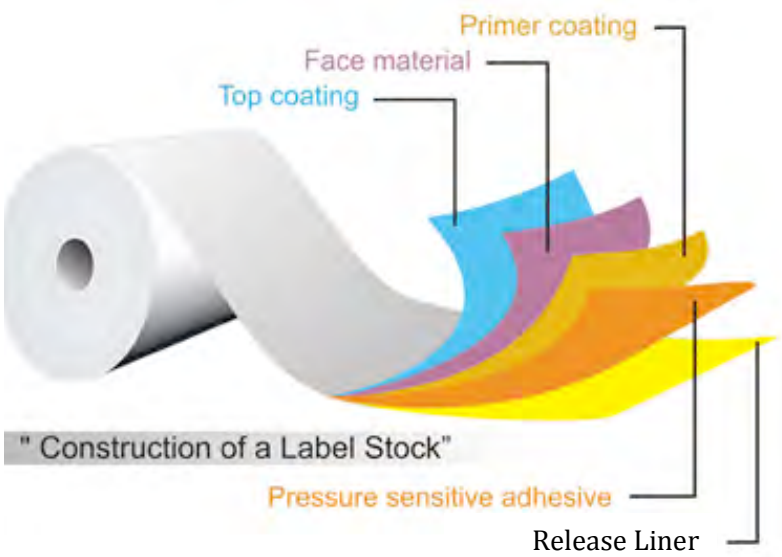

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R Rajesh Kumar of 3800 Labels with the newly installed Colordyne press at his unit in Chennai

Digital in India – a complementary technology

AAKRITI AGARWAL looks at trends towards digital printing in India

Digital is at a nascent stage in India. Though some installations are gradually happening across the country, it will still take time for the technology to mature in this market. Some companies see customization as a business opportunity, but most others still want to target the mass production market using flexo label presses. There are 14 HP Indigo and five Xeikon presses in India catering to the labels and print packaging segment. The first Colordyne CDT 1600-PC Sprint was installed in Chennai in February 2014.

Appadurai, country manager, Indigo and inkjet solutions, HP India sales, is enthusiastic about the growth of digital technology in the Indian market. Pharmaceutical, cosmetics and automobile spare parts are some of the major industries that the company is focusing on. Talking of the counterfeit business and preventive measures that are being taken by brand owners, Appadurai says, 'We are in talks with major automobile brands for printing labels of spare parts with track and trace technology. Any technology used in labels and packaging is not foolproof. However, variable data would change the game drastically.'

Continues Appadurai: 'It is getting increasingly difficult for companies to take unprofitable short run jobs because of increasing raw material and overhead costs. I see huge double digit growth in this business and we are rocketing up in India'. Citing the advantages of digital technology in label printing, he explains, 'The printer releases capacity and becomes profitable by putting short run jobs on digital. It provides customer service and acts as a marketing tool for the company, thus increasing the customer base.'

Gourav Roy, managing director of Xeikon distributor Flexo Image Graphics, says, 'There is a lot of enthusiasm in the market and we are hoping to install a couple of Xeikon presses in the Indian market this fiscal. However, it is mostly used in transfer labels and short run applications. Printers are evaluating how to integrate digital with flexo in their set-up. It will take the market some time before they use the technology for the wide range of applications as it is used internationally. They need to understand and decide the short run jobs that can be shifted on a digital press for making it a profitable venture and releasing capacity from a flexo press.'

Appadurai agrees, 'In India, the demand for short run is not huge. Customers who have HP Indigo see it as a complementary technology to flexo and gravure technology. I don't see a demand for stand-alone digital technology except with a high end niche converter such as pharmaceutical labels for export'.

Manish Kapoor, sales manager of Nilpeter India, seconds the same, 'Digital press should be installed in a plant along with flexo presses for best utilization.' Priyata Raghavan, director at Sai Packaging says, 'Digital complements flexo in a small way but it is an expensive proposition.' The company has an Epson press at its Bangalore factory.

With inkjet presses being launched by companies such as Technova, Vinsak, Epson, EFI Jetrion amongst others, the technology is building up momentum in the country, with printers using it for security applications such as variable data printing and 2D bar codes.

Most printers in India are looking at investing in a flexo press this year as they are focusing on mass production. Short run market is still very niche in the country. 'Digital is the future but the technology will take about five years to mature in India,' says Parshav Jain of Jain Transfer Products, a label printer in the national capital region of Delhi.

Ranesh Bajaj, director, Creed Engineers, is confident that digital is soon going to be big in the Indian market and there will be more clarity in a couple of years. 'It is not a replacement technology, it's a complementary technology. Therefore, every label printer will have to have the gamut of machines such as flexo, digital, offset or letterpress machines and the entire finishing to cater to the growing market,' he sums up.

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China brings letterpress into digital age

LETTERPRESS manufacturer Dongguan Hontec Machinery has worked with Esko to set up a digital platemaking operation to support High Definition letterpress printing. Kevin Liu reports

While letterpress printing has been the main trend in the Chinese label printing industry for a long time, intermittent offset technology has enjoyed great popularity in recent years. So is letterpress printing out of date in China? Can letterpress handle High Definition printing? The answers could be found at a seminar jointly organized by letterpress machinery manufacturers Dongguan Hontec Machinery and Esko China in Shenzhen last May.

The seminar was entitled 'Breaking traditional limits with letterpress printing technology', and centered on Esko's new generation of digital letterpress plate making machines, the Esko DLI (Direct Letterpress Imager), aimed specifically at the Chinese market. The DLI is described by Esko China as a 'simplified CDI', only for letterpress platemaking and at a lower cost point than the CDI. It can be upgraded to the full CDI specification both for flexo and letterpress. Dongguan Hontec Machinery has purchased an Esko DLI and set up the Dongguan Hontec Platemaking Center.

Over 30 printers from Guangdong gathered at Crowne Plaza Shenzhen to join this debate around the technical problems limiting letterpress printing. After that, they went to Dongguan Hontec Machinery and watched how to make plates and print with the DLI technology. Esko China engineer Peng Ming made the keynote speech entitled 'A breakthrough in letterpress platemaking'. He explained the root cause of traditional letterpress quality problems, caused by a combination of unstable film, printing material waste caused by uneven inking and inconsistent quality of platemaking.

Hontec Machinery engineer Wu Ayong then gave his keynote speech on using the Esko DLI in digital letterpress platemaking. He gave a detailed introduction to the DLI's advantages and showed technical details of 'how DLI improves plate-making accuracy, achieves 175lpi, one percent dot; reduces printing material waste; and keeps high consistency of plate making', with many illustrations and physical samples.

After the presentation ended, representatives went from the seminar to Dongguan Hontec Machinery and watched how to make plates with the Esko DLI. Leo Zhang, the general manager of Hontec Machinery, gave a presentation regarding operation of the DLI and answered questions.

Dongguan Hontec Machinery is a traditional letterpress machine manufacturer, so what was the point of purchasing a platemaking machine and setting up this platemaking center?

Zhang explains that, according to his many years of experience, letterpress printing has had quality problems in high-definition printing. Mostly, this is caused by the use of traditional, film-based platemaking technology, while most offset printing now uses CTP to make plates with higher quality and lower costs.

Due to this sharp decrease in film usage, fewer and fewer factories make film and the quality is not stable, which leads to inevitable quality problems during platemaking, said Zhang.

For printers, it is very expensive to purchase digital platemaking machines directly, as the price is similar to, or higher than, that of buying a letterpress printing machine, 'which is very terrifying', said Zhang. Therefore Hontec Machinery had the idea of setting up its own digital platemaking center.

'Printers can send their staff to our platemaking center where they can take their jobs through prepress and we can do the platemaking for them at a very low price, and also we can be their "consultant" if they have other problems in using letterpress technology,' said Zhang.

Does the setting up of a platemaking center compete against platemaking companies? Zhang's answer is 'No'. Since digital platemaking is more expensive than traditional platemaking, printers would rarely pay the higher price for a digital plate. Several of China's biggest platemaking centers do not have any letterpress business, and digital letterpress accounts for less than one percent of their total revenue. So setting up a digital platemaking center has little effect on their business.

Hontec's platemaking center focuses only on digital letterpress plates, and the price just covers its costs, meaning it can sell digital plates for only half the market price. So Hontec does not intend to compete against platemaking companies, but only to help printing companies solve problems in using letterpress plates.

'The purpose of forming the new team is not for profit,' continued Zhang. 'We even need to be prepared for making a loss in the time required for forming such a team. We formed this team only to solve problems for customers during high definition printing and to strengthen their confidence in letterpress printing.'

Concluded Zhang: 'Now for products that need high definition printing, it is not necessary to purchase offset printing machines with a higher price, but to change the way of platemaking.'

To promote its letterpress platemaking center, Hontec Machinery will hold similar events in East and North China.

LETTERPRESS NEWS IN BRIEF

FLINT MIGRATES NYLOFLEX NEXT TO LETTERPRESS

Flint Group celebrated the tenth anniversary of its regular customer seminars with meetings at Steinfeld (Northern Germany) and Fichtenau (South Germany) to update converters on the status of its LED-based nyloflex NExT exposure technology.

First established for flexo printing, the system was expanded last year into letterpress printing for specialist security and banknote printing applications, as well as the high-end segment of labels, tubes, cups and can printing. The exposure time of the nyloflex NExT LED bars can be customised to define dot shape and shoulder angle. The new technology can be used for all digital letterpress plates, regardless of plate thickness and format.

SATO LETTERPRESS EXPERTISE RECOGNIZED BY WLA

SATO Printing Co. Ltd's success in the 2013 World Label Awards is the company's seventh consecutive year it has picked up praise in the global contest. SATO Printing won two awards in the letterpress section, where it received particular praise for its technical capabilities, and one award in the Booklets & Coupon Labels category. The label entered in this category is the first label the company has exhibited that was produced using digital printing.

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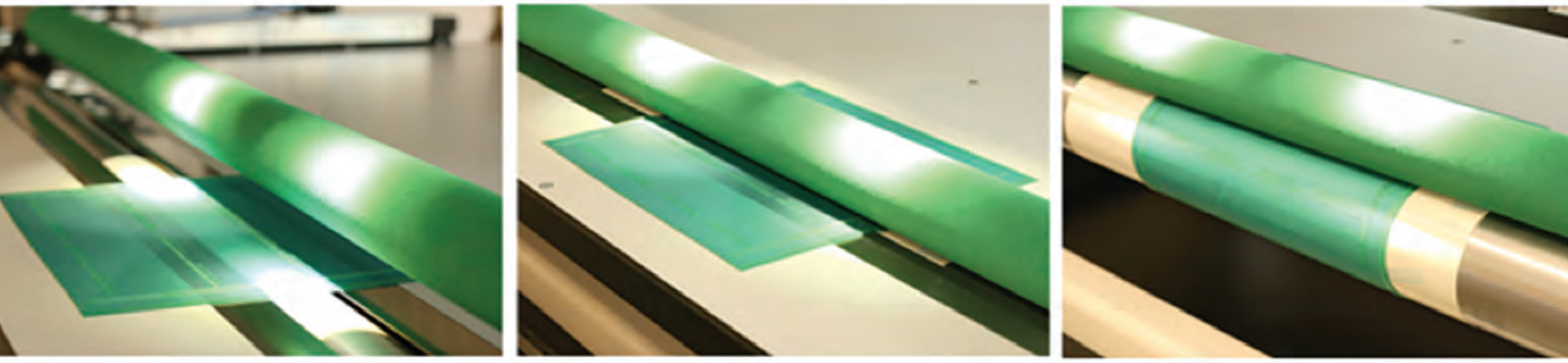
PLATE NEWS



AV Flexologic SAMM plate mounter in operation

AV FLEXOLOGIC LAUNCHES NEW MOUNTING TECHNOLOGY

AV Flexologic has launched its SAMM automated flexo plate mounting system.

In operation, the plate is roughly prepositioned on the table, and upon recognition of the marks, the plate is automatically positioned. When in position, the cylinder comes up automatically to fix the plate. The pressure roller presses the plate onto the cylinder or sleeve, so there are no air bubbles. The operator then uses the footpedal to mount the plate

The table itself can move in X and Y directions to position the plate. The table has a vacuum system for holding the plate, which is automatically switched on when the mounting marks are recognized.

AV Flexologic says SAMM has a plate mounting accuracy of 0.005 mm (0.0002"), and the system can produce a detailed quality control report based on information from the image recognition camera. The company says the system needs a less skilled operator than usually required for accurate plate mounting.

The system uses DOAL lights and laser pointers for image recognition, along with a patented digital camera beam calibration system. Digital zooming up to 170x magnification is included.

A range of expansion options are available, including entering job data through barcode scanners and extensive ERP integration. Also available is a TIR sleeve measurement system, a tape applicator, and precision knife system for cutting tape and/or plate.

The SAMM system is available in numerous sized variants for both sleeves and cylinders for printing widths from 200mm (seven inches) up to 2,200 mm (87 in).

DUPONT PLATE TARGETS UV NARROW WEB APPLICATIONS

DuPont Packaging Graphics has introduced the Cyrel FAST DFUV flexo plate, designed specifically for use with UV-curable inks. The new plates are claimed to 'improve solid ink density, reduce waste, save time and cost' in applications involving high-end substrates such as self-adhesive labels, shrink wrap and wraparound labels.

'The new Cyrel DFUV plate was developed specifically for the narrow web printer who needs a high-performance flexographic printing plate for use with UV inks,' said John Chrosniak, global business director, DuPont Packaging Graphics. 'As we continue to advance quality, productivity and sustainability for flexographic printing, this new plate is an outstanding addition to our portfolio.'

Cyrel DFUV is a thermal process plate that, says DuPont, comes to color quickly and prints smooth and dense solids, without compromising dot gain, highlights and resolution. Unlike plates engineered for very long print runs for wide web flexible packaging, Cyrel DFUV is specifically designed for shorter print runs using UV inks on high priced stock where minimizing the startup waste is essential. Cyrel DFUV is designed for very fine screens.

ROBINETTE COMPANY ADOPTS ASAHI AWP WATER WASH SYSTEM.

As part of its drive towards a more sustainable business model, film converter Robinette Company has eliminated solvent-based platemaking at its Bristol, TN facility. The company installed at first a 35 x 47, and eventually a 42 x 60 AWP water wash plate system utilizing Asahi's AWP plate material.

Commented Robinette Company's Gene Martin: 'The improvement in print quality, the positive environmental impact, the improved plate life and the overall increased efficiency that the AWP plate provided, really out-weighed what we were getting from our solvent system. The Asahi AWP plate really gave us everything we were looking for in a high quality plate material. With the AWP plate we can make plates in less than an hour which has improved the plate room productivity by over 30 percent, and a 100 percent VOC-free process with a low carbon footprint that has helped The Robinette Company lower waste throughout the printing process and has had a significant impact on our sustainability.'

Correct-Touch Graphic Arts (CTGA), the exclusive national distributor of Asahi photoproducts, completed the Asahi AWP installation for the Robinette Company.

Established in 1987 and based out of Bristol, TN, The Robinette Company is a full-service flexible film and paper packaging printer-converter specializing in packaging for the food, beverage, nutraceutical, construction, textile and health care markets. The company works out of a 100,000+ sq ft flexible film converting facility and a 100,000+ sq ft paper converting facility.

A& INTRODUCES AVANTAGE LIQUID PHOTOPOLYMER CAPPING RESIN

AVcap a new AVantage liquid photopolymer capping resin,

J M Heaford FTS NW Flexo Plate Mounter

has been introduced by Anderson & Vreeland. AVCAP is designed for use with softer-base liquid photopolymer plates used for wide web, folding carton, multi-wall and corrugated printing applications. The 60 durometer (Shore A) photopolymer resin broadens overall tone range from two to 95 percent @ 133 lip, improves ink transfer, reduces dot gain, and provides excellent coverage of solids while minimizing fluting, says the manufacturer.

'AVCAP enables printers to control print gain under impression for high quality and process color printing,' said Randy Reynolds, AVantage business development manager. The new liquid photopolymer capping resin is available in 20 lb. and 40 lb. delts.

AVantage liquid photopolymers do not use solvents or VOCs, and the un-imaged photopolymer can be reclaimed and reused.

JM HEAFORD DE-SKILLS

ACCURATE PLATE MOUNTING

JM Heaford has launched its FTS NW flexo plate mounter, which reverses the usual position of the cameras and mounts the plate with the print surface facing downwards. The application of the plate to the adhesive layer on the FTS is hands-free and achieved without air pockets, so there is no need rub or hand roll the plate on to the sleeve/cylinder. If desired the plate mounting tape can be applied to the plate roll in exactly the same manner as the plate.

The system incorporates a new methodology of lowering the sleeve/cylinder onto the pre-positioned plate and the automatic application of the plate to the sleeve/cylinder by the action of sliding the cushioned table back and forth.

Heaford says the learning curve 'is a matter of minutes' and no specific skills are needed. Says the company, 'The method of mounting discourages the often-seen last minute corrections that operators make to try and line up the bearer bars more accurately, which does nothing to improve overall plate register and simply increases the risk of plate lift during the run.'

The FTS unit requires only that the operator positions the plate centrally and lines up two horizontal bars on the video screen at an optical magnification of 56x. 'This is not a difficult or hard to learn task and requires very little manual dexterity. Compared to an automated mounting machine, the plates are mounted at least as accurately and significantly faster at a capital cost which is substantially less,' says the company.

MILLER Graphics Poland now Kodak Flexcel NX certified

TECTONIC UPDATES FLEXICO V5 PLATE MOUNTER

Tectonic International has updated its established Flexico V5 plate mounter with a lateral (side to side) movement. Combined with a forward/back/swivel movement means the plate can be quickly mounted on the cylinder or sleeve with a high degree of accuracy and the position of the first plate set using the adjustment facility.

The two pre-set cameras are moved over the register marks and when the monitors display accurate register, fine adjustment of the position of the plate in any direction can be achieved by rotating the table for 100 percent accuracy of register before the plate is adhered to the cylinder or sleeve.

Once the plate is in register a magnetic position block or blocks can be set in place to record the position of the first plate. This feature means that only the first plate in each new job requires set up. If a press has a pre-register system the cylinder or sleeve can be set in line with the auto-register center in the cylinder.

KODAK EXTENDS NX CERTIFICATION PROGRAM TO MILLER GRAPHICS POLAND

Miller Graphics Poland (formerly known as Reproserwis), one of the biggest Polish flexo prepress studios has become a Kodak Certified Partner after successfully meeting all requirements for the certification program for Kodak Flexcel NX plates.

Kodak's certification Program for its Flexcel NX plates is a relatively new initiative. Achieving Certified Partner status demonstrates to printers and brand owners that NX plates produced by certified providers are made to a standard Kodak global specification. It is a supported by comprehensive data measurement and recommendations from satisfied clients.

'We are delighted to receive this endorsement as it confirms the high quality of our plates, which is a priority for us,' says Jacek Mlynarczyk, sales & marketing manager at Miller Graphics Poland.

'The Kodak Flexcel NX system, purchased in 2009, had a big role in our success,' says Mlynarczyk. 'This investment positively influenced our production as it revolutionized the quality of our flexo printing. Therefore we were extremely happy to be the first company in Poland to adopt the technology. In our opinion, the Kodak Flexcel NX sets new standards in efficiency, stability and quality of flexo printing to positively influence our business as well.'

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Labelexpo Features break new ground

DANIELLE JERSCHEFSKE takes a look at the exciting feature areas which will add an extra dimension to this year's Labelexpo Americas

There is more going on at Labelexpo Americas this year than ever before. Be sure to plan travel arrangements accordingly, and to bring key team members to cover all it has to offer. The show is organizing numerous feature areas and seminars, in addition to its conference program, for label and packaging converters to evaluate opportunities to improve and grow their businesses. Brand managers and packaging designers will be given a tailored chance to see new label and package printing technologies which can be used to drive value through the packaging supply chain.

SMART MART

Smart Mart at Labelexpo Americas offers a glimpse into the supply chain, retail and convenience stores of the future. Experience firsthand how the latest advances in substrates, inks, digital systems and printing will forever change consumers' expectations of labels and packaging. In this all-new feature, attendees will discover how augmented reality (AR), QR codes and scanners, RFID and NFC-enabled smart tags, temperature indicating packaging constructions and specialty coated films to prevent food spoilage will change the landscape of our industry.

Such innovations can have the ability to connect with mobile devices and cloud-based data collection systems to add interactive dimensions to on-pack information and promotions. They offer the opportunity for converters to add value to their products and business, and deliver customers' solutions that can save them money and increase revenue. Many of these technologies are available now and are gaining traction as the world of IoT (Internet of Things) evolves. Attendees are encouraged to also attend the Keynote Session in the Labelexpo Conference Program Internet of Things and a vision of the future to support their understanding of how smart packaging, IoT and Big Data is driving change in business processes.

Avery Dennison will showcase FiberTracker, an anti-counter-feiting labeling solution which features a paper facestock with unique fiber patterns that can be scanned at point of purchase to validate product authenticity. The labels utilize scannable QR codes to match the unique fibers with the correct image retrieved from scanning. No special tools are needed for authentication other than a smart phone or internet-accessing device for easy and fast verification. The company will also demonstrate the capabilities of DirectLink. Using an NFC feature, DirectLink connects brands to the consumer through a smart phone. Deliver any kind of relevant content, special offer, video, tutorial or product information directly from your product to the consumer.

Xterprise will demonstrate the core value of RFID at retail using its Clarity software solution and SML passive RFID tags. The software can count an entire store's inventory in less than an hour, making twice-a-year audits a thing of the past and increasing real-time inventory accuracy. Learn how item-level RFID helps reduce out-of-stocks, inventory levels, and shrink while improving sales, selection and omnichannel fulfillment.

Smartrac and its partners will show intelligent RFID and NFC solutions, from ultimate industrial applications to the benefit of real-time merchandise interaction, analytical trend data, merchandise visibility and authentication solutions all the way to customer acquisition, experience and customer retention.

Thinfilm will show its NFC-enabled labels with temperature sensors designed to monitor perishable goods. Mobile devices with NFC capabilities can wirelessly detect the smart label's signal and display alerts on the screen if a critical temperature threshold has been reached or exceeded. The intelligent labels also have a unique ID, so it's possible to log the alert in a cloud-based application for further 'Big Data' analysis.

T+sun will exhibit its conductive ink solutions to make packages and objects communicate, engage consumers, manage inventory systems and provide brand authentication solutions. T+sun is an organization created through the partnership of Sun Chemical and T+ink.

Clemson University will demonstrate its eye-tracking

technology, which can assist both designers and brand managers with re-branding tactics and shopper response and reach schemes. Derprosa Film will promote Bacterstop, anti-bacterial BOPP films for food contamination prevention applications.

Blippar will display the possibilities of digital engagement through its mobile application that allows users to explore interactive advertising through augmented reality (AR) and image recognition. Brand logos or the universal 'Blipp' symbol can be designed into packaging for users to unlock all kinds of useful and fun content from a brand. Organizers expect Evrythng to also participate.

CRAFT BEVERAGE DAY

Labelexpo will host a Craft Beverage Day on September 11. Craft brewers, small wineries and craft distilleries will be invited to attend a special seminar to learn about new labeling technologies, materials, printing processes, label design for print efficiency, process management and label application. Attendees will gain a strong understanding of label production to assist in their brand development, recognition and growth. A leading packaging designer will discuss popular packaging and label styles and trends, while reinforcing consistency and quality throughout the process. Industry leaders will escort attendees on a tour of the show, followed by a networking luncheon and Expert Beverage Label Converter Panel Q&A. Sponsors include Avery Dennison, Delta Industrial, Flint Group, Green Bay Packaging, HP, Sun Chemical and K Laser.

BRAND MANAGER MASTER CLASS

Brand engagement through packaging: a printing technology master class at Labelexpo Americas 2014 will provide brand managers and product marketers with details about the latest labels and package printing technologies to improve shelf impact, increase sales and engage consumers. The day-long class will feature presentations from leading interactive packaging experts, a guided show tour and networking luncheon.

Mike Ferrari of Ferrari Innovation Solutions, former R&D associate director with Procter & Gamble, will discuss packaging trends for the digital age, incorporating global case studies from Nutella, Danone and Coca-Cola. Attendees will learn how to grow brand revenue and margins by leveraging new printing technologies and social media. John Foley, president and CEO of inkerlinkONE and Grow Socially will further demonstrate how to incorporate the power of digital marketing into labels and packaging to reach the next generation of shoppers.

Jan De Roeck, director of solutions management at EskoArtwork, will explore digital visualization to workflow. By virtually creating packaging to show a range of substrates, printing techniques and finishes, brand managers are empowered to reduce approval time and errors, and speed time to market. Mike Fairley, director of strategic development for the Labelexpo Global Series, will focus on high tech print and finishing technologies to add value to a brand's on-shelf presence.

The workshop will be held on the final day of the show from 9:00AM – 2.00PM. The participation fee is 700 US dollars.

PACKAGE PRINTING WORKSHOP

As narrow web label converters continue to review options for diversification and growth, the Labelexpo Global Series will bring attendees the popular Package Printing Workshop once again. The workshop sessions will cover printing and converting technologies with Xeikon and Delta Industrial. Xeikon will showcase the digital printing of carton packaging using a 3500 model digital press equipped with a digital varnish print station applying Xeikon's Durable Clear toner. They will also explain and demonstrate what is needed to produce personalized packaging and how workflow can be organized to optimize manufacturing.

Delta Industrial will feature its Mod-Tech converting and packaging technology for advanced medical field and add-value converting applications. For a total manufacturing solution, a multifaceted converting line will put together a 'transdermal' patch in a foil pouch. The complex patch will be made of a challenging polyurethane and feature multiple die cuts. The system will have a variety of features to support in-line film and parts converting: corona treater, semi-rotary island placement, knife bullnose, male/female embossing, a spreading conveyer, web re-registration to die vision inspection and reciprocating heat seal packaging.

The Package Printing Workshop sessions will run for one hour at 11:00AM and 3:00PM on each day of the show.

INKJET TRAIL

The Inkjet Trail at Labelexpo Americas 2014 will feature live label printing demonstrations of production level, full-color digital inkjet presses: Durst Tau 330, Domino's N610i, Epson L-4033 and EFI's Jetrion 4950LX. Each manufacturer will receive the same origination for a food, pharmaceutical and industrial products label using identical substrates to produce them. Origination, color and die-cutter files for the different jobs will be prepared by Esko. UPM Raflatac, Flexcon and Avery Dennison will provide paper, film and foil substrates.

Trail demos will run daily from 9:30-11:00AM and 1:30-3:00PM.

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Labelexpo Americas conference program

TARSUS conference organizer Natalie Tamiollo outlines the exciting range of educational conference sessions which are taking place during the show

TUESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2014

09.00 EXPO AND CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

09.30 CEO PANEL DISCUSSION: BUSINESS STRATEGIES FROM SUCCESSFUL CONVERTERS

- Mergers and acquisitions - the fast-growing global trend of consolidation
- Driving down costs whilst offering value to your customers
- Creating new opportunities for growth and profitability

11.00 'THE INTERNET OF THINGS' AND VISION OF THE FUTURE

- Integrating process automation, innovation and connectivity
- Vision for enterprise improvement, evolution and growth
- Adopting the right tools to grow your business

DIGITAL PRINTING

2.00 DIGITAL: INSTANTLY GLOBAL, INTERACTIVE AND INDIVIDUAL

- Producing personalized and promotional global products - seasonal, regional, local
- Adapting your business and product offering: printing for the single consumer, group of consumers or an exclusive product
- Integrating digital enabling tools with conventional (MIS, web to print, digital proofing and digital color control)

3.00 PANEL DISCUSSION: INVESTING IN DIGITAL

- What is right for my business model?
- From the theory to the practical
- Making digital more affordable: reducing costs whilst delivering high value print and product quality

4.00 INKJET TECHNOLOGIES: PRINTING, SUBSTRATES AND INKS FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE LABELS

- Sophisticated labeling: from durability to versatility
- Accurate color reproduction on a variety of substrates
- Durable labels for white goods and the automotive industry

5.00 END OF SESSIONS

DESIGN AND BRANDING FOR THE CONVERTER

2.00 ADOPTING NEW PRINTING TECHNIQUES TO REVOLUTIONIZE DESIGN AND BRANDING

- Exploring global design trends and identifying a gap in the market
- Fundamental shifts in consumer behavior – the opportunities for converters
- Structural design, substrates and specialty processes

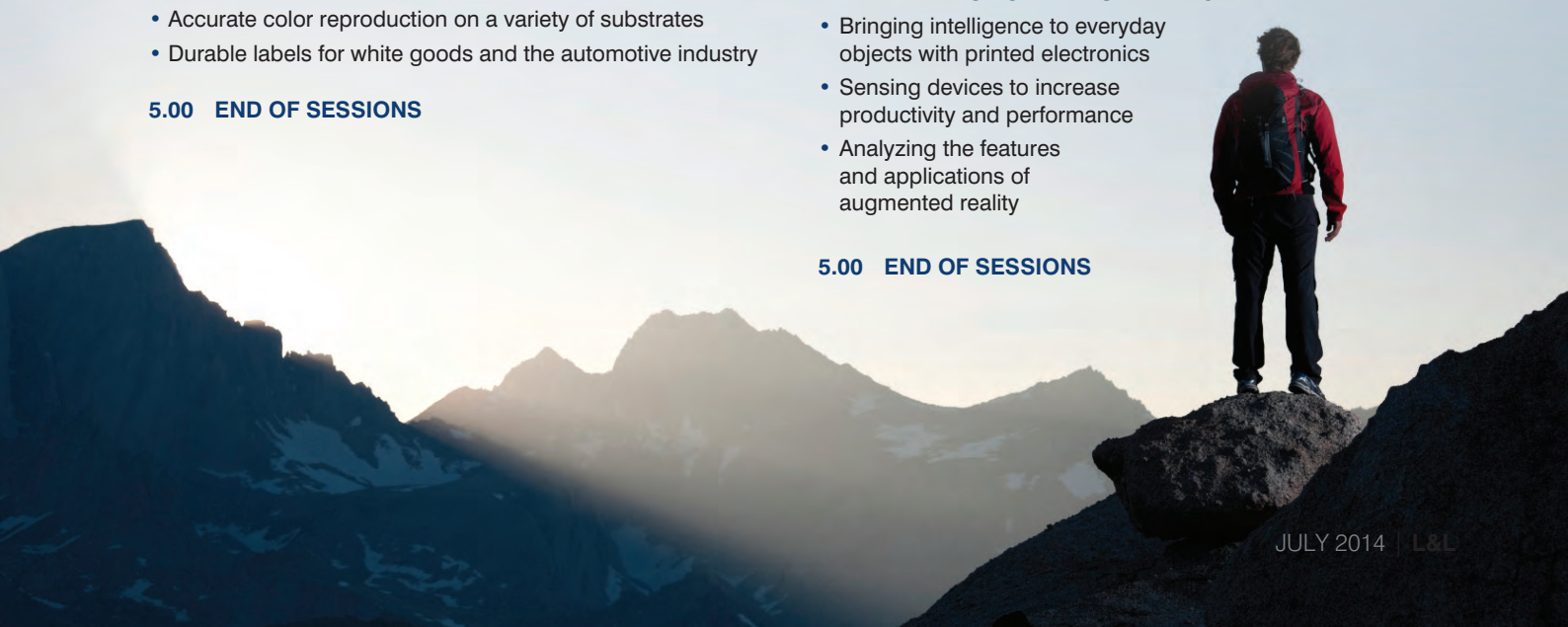
3.00 EYE TRACKING TECHNOLOGY FOR CONSUMER SHOPPING BEHAVIOR

- The impact of labels and packaging in consumer decision making
- How to gain insights on what will resonate with your client's target audience
- Effective product design to influence in-store purchasing decisions

4.00 SMART PRODUCTS TO ENCOURAGE CONSUMER INTERACTION AND SPENDING

- Bringing intelligence to everyday objects with printed electronics
- Sensing devices to increase productivity and performance
- Analyzing the features and applications of augmented reality

5.00 END OF SESSIONS



WEDNESDAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2014

09.00 EXPO AND CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

09.30 EDITORIAL PANEL DISCUSSION: BRINGING THE SUPPLY CHAIN TOGETHER

- Setting the context: how has the market evolved in the last two years?
- What the changing retail environment means for the converter
- Identifying the key growth areas for the next two to five years

11.00 CONVERTER PANEL DISCUSSION: LABEL AND PACKAGE PRINTING

- Sector analysis: labels, shrink sleeves, flexibles and cartons
- Understanding the current challenges in the industry
- Positioning your company in the market to overcome local and international competition

LABEL TRENDS AND TECHNOLOGY

2.00 LATIN AMERICA: NEW MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

- Overview of the industry and anticipating future trends
- Highlighting the main challenges
- Developing new domestic markets

3.00 BRAND PROTECTION: MAINTAINING CREDIBILITY AND INTEGRITY

- Introducing new technologies to protect your product
- Counterfeit and tamper-proof solutions
- Instant verification for product authenticity

4.00 FLEXO TECHNOLOGY: ADVANCES IN PRINTING PROCESSES

- Sophisticated technology with value-adding features
- Delivering short run – the key factors between conventional and digital
- Identifying the benefits of HD flexo

5.00 END OF SESSIONS

PACKAGE PRINTING

2.00 BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION: MOVING FROM LABELS TO FLEXIBLE PACKAGING

- Mid-web lamination for short-run flexible packaging and pouches
- Expanding your company's offering for new business opportunities
- Transformation challenges: understanding the benefits and pitfalls

3.00 NEW PACKAGING FORMAT: FROM GLASS TO POUCH CASE STUDY

- The importance of shape, structure and substrate for product functionality
- Maintaining quality and brand consistency across multiple forms of packaging
- Creating shelf presence: driving interest and appeal

4.00 NEXT GENERATION MATERIALS FOR FLEXIBLE PACKAGING AND CARTONS

- New developments in films
- Matching the process to the substrate
- Exploring different surface treatments and coatings

5.00 END OF SESSIONS

For the latest conference program and all confirmed speakers go to: www.labelexpo-americas.com/conference-program

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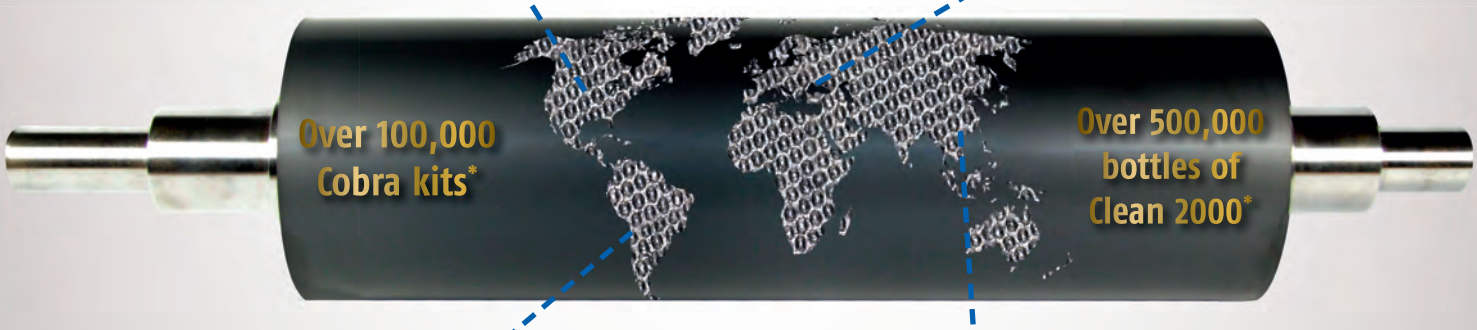

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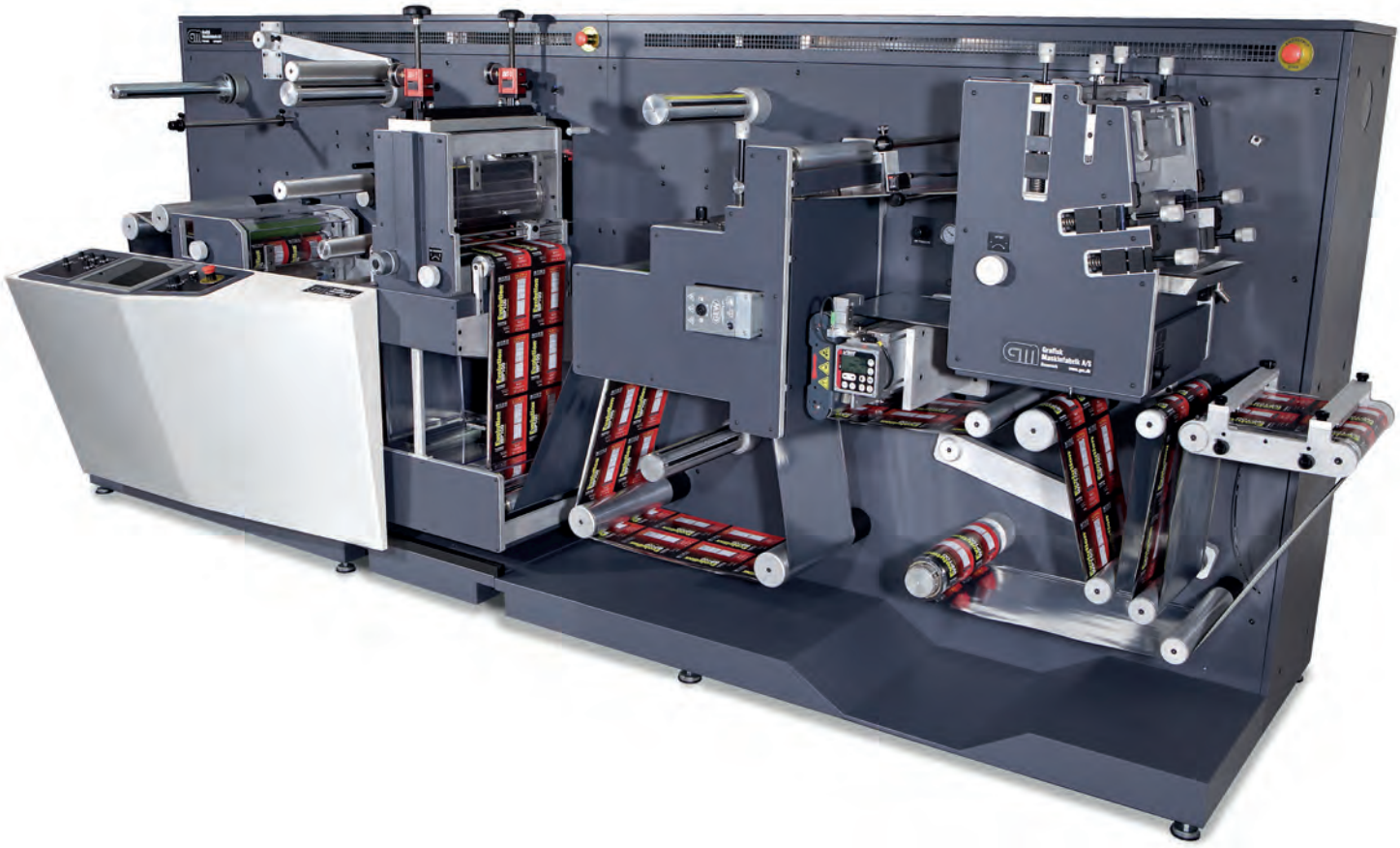

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Visit us in **booths #3226 and #3429** at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center at Labelexpo Americas, September 9-11, 2014. To schedule a product demonstration at the show or to have a set of digitally produced samples sent to you, **please contact us at 1-800-289-5986.**

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HP Indigo WS6800 Digital Press

Labelexpo A-Z

ANDY THOMAS looks at the new developments on show at Labelexpo Americas 2014

AAA PRESS

AAA Press introduces the Combo Lightouch UV with Maximizer IR drying system for a compact in-line solution that is easily retrofit in to most converting lines. This combo dryer offers space savings as it incorporates a piggy-backed IR dryer with in-line UV, one small electronic control cabinet and a shared exhaust system for either drying method.

The drying system combines the UV lamp cassette offered in the Lightouch UV line with the proven Maximizer Electric Impinged Air Infrared drying system in 4, 6 or 9 bulb configurations. Both systems are PLC Controlled allowing the operator to select either UV or IR in each station for the desired ink system.

AB GRAPHIC INTERNATIONAL

AB Graphic launches its Digicon Series 3 label converting line, incorporating flat-bed hot foiling, flexo printing, over laminating and a newly designed flat-bed UV screen printing unit.

The maximum web width has been increased to 350mm (13.75”) as well as the maximum unwind and rewind rolls being increased to 800mm (31.5”).

Also new for the USA market is the Digilase laser label cutting system equipped with unwind, self wound/carrier rewind, rewind web advance, bar code job changes for I-Score and auto-slit for non-stop production capability. T

The new Omega SRI label inspection rewinder will also be introduced. Operation can be either sitting or standing. The included fleyeVision inspection system integrates with the machine’s HMI.

Visitors to the HP stand can see demonstrations of the new Digicon 3000 converting line for 30” webs.

AFINIA LABEL

Demonstrates its L801 inkjet printer using Memjet technology, and the R635 dry toner printer, for labels that comply with GHS and BS5609 regulations.

ALLEN DATAGRAPH SYSTEMS

Demonstrates its iTech digital label systems, the CENTRA HS Digital Label System and AXXIS HS Digital Label System.

ALLISON SYSTEMS CORPORATION

Exhibits two new products for flexo applications, including a new line of cleaning products for water-based and UV inks. The cleaners are specially formulated solutions designed to remove dried inks from various surfaces on contact. They are operator and environmentally safe, non-flammable, non-corrosive, and diluted with water. The company also introduces a new end seal for high-speed flexo chambered applications. The new seal will provide longer life while minimizing leakage when compared to other typical end seal types and is available for many chamber designs, says the company.

ALPHASONICS

Following the launch of its ‘Active Cavitation’ at Labelexpo Europe last year, Alphasonics demonstrates this to the American market, alongside a new technology which alternates between varying ultrasonic frequencies in one cleaning cycle.

On the booth, Alphasonics will also be broadcasting its anilox roll cleaning trial ‘Safe With Sound’ which was recently streamed live from their facility. The purpose for the trial was to address myths surrounding anilox roll damage, which proved a huge hit with viewers worldwide.

ANDANTEX USA

Introduces a new digital web tension controller. The new DGT300+, Merobel digital controller, replaces the DGT 300, with updated electronics. Among the new DGT300+ features are a new user-friendly graphic interface, USB port for connecting to a PC, and a TCP-IP connection protocol.

APEX GROUP OF COMPANIES

Apex launches its lightweight series of UltraCell anilox rolls and GTTLABEL, a new engraving technology for anilox rolls. The company also presents the results of the Revo project, led by Nuova Gidue, which has demonstrated ‘a clear benefit to process control and efficiency’ using Apex GTT rolls.

The patented GTTLABEL roller employs

ASHE Glueless Turret

a radical 'Open Slalom' ink channel geometry allowing ink to flow precisely onto a printing plate, combined with a hybrid ceramic and laser imaging.

ARMOR

Thermal Transfer ribbon technology developer Armor launches its APX FH+ wax/resin ribbon dedicated to Flat Head printers such as Zebra, Datamax, TSC, Sato and Intermec.

The APX FH+ ribbon is claimed to offer a level of performance close to that of 'certain resin-based products while retaining the flexibility and high-speed print capacity of a wax-resin product'.

Enhanced ink sensitivity offers greater barcode printing sharpness, even at 90deg, providing an excellent finish for logos and diagrams, in addition to Improved compatibility with paper-based vellum materials. Improved print quality is offered at speeds up to 300mm/s (12 .i.ps.).

ASHE AMERICA

Ashe America launches the patented Opal glueless 4-spindle turret rewind-slitter.

Driven via all ac servo motor system, the turret allows for no tooling set up operation between slit and core size changes.

Changing the four airshafts is the only manual intervention required when moving from one size of winding core to another.

The standard off-line model will be demonstrated running continuous 1" and 3" core work. In-line and off-line models are available as standard within the range.

ANDERSON & VREELAND

A&V introduces Konica Minolta's C70RLC label press, designed to fill the gap between entry-level and higher-end label presses. Also on the stand is AV Flexologic's semi-automatic mounting machine (SAMM 1100)

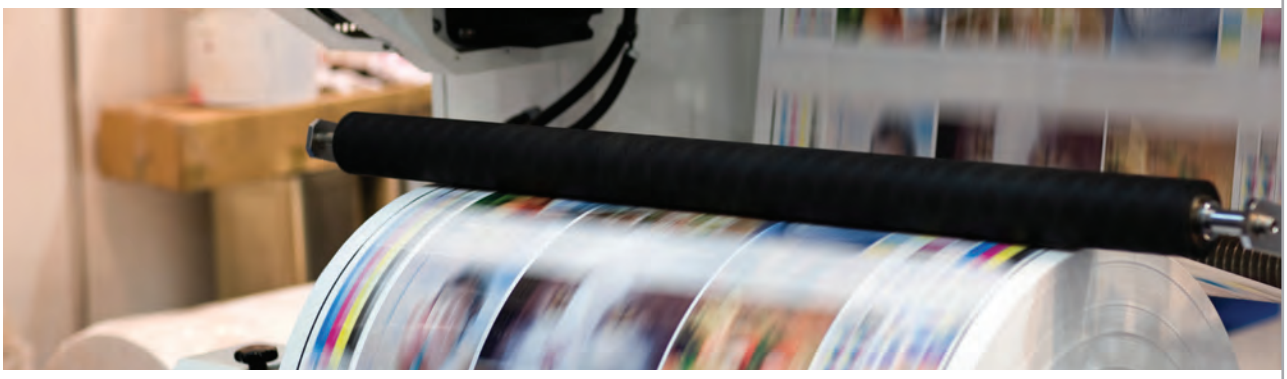
ATLANTIC ZEISER

Launches the DigiLine Booklet, which provides 'audit-proof' encoding and verification of booklet labels for clinical trials.

DigiLine Booklet encodes booklets up to 4mm thick - that cannot be processed with thermal transfer technology - and allows high-quality UV-inkjet print on fully and partially transparent label stocks.

An integrated inspection-camera ensures process safety by checking every processed label. Misprinted, unprinted or missing labels are reported instantly. Areas of manual splices will be automatically rechecked with the integrated camera. A second camera ensures the lateral alignment of the print position on each label.

Creating Impressive Labels
requires exceptional raw materials
Are you using the best?



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coatings, adhesives and pressure sensitive rollstock

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The transport mechanism ensures gentle transport of different label formats with large diameter rolls and a single bending direction. Web tension is adjustable and thanks to the sensor-operated web-edge control even telescoped mother rolls may be processed.

AVERY DENNISON LABEL AND PACKAGING MATERIALS

Avery Dennison introduces a number of new products, which includes The new point-of-purchase and vulcanization tire label portfolios, designed to improve shelf appeal and tracking. The POP portfolio features a proprietary white polypropylene film that prevents staining and eliminates curling for stronger brand appeal in retail applications. Vulcanization labels offer improved barcode-printing for tracking and safety elements.

The CleanFlake portfolio is a range of label materials designed to advance the recycling of PET containers. CleanFlake incorporates a switchable adhesive that separates from the PET flake upon recycling, resulting in pure PET flakes. CleanFlake was recently expanded to include roll-fed sleeve constructions.

ClearCut S7450 is a premium adhesive for wine and spirits and non-alcoholic beverages with excellent wet-out even on light-weight or re-used glass bottles. S7450 is specifically designed for conversion and dispensing of exceptional large and complex label shapes typical for wine and spirits applications.

ATLANTIC Zeiser DigiLine Booklet system

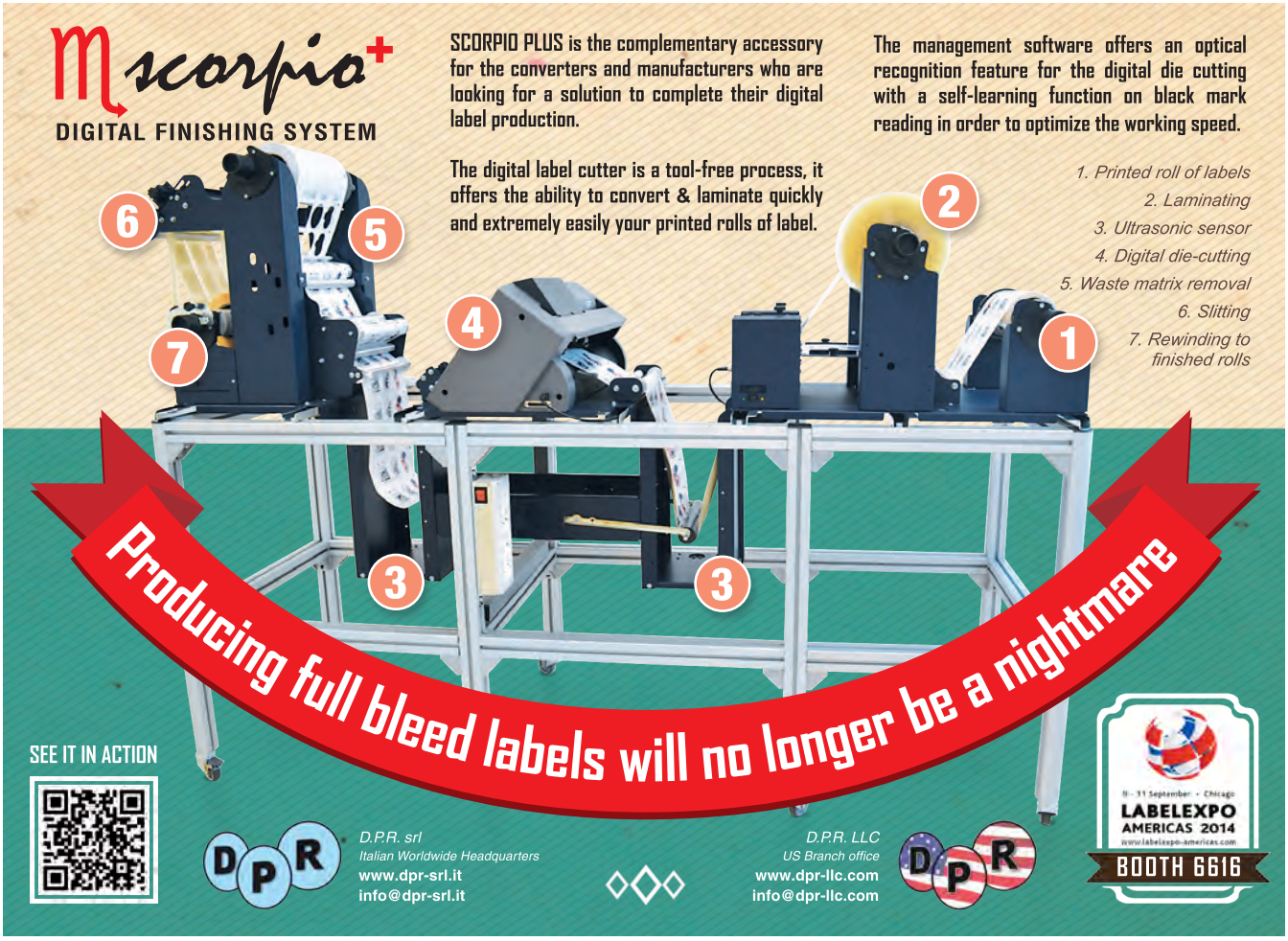
ADVANCED VISION TECHNOLOGY (AVT)

AVT upgrades its PrintFlow workflow with PrintFlow Online II, an inline data editing tool providing live quality status and production numbers via live display or MIS communication. New process and quality control technologies include the Helios II S, which inspects holographic foils and other special effects.

Also premiering are two new narrow web flexo press control technologies currently being utilized by Nilpeter and Nuova Gidue, providing automatic pressure and AVT has collaborated with HP to integrate its Apollo 20000 into the new HP Indigo 20000 Digital Press designed specifically for packaging printing.

APPVION

Showcases Résiste 185-3.3, a light top coated direct thermal face stock designed primarily for weigh scale label applications; Résiste RX top coated direct thermal face stock engineered for



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www.erhardt-leimer.com

pharmacy prescription vial labels; and its PolyTherm direct thermal film portfolio.

AZTECH

New from AzTech is the Matrix modular label finishing platform. The base system configuration is equipped with a 40-inch diameter unwind, LasX LaserSharp 400-watt laser, waste winding, and 26-inch diameter finished roll rewind capability. The system is available in 10,13,18 and 20-inch web widths and operates at speeds of up to 500 FPM.

A wide range of processing modules are available including flexo print/coating units, 4-color digital printing, laminating, hot or cold foil, semi-rotary die cutting, vision registration and barcode reading.

A 10-inch or 13-inch wide MATRIX system, with a base system configuration starts at $259,000.

BERHALTER

The company launches its PRElaser technology. A typical application is multipack yoghurt lids, which can now be pre-perforated using the PRElaser system, so the yoghurt pots can be individually snapped off and separated without the lid being unintentionally removed.

Berhalter also demonstrates its inline inspection system directly on the die-cutting machine, allowing defective material to be passed through the tool area without being punched to deliver 100% controlled products.

BERKELEY MACHINERY

Berkeley Machinery shows its new Autoflex Excel AS300 automatic high-speed shrink film sleeving machine, The seaming system converts sleeves speeds up to 300m/min and the short web path allows for very low wastage on material, as well as fast makeready.

BETA INDUSTRIES

Launches the BetaFold handheld carton crease analyser. The operator needs only one click for each critical analysis. Statistics are automatically calculated, reports are generated for documentation and process control.

The unit will measure bead and crease dimensions, folding angle, cut-score penetration, counter channel depth and width, embossing and debossing. It will detect errors in registration and tool alignment, changes in die penetration due to knife wear, inconsistent impression due to die and counter wear.

Also shown is the latest BetaFlex Pro 3D/2D flexo plate and image analyzer, which incorporates new capabilities such as the ability to measure letterpress plates, measurement of sleeved plates.

BITEK TECHNOLOGY INC (ANYTRON)

Introduces the any-001 and any-002 desktop color label presses with the any-cut desktop laser die cutter. The presses have an output speed of 9m/min, generating 5,000 labels in two hours and are bundled with software supporting color management and variable data processing including QR codes, bar codes, and numbering.

The laser die-cutter has a maximum output speed of 18m/min, or 5,000 labels/ hour and can both cut and mark simultaneously. The any-cut laser source lasts for more than 10,000 hours.

Also shown by the company is the any-blade roll-to-roll die-cutter, which does not require dies to be made and supports a 300 mm cutting width (A3 size) which covers the print width of the digital label printer. any-blade has a slitter option. It ships with a Windows driver but can also be run via an SD card where no PC is available.

BROTECH

Brotech is to show a range of label converting and finishing systems, including the Eurotech SDF, Eurotech CDF and Eurotech TR.

The Eurotech SDF digitally printed label converting and finishing system is capable of operating in semi-rotary and rotary modes, with ‘quick and easy exchange’, while a servo driven flexo unit with automatic registration system can be used for cold foil, laminating ,coating ,super varnishing and more.

Eurotech CDF, also a digitally printed label converting and finishing system, can be used for water-based priming, coating, varnish, laminating etc, or with conveyor a for IML sheeting.

ANY-CUT benchtop laser finisher

The Eurotech TR turret rewind system allows for high-speed label roll finishing without the need for press speeds to decrease due to turret cycle time because of attachment to the press. The four-spindle turret allows for quick mandrel changeover and set-up times, which coupled with a touchscreen HMI operator control interface, makes the machine both interactive and user friendly. It is available in a variety of web widths

CARTES

Cartes shows an advanced version of its established GT series now including a semi-rotary die-cutting unit and on-board job parameter storage.

CERM

New features in the CERM MIS include: improvements for handling sleeves and flexible packaging; interfaces to finishing equipment from AVT and ABG; extended LILO (lead-in lead out) management when ganging in CERM; extending Web4Labels to end-customers and to salespeople on the road (allowing quotes for renewal, quick quotes and RFQ's); and an improved integration with Esko WebCenter.

CHANNELED RESOURCES GROUP

Channeled Resources Group is highlighting three new product lines: tape, release liner, and unsupported papers and films. The company's tape line will include splicing tapes, double sided tapes and gaffer tapes. Release liners will be 42, 53 and 78 # paper, and 1 mil PET amongst others. The company's unsupported line of products will include 53 and 60 lb. semi-gloss facers, 8, 10 and 12 pt. tag stock, as well as 2 mil TC clear and white BOPP, and lightweight tear resistant laminated papers, for durable applications – as alternatives to synthetic papers.

CODIMAG

For the first time in the US, Codimag will organize AnifloLive, during which label printers will have the opportunity to challenge the Viva 340 Aniflo with their own jobs. Aniflo is an anilox offset technology, designed for high-quality, short-run label work.

With a short file to print time, printers will see on the booth file separation, platemaking and job set-up. Once the job is on press, Codimag will also show colour adjustment. According to the customer file, color separation will be done in six-colour process, using Equinox by Esko.

COLLINS INKJET

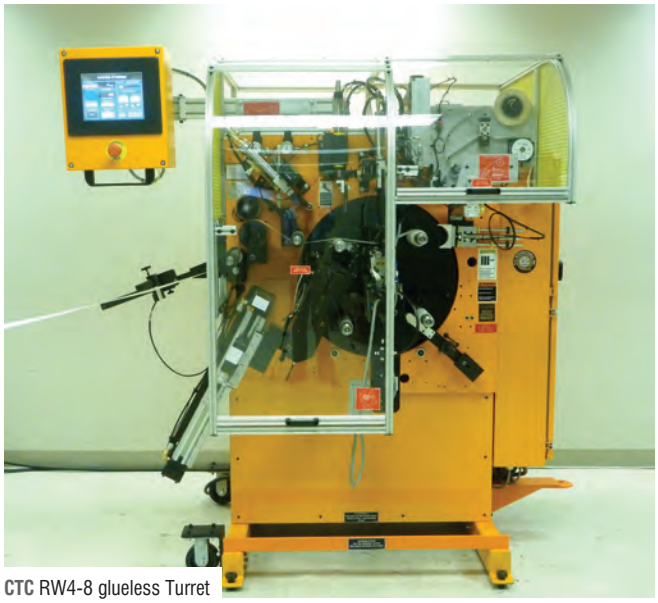
Collins Inkjet launches a full series of low migration inks for packaging and label applications including water-based, UV, LED, and now EB cure inks.

New to the range are EB Inks formulated similarly to UV and LED cure inks, but without the use of photo initiators. Rather, electron beam irradiation cures the ink completely, creating an odorless, high quality image.

Water–based inks are considered 'safe' fluids because they are comprised mostly of water and colorant, although substrate limitations still exist when compared to the energy curable inks, says Collins.

COLOR-DEC

Color-Dec introduces what the company says is the first one-axis, 3-component doming machine with glitter, perfume and color dispensing capabilities. The Domes machine model 610W-G simultaneously dispenses resin, catalysts and CDI special additives with glitter, colors, and perfumes.



CTC RW4-8 glueless Turret

COLORDYNE

Launches the CDT 3600, the latest addition to Colordyne's Production Class family of digital print systems. The CDT 3600 Series prints up to 225 ft/min (69 m/min) and at a resolution of 1600 x 1375dpi and has an enhanced web handling system with closed loop tension control. The CDT 3600 Series is available in similar configurations to CDT's existing Production Class platforms - roll-to-roll, rotary die-cutting and laser die-cutting finishing capabilities with in-line UV-varnish or lamination capabilities.

CTC

CTC introduces a new roll closure system for its line of turret rewinders.

Instead of using glue and die cut labels to close rolls, this system uses ordinary low-cost tape to close the rolls wound on the turret rewinder.

The length of tape applied to close the roll is adjustable, depending on the customer's needs.

DACO SOLUTIONS

Exhibits the PLD350 rotary die cutter with semi- automatic turret rewinder with a production speed of 150m/minute (492 ft/min) and job storage.

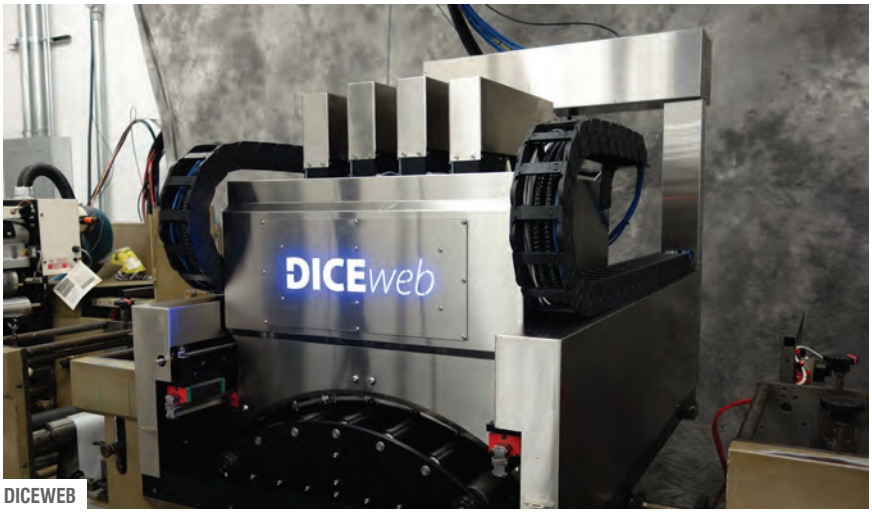
DANTEX

DantexRBCoxr, a subsidiary of Dantex and supplier of digital and analog letterpress, flexo and UV flexo water wash plates and processing equipment, at Labelexpo Americas 2014

This will coincide with the launch of the Mk 1.5. Digiwash system. This new addition to the Dantex Digiwash range has a vastly upgraded design, high-quality build and 21st century technology. It is the first equipment of its kind to use an intelligent touchscreen interface. The DigiWash also has a dual action wash, which gives far superior cleaning results.

Also new is the AQFC plate cleaning system, an addition to the Dantex range of specially designed equipment for cleaning letterpress and flexo plates after printing. Plates are automatically transported into the processor by soft-touch transfer rollers. The equipment's sequential action includes cleaning by brush action, rinsing and drying. It also incorporates recycling and filtration of waste solution for optimum economy.

Also on show will be the Aquaflex plate range, which is



DICEWEB

created from a unique formula of NBR rubber and graft polymerized, plasticized, bi-functional monomers.

DAVIS-STANDARD

New from coating specialist Davis-Standard is the Curtain Slide Coater, which applies a single layer coating at 2,800 fpm with expansion capabilities up to two additional layers. A new five-roll silicone coater is capable of applying 100 percent Silicone at 2,400 fpm. This coater is constructed of stainless steel for ease of cleanup and includes a mist removal system.

Davis-Standard is able to support over 50 liquid coating methods including gravure, rod, slot die, reverse roll, smooth roll transfer and more.

DELTA INDUSTRIAL SERVICES

Delta demonstrates its latest flexEDGE laser system, a portable unit which combines a laser cutting system with on-board chilling, ventilation and controls. The module is designed to take the place of a die station and is compatible with a rotary converting or digital print finishing system. It can also be used as a standalone sheetfed system for process setup or R&D.

Also on display is a Spectrum Finishing System featuring Delta's recently released embossing and hot foil stamping module. This now allows die-cut and emboss and/or hot foil stamp in one pass of the machine.

DIENES CORPORATION

Dienes Corporation introduces the newest member of its Quick Set automatic knife positioning family, the Quick Set 0.5.

The Quick Set 0.5 has Dienes Corporation's latest patent-pending positioning system, allowing simultaneous repositioning of hundreds of 0.5in knife sets in seconds, according to the company.

Quick Set systems can maintain the slitting action when relocating knife sets. The system uses servo motors and camera vision system output signals to change knife cut location on-the-fly. This capability prevents scrapping of production rolls due to print or folding crease line changes. Edge guiding or other devices with output signals can be utilized the same way. Operator controlled location change capability can also be provided.

DOMINO

Domino shows for the first time a 7-color version of its N610i UV-inkjet digital press.

The press is specified to print in up to seven colors including opaque white, imaging at 600 x 600dpi at speeds up to 246ft/min (75m/min).

The press incorporates all the N610i's existing intelligent technology (i-Tech) features, including ActiFlow continuous ink circulation, CleanCap automated cleaning and capping system, and StitchLink automated print head calibration system.

DOVER FLEXO ELECTRONICS

Announces the release of the EasyWeb open-loop torque controller to maintain tension on narrow web presses and label finishing lines. The EasyWeb controller works based on a diameter calculator signal and can be a lower-cost alternative to the highly precise transducer-based tension controllers for applications that require less web tension precision.

Unlike DFE's tension controllers that take an input signal from tension transducers (load cells), the EasyWeb maintains tension by controlling motor or brake torque based on the calculated variation of roll diameter as a roll is wound or unwound. An inertia compensation parameter is provided to obtain greater control of web tension during changes in line speed.

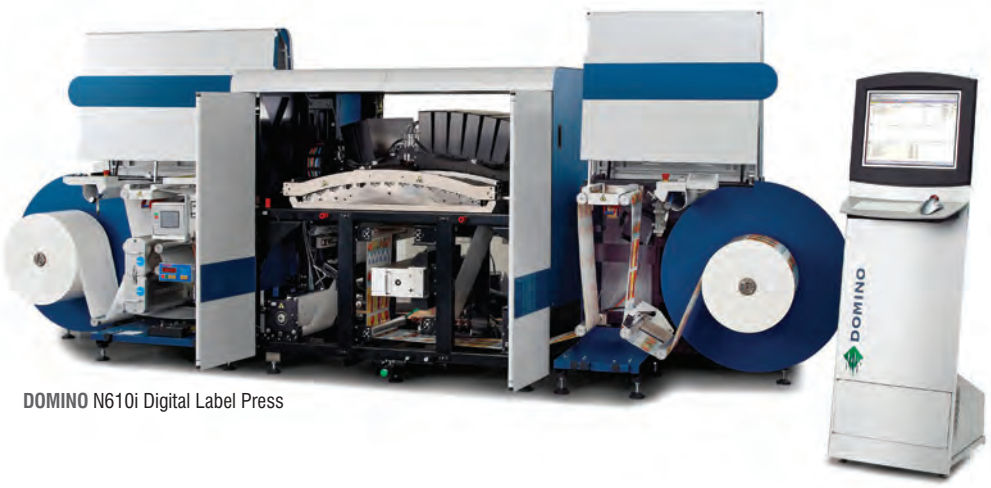
The EasyWeb Torque Controller can accept input signals from a direct diameter sensor or can calculate diameter using line and roll speed signals. In addition, an automated option is available to alert machine operators to the moment that a roll's unwind or rewind is nearing completion. An automatic shutoff feature can be enabled to shut the machine off when the core is reached at unwind or when full roll is reached at the rewind.

DPR

Shows its new digital label finishing system, the Scorpio Plus, an 'all-in-one' unit that laminates, digitally contour cuts, removes waste, slits and rewinds. The Scorpio Plus is targeted especially at systems like Memjet or toner-driven bench top systems.

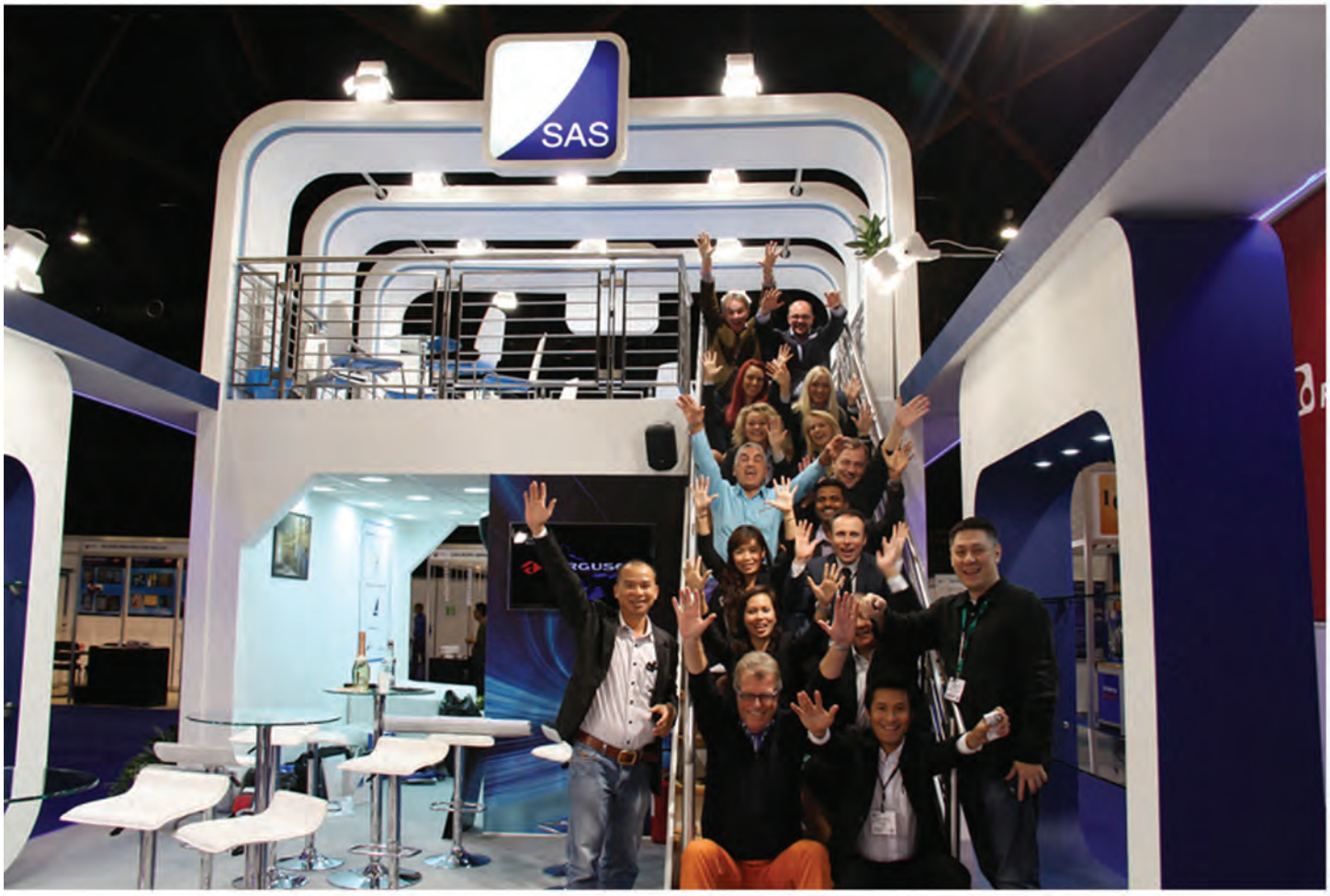
DUPONT

DuPont Packaging Graphics introduces the new DuPont Cyrel FAST DFUV flexographic printing plate. Cyrel DFUV is a thermal process plate designed specifically for shorter print runs using UV inks on high priced stock where minimizing the startup waste is essential. Cyrel DFUV is said to come up to color 'almost immediately' and



DOMINO N610i Digital Label Press

THANK YOU



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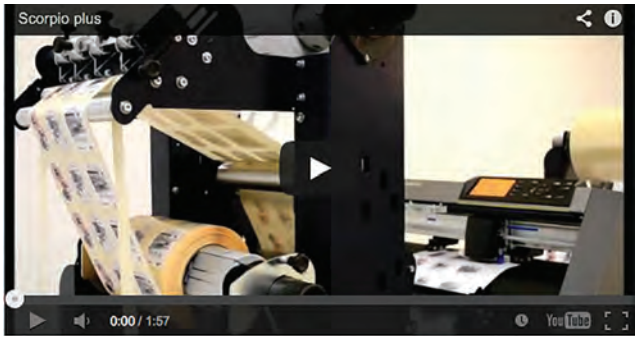
DPR Scorpion Plus digital label finisher



SEE Scorpio Plus is the perfect finishing device to the digital color label printers powered by Memjet or dry toner at: http://www.labelsandlabeling.com/video/digital-printing-finishing-and-converting-systems/scorpio-plus

DURST

Durst will show for the first time a Tau 330 UV-inkjet digital press with High-Definition Print Mode and inline Spartanics 1000W laser finishing. Durst will also introduce its new low migration/low odor Inks suitable for primary food packaging. The Tau 330 features a 14" web with full 13" image area and prints at speeds up to 157ft/min in 7 colors. The Tau's standard color configuration CMYK can be upgraded with optional high opacity White and two additional process colors, Violet and Orange, to increase pantone-matching accuracy.

ECKART AMERICA CORPORATION

Introduces its new line of RotoStar metallic LED-UV inks and Rotostar UV shrink sleeve gold ink, both designed for the narrow web and mid-web markets.

With RotoStar UV-LED inks, printers with LED capabilities can now incorporate metallic inks as part of their product offerings. Eckart's RotoStar UV Shrink Gold ink is based on a true bronze pigment that allows for cleaner, more vibrant metallic gold effects that maintain its brilliance after the film shrinking process. It will print on PVC, Pet-G and OPS shrink substrates.

EFI

Launches in the US the Jetrion 4950LX LED press, which brings higher resolution, faster throughput and full LED curing to the Jetrion 4900 product line. The press includes an enhanced varnish/lamination module and a high-power laser cutter available in single-head (500W) or dual-head (1000W) configuration.

EFI's booth will also feature the new version 15.1 of EFI Radius ERP software. This enhanced version of the packaging MIs/ERP product now includes a new mobile CRM module; improved

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ELECTROMATIC EQUIPMENT COMPANY

Demonstrates Check•Line's new LS-LED fixed-mount, linear stroboscopes. Three models (LS-5-LED, LS-9-LED and LS-18-LED) can be used singly or combined to accommodate virtually any web width. A complete line of hand-held and fixed-mounted Xenon and LED Strobes are also available.

DURST Tau330 with in-line laser finishing

ELECTRO OPTIC US

Electro Optics demonstrates its newly developed Digital Die, which 'addresses all essential requirements for the digital environment'. The Digital die is designed to perform equally on film and paper face material, eliminating the need to order different dies. Optimum integration of each semi-rotary/ digital die cutting machine's specific information allows the company to streamline its manufacturing process for the shortest possible delivery time.

Electro Flexible will perform live demonstrations repairing damaged flexible dies with the Electro Optic Die Repair Tool.

The company also shows its feature Flexible Die solutions for the Global MDO face materials on thin gauge liner applications in addition to its standard three basic grades of flexible dies.

EPSON AMERICA

Epson will announce upgrades to the SurePress L-4033A/AW water-base digital label press, including a clear sensor that will allow for printing on a clear substrate with a clear liner, as well as improved variable data printing processing for maximum label customization.

Epson will also show for the first time in the US its new SurePress L-6034VW digital press, the company's first single-pass industrial press. The machine uses Epson's new PrecisionCore linehead technology and is the first of the company's digital presses to use Epson's new LED-cured UV ink with in-line digital varnish technology.

The press will be available in two models – CMYK with digital varnish and high-opacity White ink (SurePress

EFI Jetrion 4950LX

L-6034VW) and without white ink (SurePress L-6034V).

Epson has incorporated sophisticated automatic monitoring, maintenance and cleaning features within the SurePress L-6034VW. Nozzle State Analysis technology automatically senses if a nozzle is not firing and rapidly cleans and recovers it, which minimizes downtime, ink waste and ensures reliable and continuous printing.

Epson America also launches its new ColorWorks bench top label printer, which also comes equipped with Epson's PrecisionCore print chip technology.

ERHARDT+LEIMER

Introduces its new Nyscan Web:Inspector 100% print inspection system with a completely redesigned interface, which will now be common across the company's vision product range.

Features include touch screen compatibility, sizable windows, and flexible screen resolution.

ESKO

Launches Suite 14, an update of the company's collection of preproduction software tools for packaging production. Key functions include: intelligent wizards to guide the operator through expert processes; improved workflow automation, with tickets routing designs automatically to a press-ready printing plate; and Smart templates linking objects to secure and approved content in a database.

ETI CONVERTING EQUIPMENT

Launches its Mini-Cohesio laminate manufacturing system. With a footprint of less than 25 feet, this takes up half the space of the full Cohesio, with 30 percent shorter web path, fast cantilever set-up and all the latest in-line coating technologies. The 13" (330mm) wide machine is equipped with ETI's Pellicut technology allowing to die-cutting of labels on 18 micron polyester film up to a speed of 750 ft/min (225 m/min

Demonstrates will feature a reverse gravure pre-printed beer label being silicone coated and adhesive coated, as well as die-cut, without die marks on the liner, on an 18 micron PET liner being converted in one manufacturing process from raw material to finished product at a speed of up to 500 fpm (150 m/min.).

FFEI

FFEI announces significant enhancements to its hybrid digital UV inkjet press, Graphium. Along with partner Fujifilm, FFEI demonstrates Graphium's new over white capability, claimed to 'dramatically increase' the potential opacity when used with the Graphium under white.

GRAPHIUM digital inkjet press for labels and speciality print - See more at: http://www.labelsandlabeling.com/video/digital-printing/graphium-digital-inkjet-press-labels-and-speciality-print

Additional enhancements include the capability to support substrates of 40-600um allowing the thinnest liners to heavy duty vinyl to be used, and the ability to print to an ISO 12647-2:2204 standard.

This new Graphium configuration will be demonstrated for the first time, including pre- and post- digital flexo stations, a cold foiling station and die cutter.

FIVES NORTH AMERICA

Shows its new H6421 web guide controller, which combines a touch pad with a robust pulse width modulated drive in one compact package. The web guide controller operates on a 24 VDC power supply within an IP55 rated water and dust resistant housing. Used in conjunction with SimPlexT sensors and actuators, the web guide controller provides web position control for edge guide, center guide, or line following applications. The H6421's small size – 4" W x 4" H x 4.25" D – enables maximum flexibility in installation and keyboard lockout capability minimizes inadvertent adjustments.

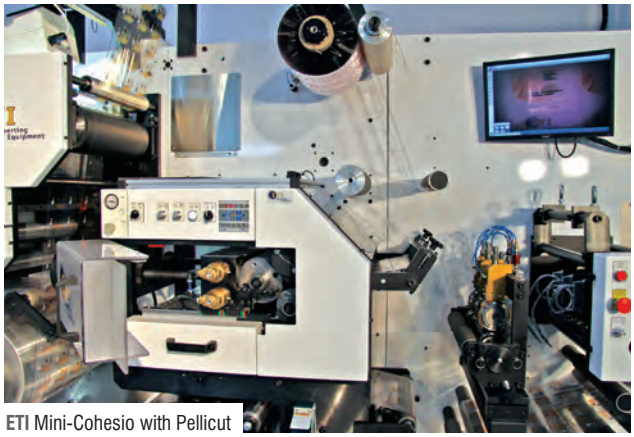
FLEXO CONCEPTS

Launches in the US its TruPoint Orange polymer doctor blade, which is now being shipped by several major press OEMs with new installations.

The company's 'MicroTip' technology along with advanced metering, gives printers an alternative to steel doctor blades with the added benefits of longer blade life and safety, says the manufacturer. 'The polymer blade has also been successful at eliminating UV ink spitting and anilox roll scoring.

FLEXOMAID

Shows a one-minute quality control test which allows printers to check their anilox rolls are clean. Also demonstrates new anilox cleaning equipment.



ETI Mini-Cohesio with Pellicut

FIVES H6421 web guide controller

FLINT GROUP

Flint expands its EkoCure UV-LED product range to include metallic inks, UV shrink whites, UV rotary screen inks, EkoCure Ivory and Ebony, plus a wide range of coatings and adhesives.

For flexible packaging converters the company showcases new water-based film inks and low migration technologies. Flint also introduces new ranges of rotary screen inks, including CombiWhite X2, designed especially for combination printing.

FRANKLIN ADHESIVES & POLYMERS

Launches Covinax 234-01 pressure sensitive adhesive (PSA) that stays transparent, peels smoothly and re-adheres – multiple times – with no adhesive build-up on the surface. The new Covinax PSA coats on clear and remains so when exposed to UV and moisture, says Franklin, and offers excellent adhesion even to low-surface-energy (LSE) materials.

Because it offers high resistance to low temperatures and water-whitening, this durable PSA is ideal for use in cold, wet environments, such as a freezer or on the inside of a window. It also is compliant to FDA 21 CFR 175.105, for food packaging. Its ability

FUJIFILM NORTH AMERICA CORPORATION

Launches Clarity water-washable flexo plates with an imaging resolution of 200 lpi at 4,400 dpi, with 1 percent process dot structure.

GEW

The UV systems manufacturer announces the start of serial production of the new Rhino power supply for use with its range of arc lamp and solid-state UV light sources. Shown for the first time in the US, the Rhino comes at the end of a three-year development programme and has achieved major gains in efficiency and reliability. The Rhino is designed to work with GEW's E2C low energy UV lamphead for the most energy-efficient UV solution. Wider machines can also benefit from the same energy saving technology by using the larger NUVA2 lamphead.

Rhino includes an embedded service technology which continuously monitors the system, guarding against out-of-specification parameters that could result in an unplanned stoppage. GEW's operating center automatically advises of any maintenance needed before a fault can develop.

GMG

Launches its OpenColor color management system, enabling proofs to be produced that both represent pure spot colors precisely and simulate their complex overprinting behavior.

OpenColor incorporates a centralized database for the secure management of spot colors and ensures that all connected GMG ColorProof systems use the same critical color data.

MultiColor profiles can be created from a few patches or with the help of complete MultiColor test charts. An integrated wizard completely automates the creation of MultiColor profiles.

GONDERFLEX INTERNATIONAL

Gonderflex introduces distortion software which permits the use of pre-existing full-rotary flexible dies by compensating their distortion requirements to fit the Rotoworx's semi-rotary die cutter. Additionally, it offers circumferential scalability of the cut length in order to obtain optimum results. The software also has the ability to directly manage plate requirements to assure their full compatibility.

GRAFISK MASKINFABRIK

GM demonstrates an entry-level, compact version of its L330 laser die cutter, including the company's new fast change flexo varnish

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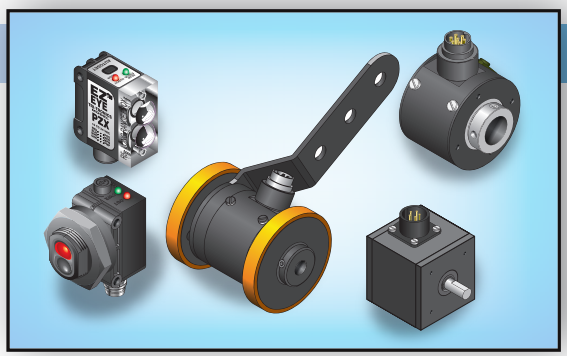

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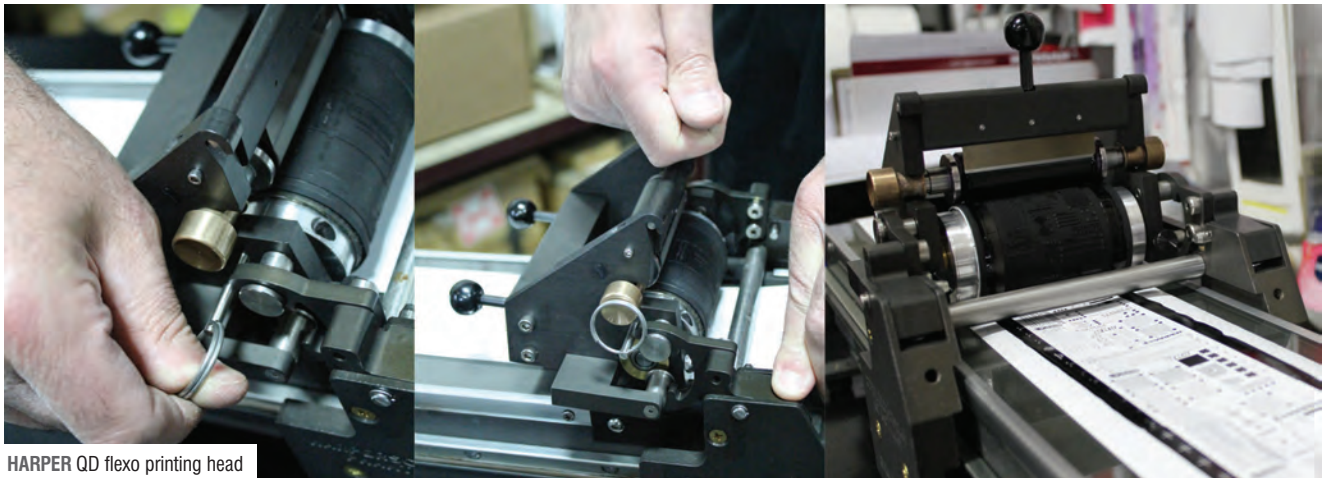


HARPER QD flexo printing head

station. This unit features a more compact peak power laser unit which cuts at higher speeds. Another laser will be shown mounted on a standard DC330 finishing line along with a Tubescan 100% inspection module. The Tubescan system can also be fitted on the LST330 slitter/rewinder to form a compact high performance inspection unit.

Also on display is the FB330 one-step hot stamp / embossing module with optional rotating foil tower and a DC330 Mini compact finisher. The latest version of company's ETV330/515 series sheeter will be shown.

GOSS INTERNATIONAL

Goss International promotes its Goss Vpak 500 and Vpak 3000 web offset press models for folding carton, flexible packaging, pre-print and label applications, available in web widths from 520 mm to 1905 mm (20.5 to 75 inches) and printing at speeds of up to 457 meters (1,500 feet) per minute. Key features include quick-change sleeve adapter technology for efficient size changes, and advanced offset inking, tension and control systems.

New are options for integrating flexo, gravure and digital stations into a Vpak press configuration to form a hybrid production line,

GRAPHTEC CORPORATION

Japanese company launches its LabelRobo LCX1000 digital label creation system, ideally suited for the production of GHS-compliant industrial labels.

The system comes in two parts. The LabelRobo DLP1000 print engine system uses Graphtec's newly developed electrophotographic printing technology, achieving speeds up to 124mm/sec at a maximum output resolution of 600dpi×2400dpi across 6in wide media.

The LabelRobo DLC1000 is a digital label finisher including laminating, plotter-based die cutting of different size and shapes, waste matrix removal, slitting, and re-winding.

The system will handle a wide variety of media, now under development, with water and weather resistance, including glossy paper, semi-glossy paper and synthetic paper. PET film white, PET film clear and PET film silver.

SEE how the Domino K600i has enabled Hofprint Etiketten to take variable data printing to the next level at http://www.labelsandlabeling.com/video/digital-printing/hofprint-etiketten-chooses-domino%E2%80%99s-k600i

GRAFOTRONIC

Grafotronic launches its CF-series entry level digital finishing machine, which includes a flexo unit, semi rotary / fully rotary die cutting, laminating with cold foil option, slitting and rewinding and is fully upgradable.

Also new is the updated HI-series (Horizontal Inspection) with web path integrated inside the machine, allowing speeds up to 985 ft/min with 100% inspection.

A new fully automatic core cutter is shown with fast diameter change and cut speed of 70 cores /min.

GRAPHIQUE

The company launches its new high speed flatbed screen unit, shown on a Galaxie SGV running at 30m/min. Also new is a high speed flatbed hot stamping/embossing unit, demonstrated on a Galaxie HGV with foil saver system, running at 35m/min.

A third launch is the Sirius Servo slitter-rewinder which can integrate different value-added modules, including 100% inspection, inkjet and label/RFID insertion.

GRAFOTRONIC CF-series finishing unit

GSE DISPENSING

Presents for the first time in the US the Colorsat Switch automated ink management system engineered for narrow-web printers requiring small ink batches for a ≤ precise and waste-free means of achieving spot color on demand.

The Colorsat Switch can dispense water-based, UV-curing or solvent-based ink batches into 1.3 gallon buckets with a typical four-component recipe of 11lbs produced in less than four minutes and to 0.01lbs accuracy.

GREEN BAY PACKAGING

Green Bay Packaging launches a label stock made from coffee bean bags. With its slightly rough texture and the noticeable pieces of jute, this paper 'makes a unique visual statement, and a statement of environmental responsibility'.

Kona Paper is a 100% recycled post-consumer waste product. This paper is a blend of repurposed coffee bean bag fiber combined with post-consumer waste material. It is available in three colors – light, medium, and dark roast. Kona Paper pressure-sensitive label material is exclusively available from Green Bay Packaging.

Green Bay Packaging suggests this is combined with an unbleached liner to make an even more positive impact on the environment.

Both Kona Light Roast and Kona Medium Roast are available trimless, on Green Bay Packaging's T.I.P. program.

GUANGDONG GUANHAO HIGH-TECH

The Chinese company launches a range of new PSA products from its Donghai Island specialty paper project: airline-related labels, die-cut stickers, removable labels and a range of special materials including thermal transfer labels.

The first stage of the Donghai Island project ran its first successful trials in Apr. 2014, including one base paper production line and four coating lines. Together with the new project, Guanhao's annual production capacity reaches to 185,000 tons for base paper and 250, 000 tons for coating paper.

HANSOL PAPER

This first-time South Korean exhibitor demonstrates its latest NTC (non-top coated) thermal label paper, Hansol NTC EL 74 . The material has been optimized for use in labels, taking account of laminating requirements as well as print image and sharpness. It displays good barcode legibility, with Image Density of 1.6, and image stability is claimed between three to eight years, depending on environmental influence.

Hansol NTC EL 74 is also suitable for use in POS and ticket applications.

HARPER

The QD flexo printing head is a new addition to Harper's QD multi-process flatbed printing system.

The expanded QD system simulates flexo and gravure full coverage printing and with laser imaged engraved cylinders (XDI) direct and off-set gravure (OSG) printing.

The flexo printing head prints a 6.66" repeat using Harper's standard proofer anilox rolls. It uses a traditional imaged flexo plate coupled with mounting tape to a plate cylinder, or the printing head can be used with Harper's fiber laser engraved ITR (in-the-round) EDPM transfer roll. The ITR transfer roll is ideal for functional printing projects with solvent or toluene-based inks to eliminate the concern with plate lift due to frequent cleanings.

The QD now has the capability of multi-passes of trapped images due to its pin type zero reference starting point.

HP INDIGO

HP Indigo's latest generation narrow-web label press will make its North America debut. The HP Indigo WS6800 Digital Press includes a new inline spectrophotometer, making setup time for color profile and matching three times faster than current methods. Users can match a target color on a specified media with complete consistently between runs, says HP.

The press also offers higher output with a larger, 12.59 x 38.58in (32cm x 98cm) image format for improved step and repeat utilization. A new automated mechanism delivers continuous, closed-loop repeat control to preserve precise accuracy of repeat length and image length during long runs.

Enhanced Print Mode (EPM) is supported along with a new, high definition 223 lines per inch (lpi) screen, providing increased color space.

Also new, the HP Indigo 20000 Digital Press will be shown for the first time in the US. The 30-in machine is designed for flexible packaging, labels, and shrink sleeves, printing on film or paper from 0.4 to 10 pt. The 20000 uses HP Indigo's established 7-color One Shot imaging technology, including ElectroInk White.

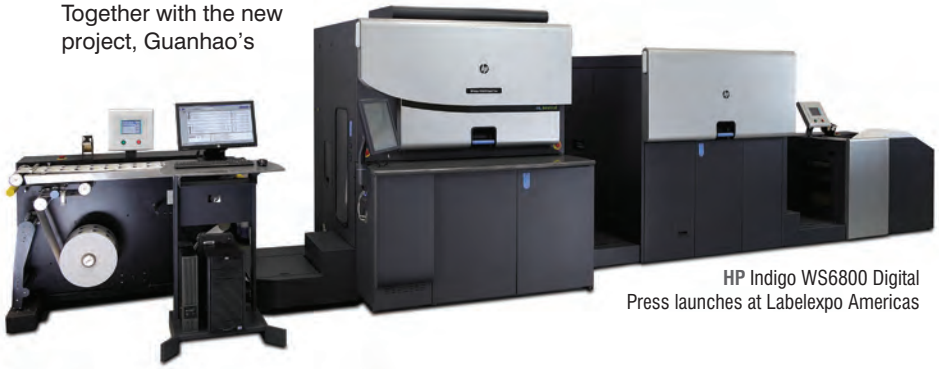
IIJ MK2 ink controller system

IIMAK

IIMAK will introduce its new SP575 flat head resin and Net Flex Plus near edge ribbons. The SP575 resin stands up against harsh chemicals and severe abrasion, making it ideal for demanding industrial and automotive labeling applications. Net Flex Plus broadens IIMAK's line of near edge ribbons, said to offer outstanding performance at high speeds, exceptional dark print quality and image durability. In addition, IIMAK will feature GHS ready solutions that are BS 5609 certified.

IMP/ZHUORIM

Introduces its Z203 wax/resin ribbons. A thinner polyester base material results is a more thermally responsive ink, allowing the product to provide resin-like performance at lower printhead energies and with at the faster printer speeds more typical of wax/resin products. Z203 Super Premium wax/resin is said to offer excellent solvent, heat, and image durability and has achieved UL recognition in combination with several



HP Indigo WS6800 Digital Press launches at Labelexpo Americas

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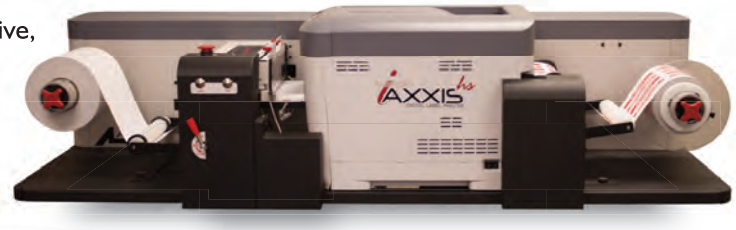

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Other product introductions include: Z107 Value Wax resin-enhanced wax ribbons; Z201 Premium Wax/Resin optimized for coated papers, matte/gloss synthetics and film products; and Z212 high-speed near-edge wax resin designed for printing onto flexible packaging.

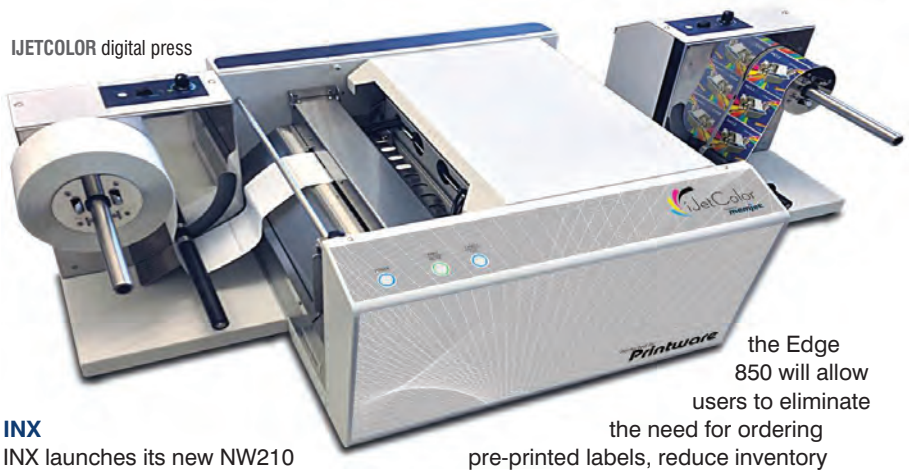
INDUSTRIAL INKJET

Industrial Inkjet Ltd (IIJ) will be showing in public for the first time at Labelexpo Americas a prototype of its newly developed wide print bar. The product, to be launched in September, is a direct response to increasingly sophisticated customer requirements.

The benefits include compact size and ease of integration, coupled with the ability to print process and spot colours, white, varnish and security inks. All these make it suitable for a wide range of packaging applications.

IIJ will also be showing the MK2 ink controller system for the first time. It has been developed in direct response to increasingly sophisticated customer requirements for fully automated turnkey systems to cope with larger industrial printers.

IIJ's MK2 system, which has already been piloted at some customer sites, has numerous improvements over the former system, including: virtually no ink wastage, with individual purge by color; ink compatibility, where extensive use of Teflon and stainless steel ensures the ink system is fully compatible with a very wide range of UV, solvent and water-based inks – even food grade inks can be used; a future-proof design, in that the system is easily expandable into more colors and more heads per color; scan or one-pass, with the tank design allowing for a high level of acceleration; applications, with the new design suitable for low-migration inks, white inks, varnishes, primers, metalics, ceramic, conductive and security inks; and an improved user interface.



IJETCOLOR digital press

INX

INX launches its new NW210 LED UV-inkjet narrow web press running in-line with a Spartanics 200W X210 laser station at speeds up to 80 ft/min across a 210mm wide web. The NW210 incorporates 15 of Xaar's new 1002 printheads capable of printing 7 drop sizes. It also has five color ink channels – CMYK plus white – with three additional channels as an option. It supports media up to 5mm thick on 3-inch cores up to two feet in diameter.

The company also shows its full range of ink technologies.

JINDA

New products include PE and PP labelstocks for the cosmetics and home chemicals market in both clear and white grades,where a 'soft touch' feel is required. Also a clear-on-clear BOPP wine labelstock which also has applications for premium beer and cosmetics labels.

ISYS ABEL

iSys Label will be showcasing the Egde 850, a roll-to-roll digital label printer for printing full-color BS5609-compliant chemical drum labels on demand.

With recent BS5609 Section 3 Certification by PIRA, the Edge 850 can print GHS-compliant labels. With print speeds of 4.33m/min and 9.14m/min, the Edge 850 will allow users to eliminate the need for ordering pre-printed labels, reduce inventory and wait times, and allows users to customize each label with variable information in full color – all in a single pass..

Die-cut labels printed on the Edge 850 deliver are stable and resistant to water, chemicals, fading and smudges when exposed to the harshest of elements.

INX NW210 press

JORDAN PRODUCTS

Introduces Covert-ID, a peel-to-activate film that allows a confidential code to be securely carried within a single layer of thin optical film. The optical thin film also has color shifting metallic properties which give it an attractive aesthetic.

The variable covert image is in registration with visible overt printing, so the hidden code can be securely tracked throughout the manufacturing process and supply chain. This visible printing can be a QR code which matches the covert code, links to a website for covert code input verification, or relates to the code in a confidential database. Applications include software authentication and pharmaceutical authentication.

JUJO THERMAL

Introduces to the US market the new multipurpose AL60KT-LH thermal face stock grade, a topcoated paper for demanding applications in applications from retail and transport to deep freeze use. AL60KT-LH has good wet strengt hand superior pre-printing properties in both offset and flexo.

KOCHER + BECK

Kocher + Beck launches its UR Precision M automatic matrix transfer rewinding system, which ensures non-stop winding of self-adhesive waste matrix.

When the maximum roll diameter has been reached, a bump and cut mechanism automatically transfers the leading edge to the self-made core.

The full roll is then rotated around to the exit position, and pneumatically pushed into a safety stop position to allow for an ergonomic lift off by the operator.

With the UR Precision M there is no need for extraction, silicone addition or any complex pipework, and the compact independent unit can be either free standing or press mounted.

KODAK

Kodak demonstrates its Flexcel NX high definition plate system, Prinergy Powerpack workflow and Spotless flexographic system for spot color replacement. For packaging that incorporates digital print features, Kodak will also discuss possible applications for its Prosper S-Series imprinting systems and the new Kodak Prosper 6000 Press.

LABEL TRAXX

Label Traxx will preview version 7.1 of its MIS software.

Version 7.1 incorporates a new external document system that can store multiple document types, including PDF, .MOV, .DOC, .XLS and others. The storage system has been added to all areas of the program for storing the paper trail, proofs, ISO and other information.

An enhanced and improved connection from Label Traxx to the Esko Automation Engine and digital press front ends are also new to Version 7.1, with more specific job data being sent. Messages are automated when job changes are entered.

LEDERLE MACHINE

Lederle Machine's Rewind division introduces the 'C-Class' CE- certified table, which utilizes a proven AC drive system that is available in 120vac or 230vac and is backed by a 1-year warranty. Includes an optional 'constant speed' feature and thermal printer

LEONARDUS

Leonardus launches its En-TAG platform. Based on nano-technology, the system integrates holograms with tracking, brand protection and product safety markers, with verification via an app on a smartphone. The system can be customized and can also integrate with multimedia content.

LUMINESCENCE

Launches a new range of security inks suitable for inkjet technologies. These can offer protection from counterfeiting or the alteration of data and can also be used as a key feature in track and trace systems. Inkjet inks can be supplied with various security features from standard UV fluorescence to multi-layered security levels. For the highest security levels, inks can be encoded with unique DNA taggants. Luminescence security inks can be formulated to work with solvent based, water-based or UV-curing inks.

MARK ANDY

Mark Andy launches its Digital Series hybrid press designed to run at speeds up to 250 ft/min (76 m/min). The press is configured with a 6-color UV ink jet printing (CMYKOV + W) with top-coating and fully integrated in-line modules including flexographic printing, various converting options, cold foil, screen and more. The machine platform is fully modular and expandable, with tooling compatible with Mark Andy's Performance-series presses (for full report see L&L3).

Premiering to the North American market will be Mark Andy's newest division, Mark Andy Print Products, which aims to be a one-stop shop for all the supplies, consumables and equipment required to support pressroom efficiency. The division maintains an extensive inventory and supplier network offering a full line of flexo and offset supplies, from plate mounting tapes to tint sleeves to doctor blades, and now an authorized distributor of Esko CDI equipment and DuPont Cyrel FAST flexographic platemaking systems.

MARTIN AUTOMATIC

The company's MBS butt splicer now includes as standard ultrasonic sidelay sensors and spiral grooved rollers for unwinding and splicing clear film structures. The MBS now features a touch screen operator panel with expanded diagnostics.

The LRD transfer rewinder also now features touch screen control including recipe functions. The optional inline slitter package has been enhanced to offer lateral adjustment of the slitter and anvil roller assembly for quicker set-up, fine-tuning and changeover between jobs.

MCS

Both water-based and UV-curable inks – including spot colors - are now available for the MCS Eagle UV inkjet system on show at Labelexpo, designed to be added to a flexo or other web press. Print heads can be combined for a total width up to 25", with 600dpi resolution printing at up to 333 fpm. Drop size is adjustable between 6, 7, 11 and 14 pl as well as oversized drop capability.

MIDWAY ROTARY DIE SOLUTIONS

Midway demonstrates its new manual

KOCHER + Beck matrix rewinder

die cutting station, designed to cut a wide range of tough materials including packaging film, transdermal medication patches and leather products for short runs, test samples, or prototyping needs. The unit features infinite adjustability of the material guide system and an FDA-approved coating on the press frames is available for medical clean room use. It can also be fitted with a drive system for integration into print or converting lines.

MULTIFEEDER TECHNOLOGY

Will be debuting the latest version of its Booklet-to-Web 1300dhsl system. The system places booklets or sheets on a high speed web to aid in creating value-added products.

MULTI-PLASTICS

Expands its flexible packaging line to include coated polypropylene films from Jindal Films and laminated pouch materials. Examples of the company's patent-pending, EZTear lamination structure will be on display. Multi-Plastics' goal is 'to help narrow web flexo printers realize how successful they can be by diversifying their product offerings to include flexible packaging and unsupported films'.

MÜHLBAUER

The Mühlbauer PL 30000 RFID Personalization line will be unveiled. Mühlbauer's universal platform now enables fully automated high speed chip encoding and print personalization of RFID labels and tickets (on reel and Z-fold) in one fully integrated system. Within the footprint of 3.6 x 1.6 meter, stations for barcode reading, chip encoding, variable data printing, UV curing, camera inspection, RFID verification, bad tag removal and auto remake of rejects are

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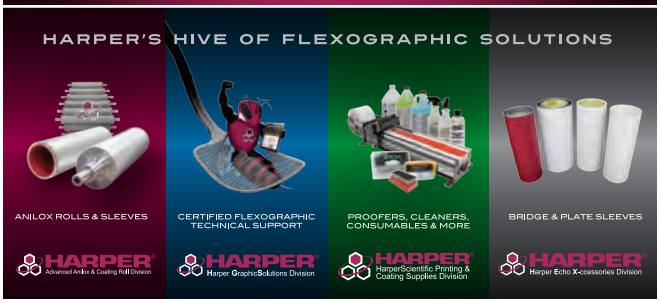

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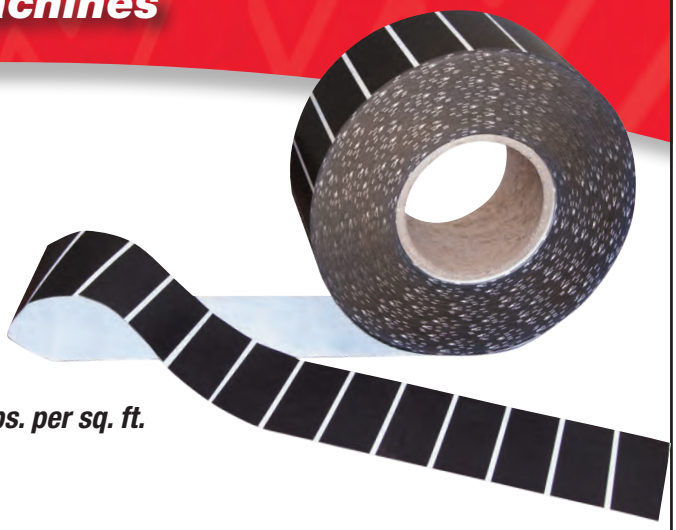

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integrated. Processing times for the PL 30000 peak at 30,0000 units per hour, a major improvement over the predecessor system PL 20000.

NASTAR

Introduces two direct thermal products to its linerless temporary adhesive offerings. They are available with both full gum and pattern-coated adhesives.

SWDTX: T2 Repositionable Adhesive and a printable food grade non-silicone release. The printable release allows the labels to be color-coded or printed flexo on both the face and adhesive side; SWDTZ: T1055 Temporary Adhesive and a traditional silicone release. T1055 is temporarily permanent and permanently removable from a wide range of surfaces.

NEWLY CORPORATION

Exhibits three new products: The Newly GCI gravure copper cylinder inspector ensures the copper coating is free from either pinholes or defects on the surface before engraving; The Newly-PMS label print inspector checks a wide range of print details including image patterns, letter shape and color versus the press proof document; The Newly-ST1 scanner is used to capture realistic 3D images of an object using progressive lighting technology.

NILPETER

Nilpeter shows for the first time its new FP-4 flatbed module for hot foil and embossing inline production. The unit will be demonstrated on the FA-4 press at the show along with the QC-Die unit for fast job changeovers.

The FA-4* on the Nilpeter stand is a fully automated 8-color, 16" press. An 8-color job-change will be demonstrated, including change of die, leaving just 20-25 meters of waste. The press is built in one-frame-unit steel construction with seven HD servo motors per printing unit, four individual tension zones, auto-synchronised roller train, and fixed web path between the units.

The FA-4* has a web width of 420 mm (16.5 in), an extra short web path and a top speed of 175 m/min. (574 ft./min.).

Also on the Nilpeter stand is the 'entry level' FB-3 press designed for maximum efficiency in PS label production. The machine is an 8-color 13" press shown printing expanded gamut process colors. The FB-3 delivers a top speed of 228 m/min (750 ft/min) on webs up to 350 mm (13.75 in) wide.

NOVATION

Latest version of Novation ScrapTracker system is shown. The software creates a "roll map" associated with each roll of material manufactured, processed or printed. The data file contains all the information about the locations and types of any defects within the roll, which are subsequently flagged.

If the downstream process is equipped with Novation's RollCode system, the roll map data is used to automatically stop the machine at each flagged location.

NUOVA GIDUE

The company shows a 430mm M5 UV flexo press demonstrating all aspects of Nuova Gidue's 'Digital Flexo' Excellence and Revo technologies, including ExcelPrint, ExcelDie and ExcelCut for the automatic non-stop exchange of print cylinders, magnetic and flexible dies. The company says waste and set-up time are significantly lower than those on digital presses.

The Revo project team behind the press consists of eight leading industry suppliers, with the aim of digitizing as far as possible the workflow from pre-press to print and converting, including printing as standard with a 7-color process set.

OMET

OMET Americas launches its new XFlex X4 in a 17in (440mm) width. XFlex X4 is Omet's entry-level press and includes the company's Vision register control system, twin servo-motors on each printing unit and label and film printing capabilities. The addition of the extended width to the XFlex X4 is targeted specifically at the American market, with a requirement to convert short and medium runs of labels to long runs of flexible packaging.

Also on the stand will be a 10-color XFlex X6 530 press demonstrating self-adhesive label printing for the wine and spirits sector alternating with shrink sleeve printing.

Omet Americas, Inc., moved last year to Illinois, forming a technical support center for North, Central and South American markets.

PANTEC GS SYSTEMS

Seen for the first time in the US is Pantec GS Systems' Swift inline hot foil saving

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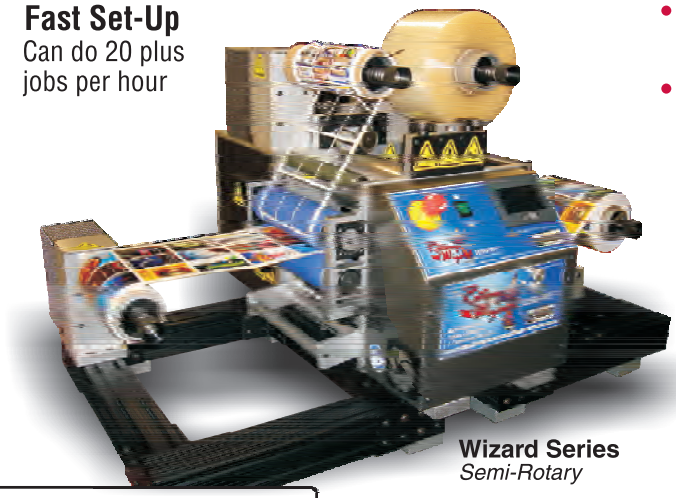

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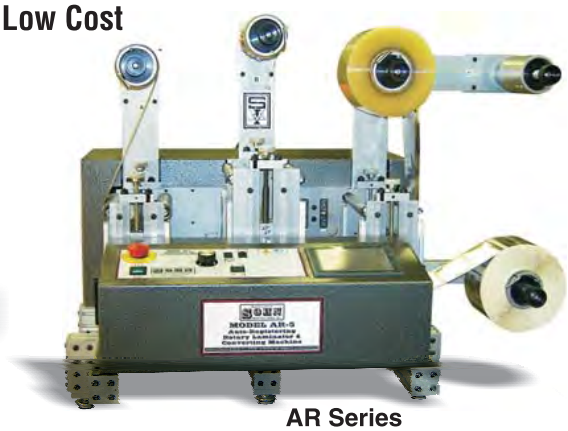

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and hologram stamping unit. Swift can achieve foil savings of 90 percent or more, depending on foil design, says Pantec. Swift is optimized for short setup time, as a great part of a job can be prepared off-line.

PC INDUSTRIES

PC industries Introduces two new systems.

The Guardian LSI is PC Industries' entry-level 100% inspection system. Defects are displayed in real time, or reviewed through the Defect Queue, which allows the operator to review and accept or reject flagged labels without stopping the press. Job setup can be saved for later recall on repeat runs.

The Graphic-Vision GV530/Spectro provides all the functionality of the GV500 series web viewers with, now with color measurement and real-time reporting. Motorized traverse with programmed and combination positioning allows the operator to monitor the most important areas on the web.

PCT ENGINEERED SYSTEMS

Label converters looking to expand into flexible packaging by adopting in-line lamination or clear coat overprint can now utilize electron beam (EB) technology to eliminate photoinitiator migration risk, following a new development by PCT Engineered Systems.

By combining the compact footprint of a Comet sealed e-beam lamp with PCT's patented Integrated Shield Roll, the unit extends the benefits of EB to narrow web printers, including stable web support, web temperature control, inerting volume minimization, easy access and a small footprint.

PCT says EB offers several advantages over UV. It needs no photoinitiator in printing inks, coatings or adhesives; more effectively penetrates opaque inks and substrates; requires less energy and delivers a much cooler curing process.

PRIMERA TECHNOLOGY.

Shows for the first time the new LX2000 desktop color label printer, featuring large ink tanks for lower cost per label, pigmented ink to allow for more water and UV resistance, front color LCD control panel and wired/ethernet or wireless connection options. Other highlights include a viewing window for label stock levels, built in "pizza-wheel" cutter and print speeds of up to 6 ips.

Primera will also showcase the CX1200 digital press and FX1200 Digital Finishing System.

PROPHETEER

The new generation Propheteer Video Plate III will be introduced. Aided by a split screen magnified video alignment tool, (100X magnification) a single adjustment knob is now used to accurately align the plate to the cylinder, greatly reducing the time for this critical task.

Also on show is the 'R' series slitter rewinder, with a large viewing area and maximum speeds of 800 fpm.

MIDWAY Press Station

POLYONICS

Polyonics shows its new family of laser-markable label materials (LML), designed to withstand high temperature and harsh environments. These products are constructed from highly durable polyimide films that can be ablated with a wide variety of popular low power lasers. Also on the stand is a range of PS materials for harsh environments including printed circuit boards, flame retardant materials, anti-static and labels capable of withstanding extreme temperatures.

PRECISION AIRCONVEY

Precision AirConvey (PAC) demonstrates its latest oil mist system for the

MARK Andy Digital Series press

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automated removal of pressure sensitive adhesive (PSA) label matrix waste, the EnviroPulse 14.

The matrix is first cut into small, confetti-like pieces that are whisked away to a waste-bin or baler. PAC's EnviroPulse 14 applies a micro-thin film of food-grade mineral oil to the internal surfaces of the path via a fine mist. This coating is critical for keeping the adhesive material from adhering to tubing or other system components, eliminating expensive system clogs. The EnviroPulse 14 uses a 100 psi atomizer at the infeed nozzle to produce such a fine mist that very little oil is required. The unit has a self-contained pump, so no compressed air is needed for its operation.

PROTOTYPE & PRODUCTION SYSTEMS (PPSI)

New at the show is DICEweb, the second generation of PPSI's DICE printers, an inkjet module which adds digital color printing to any flexo press. The DICEweb delivers fixed or variable graphics, text, and barcodes at speeds of 165 ft/min (50m/min). By adding digital print to a flexo press, DICEweb can use the flexo stations to add primer, whites or lacquers; and it makes use of existing investments in inline tooling without the need to move work to a separate converting machine.

DICEweb incorporates an automatic printhead-cleaning station, recirculating ink supplies, and steel nozzle plates for reliability and easy maintenance. DICEweb is available in widths up to 20 inches (508mm) or more by special order, and with 4-6 colors.

RAVENWOOD PACKAGING

Linerless specialist launches two new products: 'slideable' labels which are made from thicker materials up to 300gsm; and 'skin pack' labelling, which can now also be produced by Nobac linerless labeling machines.

RE CONTROLLI INDUSTRIALI

The company launches a new web guide system along with its WLigo remote controller. Designed for small and medium size web guide systems, the SmartMotion control unit fuses stepper motor and drive technologies into a single device.

The motor, controlled to 1/128 step, gives the whole web guide system a greater accuracy, fluidity in the movement, speed of response and low noise, says Re Controlli. A high heat dissipation range enables a consistently low working temperature of the stepper motor, avoiding overheating of the whole web guide system.

The SmartMotion control unit allows the series connection of more than one web guide system using one WLigo remote controller.

RECYL

Introduces two new aerosols. Magic'Cliché is sprayed onto flexo plates before the print run to facilitate ink transfer from flexo plates to the substrate. The formulation incorporates anti-static / sliding properties allows for a better release of ink, consequently avoiding ink build-up that downgrades printing quality and productivity. Magic'Cliché helps the ink circulate easily on the surface, making it easier to clean while ensuring protection to plates against any aggression from inks and solvents, thus extending plate life.

Magic'Lox is primarily to clean anilox, chrome cylinders, plates or parts between print runs.

RICOH ELECTRONICS

Ricoh launches an ID/shipping label constructed with a double-layer of adhesive. After application, a removable top layer allows the label to be applied elsewhere.

Also new is a 3.1 mil ticket material with high image sensitivity, with a brightness-enhanced thermal surface and minimized OBA on the non-thermal side.

Ricoh's thermal transfer ribbon product line now includes B120EC, a universal resin ribbon suited for applications where a high resistance to environmental conditions is required.

RITRAMA

Ritrama is to show Core Linerless Solutions, a PSA material which once printed with traditional printing technologies, by means of a dedicated machine, is transformed into a single ply linerless web before it is then dispensed using a special linerless module. Ritrama's presence will also focus on conformable films, such as Globalflex for squeezeable tube applications, the new enhanced range of seal/reseal products as well as digital demand inkjet media and other constructions for specialty applications.

ROLAND

The new Roland VSi Series printer incorporates all the features of the established VersaCAMM, including high-density eco-solvent ink and integrated contour cutting. The Piezo inkjet print head images variable droplets with seven different sizes. VSi Series printer/cutters are designed to take full advantage of Roland's faster-drying, wide-gamut Eco-Sol MAX 2 inks in CMYKLcLm, high opacity White, brighter Metallic Silver and new Light Black. Metallic Silver can be printed as a spot color or combined with CMYK to produce over 500 metallic and pearlescent colors. Print speed is up to 289 sqft./hr.

ROLLEM INTERNATIONAL

Rollem International launches a new class of rotary sheetfed die cutting system.

The Delta is a flexo-magnetic rotary die cutter for the sheet-fed label, packaging and mail markets. The Delta will die cut, kiss cut and score a wide range of

MULTI-PLASTICS
E-ZTear material

applications from both offset and digital presses. Delta has a high capacity feeder, full guide and gripper registration system, simple depth adjustments and receding stacker or waste stripping unit for delivery. Production speeds are up to 4,000 sph. The Delta5 handles 20”x15” sheet sizes, and the Delta7 handles larger 30”x24” sheets.

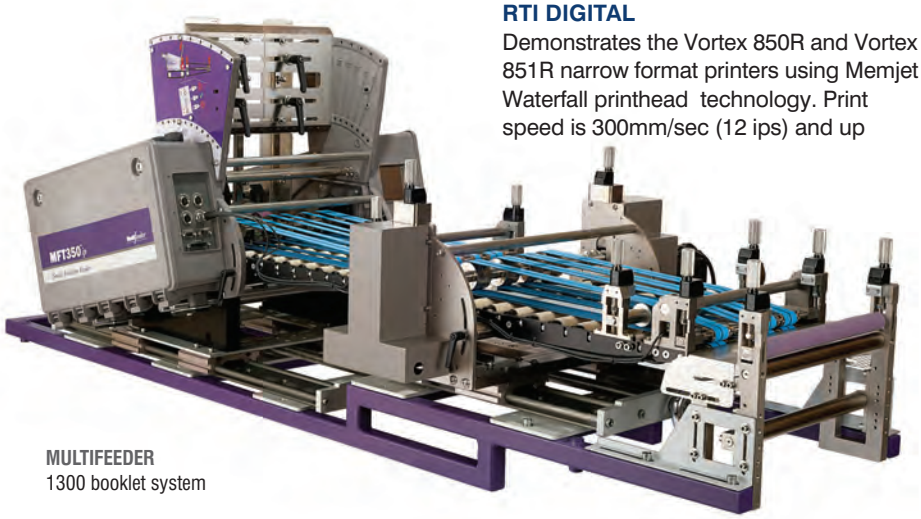
ROTOMETRICS

New from RotoMetrics is the through-hardened, machine-finished RD300 solid die. RD300 is designed to cut disposable medical substrates, dust-sensitive labels and tags, in-mold labels, synthetic gasket materials, Velcro, Tyvek and electronic components. The RD300 has a high chromium D2 steel grade body along with a specialized heat-treating process that provides a full-depth hardness of 58-60 Rockwell.

The company also introduces new features to its Pin Eject die and launches a new anodized print cylinder with added surface protection for improved scratch resistance and protection from corrosion.

RTI DIGITAL

Demonstrates the Vortex 850R and Vortex 851R narrow format printers using Memjet Waterfall printhead technology. Print speed is 300mm/sec (12 ips) and up to 215 mm paper width. The Vortex 850R features a roll-to-roll or a roll-to-cut printing option.



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RYBACK AND RYBACK

Ryback and Ryback introduces technology to make shrink sleeve prototypes/ short runs easier and more professional looking. This includes the Sleeve Maker for creating solvent seamed samples, the S3 Steam Machine for perfect shrinking of the container, and the Seam Tester to objectively measure the strength of a seam. The company will also have information on other products such as the Narrow Web Kit and Layflat Ruler.

SASCOAT

New from the Vietnam-based coater is a block-out adhesive opaque stock available in black and violet colors for office/laser applications in both semi-gloss or Thermal (VIP) ranges.

New grades of Cast coated materials will also be promoted. SASstar 80g/m2 (54.08 lbs) is the company’s latest ultra-gloss product. Produced in Asia Pacific, and fully FSC, it caters for those applications where extreme high gloss is required as well as a certain degree of water resistance. Conversions speeds in excess of 140 m/ min are claimed.

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SAScoat also introduces a new clear-on-clear laminate with a 37 micron PP face (top coated) and 30 micron PET liner, designed for applications in the food and beverage sectors. For those looking to convert thinner materials, the company shows a version of PP37 on a 12 micron PET liner, designed for the cosmetics industry.

SCHOBERTECHNOLOGIES

Schobertechnologies launches in the US the RSM-DIGI.vs, converting line, designed to process digitally printed film and foil such as OPP, PE, PS and PET, coated paper laminates and composite materials

The fully modular design integrates Schober's established stacking technologies.

The standard configuration of the RSM-DIGI.vs includes an M-Stack delivery system. The optional S-Stack is an adjustable de-nesting station to handle several products across, and Spider is a high speed robotic stacking and counting system which operates at continuous web speeds up to 50 m/min.

For rotary die cutting, Schober introduces pressure monitoring to provide additional safety during pressure adjustments,

The company also demonstrates a Braille embossing module which can be inserted on a printing or converting machine. In the press the brail embossing is applied in the creasing or die cutting station.

SCREEN USA

Screen USA launches in the US its Truepress Jet L350UV inkjet label press, with printing speeds up to 164 ft/min on a 13.7-inch web. Each printhead jets four levels of grayscale, resolution is 600 x 600dpi and minimum droplet size 3 picoliters.

The Truepress Jet L350UV utilizes Screen's proprietary high-definition UV inks, now including an opaque white. Other features include automatic printhead cleaning.

Workflow is controlled by the Equios workflow and RIP.

SEE the SMAG Graphique Digital Galaxie digital finishing system in action at www.labelsandlabeling.com/video

SEKISUI TA INDUSTRIES, LLC (STA

STA will introduce its new 1106 matte polypropylene super thin overlaminate. This thin (0.95 mils thick) non-reflective surface polypropylene product creates labels with a 'softer' look and feel.

SPARTANICS

A new launch is the Spartanics LSR 350 laser cutter line, which comes complete with semi-rotary die cutting, hot stamping, lamination, UV varnish, slitting and a 400 Watt laser. The Spartanics LSR 350 is compatible with the Spartanics' Fastline laser cutting software released earlier this year, which greatly simplifies and speeds job setup.

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View the trial now on YouTube. Search for **'Anilox'** or **'Alphasonics'**

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SPGPRINTS
SPGPrints demonstrates its modular DSI digital UV inkjet press for the first time with a new range of low-migration inks.
The printing platform, with CMYK as standard, can be specified with up to six more print heads. Options are orange and violet to make 90 percent of the Pantone color gamut achievable, digital white with 'screen-look' opacity and digital primer to maximise substrate compatibility.

Also new to the US market is SPGPrints' variLEX hybrid CTP (computer-to-plate) and CTS (computer-to-screen) processor, delivering a single digital imaging solution for high-definition flexo, dry-offset, screen and letterpress printing formes.

variLEX can be equipped with a multibeam diode laser system for ablating the black mask and/or a multibeam diode laser system to directly expose UV-sensitive materials like screens. Its integrated inline exposure system facilitates ablation and exposure in one step. This eliminates the need for offline exposure and ensures sharp printing results.

The machine accommodates different mounting cylinders to handle all common plate and screen material available on the market. These include a black anodized vacuum cylinder for flexo plates, a magnetic cylinder for screens and letterpress plates, and a hybrid cylinder (vacuum and magnetic) to handle all materials.

SPGPrints' also shows its range of retrofittable RSI (Rotary Screen Integration) units.

SUN CHEMICAL
Sun Chemical introduces its global Solaris System, a complete line of inks, consumables and coatings for a wide range of narrow web applications including self-adhesive and in-mold labels, wrap-arounds, shrink sleeves, tubes, and food and pharmaceutical packaging.

Also on display will be the SunInspire sensory coatings line, which offers special effects including high luster metallic, fluorescent, glitter, and pearlescent/ iridescent finishes. SunInspire tactile coatings, ranging from coarse and gritty to soft and smooth, appeal to the sense of touch. Other coatings in the line can create an interactive experience with color shifting, reticulating, and other aromatic coatings.

There will be live demonstrations of Sun Chemical's SunLase laser marking technology, a coating that enables brand owners to add information to both secondary and primary packaging without the traditional inkjet process.

TAGHLEEF INDUSTRIES (TI)
TI launches a white cut and stack film, which is primarily for large format labels on hot-fill PET containers. This product uses co-extrusion technology to match the performance of coated films. Available in varying thicknesses, the films can be utilized in roll-to-roll or roll-to-sheet printing.

The company will be showcasing its full line of BOPP label films for PS facestock, Injection In-Mold, Roll-Fed and Roll-Fed Shrink labeling applications.

TODAYTEC
Launches its TDW121-Premium resin enhanced wax formulation for coated or non-coated paper substrates.
Also displayed is the newly released TDM231-Premium Wax/Resin formulation, which eliminates static, and prints at high speeds on a wide variety of substrates including Tyvek, Mylar and laminates.

TRI-TRONICS
Tri-Tronics is to introduce a laser sensor with an OLED graphic display that provides visible feedback of proper setup and continual monitoring of performance.
The Smarteye SmartDot laser sensor was designed to detect the most difficult small parts at longer ranges than conventional photoelectric sensors, making it very easy to perform micro-part detection and inspection.

UNILUX
Demonstrates latest LED2000 series strobe light family featuring: more adjustable intensity for highly reflective surfaces; smaller size for more flexible mounting options; faster inspection response through "constant on" mode that automatically switches to "flash" mode at start of press run or start of slitter or rewinder operation. Operating efficiency has also been improved, says Unilux.

UPM RAFLATAC
Showcases new innovations including thinner PET film label stocks for "no label look" applications; products featuring 1.7 WG – a thin paper liner designed to increase operational efficiency; as well as new products for the pharmaceutical industry, welded and metallized label stocks for the wine market and new products for print-on-demand, retail and office labeling.

VERIFICATION SYSTEMS
Launches the FSIS stand-alone quality control system for the inspection of print and security features on printed sheets. The system has a vacuum belt based transport, pallet feeder, alignment table, reject gates with bins and a good work pile stacker.
Multiple inspection options are available including visible, transmissive, IR, UV and numbering inspection stations for front and back of sheet.

Sheets can be sorted into multiple bins according to an operator selectable sorting criteria, allowing sheets with 'acceptable' faults to be salvaged. Each of the individual inspection and verification systems can also be provided as an inline system on existing web or sheet print and processing equipment.

VETAPHONE
Shows latest iCorona generator and two VE1A corona treaters with ceramic electrodes (UL approved).

WEROSYS
Demonstrates its modular finishing system in line with a Trojan 2 Memjet digital press, designed in cooperation with Trojan Label. Operating speed is 65 m/min in semi-rotary mode and 200 m/min full rotary.

Modules include a laser die cutter, which imports cutting patterns automatically, and an automated slitting system which positions blades while running without operator intervention. A semi-automatic turret module provides fast roll change.

Other modules include flexo stations from Nuova Gidue and Nilpeter, corona treatment, RFID encoding/decoding and inspection.

Special modules for in-mold labels, peel and reveal, booklets and pharma applications are designed to customer specifications.

WINK
Wink's GapControl adjustable anvil cylinder has its North American premiere. GapControl permits a double-sided adaption of the gap - and thus the liner strike – on different materials.

Also shown is ProShift technology for staggered die-cutting, particularly applicable for blank label production. Wink's partner Esko additionally offers solutions for staggered printing at the same time.

XEIKON
Shows a 3300 digital label press producing wine and food label applications and a ThermoFlexX flexo CTP machine.
Promotes its suites for folding cartons, heat-transfer and In-mold labels.

YAZOO MILLS
Yazoo's 3" I.D. and 6" I.D. stock core program is claimed the largest in the industry, and at Labelexpo the company adds nine additional sizes to its 3" I.D. x .250 stock cores.

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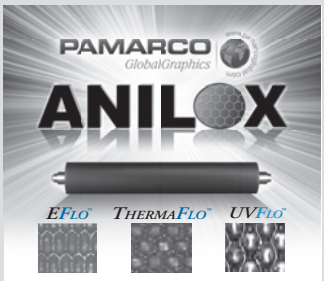

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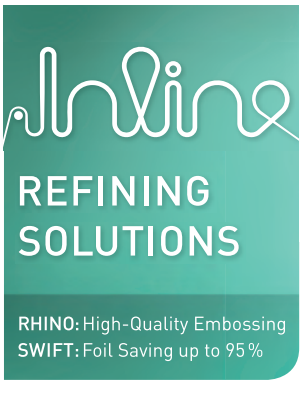

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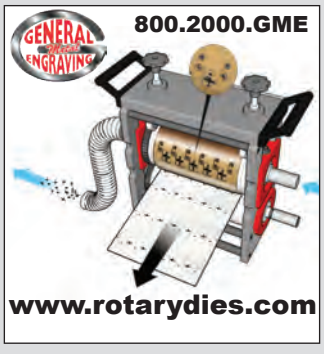

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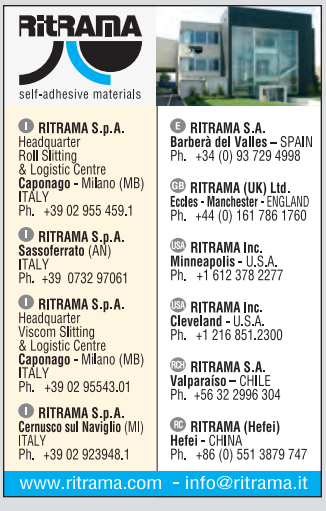

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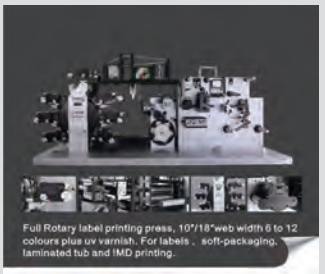

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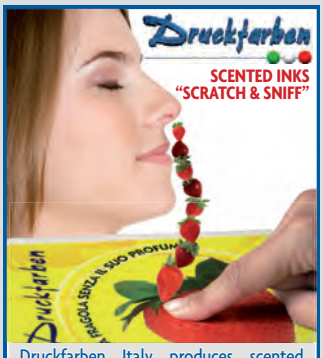

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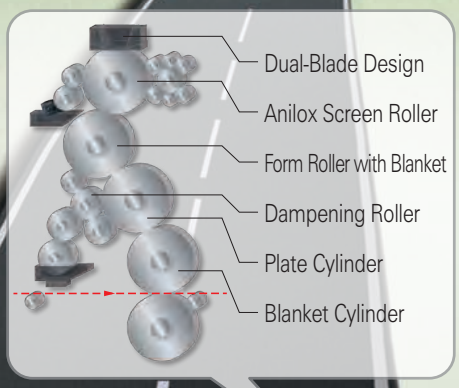

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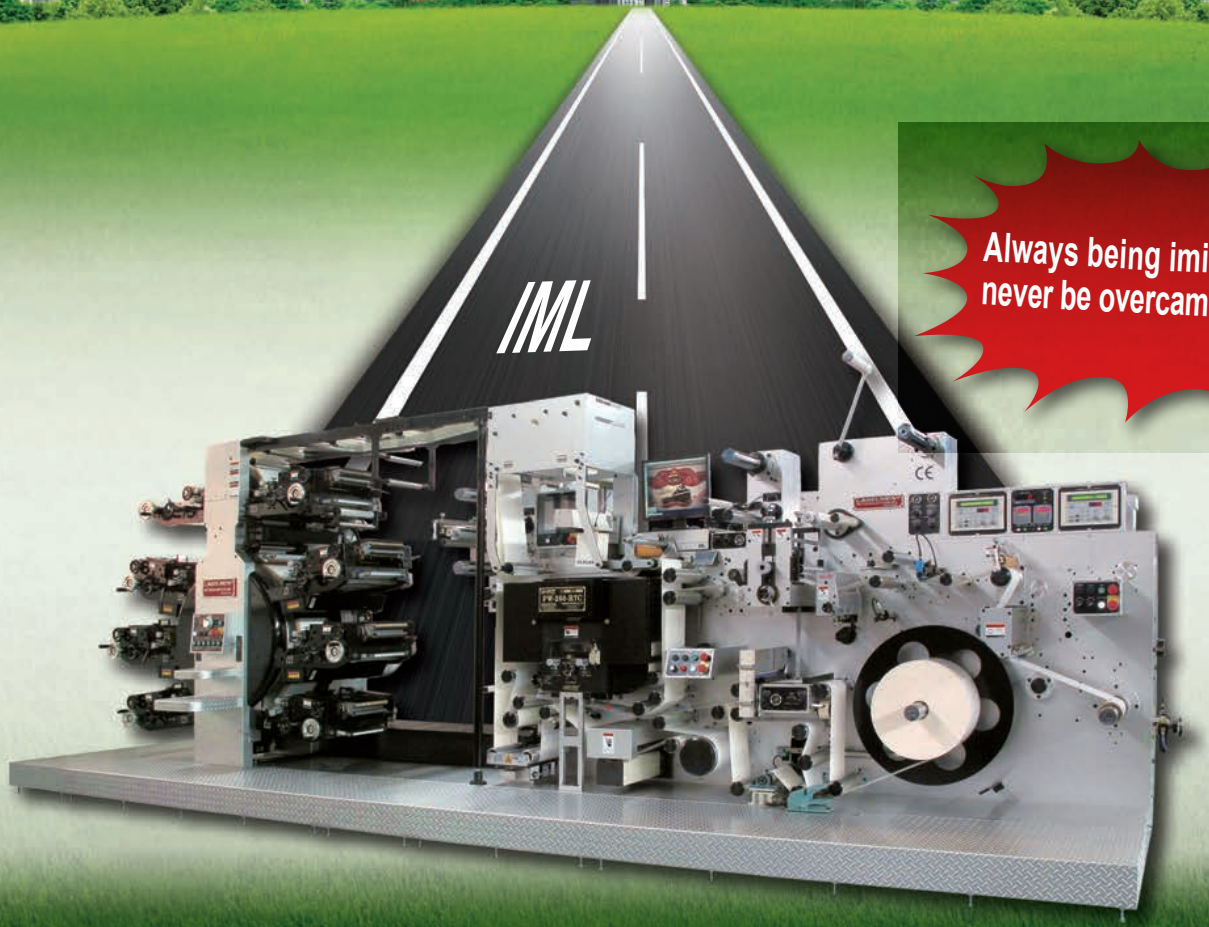

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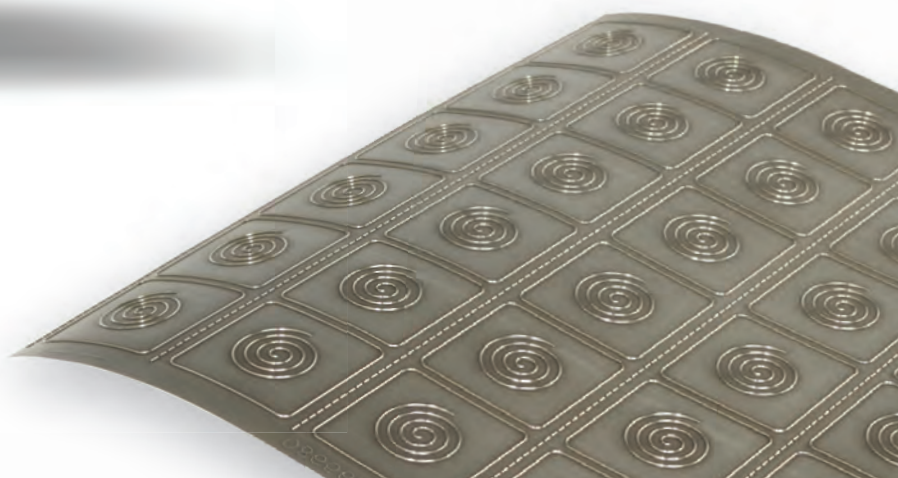
ESON
FLEXIBLE DIES

HARD



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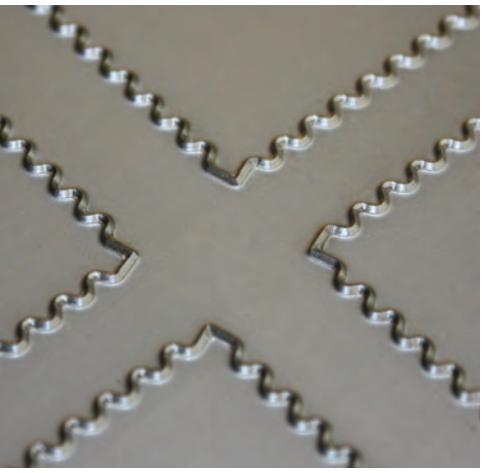
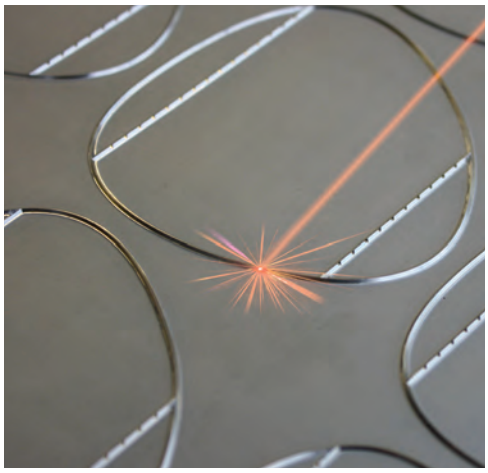
ESON
FLEXIBLE DIES

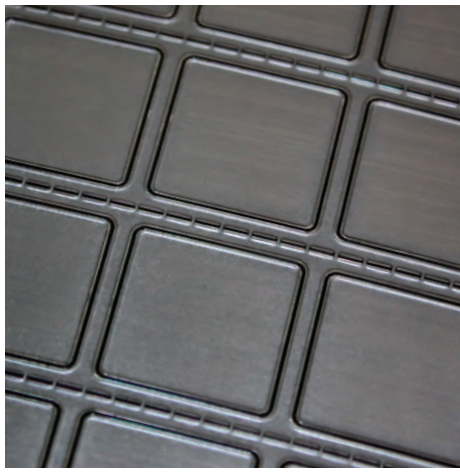
STANDARD



LASER



DLC



FLEXIBLE DIES

STANDARD

The standard quality meets the most stringent demands for use on all types of self-adhesive materials: Paper, PP, PE, PVC, PET, Tyvek etc, including all materials with a thin backing (liner) PET or PP.
Flexible dies are manufactured using CNC technology, which guarantees minimum tolerances and maximum quality cutting edges. We produce cutting edges heights up to 1mm, and cutting angles from 50° to 110°. All special applications (booklet labels, sandwich materials, micro-perforation etc) are possible.
Hardness of cutting edges: 48-50 HRC.
Finishing options are NTP and DLC.

LASER

Suitable for very large print quantities, and for standard and special materials, is generally recommendable for cutting through.
Hardness of cutting edges: 65-68 HRC.
Finishing options are NTP and DLC.

NTP

Standard or laser-hardened flexible die with a very hard coating, ideal for the abrasive thermal (thermal transfer) papers and cardboard. A thick layer of NTP enables extremely high running performances with outstanding wear properties.
Hardness of cutting edges: 60-63 HRC. Friction coefficient: 0,3-0,4.

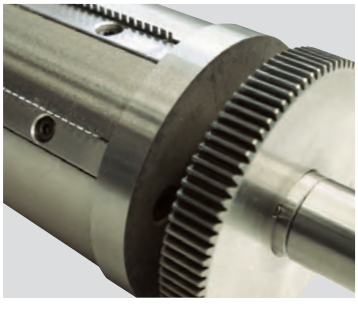
DLC

Standard or laser-hardened flexible die with a very hard and non-stick coating DLC, ideal for the separation of inks and adhesives, combined with a very long life.
Micro-hardness of cutting edges: 1500-2500HV. Friction coefficient: 0,02-0,10.

MAGNETIC CYLINDER

PRINTING CYLINDER

SHEETER CYLINDER



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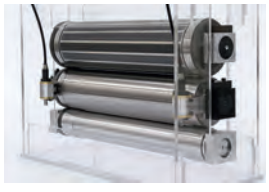

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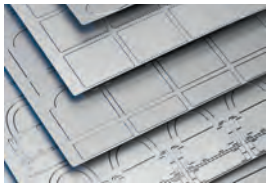
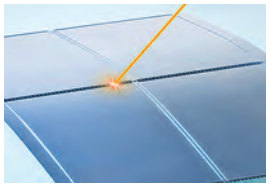
Control the liner strike



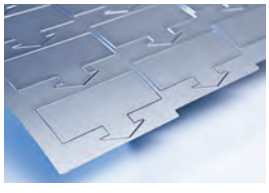
SUPERCUT FLEXIBLE DIES

Surgical precision for all applications



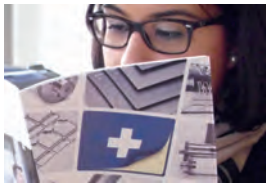
MCR COATING FOR FLEXIBLE DIES

Maximize your tools' lifetime



PROSHIFT® FLEXIBLE DIES

Reduce pressure, increase efficiency



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