

LABELXPO EUROPE 2017 REVIEWED

Automation the key trend
at industry's biggest
event

LABELS & LABELING

THE WORLD OF PACKAGE PRINTING

CHALLENGES IN PHARMA

The latest challenges facing those
serving the pharmaceutical market

COCA-COLA UNVEILS LATEST INNOVATION

Festival goers turn
label into wristband

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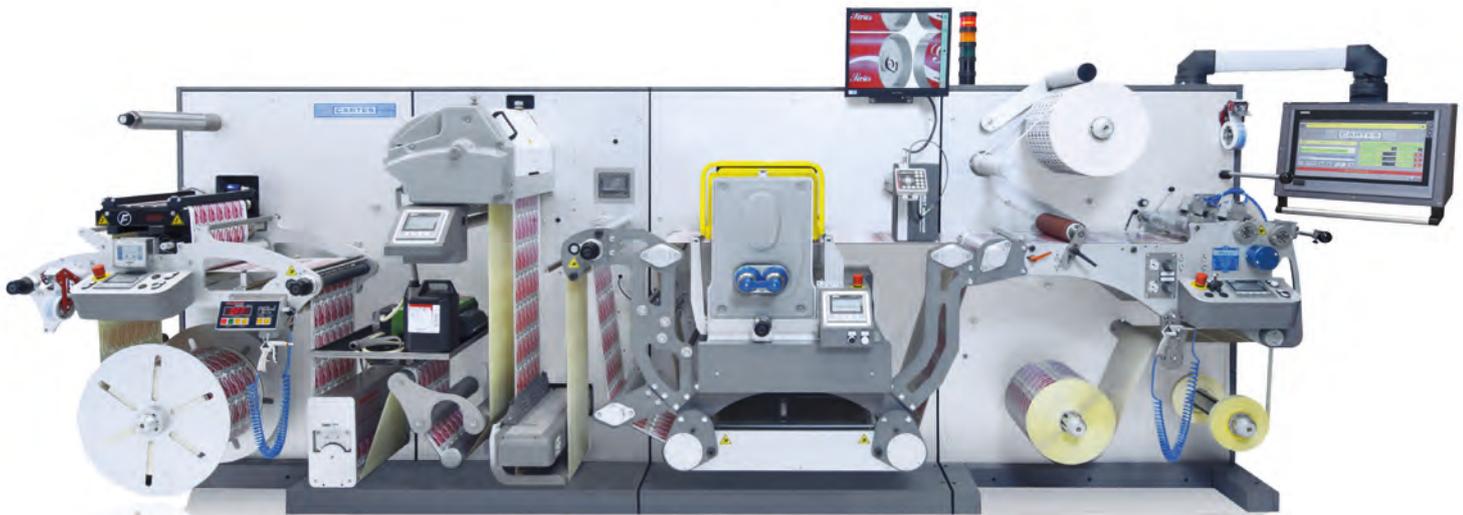
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– Meet the team

Labels & Labeling is the leading global information source for the label and package print converting industries with an editorial team located in the UK, North America, Latin America, China, India, Africa and Australasia



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E: subs@labelsandlabeling.com
ISSN: 1478-7520

Printed by

Bishops Printers, Portsmouth, United Kingdom

US mailing

Labels & Labeling (USPS No: 002-914) is published bi-monthly by Tarsus Exhibitions and Publishing Ltd and distributed in the US by SPP, 95 Aberdeen Road, Emigsville PA 17318. Periodicals postage paid at Emigsville, PA.
Postmaster: Send address changes to Labels & Labeling, 3175 N. Patrick Blvd. Suite 180, Brookfield, WI 53045



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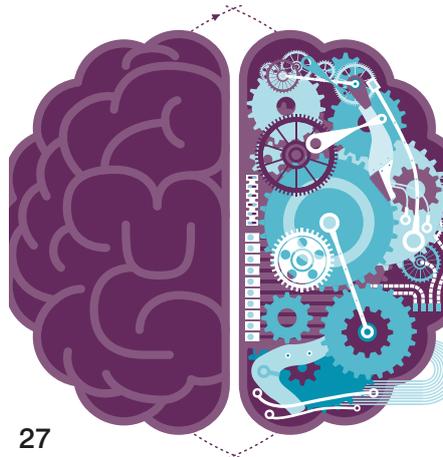


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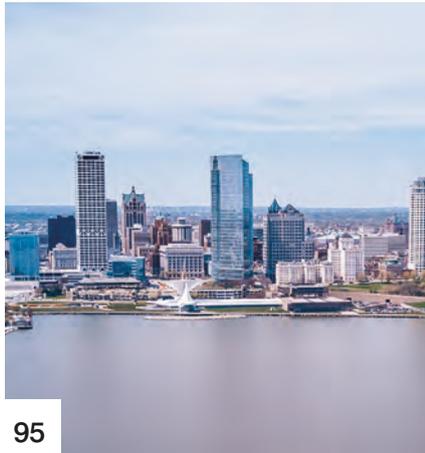
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labels&labeling.com

The *Labels & Labeling* website presents daily news and exclusive content generated by its international editorial team and addressing the most pertinent developments in the label and package printing industry



RFID opportunities (webinar)

The webinar features insights from Avery Dennison RFID expert Jeremy Schenof



OPM discusses MIS success (video)

Chris and Susan Ellison explain why they invested in sophisticated MIS and automated workflow, and the benefits it has brought to their business



NFC in FMCG smart packaging (opinion)

Gillian Ewers of PragmatIC believes we're not far from a price revolution in NFC



Pharmaceutical labeling compliance (white paper)

This white paper outlines the requirements for ensuring complete compliance

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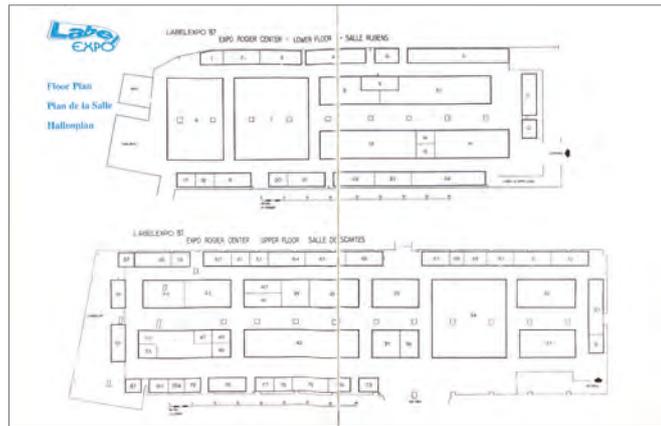
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Thirty years ago (L&L issue 4, 1987)



P12 Mike Fairley visited Mactac Europe to report on a new roll product range, further investment in equipment and people, market expansion and an increased focus on the roll printing industry. Two roll label markets where Mactac reported rapid growth and potential for its products were in thermal labeling and drinks, with smudge-proof thermal grades for price-weight labeling reported as experiencing continued growth.



P26 L&L previewed that year's Labelexpo show at Roiger Centre, Brussels. Exhibitors that year included AB Graphic, Anderson & Vreeland, Armor, Apeco Engineering, AP Engraving, Bartham (Nieuwe), BASF Aktiengesellschaft, WH Brady, Dow Chemical Europe, Edale, Etipol, Gallus, Geostick, Gerhardt, Grafisk Maskinfabrik, Hovat, IMC Europe, Kimball Systems Nederland, Klemm Maschinen-

fabrik, Ko-Pack (UK), Label Ink, Mark Andy, Markem Continental Europe, Newfoil Machines, Nilpeter, Norprint International, Omet, Pinewood Label Systems, Print Consult Europe, Printpack Equipment, Purup Electronics, Ricoh Europe, Rotoflex, Schreiner Etiketten und Selbstklebetechnik, Smith & McLaurin, Techniform, Tenza, UPM Raflatac, Webtron, Werner Hermann, Wiggins Teape Synthetics and Zurmühl & Riesz.



P81 This issue featured a report on the UK's Printing and Converting Equipment (PACE) and its work to refurbish and deliver machines to the roll label industry. This included an Iwasaki VSD250 semi-rotary letterpress machine at Mortons (Labels) of Kings Lynn in Norfolk. This was reported as a 'major step forward' for the printer.

What you're looking at...



What have visitors to labelsandlabeling.com been looking at recently?

News: A number of surveys and reports have outlined the importance of labels and packaging to modern day brand owners and consumers. A psychological study from office products supplier Avery UK has revealed how much labels matter when it comes to consumer decisions and customer loyalty. This study tested consumer response to small business label designs to reveal how certain elements can encourage positive reactions to the items they are attached to. A Chief Marketing Officer (CMO) Council survey has revealed that packaging and in-store displays are viewed as more important to the success of the overall brand experience than channels like email, direct mail and mobile apps. In numbers, AWA's Label Market Study 2017 found the pressure-sensitive labels market saw greater growth than that of the

label market as a whole in 2016, and still commands 40 percent market share. Flexible packaging demand in Europe will reach 15.5 billion EUR (18.7 billion USD) in 2021, according to PCI Wood Mackenzie's latest review of the European market.

Opinion: Chris Ellison, managing director of OPM (Labels & Packaging) Group and the new Finat president, reviews 'Management Information Systems and Workflow Automation', a reference source for label and package printers, industry suppliers and brands, and a supporting text to the Label Academy's MIS and workflow automation systems module. Constantia Flexibles CEO Alexander Baumgartner has outlined some of the requirements for successfully packaging coffee. 'To enjoy a good cup of coffee the packaging needs to be the right one.'

Automation dominates at Labelexpo Europe

Editor's note

Three major themes stood out at this year's record-breaking Labelexpo Europe. Firstly, inkjet came of age: suppliers such as Screen and Domino reported multiple sales, including to users of HP Indigo presses who clearly see it as a complementary process. Domino director Philip Easton told L&L this year has been a 'tipping point' in adoption.

Secondly, the event showed the industry's continuing evolution towards other kinds of package printing, evidenced by the host of flexible packaging materials and presses shown, as well as equipment for folding carton and direct-to-container printing.

Thirdly, automation took a dramatic step forward. The Automation Arena, a new feature which debuted at the event, showed how converters can increase efficiency and reduce waste by linking systems together – in this case pre-press, MIS,

conventional and digital presses and inspection rewinder.

It was inspiring to watch equipment and software from different suppliers working seamlessly to move a job from file preparation to finished label in around 30 minutes. Implementing automation is not an easy road – we are still some way from 'plug and play' – but suppliers are now working to common standards and the results are impressive. The last piece of the jigsaw is opening flexo press control systems to these same common standards, and MPS made a big step forward with the launch of its 'Talk to Me' MIS protocol. Hopefully the other manufacturers will follow this lead.

James Quirk
Group Managing Editor

News



The new RotoMetrics facility in Suzhou, China is staffed by a team of six

RotoMetrics expands in China

Tooling manufacturer opens new site in Suzhou, writes Yolanda Wang

RotoMetrics has opened a new site and technology center in Suzhou, strengthening its commitment to growth and service in mainland China. The facility houses a dedicated sales force, technical support staff and a solid die repair department.

Paul McKay, general manager of RotoMetrics Asia, commented: 'We researched locations for nearly a year to find the perfect spot for our new China site. We talked to customers and asked them what they were looking for in regional support that other rotary tooling companies could not provide. This facility will provide the service and support customers are asking for, including; a solid

die repair center opening in early 2018 that can quickly re-sharpen and repair RotoMetrics RD300 solid dies.'

Additionally, the location features a Converting Technology Center, where customers can learn about the latest advancements in rotary die applications and receive training, 'so our customers can get the best press performance,' explained McKay. 'This location gets us closer to our Chinese customers and places a key resource in the areas where our customers do business.'



For a video about RotoMetrics at Labelexpo Europe, go to goo.gl/nmaSTr

Jet Label acquires United Label

Acquisition 'will allow Jet to double in size in next two years'

Jet Label & Packaging, western Canada's largest producer of labels and printed tape for a range of industries, has acquired United Label Company of Coquitlam, British Columbia, a suburb of Vancouver.

The additional space and production capacity 'will allow Jet Label to double in size over the next two years,' says the company, during which time additional infrastructure investments will be made to the newly-acquired facility.

Founded in 1998 and headquartered in Edmonton, Jet Label manufactures labels and printed tape for a range of industries, including food and beverage, and grocery stores, consumer packaged goods, pharmaceuticals, forestry and industrial applications. Jet Label produces a range of

durable, water- and weatherproof labels for harsh environments. Jet Label also produces a variety of address labels, and supplies parking and boarding passes, and baggage tags to Edmonton International Airport.

Jet Label's Edmonton facility, which operates 24/7 across three shifts, runs two HP Indigo digital presses and 12 flexo presses ranging in width from 6-20in and 3-10 colors.

United Label's facility currently operates four flexo presses ranging in width from 7-10in and 3-8 colors, as part of a fully capable manufacturing facility with a wide variety of slitters, rewinders, finishing systems and inspection systems. Over the next 18 months, Jet Label will be adding to this with new machinery.



Domino has appointed Mario Fanton to lead its growth in the region

Domino expands in Asia

Inkjet press manufacturer adds to local team and portfolio

Domino Digital Printing Solutions is investing in the Asia-Pacific region to drive sales and meet increased labeling demands in the region. This sees the company supplementing its existing portfolio of K-Series digital printers with the addition of N-Series digital color label press in Asia.

The company has appointed Mario Fanton to lead its growth in the region. He said: 'There is increased speed in adopting new technologies by brand owners, enabling them to deliver much more valuable content to customers. Changes in consumer purchasing behavior and the population density in Asia further drive the volumes of self-adhesive labels, such that overall label demand in sqm per capita is expected to grow from three sqm to eight sqm.'

Domino's expansion of its Hong Kong-based team is part of a long-term plan to increase sales of its inkjet printers into Asia. With an established install base of around 250-300 monochrome printers already in the region, the N610i high-speed digital color label press is an addition to Domino's existing portfolio of monochrome printers that have been sold into Asia.

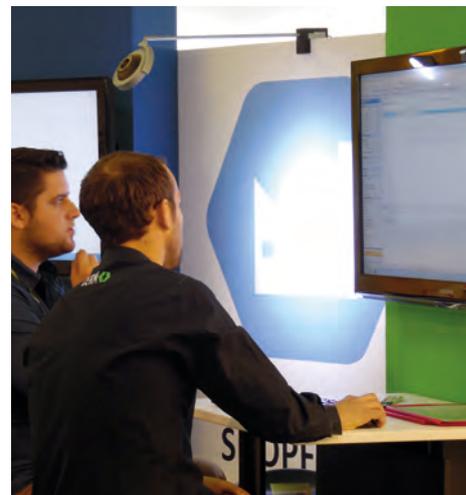
Philip Easton, director at Domino Digital Printing Solutions, added: 'This decision to expand our portfolio of products and increase our resources in the Asia-Pacific region is vital for Domino's future growth and to meet the demands of our customers, who require high-speed inkjet technology to produce labels of the best quality, giving their products the best chance to stand out on the shelves.'



Turn to page 89 for more on Domino's activities in the region



L-R Roland Simon; Darren Milligan; Georges Gravanis; Pankaj Bhardvaj; Sailesh Kapur; Anil Sharma and Hassan Hussein Rmaile from Avery Dennison



Avery Dennison opens new center in India

Innovation and Knowledge Center inaugurated in Pune

Avery Dennison has inaugurated its Innovation and Knowledge Center in Pune, India, intended to support customers, partners and employees across South Asia Pacific and Sub-Saharan Africa (SAPSSA).

It is unique among the company's global network of technology and innovation centers as it extends expertise to help label, packaging and graphic materials industry professionals with knowledge sharing and certification programs.

Darren Milligan, senior marketing director, SAPSSA at Avery Dennison, said: 'The Avery Dennison Innovation and Knowledge Center is made up of two key centers. The Knowledge Center, in

collaboration with our industry partners, is an end-to-end training facility across both conventional and digital platforms. The Innovation Center features a highly qualified and connected research and development team with material science and analytical capability. Our investment to integrate these two centers into a single location will accelerate our product development and ability to deliver faster solutions to meet customers' requirements.'



You can read more about Avery Dennison's new site in Pune in the next issue of L&L

Hybrid Software integrates with Cerm's Web4Labels

Hybrid Software and Cerm have integrated the Proofscape viewing and approval system with Cerm's Web4Labels.

Both companies provide specialist software for the label market and last year they formed a partnership to interface Hybrid Software's productivity tools with Cerm's MIS system.

Jan Ruyschaert, MD of Hybrid Software, said: 'The huge synergies resulted in the two companies working together, which created some very exciting opportunities for printers, who increasingly have to automate their entire printing process rather than just pre-press.'

Belgium packaging printer Du Caju Printing has become the first customer to integrate the two technologies.

Bobst partners for US open house

Bobst and All Printing Resources teamed up for a recent open house, writes Chelsea McDougall.

The open house, hosted at APR's Glendale Heights, Illinois-based technical center, featured live demonstrations of two Bobst flexo presses – the M1 and M5 in-line machines. The Italian manufacturer also presented information on an array of presses and press accessories. The event served as a preview to Bobst's showing at Labelexpo Europe 2017.

'This is our Labelexpo,' said Bobst's Mat Jones, as he discussed the company's various offerings that they were to show that day. First up was the M1 press, Bobst's latest configuration in-line flexo press. Bobst also showed its M5, a full servo, multi-substrate in-line flexo press equipped with what Bobst calls its 'digital flexo technology.'

Supplier partners including APR, GEW, Flint Group and Eaglewood Technologies all gave presentations on their respective technology.

An oft-discussed topic was the difference between Arc-UV and UV LED curing. Brian Wenger from GEW offered his insight, saying more labels printers are installing UV LED technology in their machine acquisitions. As LED curing continues to grow, its benefits are undeniable, Wenger said: more energy savings, less heat, performance advantages, longer lamp life.

But higher cost to entry and less ink availability still has some label converters waiting to buy in.

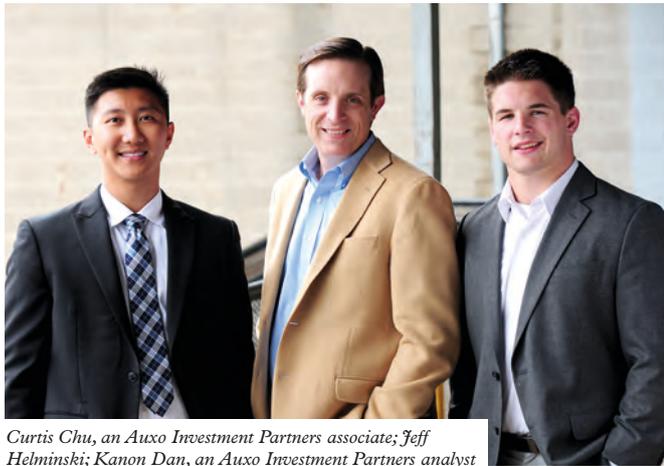
Tom Hammer from Flint Group discussed LED curable inks, acknowledging that there are inks on the market for LED curing, but further development is needed



to drive down the price. Hammer discussed the benefits and drawbacks of water-based, UV flexo inks and UV LED inks.

APR representatives discussed high res imaging, and process control, while Eaglewood technologies discussed anilox roll cleaning. Participants were also invited to walk around the APR technology showroom that featured products from its supplier partners including MacDermid, Esko, Dantex, Colordyne, Epson, X-Rite and more.

News



Curtis Chu, an Auxo Investment Partners associate; Jeff Helminski; Kanon Dan, an Auxo Investment Partners analyst

Atlas Die and Bernal acquired by PE firm

Private equity firm Auxo Investment Partners has made its first acquisitions with the purchases of Atlas Die and Bernal.

Atlas Die, based in Elkhart, Indiana, was founded in 1952 by S. Ray Miller. The company was a pioneer in the use of laser technology in the die making process, and later developed flexible rotary die making capabilities. Bernal, founded in 1972, produces complex solid rotary pressure dies, crush cut dies and high-volume rotary converting systems for die-cutting, food processing, folding cartons, specialty bandages and alcohol swabs.

Auxo Investment Partners was founded by Jeff Helminski, Jack Kolodny and Fred Tedori, all veteran investors and operators, with an investor-centric business model and a commitment to integrating environmental, social and governance concerns into its investment practices.

Industry veteran Ken Smott, who will serve as CEO of both Atlas Die and Bernal, described Auxo Investment Partners as 'the ideal partner to support Atlas and Bernal's next chapter of continued growth in supporting their customers and employees.'

Jeff Helminski said: 'We view ourselves as stewards of our founding partners' capital and of the legacies of our portfolio companies, their owners and their team members. As such, we're honored to have the opportunity to assist the teams at Atlas Die and Bernal achieve their full potential by making long-term investments and providing expert operational and strategic support.'

Jack Kolodny added: 'We see a tremendous opportunity to further grow and scale Atlas Die and Bernal and to drive new sales and revenue growth. We're also actively pursuing other deals, and we're confident that our unique hands-on, long-term investment approach will pay off for our investors and our new portfolio companies.'

UPM Raflatac acquires Southwest Label Stock
UPM Raflatac has acquired the assets of Irving, Texas-based Southwest Label Stock. Both parties have agreed not to disclose the purchase price. The acquisition will allow UPM Raflatac to expand its reach in the Texas and the southwestern US label markets.

H.B. Fuller to purchase Adecol
H.B. Fuller has agreed the purchase of Adecol, a manufacturer of adhesives in Brazil. Based in Guarulhos, Adecol produces hot melt, reactive and polymer-based adhesive products for customers in the packaging, converting and assembly markets.



Dave Birch (left), business development manager for Europe and Asia at Spartanics, and Mattias Malmqvist, Grafotronic

Grafotronic and Spartanics partner for laser die-cutting

Grafotronic and Spartanics partnered for the integration of the X350 laser into Grafotronic finishing machines.

Mattias Malmqvist, sales and marketing vice president at Grafotronic, said: 'We continuously extend our range of modules for our modular digital finishing machines. We have been looking for the right laser solution and the Spartanics laser was the perfect fit for us. This new laser module can be added to existing Grafotronic machines in the field or be a part of a new converting line.'

Mike Bacon, vice president of marketing at Spartanics, added: 'We are very excited about this new partnership as we continue to make advancements in laser die-cutting technology. Grafotronic will be another good fit for Spartanics' X350 laser module with its ability to reach further into Europe and the rest of the world.'

The new laser module was integrated in the DCL2 modular digital finishing line exhibited on the Grafotronic booth at Labelexpo Europe 2017.



Go to page 98 for more news from Labelexpo Europe 2017

Shanghai to host Labelexpo Asia

Visitor registration is open for Asia's largest label and package printing technology event. Labelexpo Asia is being held at the Shanghai New International Expo Centre (SNIEC) from 5- 8 December 2017.

The show is supported by the Printing and Printing Equipment Industries Association of China (PEIAC) and will comprise strong educational content and new feature areas.

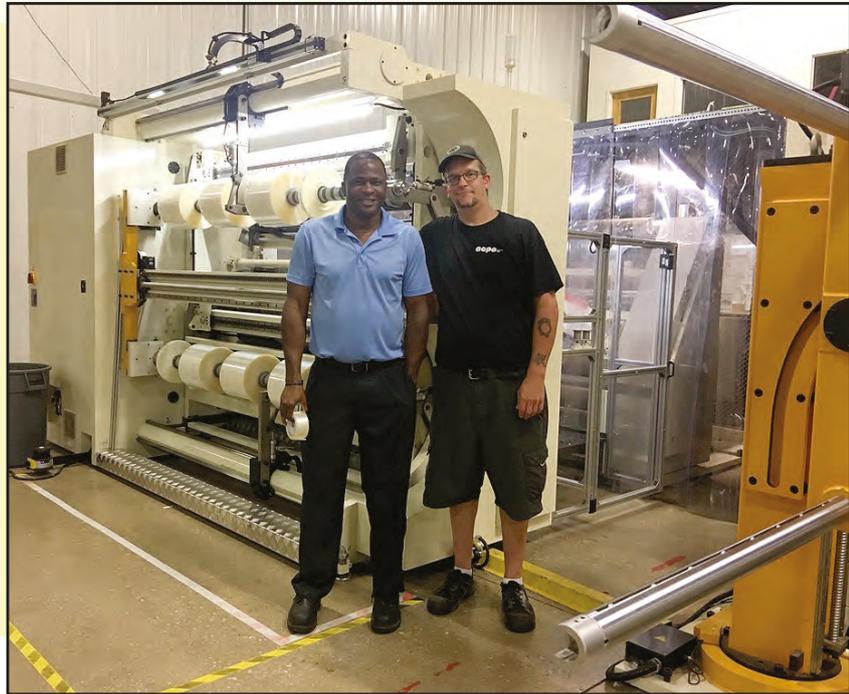
There are already 300 exhibitors signed up for this year's show. In addition to 50 new companies exhibiting for the first time, exhibitors to watch out for include: Avery Dennison, Bobst, Codimag, Domino, Flint Group, Fuji Xerox, Lintec, Omet, UPM Raflatac, Wenzhou Rhyguan Machinery Co, Xeikon, Zhejiang Weigang and Zhejiang Zhongte Machinery.



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03



04

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1. DLF-220L, Afinia Label
2. Narrow web anilox laser cleaning system, Laserclean
3. LVS-9585, Microscan
4. Digital Plus Screen, Mark Andy

01 DLF-220L

Afinia Label

All-in-one machine can laminate, contour cut labels with a digitally controlled knife, remove the surrounding waste, slit and rewind finished labels onto rolls. These finished rolls of labels are then ready to be applied, either by hand or automatically, to packaging. The entire process is described as 'automated, in-line and simple'. It can also be combined with the L801 digital color printer for a digital production system.

02 Narrow web anilox laser cleaning

Laserclean

The machine is a compact system, and described as 'easy to use, maintenance free and environmental friendly', with Laserclean claiming that it 'cleans

rollers excellently'. Chain wheels and bearings do not need to be removed and after cleaning the roller can be used immediately.

03 LVS-9585

Microscan

The new handheld portable barcode verifier provides verification of both printed labels and direct part marks. LVS-9585 verifies the readability, quality and data integrity of 1D and 2D printed labels and direct part marks to internationally accepted standards including GS1, ISO 15415/15416, ISO/IEC 29158 TR, and MIL-STD-130N. Microscan's GS1 certification provides assurance that the LVS-95XX-series verifiers can help users comply with the US FDA's Unique Device Identification (UDI) requirements for medical device labels.

04 Digital Plus Screen

Mark Andy

The digital alternative to traditional rotary screen printing is the latest option in the company's growing digital hybrid portfolio, and sees single color digital UV inkjet printing integrated with the company's Performance Series. Digital Plus Screen, a subset of Mark Andy's Digital Plus Program, is designed to retrofit on existing presses. The unit is available both as a rail-mounted option on new equipment or as a retrofit to enhance existing Performance Series presses in the field.

Track and trace

Monotech Systems

Indian machine supplier Monotech Systems has introduced Jetsci track and trace workflow that combines

hardware and software to fight counterfeiting. The workflow includes designing security software, converting and variable data printing presses along with a system to track the consumption since manufacturing throughout the supply chain. This Jetsci workflow can be customized according to the requirement and can be integrated to the customer's existing operations.

Quick Set NW

Dienes

New automatic knife position system for the narrow web market is for either crush cutting or shear cutting, and can be integrated into existing or new machines. It can handle a maximum material width of 600mm, with a minimum slitting width of 20mm.

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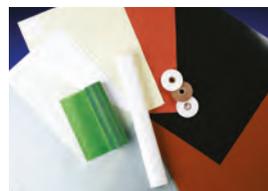
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05 mlabel Gen3

mprint

This UV inkjet hybrid press is a modular, scalable system with fully integrated digital cold foiling. mlabel UV inkjet presses – and other machine derivatives developed by mprint – have a maximum print speed of up to 75m/min with a native resolution of 600 x 600 DPI, plus gray scales. mlabel machines print, laminate and die-cut in a single pass. The mlabel Gen3 allows print widths from 108-324mm (4.25-12.75in) and single to multi-color printing (seven or more). Custom machines with print widths of 432mm (17in) and above are also available. The base machine will have a standard mechanical width of 330mm (13in) but does not have to be outfitted with a print engine of the full print width from the beginning. This allows a technology adopter to start with a lower cost system and expand the print engine in the future, according to mprint.

PICTURED

- 5. mlabel Gen3, mprint
- 6. HermaperfectOpaque, Herma
- 7. Narrow web guiding systems, Roll-2-Roll Technologies
- 8. RotaMesh Glitter Screen, SPGPrints

06 HermaperfectOpaque

Herma

Colored adhesive features the company's multilayer technology to allow most label materials to be turned opaque without affecting the properties of the adhesive. Two different adhesives will be available initially – HermaperfectOpaque 62Gpo and HermaperfectOpaque 62Dpo. In addition to providing migration safety, 62Gpo is said to be suitable for applications requiring extremely high tack despite damp and cool conditions. 62Dpo is suited for production of opaque copy/laser labels, and prevents bleeding over the die-cut edges

07

during label conversion. In both cases, the second layer is colored with dark blue pigment.

07 Narrow web guiding systems

Roll-2-Roll Technologies

These new products are powered by Roll-2-Roll Technologies' Aris web position sensors and controllers that allow for fast and easy installation and operation. The intelligent sensor and control systems allow converters to handle any material without the need of time costly calibration or adjustments. The displacement guides are lightweight with height profiles of 3.5in and 4.5in. The low profile lightweight design provides converters with a web guide system that can be placed in tight spaces within their converting lines Roll-2-Roll stated. The low profile web guides can guide webs up to 20in in width and are especially designed for nonwoven and narrow web converting

applications. The steering guide can also guide web materials with widths up to 20in, and is suited for applications where a displacement guide cannot be used, especially after a long entry span.

08 RotaMesh Glitter Screen

SPGPrints

The reusable and reimageable nickel rotary screen is suitable for applying glitter, luster, shimmer and optically variable inks. Particles for exclusive effects require wide diameters, typically of approximately 70 micron, to enable reflectivity that makes their functionality possible. RotaMesh Glitter Screen features relatively large hole sizes to facilitate the smooth transfer to the substrate of these delicate particles.



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Installations



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01 Nilpeter FA-6*

Socipack, Ivory Coast

With the 8-color Nilpeter FA-6*, the first label printing press in Socipack's factory, the packaging printer has expanded its portfolio to include high quality labels, sleeves and wraparounds. The company is already considering acquiring a second FA-6* in the near future.

02 Daco PLD350

Century Labels, Dubai

The decision was made to purchase the PLD350 and installation planned for late summer. However, with the workload at Century Labels, Daco fast-tracked the planned installation to bring it forward by four weeks. And with only two days training in Dubai, all the operators were fully trained. The PLD350 has enabled Century Labels to quote for jobs that otherwise it would have not been able to produce economically, claimed Daco.

03 HP Indigo 20000

Ultimate Digital, UK

The purchase of another HP Indigo 20000 digital press means Ultimate Digital has doubled its print capacity and can now print close to 50,000 linear meters of digital film per day. It hopes the increase in capacity will allow it to venture into new markets including luxury packaging.

04 Durst Tau 330

Ekko, Ukraine

The Tau 330 platform at Ekko features a 330mm (13in) print width, five colors (CMYK+W) and offers printing speeds of up to 48 linear m/min (169ft/min) with print resolution up to 1260 DPI.

Proofscope with Web4Labels

Du Caju Printing, Belgium

The Belgian packaging printer is the first customer to integrate Hybrid Software's Proofscope viewing and approval system into Cerm's Web4Labels MIS software. Hybrid Software and Cerm have

strengthened their close working relationship with the integration of the Proofscope viewing and approval system into Cerm's portal software, Web4Labels. A direct link means customers do not need a separate password and can open the Proofscope viewer via Web4Labels.

FTS plate mounters

Reflex Labels, UK

The investment in four JM Heaford plate mounting machines follows positive experience of the technology following an initial FTS installation in 2015, and a comprehensive evaluation of its efficiency gains and benefits since that time, according to JM Heaford. The four machines in the new order are identical in specification, while differing from the first FTS installation, which included a specialized micro-gap cutter to provide consistent plate joining accuracy for continuous design printing without the need for in-the-round sleeves.

CEI Bossjet powered by Domino

PrimeSourceOPC, US

Converting Equipment International has sold its fourth narrow web digital hybrid, 'CEI Bossjet powered by Domino', this time to North Carolina label and tag printer PrimeSourceOPC. The technology combines printing and finishing. Bossjet features Domino's N610i 4- to 7-color digital UV inkjet label press.

Bobst label press

CCL Design, China

The 9-color label printing press will be used to print sun visor and other security labels for the automobile industry. The company manufactures sun visor labels under IATF 16949 (TS16949) standards, as required by the automotive industry, at one factory in China and uses its locations worldwide for distribution.

Appointments



Mike Henry
CEO-elect, MCC
 The current executive vice president of Constantia Labels has been named as CEO-elect of Multi-Color Corporation (MCC) following Constantia Flexibles signing an agreement to sell its Labels division to MCC, and becoming MCC's biggest shareholder in the process.



Susan Shi
Senior technology director, North Asia
Avery Dennison LGM
 Shi will provide 'fresh energy, broad vision and new direction' to the company's R&D organization. Shi will lead the business in product research, material re-engineering and adhesive development for the Avery Dennison LGM business in North Asia.

Toshihiro Sawamura
CEO, Jujo Thermal
 He has held various technical and managerial positions in Japan, the US, Canada, Thailand and Australia. Most recently he has been managing the Maryville Mill of Paper Australia.



Allan Li
CEO, Pamarco
 Li has held various positions in private equity, investment banking and management consulting, and joins Pamarco from a consumer goods company. In his new role, Li will assume overall responsibility for Pamarco, including all lines of business and functional groups within the company.



Rodney Pennings -
Sales director, PCMC
 In this role, he will lead PCMC's printing, coating and laminating (PCL) sales team, and all associated sales and marketing activities. He also will help direct the product line's strategy and market plans.



Bill Mulligan
Technical account manager Harper Corporation of America
 He spent the first 15 years of his flexo career on the manufacturing

side of the label printing industry. In addition to anilox rolls, he has sold inks, substrates, consumables and capital equipment to both the narrow and wide web flexographic segments.



Jeff Strobach
VP, sales and marketing
Accrably
 In this role, he will provide leadership for all sales team activities, as well as the global marketing and business development teams.



Alastair Bearman
Sales and marketing director, Clondalkin Flexible Packaging Bury
 He will be responsible for driving the company's expansion into its core pre-cut lids and shrink sleeve markets. Bearman will also assist with new product development in related markets where the company's high definition UV flexo print process can add value to premium brands.

Karen Capey
Business development manager, Label Apeel
 Capey previously worked at Label Apeel in a similar capacity, leaving the Leicester-

shire-based business in April 2016 to explore new opportunities.



Karol Wolnikowski/ Claude Zaehring
Sales managers, Presstek
 Both to serve as sales managers for its Zahara waterless offset plate products in the EMEA region. They have joined the company as Presstek reports rising demand in the commercial and narrow web label segments for waterless offset plate products.

Umendra Kumar Gupta
President, ASPA
 Confirmed at ASPA's 17th annual general meeting, the board will serve a two-year term. Joining Gupta are: Arun Agarwal, CEO of Kantas Track Pack India, as vice president; Luv D Shriram, director at Shriram Veritech Solutions, as general secretary and treasurer; Nakul Pasricha, president and CEO of Pharma Secure PAS India and Deepak Gupta, director at Shree Lamipack, as general body members; and Shobhit Arora, managing director of Giriraj Foils, and Gaurav Sathaye, director of United Speciality Inks, as co-opted members.

Amanda Whaley
Torayfan key accounts manager, Toray Plastics (America)
 She most recently served Toray as a product

manager in that division, a position she had held since June 2015. Now she will be responsible for managing strategic accounts. Tammy Williamson has also been promoted from the position of sales and marketing analyst to associate product manager in the Torayfan division.



Thomas Eskildsen
Quality manager, Vétaphone
 With a principal focus on process optimization, his main responsibilities are to ensure on-time delivery, streamline the production process and improve the quality management system.

Chris Chappel
Sales consultant, Martin Automatic
 Role covers the UK, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand. He brings 15 years' experience in the print trade beginning in offset litho and flexo with Skanem, and most recently at UK manufacturer Edale.

Brian Wirt
Strategic account executive, ColorDyne Technologies
 He has assumed responsibility for customer growth and acquisition.

 For more industry appointments, go to labelsandlabeling.com/news/appointments

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DuPont Awards for Packaging Innovation

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Diamond Award

01 The Fritz Water Vest (USA) allows the user to carry up to 20 pounds of water safely and hygienically

Diamond award finalists

02 Zume Pizza from USA for compostable 'Pizza Pod' composed of 100 percent sustainably farmed sugarcane fiber

03 Kuraray Plantic Technologies from Australia for Plantic R, a bio-based, renewable and recyclable plastic material with ultra-high barrier

04 Sealed Air from USA for Cryovac OptiDure Abuse Bag, a breakthrough in vacuum packaging for protein

Gold winners

05 Froneri from Brazil for a cardboard ice cream cup featuring a PP in-mold label

06 CJ Cheiljedang from Korea for the Bibigo kimchi jar that incorporates multiple existing technologies



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07 Amcor Flexibles from Switzerland for Vento's advanced coffee packaging with integrated degassing system

08 PepsiCo and Printpack USA for PepsiCo's Granola Goes Nuts bar's cross directional laser scored flow wrapper

Silver winners

09 Bemis Company from USA for Kellogg's Nutri-Grain bakery delights tactile packaging

10 Fuji Tokushu Shigyo from Japan for Fuji M O flexible packaging for inkjet-gravure hybrid printing machine, which

combines full-color inkjet printing and water-based white gravure printing

11 GreenBlue from USA for the How2Recycle recycling label for packaging



This regular feature is dedicated to the best designed printed packaging from around the world. If you would like your product featured here, email labelsexposure@labelsandlabeling.com. We require a high resolution photograph and supporting text.

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Opinion

Automation

With the Automaton Arena proving to be a big draw at Labelexpo Europe 2017, L&L asks how will automation shape the future of the label and package printing industry

'MPS strongly believes that automation is the future, as it is becoming harder and harder to find and keep skilled operators today. With our own presses being equipped with maximum automation, combined with the state-of-the-art systems of our partners, we're making life on the print shop floor much easier.'

Bert van den Brink, technical director, MPS

'In the last decade, computer and communication technology has dramatically changed. The change in technology is that it is becoming affordable, reliable and accessible. As for reliability, it is far better than human control – today the most crucial operations are monitored by electronic systems – just think of air traffic control, for example. The label and packaging industry will also embrace the technology advancements just as other industries do. Depending on the type of business, think of "lights out production" with no or very few people controlling production. Today, certain thermal labels are already produced this way. Or imagine the benefits for label converters where people are boiling with creativity to create solutions for their customers rather than being occupied with monotonous work that is better handled through automated processes. Automation will allow label and packaging printers to perform their job better, to be creative and to excel in what they do.'

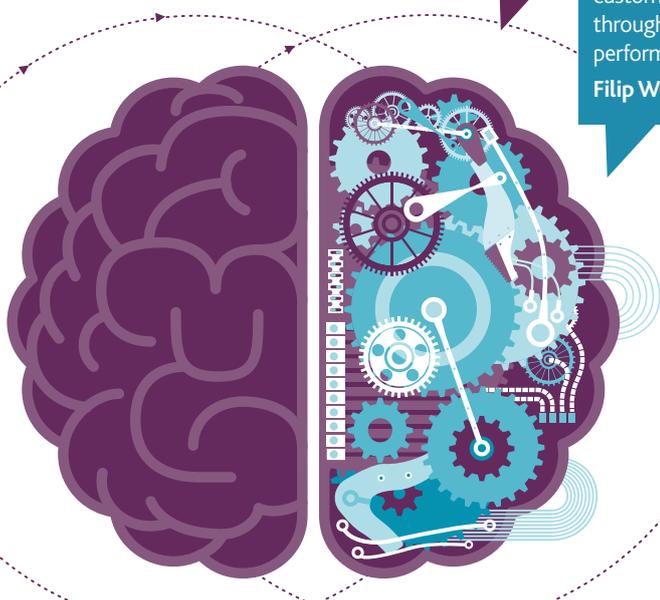
Filip Weymans, vice president, marketing, Xeikon

'People talk about 100 percent automation, but we will never reach that. Twenty percent is better than zero; 40 better than 20, etc. If you automate what you can, you are already better than before. An automatic gearbox is better than a manual gearbox. But that doesn't mean you have a self-driving car. That is sometimes the expectation and we need to be careful. But if you jump on the train today it will bring you an advantage. We will never be able to solve every individual print issue, and so many processes and systems are bespoke which makes it much harder to bring in automation. Automation will first be found in the things that are standard. Don't expect automation for hot foiling or duplex printing. Logic dictates that we will start where find the most standardization and most simple processes. If you have unique machines and processes, perhaps you can automate about 20 percent of production.'

Geert Van Damme, managing director, Cerm

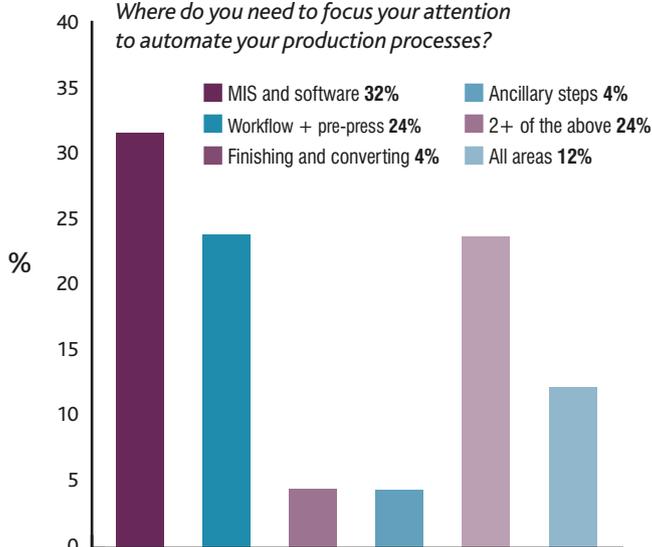
'There is an unmistakable correlation between the level of workflow automation and the efficiency in dealing with today's stringent label production requirements. The market demands short production runs of many different design variants to be supplied just in time at uncompromised and consistent print quality. Consequently, workflow automation will make the difference in capabilities and ultimately in profitability for label converters. This is already the case today, but rest assured that this will be even more the case in the future. Every label converter, no matter big or small, has already implemented some level of workflow automation. However, the role of automation will expand and include business system integration and communication between people, systems and devices across departments. Data will have to be shared and used throughout the entire process from order entry to loading dock and even beyond. When looking at the process from the perspective of the label buyer, you want integration from brand ideation and design up to the shop shelf. An integrated workflow platform with internal and external stakeholders involved and engaged has a direct and substantial impact on the overall lead times. Tangible benefits for the label converter are maximized device utilization and error reduction. Workflow automation in the future goes beyond automating repetitive and mundane operator tasks. It will be all about streamlining communication between customers and suppliers. Given changing market requirements, workflow automation is your best bet on driving lead time and order to cash efficiency gains.'

Geert De Proost, director, software engines, Esko



Automation Poll

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Young managers – Chen Zhuo, Tianjin Xiangjiang

Chen Zhuo is general manager of Chinese label converter Tianjin Xiangjiang. Interview by Kevin Liu



“Label printing is a huge market: as long as you put your heart and mind into it, you will find plenty of opportunities”

‘The government is regulating the whole supply chain, rather than just the printing industry. They are bringing these smaller companies into line, shutting down those who do not conform to market regulations, who breach environmental protection laws, who avoid paying taxes. This leaves a fairer market for the rest of us, and encourages law-abiding and socially responsible companies.’

Tianjin Xiangjiang, which has more than 100 employees, achieved ISO 14001 environmental management certification many years ago, so has avoided much of this pressure. ‘Perhaps it is because I am a young guy, but we moved more quickly in this area than most.’

Tianjin Xiangjiang was publicly listed on NEEQ (National Equities Exchange and Quotations) stock market in 2015. As well as the financial benefit, the listing also regulated Tianjin Xiangjiang’s business with regards to standards across the company: in finance system, for example, and in its internal management system. I believe that only a regulated company can grow effectively and attract talented employees.

Digital printing

Tianjin Xiangjiang’s facility contains almost all printing processes, including letterpress, flexo, offset, silkscreen, digital and inkjet. Markets served include food and beverage, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and electronics. ‘Our greatest interest lies in digital technology,’ says Chen Zhuo. ‘Each time I attend Labelexpo, I spend lots of time studying the most advanced digital technology. Currently, digital printing can satisfy more than 80 percent of our customers’ requirements, hence the future must be in digital printing.’

The major obstacle for digital printing

North China Label Association

Chen Zhuo is the general secretary of North China Label Association, a regional association established in 2016 by printing companies in Tianjin, Hebei, Beijing and Shandong. Compared to eastern and southern China, the north of the country has a relatively undeveloped label industry. The association’s main goal is to organize its members so they can solve issues they have in common. For example, the association has set a lowest price limit to reduce the price range of printed products, protects the patent rights of members, rejects the copying of another company’s work, and advocates independent innovation and cost-saving. It unites companies across the supply chain, provides superior suppliers, facilitates bulk purchasing and reduces costs through the sharing of resources. The aim of the association is collaboration, communication and mutual growth.

The label industry is elegant. The label is the face of the brand and the carrier of its information,’ says Chen Zhuo, general manager of Tianjin Xiangjiang. ‘I tell my customers: we don’t just provide you with a label, but with the image of your product.’

‘The label plays a key role in whether a product sells well in the supermarket or not. The buyer sees the label before seeing what the product contains.’

Tianjin Xiangjiang was founded by Chen Zhuo’s mother in 1992. Before entering the label industry, he studied art performance at the Beijing Broadcasting Institute and then worked as a teacher at Tianjin Normal University. Chen Zhuo, who was born in 1980, joined Tianjin Xiangjiang in 2005.

Twelve years later, the label industry is his passion and he exudes optimism. ‘It’s a great industry,’ he enthuses. ‘Almost every product has a label, so there is no excuse for the label converter. If a company fails, there is a problem in the management, not in the market.’

There have been issues in the Chinese label industry: a vicious price war; the pressure of environmental protection. But these problems are all temporary, says Chen Zhuo. ‘With governmental demands for environmental sustainability increasing, many small and medium-sized companies are under operating under ever greater pressure. Some are forced to close. We think this is positive,’ he says.

in China is still price. At present, the cost of digital printing is generally three or four times higher than conventional. With the development of digital technology, the overall costs may come down. In addition, digital printing needs to solve the problem of efficiency: the speed is far behind flexo printing. If the speed can reach 100m per minute, digital will gain a huge competitive advantage.

It’s worth noting that more and more end users are beginning to install their own digital presses and printing labels themselves. In our view, label converters have no need to panic, as we can provide professional services to customers in design, printing process consultation, anti-counterfeiting etc. Label printing is a huge market: as long as you put your heart and mind into it, you will find plenty of opportunities.



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The Mike Fairley Column

Shrink sleeve labeling – opportunities and challenges

Shrink sleeve labeling has been one of the fastest-growing of all the many different product decoration technologies in recent years. Originating in Asia in the 1960s, it was not until the 1980s that the technology began to develop significantly in Europe and North America, and only in the mid-1990s that full length sleeving and the use of steam for shrinking the sleeve really started to occur. So, still a relatively new process.

Nevertheless, growth in the new millennium has been impressive, with sleeve technology becoming ever-more sophisticated, creating new applications and markets, adapting to the potential of narrow web and digital printing for shorter runs, as well as multiple versions and variations, personalization, different types of application machinery, and much more. There is also no doubting that brand owners and marketing teams have become very attracted to sleeves and it's not difficult to see why: high quality, full body decoration, maximum 360-degree branding space, the potential to decorate complex and intricate shapes, the ability to add tamper evidence, and also offer abrasion resistance and waterproofing of the printed image.

“Get everything right, and the results can look quite superb on the supermarket shelves”

Traditionally produced using mid-to-wide web flexo and gravure printing, sleeve labels are also now being increasingly produced using narrow web flexo and digital printing processes, and becoming integrated into a label converter's portfolio of label decoration options. However, while sleeve label production might seem to be just another printing opportunity for existing label converters, it has to be understood that it is far more complex than just printing on a film, or producing self-adhesive labels.

There are many different films with different degrees of shrink capability that need to be clearly understood, plus a knowledge of the image distortion process during origination and pre-press, as well as knowing the shrinkability and demanding performance requirements of inks, the demands of the seaming process, and understanding how printed sleeves will perform in shrink tunnels and during shrinkage.

A key challenge associated with shrink sleeve decoration is undoubtedly origination. The origination must be created with an element of distortion that predicts the level of shrink such that when the printed film is shrunk onto the container, it will appear

proportionate and not be misshapen. Get everything right however, and the results can look quite superb on the supermarket shelves.

Branding

What we see in the market today is high quality, full body container decoration that maximizes branding real estate on the container. It offers the decoration of complex and intricate shapes. Additionally, shrink sleeve labeling has expanded to cans, providing smaller beverage customers with a more cost-effective option to ordering vast quantities.

Other advances include the incorporation of tamper evidence into the sleeve and providing hidden coding inside the sleeve as well.

Contemporary shrink sleeve labels may enable reduced wall thickness of plastic and glass bottles, yet increase container strength and rigidity. Generally speaking, shrink sleeve films are durable, abrasion resistant and waterproof – the image is printed on the inside of the sleeve, as mentioned – all making shrink sleeve labels a more and more compelling product decoration method today.

We have also observed the expansion of shrink sleeve labeling beyond just high volume applications. Digital pre-press has brought greater levels of sophistication and technology to shrink sleeving and as a result, we have seen narrower and mid web presses – rather than just wide web presses – getting in on the action. Furthermore, there have been improvements in flexo, UV inks, UV LED inks and digital printing technologies. With these advances, converters are now able to ask the question, 'Can we produce sleeves on the technology that we're using now?'

Innovation continues to expand and develop the shrink sleeve label market. Recent advances include color change and glow-in-the-dark sleeves, limited edition and personalized sleeves, hidden prizes and coupons, multipacks, biodegradable films and co-extruded films, microwaveable sleeves, and advances in shrink tunnel technology. Additionally, the sleeve industry has introduced full-length container decoration on complex-shaped containers, combined body label and tamper evidence, 360-degree decoration, a wide range of finishes such as matte, gloss and pearled, reduced wall thickness of plastic containers, and UV barrier properties.

With so much growth potential in virtually every part of the world, the opportunities that this label technology presents to converters – not

to mention the market in general – is virtually limitless. Brand owners are eager to employ the technology and share their brand's story with consumers at the point of sale, and consumers are drawn to the shapes, designs, colors and textures that shrink sleeve labels bring to life on the containers of products that they purchase. Shrink sleeve labeling will continue to inspire the market for years and decades to come.

At the Finat Label Competition, in the Non-adhesive Applications Group, IPE Industria Grafica of Spain took the prize for film shrink sleeve labels for Luna de Murviedro cava, printed in flexo in four colors – white, black, grey and pearl white – cold foil blocked and matte varnished



Converters interested in shrink sleeve labeling can buy the latest Label Academy book, 'Shrink Sleeve Label Technology'. Written by industry experts, it covers all aspects of shrink films, pre-press, printing, seaming, shrinking and application. Go to www.label-academy.com for more information

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Selecting the right M&A team

The key to every great M&A is having the right team, says Bob Cronin of The Open Approach

When you read about M&A, the story is often written about the bigger entity. But the fact is, most label and packaging companies doing deals are entrepreneurial. Indeed, it's the smaller players driving the innovation, potential and excitement. And this means you have great value.

Most entrepreneurs engage in M&A only once. An acquisition can give you the new platform you need through retirement. A sale can bring a different kind of closure. Both can be cumbersome. It can be difficult not only choosing the right transaction, but also making the right decisions along the way. So, how to make the most of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity?

The key to every great deal is having the right team. Big companies have a posse of M&A specialists, administrators, researchers and analysts, not to mention bankers, attorneys and other consultants. Their knowledge matters. M&A transactions are complex and require an understanding of how to negotiate all the issues. As an entrepreneur, you too need such expertise to maximize your move. While some argue that it's more cost-efficient to have a single advisor, this results in components being overlooked and owners walking away from opportunities. During my career as a CEO as well as an advisor, I've seen this happen often. Believe me, good advisors are worth their weight. Most entrepreneurs net out a great deal more – even after consultant costs – than they would have if they had done it through just one.

That said, there are three types of advisors

that should be on every M&A team: transaction advisors, financial advisors and legal advisors. Each one functions in its own specific capacity, and each offers loads of potential.

The transaction advisor is essentially your quarterback. They champion your company and call the plays. They help you find your best targets (acquisitions or acquirers) and assess a realistic value for the exchange.

While some people compare transaction advisors to realtors, this is exactly opposite. While a good realtor maximizes the number of people aware of your listing, a good transaction advisor ensures your highest value by pitching your business to the fewest possible – and most highly suitable – contacts. The better they understand your company, market, customers and industry growth possibilities, the more valuable they are. Plus, they also must have a great network (buyers/sellers and other strategic advisors) to ensure you get the focus and support you need.

These people stay with you every step of the way, and the best ones can guide you through implementation/integration to ensure your maximum return on investment.

Financial advisors fall into three categories: the lenders, the tax specialists and the auditors.

Your lender or banker will be your partner in determining your funding type, cost and availability depending on your position. The ability to leverage what you've built through an acquisition requires an advisor who can envision the opportunities of your proposed direction. So it's important to work with practitioners who have experience in our industry – and particularly with similar-sized deals in your

specific segments. You may be able to find these on your own through colleagues who have recently closed good deals, or your transaction advisor can connect you.

The tax specialist will help you understand your obligation based on the particular transaction structure and minimize tax consequences now and in the future. This can be tricky. Different avenues can have significantly different outcomes. A good tax specialist ensures you have the knowledge to achieve your best results. Keep in mind that this person needs proven M&A expertise. Your CPA and CFO may be helpful, but they don't have the training and insight to truly support you here.

The auditors, then, ensure the earnings you submit or receive are favorable, and that they accurately represent the business you're buying or selling.

The legal advisor, finally, is critical. These are the people who protect your sale or purchase with binding documents that limit liability and risk. They will craft special clauses and parameters for your unique situation, and make sure that you attain your objectives. They're also helpful in your start-up considerations, in that they can advise you on what to expect for various types of transactions.

Not only is it important that these individuals are specialists in all aspects of the M&A process, but they also must bring extreme attention to detail and masterful contract drafting skills.

With a good advisory team, you can be sure you're making the very best deal for your company.

Q&A

Debbie Waldron-Hoines is managing director of EFIA, an association representing the interests of the flexo supply chain. She has worked in the printing and packaging industry for several years, starting in labels at UK converter Harlands of Hull, before moving into reprographics at Gilchrist Brothers and then on to run the DS Smith Pre Print operation at Clay Cross until 2000. In 2001, she established Avant-Tout, a specialist consultancy business within the print and packaging industry. She is also a founder and director of Women in Packaging UK, an initiative to connect, support and recognize the contribution of female employees in the UK packaging industry. She has a degree in French Language and Literature, and an MBA. Interview by David Pittman



The EFIA board (Debbie Waldron-Hoines pictured third from left)

Labels & Labeling (L&L): What is EFIA and who does it represent?

Debbie Waldron-Hoines (DWH): EFIA, the European Flexographic Industry Association, represents the interests of companies throughout the UK. For over 40 years, it has been evolving to meet the needs of companies across the flexographic print supply chain, providing forums, initiatives and tools to support this dynamic environment and highlight the best flexo can offer, whether through the awards program, which recognizes print excellence from the UK and abroad; supporting efforts to achieve operational excellence and greater technical knowledge through training; or promoting debate on the future direction of our industry. And it is truly a broad representation, covering suppliers, printers, designers, retailers and brand owners.

L&L: What does the association do in terms of supporting, growing and lobbying on behalf of the flexo industry?

DWH: EFIA prides itself on recognizing and promoting print excellence. The Annual Print Competition and Awards gala dinner attracts over 500 people from across the industry and is now in its 28th year. The competition is intense and each year we have a very experienced panel of judges drawn from all areas of the industry.

Another key focus is on developing skills and knowledge across the UK and European print industry, through the EFIA Learning Academy – helping companies find that added competitive advantage through their investment in people. The Academy is an online e-learning tool, providing the latest flexographic knowledge in an easy, modular training solution available to everyone in the industry.

We also represent our members' interests on key industry issues by sitting on the board of the Graphic, Print and Media Alliance (GPMA), which lobbies government, especially in critical areas such as training and apprenticeships.

L&L: What is your role in the association?

DWH: I spend time speaking to our existing members and partners, understanding their issues and promoting the ongoing benefits such as the Learning Academy, industry-recognized awards and senior leadership events. I also visit those companies who are interested in joining EFIA and explaining the levels of membership available. And importantly I continue to work with the EFIA board to plan and deliver key events, such as the Awards Dinner, Partners' Dinner and Annual Golf Day. I also represent EFIA's interests through the GPMA board and FTA Europe, a pan-European group, focused on defining standards across the broader international industry. This one means I have to use my language skills.

“Customers continue to demand better quality and suppliers continue to work to achieve consistency. We are seeing the introduction of a wide range of new screening technologies to support this and an increase in more rigorous control analysis. These steps will help to ‘digitize flexo’, increase product consistency and define achievable standards”

L&L: What are the current challenges in the flexo industry?

DWH: I think there are two key challenges – establishing standards and improving skills.

Firstly, flexo is one of the more complex, yet most versatile, of the print processes used across many substrates and for many products, from corrugated board, pre-printed paper, labels and flexible films, to printed electronics, tissue, bags, wrapping paper and envelopes.

We see tremendous innovation and development throughout the supply chain, whether it is machine manufacturers, ink and plate suppliers, or those producing aniloxes and tapes and more. Everyone is contributing to the increased drive in process improvement and opportunities to grow business. However, there are no universally recognized flexo printing standards, unlike those we see in other sectors. Standards do exist, such as ISO 12647-6, but generally printers work to individual standards – established in-house within their manufacturing units that have been driven by their own demands, whether for example it is to address waste reduction or meet quality targets for their customers.

Secondly, we risk losing skills and knowledge, which are vital to the future of the industry. That is why EFIA places so much emphasis on providing a strong program of training, to enhance the education and development of those coming into companies and those who need to revisit areas as part of a continuous improvement initiative.

L&L: What is the flexo industry doing to respond?

DWH: For standards, the EFIA board believes that a pragmatic approach should be taken to create and adopt standards and is now working to define parameters used in color management within the industry. This will support improvements for the many printers

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and their customers. Our initial focus is on the flexible film market, where we are working with members to run a pilot program on color management investigation.

For skills, we work to encourage companies to take the opportunities to develop their people. And many are making great strides. It is about defining the plans, looking at the material available and making print education a real part of professional development. It is certainly an area we are passionate about and will work with our members and government to help them achieve their goals and excel.

L&L: How do you see the flexo industry developing in the near future?

DWH: Customers continue to demand better quality and suppliers continue to work to achieve consistency. The industry is developing to meet these demands. We are seeing the introduction of a wide range of new screening technologies to support this and an increase in more rigorous control analysis. These steps will help to 'digitize flexo', increase product consistency and define achievable standards. I would also expect to see the growing use of a fixed color palette to help reduce cost and improving productivity.

L&L: What are EFIA's current headline projects?

DWH: We have a number of headline projects underway to support our members.

We are working to launch our 15th module of the EFIA Learning Academy later this year, which will address color management. This new module will add to the existing range of the Learning Academy, and we aim to cover different aspects of the entire process from design to waste.

We are also broadening our existing training offering through selected partners to focus on hands-on skills, leadership and sales.

As a founding member of FTA Europe, we are helping to build the Flexo Best Practice Tool Box. This is a great chance to capture best practices and troubleshooting expertise from across the industry, especially to support the development of a new generation of professionals. It builds on lessons from those who have a real breadth of experience and allows us to ensure a solid platform for future learning.

And we begin the planning for next year's EFIA Annual Awards Gala, which will take place on the March 15, 2018. It is always an exciting time both working out the venue, logistics, judging and entertainment. We will also be preparing for the second FTA Europe Diamond Awards, which are being held in Milan in May next year.

L&L: How closely does EFIA work with national flexo associations across Europe and worldwide?

DWH: EFIA has made it a key focus to engage more broadly with colleagues in international associations. We are one of the founding members of FTA Europe, an umbrella association which represents the common interests of a number of European flexographic print industry groups. We will continue to exchange ideas, collaborate and ensure

alignment on many areas of shared interest. This year, FTA Europe also met with the US FTA for the first time to look at further collaboration. This is a very positive step and EFIA will remain an integral part of any developments.

“We need to see digital as a complementary process that should be embraced rather than feared. It is here to stay and we can expect it to grow. We should look at it as an opportunity to extend the versatility of both processes. Look at how successful the Coca-Cola campaign was, using flexo for the base label print and creating the personalization using digital”

L&L: How do you see digital printing impacting your members and how are they responding?

DWH: I believe we need to see digital as a complementary process that should be embraced rather than feared. It is here to stay and we can expect it to grow. But we should look at it as an opportunity to extend the versatility of both print processes. Look at how successful the Coca-Cola campaign was, using flexo for the base label print and creating the personalization using digital. I expect we will see more of that in the future.

L&L: What pastimes do you enjoy in your spare time?

DWH: My involvement in EFIA is only one aspect of my connection with the industry so I do balance other work with a very active family life. We live in Yorkshire, UK, so there are a great number of things to keep the mind, body and spirit working well. The Dales are on our doorstep, so a great walk, pub lunch and stunning views are never far away.

I continue to develop Women in Packaging, which I co-founded and which was formed to help connect, support and recognize female employees across the diverse packaging industry. It has been a great opportunity to meet and network with some very talented people and we are working through a series of exciting initiatives to grow it. And last year I became a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers, which combines a real sense of history with another very diverse group of interesting and talented people.



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Soabar managing director Phil Achurch with the Konica Minolta bizhub Press C71cf

Soabar moves into digital with Konica Minolta press

UK converter Soabar's first foray into digital printing with a Konica Minolta bizhub Press C71cf has been a great success. James Quirk reports

UK converter Soabar installed England's first Konica Minolta bizhub Press C71cf late last year. So successful has been its experience with the press – its first digital printing machine – that, according to production director Robert Gallagher, Soabar is keen to establish a long-term, close working relationship with Konica Minolta.

Soabar has had a long and varied history. The company was founded in the USA as a textile machine supplier, and continued to serve that market under the Soabar name after its acquisition by Avery Dennison. It had offices around the world, with its UK site opened in the 1970s. This UK facility was later acquired by the Sessions family, who owned the historic UK converter Sessions of York. Michael Sessions was managing director of Soabar until 2008, until a management buyout by Phil Achurch and his wife Jo. A year later, production director Robert Gallagher bought into the company and joined the board.

Since then, Soabar has gone from strength to strength. 'At the time of the management buyout, the company's turnover was 1.3 million GBP [1.73m USD], but it wasn't profitable,' says managing director Phil Achurch. 'Since the buyout, the company has been profitable every year. Turnover has risen to 2.2 million GBP [2.9m USD] and nine percent growth is forecast for this year.'

Longevity

A key facet of this success has been the longevity and experience of Achurch and his team. Production director Robert Gallagher has been with the company for 34 years; office manager Angela Cluskey for 26 years; machine operator Stuart Dickson for 30 years. Achurch himself has worked for Soabar for 27 years, beginning as a works engineer, and rising through the roles of installation engineer, technical manager, sales rep and sales manager before becoming managing director after the buyout. During *L&L's* tour of Soabar's factory

"We were looking at HP Indigo and Xeikon machines initially. But when we saw the Konica Minolta press, we were impressed by the color gamut it could hit and the quality of the solids it could produce"

outside Leicester, he points to the tooling station where he began nearly three decades ago. 'Customers often trust an engineering background in an MD more than an accounting background,' he says.

Equally important is the diversity of Soabar's business and its focus on service. Fifty percent of revenue comes from sales of a wide range of desktop printers, which includes thermal transfer label, textile, single card, two color, and full color inkjet label printers, as well as accessories, consumables – such as satin, for the wash-care market, and thermal foils – and barcode label software. Over-printers have been sold since the days of Soabar's acquisition by Avery Dennison and Soabar now stocks a wide range of thermal transfer machines from various manufacturers around the world.

Label printing makes up the remaining 50 percent of revenue. Forty percent of this figure is dedicated to blank and 1-2 color labels, usually sold to users of the desktop printers. The other 60 percent is from swing tickets, hanger tags and self-adhesive labels. Tags and tickets are for the textile sector – the company supplies tags for UK retailer next, among others. For self-adhesive labels, the food, chemical and automotive markets are Soabar's strongest end user sectors, with the latter said to be the fastest-growing. The company



L-R press operator Mark Harrison, managing director Phil Achurch, and production director Robert Gallagher

also serves the logistics and pharmaceutical markets. The majority of label sales are in the UK; textile printers are exported worldwide.

'We focus on service rather than price,' says Achurch. 'We install and maintain the machines. We are a one-stop shop, providing machines, labels and service.'

'New printing jobs often come out of machine installations. We have around 700 customers, and our client retention rate is excellent,' says Gallagher. 'They are spread across different sectors, so we are not reliant on any one customer,' adds Achurch.

Digital move

Following the management buyout, 'the first order of business was to consolidate and then upgrade the machinery,' says Achurch. In the 1980s, Soabar had installed Kopack letterpress machines and flexo presses from the US which were rebranded as Soabar presses. Finishing took place on a Chinese hot foil, laminating and sheeting

"The cost to quality ratio is very good, there's little maintenance, and the fact that it can print on virtually any material is a huge advantage. Our clients have been very happy with the results"

machine. One flatbed Kopack is still in use, dedicated to card work.

In the early 2000s, the company added two AB Graphic finishing machines – a Vectra turret rewinder and ATR inspection rewinder – and one from Focus Machinery. In 2005, Soabar installed a Taiwo press and a 2-color Nilpeter FA-4 – the chassis of a 4-color press with the ABC Vectra attached in-line – for the production of blank and 1-2 color labels. According to Achurch, the Nilpeter will likely be upgraded back to a 4-color machine in the near future.

A year after the buyout, Soabar installed an 8-color Edale Beta water-based flexo press, which was later upgraded to a UV system. In early 2016, Achurch and his team then began to evaluate the digital printing options in the market. During this process, Soabar farmed out work to external suppliers with digital capabilities, one of whom was a Xeikon user. When the company decided to install the Konica Minolta bizhub Press C71cf in December last year, 'there was no problem shifting this work to the Konica Minolta press,' says Robert Gallagher.

'The quality it produces is superb,' he continues. 'It is more than comparable to the work produced on a Xeikon press. The Konica Minolta only prints CMYK but is a fraction of the cost of the bigger machines. The inks are very durable and there are no hidden costs. It is also very easy to run – an operator who hadn't run a press before was running the Konica Minolta machine without any problems after just one day. Our clients like the fact that they can press a button, look at a sample, and pass the job.' With Soabar's 23 employees housed in a small factory

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of 650sqm, the relatively small footprint of the Konica Minolta press was also an advantage. The Konica Minolta bizhub Press C71cf uses a dry toner electro-photographic imaging engine and will print roll-to-roll CMYK at 13.5m/min at a native resolution of 1200 x 1200 DPI / 8 bit. Maximum unwind/rewind diameter is 500mm (20in). The press requires no pre-treatment of materials.

'We were looking at HP Indigo and Xeikon machines initially,' reveals Soabar's digital sales manager Simon Tolley, who has spent the last nine years working in the digital label market. 'But when we saw the Konica Minolta press, we were impressed by the color gamut it could hit and the quality of the solids it could produce, which in our opinion was more than comparable to the likes of the HP Indigo and Xeikon presses.

'The cost to quality ratio is very good, there's very little maintenance, and the fact that it can print on virtually any material is a huge advantage. Our clients have been very happy with the results.' 'We can't fault the support from Konica Minolta,' continues Phil Achurch.

The press is the first of its kind in England (UK installations had taken place in Scotland and the Republic of Ireland), and the strong relationship between Soabar and Konica Minolta is evidenced by the converter allowing its operation to be used by the press manufacturer as a showroom for potential clients. Delete quote

To complement the Konica Minolta press, in January of this year Soabar installed an AB Graphic Digicon Lite with lamination, varnish,



An AB Graphic Digicon Lite was installed to finish labels printed on the Konica Minolta bizhub Press C71cf

cold foil and semi-rotary die-cutting. The majority of labels printed by the Konica Minolta press are finished on the Digicon Lite.

Within the 60 percent of production dedicated to self-adhesive labels, the Konica Minolta press contributes around 14 percent, a figure which is rising. The installation has helped Soabar attract new clients, particularly in the beer, water, food and chemical sectors. The press prints one shift, with an average run length of 250 linear meters.

According to Phil Achurch, Soabar's next potential investment is in a management information system. 'Our challenge is to

integrate the Konica Minolta press further into the existing workflow of the business, to increase the automation of orders and client pdfs through to the press and then to finishing.'

The company launched an updated website 12 months ago, with regularly updated blogs and news. 'We receive lots of orders online, particularly from abroad,' says Achurch. In a further recent development, Soabar recently launched an apprenticeship scheme.



Watch a video about Konica Minolta at Labelexpo Europe 2017 here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7vv2ne3>

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keep reinventing



Nuceria's Milan production team with new Nilpeter FA-4*



New Bobst M6 press dedicated to shrink sleeve production

Nuceria climbs the value chain

The acquisition of a design agency and a major investment program have extended Nuceria Group's capabilities to the entire pack print supply chain. Andy Thomas reports

Nuceria, Italy's biggest integrated label and packaging printing group, is changing its role from a packaging supplier to a provider of complete packaging services as it aims for a 100m EUR turnover over the next few years.

This has been made possible by the acquisition of a stake in the Solutioo Group, a creative packaging agency offering a broad range of services and capabilities spanning from visual communication to 3D modeling, animation and prototyping, artwork development and management, pre-print and digital proofs, mock-ups and project management. It also engages in product development and regulatory consulting.

The company has been operating since the early 2000s out of four sites – three in Italy and one in Switzerland – with 30 employees supporting multinational customers in the home and personal care, food and medical devices markets.

'Today we are already close partners for our customers,' explains Guido Iannone, general manager of Nuceria group, 'but we want to do more. We want to offer them integrated and customized services; a virtual circle that connects vendors, partners and clients. Leveraging the complementary capabilities of Solutioo Group we can minimize interfaces, accelerate innovation timelines and minimize time to market.'

Adds Iannone, 'Being better does not

mean just winning new market share. It is more related to the portfolio of products, services, skills and consultancies, and all of these are linked in the Solutioo acquisition. This demonstrates the group's willingness to go beyond merely consolidating and meeting larger targets and not any more just operating in the production phase.'

Organic growth

On the technology side, Nuceria continues to expand its machinery fleet across all areas of its packaging business. Flexible packaging is a particular focus, and Nuceria plans to increase production volume with a series of new investments.

The company has already invested heavily in shrink sleeve labels in its Salerno plant, with a new dedicated factory area and state-of-the-art technologies. New equipment includes a highly specified Bobst M6 press, a DCM seamer, Karlville inspection unit and a Prati rewinder.

'We are moving outside our comfort zone looking for new value-added markets with this press, as customers are now asking for higher decoration and special effects which cannot be achieved on wide web presses,' says Guido Iannone.

The 670mm-wide Bobst M6 press is a 14-color machine – 13 x flexo and one SPG rotary screen unit – with cold foil, two lamination stations and two turnbars to allow

reverse printing. The press is integrated with Bobst automated unwind and rewind units for non-stop operation and the full range of Bobst 'Digital Flexo' automation technologies including automated print pressure and register adjustment. The press is equipped with the latest AVT inspection system, which automatically stops the rewinder on each defective label.

Nuceria has also planned the construction of a 6,000sqm plant in Salerno to install a new 10-color Uteco solvent-based flexo press with gravure station, laminator and dedicated cutting line.

Flexible packaging applications will include flow wraps and pouches. 'This will be complimentary to our existing core applications like wraparound, or roll-fed labels,' says Iannone. 'We want to get into the value-added end of the flexible space.'

The ability to cross-sell a diverse range of products will be key to Nuceria's future growth.

Nuceria Group also continues to invest in its pressure-sensitive label operation. At Labelexpo Europe the company confirmed the purchase of a Nilpeter Panorama hybrid flexo-digital press, configured with 5-color inkjet module in combination with flexo process, silkscreen, cold foil and quick-change die-cutting.

Paolo Cordonato, operations director at Nuceria Group, comments: 'We have embraced the market trend towards customization for a long time, and with this investment we will reach the next level. We have chosen Nilpeter's Panorama because it perfectly combines the strength of the different technologies to build sustained value and transform something special into something unique.'



Prati rewinder with workflow link to Bobst press automates shrink sleeve production



For previous articles on Nuceria group, visit www.labelsandlabeling.com/search/site/Nuceria



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Zebra adds capacity with Nilpeter FA-4*

Zebra Technologies Europe – known for its thermal label printers – has installed a Nilpeter FA-4* in the UK as it seeks to grow its supplies business. James Quirk reports

Zebra Technologies Europe is well-known for its thermal label printers – it boasts some 7,000 resellers for these machines, whose main markets are manufacturing, transport/logistics, retail and healthcare, and estimates to have a 40 percent market share in the EMEA region. But at its facility in Preston, UK, the company also prints its own labels – sold to users of its printers – as well as an array of products such as wristbands and tags, on a fleet of flexo presses designed and built in-house.

Zebra Technologies Europe's site in Preston – one of two facilities in the UK, alongside its head office in Bourne End – supplies the EMEA region with Zebra Certified Supplies, and is supported by further label printing at its site in Heerenveen, the Netherlands. There are 11 presses in Preston; five in Heerenveen.

The US-headquartered parent company Zebra Technologies – which has four label production sites in the US, mainly equipped with Mark Andy presses – entered the UK market in 1993 through the acquisition of Preston-based Brook Labels. The premises was relocated five years later, and it is at this site that Zebra Technologies Europe has installed a Nilpeter FA-4* – its first press in Europe not built in-house – as it seeks to increase its market share of supplies for its thermal printers.

'We want to attach more label sales to our printer sales in order to increase market

share,' says Elaine Wilkinson, senior manager, supplies product marketing, at Zebra Technologies Europe. 'We are growing quickly and need to produce more complex products locally, such as wristbands, rather than import them from our sites in the US. We want to be flexible in our production. Our business is growing too quickly for us to continue manufacturing presses internally, hence the installation of the Nilpeter FA-4*.'

Zebra Technologies Europe sold 56 million EUR (66 million USD) of supplies – labels, ribbons, wristbands and tags – during 2016 in EMEA. It's an impressive figure, though it doesn't reach the 40 percent market share enjoyed by its printers. However, a renewed focus in this area is already reaping benefits. Zebra Technologies Europe has made a number of investments including appointing a new sales team in charge of supplies in specific territories across EMEA, and the Nilpeter press, which has brought additional capacity since its installation late last year. Zebra exhibited for the first time at Labelexpo this year, where it showcased Zebra Certified Supplies and met with a number of potential new partners – Zebra has some 120 specialist partners currently focused on selling supplies.

On the day of L&L's visit, staff at the Preston site were celebrating a record first quarter of supplies sales. The figures of 15.2 million EUR in barcode supplies, more than 3m EUR in wristband sales, and more than 4.5m EUR of ZipShip (stocked label) sales are

"We are growing quickly and need to produce more complex products locally, such as wristbands, rather than import them from our sites in the US. We want to be flexible in our production"

all records. Custom-made labels also had a strong quarter – the 3.3m EUR of sales in this area, though not a record, was higher than in any quarter in 2016. According to Elaine Wilkinson, the company's average annual growth has been around 10 percent for the last three years.

In-house expertise

The Nilpeter FA-4* joins a fleet of presses designed and built in-house by engineering manager Mark Richmond and his team since 1998. 'We convert complicated synthetic materials, which require a very high degree of web tension control throughout the machine,' says Richmond. 'There were no machines on the market that fitted our exact needs for the production of high quality plain labels, so we developed our own, incorporating operator feedback.'

Richmond and his team have designed and built eight plain label presses, as well as three 2-color machines, one 3-color, two 4-color and one 7-color. The first 4-color press was sent to the Heerenveen site with the arrival of the Nilpeter FA-4*. 'The machines are designed to high specifications and focus on ease of use. They are tailor-made for our



Zebra hosted a partner event in December to mark the installation of the Nilpeter FA-4

Landmark wristband sale

In 2016, Zebra sold its one billionth Z-Band wristband – thermal printable wristbands which the company has been selling to the global healthcare industry since 2008.



The factory floor at Zebra Technologies Europe's site in Preston, UK



Mark Richmond and his team have designed and built a fleet of flexo presses in-house

Zebra marks 35th anniversary of barcode printer line

Zebra Technologies continues its legacy of innovation with industrial, desktop and mobile printer launches, 35 years after introducing the first barcode printer in 1982. The new printers are enabled by Print DNA, a new software suite of applications, utilities and developer tools. Zebra's new ZT600 Series industrial printers, ZD420/ZD620 desktop printers and ZQ300 Series mobile printers along with Print DNA software help users analyze the status and performance of their printer fleet in real time.

specific business needs. All the presses built in the last 10 years have full servo control technology,' says Richmond. 'We keep a wide range of spare parts, so we don't have to wait for third party suppliers.'

The seven flexo presses built in-house have a 14in web width. Two of them are equipped with Tamarack insertion units for the production of wristbands, and all have integrated Meech web cleaning equipment.

Finishing takes place on thirteen turret rewinders from AB Graphic and Zebra has recently installed a Martin Automatic butt splicer enabling continuous reel-to-reel

production. Plate mounting equipment comes from JM Heaford; plate cleaners from Flexowash; and anilox cleaners from Alphasonics. Tooling is supplied by RotoMetrics and Wink.

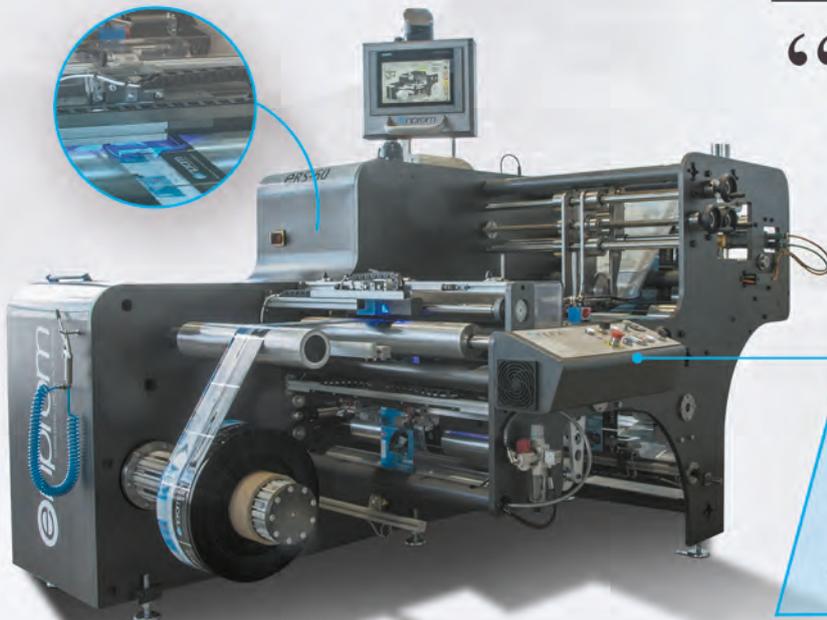
Fifty-five people are employed in manufacturing at the Preston site – which is certified to ISO 9001 quality and ISO 14001 environment standards – with 140 staff in total. Production runs 24 hours a day, five days a week in a 24,000sq ft (2,200sqm) manufacturing area. Factory floor space was doubled in 2013. A further 20,000sq ft (1,850sqm) is dedicated to warehousing and distribution, and 12,000sq ft (1,100sqm) to office space.

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L-R: Elaine Wilkinson, senior manager, supplies product marketing; Muir Hutton, senior manufacturing manager; Mark Richmond, engineering manager; Andrew Shuttleworth, shift team leader

Nilpeter installation

As Zebra Technologies Europe’s first outsourced press, the 8-color Nilpeter FA-4* represents something of a departure for the company, and brings additional capabilities. The water-based UV press features a Tamarack insertion unit, rail system, turnbar, reverse printing units, relam/delam and lamination. It has three die stations, including a Quick Change die-cutting station developed by Nilpeter in cooperation with Kocher+Beck, which allows a die to be changed in just 10 seconds. A 100 percent inspection system will shortly be added.

‘It has more functionality than our existing presses,’ says Elaine Wilkinson. ‘The

quick-change die, job save function and sleeve system are all different, so we have been focused on getting the operators up to speed. They love the additional functionality, while the reduced changeover times increase throughput.’ Wilkinson reports that in-house production of plain label presses will continue, but for color presses, Nilpeter is likely to be Zebra Technologies Europe’s preferred partner in the future.

The Zebra team studied presses from rival manufacturers at Labelexpo before opting for the Nilpeter. ‘Its build quality had a slight edge over the competition,’ reveals Richmond. ‘Its ease of use and storing and retention of set-up info were big advantages. The print

engines are phenomenal. The other machines we looked at were all good – but the Nilpeter press just goes that little bit further. It was designed as a quick-change machine, and is as good as you will get in the flexo industry.’

Shift team leader Andrew Shuttleworth, who operates the Nilpeter FA-4*, is similarly enthused. ‘In 17 years, it’s the best machine I’ve operated,’ he reports. ‘Its print quality and registration accuracy are excellent. Jobs can be recalled at a click of a button on an iPad. It’s a Rolls-Royce of a press.’



For more news on Zebra Technologies, go to www.labelsandlabeling.com/search/site/zebra

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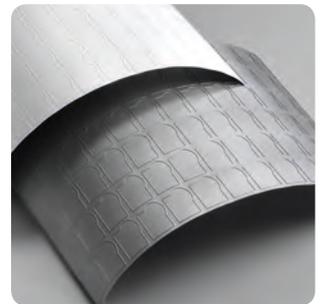
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Project showcases narrow web flexible package production

In a unique project to promote the latest in narrow web flexible package production, a cross-section of the supply chain united at Danish printer Green Label to showcase the work going on to support growth in this area. David Pittman reports

The use of narrow web technology in the production of flexible packaging is by no means a 'bleeding edge' development. Converters are embracing the opportunities in growing numbers, while the supply chain has an established portfolio of technologies available for those wanting to offer such capabilities to their customers.

Regular readers of *L&L* will know how the magazine has evolved to reflect this (see *L&L* editor James Quirk's leader from issue 4, 2017), and visitors to recent Labelexpo shows around the world will similarly have seen first-hand how exhibitors have progressed from showing technologies for 'labels' and 'packaging' to those for 'labels and packaging'.

Labelexpo Europe 2017 was the latest evidence of this (see *L&L's* review on p98), including a project that brought together specialists in pre-press, material, press, inks and curing to push the market forward even further. Those dropping by the DuPont, Synthogra, Nilpeter, Flint or GEW stands at the show will have seen the outcome, with six designs of a bag for crisps (potato chips) on display, produced in short runs using a combination of their latest and greatest developments.

To make this a reality, the suppliers came together at Denmark's Green Label earlier this summer, where the printing, inks, materials and UV curing were examined. In attendance were Lykke Trusbak and Anne Emborg from Nilpeter; Flint Group's Niklas

Olsson; Nanette Thomas, Christian Petersen and Helene Severin from Synthogra; and GEW's Marcus Greenbrook.

Pre-press

This started with the creation of the printing plates, handled by Danish flexible packaging reprographic specialist hl-repro, using DuPont's Cyrel DPR 45 plates with DigiFlow, a simple, inexpensive modification to existing DuPont exposure units that adds a chamber for the creation of a controlled atmosphere during the main exposure. As a result, flexographers can maintain an exact 1:1 reproduction of image elements on the plate for improved solid ink density, it is claimed.

Cyrel DPR is a robust digital plate, designed for printing on a variety of substrates and with different ink types – solvent- and water-based inks, and with limited compatibility with select UV inks.

Carsten Tychosen, hl-repro sales manager, was present to see his company's work in action, with the plates mounted on polyurethane sleeves supplied by Synthogra using a JM Heaford plate mounting machine before loading onto the press, one of the first new-look Nilpeter FA flexo presses installed.

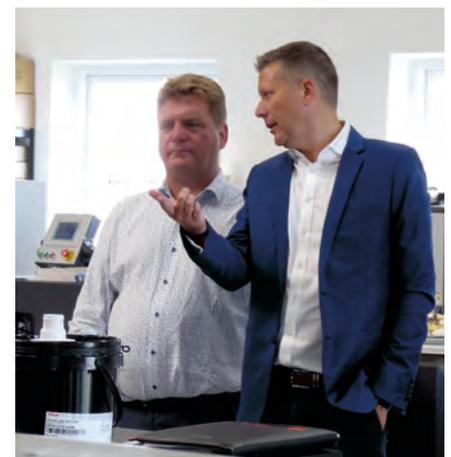
Printing

The newest FA machine in Nilpeter's portfolio, launched at Labelexpo Europe 2017, is described as 'the most versatile flexo press on the market'. It has been designed

to accommodate printers' ever-growing needs, according to the press manufacturer, with a shorter web path, redesigned print stations, tight register tolerance and 'excellent printing results' on multiple substrates. Both the 14in and 17in versions of the machine have a maximum printing speed of 200m/min, while value-adding units, and Application

Above (from left): Anne Emborg (Nilpeter), Steffen Vahlkvist (Nilpeter), David Pittman (L&L), Marcus Greenbrook (GEW), Niklas Olsson (Flint Group), Nanette Thomas (Synthogra), Claus Gramning (Green Label), Carsten Tychosen (hl-repro), Anne Gramning (Green Label) and Christian Petersen (Synthogra)

Below: Flint Group's Niklas Olsson and GEW's Marcus Greenbrook were present to see the first results of the project being printed at Green Label



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Above: The new Nilpeter FA installed at Denmark's Green Label

Left: Nilpeter technician Steffen Vahlkvist checks the new press

and Automation Packages can be specified, according to application needs and budget. Based on Nilpeter's Clean-Hand design approach, the new FA model ensures clean hands during press operation, with a minimum of hands-on press interaction; all data is saved, jobs are easily recalled and the press will auto register. The new press has further been built around the needs of modern press operators, with an intuitive user interface and fully mobile print controls.

'This press has been designed to be as simple to use as possible,' says Lykke Trusbak, Nilpeter technology center manager and representing the company as the first jobs began to run off the press. 'At its heart, it is a simple – yet sophisticated – machine with a high degree of available automation to make production as efficient as possible. The platform is flexible, and with the various add-ons and packages available it can quickly be upgraded to a high-end system in line with the users' needs.'

The Green Label production hall features flexo and digital printing technology, finishing and converting machinery, alongside which the new press sits. When L&L visited Green Label's production facility outside of Aarhus in August, the press had only recently been installed, with owner Claus Grønning and his team still learning the ins and outs of their new eight print station machine. Only printing using five colors at this time, quick changeovers were already in evidence. Grønning was already full of praise for the new press on his company's shop floor, with his initial feedback being that it is, 'easy-to-use, efficient and productive'.

Consumables

Supported by Nilpeter technician Steffen Vahlkvist, the press was running a metallized PET/PE B from Synthogra, printed using Flint's Flexocure Ancora 50 low migration inkset to print CMYK+W, cured using GEW E2C UV lamps positioned after each print station, and then laminated with a BOPP film, also from Synthogra's product portfolio.

Flexocure Ancora 50 is one of Flint Group's latest developments, and is suitable for printing labels and certain flexible packaging applications where specific demands for low migration are required. It can be used in all narrow and mid web flexographic print units

where the ink is cured using UV. A white ink, also from the Flexocure Ancora series, was laid down in the first print station.

GEW's E2C is a low energy UV curing system for narrow web presses, featuring the Rhino electronic power supply, and enabling color process printing at full production speed with as little power as 90W/cm. E2C UV curing systems can be used with a wide range of heat-sensitive materials with no heat transfer to the machine or substrate at stand-by through the use of actively air-cooled shutter technology.

Synthogra has been working hard for a number of years to deliver various materials, especially packaging films, in orders suited to short-run production. These are targeted at both narrow and wide web converters, with its offering to narrow web converters intended to deliver business opportunities as a supplement to conventional label printing and converting. For example, Synthogra's single layer flexible films, and multilayer flexible films for flow packaging, sachets and lidding films are optimized for printing on narrow web machines using flexo, UV flexo and digital.

Synthogra's recently refurbished facility close to Copenhagen holds stocks of upwards of 700 varieties, slit into widths and lengths as required by customers, and delivered just-in-time. Two Jurmet slitting machines take center stage, with Thomas discussing the possibility of adding a laminating unit in the near future. Synthogra currently does no in-house production of its materials, although the company is involved in developing a range of constructions intended for diverse applications. Synthogra owns recipes of many of its films that are 'very unique' and modified to the narrow web industry.

After printing, both gloss and matte overlamination films from Synthogra were applied to the same job for the partners present to assess the output using both finishes. Further, Flint Group has taken samples for migration testing, and although the results were not available at the time of going to press, Olsson predicted that the results would show how the combination of the correctly specified material, low

migration inks, efficient UV curing and lamination make successful production of flexible packaging using narrow web technology a genuine opportunity.

'We are writing history'

'We think the time is now for narrow web converters to enter the flexible packaging market,' states Olsson. 'The technologies have been around for a number of years, but evolutions in the supply chain have brought the next-generation of products to market, which when coupled with growing interest from converters and their customers in efficient short-run packaging production, makes it the right time.'

For the other suppliers involved, their eight-month collaboration has been conducted to make clear to the market that there are genuine technologies available, with the whole supply chain able to unite to help address any concerns and overcome any obstacles in the adoption of narrow web flexible packaging.

'There has never been a gathering like this, on this scale, so it shows how the supply chain is ready, willing and able to support those looking to take the step into flexible packaging, as well as those that already have with their next steps,' says Thomas.

'We wanted to hold the customers hand from the beginning to the end. From idea to plates, ink, drying, printing and testing, until the product is packed and ready. We did it.'

Olsson adds that another way the market might develop is with wide web manufacturer's investing in narrow web machines to extend their offering. As an example, Ivory Coast flexible packaging printer Socipack has invested in a Nilpeter FA-6* flexo press to meet increasing market demand for adhesives labels, sleeves and wrap-around labels.

'The process is embedded in the narrow web market, giving label companies the tools to produce short runs of flexible packaging,' concludes Olsson.



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Wrist band promotion is latest Coca-Cola innovation

Andy Thomas reports how the Coca-Cola technical team behind Share-a-Coke and Bow Label brought to market another innovation which allows festival goers to turn a label into a wristband. Photography by Hannah Payne

The latest in a string of innovations from Coca-Cola sees music fans in Romania using labels as entry tickets to some of the country's leading concert events.

Coca-Cola Romania and McCann Bucharest developed detachable Coca-Cola labels that double as music festival wristbands for some of the country's main music events, including Transylvania's 'Untold' festival. Fans scan a promotional barcode on the label with a smartphone app to see if their bottle is a valid ticket.

“Initially, the idea was for a fabric wristband incorporated into the label, but this proved too time consuming, expensive and complex to create. That is how we started developing the wristband made from our label and hotmelt glue”

The multi-colored wristbands also have an after-life, tapping into the trend among Romanian teens to collect festival wristbands as fashionable souvenirs.

Coca-Cola Romania – led by Iuliana Nedelcu, senior brand manager, My Coke Romania and Moldova, and Daria Gonta, brand manager, Coca-Cola flavors – came up with the idea to turn Coca-Cola bottles into

'tickets to summer experiences'.

The idea was given practical form by Coca-Cola's packaging innovations manager Gregory Bentley, working closely with the engineers at Coca-Cola Romania. Bentley has previously driven a range of Coca-Cola label innovations including Share-a-Coke and Bow Label.

Bentley explains that Coca-Cola's Packaging R&D team had been kicking around the concept of a label wristband for a few years, but the project gained momentum

when Marco Beggiora, packaging manager for Coca-Cola Central and Eastern Europe, requested support for festival promotions in Romania.

'Initially, the idea was for a fabric wristband incorporated into the label, but this proved too time consuming, expensive and complex to create,' says Bentley. 'That is how we started developing the wristband made from

our label and hotmelt glue.'

Continues Bentley, 'This solution seems obvious now, but you have to understand nothing like this has been done before, and we needed to investigate many alternatives before deciding on the most viable.'

Lessons

Working closely with the engineering and operations teams at the local bottler, CCHBC Romania, and label supplier Rodata, the team quickly agreed on a printing method and conversion techniques, drawing lessons from the award-winning Bow Label project. Rodata had also worked with Bentley on the Share-A-Coke campaign.

As with the Share-a-Coke project, it was vital there should be no change in the bottler's workflow – for example in the format of the wraparound label and the slip coefficient of the varnish.

The key design concept was a perforation which goes part way through the label; the depth of that score is Rodata's IP. 'This meant we had to use a solid film,' explains Bentley. 'A cavitated film is not oriented, so you can't put a tear in it.'

The wraparound label is printed in three colors front and back via a turnbar, with space left for a digitally printed barcode on



Coca-Cola Romania and McCann Bucharest developed detachable Coca-Cola labels that double as music festival wristbands



a white patch on the inside of the label. The labels were printed by Rodata on a 1.2m-wide gravure press then slit to 330mm rolls for digital printing on an HP Indigo WS6800 press.

'Rodata already had an HP Indigo press in-house because of Share-A-Coke,' says Bentley. 'They wanted to do the whole operation in-house, which was much better. Sadly, the process is not in-line. We are still looking at ways to make it more efficient to produce – for example attaching a digital head to the gravure press.'

An advantage of the 645mm-wide repeat length on the gravure press was that multiple lanes of different designs could be printed, allowing Bentley to create a good mix without having to use digital print for the main print process.

On the bottling line, a simple but clever modification to the applicator saw the bottom cut off a pad on the glue drum. This means when the consumer tears off the strip there is glue on one end only, allowing it to be secured round the wrist.

CCHBC Romania launched an initial trial within weeks of the initial concept, then made small modifications to the design and the project took off.

'When I tried on the first sample for a quality check, the wristband stayed on for over three weeks in which time I ran the equivalent of nearly two marathons and travelled to Japan for a business trip,' says Bentley.

In the first year of the promotion it was run from this one factory in two versions and three sizes. 'The factory team were amazing,' recalls Bentley. 'I had worked with them on Bow Label, I knew them and they trusted me.'

Autonomy

The franchise structure of Coca-Cola gives each bottler a wide degree of autonomy. 'It's not part of our company and we have

“This excellent working relationship saw the project completed at unprecedented speed – just 6-8 months from start of discussions to commercial launch”

to build up these relationships. Along with Coca-Cola's CEE packaging manager, they are the heroes of this project. They also had a great relationship with Rodata and worked really hard on the project together even when we weren't there.'

This excellent working relationship saw the project completed at unprecedented speed – just 6-8 months from start of discussions to commercial launch.

'In terms of label technology, this was the easiest of all the projects we've done,' concludes Bentley. 'And it was made easier because we have built the know-how. We had learned the perforation techniques from

Bow Label – including not using cavitated film – and we had learned to use digital from Share-A-Coke.'

One notable aspect of the project was its security element. Because each winning label is so valuable, people needed to be prevented from removing the labels in-store and scanning them to see if they had won. So the consumer cannot enter the competition without entering a digitally printed code concealed in the cap. Also important, once the wristband is removed, all legal information is still readable on the label.

The project was a huge success, with Coca-Cola estimating that the wristband labels reached most teens in Romania.

Concludes Bentley, 'My job is to scale this globally. I have produced a tool kit for all projects I have done and they are on the system on the Coca-Cola Cloud, so anyone in Coke globally can activate those campaigns.'



The Coca-Cola wristband project was shortlisted for the 2017 Global Label Awards. www.labelawards.com



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Chocolate bar wrappers were turned into a DIY art project allowing consumers to turn the wrapper into an origami cow

Promotional labels get personal

Promotional label and packaging campaigns are increasingly used by brands as a tool to reach more consumers, while personalized labels are increasing engagement. Chelsea McDougall reports

Studies have shown that a well-designed product can lead to increased sales. Holidays and major sporting events also can mean a boost in sales for CPGs. So for brands looking to make push more product from store shelves during these times, special promotional and seasonal label and packaging campaigns are a match made in retail heaven.

Nielsen recently conducted market research exploring brand packaging design and effectiveness. The researchers say that packaging is the only marketing tool that reaches 100 percent of buyers at what Nielsen calls 'the first moment of truth,' when between 50 and 80 percent of purchase decisions are made.

"We have seen many successful examples, including Share a Coke and Kit Kat, generating new excitement for well-known, mature brands. The common thread in these successful campaigns is the customer making a personal connection to the product"

Perhaps no one knows this better than craft beer. In North America, the Brewers Association says that seasonal beers are the second most popular beers, behind IPAs, with annual sales eclipsing \$17m USD.

Personalized labeling is a top trend for brand owners looking to engage one-to-one with consumers.

Coca-Cola has proven to be a leader in this arena with several successful promotional label and packaging campaigns, including the blockbuster Share a Coke that is credited for growing sales for the company for the first time in 10 years, after a decade of steady declines, as reported in the Wall Street Journal. Oreo saw success with its customized, colorful packaging that the company launched for the holiday season in 2015. More recently, KitKat created successful web-to-print personalized packages for its chocolate bars.

'We have seen many successful examples, including Share a Coke and Kit Kat, generating new excitement for well-known, mature

brands,' said Ravit Spiegel, HP Indigo commercial marketing manager. 'The common thread in these successful campaigns is the customer making a personal connection to the product.'

A million to one

Similarly, Parra Chocolate, an iconic chocolate bar in Israel, was looking to revitalize its veteran brand in order to attract consumers in the coveted 18-34 age range. Strauss Group's Parra brand chocolate bars are to Israelis what Hershey's are to Americans, Cadbury to Britons, and Toblerone to the Swiss. A cow is Parra Chocolate's most ubiquitous mascot and has adorned the package since the brand was born in 1934.

But in recent years, the veteran brand was facing competition from imported chocolate. Strauss Group wanted to innovate its Parra Chocolate packaging without changing the product, or losing the cow, or its legacy. Strauss Group turned to Ilan Print, a commercial printer based in Ashdod, Israel, to create one million unique labels for a one-time omni-channel promotion.

'In Israel, everybody grew up on that brand,' says Ilan Print VP of



Unique designs were created with HP Mosaic software



XY promotional project by Multi-Color England



The XY promotion by Multi-Color England was digitally printed with screen print for the 'XY'

marketing, Eran Friedman. 'The brand felt they need to speak to the young generation. They wanted to do something to have

printer that is capable of a project like this, it means you're not a digital printer like the rest. You have made a mark on the industry.

"When you are a printer that is capable of a project like this, it means you're not a digital printer like the rest. You have made a mark on the industry. We are creating an experience for our customers"

the younger generation feel engaged again with the brand.'

Behind the scenes, Ilan Print worked round-the-clock shifts for 10 days to complete the project, which included wrappers printed six to a sheet on an HP Indigo 10000 digital sheet-fed press. One million unique designs were automatically generated using HP SmartStream Mosaic from 17 seed patterns using scaling, transposition and rotation.

Strauss Group went a step further, turning the wrapper into an art project by providing the directions for consumers to turn the wrapper into an origami cow – a nod to its mascot.

When it launched in January 2016, Strauss had introduced a wide-ranging media marketing campaign that featured TV advertising, billboards and social media sweepstakes with its origami projects. The company asked consumers to tag images of their creations on Facebook and Instagram to win prizes.

Friedman says: 'When you are a

I say to customers, "We are not just printer." We are creating an experience for our customers, we're creating a product that's more than just colors, more than just ink on paper. This is showing our customers that we can do things that are unique.'

XY project

While Strauss Group used packaging to revamp a veteran brand, some print companies are using labels and packaging to promote themselves.

Multi-Color England recently did just that with a personalized campaign it called 'XY' that sent wine bottles with unique labels to 1,000 customers. The traditionally flexo company wanted to highlight its digital capabilities. The labels were printed on a HP Indigo WS6600 at an MCC sister site in Scotland.

Paul Piper, creative marketing and digital communications at MCC Daventry England, explains: 'We're a flexo printer mainly, but we wanted to come up

with a campaign to show our customers what's possible, to show them what we're capable of.'

The company teamed with its design partner at Studio Parr for the labels, each with its own unique image. Though the company wanted to flex its digital muscles, it also took elements of flexographic printing for the XY project. MCC England and Studio Parr took CMYK inks from its flexo presses and mixed the inks with opaque white varnishes to create a brightly colored loose liquid ink look that took its own shape as the liquid moved.

'We wanted that hand-crafted feel, even though it's a digital project we wanted to use the inks we use on our flexo presses. It gave us quite a nice look.'

Unlike Ilan Print, which used Mosaic software, MCC took painstaking efforts to photograph 1,000 different images as the ink moved. The company numbered the labels and printed the names of the customers to whom they sent the bottles. Finally, some commercial materials and brochures were also sent to clients along with the wine.

Not only were the results visually stunning, but customers reacted well to them, too, Piper says. "This was purely about personalization and connecting with our brand and consumers and making them feel special."



Multi-Color England printed its customers' names on the labels

Lucky bags

Tostitos will release limited-edition 'lucky bags' for the US football season later this year. The team-inspired packaging gives a nod to rituals and lucky charms celebrated by the NFL. The bags are redesigned with NFL team logos, and the campaign will include digital content showcasing each team's game-day rituals. Content can be viewed by snapping the SnapChat code found on the back of the Tostitos lucky bags.

'Creating unique experiences for football fans has been at the heart of our partnership with the NFL for decades,' says Pat O'Toole, senior director of marketing, at Frito-Lay North America. 'Fans can now have access to these limited-edition bags to share their team pride and give their team a little luck on game day.'

Tostitos also wants fans to get included in the action by using the hashtag #LuckyBags show how they get ready for game day with their own unique rituals. Participants will have the chance to be featured on the Tostitos Twitter, Instagram or Facebook channels.

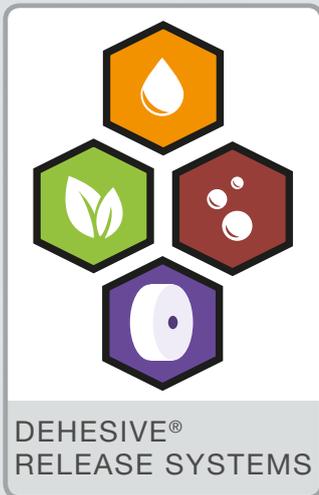


To read more about Nestlé's KitKat packaging promotion, read Labels & Labeling's coverage at <http://tinyurl.com/m64oqp4>

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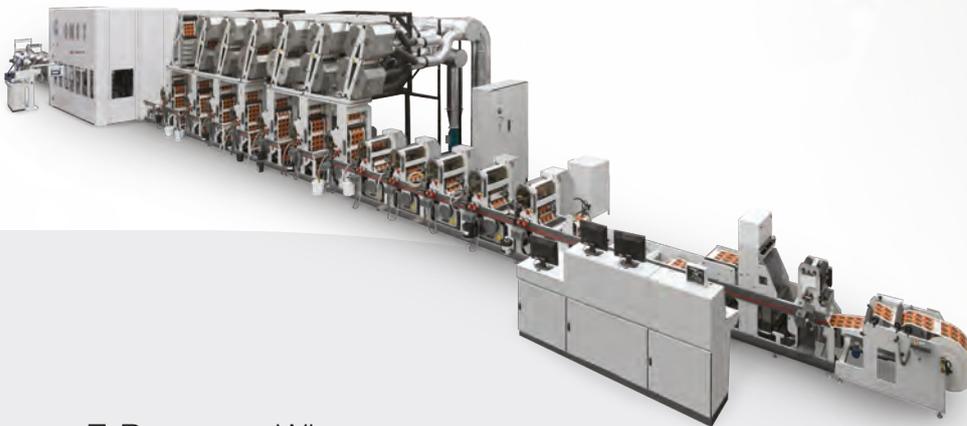
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Challenges and opportunities in pharma

What are the latest challenges and opportunities facing those serving the pharma market? David Pittman reports

The requirements in this market are extremely demanding,' says Dr Ulli Nägele, head of development and application technology at Herma. 'On the one hand, the labeling of pharmaceuticals and the complete handling process along the logistics chain must be 100 percent reliable. On the other hand, manufacturers must fulfill an increasing number of legal obligations, for instance regarding serialization, tamper evidence or migration safety.'

Laura Johnson, life sciences expert at enterprise labeling specialist Software, adds that the picture is complicated further by the global nature of the pharmaceutical industry. Then there is a trend towards progressively smaller batch sizes, while manufacturers are legally required to provide more and more information about the product. 'Country- or market-specific information is often provided by means of labels,' explains Nägele. 'Moreover, many legal standards, such as regarding tamper evidence, can be easily and very efficiently fulfilled by means of labels.'

As such, he sees self-adhesive materials and labels playing a crucial role in the pharmaceutical industry. However, Steve Wood, president and CEO of Covectra, notes 'a real need for a more secure label than currently exists'. Counterfeiters, he says, are able to replicate a label with a barcode that is legitimate and GS1 compliant, and to replicate the same legitimate barcode many times over, with detection in the supply chain taking a long time.

Regulatory compliance

An evolving regulatory landscape continues to be a big talking point for the industry. In a recently published white paper, Avery Dennison states that all manufacturers of pharmaceutical packaging have to meet the challenges posed by new regulations and stronger packaging guidelines. A recent survey on the state of label management in the pharmaceutical industry, undertaken by NiceLabel, reveals that 80 percent of respondents list compliance as the number one driver

when selecting a label management software.

The Falsified Medicines Directive (FMD) comes into force in Europe in 2018, while in the US, enforcement of the Drug Supply Chain Security Act (DSCSA) has been delayed by a year. Dave Harty, head of professional services in the Americas at Adents, sees postponing enforcement, rather than delaying the official compliance deadline, as a 'deliberate and very clear signal' from the FDA that the law remains in place and is not going to go away or suffer multiple further delays.

"The tide isn't turning back. The world is going to be serialized"

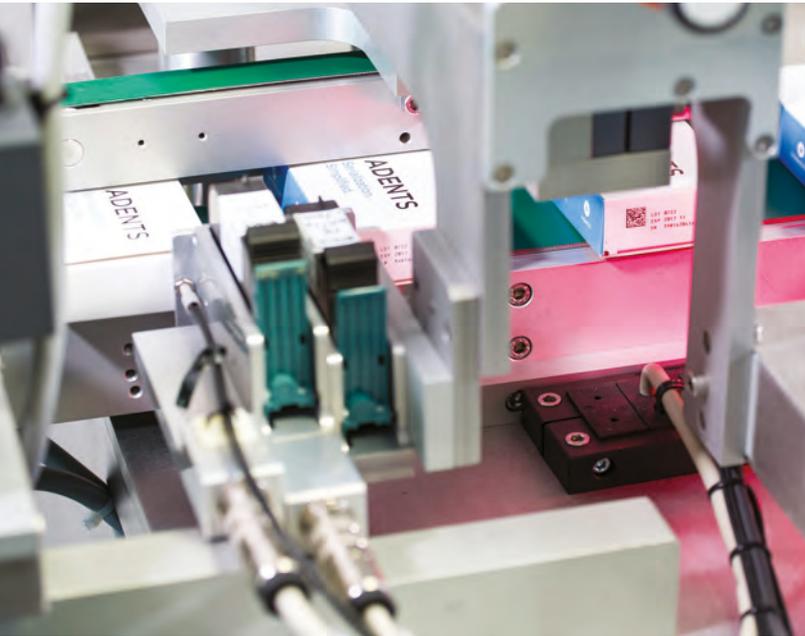
'After all, the law is intended to make the drug supply chain safer and, ultimately, save patients' lives by protecting them from counterfeit medicines. It is more than likely that this suspension of enforcement for 12 months will entail a complete zero-tolerance approach in 2018 as anyone not in compliance would technically have been in violation of the law for a full year.'

However, he says: 'A delay in the enforcement date will provide invaluable time for pharmaceutical companies and contract manufacturers to look beyond short-term compliance needs and consider long-term solution viability.'

In addition to compliance with DSCSA, there is also the FDA's Title 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 11, which provides guidance for electronic records and eSignatures to streamline workflows.

Products

Research and product development play a key part in allowing the industry to achieve these requirements, especially when other



“We are looking forward to new challenges, which will come from the pharmaceutical market’s dynamic development regarding labeling”

considerations are taken into account, such as cost pressures and label application, and guidelines on plastic immediate packaging materials, medical devices and blood bag labeling. The speed of pharmaceutical packaging lines, for example, means ‘labels must achieve reliable adhesion within fractions of a second, on products which are often round with very small radii,’ says Nägele. ‘This results in large elastic forces affecting the labels.’

Herma 63Mps is a special adhesive for pharmaceutical applications based on the company’s multi-layer technology, and with a strong initial tack coupled with migration levels, even through thin PE films, below the limit of determination. This is identified as highly relevant for the pharmaceutical industry with HDPE and LDPE plastics increasingly used to replace glass containers. HermaSuperPerm (63S) is a one-layer adhesive with final adhesion said to be so high that sealing labels equipped with the adhesive cannot be removed from lacquered pharmaceutical packaging, as well as many other polar and non-polar surfaces, without destruction of the label or the packaging surface.

Avery Dennison has developed several pharmaceutical labeling adhesives that follow and adhere to the various guidelines mentioned above, and their associated regulations, including S2000NP, S692NP and S717P (plastic immediate packaging materials), S692NP and S717P (medical devices), and AL171, C2020P and S2060NP (blood bag labeling).

UPM Raflatac’s latest development sees the introduction of RPMD (Raflatac permanent medical device) adhesive range to further expanded its range of guaranteed, globally available, and compliant pharmaceutical and healthcare label materials for the medical device and healthcare industries. Combining selected paper and film face materials with an RPMD adhesive ensures adhesion with a tight mandrel hold on glass and plastic, as well as sterilization resistance and migration safety.

StellaGuard from Covectra and Schreiner MediPharm’s Flexi-Cap for Clinical Trial Supplies (CTS) evidence yet more areas where innovation is taking place. StellaGuard is a security label featuring a random pattern of holographic symbols embedded in the proprietary label

film when it is manufactured. Flexi-Cap for CTS has been developed for the specific requirements in clinical trials, such as a reliable blinding and first-opening protection.

Software

Software also plays an important role in ensuring production of accurate, compliant labels. The NiceLabel survey shows the importance of a single, centralized platform for label design, change control, printing, integration and management. Document control, integrating label management systems with ERP/MES and other systems, web printing, and scalability are identified as the most common challenges in an increasingly complex and fragmented production environment that often involves managing multiple products, locations and markets.

Ken Moir, vice president of marketing at NiceLabel, says: ‘Only 14 percent of those surveyed have achieved 100 percent integration with their MES/ERP system. Over 34 percent are still using separate systems to manage their labeling and marking printers. Having disconnected systems makes it extremely difficult to update and maintain label databases, and it means pharmaceutical manufacturers are missing out on the productivity and quality gains that can come from a fully-integrated label management solution.’

Another survey, conducted by Loftware, found that 47 percent of 200 manufacturing professionals, including many from the pharmaceutical industry, indicated they were experiencing costly downtime due to labeling disruptions. The reasons cited for these delays included dealing with customer-specific labels, product-specific labels and slow label printing speeds.

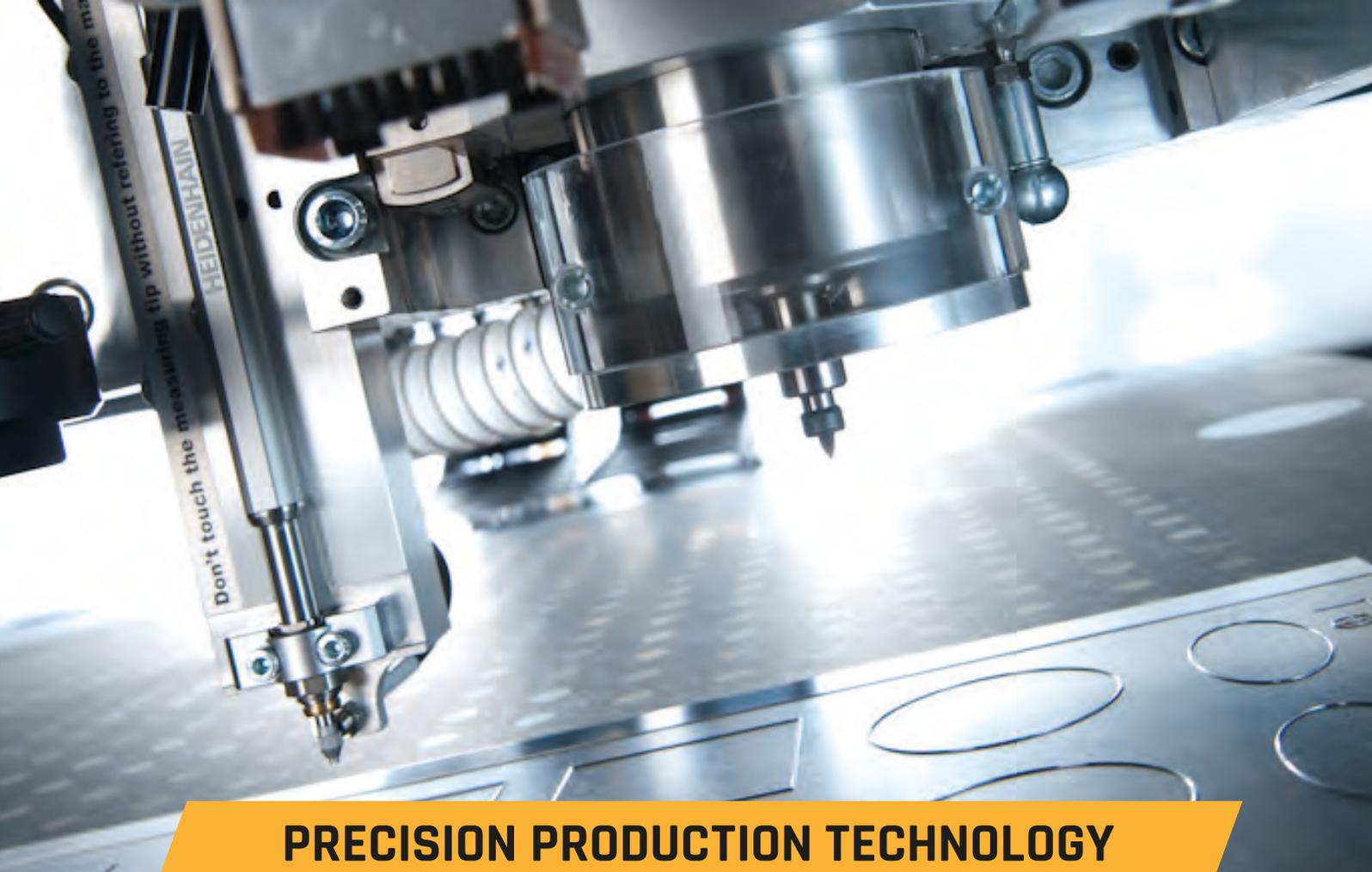
‘When you add up all of these isolated labeling issues occurring across different segments of your supply chain, you’re looking at hundreds of thousands of dollars of lost productivity, severely impacting your bottom line,’ says Johnson. ‘An automated process allows companies to achieve significant printing performance gains, allowing labeling to keep up with production.’

‘A centralized approach to labeling allows

Top left: Pharma manufacturers are realizing the importance of modularity and flexibility in the options they specify

Top right: A survey shows that compliance with upcoming regulations is top of mind for pharma manufacturers





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Above: In round products with very small radii, large elastic forces affect the labels

Left: Faller specializes in the production of secondary packaging for the pharmaceutical and healthcare industry



companies to integrate the labeling process with their existing ERP, PLM, or other validated environments to drive data from "sources of truth," which offers greater control. By using a central database, companies can avoid the need to replicate data, which reduces errors and offers improved labeling consistency for deployment to other plants and distribution partners internationally. This ultimately provides a new level of consistency, simplifies troubleshooting and streamlines labeling, helping to drive greater supply chain efficiency. When labeling is integrated with the enterprise business processes rather than in a stand-alone system, processes are simplified and non-value added activities, such as regulatory updates, are reduced.'

Antares Vision, a provider of serialization-based track and trace options for the pharmaceutical industry, launched Quick Compliance Program, claimed to enable serialization compliance within 10 weeks

of serialized labels suitable for bottle labeling, the program runs Antares' GTS Plant Manager software, which generates or imports serialization numbers and stores all data while interfacing with Level 4 repositories.

Continues Johnson, 'Labeling is complex; today's pharmaceutical organizations are faced with a range of evolving requirements that complicate the process, and leave many companies updating outside changes and regulatory updates to the process as a cost of doing business.

'But it doesn't have to be. Labeling can make a huge difference, enabling IT and supply chain decision makers to overcome challenges, and provide their company with a distinct competitive advantage.'

Future-proof

Investments in technology support R&D and new product development going on in the supply chain.

Herma is investing heavily at its headquarters in Filderstadt, Germany, including an all-new coating plant that will be used to produce self-adhesive materials and prepare them according to customer requests. Also in Germany, August Faller has invested in digital printing to meet growing

from the project start. The program is based on preconfigured modules in concert with a standardized package of software, documentation and services. As well as a Reel 2 Reel module, an off-line labeling printing station to produce reels

Converter invests in Heidelberg digital printing system

Germany-based August Faller has invested in a Heidelberg Primefire 106 digital printing system to meet growing demand for shorter runs and delivery times in the pharmaceutical market.

Heidelberg said digitization supports the trend towards smaller runs resulting from specialized medicinal products. August Faller managing partner Dr Michael Faller explains that, as the company specializes in the production of secondary packaging for the pharmaceutical and healthcare industry, the Primefire technology 'creates new opportunities in packaging production, which is increasingly moving towards customization, serialization and digitization.'

August Faller is evolving its digitization strategy. Jörg Frischkorn, the company's head of European operations, explains: 'Digital printing is an important link in the digitization of our administrative and productive processes.

'By networking digital printing with our pre-print processes and the digital ordering and job system, we will increase the profitability and flexibility of our processes in the long term and, by doing so, also generate benefits for customers.'

demand for shorter runs and delivery times in the pharmaceutical market (see boxout). Spain's Etiquetas Adhegraf, where 80 percent of production is dedicated to pharmaceutical products, has commissioned a Screen Truepress Jet L350UV digital label press for its repeatable print quality and precise accuracy. US printer Dion Label has invested in new digital and servo-driven flexo presses, as well as color management systems, hardware and document control software to ensure precise color standards are met and procedures followed.

'For Dion, it's about investing in the right equipment along with the best team to ensure we are providing the highest quality products for our customers while maintaining compliance,' says a spokesperson for the printer.

'We are looking forward to new challenges, which will come from the pharmaceutical market's dynamic development regarding labeling, as many new legal requirements are being added throughout the world,' concludes Nägele.



See www.labelsandlabeling.com/ suppliers for a number of white papers addressing pharmaceutical labeling



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A recent example of Edale's success in North America is the installation of a 6-color FL3-430 at Geo Labels in Southern California



Collaboration is central to Edale's strategy going forward, such as its work with FFEI and Fujifilm for the Graphium hybrid press



UK manufacturer Edale is working to change the market's perception of it as a narrow web press manufacturer to an engineering company

Edale moves forward

Edale's work to change the market's perception of the company from a narrow web press manufacturer to an engineering company continues at pace. David Pittman reports

'People think of us as a flexo label press manufacturer, but that's becoming less and less true,' states James Boughton, managing director of Edale.

Of course, his company does have a long and proud history in flexo, although the current sales mix sees pure flexo label presses equating to less than half of its business, with flexo packaging machines representing 35 percent and digital systems the rest.

This reflects both the changing nature of Edale's reputation in the market, as well as the market's own evolution. Digital continues to disrupt the print industry, although not as fervently in the broader packaging market as labels, while other print processes continue to develop and find new markets to serve and applications to fulfill. Boughton notes: 'There are huge opportunities for us to grow within the wider packaging market, with flexo offering package printers the equivalent of what digital offers label printers.'

Collaboration

In reality, Edale has been involved in markets beyond flexo labels for many years, building machines to print films and cartons back in the 1990s. In the 2000s, it worked with Agfa on a hybrid system, Dotrix Modular, which helped lay the groundwork for its current portfolio of products and activities by giving it experience in collaborating with other manufacturers to deliver systems. More recently, it has worked with Screen, joined forces with FFEI and Fujifilm for the Graphium hybrid press, and partnered with AB Graphic on the development of

the Digicon 3000 finishing machine to complement the HP Indigo 20000 digital press. It has worked with inkjet printhead manufacturers to produce test rigs for their R&D activities, with other partnerships in the pipeline. It has even been involved on the development of a 1.6m-wide inkjet press for digital corrugated printing, itself a pilot for a 2.8m-wide machine. 'People don't relate things like wide format inkjet to Edale, rather we're known for flexo machines that were bestsellers in the 1970s, 80s, 90s and 2000s,' explains Boughton. 'Everything we do is getting bigger and bigger, wider and wider.'

At the heart of all this is collaboration, with Edale 'building bits of machines for others to sell,' quips Boughton. The Graphium is a good example, with Edale conducting no sales activities, rather providing web handling and engineering competence to deliver a working system.

'We're doing projects with inkjet, narrow web hybrid machines and wider packaging machines, and we've produced three electron beam machines in the last year,' Boughton continues. 'We have a number of relationships, and there hasn't been much in the way of crossover yet which allows us to serve a broad cross-section of the market.'

'Over the last few years, we've worked hard on our collaborative approach which has helped us grow the business at around 20 percent a year over the last five years.'

Edale is also broadening its horizons with a focus on new territories, such as North America. With the appointment of Matik as its exclusive distributor in North America

US success

A recent example of Edale's success in North America is the installation of a 6-color FL3-430 at Geo Labels in Southern California, which specializes in the manufacturing of industrial and prime labels for industries from food packaging to cosmetics. James Boughton says the company has previously been wary of the US market due to the strength of local manufacturers: 'Since our old philosophy of manufacturing simple flexo presses changed to now manufacturing the most automated equipment within the industry, our success has really opened our eyes to the potential within this market.'

at the end of 2016, Edale has ramped up its position in the region quickly (see boxout) with customers from the East to the West Coast. 'Distribution in the US has gone well,' states Boughton. 'We were doing a lot of business in the region by default through Graphium and Digicon installations, but we've been quite successful very quickly in selling our own brand flexo machines, with the US now our biggest export market. India has always been good for us, as is Southeast Asia. Europe is a challenging market. In the US, even though it's a large market, you can use a common strategy, but in Europe you can't.'



See www.labelsandlabeling.com/search/site/Edale for more on Edale

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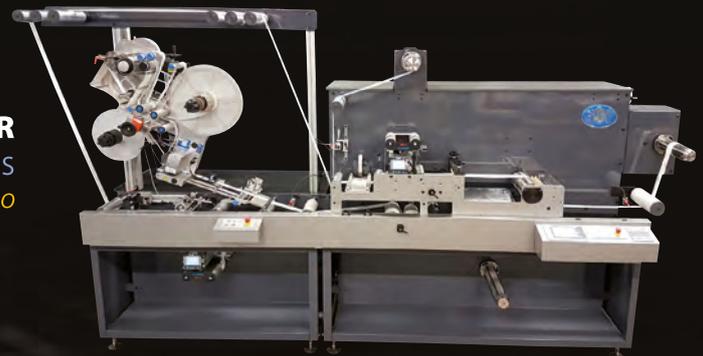
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Screen launches new inkjet models

Low migration capabilities, higher speeds, orange ink and chill drums are features of two new UV inkjet presses launched by Screen at Labelexpo Europe. Andy Thomas reports

At Labelexpo Europe, Screen added two new digital label presses to its Truepress Jet L350UV series. This represents the first significant upgrade of the company's UV inkjet label press since its introduction in 2013.

The Screen Truepress Jet L350UV+LM is designed to print on substrates susceptible to UV ink migration and odor. It matches newly developed low migration (or 'low permeability') inks with a nitrogen purge mechanism for accelerating the cross-linking of UV inks. Screen says the new unit is compliant with European regulations including the Swiss Ordinance and Nestle guidelines.

The Truepress L350UV+LM press shares a number of features with the new L350UV+ ('Plus') press. This includes a new top speed of 60m/min compared to 50m/min for the original.

Both presses add a special orange ink to the existing CMYK+white ink set. The 600 x 600 DPI resolution and 3 picoliter drop size remain unchanged.

Screen line-up

There are now three models of Screen Truepress Jet L350UV available. The 'classic' model printing CMYK+W at 50m/min; the '+' version printing at 60m/min with orange and optional chill drum; and the 'LM' with nitrogen inerting. The new capabilities are not retrofittable.

Carlo Sammarco, EMEA sales director for labels and packaging at Screen, claims Screen's unique screening technology added to the 3 picoliter droplet size gives the company's Vivid Color inkset the widest 4-color gamut available, and the new orange adds 16 percent to the Pantone color coverage in orange and reds. The press' workflow includes LAB spot color matching with a built-in spectrophotometer.

A further addition is an optional chill roller which can be added to the press' transfer section for cooling thin, heat sensitive substrates. For example, this means the wrappers used on PET bottles can now be printed on the Truepress Jet L350UV+LM press.

New applications

Carlo Sammarco said that up to now UV inkjet has mainly been applicable to industrial products where screen-like appearance and chemical resistance have been important. 'But now we can print onto a wider array of unsupported material. At the same time working through Avery Dennison and Michelman we are bringing to market new higher value applications like wine label paperstocks. So this is now a machine which enables a label converter to provide a wide variety of applications.'

Rob Beaux, application engineer for printing and packaging at Michelman,



Screen Truepress Jet 350UV+LM

explained why specialist primers are necessary: 'For print quality – better visual resolution, higher optical density, to control bleeding and drying. Primers seal the surface, keep the ink vibrant and provide a good anchor to the surface. Our latest primers have been tested successfully with both wine label papers and direct thermal papers.'

All L350UV-series presses are available in either stand-alone (near line) or in-line configuration, with an AB Graphic Jet converter on demonstration at the Amsterdam HQ launch event.

Looking at the wider workflow, Screen's established Equios system now integrates seamlessly with Cerm's MIS. And at the launch event, German company One Vision was demonstrating a stripped-down, labels-specific version of its industry-leading newspaper workflow system, Digilabel, a fully automated label production system which integrates with Equios.

Concluding, Bui Burke, senior vice president of sales at Screen, said the company 'will continue its development of systems designed to meet the needs of the label printing industry. We're fully committed to the stable, long-term growth of the sector.' As part of the company's enhanced commitment to the European labels sector, Screen has relocated Yuki Yoshi Tanaka, global business director for labels and packaging, to the company's European HQ and demo center in the Netherlands.



Carlo Sammarco, EMEA sales director labels and packaging at Screen



For full review of digital press launches at Labelexpo Europe, see page 105

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inkanto was introduced to the market at Labelexpo Europe 2017



Armor updates thermal transfer offering

inkanto represents a new way of approaching the thermal transfer market, writes David Pittman

Armor has introduced inkanto as a new brand for its thermal transfer offering, providing a focal point for the products and services of the group's largest area of activity.

Armor Group's interests extend into many verticals, such as haptic films, flexible solar film and films for batteries, all of which operate under their own brands – En' Safe (batteries), OWA (office supplies), ASCA (solar cells). Until now, thermal transfer has not had its own identity, with products not taken to market through OEM relationships currently sold without a strong brand name to associate them with. This has changed with the introduction of inkanto.

More than a name

The creation of inkanto has been a long-term strategic initiative for Armor. The company has never been used as a brand for thermal transfer products and with the group's other initiatives having their own identities, this development can be viewed as the final piece in the jigsaw. The OEM side of the thermal transfer business or any Armor partner with

branded ribbons will be unaffected by this development, with 'neutral' products – those currently available to the market without a dedicated name – to be given a boost by the creation of inkanto. This covers the ribbons themselves, to new services and tools.

To create a strong visual identity, full branding has been introduced on cores to boxes, with the latter now featuring a 2D barcode that connects with a quality control database to allow each customer to download a certificate of conformity for each box, as well as identification and reporting of issues with a particular batch. A newly introduced lifetime guarantee means, regardless of the product's age, issues will be dealt with, while a cleaning cloth is now included in every box to assist with printer/printhead maintenance. The number of ribbons per box will be lowered to allow greater flexibility with customers' needs, and a new design for samples makes them memorable and easy to identify.

'It is difficult to be loyal to a product with no name,' says Yohann Froment, marketing director at Armor. 'Although it's important to note that we are not just putting a name on a product. Rather, we have developed an offering that is completely different to what was available to the market before.'

Added value

To assist this and bring even more value to customers and end users, product sheets, featuring real printouts for the first time, have been reworked to make it easier to identify the correct thermal transfer ribbon grade according to the application. The existing thermal transfer extranet, 2go2, has also been reworked, now allowing two-way communication and integrated with the company's CRM system, with queries and communication automatically passed to the correct

account manager for a prompt response.

Froment says such developments underline how inkanto is more than a new brand and brings a new experience to thermal transfer manufacturing. 'It represents a different way of manufacturing and doing business to our competitors.'

'It gives a face to a name that is recognized for its quality,' he adds, 'and will help customers and end users talk about and understand the products and services available under the inkanto banner.'

The inkanto name debuted at Labelexpo Europe 2017, with rollout of the initiative to Armor thermal transfer activities around the world now underway.

The first inkanto branded products are expected to be in the market towards the end of 2017, with the phasing out of 'neutral' products to follow by the end of next year.

The following months are to be used to introduce the inkanto concept to the market, as Froment explains: 'We will use this time now to explain the benefits of the change and what we now offer to the thermal transfer market. In a market that doesn't experience wholesale changes regularly, we are working to reassure and educate customers and end users.'



See the Labelexpo Europe 2017 review starting on p98

Armor to add more subsidiaries

Armor, through its inkanto thermal transfer brand, is to open new subsidiaries around the world as it continues to pursue global growth and take market share.

A number of subsidiaries in key markets have been established over the last 12-18 months, with its activities currently represented by 15 subsidiaries and sales offices worldwide.

'We are to launch new subsidiaries as we look to grow further, and gain market share,' says Armor ICP marketing director Yohann Froment. 'We need a presence in specific markets if we are to achieve this.'



The new visual identity for Armor's thermal transfer products

November 2017

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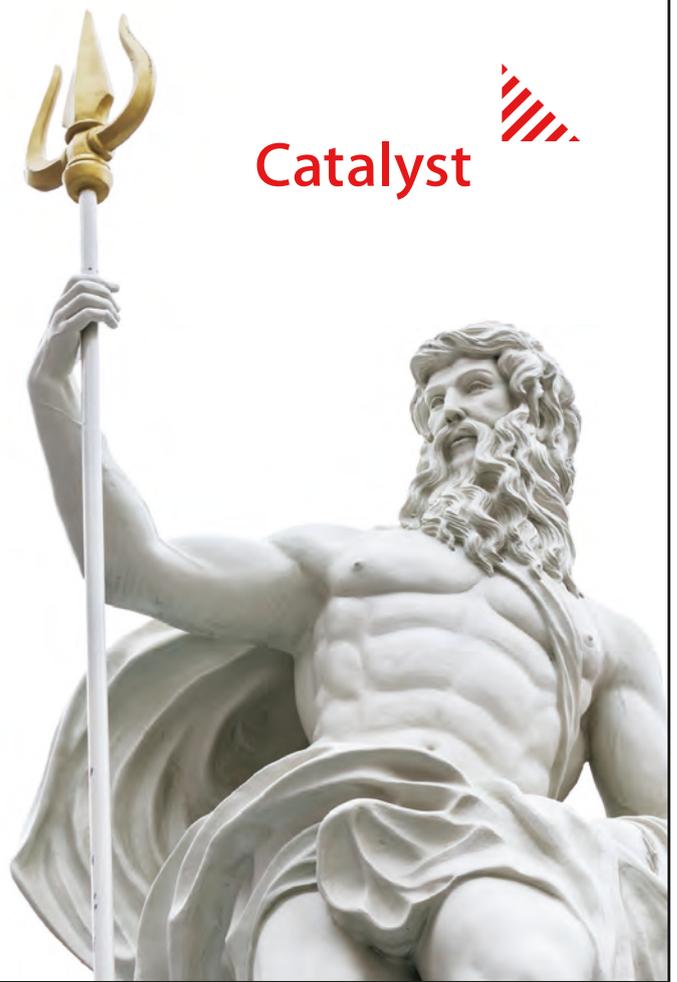


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Choosing the right web cleaning system

Adam Battrick, sales director at Meech, explains the importance of maintaining a clean web for increasing productivity and reducing downtime

Label printers understand that a clean web is a productive web. With contamination being an inevitable by-product of high-speed webs, it is important to have an effective web cleaning system in place to increase productivity by reducing maintenance downtime and minimizing discarded product.

The types and levels of contamination differ in label printing, as do the reasons why web cleaning is necessary. Is it solely a maintenance issue or also a customer requirement? Given that any web cleaning system will have to fit into an existing production line, how does this influence the choice of system?

These are crucial factors that will contribute to the final choice of web cleaner, which is why it is fundamental to understand the basics of web contamination — why it happens, and how to tackle it.

What are the key causes of contamination?

Contamination takes on the form of dust, dirt and assorted airborne particles that deposit on the web's surface during the printing process. There are two main reasons why a web attracts contamination: the boundary layer created by any moving web and the generation of static charges. An effective web cleaning system must be capable of tackling both.

The friction or separation between two objects can lead to the generation of static electricity, creating an electrical charge on the material surface that will attract contamination to the web.

The boundary layer is caused by the ambient air that the web drags along when in motion. This movement draws contamination to the substrate, trapping it either beneath the layer — and therefore directly on the web's surface — or holding it within the layer. The slower the web is moving, the thinner the boundary layer, whereas the layer's thickness will increase as the speed intensifies.

Contact or non-contact?

There are two basic web cleaning technologies for breaking the boundary layer on a label converting line: contact web cleaning and non-contact web cleaning.

Contact systems typically incorporate two types of cleaning

“With contamination being an inevitable by-product of high-speed webs, it is important to have an effective web cleaning system in place to increase productivity by reducing maintenance downtime and minimizing discarded product”

methods: vacuum technology, or adhesive rollers. Several different designs of contact vacuum system are available. One employs a low-friction component of the cleaning manifold — a highly-polished steel faceplate, for example — to make contact with the web, breaking the boundary layer and releasing the contaminants, which are subsequently vacuumed away.

Other contact vacuum systems incorporate brushes to free debris before vacuuming. While this approach is effective when large particles need to be removed from heavily contaminated surfaces, it can be too harsh a cleaning method for use on sensitive materials (although some systems feature retractable brushes to avoid damaging abrasion). In addition, the necessity of removing contaminants from the brushes raises the possibility of cross-contamination. Furthermore, brush systems qualify as consumables and therefore require a significant capital investment.

Systems using adhesive rollers incorporate twin elastomer rollers, which are in contact with the full width of the web, breaking down the boundary layer and lifting contamination from the web's surface. This is then transferred to a second roller with a high adhesive mass, which removes debris from the first roller, preventing recontamination. Adhesive-roller systems perform well on small particles (down to



Meech's 924IPS from its Hyperion range of static bars



Meech's CyClean web cleaner

Contact web cleaning

The Meech TakClean is designed primarily for use in the label and narrow web markets to remove dry, unbonded contamination from a moving web efficiently. TakClean incorporates specially-formulated TransTak elastomer contact cleaning rollers and perforated adhesive rolls which combine to make TakClean the ultimate elastomer-based web cleaning machine.

The Meech VacClean contact web cleaning system is an evolution of Meech's successful Tornado system, of which there are hundreds of installations globally. VacClean systems incorporate an enhanced contact cleaning manifold with either an Air Handling Unit (AHU) or vacuum fan unit, depending on the installation environment and web width.

Non-contact web cleaning

The Meech CyClean is designed to meet increased demand for a compact, high performance, non-contact web cleaning system. By applying advanced computational fluid dynamics, Meech has optimized the cleaning efficiency of CyClean to remove and extract

contamination to below 1 micron.

The innovative Meech ShearClean web cleaning system is based on patented technology that utilizes well established aerodynamic and fluid dynamic technologies to achieve the very highest levels of cleaning efficiency without the need for physical contact.

Static control

All Meech systems incorporate as standard the latest shockless AC static control bars to guarantee comprehensive contamination removal.

The Hyperion range of ionizing bars and power supplies are the latest industrial static control products offered by Meech. Developed by Meech's engineers in conjunction with distributors and end users, the Hyperion range offers new levels of technical superiority for industrial static control. The range has been engineered to include a number of key characteristics such as Ion Current Monitoring (ICM) technology, clean pin alert and adjustable output voltage, frequency and balance.



Adam Batrick, sales director at Meech

as low as 0.5 micron), but are not designed for more demanding applications where higher levels of contamination are involved, as the adhesive rolls can quickly become tainted. For this reason, adhesive roller systems also require closer monitoring by the operator than other web cleaning systems. Another limitation of tacky roller systems is the machine speed, normally limited to less than 250mpm, which can prove problematic for label applications, for which high production rates are a priority.

The choice of non-contact technologies is between 'blow-and-vacuum' and boundary layer systems. Blow-and-vacuum systems

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Meech

Meech is a world leader in web cleaning and static control, with a comprehensive range of contact and non-contact web cleaning systems. Meech has more than 200 web cleaning installations in a range of industries including packaging, printing and converting.

employ air knives on either side of the web to strip the boundary layer and all traces of contamination from the web's surface. The presence of vacuum airflows ensure that turbulent air is captured and subsequently removed. It is an efficient method and the systems are typically compact, which makes integration into existing label converting lines more straightforward.

Boundary layer systems are a relatively recent development. High-speed, non-contact rollers rotate at a distance of between 0.5 and 1mm from the surface of the web and in the opposite direction. The roller design is optimized to generate its own high-speed boundary layer, the greater energy of which destroys the boundary layer carried by the incoming web. This exposes even the smallest particles on the web to a very powerful cleaning force. The low-pressure, high-velocity region created by the roller lifts and removes the particles from the web and carries them to a vacuum extraction chamber.

Controlling static

A web cleaner alone is not enough to guarantee a spotless web, which is why it must be combined with an effective static control system to counter the charges on the web's surface that also cause contamination.

A static charge is typically generated by the separation (such

as when the web unwinds) or friction (as the web travels over non-conductive nip rollers, for example) between two objects. These charges are more likely to occur when processing film and, if not neutralized, pull contamination already on the web to the surface of the material. Charges can be positive or negative in polarity, with paper usually being positive and film negative.

Active static control provides the most effective means of neutralizing charges. The technology uses ionization. A voltage is fed to an array of emitter pins mounted on an ionizing bar, creating a high-energy 'cloud' of positive and negative ions. Any statically-charged surface, of either polarity, passing close to the cloud, is quickly neutralized.

Conclusion

We noted at the outset that a clean web is the key to productivity. Label printers must be able to deliver on this promise and do so profitably. Installing a web cleaning system can increase the productivity of the converting line and ensure products are processed to a consistently high quality. Arriving at the right choice of web cleaning system, however, means considering a wide variety of factors, from analyzing the source of contamination to understanding how your customers' needs are likely to develop in the future. Only then can you make an informed decision on which of the different approaches to web cleaning is right for you.



Adam Battrick joined Meech in 1997 in technical sales. Within Meech he assumed various sales and marketing positions across the entire Meech range, before taking on the responsibility of product manager and then international product manager for cleaning systems in 2009

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OpSec Security relies on Erhardt + Leimer

Pennsylvania-based OpSec Security relies on web control and inspection systems from Erhardt + Leimer for its anti-counterfeit and security products. Chelsea McDougall reports

For a company whose business is built on fighting counterfeiting and protecting brands, inspection equipment is paramount.

OpSec Security provides anti-counterfeiting products, track and trace services and product authentication through pressure-sensitive, heat-applied and sewn-in tags and labels. The company offers printed holograms, tampered evident labels, security labels with a QR codes and more. OpSec Security works with some of the top retailers as well as major sports leagues and financial and governmental institutions, among other markets.

The company operates manufacturing and software development facilities and laboratories in the US, the UK and Germany and has sales operations in the Americas, Europe and Asia.

Providing an accurate product is a priority at OpSec, therefore the company relies heavily on inspection equipment from Erhardt + Leimer. OpSec Security uses ELScan web viewers, ELGuider web guides and FE5201 color line sensors from the manufacturer.

“It helps with the final quality of the product and cuts down on scrap. The less scrap we have, the more the margins go up, and the margins are thin already. The equipment is a big a part of that”

Accuracy

Not only does this technology ensure accuracy in the final product, but the systems help to save on waste, according to OpSec Security's director of facilities, Mike Moser.

'It helps with the final quality of the product and cuts down on scrap,' he says. 'The less scrap we have, the more the margins go up, and the margins are thin already. The equipment is a big a part of that. Erhardt + Leimer is a major player in the market.'

E+L offers a range of web guiding, web tension control and vision systems. Erhardt + Leimer has also made a name for itself in a wide range of industries including corrugating, non-woven, tire and rubber, paper manufacturing, plastics, packaging and carpet industries.

'Erhardt + Leimer draws from its extensive and diverse knowledge in other industries, which only bolsters its current portfolio for labels,' says Todd Guzzardo, president of Erhardt + Leimer in the US.

At Labelexpo Europe 2017, Erhardt + Leimer showcased its Smartscan print inspection and web monitoring system. Smartscan works to detect missing labels, unremoved matrix and detect splices. The camera unit is housed in a compact enclosure, which means Smartscan can be retrofitted to existing printing and finishing machines.

A century of experience

Erhardt + Leimer was founded in 1919 by Manfred Erhardt for the repair and service of industrial clocks.

Albert Leimer joined in 1923, and throughout the 1920s and 1930s he transformed the company into a supplier of measuring and control equipment for the thriving local textile industry.

Over the following decades, Erhardt + Leimer expanded its activities to other sectors such as the paper, printing, tire, film and foil industries. The company's key competences today are in automation, visualization and inspection of all processes that occur in any web converting industry.

'We've been around and we've been consistent for nearly 100 years,' said Todd Guzzardo, Erhardt + Leimer's president in the US.

Erhardt + Leimer has global headquarters in Augsburg, Germany, and the company also made a home in the US for the past 40 years in Duncan, South Carolina. Today, the Duncan plant is a 50,000-sqaure-foot facility where Erhardt + Leimer employs 70 people and provide sales, service and manufacturing for the North American market.

The US operation is part of the worldwide group of Erhardt + Leimer companies and supported by 16 subsidiaries, branch offices and agencies in all major industrial countries.



Erhardt + Leimer's ELGuider web guide



For more on Erhardt + Leimer at Labelexpo Europe 2017, see page 119

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African converter opts for Kocher + Beck screen equipment

South Africa-based Limitless Labels has installed Kocher+Beck screen exposure and mounting equipment, allowing for in-house production of print-ready screens. Gill Loubser reports

Situated in Paarl, Western Cape, Limitless Labels is a new entrant in South Africa's label printing community. This family-owned operation is the brainchild of Nico Odendaal, businessman, entrepreneur and also – somewhat surprisingly – a South African Airways captain. But, while Odendaal is CEO, the day-to-day management rests in the experienced hands of his step-son, Jean van der Walt, MD, and a team of highly-skilled staff members, all of whom offer deep expertise in label printing and converting matters.

'We specialize in UV flexo printing of labels, particularly for local wine and spirits producers,' van der Walt explains.

This one-year-old business, according to van der Walt, has a distinct mission. Its primary purpose is to meet the largely unanswered call for very short lead times, and often short runs, especially for smaller wine estates. 'We're not trying to be the cheapest printer in town, but we are offering an unrivalled service when it comes to short lead times, coupled with superb quality,' he contends. 'Additionally, we're passionate about what we do and give the business our best efforts all day, every day.'

Moving from the philosophical to the technological, however, a sense of déjà vu sets in, as pride of place in the factory goes to a 300mm-wide Nilpeter F280 12-station UV flexo press (ten colors plus screen printing and hot/cold foiling) that was originally transferred from a Rako site in Germany to Cape Town's Rako-Tampersal operation – now All4Labels – and later sold to Limitless

"With this installation, Limitless Labels is able to produce a print-ready screen in less than an hour – compared to waiting weeks for imported screens"

Labels in a deal facilitated by Rotocon Consulting & Service, through its burgeoning business in refurbished equipment.

Print-ready screens

Again facilitated by Rotocon, Limitless Labels' purchase of Kocher+Beck screen exposure and mounting equipment allows for in-house production of print-ready screens, using K+B's TecScreen material.

This marks the first sale of this equipment in South Africa since Rotocon took on this important agency earlier this year.

With this installation, Limitless Labels is able to produce a print-ready screen in less than an hour – compared to waiting weeks for imported screens. 'This is essential when we're meeting very tight deadlines for labels and the simultaneous demand for top quality,' says van der Walt.

As Rotocon's Michael Aengenvoort adds, rotary screen printing remains a highly valuable feature when it comes to producing labels for marketers of leading brands: 'To compete in highly competitive markets – such as wine and spirits – image is everything.

And screen printing provides effects that take labels to another level.'

Visiting South Africa was K+B's TecScreen product manager, John Fehrenbacher, conducting training on screen-making techniques with members of the Limitless Labels production team, including Cecilia Steyn, now the chief screen-maker.

He explains that K+B's TecScreen is a high-definition, precoated printing plate, made of a nickel-plated stainless steel material, coated with photopolymer and protected against mechanical damages with a carrier foil. It offers a number of design characteristics that make it stand apart, particularly register accuracy.

Additionally, as Jean van der Walt reiterates, costs are always an issue in the label market. 'TecScreen allows us to use the advantages of screen printing at an affordable cost,' he asserts.

And there's no delay in answering L&L's final question: what is the next investment likely to be? 'We will be purchasing a new MPS press in the not-too-distant future,' van der Walt responds. 'We've had nothing but exemplary service from the Rotocon team – with the purchase of the refurbished Nilpeter press, and the installation of the K+B TecScreen system. We'll have no hesitation in ordering the new MPS through Rotocon.'



Gill Loubser is L&L's Africa correspondent. See more reports from the region at www.labelsand-labeling.com/author/gill-loubser



Visiting South Africa was K+B's TecScreen product manager, John Fehrenbacher (left), conducting training on screen-making techniques with members of the Limitless Labels production team. He's seen here with Michael Aengenvoort, CEO of Rotocon (K+B's representative for Africa), and Jean van der Walt, MD of Limitless Labels



Just-produced, a press-ready screen is jubilantly held aloft by Cecilia Steyn (newly-qualified screen-maker)

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Flex Films' factory in Egypt

Indian film giant continues expansion

Anantshree Chaturvedi of Flex Films International, a division of Uflex, discusses the company's expansion and environmental policies, and digital trends in the Indian market. Aakriti Agarwal reports

Indian multinational company Uflex has commissioned its aseptic liquid packaging material manufacturing plant in Sanand, Gujarat. Built with an investment of 580 crore INR (approximately 85 million USD), this plant has been set up in an area of 914,760 sq ft (21 acres) within a 72 acre plot of land. The remaining land has been bought for any future expansion.

“The best segments for digital label printing in developing nations are short run urban markets which supply higher priced luxury goods to a limited niche segment of the market, for example, organic foods or high-end gelato”

Anantshree Chaturvedi, vice chairman and chief executive officer of Flex Films International, a division of Uflex, says that India is beginning to see an influx flexible packaging materials. 'If we look at the organized flexible packaging market in India comprising both polymeric films and flexible packaging products, it is pegged at around eight billion USD,' he reveals.

'This market has been growing between 15 to 17 percent per annum over the last few years. Given the fact the per capita packaging consumption in India is just about 4.3kg as compared to 42kg and 19kg in Germany and Taiwan respectively, there is a huge potential for the industry to grow at around 20 percent hereafter. The use of labels is less than one sqm per capita, which is still miniscule when compared to the usage patterns in the mature markets. Thus the potential is huge.'

New holography facility

Uflex's holography business will inaugurate a 72,000 sq ft (6,700 sqm) plant in Jammu by end of 2017, its seventh manufacturing facility dedicated to holography in India. The plant will be equipped with specialized machinery from Europe and the US to meet the requirements of the label and packaging industry. Uflex's holographic business has grown by more than 400 percent to 600 crore INR in the last four years, and is expected to grow even faster in the future. Technologies offered by Uflex include Fresnel lens, hidden text, sterling lens and unigram, among others.

He predicts that private label enterprises will lead this growth in India, while in the other developing economies 'the traditional food and beverage companies have far too many legacy investments plaguing them. Therefore such companies will take time to switch to new formats.'

A recent study by AWA Alexander Watson Associates estimates the Indian label market has been growing by 10 percent every year. Glue-applied labels still dominate the market with a 57 percent share. Pressure-sensitive labels account for approximately 31 percent, while sleeve labels and other unidentified labels each take a six percent share.

In this growing market, Chaturvedi believes that digital will stand the test of time. 'I can clearly see the Indian market trending towards more customized and bespoke offerings, many players, shorter turnaround times and more ecologically sustainable solutions,' he says. According to industry estimates, the number of operational digital label presses in India had reached 22 by the end of March 2017.

However, he points out that India is a cost-sensitive market. 'The current per unit cost – primarily due to the cost structure of per click cost – makes this model difficult to scale in large populous markets



Above: The total production capacity of BOPET films across all plants of Flex Films is 256,000 tons per annum, of which the plant in Kentucky contributes 30,000 tons

Left: Anantshree Chaturvedi, vice chairman and CEO of Flex Films International, the global film manufacturing arm of Uflex.jpg



“I feel the world will be a very different place by 2020 when it comes to sustainable practices and legislation”

heat sealable 12 micron metallized BOPP films that are suitable for printing and lamination. These films possess comparable machinability parameters to conventionally thicker films and provide significant reduction at source. These films have much lower carbon footprint than the films they replace,’ Chaturvedi explains.

Products engineered by Uflex includes green PET films using PTA (Purified Terephthalic Acid) manufactured from the oxidation of p-xylene, 9.5 micron PET ALOx transparent film with WVTR and OTR both significantly less than one, and green MEG (Mono Ethylene Glycol) manufactured from ethanol obtained from agro-based sources.

The company also manufactures rPET film which contains post-consumer recycled PET resins obtained from re-processing waste such as used PET bottles which otherwise would have been consigned to landfill. rPET films are USFDA and EU compliant for direct food contact, having the same properties as films made from virgin PET resins.

A special patented biodegradable polymeric film, Flexfresh, keeps freshness intact for fresh fruits, vegetables and flowers and works on the principle of Active Modified Atmospheric Packaging (AMAP) technology.

‘Flex Films sees downgauging as a natural trend that offers significant throughput benefits to converters while at the same time reducing

material usage and wastage on both ends of the product conversion,’ says Chaturvedi. ‘We use renewable resources and maximize post-consumer recycle usage, reduce production waste, reuse all-production waste, use all non-recyclable waste to produce energy and progressively optimize energy consumption. We have developed a technology for reprocessing the waste arising from production of various flexible packaging products. This helps in reduction of material waste at landfill, underscoring the importance that we ascribe to environment and sustainability.’

He concludes by assuring that law makers in India are creating single stroke policies that provide quantum leaps towards sustainable practices. ‘I feel the world will be a very different place by 2020 when it comes to sustainable practices and legislation.’

The consolidated revenue of Uflex stood at 65,294 million INR (approximately 1 billion USD) in the 2016-17 financial year, of which its international business accounted for approximately 50 percent. The revenue of Flex Films for 2016-17 financial year stood at 543 million USD, constituting 57 percent of the total consolidated revenue of Uflex for the period.



For more information on Uflex’s liquid packaging plant, visit tinyurl.com/ycaj5wej

such as India. The best segments for this technology in developing nations are short-run urban markets which supply higher-priced luxury goods to a limited niche segment of the market, for example, organic foods or high-end gelato.’

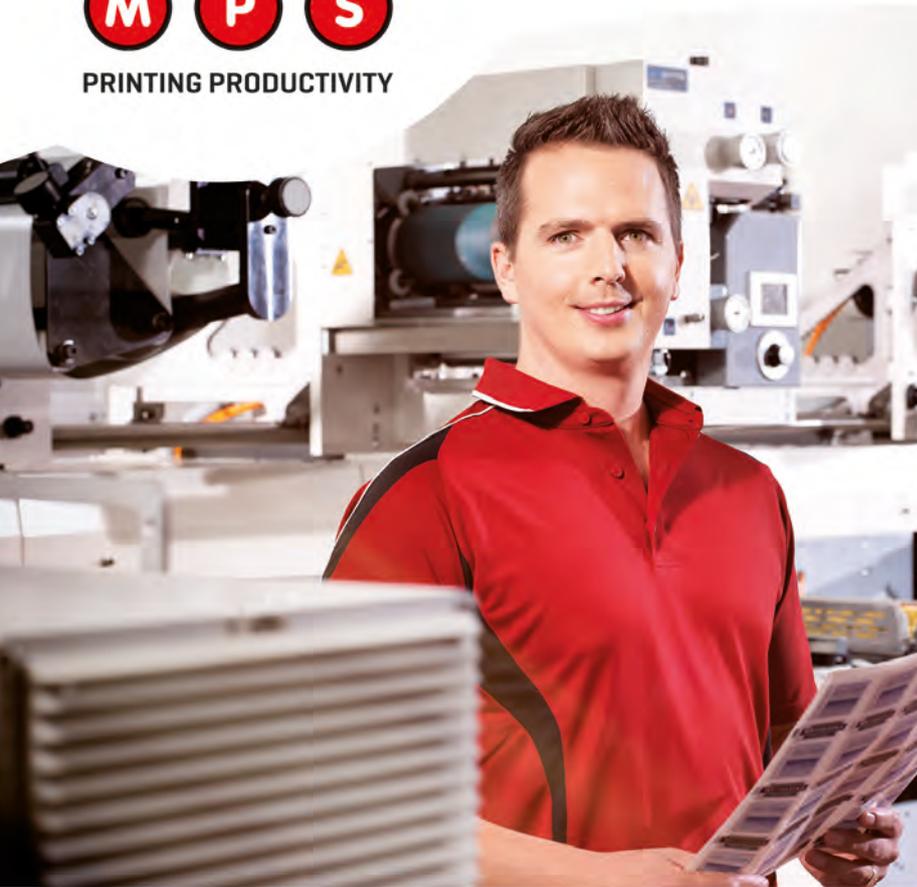
Green policies and products

Flex Films, a global film manufacturing arm of Uflex with polymeric film manufacturing plants in India, UAE, Egypt, Mexico, USA and Poland, is committed to the environment with its reduce, reuse and recycle policy. ‘These are the pillars that help us consume most of the polymers we make in-house so we reduce our overall carbon footprint. Along with that we offer a wide variety of post-consumer-recyclate and green source based PET.’

The company reduces at source and its research and development team works towards downgauging polymeric substrates, which leads to light-weight laminates. ‘We have successfully developed plain or heat sealable BOPP films as thin as eight micron; BOPET films with 6.5 micron thickness and



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LMAI hosts fourth conference

LMAI's three-day conference in Agra, northern India, welcomed 550 delegates. Aakriti Agarwal reports

Label Manufacturers' Association of India (LMAI) hosted its fourth biennial conference in Agra, attended by more than 550 delegates.

The conference commenced with Sandeep Zaveri, the president of LMAI, welcoming delegates followed by a lamp lighting ceremony. During the conference, LMAI honored Harveer Sahni, chairman of Weldon Celloplast with an award for life time support of the Indian label industry (see boxout).

Pankaj Bhardwaj, senior director and general manager, Label and Graphic Materials South Asia at Avery Dennison, gave the keynote address and highlighted the growth opportunities for label printers. 'International Monetary Fund has increased its world forecast GDP to 3.5 percent from previous 3.4 percent. The pressure-sensitive industry has revived to a four percent worldwide growth. There are more opportunities than risks,' he said.

Turning attention to the low pressure-sensitive label consumption of 0.5 sqm per capita in India, he added: 'We can double this consumption and catch up with Thailand and Indonesia. We have an opportunity to convert labels that are not pressure-sensitive by solving brand owner's pain points and offering them with sustainable and functional labels.'

He further spoke of scholarship programs run together by LMAI and Avery Dennison, and emphasized the need of scaling them up for the benefit of the industry.

This was followed by a special address by Lisa Milburn, managing director, Labelexpo Global Series. In her presentation, Milburn spoke of global converter trends including consolidation of suppliers and converters, margin pressures, shorter run lengths and increasing SKUs, integration and automation of production processes, waste reduction and lean manufacturing, shortage of skilled staff, and increasing compliance requirements. 'Brands globally are demanding faster time-to-market and reduced inventory with mass customization as well as brand security while targeting niche demographics, that requires shorter runs,' she added.

Milburn highlighted some of the fastest-growing markets, with China growing at 10 percent year-on-year, India at eight to nine

Top left: Representatives from the 30 companies which sponsored the conference with the LMAI management committee

Above left: Harveer Sahni receives the 'Lifetime in support of the Indian label industry' award

Above right: Bobst's Federico d'Annunzio discussed the future of the global label industry and said that businesses will be data-driven

Harveer Sahni honored

Label Manufacturers' Association of India (LMAI) honored Harveer Sahni, chairman at Weldon Celloplast, with 'Lifetime in support of the Indian label industry' award. Sahni is the first ever recipient of this honor. Accepting the award, Sahni thanked the label fraternity and said, 'I have tried to give back to the industry that gave me so much love and affection. I am proud to say I get it back in full measure.'

He further emphasized on the importance of training the next generation for the future health of the Indian label industry. 'We need to mentor and empower our next generations. They have to protect, innovate, expand, grow and improve upon the businesses you set up so painstakingly. We need to involve the power of youth and sharpen their skills. Today's generation is much more knowledgeable. They have access to IT, advanced specialized education, mobile phones, telephones and the energy, that if channelized can work wonders under your guidance.'



Left: The lamp lighting ceremony before the opening of the fourth biennial conference in Agra

percent, South East Asia at seven percent, and Africa at more than six percent.

Innovation

Jitesh Mehta, director product management, Label and Graphic Materials, South Asia Pacific and Sub Saharan Africa at Avery Dennison, spoke about the need for simple innovations for businesses to grow profitably. 'Quality ideas and a highly effective front-end for innovation are keys to success. Collaboration is very important to innovate,' he said.

Ajay Mehta, managing director at SMI Coated Products, spoke on market trends in India. 'It is important to earn money so we all can continue to grow. We need to change the way we look at our costing and run our businesses efficiently for our benefit.'

Further, he pointed out that reduced selling price to the end customers does not affect their bottom line. 'Their business is not dependent on the profit that you pass on to them. The business of printers and the whole industry depends on the profits we make,' he added. Mehta shared an incidence where an end customer went for reverse auction, because, at a time when all other prices went up, label prices came down. 'They thought there were huge margins in the label printing industry and wanted to reduce it. Therefore, it is important that we as an industry act more responsibly,' he advised.

A Appadurai, country manager for HP Indigo and inkjet presses, India and Sri Lanka, started his presentation by asking delegates if the Taj Mahal, one of the seven wonders of the world, looked so beautiful if the King Shah Jahan who had it made floated a reverse auction for it?

'This is the foremost problem with the label industry. Milk prices in India have doubled in the last two years but your pricing has gone down. When the input cost goes up, the selling price of your label should also go up. No one in the industry is following the basic principle,' he said. He suggested that printers shouldn't keep a bulk of their business with a handful of customers who then dictate their pricing and requirements.

Pawandeep Sahni, director at Weldon Celloplast, urged label printers to look at themselves as specialists for categories such as pharmaceutical or automobiles, among others. 'To improve customer engagement, converters must look at labels the way consumers look at them. It is important to focus on products and services to become a 1,000 crore INR [156 million USD] company,' he said.

Paolo Grasso, export area manager for Omet, advised delegates to identify bottlenecks by checking where throughput has slowed down and eliminating it from the process to increase profitability.

Data

Discussing the future of the label industry, Federico D'Annunzio, strategic marketing director at Bobst web fed business unit, said that the entire printing process, including color matching, which is currently a manual process, will be done digitally using software. 'Your perception of quality in the next five years will be data-driven.'

Talking of Industry 4.0, he said that printing presses will be interconnected, and that will dramatically change the structure of businesses. Machine manufacturers, converters and suppliers will partner and share data. 'This will take away privacy, which the old generation may not be comfortable with. However, it comes naturally to the new generation. This will have a lot of benefits because the industry benchmarks can be created once everyone has access to data. A supplier, for example, can help a converter who is not performing efficiently to match the industry benchmark and make them more profitable,' he added.

He further said that someone in the packaging world will come out with a common platform, similar to Airbnb and Uber, for everyone in this industry. 'As an entrepreneur, you will want to use your business investment and not let your press stay idle. So, you will want access to data from around the world and not just the customers close to you. This platform will give you access on the condition that you share your data too. Thus, the real value will be data, it won't be technology-driven any longer,' he emphasized.

“Your perception of label quality in the next five years will be driven by data”

In sync with ongoing discussions of global markets and trends, a session on the export strategy of labels was organized. Guest speaker Sudhakar Kasture advised label printers to look at regions that have been neglected and increase their export percentage. 'Regions such as Africa and ASEAN should be looked at more seriously. Literacy rate in a country is a good indicator for directing efforts. One should also design special campaigns for increasing exports to various countries,' he said.

SiMing Luo, regional marketing manager, Asia Pacific, DuPont Advance Printing, highlighted company observations from various regions. Interestingly, in the Asia Pacific region outside China, converters look at reducing ink consumption as the most important factor. In China, reduced plate cost is a major concern.

Kelly Kolliopoulos, global marketing director at Flint Group Narrow Web, presented the advantages of UV LED over mercury lamp systems. Gavin Rittmeyer, vice president, sales and marketing at Martin Automatic, discussed the importance of automation and uninterrupted production to reduce wastage. Amit Ahuja, sales director at Multitec, spoke on controlling production waste.

Other speakers at the conference were Manish Jain, managing director of Loparex India; Arvind K Dutta, general manager from Kurz; Tom Visser, technical sales manager from artimelt; Ranesh Bajaj, director at Creed Engineers; Keith Montgomery, business development manager, AB Graphic; Martin Betting, director of business development at BST Eltromat; Shaun Pullen, sales director Asia Pacific at Mark Andy; Ajay Aggarwal, CEO and MD of Insight Print Communications; Lee Unsworth, area sales director, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, UPM Raflatac; Samir Patkar, regional head of sales Asia at Gallus; and Jennifer Joyce, director of global product development at Siegwerk. Other sponsors included Dragon Foil, Hubergroup India, MacDermid, Monotech Systems, teas Tapes, and Unique UV & Light.



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Taiwanese converter installs Domino press

Taiwan Fengpeng Trademark Tape has installed the first Domino N610i digital inkjet label press in the Greater China region. Yolanda Wang reports

Taiwan Fengpeng Trademark Tape has installed the first Domino N610i digital press in the Greater China region, indicating a new chapter of digitization at the company.

Established in 1982 in Taichung City, Fengpeng employs around 30 people at its 400 sqm facility. Its revenue in 2016 was RMB 30 million (4.5m USD).

According to general manager Zhang Jiahao, label production represents 70 percent of the company's business. 'Our labels are mainly used in the industrial, chemical, and food and beverage sectors,' he says. 'Industrial labels account for 50 percent of label production, with food and chemical labels taking 25 percent each.'

During its 35 years in business, Fengpeng has experienced dramatic shifts in printing technology, from manual platemaking to automatic CTF and CTP, to plateless digital printing. 'At Fengpeng we closely follow technology trends and are quick to adapt to new developments,' says Zhang Jiahao. The company operates five conventional printing presses, six digital presses, and a raft of finishing equipment including die-cutting and hot stamping machines.

With smaller and more personalized orders increasing in the local Taiwanese market, Fengpeng is shifting more and more work to its digital presses. In 2015, the company installed two Epson L-4033 inkjet presses, and today 40 percent of production is carried out on digital machines.

“The Domino N610i allows us to provide a better variable data printing and short-run service to our customers and brings tremendous improvement to our productivity”

Productivity

Its latest foray into digital technology is the installation of a Domino N610i digital UV inkjet press. 'We chose the machine after carrying out a great deal of research,' says Zhang Jiahao. 'The Domino N610i allows us to provide a better variable data printing and short-run service to our customers and brings tremendous improvement to our productivity.'

'We are especially happy with the machine's printing speed of up to 75m/min, which helps us to deliver jobs to deadline. The print width reaches 333mm and the press can achieve high quality on transparent films. It allows us to develop our film label business.'

Alongside the Domino press, Fengpeng installed a laser die-cutting machine from Hans-Gronhi for the finishing of digitally printed labels. Esko software handles the processing of variable data and imaging.

'Compared to the pre-press requirements of conventional printing, digital printing has simplified our processes and laser die-cutting has increased the accuracy and efficiency of our finishing,' says Zhang Jiahao.

The digital technology brings advantages and cost benefits to short and medium run work, but for longer runs it loses its cost-effectiveness.

'We believe that digital printing technology will become more and more advanced in the future, both with regard to efficiency and price, which will better meet customer demands,' says Zhang Jiahao. 'Currently, 40 percent of our production is handled by digital presses, but our target is 70 percent or even 80 percent in the future. Future investments will continue in digital rather than conventional printing.'



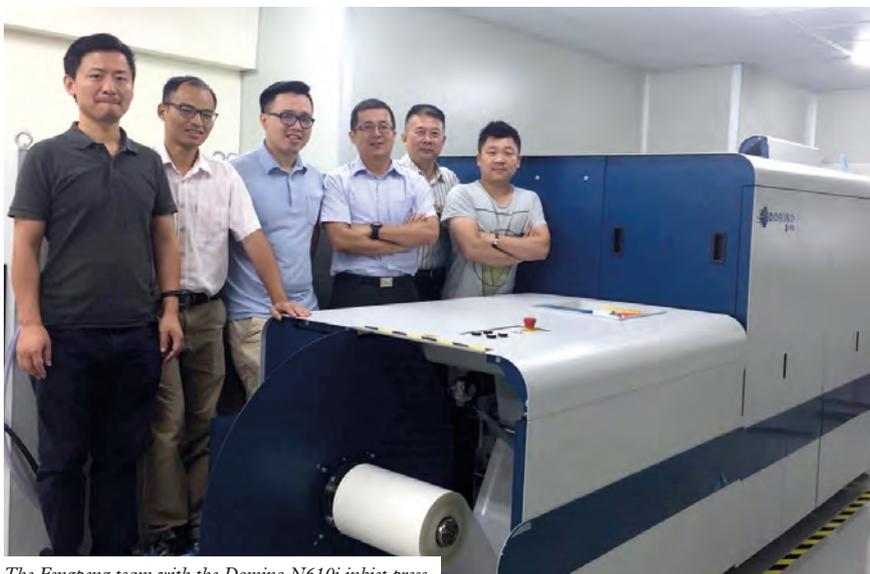
Domino will exhibit on stand F14 at Labelexpo Asia 2017 in Shanghai on December 5-8. Go to www.labelexpo-asia.com for more information

Domino in China

Domino's first inkjet press installation in the Greater China region is the result of the company's increased focus on the area in recent years. At the beginning of 2016, Domino Digital Printing Solutions established an office in Shanghai composed of sales and technical service teams covering mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macao. The company then opened a demo center in Zhuhai in China's Guangdong province to attract customers from the wider Asia Pacific region.

'Inkjet technology satisfied industrial requirements for stable production,' says Jimmy Zhan, Domino's sales director for the Greater China region. 'The N610i not only matches the high productivity of flexo printing, but also embodies the flexibility of digital printing during the changeover of jobs.'

'Domino has decades of experience in the labeling industry and established a Chinese subsidiary in 1995. We accumulated extensive experience in digital printing technology. However, in the Chinese label market, people are still unfamiliar with Domino. We will enhance our promotion of the Domino brand in the domestic label market,' said Zhan Zhihong.



The Fengpeng team with the Domino N610i inkjet press



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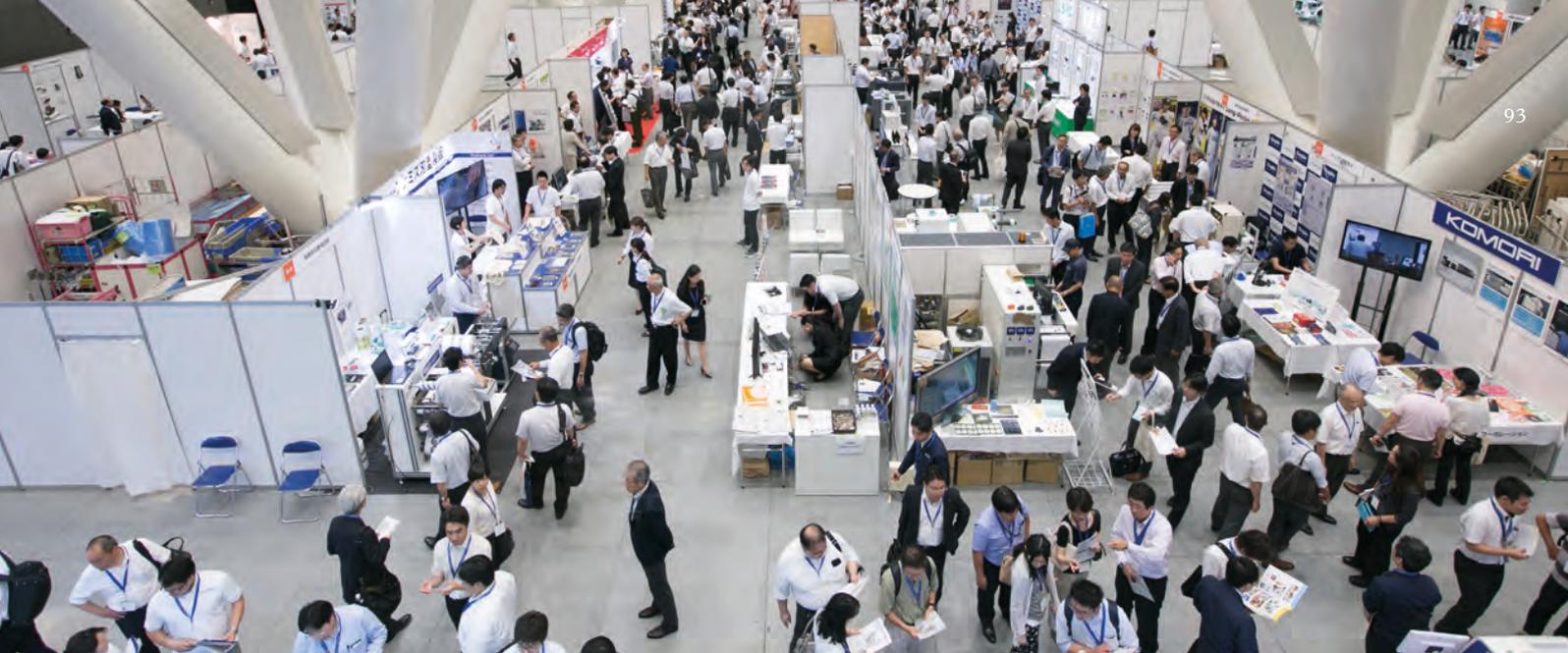
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Label Forum shows Japan's strength

The Japanese label industry remains at the cutting edge of technology, as demonstrated at this year's Label Forum in Tokyo.
Andy Thomas reports

The Japan Label Forum, jointly organized by the country's leading label magazine Label Shimbun and Labelexpo Global Series, is a window into the world of Asia's highest-consuming label economy, as well as the wider Asia-Pacific region.

The Label Forum was opened by Yu Tanaka, president of the Japan Label Federation, and Hiroyuki Nishio, CEO of event sponsor Lintec. Nishio spoke of the growing importance of Asia-Pacific in the world label market, now representing 43 percent of global consumption. This is expected to rise to 46 percent by 2019, growing at twice the rate of Europe and North America.

Corey Reardon, president and CEO of consultancy AWA, said that shrink sleeves are now the second biggest primary product label technology – after wet-glue – in Asia-Pacific, representing over 41 percent of the market by square meters. PS accounts for 22 percent. In European and North American markets, by contrast, PS and shrink sleeve have roughly equal shares of around 23 percent. Reardon stressed that these figures do not include VIP materials, which account for almost half of PS consumption worldwide.

Japan, with its high consumption of shrink sleeve labels, very largely accounts for the difference between the Asia-Pacific and Western markets in terms of material types. Worldwide, shrink sleeves remain the fastest-growing label segment at 8 percent a year.

'This represents a growing opportunity for pressure-sensitive labels in Japan and for sleeves outside Japan,' said Reardon. He noted

IML is growing in some segments, though its overall market share has changed little.

Widening his field of vision to competitive decoration technologies, Reardon noted that in Asia-Pacific many products are in sachets rather than the rigid packs.

“The biggest threat to Japanese label converters is coming from companies outside the label industry: they are better at leveraging digital printing and are taking business away from established players”

'Flexibles are growing at twice the rate of rigid containers, particularly in the food, household and pet care market segments.'

Letterpress dominates

Natuski Uchida, executive planner in the editorial department of Label Shimbun, looked in more detail at trends in the Japanese label market. He noted that letterpress is by far the dominant technology for PS label production in Japan, with flexo still a long way behind. He also drew attention to the structure of the Japanese industry, with the few bigger companies growing faster than the mass of smaller converters.

Uchida said the biggest threat to these converters is coming from companies outside the label sector: 'They are better at leveraging digital printing and are taking business away from established players. They are better at making a full range of proposals to customers.'

These 'outside' companies are also buying presses for commercial and flexible packaging work.

Takashi Yamamoto of Lintec Corporation gave the company's perspective on the Japanese economy and label industry. He said label shipments, both film and paper, have finally exceeded pre-financial crisis levels despite the additional shock of the Tohoku earthquake. This recovery has been supported by the supply-side economics ('Abenomics') pursued by the Japanese government. Total label shipments now stand at almost 120m sqm/month.

The Japanese label industry is looking forward to a major boost from the 2020 Tokyo Olympics/Paralympics and the 2025 Osaka world exposition. 'Our aim is to help brands use new technologies to fully exploit their marketing strategies.'

On the innovation front, Yamamoto explained Lintec's new technology for eliminating bubbles when PS labels are applied: by embossing grooves onto the liner, allowing trapped air to escape. The company has also developed specialist adhesive technology to ensure labels adhere to an oily surface without needing to clean it first. The oily substance is actually absorbed into the adhesive.

Korea overview

Korea is a key export market for the Japanese label industry, and Sam-Do Park, chairman of World Laser Co and advisor to the Korea Label Printing Association, gave a history and overview of this important region.

Park noted a steady decline in the annual label industry growth rate from 15 percent before 1980 to 7 percent in 2005, 5 percent in 2010 and 3 percent today. A key reason for the rapid decline of label volumes has been electronic barcodes and direct electronic printing of codes.

Rafi Albo, founder and CEO of SEG Marketing, looked at how products connected to the web are creating a new category – ‘onlife’ marketing, or ‘one-to-one connected packaging which adapts to the person consuming the product’. Personalized overlays are delivered via a user’s smart device triggered by embedded codes.

Jim Anzai, managing director Asia for CCL Industries, continued this theme when explaining CCL’s acquisition of security labeling and systems specialist CheckPoint. This has given CCL access to ‘Internet of Things’ technologies which link objects to integrated hardware, software and Cloud computing systems. Providing brands with global product traceability is a key strategic goal for the group.

Kazuo Matsuyama, president and CEO of Japanese converter Sato Holding Corporation, agreed that IoT and artificial intelligence, transformed by Cloud networking, will have a much bigger impact on the label industry than barcoding, and converters have to start offering these solutions to end users.

UPM Raflatac’s Jari Haavisto looked at sustainability issues, noting that ‘in emerging markets there is still growth and time to make it more sustainable.’ UPM’s ‘Sustainable by Design’ program looks to reduce waste along the supply chain. Haavisto reported on efforts to replace solvent adhesives, with UV adhesive technology now growing at up to 6 percent a year. He gave as an example UPM Raflatac’s RC adhesive for wet wipes. The company’s Label Life LCA shows energy reduced (on a standard PP with paper liner) by 14 percent, water usage by an astonishing 98 percent and CO2 emissions by 5 percent.

An interesting development is PSA labeling of beverage cans after filling, which UPM Raflatac calls Vanish. ‘This means a reduction in warehousing space for pre-printed cans, increased cash flow and more efficient logistics, as well as the possibility of launching small batches of new premium products cost effectively – particularly for the craft beer market.’

Aluminum beverage cans labeled with the ultra-thin PET Vanish labels can now be recycled in Europe. ‘Novelis, the world’s largest recycler of aluminum cans, confirms that the Vanish label is light enough in order not to affect the quality of recycled aluminum,’ said Haavisto.

Japanese cutting plotter manufacturer Graphtec Corporation introduced the LCX1000 label creation system at the Japan Label Forum. The LCX1000 system consists of the DLP1000 electrophotographic digital label printer and the DLC1000 finisher, which includes laminating, variable shape cutting, waste matrix removal, slitting and rewinding. The DLP1000 prints at speeds up to 7.2m/min at a resolution of 600 x 2400 DPI. Key applications for the system include in-house production of product labels and GHS labels in small lots on demand.

Skill development

Japan is experiencing a skilled labor shortage, and one inspiring initiative – covered in a panel session – is a group of eleven regional label converters which have joined together to encourage young people into the print industry and support their skill development.

Christof Naier, VP sales and marketing at Gallus Ferd Ruesch, gave a fascinating insight into the development of the inkjet print engine for the Gallus LabelFire hybrid press.

The main issue to overcome in inkjet printing is potential ‘banding’



Christof Naier explains hybrid inkjet technology



Yu Tanaka, president of the Japan Federation of Label Printers, opens the conference

caused by failure of an inkjet nozzle. ‘There is a higher risk of blocked nozzle as the resolution gets higher and the nozzles smaller,’ Naier pointed out. The key breakthrough was developing an algorithm which forces the nozzles on either side of the blocked nozzle to print a bigger dot to cover the missing line of print. This also required advances in screening technology.’

Naier said the most efficient use of a hybrid press is to reduce the cost of the label by using screen or flexo for the main color. Gallus is seeing the number of flexo press sales rising, and the number of colors has grown from seven to an average of nine plus, so flexo is far from being killed off by digital.

Yasuhiro Morihara, manager of the color support center at DIC Graphics Corporation, gave a detailed account of an innovative project to color match between digital and conventional (offset) printing, based on Epson’s SurePress and DIC’s ColorCloud system. Trials start this year. DIC first creates a database on its Cloud site of 60 million reproducible colors in offset and gravure to which it then maps SurePress colors.

‘This allows parties to confirm an agreed color at an earlier date,’ said Morihara. The database will be LAB-based and include color data on multiple substrates.

Hidetaka Shimizu, senior manager digital communications at the marketing development department of Sapporo Breweries, looked at how the company has used customization to transform a traditional beer brand.

‘We departed from normal beer promotion practices to create a “viral chain” from gift giver to receiver and on to someone else. We called this “Photo, Beer and Smiles”. All our promotions were designed around the theme of the strength of ties between people and did not even mention the brand. This was because Sapporo appeals mainly to older men, and we wanted to target younger women.’

Sapporo redesigned its labels around the theme and introduced three-bottle sets ‘designed to be not too heavy for our target audience.’

Sharing themes which worked particularly well were weddings and pets. ‘We saw a big peak during festivals like Father’s Day and we had finally to stop further orders because we could not keep up with demand.’



The next major Asia-Pacific label events are *Labelexpo Asia* in Shanghai in December and *Labelexpo Southeast Asia* in Bangkok in March 2018

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Labelexpo hosts US Label Day

Labelexpo Global Series invited US label industry members to join them at the opening day of Summerfest music festival in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to talk all aspects of labels. Jordan Hart and Chelsea McDougall report

Labelexpo Global Series hosted a label and packaging printing networking event on June 28, at the opening day of one of the biggest music festivals in the US, Summerfest, in Milwaukee. Despite some questionable weather, more than 35 industry members including both label converters and suppliers attended to discuss labels, listen to music, and network with colleagues.

The day started with lunch and drinks, followed by small roundtable discussions focusing on five key aspects of the industry: innovation, business, technical, environment and workforce development. Fifteen minutes were dedicated to discuss each topic before the participants rotated to the next topic with new industry members to meet. The day had background music provided by one of the Summerfest bands, 'Crank the Radio.' After the discussions, attendees were given time to mingle with industry members and enjoy the music.

The day provided label converters and suppliers the chance to speak directly and hear the issues and concerns each faces in their business, as well as where they're thriving.

Innovation

The innovation discussion began with the question, 'What division in your company drives innovation?' While the immediate answer was product development, upon further discussion, another key group emerged: sales, which proved to be the gateway between what the customer wants and what the company can provide, participants said. Innovation is always customer-driven, and the company should always

listen to what the customer wants.

Millennials also were another demographic that provides sources of innovation. Millennials are familiar with consumer culture and the industry needs to innovate if they want to capture that age group. As millennial Taylor Buckthorpe from ColorDyne said, 'Individualization and customization are what millennials want.'

The millennials who are already in the industry are helping drive digital innovation. It is unsurprising that young workers are the go-to source for creating and managing a social media presence, but more than that, they are creating a digital presence as a whole through website management and the use of keywords and buzzwords, which are key to attracting new business, especially younger business. 'We want them [millennials] to find us and that's the best way,' said Mark Ammerman with Protect-All.

Business

Once rotating to the table discussion on business, the topic drifted to social media. Participants were mixed on the subject, with some saying they maintain a presence on social media platforms. Most popular among the participants was Twitter for sharing news, ideas and engaging with customers, and LinkedIn for connecting with colleagues and for hiring. There were others who said they have a social media presence just because they believe they should, but they don't know how to leverage it. Others had no idea where to start with a social media strategy.



Bottom left: Jessica Meisner and Angela Nye, both Labelexpo sales representatives, tackle all aspects of workforce issues during their roundtable



Bottom right: Tasha Ventimiglia, Labelexpo Americas show director, leads the technical discussion as all groups engage with their topics and fellow group members

Participants also discussed their company culture, training and millennials.

Technical

One cannot talk about technical advancements without talking about digital printing. Digital printing has opened up new markets, especially in craft beverage and marijuana labels, participants said. Because of a trend to highly personalized shorter runs, digital has become an ideal tool to use. This personalization especially attracts the younger generation, as stated in the innovation discussion.

“There are organizations that assist in placing autistic individuals into jobs, which could be a valuable asset for companies looking to hire”

This discussion also brought the question, are private labels a threat? John Attayak with Inovar Packaging Group said quite simply, ‘No, you just need to be a better company.’ This is increasingly important as not just label converters are purchasing digital equipment; commercial printers entering the label market are purchasing digital printers as well as private label companies.

Automation, on the other hand, is a threat to the job market. Automation is already established in Europe and the trend is now starting in the US. The term ‘Industry 4.0’ encompasses the trend of automation and data exchange in manufacturing technologies; but with automation comes the risk of simply having more machines and fewer people.

The flexible packaging trend also cannot be ignored. While the ink migration laws and barrier films are a lot to learn to enter this market, the benefits can outweigh the learning curve as flexible packaging offers even more options to customers.

Label industry takes on Milwaukee’s ‘Big Gig’

This Label Day was not just an event to discuss the label industry, but to come together, have fun and celebrate Milwaukee. Summerfest, known as ‘The Big Gig’, features 11 stages at a 75-acre park along the city’s lakefront. The music festival has been in Milwaukee for 50 years.

‘Holding Label Day at this iconic festival was a way not just to learn about the label industry, but to learn about all the great things Milwaukee has to offer,’ said Tasha Ventimiglia, Labelexpo Americas show director.



Discussion leader and Labels & Labeling VP of sales Randy Kessler and other industry members discuss the business aspect of the label industry

Environment

As guests moved to the environmental table, a common thread quickly presented itself. Both suppliers and label converters agreed that while label buyers are asking about sustainable options, they stop short of paying extra for them. Participants said that another setback is that some sustainable materials don’t have the same print quality as traditional materials.

Kees Nijenhuis of MPS said that for many companies, there tends to be two reasons businesses invest in sustainability: ‘To save costs, and so they can market it,’ he said.

Guests also discussed UV LED as a low-energy alternative to arc LED curing. Steve Schulte of Mark Andy said more and more customers are interested in UV LED curing, and that close to half of the new presses Mark Andy sells are equipped with LED systems.

Joel O’Leary with Air Motion Systems, a supplier of curing technology, said the label industry was slow to respond to UV LED, but he, too, has seen a shift toward wider adoption. ‘Many of them were waiting to see who else is doing it,’ O’Leary said.

When the topic shifted to liner waste, there appeared to be some frustrations from the label converters. Tim McDonough from Butler, Wisconsin-based Flexo Graphics said his company previously had baled all of its spent matrix and liner and shipped it to a company that converted it to energy. But as the cost of natural gas decreased, McDonough’s vendor will no longer take the used material, so it is back to the landfill for the label waste.

‘That might be the only industry who gets all their materials for free, and they still can’t make money,’ McDonough said, laughing.

Workforce development

The workforce development discussion was another area where the topic of millennials came up. There is a gap in the label industry workforce that millennials simply are not filling. ‘Millennials have the mentality that printing is dead,’ said Lori Schinker with Red Oak Label, based in New Berlin, Wisconsin. Many companies have had success finding workers at college job fairs, tech schools, or forming partnerships with a university. Video gamers are also proving to be a surprising source for digital print operators.

Flexo Graphics representatives recommended looking into the autistic workforce for new employees, a practice they have found successful. Running machinery is a great opportunity, as office settings are often not a good fit for these individuals. There are even organizations that assist in placing autistic individuals into jobs, which could be a valuable asset for companies.

Every company has a different approach to finding new workers. Some companies turn to automation, a switch that is easier than finding new labor. Other companies focus on personality over skill and instead find a good person they can shape into a good employee.

Label Day was sponsored by the following suppliers: All Printing Resources, Colordyne, Durst, Enercon, Erhardt + Leimer, Flint Group, Fujifilm, Green Bay Packaging, Jindal, K Laser, Label Traxx, Mark Andy, MPS, PC Industries, PPG Teslin Substrates and Xeikon.



For information on all Labelexpo Global Series events, visit www.labelexpo.com



The innovation discussion group, co-lead by Tricia Barglof and Erin Dandridge, both with Labelexpo, listen intently to the contributions of industry members



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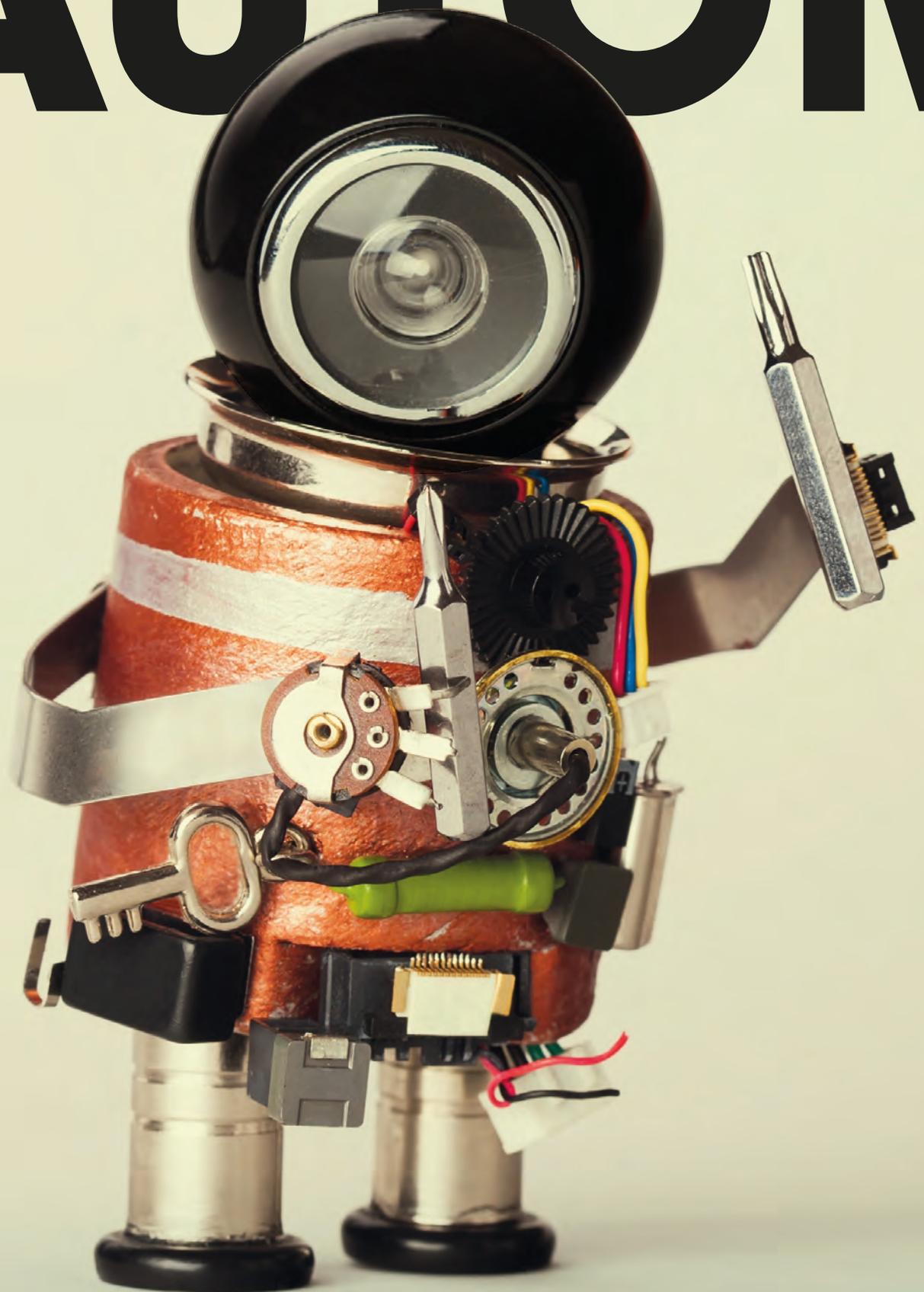


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AUTOM



Automation steals the show

L&L's comprehensive 25-page review of a record-breaking Labelexpo

Labelexpo Europe 2017, the largest international event dedicated to the label and package printing sector, culminated in its biggest-ever edition with record-breaking exhibitor and visitor figures and a show floor 12 percent bigger than in 2015.

Held at Brussels Expo on 25-28 September, Labelexpo Europe covered nine exhibition halls and hosted 679 exhibitors, including 198 for the first time. The show welcomed 37,724 visitors – a 5.6 percent increase from 2015 – and attracted large delegations from Brazil, China, India and Japan, among other countries.

While labels remain central to Labelexpo, the profile of visitors and the technology on display both reflected the sector's continued diversification. Equipment and materials for flexible packaging and folding carton applications were shown, while direct-to-container printing technology made its first appearance.

Running alongside the Linerless Trail and educational master classes from the Label Academy, the new Automation Arena feature highlighted the latest automation techniques and demonstrated the shift towards combining industry with the Internet of Things. The live workshop featured two automated press lines for digital and conventional label production. The ground-breaking feature was run in partnership with AVT, Cerm, Esko, Grafotronic, Kocher+Beck, Matho, MPS, Wasberger and Xeikon. With 25 percent more working machinery demonstrated compared to 2015, 2017's event featured a host of product launches. Among conventional technology launches, Lisa Milburn, Labelexpo's managing director, said: 'This edition has broken all previous records and its success is testament to the fact that the label and package printing industry continues to regard Labelexpo as the place to be. We are still extremely ambitious for the show's future and we look forward to returning to Brussels with an even bigger and better event in September 2019.'



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L-R: Mike Fairley, chairman of the judging panel; Professor Tan Junqiao; Georges Gravanis, president, label and graphic materials, Avery Dennison



L-R: Dan Bartlett of Cognex Corporation, receiving the award on behalf of AIM, and Guillaume Clement of Flint Group Narrow Web



L-R: Guillaume Clement of Flint Group Narrow Web and Martin Kuhl of Herma

Awards ceremony honors industry pioneers

The Label Industry Global Awards took place on the first evening of Labelexpo Europe, honoring two suppliers, a trade association and a long-time industry pioneer. Chelsea McDougall and Yolanda Wang report

Two companies, one trade association and a long-time label industry pioneer were honored at the Label Industry Global Awards, attended by more than 500 people on the first evening of Labelexpo Europe

Professor Tan Junqiao was honored with the R Stanton Avery Lifetime Achievement Award. Professor Tan, the first Chinese winner, is founder and honorary chairman of the China Label Sub Association of the Printing Equipment Industries Association of China (PEIAC). During his 36-year career, Professor Tan has been instrumental in introducing flexo printing to China – convincing government agencies to reduce import taxes on flexo presses and, more recently, digital.

'This award is not only glory for myself, but also affirmation for the Chinese packaging and label printing industry. Inheriting the foresight and pioneering spirit of R Stanton Avery, I'll continue to devote myself to the cause of China's packaging and labeling,' Tan said during his acceptance speech.

He continued: 'I hope the whole industry can unite together to make further developments for not only the Chinese label industry, but for the whole international sector. I will continue to contribute to the Chinese label industry for the rest of my life.'

The R Stanton Avery Lifetime Achievement Award is presented to an individual who has made a 'substantial and key contribution' to the promotion and growth of the label industry over a minimum of 25 years. The award is sponsored by Avery Dennison.

'Spending most of his life contributing to the Chinese label printing industry, Professor Tan is highly regarded and respected as the founder and motivator of the country's label and packaging printing sectors,' said Jean Lee, vice chairman of the label printing sub-association of PEIAC. 'As the first Chinese winner of this award, he deserves it.'

INNOVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

Also at the Label Industry Global Awards, three were honored in areas of innovation and sustainability. Herma, AIM and ebeam Technologies were announced as the winners at the event.

The award for innovation for companies with more than 300 employees was presented to Herma for its superTack (63Vst). The judges singled out the manufacturer of self-adhesive label application systems, saying that product innovation has enabled Herma to create the world's first resin-free adhesive for labels that require an extremely strong initial tack. The product is designed for moist, fatty, dirty or dusty surfaces, and extending it beyond the food sector. By dispensing with resin, Herma's adhesive reaches the approval for dry, moist and fatty foods and comes closer to the zero migration benchmark.

The award for innovation for companies with up to 300 employees was awarded to AIM, the trade association for the automatic identification industry. For nearly half a century, AIM has provided unbiased information, educational resources and standards to providers and users of these technologies. AIM took the award for Ultracode, a process innovation that enables the automatic capture of data by any digital color camera or smartphone. The process utilizes the first international standard 2D color barcode – Ultracode – which is printable by any RGB or CMYK process color, inkjet or toner technology. The code, together with advanced data compaction schemes and URLs, encodes data in less than half the area of a QR code using the same modular size.

Lastly, ebeam Technologies won the Award for Sustainability, sponsored by Labels & Labeling magazine, for its Compact curing unit. The award was given for the company's development of a compact electron beam curing system for narrow web presses which

now makes low-energy, photo-initiator-free, curing accessible for label and package printing production. Using ½ to 1/10 of the energy required by heat, steam, chemical, microwave or UV processes, ebeam systems are compact, vacuum-sealed, zero maintenance and have high longevity.

The judges for the awards' 14th edition, serving under chairman Mike Fairley, were: Thomas Hagmaier, past-president of Finat; Craig Moreland, chairman of TLMI; Rosina Obermayer, editor of NarrowWebTech magazine and Andy Thomas, strategic director of Labelexpo Global Series.

The winners of the World Label Awards were also announced. In the combination printing category, Sunmex of Japan won for Le Lectier. Letterpress printing: Sankyo Tac Label, of Japan, for Kachoufugetsu (Japanese sake). Offset litho printing: Beijing Sunrise Printing, of China, for Great Wall Dessert Vineyard D3. Flexographic printing: Multi-Color Corporation North American Wine & Spirits, of USA, for Girl & Dragon Malbec. Digital printing: Multi-Color Corporation, Sonoma division, of USA, for Precision.



For more information about the Label Industry Global Awards, go to www.labelawards.com



L-R: Corinne Schmid of eBeam Technologies, James Quirk of L&L, and Charles Flütiger of eBeam Technologies

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Geert Van Damme of Cerm played a key role in the Automation Arena



The automated label plant of tomorrow

Mike Fairley reviews the Automation Arena, which made its debut at Labelexpo Europe 2017

Any converters that visited the Automation Arena at Labelexpo cannot fail to have been impressed by the level of integration between today's sophisticated Management Information Systems (MIS), advances in workflow automation and the latest developments in automated press, inspection and finishing line set-up.

In a 30 minute demonstration, an audience member 'customer' selected both a digital and conventional repeat job label design and was able to follow these through all the necessary automated job management, pre-press, print production, inspection and finishing stages, waste removal and warehousing and, finally, through to job delivery and invoicing. Indeed, the whole automation feature was designed to present the printing plant of tomorrow with a level of automation and profitability never before attempted. From its initial concept, the overall aim of the Automation Arena was to convince converters that with the latest workflow technology it is now easier than ever to automate and process more jobs in the same through-put time, with fewer errors, with 100 percent quality and barcode inspection, incorporate automated press and finishing set-up, and all with the same number of employees.

AUTOMATED WORKFLOW

As the central hub of the Automation Arena, a Cerm MIS processed and managed the whole automated workflow, integrating with an Esko Software Platform supporting the end-to-end label workflow to change the selected

digital label design and personalize with the customer's name, create rules for inspection, and initiate a proof for customer approval.

Once approval of the label and barcode was received back from the customer, files were sent to a Xeikon 3300 with a Xeikon LDU laser die-cutting unit integrated with a Xeikon Vectorizer for step and repeat and printing, together with AVT inspection files, job identification and die-cutting and finishing barcodes for the in-line laser die-cutting, slitting and turret rewinding.

Meanwhile, the MPS EF 430 operator read his MIS-generated job ticket on screen, checked that plates, tools, inks and substrate had been delivered, changing the roll using a Kocher+Beck UR Precision U440 butt splicer. Each roll loaded was scanned and became fully traceable throughout the process, interacting with the Cerm system in order to provide real-time production values. A Cerm inspection command was also sent to AVT's automatic 100 percent print inspection system, which registered any defects during printing – but at this stage did not act on them.

A Matho EM-180 waste management system on the MPS press captured, cut, transported and collected the production waste into a waste disposal system, while cores for both presses were cut on a Wasberger WLE fully automatic core cutter following the specifications provided on the job ticket.

All finished rolls from both the Xeikon and MPS presses incorporated an ID barcode which, when scanned, enabled electronic instructions for the automatic set-up of

cutting knives on a Grafotronic high-speed inspection slitter rewinder. An AVT camera automatically stopped the Grafotronic when a defect was detected so that a repair could take place. Final rolls were scanned into a warehouse location, a picking list prepared through the MIS, a delivery note printed, an email sent to the customer and invoicing launched.

Did the Automation Arena fulfil its promise of presenting the label plant of the future? Well, more than 1,000 visitors sat through demonstrations, there were over 250 media posts, and there were in excess of 1.26 million impressions on those posts. Participating suppliers were almost overwhelmed with the number of enquiries received from companies now looking to consider automating their operations. An undoubted key to the success of the Automation Arena was most certainly the collaboration between all the participating companies, managed in turn by the Cerm MIS.

In an era of ever decreasing run lengths, production bottlenecks, shorter lead and delivery times, multi-versions and variations, it seems certain that increasing automation of tomorrow's label plants will become a necessity for successful performance and profitability. Hopefully the Automation Arena provided an important showcase of just what is now becoming feasible.



Read Mike Fairley's article 'Automate to survive' here: tinyurl.com/hzu3ekh



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Seeing is believing

Rivaling the quality of print typically associated with offset and gravure, Bellissima DMS is challenging digital as the future for flexible packaging and labels.

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- Vignettes that fade smoothly to nothing
- Smooth flat tints for 'perfect' fixed palette
- Solid object protection
- High solid ink densities
- No color shifts with misregistration
- Reduced bounce, barring and slur



Gallus LabelMaster with multi-web configuration



Mark Andy P7 with Digital Screen unit

Press technology at Labelexpo Europe

Andy Thomas-Emans assesses new technology developments across conventional and digital presses – and the range of hybrid systems offered by suppliers

CONVENTIONAL PRESS DEVELOPMENTS

The last two Labelexpo Europe shows have seen a remarkable fightback by the flexo industry with more efficient presses capable of taking on digital in the short-to-medium run sector of the label market.

Part of the story is increased automation, both on the presses themselves, and by embedding presses into wider plant management systems – a practical response to the requirements of Industry 4.0. More efficient converting systems – now including fast semi-rotary die-cutting systems – is another.

Semi-rotary dies move to flexo

A key trend at Labelexpo was for fast semi-rotary die systems to move onto flexo presses – something demonstrated by **Mark Andy**, **Edale** and **MPS**. This brings all the fast makeready advantages of semi-rotary to conventional machines: no need to change cylinders for different repeat lengths and automatic die ejection. In some cases – on the Mark Andy system for example – it is possible to change from semi-rotary to full rotary mode from the press control console, meaning the press is still efficient on the longer runs where higher speeds are required.

Starting with on-press automation, automatic print pressure controls made a wider appearance at this show. **Bobst** first demonstrated these systems in operation, which featured in the 'Digital Flexo' presses demonstrated by Bobst at this show.

They are now joined by a raft of flexo press manufacturers. **Edale** showed an image-based press control system on an FL-3 press, part of its new AiiR (Autonomous Inking, Impression and Register) system developed with AVT. During makeready, AiiR sees registration marks printed on each station, which are fed to the AVT Helios S camera at the end of the press. The camera analyzes the relative positions of the marks and sends corrections

to the print stations. Tracking software developed by Edale ensures that no additional corrections are made until the initial corrections have passed the camera. AiiR also incorporates AVT's image-based registration camera technology, as well as automatic slit knife positioning.

Similar pressure control systems were also demonstrated by **MPS** on its automated EF press in the Automation Arena, and by **Omet**, whose upgraded XFlex X6.0 platform press incorporates 'intelligent cruise control' – automatically setting pressure according to press speed and compensating for changes in repeat length.

The company's new Multivision cameras,



Omet launches XFlex X6.0 technology



XeiKon shows new inkjet and toner models

Following XeiKon's move to embrace UV inkjet with the launch of the 330mm-wide PX3000 UV inkjet press with 'Panther-cure' inks earlier this year, Labelexpo saw the addition of the 'entry level' PX2000 press, with a web width of 220mm and speeds up to 50m/min at 600 DPI native. The press is configured with 4-colors and an optional white. Both PX presses are driven by XeiKon's X-800 front end.

XeiKon demonstrated its continued support of dry toner technology with a beta version of the 520mm-wide CX 500, which prints at up to 30m/min at 1200 DPI. The first order for the new press at the show came from CS Labels.

And seen on the CX3 toner press on the stand was the first commercial module of XeiKon's Fusion digital finishing system – an opaque white 'digital screen' printing unit.

placed after each print unit, allow immediate registration setting without waiting for the web to reach the end of the press.

Omet also announced a film package for its established iFlex press, adding chill rollers and MultiVision registration to allow printing of shrink sleeves labels. A sheeter can be added for producing wraparound labels.

Automation was being offered at different levels of sophistication by both Gallus and Nilpeter in the presses launched at this show.

Automation was central to the presentation

of the new Nilpeter FA-4* platform press. 'Any repeatable or predictable task that can be done by a human is now done by the automation of the machine,' said the company's Paul Teachout. Nilpeter demonstrated the fully wireless system which allows the press to be operated from a tablet, including recipe building and job recall. The press implements Nilpeter's

Clean Hand technology, with inking units removed from the press as a single piece without separate anilox, meter rolls and ink pans. The plate sleeve is fully gearless, giving an infinitely variable repeat and each print unit has seven motion control motors for the plate, anilox and impression cylinders and for pressure and lateral adjustment. The Quick Die Change unit incorporates auto-registration and rapid exchange of dies without breaking the matrix.

Gallus launched its LabelMaster press last year, but brought to Labelexpo its most sophisticated model, the LabelMaster Advanced, complete with multiple webs. This is a fully modular platform press with a top speed of 200m/min – the fastest label press Gallus has produced.

An important announcement by Gallus was a new Screeny design which brings rotary screen speeds up to 120m/min. There has also been progress in the Screeny metal doming process reported in earlier editions of *L&L*.

Automation featured heavily on two presses shown by Lombardi. The Synchroline 430, shown in 8-color configuration, incorporated automatic register and pre-register. This press was displayed with a new Toro in-line hotfoil unit and Bravo in-line flat screen unit. The company's fully automated Invicta 630 press was also shown, incorporating sleeve technology and pre-register and auto-register control.

Rotatek continues to develop its Brava press, demonstrating in semi-rotary mode printing filmic as well as self-adhesive materials. The company also showed a new variant of the Universal 680 offset hybrid press using sleeves.

Bobst also presented a range of automation options with the launch of its new M1 Press, dedicated to self-adhesive

HP integrates GEM embellishment

Extending the trend seen at Labelexpo for digital embellishment, HP Indigo demonstrated the commercialized version of its GEM digital embellishment unit, demonstrated in-line with an HP Indigo WS6800 digital press.

This allows users to add a range of 2D and 3D effects including spot and gloss varnish, tactile effects and digital cold foiling. Because there are two arrays, these effects can be used in combination.

The GEM is controlled through the press DFE giving a single workflow. The first coating products available are the GEM Coat and GEM Clear. Developed with JetFX, HP Indigo GEM is now available to pre-order with shipping expected to begin in the spring of 2018.

Clearly this combination puts more pressure on the RIP, and HP Indigo's Alon Bar-Shany announced the new HP Production Pro for Indigo labels and packaging RIP at the show, claimed to offer five times faster processing than the existing RIP. The RIP technology was supplied by Global Graphics.

Drawn from HP Indigo's commercial press technology, the RIP also allows converters to manage centrally fleets of HP Indigo label presses, either within the same plant or in multiple plants, while connecting the press to automation tools including HP PrintOS, MIS systems and the Esko Automation Engine QuickStart for Labels. HP and Esko have incorporated the Esko Color Engine into HP Production Pro and are extending the cooperation to resell the new Esko Automation Engine QuickStart for Labels.

applications and incorporating laser-pre-register and automatic register control. The new M5X, for both labels and flexible packaging applications, incorporates what Bobst calls its 'second Level of digital automation', including automatic print pressure and register adjustment. The Bobst M6 shows adds automated job exchange, and was shown running changing between packaging jobs in one minute, with an unlimited number of Pantones achieved by extended gamut process color printing.

Etirama promoted its E-Series press, launched in March, which features the company's Easy Concept print unit design. The range has a maximum print speed of 180m/min and comprises the E3, with a print width of 340mm; E4 at 420mm; and E5, 500mm. The presses can also be equipped with a chill drum for shrink sleeve printing. The servo-driven E-Series features automatic pre-register and register adjustment through an HMI touch screen control panel. Designed in Spain, the machines' components are supplied by French manufacturer Schneider.



Bobst Mouvent water-based press

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MPS EF press with Talk To Me connectivity

CONNECTIVITY

One of the problems in integrating conventional presses into MIS systems has been the proprietary nature of press control systems. This led **MPS** to work with Cerm and LabelTraxx in developing a new open communications protocol called Talk to Me.

Data moving from MIS to press includes customer name, press run, color sequence, tooling, material type and thickness, printing plate code and planning. Data moving from press to MIS includes operator ID, print speed, meters/yards printed, waste produced, set-up and printing time. Press operators can access these capabilities remotely using an Android and IOS-compatible app. Apex International demonstrated an RFID-equipped anilox roll designed to communicate with the Talk to Me eco-system.

Omet's Marco Calcagni also announced a

Indian and Chinese manufacturers shine

Press manufacturers from India and China were present in Brussels.

Indian company **Multitec** showed its S2 label press, where the print cylinder is converted into a metal sleeve with side bearers, so the sleeve does not require an air mandrel to be mounted. The press on stand was sold into Russia on the first day of the show. Multitec is now looking at digital print engines to mount in a hybrid press.

Chinese manufacturer **Zhejiang Weigang Machinery** showcased its new ZJR-330 flexo press.

The ZJR-330 uses Rexroth-Bosch servo drives on tension control and print units, printing at 80m/min on a 330mm web width. The press uses print sleeves and incorporates chilled impressions cylinders for a wider material gamut.

Jinjian launched the JJ380 waterless offset intermittent press, printing with Presstek waterless plates and Toyo inks. A particular target of the press is the European and American wine label market.

connectivity initiative called the Transparent Factory Cloud, which takes in remote machine check-up, data analysis and strategic production planning. This will be aided by 'Smart glasses' which will have multiple functions – sending an image of the print in real time to the final customer, ensuring print registration accuracy and connecting directly with Omet engineers for on-the-spot fault finding. A similar program – minus the smart glasses – was announced by **Gallus** via its Heidelberg parent.

A high degree of process integration was also apparent in the **Codimag** demonstration of its Aniflo-based Viva 340 Evolution press. A number of converters submitted a PDF label file and watched it 'live' going from design to print within 30 minutes. The automated workflow included color management with Esko's Equinox software, color proofing, plate-imaging, and press makeready. The press was using Presstek's new Zahara NWL plates (see plates review for more information).

HYBRID DIGITAL-FLEXO

The blurring of lines between digital and flexo is nowhere more evident than in the various combinations of both processes shown at Labelexpo Europe.

Mark Andy has perhaps gone the furthest in integrating digital into the company's DNA, with a dedicated digital division run by industry veteran Ray Dickenson. Options now include the Digital Series hybrid press and various digital add-ons for the Performance series flexo press line, all under the banner of the Digital Plus program

At Labelexpo the company introduced Digital Plus Screen, a single color digital UV inkjet module demonstrated on a Performance Series P7 press as a first down White. The unit is available both as a rail-mounted option on new equipment or as a retrofit. Incorporating interstation pinning, the module prints ink at speeds up to 240ft/min (73m/min). Mark Andy's Steve Schulte told *L&L* the 8-micron laydown is heavier than UV flexo and comparable to UV screen.

Another hybrid technology shown in

Shrink sleeves on inkjet

Domino Digital Printing Solutions

demonstrated shrink sleeves printed on its N610i digital press using the UV90 6-color UV-curable ink set launched at the show. The hybrid configured N610i uses a flexo station after the digital print module to print a white back layer on the shrink sleeves. Domino is working on the project with industry partners including MPS – whose Symjet hybrid press uses the N610i integration engine – and AB Graphic, whose Digicon 3 integrates fully with the N610i engine.



Edale FL-3 with AiR automation, Graphium unit and FFEI Prinbar

Europe for the first time is Mark Andy's Digital One entry level digital press, which integrates a flexo coating unit into a 4-color electrophotographic print engine. 'With this press we are recreating the in-plant market and we're finding interest from commercial printers as well as the smaller label converters. We've tapped into a new stream without even realizing it,' said Schulte.

As **Heidelberg** continues its transformation into a digital company, it is not surprising to see an increased emphasis on its Gallus LabelFire hybrid press, now being built at Heidelberg's Wiesloch production center. New this Labelexpo is an in-line inkjet varnish module, the Digital Embellishment Unit (DEU), which applies matt, gloss and tactile spot coating effects in various thicknesses.

A joint project between three Swiss companies, the DEU is built on Steinemann's dmax technology with Schmid Rhyner developing the UV inkjet effect varnish and Gallus providing the integration expertise. The unit supports coating volumes up to 100gsm with a resolution of 600 x 600 DPI. The DEU will initially be available for the Gallus LabelFire, Gallus ECS 340 and Gallus Labelmaster machine platforms.

Also new on the LabelFire press is AVTs new Jet-IQ closed loop inspection system (also shown on the Mark Andy Digital Series press), which gives enhanced print quality at higher speeds with full reporting capabilities.

Nilpeter demonstrated a Panorama hybrid press with newly designed converting units using the Clean Hand technology developed for the FA-4* print platform. Close integration of the converting and digital print unit means

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Nilpeter Panorama with new finishing section

there is no festoon required between press and in-line converting units, greatly reducing waste. The press was configured with four flexo units, a Nilpeter FP4 flatbed embossing/foiling unit and semi-rotary die station. The press was operating at 600 DPI at speeds of 60m/min.

Omet announced at the show an alliance with **Durst**, which sees the new Durst Tau 330 RSC fully integrated with Omet's XFlex X6 with any combination of pre-treatment, print, coating and converting stations. Both partners will sell the X6 JetPlus press across their global networks. The Durst RSC prints at speeds up to 78m/min at 1200 x 1200 DPI resolution using a new high pigmentation ink set.

Drawing on its background in offset, **Rotatek** demonstrated a UV LED cured hybrid system which combined inkjet, offset and flexo technology, while **Lombardi** launched the Digistar hybrid press matching a 5-color Domino inkjet unit with semi-rotary flexo unit, cold foil and semi-rotary die-cutting.

DIGITAL PRESS DEVELOPMENTS

Several major global digital press launches took place at Labelexpo Europe, including the entry of two new players: **Bobst**, with its Mouvent press, and **Uteco's** Gaia Electron Beam curing digital press.

The Mouvent press is a joint venture between **Bobst** and **Radex**, a Swiss company

set up in 2013 to develop a new inkjet system called the 'Cluster' based on the FujiFilm Samba 1200 x 1200 DPI printhead,

The Cluster prints with both UV and water-based inks on any substrate, including labels, flexible packaging and cartons (a textile printer using the same technology is under development). **Radex** is developing the water-based inks itself and working with a partner for the UV inks. The water-base machine incorporates pre-coating and drying – allowing both films and paper substrates to be printed – followed by print and drying modules. The smaller footprint UV inkjet press has coating and die-cutting integrated in the machine body. The Mouvent presses are rated at mechanical speeds up to 100m/min and are available in both 170 and 340mm widths. Mouvent developed the RIP, calibration and screening algorithms.

Uteco entered the digital label arena in alliance with **ebeam Technologies** and **INX Digital**, introducing the Gaia electron beam curing press. Up to now electron beam has been confined to wider web packaging presses due to cost and size considerations, so it is a major breakthrough by ebeam Technologies to fit the EB unit inside the Gaia's compact 4.4 x 1.5m frame. The key benefit of EB is food safety, as there are no photoinitiators to migrate through the packaging. This is a 4-color system using specialist INX Digital inks. It has a resolution up to 720 x 360 DPI and speeds up to 25m/min. Gaia is driven by the JetINX printhead ink recirculation system. Gaia is to be sold through the Uteco Converting sales channel.

Continuing the indirect food contact theme, **Screen** introduced a low migration version of its established TruePress Jet350UV. The +LM model adds nitrogen inerting and a new low migration ink set. The first +LM press was ordered at the show by Springfield Group.

Screen also introduced a 'Plus' version of the Jet350UV, which adds a sixth color (orange) and chill drums to allow handling of heat sensitive substrates. Both new presses have a higher top speed of 60m/min.

EFI also demonstrated a low migration-capable digital press, with a Jetrion 4950lx UV LED inkjet press using new low migration inks for non-food-contact applications. Also shown were EFI's Armor UVF and UVR coatings, which offer increased durability and

Desktop systems

Labelexpo is home not only to production-scale digital systems, but also to desktop/benchtop units aimed principally at in-plant operations at converters or end users. Suppliers usually also provide software suites for a turnkey VIP system.

NeuraLabel launched its NeuraLabel 600e desktop press running at up to 30ft/min (9m/min) which can print on die-cut, kiss-cut or rolled media up to 220gsm. It combines a multilevel LED printhead and microfine toner technology. Also launched was the No-Touch Roll-to-Roll Unwinder/Rewinder Unit incorporating optical sensors to automatically control media flow.

New Solution launched the NS Atom desktop label press for roll-to-roll printing on pre-cut labels. The Sirius Memjet single pass printhead prints web widths of 80-240mm at speeds of 9m/min or 18m/min. Resolution is 1600 x 1600 DPI.

VIP Color unveiled a prototype of its VP720 Memjet Versapass-powered color label printer, running at speeds up to 18m/min at 1600 x 1600 DPI. The new generation Memjet printhead and inks improve water-resistance. Another prototype unit was the VP9000, which has similar specifications to the VP720 but with automatic printhead self-cleaning.

Epson demonstrated its ColorWorks C831, optimized for GHS large format drum and chemical labels, as well as a selection of finishing devices. The SC-S40600 is a wider format device which allows printing of decals or sheet label proofs, demonstrating another route for label converters to diversify.

gloss level control.

The press now includes media compatibility profiles for a broader range of labelstocks, including Avery Dennison substrates used for durable labels and wine applications. The press was demonstrated integrated into EFI's automated workflow tools.

Epson upgraded its highly successful (100+ installations) SurePress L-4033 aqueous inkjet press to the SurePress L-4533, which takes advantage of faster data handling to increase productivity. It retains the original CMYK+OG+W configuration. Also on stand was a SurePress L-6034VW, the company's UV LED inkjet press.

After entering the label market with its 210mm-wide PicoColour, **Dantex** launched a 350mm-wide 7-color press, the PicoJet, which uses Ricoh printheads with ink recirculation to print up to 75m/min (in 4-colors) The press is fully UV LED cured including inter-station pinning and final cure, with water cooling. The press incorporates lamination and rotary die-cutting and slitting, and a flexo station is planned. The press DFE, including color management, was developed in-house.

SPGPrints previews Pike hybrid

SPGPrints previewed its Pike 700 UV inkjet hybrid press, which will combine 1,200 DPI imaging with extensive pre-treatment and added value finishing processes – including screen unit integration – in a single pass, at speeds up to 70m/min.

The 700mm-wide roll-to-roll press is based on Archer technology developed by SPG for the textiles market, and features up to 10 inkjet positions in a central cylinder configuration, with CMYK plus White standard, using SPGPrints' own optimized ink system.

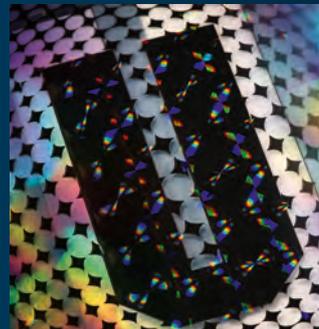
Pike 700 prints on both supported and unsupported paper and film materials up to 450 micron thickness.

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Use of a temperature-controlled roller opens up the possibility of printing heat sensitive materials such as shrink sleeves.

Konica Minolta unveiled its AccurioLabel 190 digital toner press that, in Europe, was developed and manufactured in cooperation with Danish company Grafisk Maskinfabrik (GM). Elsewhere in the world, the converting section will be provided by established partner Miyakoshi. The AccurioLabel 190 features 1200 x 1200 DPI resolution with no pre-coating. At Labelexpo the AccurioLabel 190 was shown in-line with the GM DC330Mini.

Amica launched its Gemini 330 UV LED cured label press. The machine offers 4-6 color printing including white, varnish, and spot color at a resolution of 600 x 600 DPI on a 324mm print width at speeds up to 75m/min.

DIGITAL PRINT AND EMBELLISHMENT MODULES

Another 'hybrid' format which made a significant impact at Labelexpo was adding digital modules to conventional presses.

Edale, FFEI and **Xaar** worked closely together to bring to Labelexpo the Printbar Uncovered technology, seen in action on an Edale FL-3 hybrid flexo-digital press. Printbar Uncovered is based on Xaar's new 1003 GS12U printhead, which in binary HL (High Laydown) modes allows high build UV varnishes to be applied – specified as an 80 micron layer thickness at 25m/min line speed. A double head is available which increases resolution to 720 DPI.

But FFEI's Andy Cook says the company's own software, combined with LED pinning, has achieved builds of over 130 microns. 'We are very close to a height of 250 microns, which is Braille height, in a single pass,' Cook told *L&L*.

Colordyne Technologies used its existing integration expertise in the launch of its first UV inkjet integration module, the 4-color 3600 Series UV – Retrofit. This operates at speeds up to 246ft/min (75m/min) across either an 8.5 inch or 12.75 inch (324mm) print width at a print resolution of 600 DPI.

Industrial Inkjet (IIJ) launched a range of compact color print modules based on the Konica Minolta KM1800i printhead. The ColourPrint HiQ prints at 600 DPI (claimed with asymmetric screening technology to achieve 1,000 DPI 'apparent' resolution) with 3.5pl droplet size. Speeds of up to 200m/min are achievable, says the company, making the units well-suited to the fastest conventional presses and finishing equipment. The modules are available in widths from 75mm to 520mm.

Domino Digital Printing Solutions showed K600i digital print modules integrated onto a GraphiMecc web inspection system demonstrating Domino's new digital foiling system, printing a digital adhesive to create the image area prior to



Mimaki direct to container printing



Module of Bobst M8 press

Package print

Package printing is a key trend, putting Labelexpo well onto the path of a true packaging print show – albeit with a labels core. Although most narrow and mid web presses today are capable of handling a wide range of unsupported films, there were two notable developments dedicated to flexible packaging at this show.

Bobst unveiled a print unit of a new press, the M8, which is built from the ground up for efficient short run flexible packaging production (note that what counts as a 'short run' for flexible packaging is very different from a short run of labels).

The press incorporates all Bobst's existing 'Digital Flexo' automation features seen on the M6, including auto print pressure and register adjustment and automatic print sleeve exchange on the new X-Flower print module. 'A change of print sleeve is accomplished in under 30 seconds,' said the company's Federico d'Annunzio. The press will run at up to 400m/min and incorporate multiple drying technologies for water-base, solvent and UV curing.

The M8 is currently undergoing print trials and the first commercial model is expected to be shipped to a converter in Africa shortly.

Bobst was also a presenter at the first meeting of the FoodSafeUV group, which aims to communicate with brands on how UV curing can be made certifiably safe on indirect food contact applications.

On the digital side, **HP Indigo** launched commercially its PackReady ecosystem, which delivers zero-wait lamination of flexible packaging film rolls using specially coated film substrates supplied by a number of partners. The format of PackReady matches HP Indigo's 20000 digital press, allowing a complete

flexible packaging production line to be set up from print to final product.

HP announced the 50th sale of its 30000 digital carton press and the 100th sale of the 20000 press, which is being used for both flexible packaging and film label applications.

Direct printing onto substrates is a growing trend in the packaging world, and **Mimaki** demonstrated its UJF-7151plus for direct printing on rigid substrates to create nameplates suitable for industrial marking or placarding. Additionally, a small laser cutting device was used in combination with the printer to cut rigid labels to finished product. Also running live on the show floor was the Mimaki UJF-3042 MKII UV LED direct-to-object printer. Principally intended for prototyping, this machine prints 360-degree decoration directly onto the container.

Dilli demonstrated another route to diversification for label converters with its Neo Sun FB2513-04DWX flatbed UV printer, which prints up to 100sqm an hour at up to 600 x 2400 DPI. Its Auto Vacuum Control System can handle various media sizes, and the Dilli Variable Dot technology allows four-level grayscale (0, 3, 6 and 13 pico liter). Also on display was the Neo Triton digital cutter series. Applications might include point of sale, sheet label proofs and short run folding cartons.

Hapa demonstrated direct printing of closures using its redcube plus UV inkjet modular system, demonstrated in a 5-color version integrated into the IMD Closure Digital Print (CLDP). Bottle closures were printed CMYK plus white at a print resolution of 720 DPI.

The redcube is also at the heart of the Hapa 862, shown printing serialized data onto a range of roll-fed materials.

UV-curing and foil delamination. The company also showed a new phosphorescent digital security ink.

UK-based **Inkjet Solutions** was promoting its digital integration service based around CMYK or monochrome UV inkjet modules operating in standard format at 75m/min at 600 DPI, or at higher speeds on request. The company's real USP is its relationship with narrow web engineering veteran KPG Europe, which provides conventional converting options.

Mprint showed for the first time Kurz's Digital

Metal UV ink system in the frame of its Gen3 UV inkjet press. The 330mm-wide CMYK+W press has a maximum print speed of 75m/min with a native resolution of 600 x 600 DPI, and incorporates lamination and die-cut in-line.

James Quirk and Yolanda Wang contributed to this article.



Go to www.labelsandlabeling.com/ video for videos recorded on the Domino, Gallus, Multitec and Nilpeter stands

The Award Winning



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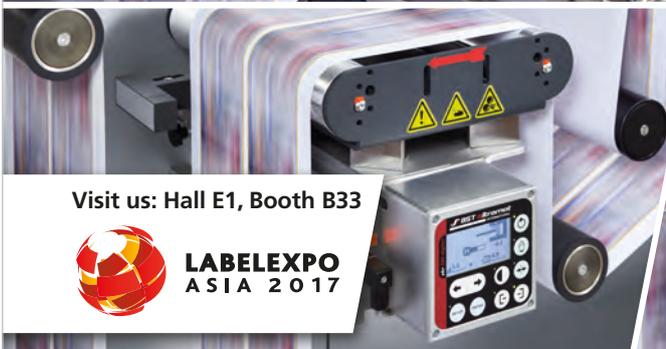
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Domino Really Does ‘Do More’ at Labelexpo 2017

From the moment Labelexpo 2017 opened its doors, the Domino Digital Printing Solutions stand was busy. One of the first customers they welcomed onto the stand was Iban Cid (pictured centre of middle diamond above), President of Barcelona based Germark, who came to take ownership of the 7 colour Domino **N610i** ink jet label press being demonstrated on the stand. Renowned for being innovators in their field, Germark was the first company in Spain to invest in a digital label press in 2000. Iban said, “Germark is a forward-thinking business that constantly innovates and proactively seeks to offer profitable solutions that will help to contribute to the success of our clients’ brands. We

are delighted to be introducing Domino’s ink jet technology into our portfolio, providing our clients with the opportunity to be more competitive and allowing us to give our customers a better service.”

Shortly after, Antonio Romero and Angel García (pictured left and right in left diamond above), joint owners of Murcia based Adhesivos Romero García came to the booth to ‘seal the deal’ for their 5 colour Domino **N610i** ink jet label press. Antonio says, “This is our first investment into digital ink jet and provides the perfect complement to our existing in-house printing technologies. It will allow us to target new market sectors that we have previously been unable to reach.”

The following day, representatives from Emballage Gruppen, the second largest producer of folded cartons in Denmark, and Dan Labels, the specialist labels producer within the Group (pictured in right diamond above), came on to the Domino stand to watch the demonstration of the 7 colour UV inkjet Domino **N610i**/ABG hybrid solution in action, and left the stand as the proud new owners of the exhibit.

Further sales of Domino **N610i** standalone presses and hybrids followed over the remaining two days of the show including sales to two of the top 5 multinational label printing corporations.

First ink jet press to print shrink sleeves

Domino was excited to announce that it has had positive results successfully printing onto a number of industry standard shrink sleeve materials using its newly launched **UV90** six colour UV-curable ink set on the **N610i** ink jet label press. The new inks have excellent physical properties for printing on self-adhesive labels, but shrink sleeve capability has long been a disadvantage for ink jet when compared to toner solutions. However, with this latest technology breakthrough, this is now no longer the case.

Domino proposes that the **N610i** is supplied in a hybrid configuration using a flexo station after the **N610i** Integration Module to print a cost-effective white back layer for shrink sleeve applications. This combination provides an extremely cost-effective solution capitalising on the full benefits of digital printing with

instantaneous job change, minimal substrate waste and variable data printing capability, combined with flexo printing for the high ink usage, non-digital elements.

Philip Easton, Director of Domino Digital Printing Solutions comments, "Industry feedback suggests that many of the toner applications are used for prototype production and early product life requirements. This is mostly driven by high unit cost and slow running speeds. The Domino **N610i** high speed ink jet solution, running at 70m/min combined with a lower cost flexo printed white for the backing, offers a different proposition and will be a disruptive technology. Interest and visitor response has been extremely positive and encouraging during Labelexpo. In fact, one of our OEM partners has confirmed a sale of a Domino hybrid line configuration during



the show, designed to print both self-adhesive labels and shrink sleeves."

Domino welcomed many international visitors to their stand for the daily demonstrations of the new **K600i** White digital print module integrated onto a Graphimecc finishing line with a second **K600i** that was printing Domino's new UV fluorescent ink. This solution is ideal for security printing and brand protection to safeguard against parallel trade and anti-counterfeiting.



Why the Domino N610i?

1. **Proven** - Over 500 global installations with this technology
2. **Reliable** - Surveys show ink jet is the most reliable digital technology
3. **Comprehensive global support** - Ink jet has been our core business for 40 years
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7. **Industry standard workflow** - ESKO workflow as 'standard'
8. **Variable data printing** - Add more value with monochrome and colour VDP
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Plate systems

Andy Thomas-Emans looks at developments in plates and processing technology, as seen at Labelexpo Europe

PLATE MOUNTING

With press tolerances getting ever-tighter, particularly for extended gamut process printing, accurate plate mounting is becoming critical. This has led to the development of semi- or fully-automated systems for mounting onto both cylinders and sleeves.

Bobst launched a wider version of its Smart DigiMount automatic print sleeve mounting system to accompany its wider format M6 and M8 presses. The system now handles sleeve repeats of 254-812.8mm and optionally 1066.8mm (10-32in, optionally 42in) and includes a new enclosure to exclude ambient light, helping the positioning system operate consistently in any ambient environment. Bobst sells the Smart DigiMount as part of its Revo Digital Flexo automation program, which includes 7-color ECG printing. Plate mounting accuracy of 0.02 +/- mm is achieved.

JM Heaford launched its Label AutoMounter, building on the success of the flexible packaging AutoMounter launched last year. After the plate is roughly positioned, the AutoMounter mounts the plate to a positional accuracy of +/- 5 microns. Each plate takes less than one minute to mount and requires no skilled manual input. Set up is by co-ordinate import, manual programming or by teaching. Over 10,000 jobs can be stored and recalled.

Focus Label Machinery launched its Platemate 2 compact video flexo plate mounting systems for all popular narrow or mid web presses. Platemate 2 picks up pre-applied register marks on the plate

edges marks using two high magnification cameras to finely adjust the plate position. The procedure takes around 30 seconds for each cylinder. LED lights integrated into each camera ensure that light is balanced on both edges of the plate. An adhesive tape dispenser allows application of double sided tape without creases or air bubbles.

PLATE SYSTEMS

With sustainability now firmly on the industry's radar, chemistry-free and water-wash plates technologies were to the fore.

Presstek launched its Zahara NWL chemistry-free waterless offset plate dedicated to narrow web production. Launched for this UV compatible plate was the Dimension Pro-W thermal CTP imaging system optimized for the Zahara plate family.

Both new products were showcased on the Codimag stand where the Zahara NWL plate was imaged on a Dimension Pro-W CTP system, water-rinsed, and printed on Codimag's Viva 340 6-color, waterless offset press.

Toray Graphics unveiled its new Imprima line of waterless offset printing plates, along with new branding, and a line of chemistry and processors. Vianord Engineering launched its Eco Wave plate processing system for water-washable plates. The water management system does not require water replacement outside normal evaporation requirements. Eco Wave has a compact footprint and fast washout using a pre-drying module.

The Gallus screen printing department

teamed up with Heidelberg at the show to showcase the new Phoenix UV LED direct platesetter, capable of imaging plates for a range of printing processes including screen, flexo, offset and letterpress.

MacDermid announced its Lux ITP 60 plate has been approved for use with the Bellissima DMS screening system. The company says the 1:1 mask-to-plate plate imaging process of In-the-Plate technology allows Bellissima DMS to deliver 'a level of quality usually associated with offset and gravure.' Additionally, Bellissima DMS 'significantly reduces common machine issues such as bounce, barring and slur.'

DuPont Advanced Printing featured its latest Cyrel Easy ESM and EFM mid-durometer plates developed for coated and uncoated paper printing applications, which can be processed in solvent and Cyrel Fast thermal processing. A Cyrel FastT 2000 TD processor was also featured.

SPGPrints launched the RotaMesh Glitter Screen, a nickel rotary screen suitable for applying glitter, luster, shimmer and optically variable inks. RotaMesh Glitter Screen hole sizes are designed to facilitate the smooth transfer to the substrate of these delicate 70 micron particles, without risk of blockage, and at high printing speeds.

SPGPrints also demonstrated a new automatic RotaPlate screen cleaner developer and washing system.

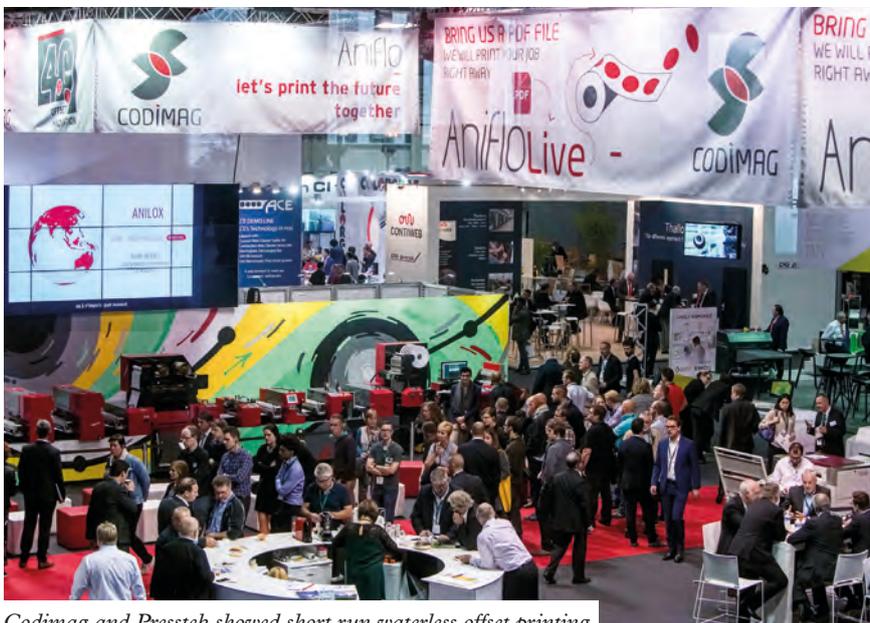
FLINT PORTFOLIO

Flint Group had a number of plate-related launches from different divisions. First up was the Nyloflex Xpress thermal processing system along with a dedicated plate and developer portfolio.

And with the continuing global strength of Letterpress, the new water-washable Nyloprint WF Sharp digital plate was launched.

Rotec 'Smart' and 'Smart Premium' sleeves were shown with a new inner core which reduces weight by 15 percent and an additional barrier layer for superior dimensional stability.

The Flint Thermoflex division introduced the FlexTray plate handling system for the flexo CTP imager, as well as an automation package which adds connectivity to plate exposing systems, auto resolution switching and automatic calibration.



Codimag and Presstek showed short run waterless offset printing



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Workflow developments highlight trend towards automation

James Quirk rounds up developments in workflow, MIS and inspection technology at Labelexpo Europe 2017

At a Labelexpo where automation was a dominant theme, the lines between suppliers of workflow software, color management tools and inspection systems were increasingly blurred. MIS systems have become ever more sophisticated, enabling everything from materials purchasing, to production, distribution and invoicing. They integrate with other applications including desktop productivity tools, press management control systems, inspection, finishing, and accounting and administration systems.

AVT is a perfect example – traditionally an inspection equipment supplier, now a developer of all-encompassing workflow tools. 'Now that AVT is part of the Danaher family of companies,' said president and CEO Jaron Lotan, 'we have even more opportunities to work with strategic partners to collaborate on interconnected, "linked" solutions that automate workflow while providing insight into production behaviors.' At Labelexpo, AVT showcased systems for automation and efficiency supporting Industry 4.0 production environments. By connecting AVT systems to pre-production tools – such as management information systems or Esko's Automation Engine – printers can define and control cross-plant quality standards, monitor production floor key performance indicators (KPIs), uncover potential improvements, aggregate data and benchmark against defined targets.

AVT demonstrated Helios D, a 100 percent automatic inspection system specifically designed to address digital printing challenges such as missing nozzles, ink drips and color uniformity – all in real time. The company also demonstrated its forthcoming iCenter Platform, a cloud-based system that allows printers to manage and control quality and production standards for facilities around the world. Through iCenter, printers can set cross-site quality standards, auto-analyze PDF files for inspection, and utilize business intelligence from the production floor with seamless connectivity to MIS and pre-press systems.

Pre-press specialist **Carl Ostermann Erben** (COE) introduced coe center, a web-based print data management system that provides customers with extensive options for data exchange, the approval process and data archiving.



coe center is a web-based print data management system

Cerm played a key role in the Automation Arena (see Mike Fairley's review of that feature). Its workflow software modules support each step in the printer's integrated workflow. The Cerm MIS consists of eight modules: the Web4Labels all-in-one digital storefront for online quoting and managing assets online; estimating; product catalogue and sales orders; job management; production scheduling; shipping and invoicing; stock and material management; and costing and shop floor data collection.

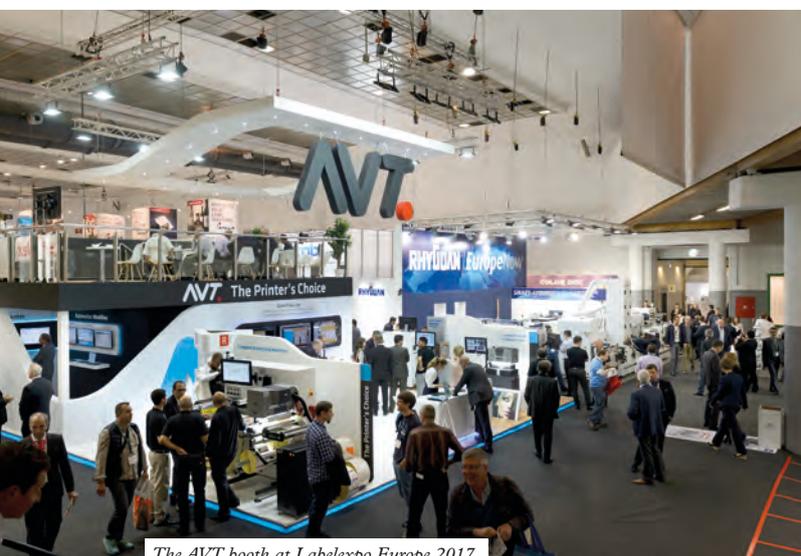
Colorware introduced its MeasureColor software, a modular system, offering an end-to-end color workflow tool designed to eliminate uncertainty or questions about color. A network-based system, all data is stored on the user's own server, allowing quick and simple analysis. Data can be shared with any other color management option in the market.

MeasureColor Reports offers the capability to build customized print quality reports for individual customers. It connects to multiple third-party data sources simultaneously, combining data into a single report or live dashboard.

The new **Dalim ES 5** is a collaborative digital asset production and management platform, providing services ranging from online approval to a web-based production environment for everyone in the production cycle. ES lets users plan, execute and control any aspect of media production, regardless of the final use of the output.

EFI showed a new version of its packaging suite workflow software. The new version five of the EFI packaging suite features EFI Radius as its core ERP software, and includes workflow enhancements in estimating, job planning and shop floor data collection, as well as new digital print workflows and additional tools that enhance user productivity and collaboration. Other new packaging suite workflow enhancements include: online packaging procurement; automated planning optimization; global resource scheduling; multi-channel marketing campaigns; centralized productivity widgets; and a simplified estimating and planning system.

Esko's Automation Engine QuickStart for Labels is an out-of-the-box, pre-configured workflow bundle that addresses the majority of the essential pre-press tasks for labels, no matter what printing technology is used – digital (toner and inkjet), flexo, offset or gravure. It is claimed by Esko to be ideal for label converters that want to start pre-press automation without the need for an extensive



The AVT booth at Labelexpo Europe 2017



Chinese company Luster launched its LabelRoll inspection system

implementation process or in house workflow specialists. It includes tasks such as preflighting, adding and checking barcodes and content, trapping, step-and-repeat, marks and control strips as well as automated reports.

Another new system, WebCenter QuickStart for Labels, controls the management of data within the system and fully digitizes and streamlines communication and collaboration from project briefing to the production floor. With full automation and visibility, it allows users to follow the audit trail of existing printed and digital assets, speeding the approval cycle with a built-in graphic viewer for both 2D and 3D assets. Work in progress, status and device

Apex and Hamillroad Software partner

Apex International and **Hamillroad Software** have entered into a strategic partnership, resulting in the formation of Aniken Graphics International, a joint venture created to bring Hamillroad's Bellissima digitally modulated screening (DMS) technology 'into the flexographic mainstream'. Nick Harvey has been named as managing director of the joint venture. As a further result of the partnership, Apex International has been granted distribution rights to Bellissima worldwide following its launch at Labelexpo Europe 2017. Bellissima DMS is a screening option for flexo printing featuring patented technology that is fully optimized to work at 4,000 DPI on industry standard equipment. Hamillroad claimed this allows printers to achieve a high level of detail and quality of print normally associated with gravure and offset, typically 300-450 LPI.

queues are monitored and presented visually in an easy-to-understand browser-based dashboard.

Global Graphics has extended its relationship with HP Indigo to include the HP Indigo range of labels and packaging presses. The Harlequin RIP has been chosen as the RIP engine inside the HP Production Pro for Indigo Labels & Packaging. This is the new HP digital front end (DFE) designed to drive all HP Indigo digital labels and packaging presses. New features in the Harlequin RIP include controls for deciding when to blend emulated spot colors with process colors for exceptionally accurate brand color matching, and extended controls over PDF layers so that optional content used in process control can be individually switched on or off, for example for example to print just cut and fold lines for lead-in sheets.

Hybrid Software showed a number of advances to its software tools. Key developments include Cloudflow Jobs module, a job management engine that tracks and presents information concerning all the parts of a job through a dashboard. Cloudflow Jobs is supplied pre-configured out of the box, ready to be used in production. It integrates well with MIS/ERP systems, online shops and databases. Cloudflow Share is a new enterprise file management module to improve the way data is shared between different production sites within a company. It works with all front end, back end and pre-press processes for load balancing and production efficiency. Cloudflow Proofscope preflight integration embeds the preflight report directly into Proofscope. Designers or print buyers who submit files for print production can review immediately any issues in their browser, thereby shortening the production cycle.

Label Traxx introduced the Sitrine module, a tool to allow customers access to all their pertinent label business information



The new PowerScope 5000 web monitoring system from BST eltromat

online and place reorders from any connected device. Label Traxx described Sitrine as 'a self-service customer view so they can interact with you when it's convenient for them'. Sitrine has been designed as a set of tools that makes it faster, easier and more efficient to do business. As an example, if a customer needs to look up the details of an order they placed last year for budgeting purposes, they can now do that from their mobile phone, and outside of business hours if needed. Label Traxx further noted that it can relieve the administrative burden of processing reorders, answering simple questions about job status, or helping customers understand all the label products/versions they have printed.

Rogler International showed its ERP/MIS business process optimization software for print and packaging. It handles all processes including CRM, sales, estimating, sheet optimization, electronic production-planning and optimization, BI, controlling, integrated material logistics. It is suited to production of labels, boxes, corrugated products or flexible packaging.

Sistrade unveiled the latest version, S10, of MIS/ERP Sistrade Software. The MIS/ERP Sistrade S10 is cloud-based, modular and highly customizable, cross-browser and multi-device, allowing customers to use it either on PC, tablet and smartphone. Customers are able to perform tasks such as estimating, orders management, purchasing, stocks and production management, control of the factory floor, accounting, human resources and many other.

theurer.com presented the latest innovations relating to C3 ERP/ MIS business management software for labels and flexible packaging. C3 covers every process – from estimating and sales to production planning all the way through to logistics and controlling. C3 offers preconfigured Business Templates for specialized companies such

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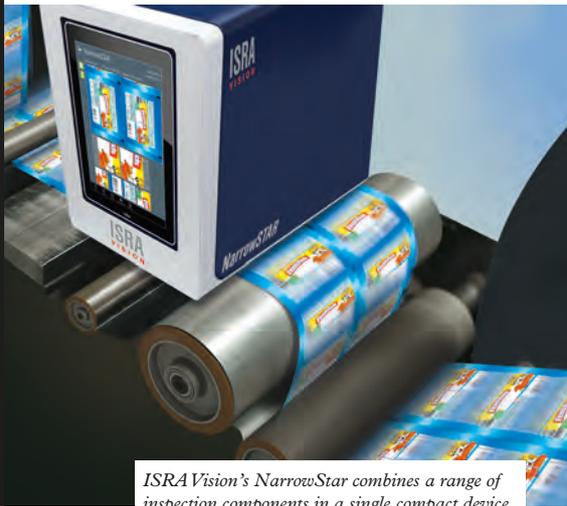
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ISRA Vision's NarrowStar combines a range of inspection components in a single compact device

software facilitates fast, accurate press-side correction of ink formulations. Also shown was Color Measurement with DeltaCam for advanced, in-line spectral measurement which allows printers to utilize accurate, automated L*a*b* measurement on film, paper or board—ensuring that all printed product is within their customers' color specifications.

Systemata presented IC Label, a RIP-based software for design, management and color-consistent reproduction of digitally printed labels in small and medium runs. IC Label has an integrated design manager for label design and provides variable data output with barcode and QR code support. Individualization via database connection and simple organization through label management are possible. IC Label enables professional print data creation with cutting and finishing marks for sheet and roll processing in digital printing. The special feature is color management for color-consistent reproduction using ICC profiles and device links.

X-Rite and its subsidiary Pantone unveiled new versions of ColorCert Suite 3.0 process control software and the eXact handheld spectrophotometer. Both support all G7 and PSO metrics and guide operators in determining whether printed output is compliant with those guidelines. The new products, combined with X-Rite's InkFormulation Software, offer commercial printers and packaging converters an integrated, end-to-end system for managing color consistency in a G7 or PSO process workflow.

INSPECTION

BST eltromat showed a CompactGuide with a CLS Pro 600 digital line and contrast sensor, and a CompactGuide with a wide array sensor, as well as an EcoGuide web guiding system that can be configured to meet a variety of requirements. Also shown was the ekr commander for the ekr 500 digital controller. With intuitive operation, revised hardware, new software and a higher-resolution graphical display, the new ekr commander provides support in all the areas where it makes sense to use a touchscreen – during set-up or for direct data input, for example.

BST also showed the Super HandyScan 4000 and PowerScope 5000 web monitoring systems. PowerScope 5000 was shown in use on a rewinder, alongside a CompactGuide, a Shark 4000 Lex system for 100 percent inspection and TubeScan eagle view inspection system.

BST eltromat demonstrated its iPQ-Center, with modules iPQ-Check for 100 percent

GSE launches ink management software

GSE Dispensing launched an ink management system, Ink manager, intended to eliminate all aspects of ink-related waste. The GSE Ink manager software is claimed to offer optimized ink yields through recycling press returns, as well as improved connectivity, mobility and reporting capabilities. Features include a user interface with extensive search functionalities, a job list separating work preparation and ink production, and a web interface for integration with other applications, such as ink formulation, management information and Cloud software. GSE Ink manager is supported by mobile applications that allow remote data entry and access to real-time information, facilitated by Wi-Fi connection to the ink dispenser.

inspection, iPQ-View for web monitoring, iPQ-Spectral for in-line spectral color measurement and iPQ-Workflow as the connective element.

Another highlight was products that focus on color management for offset printing, including FSS 15 ink fountain control in combination with AR4000 register control.

BST eltromat and **Printum** extended their partnership to the new Concept_17 generation of printing machines which debuted at Labelexpo. Concept_17 is a new generation of digital multi-web printing machines from Printum, which feature quality assurance systems from BST eltromat.

Crest Solutions showed Pivot, a new barcode grading system for thermal transfer labels. Pivot ensures barcodes printed on Zebra thermal transfer industrial printers pass the required grade. Its quality control system ensures every barcode on every label is checked at the point of printing, with defective labels able to be removed at source.

DeCoSystem launched Sentinel Gold, an inspection system equipped a linescan camera. Sentinel Gold identifies defects such as missing color, spots, substrate damages, remaining matrix, splices, color deviation, text defects, hickies, poor quality codes and color misregistration. It is designed to work on all types of substrates, including highly reflective foils. The advanced LED dome illuminator allows the optimization of image quality on special finishing like hot and cold foil, embossing, metallized substrates and transparent films.

Erhardt+Leimer showed its Smartscan system for print image monitoring. In addition to a video function with zoom, it also enables 100 percent print image inspection, splice detection and detection of missing labels and unremoved matrix. The

as manufacturers of labels, flexible packaging, folding cartons or corrugated products. theurer.com is also introducing quality assurance test plans as well as extended collaborations with other industry software systems.



eXact handheld spectrophotometer

COLOR MANAGEMENT

AVT showed SpectraLab II, an in-line, automatic spectral measurement system compliant with X-Rite's ISO-compliant XRGA metrology standard, certifying the system's ability to optimize color measurement across multivendor networks, among other allowances.

Luster LightTech Group released a new system for in-line color management, which can read up to 220m/min during the printing process.

QuadTech conducted live demonstrations of ColorTrack, its latest color management software for flexo and gravure packaging applications. With a variety of options for hand-held and in-line configurations, the



EyeC introduced its Workflow Integration module



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new DR 2301 web guider from the ELGuider product family was developed especially for the label industry. The key parameters are already pre-set on delivery. The PA 62 is a two-channel measuring amplifier for connecting any load cells; it displays not only the sum signal but also the web tension on the left and right hand side of the web separately.

Inspection system supplier **EyeC** introduced the Workflow Integration module, allowing the incorporation of EyeC Profiler Graphic, the company's PDF proofing technology, into workflow systems such as Esko Automation Engine. EyeC Workflow Integration automates quality control in the pre-press stages, with the workflow system automatically activating the inspection process, and the EyeC Profiler Graphic retrieving the order data and inspection parameters of the respective job from the workflow system. It automatically inspects the entire contents of the PDF file – including text, graphics, Braille, and 1D and 2D codes – against one or more approved files and then reports the inspection results back to the workflow system.

GlobalVision presented its latest Quality Control Platform technology and new scanner developments. Showcasing QCP deployed on the Cloud and available in HTML 5 as well as the latest version of QCP – V4.1 for the desktop, the company demonstrated double speed times for loading files and inspection. Designed to eliminate printed artwork and copy related errors, GlobalVision's automated proofreading systems provide all-in-one quality assurance at every stage of the workflow process. GlobalVision has embedded its Quality Control Platform within Esko's Automation's Engine.

With the modular TQC-360° platform, **Grafikontrol** offered a full range of quality control through production, application, processes and services. The TQC-360° family includes: web video camera (Matrix), 100 percent print inspection (Lynex), in-line spectrophotometer (ChromaLab), and defect Vtracking through the process from printing to slitting (Procheck).

Lynex is Grafikontrol's newest system for 100 percent inspection of the printed web.

ISRA Vision's new Plug & Inspect range combines high-resolution in-line web viewing with adaptive narrow web inspection. The pre-calibrated ready-to-use systems are quick and easy to install, optimizing output from the start. The combination of the ViewStar and NarrowStar inspection systems, which work in series, ensure the desired image is achieved accurately and quickly every time. ViewStar provides precise web viewing and color reproduction in real time – even at high web speeds – combined with high robustness and minimal maintenance requirements. NarrowStar combines a range of inspection

components in a single compact device in three sizes, covering web widths between 330 and 660mm.

Lake Image Systems featured its Discovery platform, offering tailored options to automate variable data integrity and print quality inspection requirements. Those demonstrated at the show included the Discovery platform specifically adapted to focus on the print and label inspection requirements for the food and packaging industry; and data verification, quality control, reporting and traceability enabling tools which can be applied to pharmaceutical, shipping and security labels.

Luster LightTech Group launched its latest-generation LabelRoll inspection system. LabelRoll can detect defects as small as 0.03 squared millimeters and provides accurate defect classification, especially for common issues such as broken words and punctuation. Its double-screen display of both live image monitoring and inspection software enables operators to easily locate defects and accurately control misregistration as well as other issues.

Nyquist Systems showed its new QLink workflow for 100 percent inspection on the press and automatic controlling of the converting machine. The Nyquist QLink real-time editor enables the operator at the press to decide immediately which defects are relevant and have to be removed at the converting machine or can be ignored. In cooperation with BST eltromat, the exclusive sales partner for the Nyquist TubeScan portfolio, many orders for new TubeScan system were closed during the exhibition. 'This was the first time that we participated with an own stand at Labelexpo and the result overachieved our highest expectations. We believe this is a result of the new technology and new philosophy of our QLink workflow and an incredible work form our partner BST eltromat. More than 20 machine manufacturers had a TubeScan system in operation at their stands,' said Robert Heichele, sales director at Nyquist Systems.

PC Industries introduced its newest off-line proofing system, along with a new upgraded interfaces for the Graphic-Vision systems with Programmed Positioning. Additionally, PC Industries has improved its Guardian Inspection System flagship product, the Guardian PQV, offering a smaller footprint and enhanced color measurement capabilities. The Guardian OLP offers pdf proofing and off-line inspection for applications throughout the pre-press and print production process. While the basic functions of the system have remained the same, PC Industries has been developing features to simplify set-up. The most



Unilux has developed controls for its LED2000 series strobes

significant of these is PDF automation, including integrated layer support; trim, art, and bleed box detection and snapping; dieline detection and masking; text recognition and import when selectable and extractable; and Esko integration.

Q.I. Press Controls' new IBS-100 combines all required functionalities for the packaging, labeling and digital markets in one single bar sensor, including 100 percent web inspection, automatic color register and color control from the image. The detection of missing jets on digital presses from a pattern or image for full quality control is functional on the IBS-100 bar sensor as well.

Rheintacho launched a hand-held stroboscope which is exceptionally bright thanks to its 118 high-power LEDs. It is claimed to have an 'outstanding technical highlight', for which Rheintacho has applied for a patent: the auto-sync laser function. By means of a far-reaching transmission/reception system based on lasers, the flash rate of the stroboscope is synchronized automatically. The system operates to a distance of up to 3 meters, depending on ambient conditions.

Tri-Tronics introduced an ultrasonic clear label sensor with a high performance OLED on-board display. Users will be provided with a view of the sensor's performance, options, program modes, and simple instructions. The new sensor timers and delays, durable and robust housing, and compatibility with existing mounting configurations.

Unilux launched new controls for its LED2000 series inspection systems to enhance stroboscopic inspection and simplify operation. Smart Assist controls are said to make it easier to adjust settings so that an inspector can view fine detail in any high-speed process as if it's standing still. Operators can confirm print registration and surface quality in an instant, across the entire width of the web or strip.



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Material suppliers tackle labels' sticky issues

Material suppliers showed products geared for label industry's key trends. Chelsea McDougall reports

Label material suppliers are on the forefront of many issues facing the label industry, and it showed at Labelexpo Europe 2017. Low migration, sustainability, security, durability and high-end labelstocks were clear themes that emerged from material suppliers showcasing at the bi-annual European show.

SUSTAINABILITY

Material suppliers are increasingly conscious of the effects the label industry has on the environment, and they were eager to discuss the products in their sustainability portfolios.

Avery Dennison and **UPM Raflatac** were two companies that took it a step further. Avery Dennison created the majority of its Labelexpo booth with recycled label material waste. UPM Raflatac again offered Rafcycle and giving those exhibiting at the show a place to recycle their label waste.

Avery Dennison said its booth provided way to visualize the urgent issue of label waste, and the possibilities for the industry to do business more sustainably.

Around 60 percent of the materials in the booth were made from label waste collected from Avery Dennison customers. The waste was converted into panels that were then used in a number of elements of the booth, including meeting rooms, storage areas, technical areas, floors, walls and more.

UPM Raflatac once again offered its Rafcycle program to Labelexpo exhibitors. With Rafcycle, UPM Raflatac collected the pressure-sensitive label waste generated at the show and reuses pressure-sensitive label waste – that would otherwise be incinerated or sent to landfill – to create new materials.

As for recyclable products, Avery Dennison offered a new recycled paper facestock, marble-based 'paper' and compostable adhesive. The FSC-certified recycled paper facestock range is 100 percent recycled PCW material and contains up to 30 percent recycled liner.

UPM Raflatac launched a new plant-based PE film for home and personal care applications. The new material, RafBio PE, provides a sustainable alternative to fossil-based films for a wide variety of end uses. RafBio PE performs just like standard PE film. Made from sugarcane ethanol, the film contains more than 80 percent renewable plant-based raw material and is recyclable within the same recycling streams as fossil-based PE.

On the **Finat** stand, the trade association offered a recycling desk, where visitors could obtain information about the various recycling options for spent release liner.

SECURITY

Another focal point for material suppliers at the show was security labeling, as the EU falsified medicine directive deadline looms. The directive demands that pharmaceutical product packaging be sealed in a way that visibly shows tamper evidence. The deadline for compliance is February 2018 for the majority of EU member states.

The options were plentiful for businesses working in the pharmaceutical or medical space.

Calor developed thermal transfer ribbons for security labeling applications and brand protection. Calor's product print black or transparent and flares with bright colorful fluorescence under ultraviolet illumination. The black flares with neon bright fluorescent green/yellow (T 865 SY), and the transparent qualities glare yellow (T 861 TY) or cyan (T 866 TC).

Cosmo Films presented universal printable coated BOPP label facestock films. Alongside on display were label over lamination films and top-coated direct thermal printable film for track and trace labeling applications. The product is water and solvent resistant, has matte paper-like appearance and can endure temperature range of -20 to 70 degrees C.

DChange (Shenzhen DCTC Technology) introduced new tamper-evident label materials, security tape, destructible labels, printable PET labels, water-sensitive labels and special labels. The transfer or non-transfer security void label is made from PET with release glassine liner, the usual thickness of face material is 25, 38, 50 microns.

Rolling Optics showed its micro-optical technology for anti-counterfeit labels. The micro-optical flexible material can be combined with track and trace and anti-tampering technology to achieve multi-functional security. The company also showed a closure for bottle where the 3D-material is integrated and where it will destroy when being opened.

Roll Cover offered a range of anti-counterfeiting products, such as destructible and voided products in a variety of colors and other options.

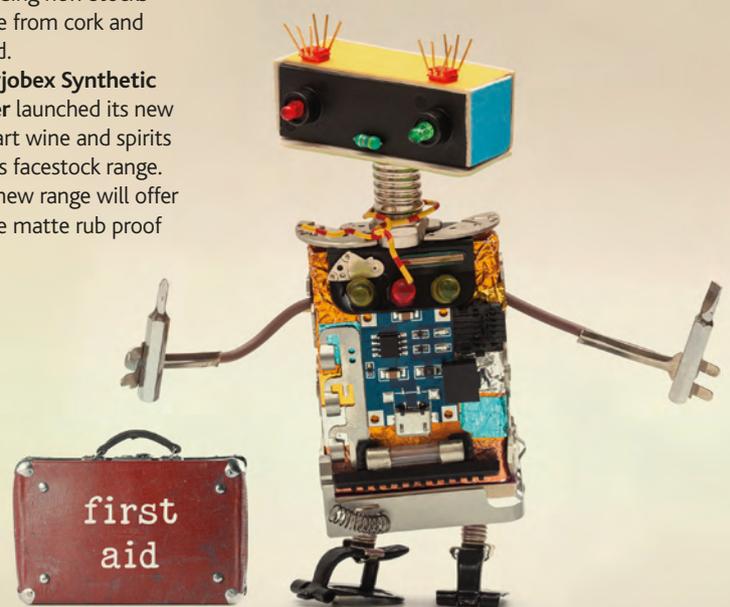
VPF displayed its range of 11 security films designed with a variety of protection mechanisms, such as void, checkerboard or diamond patterns and splittable or ultra-destructible characteristics. The newest offering in range is a transparent, ultra-destructible acrylate security film with a thickness of 50 micron.

WINE, SPIRITS, CRAFT BEVERAGE

As the wine, spirits and craft beverage verticals continue to grow, material suppliers want to provide the right product for brand owners looking to stand out on crowded shelves.

Arconvert featured its latest collection high-end labelstocks, including a new swatchbook that featured more than 100 different self-adhesive labels including new stocks made from cork and wood.

Arjobex Synthetic Paper launched its new Polyart wine and spirits labels facestock range. The new range will offer white matte rub proof





Avery Dennison booth



Security options from Roll Cover

facestocks, together with new pearlescent white and gold finish, and full resistance to ice bucket immersion, and even after several days in a cooling cabinet, the labels won't lose opacity or pearlescence.

API released new TA+ cold foil that offers pack designers and printers the capability to cover large solid areas, as well as outstanding over-printability, and no limit to the range of colors and effects they can produce.

DURABILITY

Material suppliers also took to Labelexpo Europe to present their durable offerings.

Appvion introduced the new dual and the new résiste 185-3.2. Dual is designed for weigh scale applications. Résiste 185-3.2 joins the standard top coated Résiste label products as a product for grocery weigh scale and light logistic application where oil, heat, and room temperature plasticizer resistance is essential.

DNP Imagingcomm Europe launched its most durable resin ribbon to date. R550 is designed for extreme resistance against most chemicals used in the automotive, chemical, pharma, electronics and other industries.

Herma showed its HermasuperPerm 63S adhesive which offers label users the possibility to permanently and safely label very different surfaces. The adhesive cannot be removed from lacquered packaging as well as many other polar and non-polar surfaces, such

as paper, cardboard, or plastics and steel without destruction of the label or the packaging surface.

Lintec unveiled a high-tack labelstock designed to adhere strongly to 'hard to adhere' surfaces such as non-polar substrates like polypropylene and polycarbonates. Its high-tack characteristics were found

accidentally during the development phase of a surgical and medical tape and Lintec has reformulated it for industrial usage.

PPG's Teslin labelstock is designed so printed data remains on labels through demanding use and extreme environmental exposure. It is also used in the chemicals industry for labels that are compliant with the GHS of classification and labeling of chemicals and BS 5609.

Flexcon has made globally available four new high-temperature polyimide constructions to its Thermifilm HT product line. The new Thermifilm HT 9000 series of products has been tested and approved for leaded and lead free reflow (top and bottom) in the wave solder environment and can withstand the fluctuating temperatures, abrasion and chemicals inherent in the printed circuit board (PCB) manufacturing process.

NEW PRODUCTS

Perhaps the best part of any Labelexpo show is the myriad of product launches to explore, and in 2017 material suppliers did not disappoint.

AKO Printing Technology Shanghai, a Chinese self-adhesive material supplier, launched its new PET ultra-thin liner material at the show. Compared with the traditional 60g liner, this material is consisted of 30g glassine liner, making the thickness from 23

microns to 12 microns and providing more labels on each roll.

Among a raft of product launches, **Avery Dennison** unveiled a heat-activated adhesive, a hot metal label, an extended water-based inkjet portfolio and a UV inkjet premium paper range.

Dow Adhesives released its latest innovation in its acrylic adhesives portfolio: Robond Invisu PS-7910. The water-based acrylic adhesive is in compliance to food contact regulation EU 10/2011 with reduction factor 2 for certain types of food.

First-time Labelexpo exhibitor **Eukalin** presented a new deep freeze hotmelt adhesive that is designed for labels applied at temperatures far below freezing point. The product adheres to difficult surfaces, such as cardboard or films, with low surface tension.

Folex launched a range of films aimed at high speed printing. Label Jet PP gloss white is a 0.60 micron polypropylene film with a glossy nanoporous surface coating. This nanoporous coating acts like a micro honeycomb layer, sucking the ink droplets into the film at high speed and holding them in the right position. This high ink absorption dries to the surface is instantly dry so as the printing continues, no ink offset occurs causing defects or jams.

Garware Polyester launched a colored thermal lamination feather feel film. It is suitable for UV spot coating and is available in glossy, silver, golden, red, blue, yellow, white and black colors.

Herma introduced a colored adhesive that provides perfect opacity as well as unchanged adhesive qualities that is suitable for direct contact with foodstuffs. The new HermaperfectOpaque adhesive range of opaque labeling materials will feature two different adhesives: HermaperfectOpaque 62Gpo and HermaperfectOpaque 62Dpo.

Jindal Films exhibited its new Platinum Thermal and Label-Lyte LLC films, as well as new products for in-mold labeling applications. Jindal Films also presented its new Digilyte portfolio, digital printable films for HP Indigo.

Label Industry Global Awards finalist **Klöckner Pentaplast** showed its Pentalabel eklipse, a light blocking film for which it was nominated. The shrink film introduces maximum light blocking properties into the film process to improve light barrier characteristics.

Lecta has developed Adestor HM300, a permanent hotmelt adhesive with a high tack formulated for high-speed air-blow labeling. The new HM300 adhesive is available in a range of different paper and film facestock, with immediate strong adhesion. It can be used at room temperature of -5 degrees C.

Lintec launched a newly developed 'ultra-low migration' labelstock designed to combat migration issues in low-barrier plastic containers, particularly in pharmaceutical

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applications. The labelstocks come in 38-micron polyester film in both white and clear. The product has passed both European and Japanese legislation for low-migration.

Michelman introduced a new primer from its JetPrime brand created for inkjet printing applications. The new primer JetPrime UV 100 provides improved adhesion and print quality when printing with UV Inkjet on paper substrates as well as for coated, uncoated and direct thermal paper. Michelman also unveiled Michem Flex Barrier 3510, a water-based coating that provides a transparent high oxygen barrier.

Participating in the Linerless Trail, **Mitsubishi HiTec Paper** exhibited its wide range of coated HiTec papers, and presented new thermal paper products developed for linerless label applications. Thermoscript LL 7077 and LL 8077 are phenol-free, and high sensitive, with very good silicone adhesion.

Momentive Performance Materials introduced SilForce SL7562S base polymer release coating. The new thermal solventless release coating for glassine papers and filmic liners provides a flat release profile and fast cure at a low level of catalyst.

QSPAC Industries launched a new line of BOPP and PET laminates. These laminates are used on applications for barcode scanning, booklets, clear substrates, desktop printing, digital printing, economy grade, easy release, extended content labels, flexible packaging, general purpose, header bags, heavy duty, hi-tack adhesive, reinforcement, thermal



UPM Raflatac booth

transfer printing, UV protection, and are UL recognized.

Ricoh moved beyond labels to show print service providers at the show how metallic effects can help them target growth market segments including labels, greeting cards, book covers, brochures, packaging and gift vouchers. Partnering with paper and film coating specialist MDV Group, Ricoh showcased the capabilities of the fifth unit on the Ricoh Pro C7100X digital color sheet-fed press.

Ritrama introduced a self-wound thermal paper to its roll label product portfolio named DTL, direct thermal linerless. DTL offers up to 40 percent more labels per roll and a well-tested compatibility between adhesive and silicone ensures a smooth unwinding and high printing quality.

Shanghai Jinda Plastic, a Chinese manufacturer of self-adhesive materials, unveiled three new products. The 75 micron PP synthetic paper maintains performance at low temperatures (down to -40 deg C), and can be used in frozen food labels.

SMI Coated Products launched clear-on-clear using HM adhesive and peelable labelstock for wet wipes. SMI Clarity uses a hotmelt adhesive, so printers can produce high-clarity labels which can be applied on a variety of substrates. The second product for wet wipes has been made using SMI 46300Y, a UV curable adhesive, developed for this application.

Taghleef Industries (Ti) launched a new shrink film. TDS is low-density polyolefin polymers film that's ultra-clear floatable film that minimizes the impact on PET recycling systems and reduces the weight of the label. The product is claimed to have exceptional shrink curve, in transverse direction (TD), and guarantees up to 65 percent shrinkage.

UPM Raflatac launched RafMore, which combines pressure-sensitive labels and unique machine-readable codes. RafMore gives every labeled product a unique digital identity. The unique codes embedded into the label designs are stored in a cloud database and act as an information channel at every point on the product's journey from creation to consumption.

Zhuoli Imaging Technology launched its new Z800 textile resin. Z800 has been developed to print on structured labels and to meet the demands of the numerous processes involved in garment and textile production. It is highly resistant to heat, water and industrial solvents, and it is compatible with a wide variety of materials, including nylon, acetate, polyester, rayon and synthetic fibers.

L&L's India editor Aakriti Agrawal and China editor Yolanda Wang contributed to this article.



Flexcon booth



Jindal Films booth

Go to www.labelsandlabeling.com/ video for videos from the Avery Dennison, API Group, Cosmo Films and Mitsubishi Paper Mills booths



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Depending on how you combine the Werosys Compact modules your label production system can be anything from a true digital finishing solution with UV varnish and cold foil, to a fully configured hybrid printing solution with a combination of flexo and digital printing.

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The future of inks

David Pittman reports on ink and curing technology developments at Labelexpo Europe 2017

Across the show floor, ink suppliers presented a range of products for established and emerging print technologies, from water-based and UV flexo, to UV LED and electron beam (EB) formulations.

This plugged into many of the wider trends reported from the show floor – efficiency, productivity and environmental sustainability – and new label and package printing technologies, such as Mouvent’s portfolio of UV and water-based inkjet presses and the launch of the EB-powered Gaia press for mass personalization of indirect food contact flexible packaging and labels.

United Ink launched a UV flexo opaque white ink and **Pulse Roll Label Products** launched the PureAqua series of water-based flexo inks, varnishes, primer and additives. **INX Digital** provided the EB inks running on Gaia at the show, making it one of the first to offer EB-curable inks for digital printing. Jim Lambert, vice president and general manager

of the company’s Digital division, is ‘excited’ by the potential of EB in terms of curing speed, quality and application range.

Kao Collins, created by the acquisition of Collins by Kao last year, also offers such products through the recently created Kao Advanced Printing Solutions business unit.

Pulse Roll Label Products presented its own new identity, with its entire portfolio rebranded in an effort to replicate the success of its PureTone UV flexo ink series and PureCode laser markable coating. Joining them are PureWhite, PureBright, PureFX, PureFinish and PurePeel.

Low migration was a talking point for suppliers such as **Zeller+Gmelin** with its Uvaflex FCM Y81. The formulation of the new ink series eliminates raw materials containing BPA. The molecular weight of the cross-linked photoinitiators is claimed to exceed that of conventional photoinitiators, and they contain polymerizable

groups which participate in curing.

Siegwerk has Sicura Nutri Jet UV-Inkjet, a low migration inkjet ink series for food and pharma packaging, and Sicura Jet low-odor, non-CMR UV inkjet inks that are designed for printing labels for

household, hygiene and industrial packaging. Sicura Nutriflex LEDTec is a migration optimized UV LED flexo series for food and pharma packaging.

“UV LED technology will become an established way of printing”

Flint Group laid out its own road map for a low migration future, including EkoCure Ancora UV LED low migration technology. ‘Low migration LED curable inks and printing systems open up opportunities for expansion into food packaging that did not exist before,’ says Kelly Kolliopoulos, global marketing director at Flint Group Narrow Web.

UV LED

UV LED was a hot topic at Labelexpo. **Sun Chemical** introduced SolarFlex LED, a range of migration-compliant, UV flexo 4-color process inks that feature its M-Cure photoinitiators for rapid curing and full cure at high press speeds. **Zeller+Gmelin** presented Uvalux LED U45, an ink series with optimized gloss properties for UV LED offset printing, alongside a new product line for LED flexo printing. The new flexo ink product line has been designed to work with the latest LED curing systems.

Erich Midlich, executive vice president at **Prime UV/IR**, sees the growing number of presses being installed, either already equipped with UV LED or ready for an upgrade, as an indication of the market’s acceptance of the technology. Prime’s LEDMax can be retrofitted on a wide range of equipment, including narrow to wide web flexo presses.

IST Metz and **GEW** have systems designed to allow printers to upgrade from conventional UV curing to UV

LED. **GEW’s** ArcLED allows the use of a conventional UV mercury arc lamp or LED array on the same print unit. Both arc and LED cassettes are compatible with the same power supply and fit in the same housing for ease of change. **IST Metz’s** Hot Swap concept for Lampcure and LEDcure systems allows users to interchange between both technologies at any time.

Larisa Shewczyk, marketing lead at **AMS Spectral UV**, identifies the increase in curing intensities as broadening the application range of UV LED and increasing adoption through better cure. Then there’s environmental considerations, with substantially less energy required to run the systems and no mercury involved, allowing those adopting UV LED to get ahead of the curve in terms of future legislation against the use of substances deemed as hazardous.

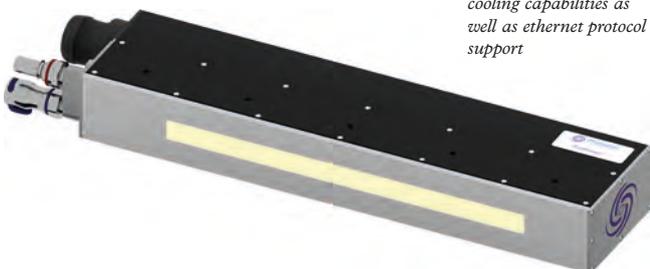
Phoseon has been pushing the use of LED technology for UV curing applications for more than 15 years. Its latest products, FireJet FJ601 and FirePower FP601, target the narrow web flexo segment with capabilities for film and flexible packaging applications. The water-cooled FirePower FP601 cures UV LED flexo inks at speeds up to 300m/min (1000ft/min) and has an IP54 rating for ink spills and liquid protection. FireJet FJ601, featuring its proprietary WhisperCool and TargetCure technologies for quiet and precise curing, provides simple integration with a direct analog interface and high-power 16W/cm² at 395nm for retrofitting individual press stations.

Phoseon sees LED as the ‘new standard’ for the majority of UV printing applications, in addition to rapid growth in coating and adhesive applications, while **IST Metz** states that UV LED technology will become an established way of printing in the near future.



Left: Pulse has rebranded its portfolio to replicate the success it has had with PureTone

Below: Phoseon’s FirePower FP601 has increased power and cooling capabilities as well as ethernet protocol support



See www.label-academy.com for a forthcoming module on inks, coatings and varnishes



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Moving finishing forward

Developments in post-press tools and hardware support innovations in printing technology, as David Pittman reports

The speeds, volumes and range of applications of modern presses are making printers more productive, with finishing and converting specialists working to ensure their hardware can match and support such evolutions in the industry. This was witnessed at Labelexpo.

SPEED

Grafotronic launched GigaFast, a semi-rotary die-cutting module for finishing digitally printed labels at 160m/min. It is available as a module for the company's fully modular DCL2 finishing line, and as a retrofit option.

AB Graphic has developed a new flatbed screen printing unit featuring full rotary web motion while still using a flatbed screen. By advancing the slowest module of any finishing machine, AB Graphic claims to have doubled productivity.

Prati's Digifast has a 90m/min running speed with semi-rotary print and die-cutting register mode. Prati's sales and marketing director Chiara Prati explained: 'We're not talking about semi-rotary die-cutting alone when we say it runs at 90m/min. We're talking of a fully operational flexo semi-rotary print and die-cutting register mode, running at high speed.'

Enprom's eSDC-60 can be configured with semi-rotary die-cut to register at up to 140m/min. SEI Laser's Labelmaster can laser die-cut at 100m/min using 1-4 laser heads. GCC's LabelExpress laser label cutting system can cut square patterns at 1m/min.

The **Pantec** RHINO IIS flatbed foil embossing system is now 70 percent faster than the original machine, achieving 30,000 strokes an hour in combination with a higher embossing tonnage.

WIDTH

Along with higher speeds has arisen the need to handle new formats and substrates, as the industry evolves to include a greater variety of packaging products for finishing and converting.

An 800mm-wide multi-substrate **Ashe** Solitaire duplex slitter rewinder showcased high speed slitting and rewinding of 38 micron unsupported film, and can handle substrates ranging from 9-250 micron, including open adhesive.

"Modern label and package production requires ever-more complex finishing and converting"

Smag demonstrated the new Digital Galaxie Generation III 530mm. This was shown with unwinder with corona treatment, semi-rotary flexo station, semi-rotary die-cutting and converting unit including automatic slitting. **Brotech's** SDF Plus, for finishing digitally printed labels, is available in web widths up to 530mm and with a semi-rotary flexo unit and semi-rotary die-cutting. New is a patented flatbed hot foil stamping module, with stamping head that can be rotated 90 degrees to allow web and cross-web direction hot foil stamping.

Martin Automatic's LRD automatic transfer rewriter accommodates 800mm diameter rolls in the standard model, with smaller and larger diameter models available.

LRD is a two-spindle transfer rewind that winds, changes and automatically offloads rolls, without any need for carts or additional roll handling equipment. At Labelexpo, LRD was shown with a web guide and slitter package for in-line slitting, as well as a portability package for relocation between press lines. An articulating arm offloads rolls through the front, if product rolls require special handling.

INTEGRATION

The nature of modern label and package production requires ever-more complex finishing and converting, which has seen the integration of a wider selection of options into one, often modular, finishing line.

Labeltech has launched its first converting machine, Stelvio, with the exhibited



Grafotronic's GigaFast is a semi-rotary die-cutting module for finishing digitally printed labels



AB Graphic has developed a new flatbed screen printing unit for the Digicon Series 3



Labeltech's new Stelvio converting machine



A new screen unit was shown by Newfoil

“A modular design is key to combining different technologies and providing customers with a ‘one-stop solution’”

configuration including rotary/semi-rotary die-cut to register, inspection, and half-cut, scissor and razor slitting systems. Vajolet, a new semi-automatic turret rewinder, and Lavaredo, a new automatic slitter positioning system for both rotary and razor slitters, are available as options for Stelvio.

DPR's Taurus roll-to-roll system unwinds, laminates, laser die-cuts, removes waste, slits and rewinds. Labelmaster roll-to-roll system from SEI Laser has many options, including laser die-cutting, semi-rotary die-cutting, rotary/semi-rotary flexo varnishing, semi-rotary hot stamping and overlamination.

The Gemini 360 Series from Cartes allows the combination of a flexo unit in rotary or semi-rotary mode, new flexo varnishing module, semi-rotary die-cutting and laser die-cutting. A Gemini Laser machine in right-to-left configuration has been introduced.

eSDC, part of Enprom's modular machine concept, allows several unwinder and rewinder configurations as well as integration of rotary and semi-rotary die-cutting processes, 100 percent inspection, inkjet marking, laser cutting, label insertion and RFID placement.

PRINTING

In-line printing modules can be integrated into the Enprom eSDC, as they can with many other lines to extend their capabilities.

Graphimecc's Module VDC 350 integrates a Domino N610i digital inkjet printing unit for full color printing of variable images

Semi-rotary enables short runs

‘We are seeing growth of very fast semi-rotary die-cutting, which up until now has only been seen on intermittent machines or digital finishing equipment,’ says Andy Thomas, L&L strategic director. ‘Now it's up to speeds in excess of 150m/min, we're seeing semi-rotary technology on conventional presses, which makes them much more efficient for short runs. They can also be switched over to fully rotary for long runs. This all helps to make flexo presses more competitive with digital presses for short to medium runs.’

and data. Newfoil demonstrated the integration of a new screen unit into its NH 3534 line and Werosys has added a fully automated flexo printing module for its Compact line. This module can be combined with multiple Compact modules, for a digital finishing option with UV varnish and cold foil, to a fully configured hybrid printing line.

The anytron Duoblade S is a dual blade finishing machine that features lamination and slitting. It can be paired with the anytron any-002 toner-based digital printer to produce various label types, including those that are BS 5609 certified.

Flexor xCut/xCut Pro from Emis are 250/330mm wide semi-rotary die-cutting and converting machines that work in-line with Memjet printers. Lemorau's Digi EBR+ is a digital printing machine that can coat and die-cut in one process. Digi EBR+ can print with 1600x1600 DPI resolution, full color.

Rhyguan Machinery showed Plus 330 Gravure, a digital finishing machine with gravure printing and coating units. The gravure coating unit can be used for adhesive coating, reverse printing of labels, counterfeit labels, overlaminating and tape making.

FLEXIBILITY

The integration of such a variety of modules highlights the level of flexibility offered by modern finishing and converting systems. Ramon Lee, Brotech managing director, says that a modular design is key to combining different technologies and providing customers with a ‘one-stop solution’.



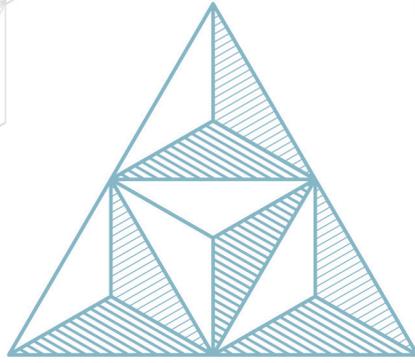
DPR's Taurus is a roll-to-roll system

Partnerships deliver results

Prati and Screen are collaborating for an interface between the Truepress Jet L350UV digital label presses and Prati's Digifast One modular digital converting line. This will deliver a near-line connection allowing label printers to run integrated in-line or standalone off-line jobs. Grafotronic has partnered with Spartanics for a new laser die-cutting module, and integration between MGI and Dalim Software has shown digital presses and finishing systems producing labels generated from Dalim ES. This has demonstrated how projects can progress from brand owners, through designers and, finally, into digital production.

Mike Huss, responsible for business development at Delta ModTech, confirms this as important, with Delta ModTech presenting a Crusader converting line featuring tight tolerance rotary die-cutting, multi-layer lamination, precise part placement and the Intelli-Mod control system. This gives complete control of each module, while a separate servo motor at each station allows the die-cutting modules to be adjusted independently of each other. Individual servo control at each die station allows for precise tension control.

ETI Converting Equipment reported a strong response to the flexible nature of its in-line coating and printing equipment for

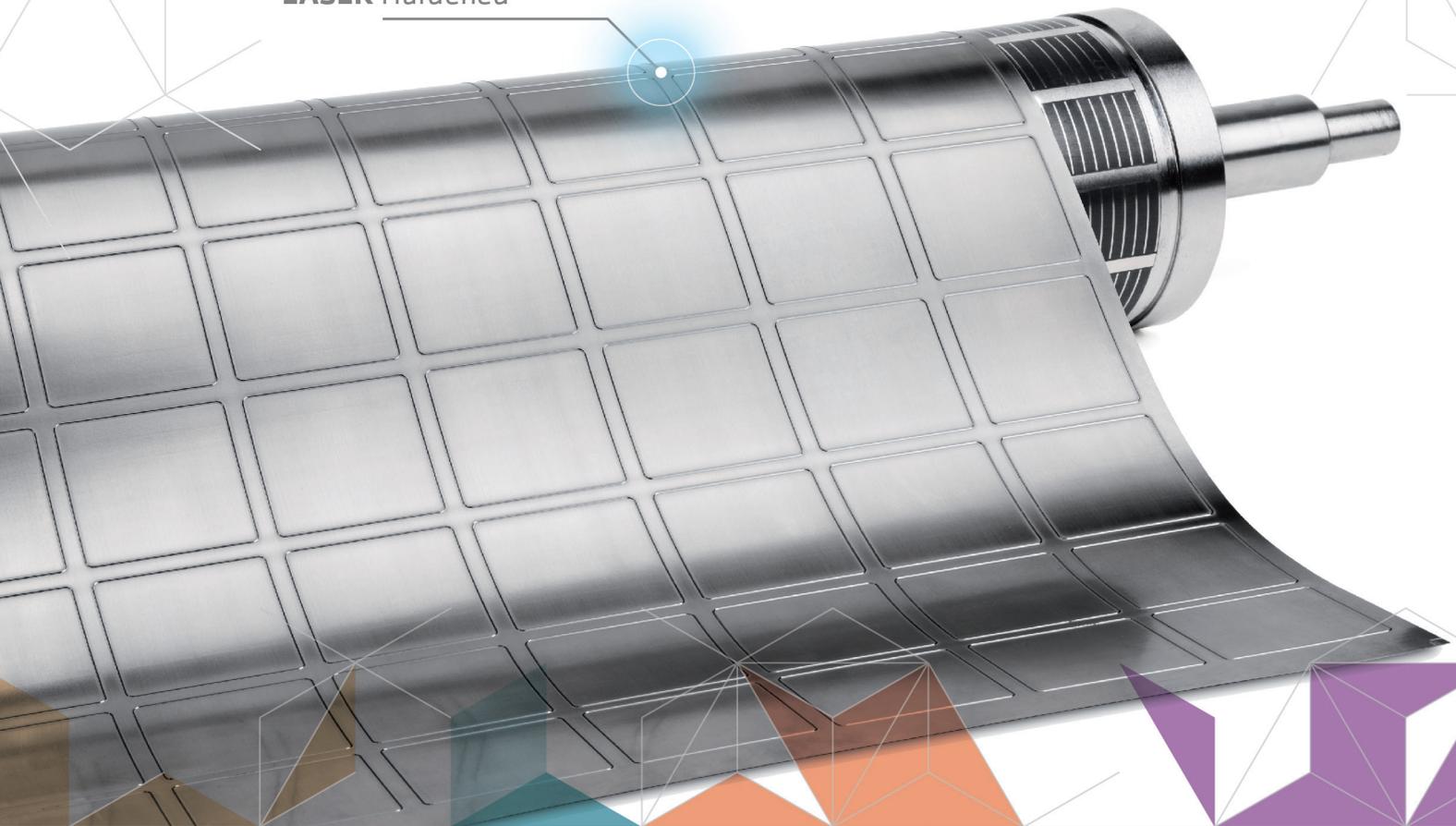


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RFID integration was shown on the Graphimecc stand

producing pressure-sensitive materials or labels, such as Mini-Cohesio and its new coating head.

GM's new DC350 offers semi-rotary varnish and die-cutting as standard, job automation and in-line compatible with all major digital presses and the GM flatbed hot foil unit. Further options are automatic slitting, turret, GM SmartLam Multilayer and upgrade to laser die-cutting. An SPGPrints rotary screen unit can be used for tactile labels.

ADDING VALUE

Pantec CEO Peter Frei identifies a demand for more and more effects, from foil and embossing, to foil embossing and micro-embossing, on both short and long runs.

RHINO IIS was shown producing a sophisticated three foil rum bottle label including a registered 3D effect lens, gloss-matte emphasizing with transparent foil and uncoated substrate, and 3D beveled nanoembossed brand name.

Combining **MGI** and **Konica Minolta** technologies, the new JETvarnish 3D Web Color + produces 2D/3D UV dimensional textures and personalized, embossed variable data foiling. The integrated press features semi-rotary cutting and slitting functions, and corona treatment and flexo primer coating stations. JETvarnish 3D Evolution has also been launched. The integration of RFID technology is another growing market for adding value, and functionality, to labels and packaging, and witnessed at Labelexpo Europe 2017.

Mühlbauer presented the PL light entry-level RFID personalization system designed for low-to-medium volumes. The process includes UHF chip encoding, as well as printing variable data for graphical personalization. The CL light RFID converting line can output dry inlay, wet inlay, and smart labels

Supplier focus in Europe

Lemu and Brotech have partnered to create Brotech Europe, with a focus on distributing and providing after-sales technical service in the EMEA region for Brotech digital finishing machines. Werosys has signed an exclusive agent agreement with Inglese, significantly strengthening its sales efforts and focus on the Italian market.

and tickets.

Graphimecc showed RFID converting and encoding as part of a security printing demonstration using a Module VDC 125. It and Mühlbauer hosted a series of 'RFID master classes' on their stands during Labelexpo Europe 2017.

Voyantic presented its option for RFID testing, with the improved Reelsurance enabling testing of both RAIN RFID (UHF) and HF/NFC tags. It is optimized for dual frequency tag testing and uses the Voyantic Tagsurance UHF and HF testers to verify the RFID tag operation sensitivity.

The knock-on effect of all these developments is seen in the results reported from Labelexpo. **AB Graphic** sold all 19 machines on its stand, while taking a further 50+ orders across the four days. **Cartes** confirmed orders at the show from Mexico, Uruguay, Spain, Italy, Germany and Russia. **Lemorau** sold 17 machines from its stand, **GM** sold its first machine into Azerbaijan and first-time exhibitor **Enprom** sold four machines.



See p145 for more on sales from the show floor at Labelexpo Europe 2017

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Ancillary equipment

Suppliers of ancillary equipment at Labelexpo Europe 2017 were geared towards assisting automation and increasing efficiency of production. Aakriti Agarwal reports on some of the technology launched

Albertin used this show to debut on the European market and introduce a new 5-in-1 in-line stamping tool. The latest development from the Italian manufacturer of stamping tools, flexo coating and printing plates allows five different effects – hot foil printing, blind embossing, debossing, texture and anti-counterfeiting holograms) to be achieved in one pass, without changing the stamping tool.

Alphasonics launched a cleaning system with chemical measurement system, giving the user an accurate indication of the condition of the system's fluid and when it requires changing. Other exhibits included current monitoring systems, automatic roll reversal for improved cleaning, storage and racking systems, and automatic chemical dilution. Christopher Jones, marketing manager at Alphasonics, said: 'We mainly got enquiries from Latin America and the Middle East. It has been a good show for us.'

Archem introduced cleaners for flexo presses and anilox rollers alongside water based cleaners for all purposes.

Cheshire Anilox Technology launched TactiLoX, a new anilox for producing tactile, bi-dimensional flexo printed textured labels. The new engraving is specially designed to reproduce the tactile effect of rotary screen. This engraving technology offers high release of lacquers and varnishes.

Converttech introduced Sureprint Series 1000 doctor blades. Dhruv Sanon, manager of Sureprint Technologies, said: 'We had a good response to the Sureprint 1000 series

of doctor blades and received enquiries from Europe, South America and Asia.'

Eson showcased its flexible dies. Anna Jelinkova, sales and technical support at Eson, said that the company has increased its production capacity by 20 percent and expanded its sales team to better cater to customers. 'We are focusing on improving lead times and quality of flexible dies while catching up with digitalization trends. We are, for instance, now supplying dies for printing wine labels.' She reported a successful show. 'We are happy to have met a lot of existing and new customers as well as our sales representatives from all over the world.'

GEW showed a range of UV curing systems comprising mercury arc systems, LED systems and hybrid systems together with the associated fully hybrid Rhino ArcLED electronic power supply. On display were also LW1 cassette based system for narrow web and LW2, a fixed system for sheet-fed offset printing. These are patented lampheads with water-cooled UV LED curing technology. The latest advanced power supplies from GEW can run LED curing technology as standard and are ready to extend with either LED or conventional mercury arc in the future as changes in job requirements or ink formulations dictate. Martin Kugler corporate communications at GEW, commented: 'We have over 200 lamps installed with different OEMs on the show floor this time. We have received tremendous response for our products. Visitors here are very international and we have met many printers from the Middle East, India, Pakistan, North and South America, as well as many from across Europe.'

IEEC, an Indian manufacturer of corona

treatment systems, integrated 4.5in color HMI on a treating station for ease of operation and control. The compact design of the treating station allows it to mount in a limited space on any narrow web press. The company signed new agents in Peru, Brazil and Lebanon. Rohit Deshpande, director at IEEC, said: 'We got visitors from all over the world and received serious enquiries from Europe for new plasma treatment system meant for 3-dimensional applications or thick substrates. OEMs want to tie-up with us for this product for developing special surface applications. We received an overwhelming response and had the best show so far.'

Kocher+Beck demonstrated an upgraded version of its GapMaster die pressure adjustment system with new external oil lubrication units for automatic maintenance which are now mandatory for all new installations. Other exhibits included new mesh types, a reengineered mounting device, Kocher+Beck 3L – Laser Long Life flexible dies, QuickChange cutting unit which allows set-up changes on magnetic cylinder during running jobs as well as quick exchange of magnetic cylinders. Further, the company showcased winding technology at its booth and at the Automation Arena.

Lartec launched flexible dies with special surface treatment. The range includes Hard, Enduro, Anti-Tack, Laser and Laser+Enduro dies. While the Hard series enables repetitive work on abrasive materials, Enduro dies are coated with plasma that increases the working life of the tool with hardness levels beyond 85Hrc. Anti-Tack dies come with anti-adherent coating and are able to repel different residue, thus enabling faster and



Christopher Jones of Alphasonics with the new cleaning system launched at Labelexpo Europe



The Daetwyler SwissTec team was happy to meet with printers and partners from all over the world

better performance. Laser dies increase the hardness of cutting blade to up to 66 to 68hrc. Laser+Enduro combines both hardening processes and offers surface layer of two to three microns with hardness above 85hrc.

Tono Sanchez of Lartec said: 'We have met a lot of new people who now want to use these dies since the price difference is not considerable for the value they offer. We are looking at increasing machinery in the factory to cater to new demand. It has been an extremely busy and successful show for us.'

Mona Equipment introduced air expanding over shaft with diameter of 10 and 12-inch for paper labels to the international market.

Anilox rolls and sleeves manufacturer **Praxair Surface Technologies** launched the Urmi app at Labelexpo Europe. This app allows volume measurement of ceramic anilox rolls directly on a smartphone. It is able to measure the footprint area and calculate the volume, giving immediate and useful information that is easily sharable with the entire printing team through the common messaging services. The test spot area on the printed paper can be imported directly through a smart phone using software developed by Praxair.

RotoMetrics and **Electro Optic** merged earlier this year and exhibited in separate booths at Labelexpo Europe. Erwin Lindl, Electro Optic CEO, said: 'We now have a wider range of products to offer to our customers. They have been very supportive and realize the advantages of this partnership. This merger has turned out to be a perfect match.' RotoMetrics showed RotoRepel, a non-stick treatment for solid and flexible dies designed to tackle tough adhesive challenges. Other exhibits included Electro Optic Gold Line Special Flexible Die, a premium die exemplifying perfect cutting ability with no liner strike on ultra-thin liners; Electro Optic Dura Line Special, which features advanced surface treatment plus perfect cutting ability to create the longest running flexible die for challenging and abrasive film applications; RotoMetrics AccuBase XT Magnetic Cylinders, whose hardened bearings enhance



RotoMetrics and Electro Optic merged earlier this year and were exhibiting at separate booths

dimensional stability and reduce elasticity; and RotoMetrics Anvils, featuring premium custom steel grades, fully hardened and ground to near-mirror finish.

Spilker reported a good show and received encouraging feedback for its newly launched non-stick coating dies. The company introduced food safe and FDA approved non-stick coating on dies so labels won't stick to them. This coating can be done on the entire tool to ensure its longer life. The German company is growing at 10 to 15 percent per annum over the last five years.

Unilux, a manufacturer of stroboscopic inspection lighting, unveiled new controls for LED 2000 series strobes. The new controls make it easier to set up, operate and access powerful features and capabilities for high-speed surface and print inspection. Further, they provide on-screen help and instructions in various languages to assist operators using the units.

UV Graphic Technologies launched its automated universal video plate mouter, which allows mounting of flexo plates in less than 30 seconds. Abhay Datta, UV Graphic Technologies director, said: 'Plates of an 8-color job could be mounted in as little as four minutes flat. Besides, this is the only plate mouter in the market which can mount plates of traditional presses as well as the latest presses with sleeves.'



GEW had over 200 lamps installed with different OEMs on the show floor

The VE1A corona treater fitted to the Mark Andy Digital Series press on working demonstration at the show was the 10,000th narrow web unit to be built by **Vetaphone**. Company CEO Frank Eisby said: 'With almost 70 of our units working or on static display at Labelexpo Europe, we are delighted that number 10,000 was fitted to a Mark Andy press – a great example of two top brands working together.'

Wink showed its SmartGap Adjustable anvil roller. Using this system, the operator can adapt the gap or clearance with great accuracy individually for the drive and operator side. The company also showed its touch version with digital control and smart features which further enhance production efficiency. SuperCut Flexible Die, a perforating die, with patent pending laser technology was also on exhibit. The perforation cuts and ties are produced with high precision. Wink also displayed the updated ForceControl pressure monitoring system for monitoring and adjusting the cutting pressure, thus guaranteeing an effective and controlled process for all die-cutting tasks.



Visitors at the Eson stand during the show



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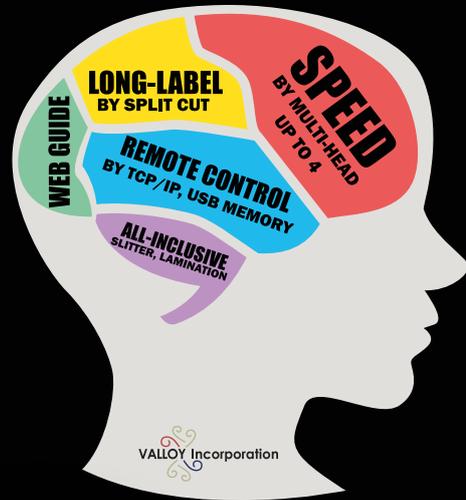


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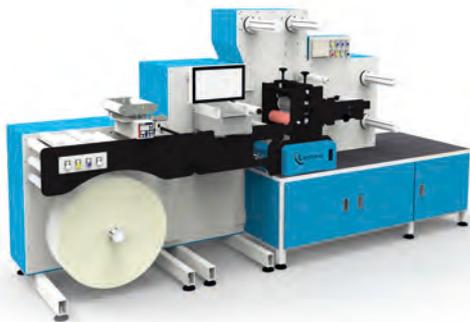
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Show floor sales

The L&L team rounds-up some of the sales made on the show floor at Labelexpo Europe 2017

Many exhibitors at Labelexpo Europe 2017 reported sales made on the show floor to label converter visitors from across the globe.

AB Graphic sold all 19 machines exhibited on the show floor and took in excess of 50 orders, according to sales director Tony Bell.

Portuguese converter Olegário Fernandes Artes Gráficas signed a deal for two **Bobst** M5 in-line multi-process presses. The two production lines will be delivered to Olegário Fernandes' production plant in Cacém, near Lisbon, in Portugal at the end of 2017 and early 2018. Established in 1922, Olegário Fernandes specializes in the production of cardboard packaging and labels for a variety of industries, including pharmaceutical, food and beverage, personal and household care and cosmetics. 'We look ahead to the considerable benefits that the advanced features of the M5 – which we have seen demonstrated a number of times in Bobst Firenze's Competence Center – can bring in terms of operational efficiency with pre-register setting and very fast job changes,' said Duarte Rebelo de Sousa, director, Olegário Fernandes.



VR Print takes fourth Screen Truepress Jet L350UV+

Spanish converter Germark purchased a 7-color **Domino** N610i inkjet press. The press will be delivered to the Barcelona-based company immediately after the show. One of the early adopters of digital printing technology, this investment represents Germark's first step into digital inkjet printing. 'We conducted extensive research and visited two of Domino's existing N610i customers in the UK and France before deciding to invest in a 7-color Domino N610i label press,' said Iban Cid, president of Germark. 'We were particularly impressed by the high print quality, the cost-effective production costs, and with the added value capability to print digitally textured labels. In addition, the high opacity of the white ink will enable us to replace conventional silkscreen jobs with inkjet for short print runs.' Another Spanish converter, Murcia-based Adhesivos Romero Garcia, also bought a Domino N610i inkjet press, as did German converter Killiandruck.

Chilean converter Quintero Impresores bought its third **Cartes** finishing machine, which adds to its existing 30 finishing units for labels mainly for the wine market.

Enprom sold four eRS sleeve machines on the third day of the show alone – two to converters in Algeria and two to Turkish companies.

Flexo tradeshop Veepee Graphic has become the first Indian operation to invest in **Esko's** CDI Crystal 5080.

Flexowash took orders for machines from Africa, Asia, and South America, as well as from Europe, according to area sales manager Mette Laursen.

Pilot Italia is the first Italian company to buy a **Gallus** Labelfire. The machine on display at Labelexpo will be delivered to the converter,

Top left: R-L: Matteo Cardinotti, Bobst Firenze; Duarte Rebelo de Sousa, Olegário Fernandes Artes Gráficas; Maurizio Trecate, Bobst Firenze; Antonino Nunes, Olegário Fernandes Artes Gráficas

Top right: CS Labels signed up for a Xeikon CX500.

Second row left: Grafomed Printing Company invested in a SPGprints RSI Compact unit

Second row right: James Hamilton Group invested in the world's first Screen Truepress Jet L350UV+ press



Top left: Austria-based converter Insignis Etiketten invested in a Gallus Labelfire 340 digital inkjet press

Above: Nilpeter reported the sale of a Panorama hybrid press to Italian converter Nuceria

Left: Pictured (from left) Minit Print's Terry Shiller, Stan Shiller, Dean Shiller

Bottom left: Morten Toksværd, sales manager, global sales at GM is joined by Tariyel Salahov (second from right), and Avtandil Salahov (far right)

which specializes in self-adhesive labels for the home and personal care, food and beverage and pharma industries, in October. The system will have a tailor-made configuration for Pilot Italia's needs: it has two flexo units upstream (before digital printing) and three flexo units in downstream (after the digital drive), all interchangeable with screen printing units; two cold foil or plastification units, upstream and downstream; and a semi-rotary die-cutting unit. Austrian converter Insignis Etiketten also invested in a Gallus Labelfire 340 digital inkjet press. Gallus sold its first Labelmaster 440 press in India, to be installed at Signode India.

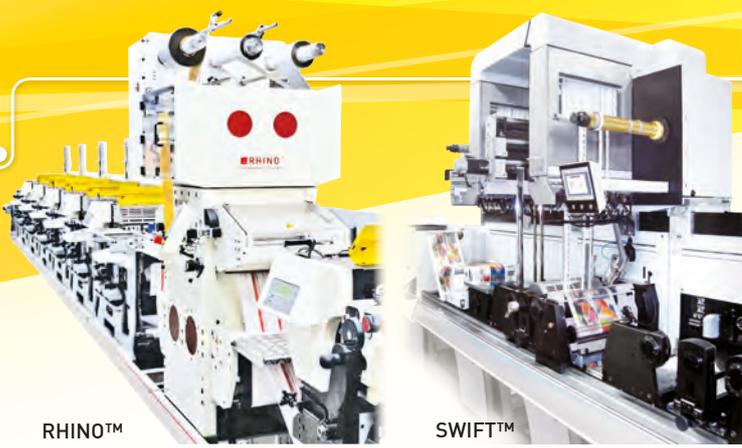
Indigo Print House, a converter from Azerbaijan, ordered a DC330Mini compact converting line from GM. The printer's general director, Tariyel Salahov, and Avtandil Salahov, deputy commerce director, visited the GM stand at Labelexpo Europe 2017. Indigo Print

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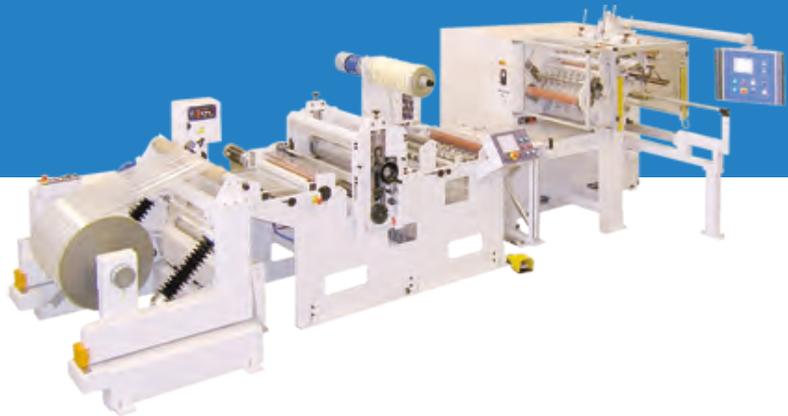
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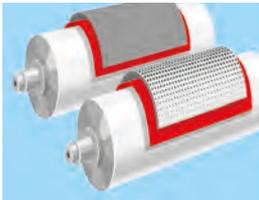
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James Hamilton Group invested in the world's first Screen Truepress Jet L350UV+ press

House represents GM's first machine sold into Azerbaijan.

Sales of **GSE's** Colorsat range of dispensers for mixing ink on demand and reusing press returns in new recipes included three Match systems and two Switch systems to label converters in the UK, India and Ireland. A Colorsat Slim dispenser was sold to a Netherlands-based paper and board converter. Additionally, an Evolution Series tabletop proofer was sold to India.

Minit Print, one of the largest commercial print service providers in Pretoria, South Africa, has purchased an **HP Indigo** WS6800. Established 34 years ago as a copy shop, Minit Print has steadily grown and fulfils all kinds of commercial jobs from corporate newsletters and folders, to short run magazines, flyers and pharmaceutical boxes. Minit Print has now decided to break into the labels and packaging market with the addition of an HP Indigo WS6800, its third HP press. 'We see huge opportunities in labels and packaging, and the purchase of the HP Indigo WS6800 marks a strategic decision we have made to enter this market,' explained Stan Shiller, managing director at Minit Print. Denmark-based 4Labels also purchased an HP Indigo WS6800. Ohio, USA-based Haney, a global leader in

package prototyping, ordered an HP Indigo 20000 digital press. The first HP Indigo 20000 digital press units in Southeast Asia have been purchased by two converters in Thailand. Thai Nam Polypack and TPBI Public both selected the HP Indigo 20000 digital press to serve customers in the fast-growing flexible packaging market. St-Luc Labels & Packaging installed an HP Indigo 8000 digital press at Altrif Label in the Netherlands and an HP Indigo 20000 digital press at the company's Belgium site, marking the 100th installation of the HP Indigo 20000 globally. Blue Label Digital Printing of Lancaster, Ohio, an all-digital label converter, signed a deal for an HP Indigo 8000.

LLC Label Group, based in Moscow, Russia, purchased a CTA 1500 semi-automatic core cutter from **Lemorau**, among 17 show floor sales by the Portuguese manufacturer. Portugal-based Planner purchased a Lemorau M EBR+ 330 modular digital converting machine.

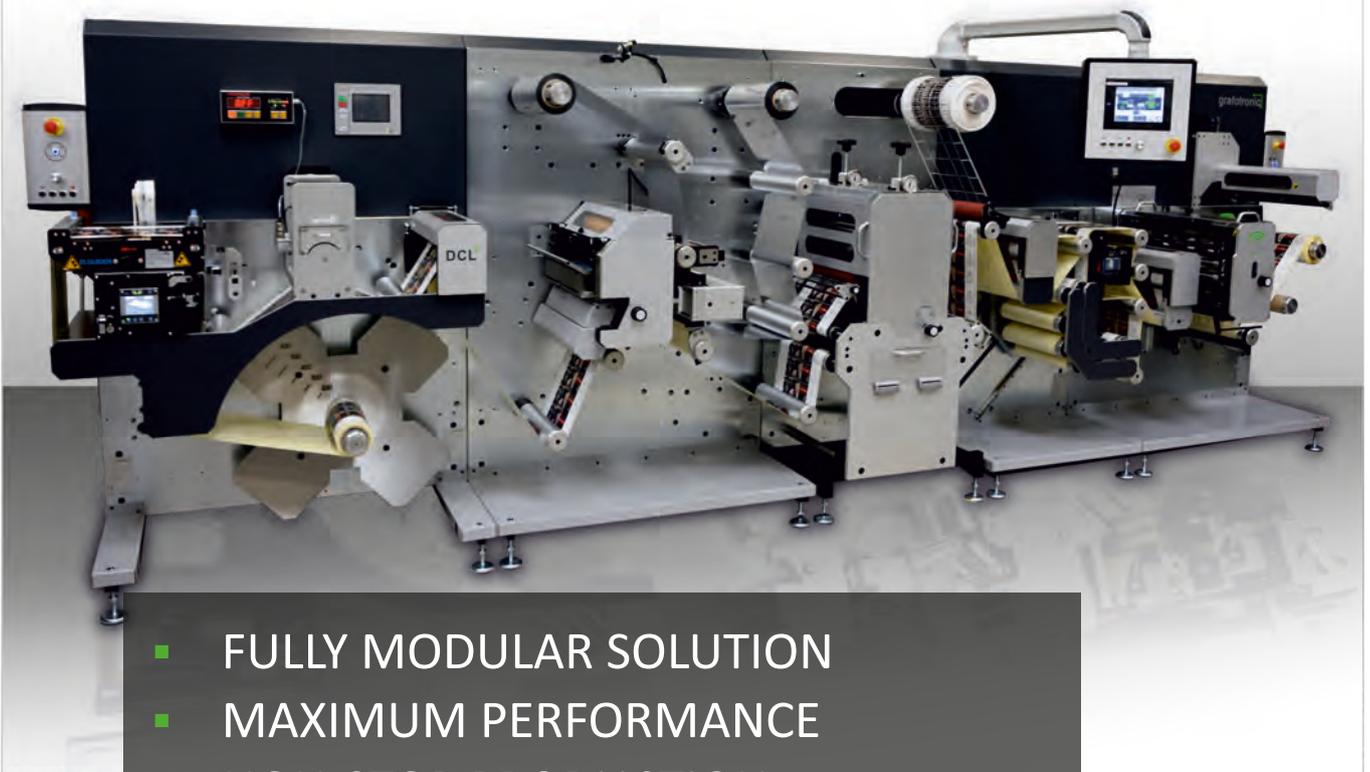
Vinsak, the exclusive distributor of Lombardi in the Indian subcontinent, sold **Lombardi** Synchroline 430 presses to Mold-Tek Packaging and K L Hi-Tec, both based in Hyderabad. Manipal International Printing Press ordered a Lombardi Synchroline press for the company's plant



Denmark-based 4Labels purchased an HP Indigo WS6800

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L-R Maxim Pakhomov, LLC Label Group; Susana Teixeira, Lemorau; and Denisov Anton, LLC Label Group

in Nairobi, Kenya. Citrus Packaging, based in Hyderabad, also ordered an 8-color Lombardi Synchroline 330.

Sai Paks, based in Pune, India, bought a Mark Andy Performance Series P5 and Rotoflex VSI 330. This will be the first P5 press in Pune and is expected to be installed by December 2017.

Furthermore, Mark Andy's India distributor Flexo Image Graphics reported sales of two more 8-color P5 presses and two Rotoflex VSI 330 machines to printers in western India.

Indian flexo press manufacturer **Multitec**

launched its new press, S2, and sold the machine to Atoll Print, based in Russia, on the first day of the show. A S1 multi-substrate press was sold to Iranian label printer Kalabarchsb. Multitec has also signed exclusive distribution deals with TRI in Central America and Romexsa in Mexico.

fs Etiketten bought a **Nanovis** Nanocleaner NWC-1200.

Nilpeter sold a Panorama hybrid press to Italian converter Nuceria. The new press supports five inkjet digital colors in combination with flexo processes, silkscreen,

cold foil, and quick-change die-cutting. Nuceria Group general manager Guido Iannone said: 'The new Panorama hybrid product line will be installed in our Milan plant and will follow our strategy to set new industry standards in terms of flexibility, customization and supply chain excellence.' Indian label printer Sai Com Codes ordered three Nilpeter FB presses, one 8-color and two 10-color machines. Two will be installed in Sonapat in November 2017 and February 2018, while the third will be shipped to the company's new plant in Guwahati in December 2017.

Orianaa Decorpack, based in Baroda in India, ordered a 9-color **Omet** iFlex 370.

The new press, launched at the show, comes with a film package consisting of chill drums, a new sheeting station and a new version of the Rock'n'Roll Dual Function matrix stripping unit. Further, it features a cold foil station, delam, relam, corona turnbar and a die station.

Reborn sold a RBJ-400A single station die-cutting machine with hot foil stamping and high speed sheeter to Zircon Technologies, based in Dehradun, India.

James Hamilton Group invested in the world's first Screen Truepress Jet L350UV+ press for its specialist JH Label Solutions division, based in Lurgan, Northern Ireland. The UV inkjet press will be used to produce food, beverage and chemical product packaging labels. South African label printer

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Amit Ahuja, sales director at Multitec (left) with Pooya Mahboubi from Kalabarchsb, Iran



The sale, signed at Labelexpo Europe 2017, represents Springfield's fourth Screen label press

VR Print, Spain's Docuworld and Italy's Impronta Digitale also ordered Truepress Jet L350UV+ presses. UK-based Springfield Solutions purchased the world's first Screen Truepress Jet L350UV+LM press. The new Screen Truepress Jet L350UV+LM uses newly developed low migration (low permeability) inks that offer enhanced safety and functionality to food packaging label production. Additionally, the press includes a nitrogen purge mechanism for accelerating the curing of UV inks, further preventing ink migration and UV odor.

Grafomed Printing Company will become Serbia's first label converter to offer rotary screen printing capabilities after agreeing, to install a SPGPrints RSI Compact printing unit on a 6-color MPS flexo press at its

Aleksandrovac printing facility.

German label printer demention purchased an anytron any-002 digital color label printer, which it will use to produce compliant chemical labels. Purchased through Valloy at Labelexpo Europe 2017, demention selected the BS 5609 approved any-002 owing to support for pre-cut and durable labels.

CS Labels signed up for beta testing of the newly announced wider web Xeikon CX500.

Managing director Simon Smith said: 'We are familiar with the advantages of a wider web digital press having two Xeikon 3500 presses. Now that Xeikon introduced the

Xeikon CX500, the first press based on a new dry toner platform, we want reap the benefits of this new platform. The enhancements are really impressive.' Belgium-based Femalabel ordered two CX3 digital label presses, more than doubling its capacity. Wim Feys, chief technology officer at Femalabel, said: 'We face an increasing demand for specialty products and variable print. That is why we had to dramatically increase our capacity.'



Go to www.labelsandlabeling.com for more show floor sales from Labelexpo Europe 2017



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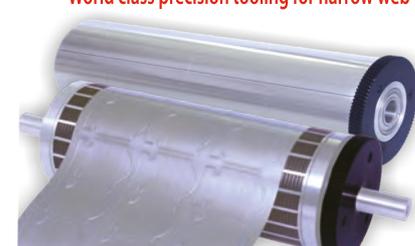
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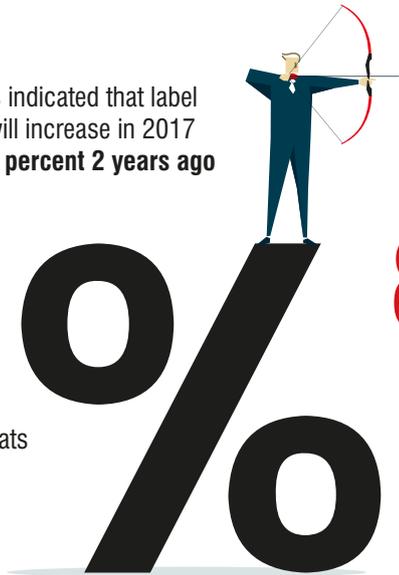
Label Trends

End user and converter trends from Finat's annual Radar survey

End users

50% of respondents indicated that label procurement will increase in 2017
Down from 65 percent 2 years ago

70% have no intention of moving from self-adhesive to other packaging formats



85% plan to stay with their current label vendors. 75 percent two years ago

40% could move sourcing from Western Europe to Eastern Europe, China and India

Converter trends

4.5 – 5,000 linear meters

Average run length for conventional

850 linear meters

Average run length for digital

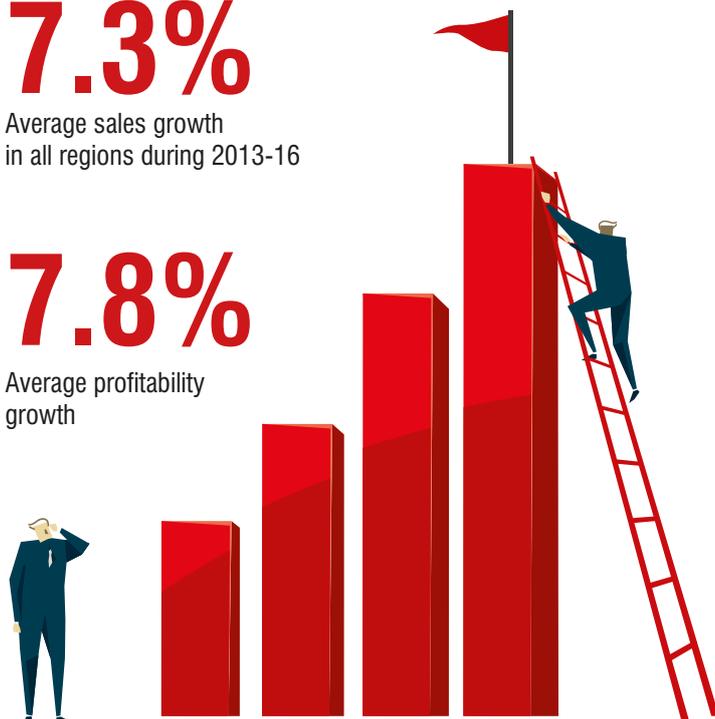
22.5-35%

Average downtime for conventional presses

Converter sales growth

7.3%
Average sales growth in all regions during 2013-16

7.8%
Average profitability growth



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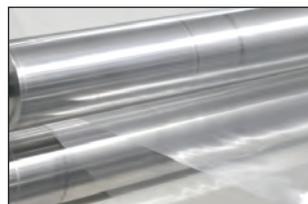
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Label SOCIETY



01



02



03



04

Mark Andy/FIG meeting Colombo

- 02 L-R: M Suresh, FIG; Dimuthu Rathmayake, Solara Print Impression; Shean Perera, Perera and Sons; Peter Deckker, T Print; and Gourav Roy, FIG
- 03 Amal Raj of VeePee Aasan Solution (left) with Meenachi Sundaram of T Print



05

AIDC Meeting Goa

- 04 SMI team with Rajiv Nair, MD of Stallion Systems and Solutions (far right)
- 05 L-R: Pankaj Bhardwaj of Avery Dennison, Harveer Sahni of Weldon Celloplast, Ajay Mehta of SMI Coated Products and Sanjeev Atre of PGI Technologies



06

LMAI Conference Agra

- 06 L-R: Amit Ahuja of Multitec, Sandeep Zaveri of Total Print Solutions, Ajay Mehta of SMI, Amar Chhajed of Webtech Labels and Ramesh Deshpande of Remu Prints
- 07 L-R: Christof Noier of Heidelberg India, Denver Annunciation of Janus International, Samir Patkar of Gallus India and Lisa Milburn of Labelexpo
- 08 Lakshminaryan of RotoMetrics (second from left) and Vidhu Gautam of Kodak (right) enjoying the gala night in Agra with friends
- 09 L-R: Hope Hu and Gavin Rittmeyer of Martin Automatic with Vijay Pareek of Genius Flexo Machinery
- 10 L-R: Ranesh Bajaj of Vinsak, Kuldeep Goel of Anygraphics, Pradeep Saroha of Labelexpo, Sarfaraz Khan of Mark Enterprises and Deepan Shankar Samarth of Sai Pack
- 11 Ranesh Bajaj of Vinsak (left) with Arvind Sekhar of Sai Packaging
- 12 Sandeep Zaveri, president of LMAI



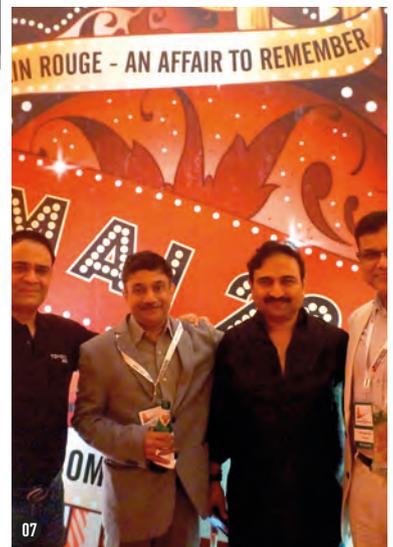
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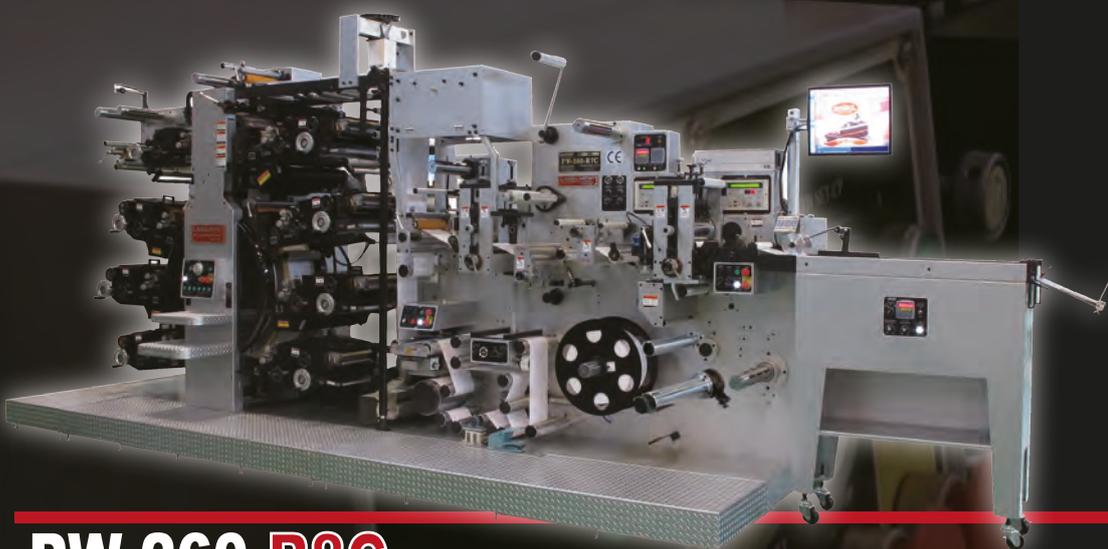


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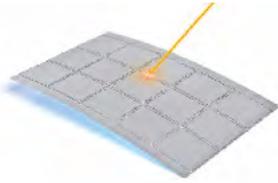
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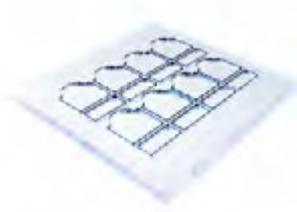
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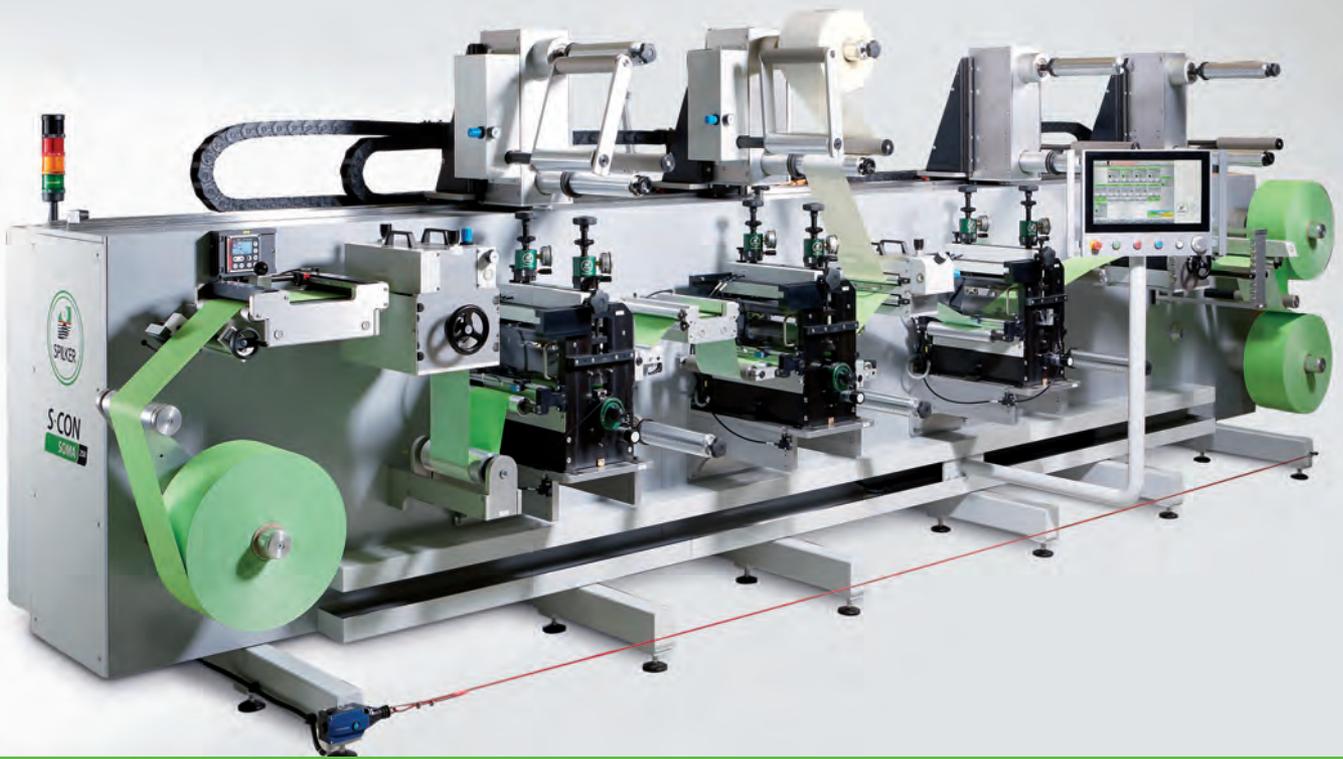


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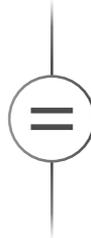


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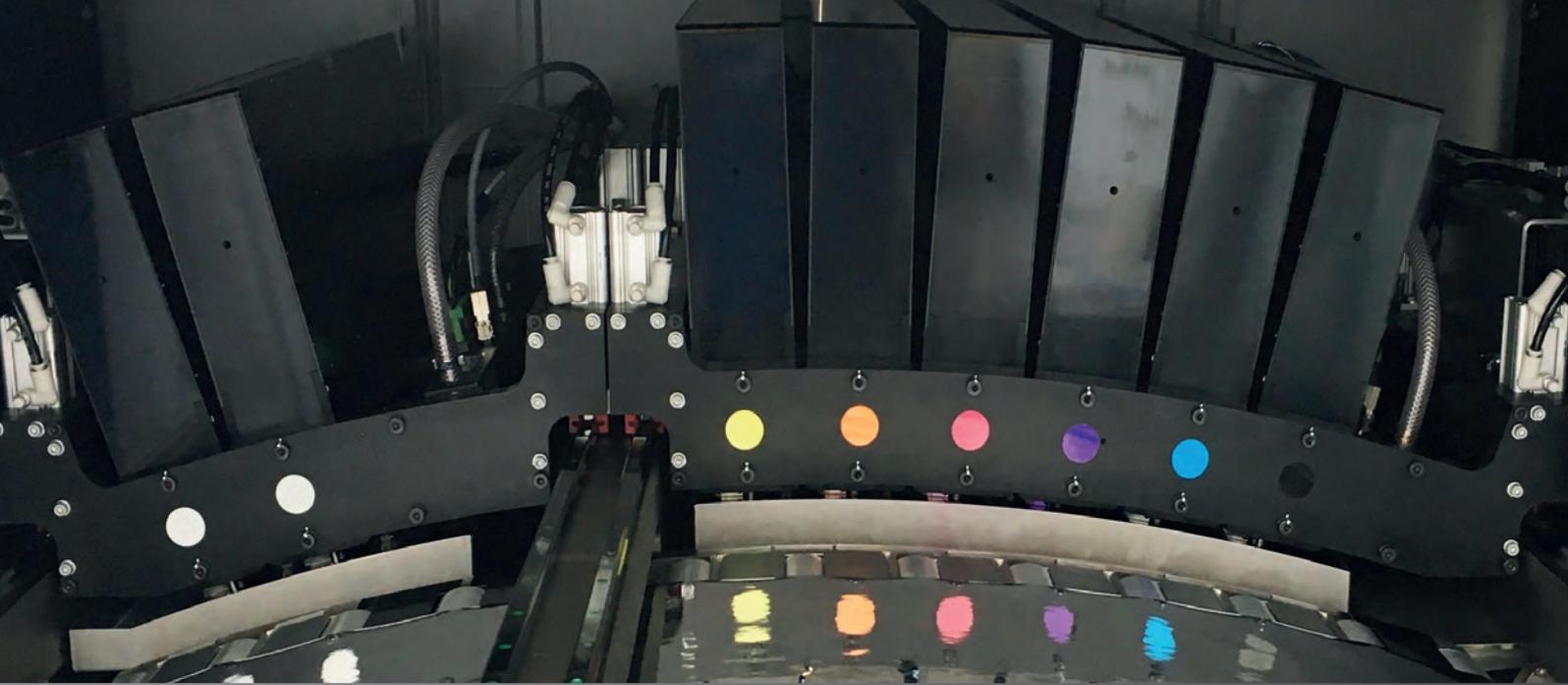
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