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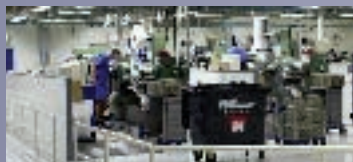
Apr/May 2005

## Analysis



Mike Fairley interviews  
new president of UPM's  
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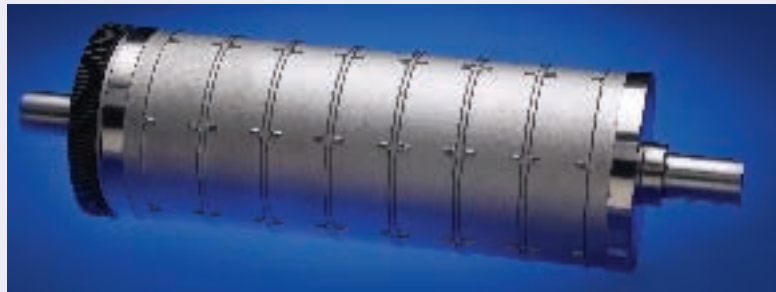
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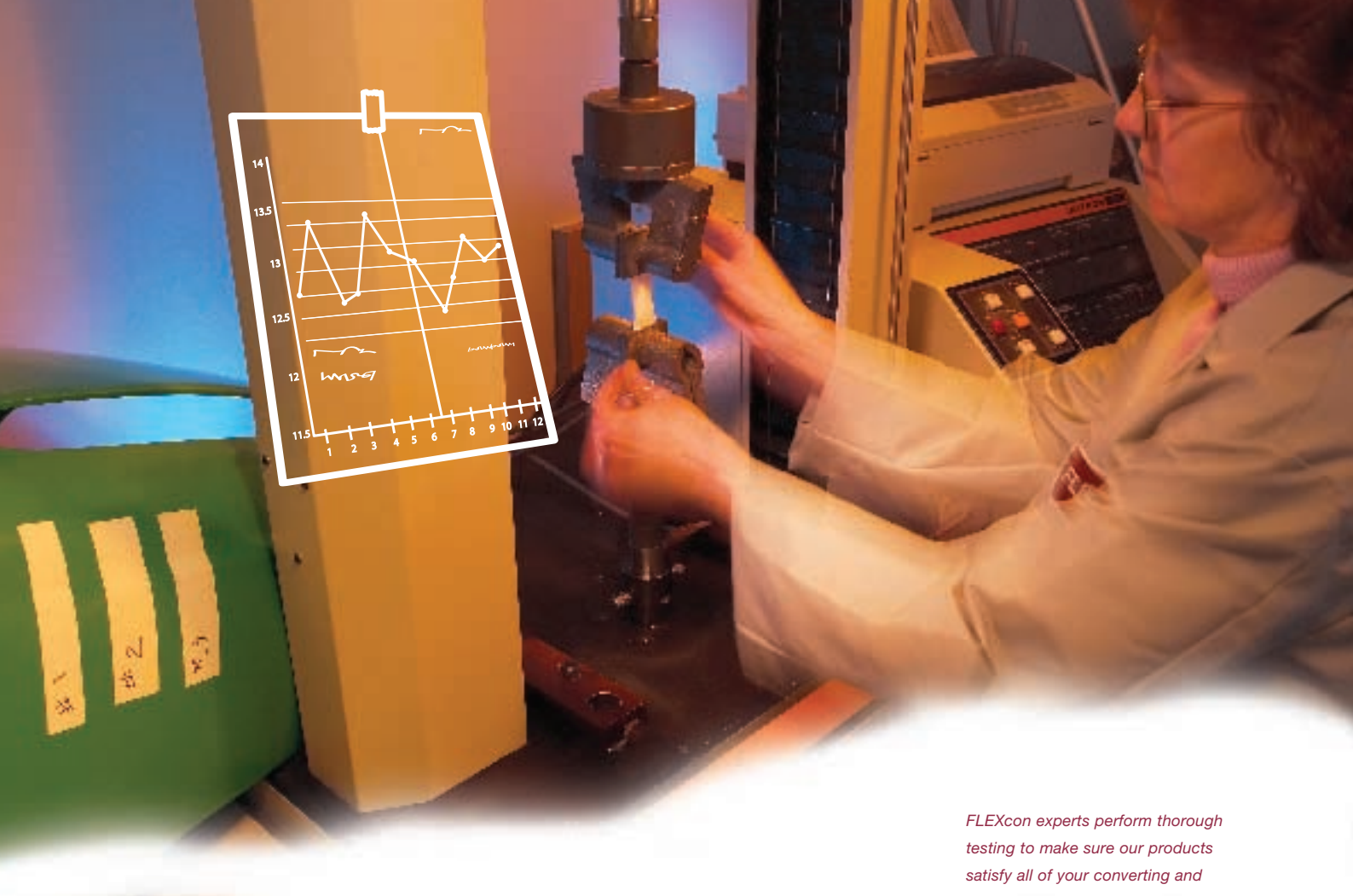


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# Leader



This month sees a major change in the layout of L&L. We have moved our news coverage onto the Internet, which allows us to react quickly to breaking news stories. It is very difficult in a magazine which is published every two months to keep readers informed of current news. Making use of the internet gives us more space in L&L to devote to new products of interest to label and narrow web packaging converters, and to the in-depth features which have always been a hallmark of *Labels & Labeling*.

So I recommend you regularly check the L&L online website, [www.labelsandlabeling.com](http://www.labelsandlabeling.com) for the latest news stories. You can also register for our twice-weekly newsletter, 'Label News' on the website. This is now read by 15,400 label converters, suppliers and end users worldwide.

The website contains many other resources which can help your day to day business – and all for free. The on-line Directory is the world's biggest resource for finding suppliers worldwide for the full range of hardware, software and consumables necessary to run a labels business – from presses to inks and security substrates, and from rotary tooling to RFID and management information systems.

**“We now have 11,412 registered on-line readers worldwide reading L&L on PCs, laptops or printing out pdfs”**

You can also register to receive *Labels & Labeling* on-line as downloadable PDFs. Again, this is a free service. L&L goes on-line shortly after the paper magazine is published. We now have 11,412 registered on-line readers worldwide reading L&L on PCs, laptops or printing it out. This figure has climbed from just fifteen when we launched the system in July 2001!

Another useful resource is the ability to search an archive of *Labels & Labeling* magazines going back over three years. Simply enter keywords such as 'RFID' and you can scroll through a listing of all the news articles, on-line references and articles in L&L which have mentioned RFID since 2001.

And we are committed to building these resources. Just launched is a Jobs section where you can place adverts for key personnel which will be read by the thousands of visitors who come to the site every week.

When the Dot Com revolution started, it is fair to say that journalists the world over were worried about the demise of paper-based magazines and newspapers. At the same time we heard 'gurus' predicting the death of labels and packaging as people ordered un-branded products over the internet and had them delivered by the big retailers. Today we can take a more mature perspective, and recognise that there is a place for both electronic and 'hard' products.

Andy Thomas

**Group Managing Editor**



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*Heikki Pikkarainen, the newly appointed president of UPM's Labelstock Business*

# New era of strategic growth for UPM labelstock business

UPM's Labelstock Business has a new president who aims to promote an intergrated global growth strategy. Interview by **Mike Fairley**

**T**he beginning of 2005 saw the start of a new and challenging era of strategic organic growth for UPM Group companies, Raflatac and UPM Rafsec – growth to be spearheaded by Heikki Pikkarainen, the newly appointed president of UPM's Labelstock Business (made up of both self-adhesive labelstock and RFID label products).

'As UPM's most global business operations,' says Pikkarainen, 'we see our current priorities targeted at strengthening the presence of the labelstock business in the developing economies of China, Asia, Eastern Europe, Russia and South America, looking for growth with filmic products that offer interesting prospects in our main markets in Europe and North America as

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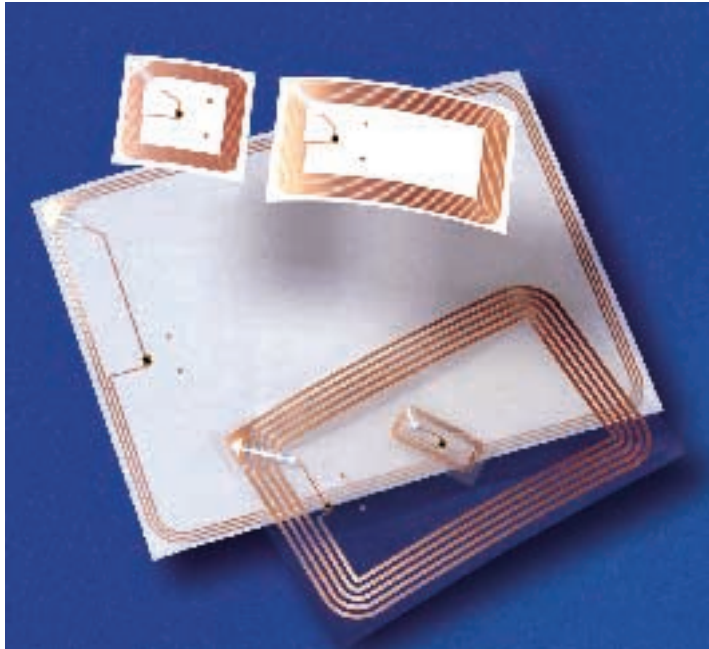
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well as the developing economies, and to accelerate UPM Rafsec's growth in the fast-evolving radio frequency identification markets through closer co-operation with Raflatac.'

Appointed as of January 1, 2005, Heikki Pikkarainen reports directly to Jussi Pesonen, president and CEO of the UPM Group, as well as becoming a member of UPM's executive team. For the past two years his role has been as vice president, Strategic Development for UPM, where he was also in charge of mergers and acquisitions. Prior to UPM he worked for companies such as Fortum and Jaakko Pöyry Consulting.

The new strategy for organic growth was approved by the UPM Group in the autumn of 2004 and has been extensively communicated to the employees. It follows on from major announcements during 2004 which have already seen UPM Rafsec doubling the RFID tag and label production capacity of its plant in Jyväskylä, Finland, the opening of a new Raflatac distribution and sales facility in Tatabánya, Hungary, an investment of US\$ 40 million in additional coating and finishing capacity at Raflatac's pressure-sensitive labelstock production facility in Fletcher, North Carolina, the establishment of a new RFID sales and technical support center in Chicago, the opening of a new RFID sales office in Dreieich, Germany, and the participation of UPM Rafsec in EPCglobal Inc's Hardware Interoperability testing program.

This year has already seen the opening of an application center specialising in radio frequency identification – RFID Lab Finland – at the Technopolis Helsinki-Vantaa technology centre near to Helsinki-Vantaa international airport. Promoted by a group of leading technology enterprises including Nokia and Hewlett-Packard, the center will provide a concrete demonstration venue where the possibilities of RFID can be displayed and developed to suit the needs of the Finnish industry.

'UPM has been investing in RFID since 1997', explains Heikki

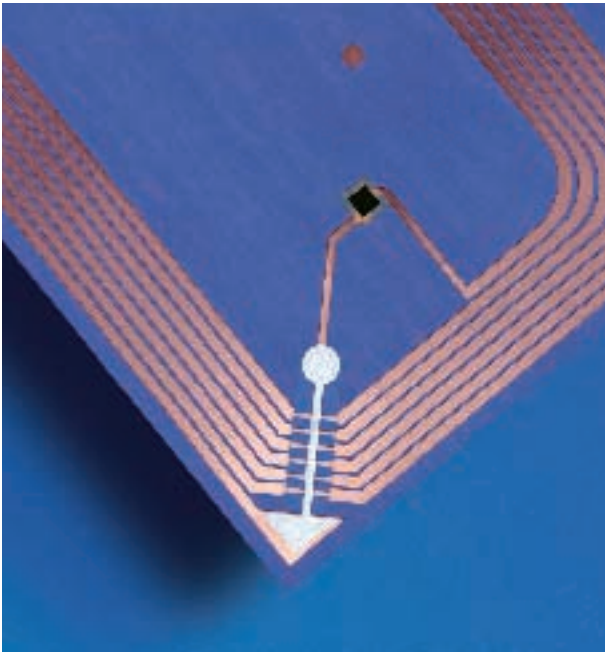
“Over the next two years, we are looking to significantly ramp-up the production of RFID tag inlays to meet the growth requirements of early RFID smart label users”

Pikkarainen 'and is now a world leading RFID tag manufacturer and pioneer of the ePC standard, specializing in low-cost and high volume production.' The company headquarters and R&D are located in Tampere, Finland, in the heart of the most famous center of excellence for wireless technology worldwide. The company combines leading edge know-how in the fields of wireless and paper technology – and has the broadest and most comprehensive knowledge and capabilities for RFID tag design and manufacturing. Originally part of UPM new ventures, UPM Rafsec is now a fully-fledged operating unit within UPM's Labelstock Business and has sales offices in the USA, Netherlands, Japan and Singapore.

'Over the next two years, we are looking to significantly ramp-up the production of RFID tag inlays to meet the growth requirements of early RFID smart label users such as the U.S Department of Defense and leading players in the retail area that include Wal-Mart in North America and the Metro Group's roll-out in Europe, as well as in the creation of the first automatic pallet labeling device for UHF

#### More new appointments at Raflatac

Jussi Vanhanen has been appointed senior vice president Raflatac, Asia-Pacific, to be based in Shanghai, China. Vanhanen was most recently general manager of the European A4 & Sheets business unit in Spain. Jan-Erik Forsström has been appointed vice president, operations & technology. He is based in Tampere, Finland. Both Vanhanen and Forsström will report to Heikki Pikkarainen.



RFID tags for Nestlé' adds Pikkarainen. 'By bringing UPM Rafsec closer to Raflatac we can direct our resources as effectively as possible into building customer relationships and production capacity – and accelerate UPM Rafsec's growth.'

Outside of Rafsec, the UPM Labelstock Business see key ongoing growth opportunities for filmic labelstocks worldwide.

Already growing at well above the European average in the key markets of Germany, France and the UK and also in North America – all of these markets primarily geared to volume growth of standard polyethylene and polypropylene prime label films – Raflatac is looking for wider European and North American filmic labelstock growth.

'Films still offer interesting prospects in our key main markets as well as in the developing economies around the world,' explains Heikki Pikkarainen. We have our own PE film blowing line in Europe, as well as a film blowing line jointly owned with RKW, so are ideally placed for further volume filmic labelstock growth. As the challenger behind Avery, we have much to go for and are currently experiencing quite exceptional volume growth opportunities. We expect this to continue.'

As part of UPM, one of the world's leading forest products companies, there is still an ongoing focus for paper-based pressure-sensitive labelstocks within Raflatac. Already the market leader in Europe and with a strong and rapidly growing presence in North America through its recent investment in a US\$40 million additional coating and finishing capacity in Fletcher, a terminal in California, and slitting and distribution from Wisconsin, Toronto and Mexico City – as well as a newly opened slitting and distribution center in Northeastern Pennsylvania - Raflatac is now looking to continue strengthening its paper business in many of the world's fast developing economies.

'There are still major opportunities for paper labelstock



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**“We have to get the right people for future strategic growth into place, then provide them with the right support”**

growth in Central and Eastern Europe’ explains Pikkarainen. ‘Asia needs to be stronger for us and will be a long march, while Latin America is something of a challenge for Raflatac in a market long dominated by AveryDennison/Jackstaedt.

‘However, we do have key opportunities for growth in China. UPM operates a modern paper mill near Shanghai as well as owning its own Chinese power supply plant. In addition we have a wholly-owned labelstock coating plant within Raflatac China – albeit relatively small at present – and a terminal in Tianjin in northern China. These operations will be better integrated with the Raflatac operation globally in order to offer a uniformly high level of service. We also now have a Chinese language internet site to offer an improved service to customers.’

Certainly there are major challenges and opportunities for organic growth within UPM’s Labelstock Business. ‘While the opportunities and some of the capacity requirements are there, we still have a major challenge to put the right management

system into place. It has to change,’ says Pikkarainen. ‘We have to get the right people for future strategic growth into place, then provide them with the right support. The challenge that I have is to build an organization for the future. Get the organization right, and the organic development will follow.

‘In my opinion, the pre-requisites for the continued growth of Raflatac and UPM Rafsec are excellent. According to my experience the atmosphere in both units is positive and the personnel competent. Both units face a growth challenge and their overall profitability is in good condition, although there are of course things that need improving.’

New appointments within the Labelstock Business are already taking place to meet the challenge of growth – of which Heikki Pikkarainen is one of the first. Christer Härkönen takes up the position of senior vice president, UPM Rafsec – and becomes a member of the Raflatac management team as of March 16, 2005. Timo Lindström, president of UPM Rafsec, will take responsibility of marketing and sales as vice president, UPM Rafsec, again as of March 16.

At 41 years old, Heikki Pikkarainen sees his management style consisting of ‘thorough familiarization, open communication, encouragement and striving for results.’ He is undoubtedly enjoying the opportunity and challenge presented by his new appointment.

The label world should certainly look to the UPM Labelstock Business staying focused under Pikkarainen and to meeting its global business growth aspirations and targets for the future. ■

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# Bem-vindo à Brasil

With the approach of the Latin American Label Summit organized by the Tarsus group and sponsored by L&L, **Katy Wight** visits Brazilian label converters to assess the state of the industry

**B**razil is a huge country, dominating South America. After 50 years of internal migration and population growth, it is also an overwhelmingly urban country, with 80 per cent of Brazilians now living in cities. São Paulo alone has over 17 million inhabitants and is the world's second most populous metropolis.

After difficult periods of political instability and wild inflation, an economic plan implemented in 1994 finally steadied the currency and lowered inflation. Protectionist laws were abandoned and market controls eliminated. Local industries were forced to adapt to the global economy and became competitive with foreign corporations on the domestic market.

Towards the end of the 1990s, large numbers of foreign flexo presses were sold into Brazil, raising printing standards and encouraging competition. But import taxes remain high, which has allowed domestic press manufacturers to gain ground. A small number of converters who have invested in high-end technology dominate the market, but estimates say there could be up to 1,500 label converters in Brazil.

## **Baumgarten Gráfica Ltda** **Blumenau, Santa Catarina** **Baumgarten Label**

Blumenau is a serene area that was settled largely by German immigrants in the second half of the 19th century. Baumgarten began printing a German newspaper there over 120 years ago and has grown into a formidable force in print in Brazil, with divisions in labels, tags, cartons and board.

Germano Baumgarten remains at the helm of the Label division, which is dedicated to prime labels for the cosmetics industry. Baumgarten Etiquetas also prints labels for other non-competing markets such as pharmaceuticals, apparel, food and industrial.

'Around 1995 we realized that the cosmetics industry wasn't well serviced for labels and we decided to create a dedicated

unit,' says Baumgarten. 'We had a new president in the 1990s and we were able to buy our first European press and truly compete to provide labels for the cosmetics companies. At that time paper labels and screen printing were very common and there weren't companies offering pressure-sensitive.'

Baumgarten Label's spotless facility houses four Nilpeter offset presses, two Gallus letterpress and nine Rotoflex inspection rewinders. It processes one million square meters of self-adhesive material each month for customers such as Unilever, L'Oreal, Wella and Nivea and has annual sales of \$25 million.

'This is a globalized market and South and Central America have the same pressures as the rest of the world,' says Baumgarten. 'The biggest challenge for us right now is reducing our costs. Our customers are squeezing their margins, but we need to be able to continue to invest in new technology, so you have to be creative. In the past we worked on 100 micron. Right now we are working on 80 micron and we are working on going even thinner.'

Eighty per cent of the company's labelstock is imported from a supplier in Germany. Quality is crucial and Baumgarten feels that it cannot rely on domestic suppliers to consistently meet requirements. The company has close ties with Europe and four years ago was invited to become part of an alliance. Management felt that it was too early to enter into a global relationship and instead they formed an alliance with converters in Mexico and Chile.

'We export about 10 per cent of our production,' says Baumgarten. 'Our triple alliance is very new and we are still growing it, but the principal reason behind it was taxes. For example, to export to Colombia there is a 70 per cent import tax, but if you are based in Chile, there is no charge at all.'

Baumgarten says that the company is currently reviewing a move to gravure and opportunities in shrink sleeves, and even mentions future projects involving RFID and smart labels.

“This is a globalized market and South and Central America have the same pressures as the rest of the world. Our customers are squeezing their margins, but we need to be able to continue to invest in new technology, so you have to be creative”



*Germano Baumgarten and Baumgarten's Label division building in Blumenau*

### **Baumgarten Etiquetas**

The Etiquetas division grew 20 per cent in 2004 and business remains buoyant. It has three Nilpeter flexo presses and a battery of smaller machines for simpler applications like textile label printing. Almost one third of the Etiquetas division sales are to local garment producers, who have used favorable movements in the exchange rate to increase exports.

The company recently moved into pharmaceutical labeling, and this business is growing fast. ‘It’s been hard as there are strict standards that need to be followed,’ says plant manager Altino De Souza E Silva. ‘We had to amend our processes, but now we are approved for two big labs in Brazil.’

‘This is really only a pilot for what could be a huge potential market,’ adds Silva. ‘We want to learn what they want and make those initial contacts.’ Among customer requirements is the ink jetting of sequential numbers on the backing liner.

### **Setprint Centro Tecnológico Digital São Paulo**

Five years ago Fabio Setton launched a groundbreaking business venture focusing on print quantities that other converters couldn’t afford to take on. This slick operation has built up annual sales of \$1.3 million based on individual jobs with sometimes 20 different variants and worth \$50 on average. Sales have doubled each year along with the company’s customer base.

Setton started Setprint with a Xeikon press, hot stamping unit, flat screen varnish and a flatbed die cutting unit. The company began printing very short runs for cosmetics companies and in 2002 acquired its second Xeikon. But Setton realized that they weren’t exploiting their full potential.

‘We were cost-effective between 5-80 sq metres and flexo was strong at 300 sq metres and upwards,’ he says. ‘There was a big gap between what we could supply and what the other label converters could supply.’

At Labelexpo in 2002 Setton looked at something that would fill that gap between digital and flexo. ‘We wanted to try and merge technologies to find a solution, and we chose the Codimag Viva, with Toray waterless CTP, Creo pre-press and the first worldwide installation of Stork semi-rotary screen.’

Setprint uses Stochastic (FM) screening as a default and is very proud of the quality it achieves. This commitment to quality was a factor behind the decision last year to trade in the Xeikon presses for an HP ws4000.

‘I believe that it is the first press that is superior to the Xeikon,’ says Setton. ‘It achieves better quality and you get more productivity. With the Xeikon, you needed two or three shots to calibrate the machine and wasted a lot of paper. The ws4000 needs less paper for one shot and you also have an on-line densitometer. Production is also higher because you have less maintenance compared to the ws2000 and Xeikon.’



*Setprint director Fabio Setton (left) and commercial director Fernando Pirutti with the new HP Indigo ws4000*

The company is expecting installation of an Omega laser die cutter, with hot foil and varnish in-line, in the first quarter of 2005. The laser can die cut and finish at 50-60m/min – faster than the offset press – and is expected to have a huge impact.

‘It’s going to change the way that we print,’ says Setton. ‘At the moment, waiting for dies takes one day. Eliminate that, and we are going to be able to dramatically reduce our turnaround. Now an order that might get turned around in 3-4 days can be reduced to 1-2 days and repeat orders will be same-day delivery.’

Re-investment is a priority for Setprint, which plans to focus on workflow and MIS next year. It is already allying itself with Adobe, MIS providers and other companies with interests in JDF.

### **Grif Rotulas e Etiquetas Adesivas São Paulo**

Grif was founded in 1986, in the wake of the Real Plan – an economic strategy to steady the currency and lower inflation in Brazil. As a result, national industry became competitive with foreign companies on the domestic market and Grif was ready to take advantage.

‘We were opportunistic,’ says director Francisco Paz, one of the four founders of the company and sole owner for the last ten years.

‘When we started there was a lot of political change and there wasn’t enough self-adhesive material for the customers who wanted it. Label companies at the time weren’t taking care of their customers and we became a valuable name in the market.’

With a past in sheetfed offset, Grif bought its first web-fed flexo presses from Mark Andy and Comco at Labelexpo Chicago 1996. In the early 1990s, only two label printers in Brazil could offer in-line printing and Paz says that this had restricted PS-market growth. After the Real Plan in 1994, converters began to invest in flexo and screen printing moved over to pressure sensitive.

“The laser die cutter is going to change the way that we print. At the moment, waiting for dies takes one day. Eliminate that, and we are going to be able to dramatically reduce our turnaround”

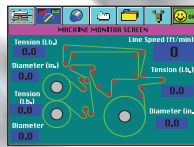
Today Grif has a Mark Andy 4150 and 2200, two Etirama Superflex SF/8s, three GGS CI presses, an Etirama CI press and a Comco Cadet. It has two Rotoflex machines - one with auto-inspection – and a Videojet inkjet system. The company can output its own film, screens and plates.

Grif converts for the cosmetics, pharmaceutical, food, beverage and household





Machine Monitor Screen



Job Screen

Parameter	Value
Date Record Name	Job
Entry Name	Job
Web Width (ft.)	1.0
Holding Tension (lb.)	1.0
Taper (%)	0
Accel. Time (secs)	6.0

Alarm Display Screen

Alarm	Status
RAW Upper Core Lock	OK
RAW Lower Core Lock	OK
RAW Core & Station Clam	OK
Safety Cover	OK
Drive Fault	OK
Hip Open	OK
Roll End Fault	OK
Web Break	OK

Parameter	Value
Max. Speed (ft/min)	25
Max. Speed (m/min)	1000
Raw Core (ft)	3.0
Liming Core (ft)	3.0
Log Speed (%)	5
Slow Speed (%)	5
Taper Start (ft)	6.0
Roll End (ft)	5.0

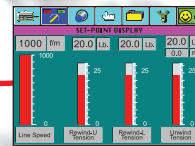
Limits Screen

Level	Count
1	1
2	2

Password Mgmt Screen

Tr	USS Communication (ft/min)	Count
00000000	0	0
00000000	0	0
00000000	0	0
00000000	0	0
00000000	0	0
00000000	0	0

USS Communication Screen



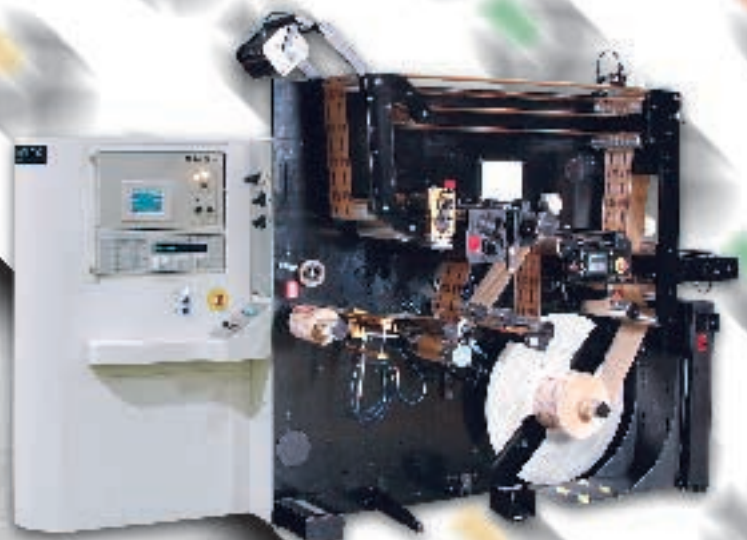
Set-Point Display Screen

## Overview

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*Indexflex directors Mauricio Preto and Marcelo Brito with their Nilpeter MO offset press*



sectors and deals with everyone from small local companies to large multi-nationals.

'This year we have worked with some customers on projects regarding logistics,' says Paz. 'It's more than JIT – we guarantee delivery within 24 hours to any branch and everything is ordered and shipped on-line. We are working with a fast food chain on this kind of a project.'

Paz believes that this kind of service differentiates Grif from its competitors and he is optimistic about the future.

'As long as the economy keeps growing, the poorer people will start to consume more. There are always good prospects for growth. You just have to work and believe in your country.'

### **Indexflex rotulas e etiquetas adesivas São Paulo**

One of the fastest growing converters in Brazil has to be Indexflex. With 2004 sales up 53 per cent on 2003, the company's strategy is certainly on the right track. Founding partners Mauricio Preto and Marcelo Brito worked together in print sales for a number of years and launched Indexflex in

1997 with a Mark Andy press. Following the Mark Andy installation, they invested in two Brazilian-made GGS presses, an 11" seven-color Nilpeter FA2500, and last year installed a Nilpeter MO offset press. On the day that L&L visited the plant, they had just confirmed a deal for an HP Indigo ws4050.

'All of the equipment that we have bought has been to satisfy different niches,' says Mauricio Preto. 'Now we can offer our customers every possibility – high quality short, medium and long runs. We are prepared for anything and which other companies have these kinds of prospects?'

The pair graduated in flexo but soon found some cost and quality limitations. Says Marcelo Brito, 'We're still a small company but by adding offset we have had the opportunity to look for big customers who need high quality.'

But offset has quantity limitations and even global brands need short runs when they are releasing new products. 'We did a lot of research and decided that digital could attend to our short run needs,' explains Brito. 'We believe that it's a huge potential market that already exists and there are only three installations in Brazil, so we are well placed.'

The move to digital is a reflection of their forward-thinking approach. Indexflex is a young, highly motivated and modern company. The facility is spotless and stylish, with a recreational area for its 60 employees. They have built themselves a strong brand in the industry and a reputation for aggressive growth.

'Everyone says that the label market in Brazil is not as good these days,' says Brito, 'but we are still growing. People just need passion. We believe in the future of the business. The people in Brazil usually wait until they have the orders before investing in new equipment. We invest and then we go after the business.'

The partnership is currently looking at getting into shrink and the in-line finishing of cartons and board. However, Brito says that the current company structure will allow for an extra 50 per cent capacity without any further investment – a figure they're confident they'll surpass.



*Grif director Francisco Paz*

### **Grafimax Industria Gráfica Ltda Blumenau, Santa Catarina**

Elimar Reinhold became the sole owner of Grafimax in 1992. The company began in typography, but was taking care of more and more customers who also wanted labels. In 2002 Reinhold decided to invest in a 10" Nilpeter FA press with five colors plus UV varnish. Grafimax also has four sheetfed offset Heidelberg Speedmasters, but has found that many of its offset customers are migrating to self-adhesive. Eighty per cent of Grafimax's pressure-sensitive label work was previously produced offset and 20 per cent has been new business.

Last year the PS side of the business grew by more than 50 per cent and Grafimax converts between 80-100,000m<sup>2</sup> of labelstock with flexo per month. 'One day we will only work with



“One of our challenges is coming up with new applications in order to differentiate ourselves. I travel the world a lot and visit other plants to learn what other converters are doing”

*Felipe Beer Honigsman, founder of Soft Color*



flexo,’ says Elimar Rheinhold. ‘We are buying CTP for the offset side of the business and we have decided that after that we will only invest in flexo. We are growing very fast, but we need to open to new markets.’

The company’s 30 employees print labels for the beverage and food market, as well as cartons, clothes tags and brochures.

‘Our business is very regional,’ says Reinhold. ‘Most of our customers are within the state of Santa Catarina and to the south, where we take care of lots of vineyards, for example. We understand that there is a big opportunity in the pharmaceutical and cosmetic markets, and we just need to get our foot in the door. We don’t have an agent in São Paulo just yet. It’s hard to find the right salesman.’

Grafimax’s current Nilpeter press has flatbed die cutting and hot stamping and Reinhold says that a future investment would include corona treatment, lamination, rotary screen and full UV curing.

### **Soft Color Etiquetas Adesivas Ltda São Paulo**

Felipe Beer Honigsman started Soft Color out of the back of the gas station he managed with one small Etirama letterpress. In 1986 he sold the gas station and moved from a 60m<sup>2</sup> facility to somewhere almost four times bigger. Two more premises and nearly 20 years later, and Soft Color is fighting for space again.

Soft Color today has 22 employees and converts an average of 100,000m<sup>2</sup> of labelstock per month. The company runs a Gallus R200, Gallus T180, a Comco, GGS CI flexo and two sheetfed offset, as well as two older Brazilian letterpress. It is expecting delivery of a further 10-color R200 by the middle of the year.

The majority of Soft Color’s work is in cosmetics, but the company is also active in pharmaceutical, food and industrial applications. Soft Color can output its own film, plates, rotary

screens and flat screens – all key in optimizing job turnaround for its customers.

Although the company has been ISO 9000 certified for a number of years, Soft Color is currently working on optimizing its processes for the growing pharmaceutical market.

A major focus is innovation. ‘One of our challenges is coming up with new applications in order to differentiate ourselves,’ says Felipe Honigsman. ‘I travel the world a lot and visit other plants to learn what other converters are doing. I have close contact with four converters in Israel, where we trade information and communicate all the time. I am also in touch with converters in Argentina, Chile, Canada and Italy. Most of the guys that we visit work with offset – mainly the guys that like Gallus.

‘Customers like innovation – but paying for it is a different matter’, says Honigsman. ‘You can bring great ideas to Brazil and they will never get developed because they are too expensive.’

### **Prodesmaq Vinhedo, São Paulo**

Prodesmaq is one of the three largest self-adhesive label converters in Latin America. Located in the city of Vinhedo, in the state of São Paulo, Prodesmaq is ideally placed to service the resident multi-national end users such as Unilever and Procter & Gamble.

The company was founded in 1976 by a father and his three sons and has evolved from a small family business into one of the most successful converters in Brazil. Two years ago the company launched a branch in Mexico to analyze the business opportunities there.

‘It’s important to think about exporting, because today the consumer product companies are globalized,’ says Clélia De Marco, marketing co-ordinator for Prodesmaq.

The company’s customer base includes global giants like L’Oreal, Johnson, Unilever and Procter & Gamble, and brand

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## Avon – an end user perspective

Álvaro Oliveira has been packaging development manager at Avon for three years. Prior to that he spent 18 years working at Johnson and Johnson. Avon is a unique cosmetics company in that its products are sold through local sales representatives, from a catalogue – Brazil alone has more than 900,000 representatives. Avon isn't fighting for shelf space with its competitors and its consumers aren't afforded the luxury of handling the product. The catalogue must reflect the product's visual impact and convey the brand value.

Avon is continuously in the process of creating an updated image for itself and as a consequence is moving from simple decoration to labels.

'We used to silk screen, but the whole cosmetics industry has been moving away from that in the past five years,' Oliveira says. 'It was a problem in the beginning because of the label prices and also the cost of investing in applicators. But now there are more materials available, the technology is better and there are more converters in Brazil and Latin America.'

Oliveira says that his priorities when choosing a converter are quality and price, but it is clear that converters are expected to innovate and be able to react quickly.

'Normally we have small fluctuations in demand and labels are a good solution for that. But at the same time, converters, and other members of the supply chain have to be prepared for the unpredictable surge of sales when a new catalogue is released. We have surprises and the supply chain needs to be prepared for that.'

Oliveira says there used to be big differences between

Brazilian converters, but these are decreasing now more of them are investing in new technology and importing presses. 'The good thing about globalization is that it is forcing them to invest.'

Price, of course is important, but Oliveira claims the relationship with the converter comes first. 'We are working together and developing together.'

Although 70 per cent of concepts and packaging specs come from Avon's center of global development in the US, the Brazilian team has the freedom to customize for the local market. Recent developments have been the introduction of leaflet labels onto deodorant to preserve the look and feel of the package, and reverse printed labels that can be read through a clear bottle and liquid product.

Reverse printing the front label saved money on a back label and Oliveira was able to spend more on high quality effects such as hot stamping, which he identifies as a current trend. He is also interested in combining different printing techniques such as flexo and gravure, and is experimenting with new materials such as BOPP and substrates developed for higher clarity and gloss.

'We have been trying to introduce collaborative work,' he says. 'Partnerships are good in this global environment. In Brazil we now have Avery Dennison who supplies 99 per cent of all the films and it is a key source for printers. We work with Avery Dennison to specify materials, and printers need to be able to match our needs. Avon is delivering more and more global specs and when you are working with global suppliers that helps.'

globalization means that Brazil has seen the same decoration trends as the more mature markets in Europe, the US and Asia. Initially in the cosmetic sector, end users recognized the need for a more sophisticated package with more added-value effects for luxury brands such as the no-label look. This has extended from cosmetics to other segments such as household cleaning products.

'In Brazil there is definitely a trend for making a package more attractive and appealing,' says De Marco, 'but there is an economic problem and not many companies and consumers have the money to invest and buy into innovation. For example, we know that there is thermochromic technology available where a label changes color at different temperatures, but because of the cost, this would never apply in our market right now.'

De Marco points out, that as high end Brazilian converters invest in similar state-of-the-art equipment, business success depends increasingly on differentiating yourself through adding value – for example through complex combination printing, customer service and post service support.

One way of securing customers is through 'comodato', where converters install label application machinery for free at the end user in return for label printing business. Prodesmaq has 26 applicators installed with customers.

'We offer very high quality and differentiated technology and this has a relationship with price,' explains De Marco. 'We try to be as cost-effective as possible, but there are many smaller companies that are offering labels. Although they might not have the same quality expectations, they are very competitive.'

### Prakolar Rótulos Auto-Adesivos São Paulo

Prakolar was launched 38 years ago by Gregoire Chatziefstratiou and two business partners. Ten years ago the Chatziefstratiou family bought the whole company and Gregoire continues to work there with his three sons. The focus of the business shifted when the Chatziefstratiou took over – with experience in sheet offset, they started buying modular flexo presses and began printing prime labels. Today 30-40 per cent of the business comes from pharmaceutical labels and 20-



*Industrial director at Prakolar, Alexandre Chatziefstratiou*

“There is lots of competition in São Paulo and now there are more and more companies springing up and local press manufacturers are cheap”

30 per cent comes from the cosmetics industry. The 65-strong company is proud of a quality record which saw it win the prestigious label award from the 14º Premio de excelência gráfica Fernando Pini for the second time.

Prakolar chose Mark Andy as its first flexo press partly because of the quality, but also due to the technical assistance available in Brazil at the time. It was a new market for the company and aftersales service was a priority. The company now has a MA 2200 6 col 7”, MA 2200 8 col 7”, MA 4150 8 col 10”, MA 2200 8 col 7”, MA 4150 9 col 10”, and unusually they are all UV flexo. The Brazilian market is just beginning to move over to UV.

‘It’s a challenge to try and maintain our growth at 10-20 per cent,’ says industrial director Alexandre Chatziefstratiou. ‘There is lots of competition in São Paulo and now there are more and more companies springing up and local press manufacturers are cheap. We try to supply a high quality product and use high quality systems to try and kill the competition.’

The company is considering investment in digital or offset technology. Chatziefstratiou explains that some customers in Brazil specifically want offset and are prepared to pay extra for it. But he is also keeping an eye on developments in shrink and RFID.

### **Gráficos Sangar Ltda São Paulo**

Sangar is a converter which specializes almost exclusively in the pharmaceutical market. Since its foundation 35 years ago, the company has catered to a group of clients ranging from the biggest pharma labs in the world to domestic Brazilian manufacturers. Sangar director Davidson Tomé is also the vice president of the Associação Brasileira das Indústrias de Etiquetas Adesivas (ABIEA). Sangar was set up by his father and has grown to employ 250 people.

Today, Sangar’s facility in São Paulo houses two Rotatex and

one Didde rotary offset press, two Komori sheetfed presses, two Heidelberg sheetfed presses (SORMZ and a Speedmaster 74-2), Jetrion inkjet unit, a 17” Mark Andy flexo with 6 units, a 7” Webtron with 7 units, a 10 “ Webtron with 6 units, an Etirama with two units for converting booklet labels and four Rotoflex inspectors.

Working with international labs such as Schering Plough, Merck and Pfizer, Sangar’s manufacturing processes are carefully controlled. It has implemented GMP and is planning to complete ISO certification by the end of this year. After ISO approval, operations manager Luiz Chiomento says that they would like to attain an environmental certification.

Working with global pharmaceutical companies usually means following standards set abroad.

‘We don’t work directly with the FDA, but we have customers with products that are exported and therefore it has to be approved,’ Chiomento says. ‘It’s not just related to exportation though. Everyone takes the FDA requirements as standard.’

Staff are directly involved in the running of the business and employees are crucial in maintaining the company’s reputation for innovation. Sangar has a patent for a glued and folded medication leaflet and has also developed special constructions for birth control packs and leaflet labels for chemical bottles.

Although Sangar has no problems with domestic labelstock quality, sourcing raw material is proving a challenge.

‘Our big problem right now is that there is no PET in Brazil and we need to source another supplier,’ says Chiomento. ‘I would say that it is inhibiting our growth by 20-30 per cent. We have leaflet labels that we can’t print because there is no PET and it is too expensive to import. Lots of unsupported films were sold to the wide web packaging industry last year and the label market share is very small in comparison.’

Despite the challenge of material supplies, director Tomé is very positive about the company’s growth prospects, based on the continued success of the Brazilian economy.



The company recently joined forces with an American converter. 'New technology and developments take a long time,' says Tomé. 'Our American partner has the knowledge and we have the market. We could be a base for American chains and companies, but it is difficult to explain to Americans how Brazil works – your social relationships are very important.'

### **Novelprint Sistemas de Etiquetagem Ltda São Paulo**

Novelprint was founded in São Paulo in 1958 and is in the middle of a dramatic reorganization program, which has resulted in a sales increase of over 40 percent in the last two years. Novelprint's president Jeffrey Arippol, began restructuring the company in 1999 and has focused on optimizing each of its three areas of expertise.

Novelprint's core business is in the printing and converting of labels, but its Novel Tech division develops and manufactures label application machinery and software, while PAC develops labelstock. The PAC division develops adhesives, and coats and laminates pressure-sensitive materials. Novelprint believes that these capabilities differentiate it from the majority of label converters worldwide. Novelprint is able to promote itself as a fully-integrated service provider, leading the customer through product research, development, testing, converting and application.

Once the initial company reorganization was finalized in 2004, the company began to optimize its capabilities in January this year. Company president Arippol recruited CEO Emanuel Silveira to manage the business, allowing him to dedicate time to promoting Novelprint throughout the world as a global player. 'The key principal over the last two years has been focused on expanding customer awareness of Novelprint's unique expertise and redefining its position as a customer friendly organization,' explains director of corporate affairs Debby Forman, 'not just as a manufacturer, but rather as a strategic development partner to its customers. At Novelprint you will be working with a multi-discipline team.'

Part of this strategy involved the incorporation of new actions and services into the company. Market surveys were conducted to ensure that employees understood their customers and an automated customer relationship management (CRM) system was implemented to monitor client feedback. Novelprint also introduced monthly technical training courses for its customers, held at its facility, and has developed an interactive showroom where customers can test label applicators.

Novelprint's technical skills are perhaps its biggest selling point. Novelprint's large R&D team of 15-20 people specializes in chemistry for adhesive formulations, printing for ink and material improvements, and label application machinery upgrades. The R&D specialists rely on the three laminators for continuous material development, just as the machinery division relies on the ability to oversee machinery production and test new concepts.



*The Novelprint facility in Sao Paulo; Novelprint recently invested in gravure press for printing shrink sleeves*

'R&D is the most strategic aspect of the business. Most converters are printers,' says Forman, 'but we are converting what we print into innovative products.'

Technical Director, Oswaldo Belintani, presents a vast array of innovative constructions to L&L including re-sealable package lids, special constructions to protect variable information printing, flag labels to be used at point of sale, detachable booklet labels, special jewelry price tags and wraparound labels for harsh environments.

The company's most recent industrial strategy was to invest in a 10 color gravure press with seaming and finishing equipment from Karlville for printing shrink sleeves. Interest is high in shrink in Brazil, but few converters currently have the capabilities.

Novelprint has always striven to be an industry leader. Forman says that it was the first converter to start using clear BOPP liner in the 1980s and it continues to be the company's preferred choice. It converts 90 per cent of its labels on BOPP liner today. Jeffrey Arippol will be speaking about BOPP silicone release liners at the 2005 Release Liner Conference in Washington DC. The benefits of BOPP have allowed Novelprint to persuade multinational clients to modify material specifications.

Arippol and Forman are focusing on establishing a global model to overcome the roadblocks of being the first self-sufficient converter located in South America.

'We are a South American converter trying to deal with the regional branches of multinational companies. Take into consideration that the branches of the multinationals receive pre-defined specifications, and remember that Novelprint produces its own material – we had a big obstacle to overcome.'

'How do we make our material become a specification at headquarters so it is incorporated as a global specification, filtered back into the country branch facility and introduced back into our company?' This question was the basis behind a new business model.

Debby Forman and Jeffrey Arippol are well known faces around the globe through their dedicated participation at regional Label Summits, Label Expo, Finat and TLMI meetings. Defining itself as part of a global industry, the company has a network of counterparts in the US and Europe, with whom it shares patents and strategies.

Arippol will be sharing more about this procedure when giving his presentation at the Latin America Label Summit in May – Sao Paulo. ■



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# Going digital in Brazil

Brazilian convertor Giankoy has supplemented its conventional presses with a Matan Spring12 digital press, opening up new short run markets

**G**iankoy is a Brazilian Company with 23 years experience in the tag and label market, and a particular expertise in printing polycarbonates. Umberto Giannobile, director and founder of Giankoy, is also president of ABIEA, the Brazilian Association of Tag and Label. Giankoy began its activities with only six workers, and has now approximately 40. In addition to silkscreen printing, the company also has flexo, letterpress and offset printing platforms to accommodate all types of tags and labels in a very competitive market.

Last year Giankoy became the first Brazilian company to purchase a Matan Spring12 digital printing system to complement its conventional printing capabilities. The company's commercial manager, Ricardo Giannobile, says new business opportunities have been opened up in print-on-demand work.

'Now we are working to finish jobs in a

shorter time and job run length compared to the jobs we used to perform without the Matan Spring12,' says Giannobile. 'Our challenge now is to break a stigma and convince our potential customers of the cost-benefits involved in digital printing, since many customers still think that the cost of digital printing is high. We are engaged in finding other opportunities for conventional tags and labels, because now we recognize the possibilities offered by the equipment.'

Giannobile says the break-even point with traditional printing platforms can reach up to a few thousand labels per job. 'The cost-effectiveness of the Matan Spring12 provides the flexibility to develop new services and applications at a very cost effective price which we could not provide before.'

The Matan Spring12 is capable of printing up to six colors including spot white and metallics in a single pass. 'The ability to change quickly between color ribbons provides the flexibility to switch from one job to the next in seconds, and the image quality covers a wide variety of short-run applications,' says Ricardo Giannobile. 'The Matan Spring12 supports variable data printing and can work with pre-printed rolls produced with either an analog or a different digital printing press.'

Giankoy purchased a Digital Finishing System (DFS) to compliment the Spring12. The DFS uses a computer guided knife to handle cutting, and is supported by the Matan's own front-end and RIP software. 'This allows working online or offline, as well as to achieve a complete digital workflow without the need for investment in the traditional die cutting,' says Ricardo Giannobile,

Giannobile stresses that to get the best out of digital printing you need a high degree of pre-press knowledge.

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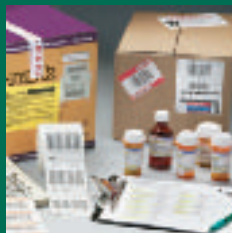
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'Our company knows how to work with vectorization software along with ICC curves and color management. In other words, the better you know the minimum and maximum possibilities of this printer, the more you can optimize its possibilities to adapt to customer needs and the final result will be very positive.'

The printer was purchased through Matan's Brazilian representative, Gammerler Ltd, and Ricardo Giannobile was impressed with the help he received. 'Gammerler co-operated in developing tests for most kinds of substrates available in the Brazilian market, and Matan was very helpful in evaluating the samples we sent, because this was a new development for us,' says Ricardo Giannobile. 'This was our greatest deliberation - how the Spring12 could work with different substrates.' ■

### The main features of the Matan Spring12 are:

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17-18 de Mayo, San Pablo, Brasil

# LABELSUMMIT Latin America 2005

[www.labelsummit.com](http://www.labelsummit.com)

Da la Labelexpo Global Serial, Tarsus Grupo plc

## Latin American Label Summit

The second Latin American Label Summit, taking place on 17-18 May at the Gran Melia Hotel, Sao Paulo, Brazil, has attracted prestigious industry speakers and over 50 local and international supplier exhibitors. The event is virtually sold out already – and delegate registrations are going fast.

John Wurzburger, from Avery Dennison, will be giving the keynote address at the Summit, focusing on the challenges and opportunities in the Latin American label converting, and including information specifically about the Brazilian economy and printing industry. Other well known speakers will include Gonzalo Fernando, Unilever; Jeffrey Arrippol, Novelprint; Federico d' Annunzio, Gidue; and Christian Menegon, HP Indigo, covering current hot issues such as smart labels, RFID, innovations and trends in materials, servo, digital printing, Latin American label converter's requirements, and end-user perspectives. The conference will be an unrivalled opportunity to get to grips with these market issues, assess new materials and technology trends – as well as to hear case studies gain end users' perspective. Hundreds of local printers are expected to attend the event – following the success of the first Latin American Label Summit in Mexico in 2004 that was visited by over 600 people.

Running alongside the conference, there will be a tabletop exhibition of local, national and international suppliers including Avery Dennison, Colacril, Etrama, Gallus, Gidue, HP Indigo, Mark Andy, Nilpeter, Omet, and Raflatrac. Many exhibitors will be showcasing new products – for example, GEW will be launching 'e-Brick', a modular and compact, space saving electronic power supply with less than 30% of the volume and 20% of the weight of conventional systems.

Mary Sullivan, Mark Andy, said, "Mark Andy's participation in the Latin American Label Summit provides a great forum to continue showcasing the company's new vision and its whole new line of products. The Label Summit allows converters to learn about the latest in flexo label production and to also learn about the latest equipment that supports today's business philosophies."

Roger Pellow, Labelexpo Managing Director, said, "In Brazil, opportunities for suppliers, and for local manufacturers, lie in the region's ability to sustain growth for the foreseeable future. Economists are predicting that the remainder of 2005 and 2006 will bring surges in private consumption as Latin Americans begin to quench their thirst for the bigger-ticket items they haven't had the personal income to afford in nearly half a decade. We are looking to build on our success in Mexico last year and are expecting a big turn out at The Latin American Label Summit in Sao Paulo this year." ■

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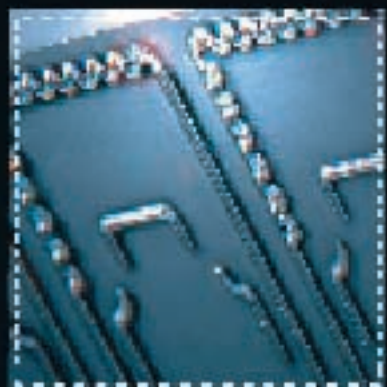
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# Zero defects

Accurate, authentic pharmaceutical labeling can literally mean the difference between life and death. What impact does this have on the label converter?

**T**he mechanics of the pharmaceutical industry hinge on one thing: liability. Safeguarding the general public's health necessitates a supply chain with a zero defect tolerance. Converters in the US – and converters supplying pharmaceutical products into North America – must comply with Food and Drug Administration (FDA) legislation, strict regulations imposed by their pharmaceutical customers and retailer mandates to manufacture a product that is perfect, consistent and authentic. The rise of counterfeit drugs also a heavy burden on the industry and companies are relying on converters to define a security strategy for their packaging.



### Production controls

NOSCO Inc signed its first pharmaceutical packaging contract in 1932 and today has three plants in Waukegan, IL; Gurnee, IL; and Carrollton, TX; providing labels, folded cartons and printed leaflets exclusively for the pharmaceutical industry. Being able to provide a broad scope of packaging solutions is beneficial to pharmaceutical buyers as they can minimize their supplier base.

'It gives us a strategic advantage,' says Kregg Albrecht, director of business development. 'There is only a small number of companies that can provide this kind of service. With product launches, for example, timing is extremely important and often different pharmaceutical companies are racing against one another. Copy approval from the FDA is always the very last thing before we go to print and once they have that approval they want all of their packaging the next day. Our company structure can handle the launch of multiple product lines and combinations of packaging.'

It's not surprising that only a small number of companies are focused on the pharmaceutical industry. Pharmaceutical packaging requires very specific, dedicated production processes that can be costly and time consuming to implement. Converters are required to

"We have to have zero defects. After each run we have to do a line clearance where all of the elements associated with a particular product must be removed from the press, including plates and any paperwork"

follow cGMP (current good manufacturing processes) guidelines that are outlined by the FDA and will also be subject to audit by their customers. GMP controls production processes and provides documentation that errors have been eliminated and quality has been attained.

'We have to have zero defects,' says Albrecht. 'The worst possible scenario would be to have mixed components such as child and adult drug labels mixed together. After each run we have to do a line clearance where all of the elements associated with a particular product must be removed from the press, including plates and any paperwork. It requires a lot of details and tedious procedures, but it is all part of our culture. We are 100 per cent pharmaceutical, so we don't have to run two quality systems at the same time.'

Vendors to the pharmaceutical industry also have to be responsible for a process of reconciliation where closures, cartons, labels and other packaging parts have to be delivered and matched one-for-one. If any of the elements are left when the drug have been packaged, it could mean that some had been diverted. Increasingly, end users are asking for the reverse side of the web to be inventoried with sequential numbers. Converters have to count and account for every label they print and ensure that they can't be used elsewhere. Non-conforming products have to be shredded and any expiration dates or other codes hole-punched through.

Automation is being introduced where possible in the production process to eliminate the scope of human error. Today, pharmaceutical companies mandate 100 percent automatic inspection, but as John Thome, VP marketing,



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“Total automation is the way of the future, particularly in the pharmaceutical and healthcare industry where the integrity of the file is paramount throughout the job”

BST Pro Mark, explains, combining it with a system that pinpoints trend defects on-press could be the best solution.

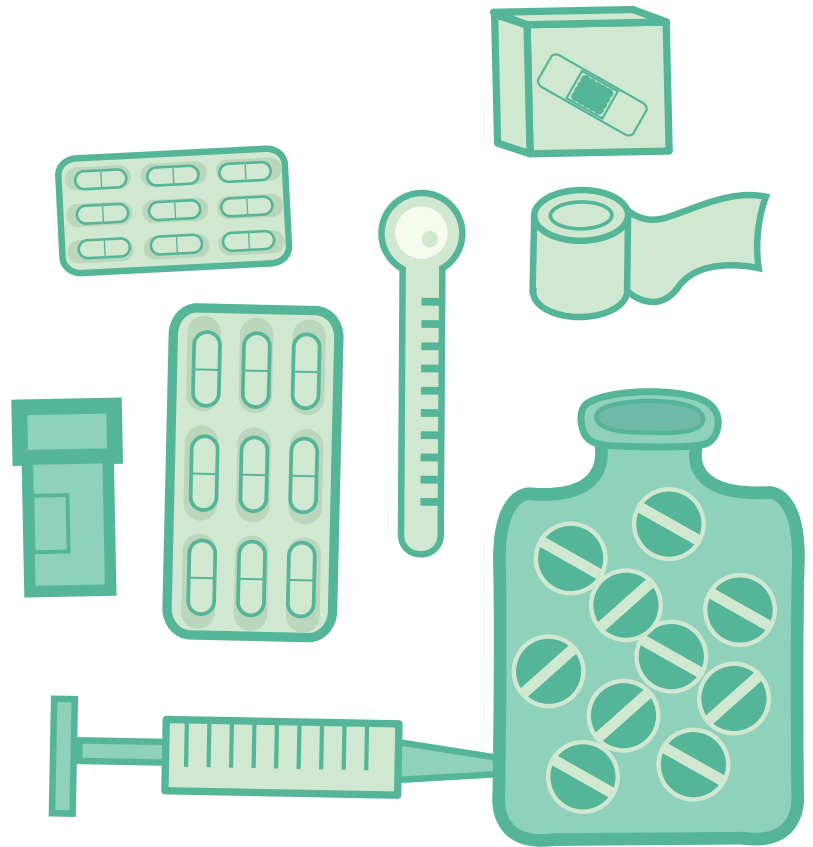
‘The only way to get 100 percent automatic inspection is with line scan camera technology, but it’s the wrong solution for the pharmaceutical industry,’ he says. ‘Line scan cannot inspect barcodes, UPC or pharma codes. Color monitoring is also becoming more important and it can’t do that either. Line scan can check ingredient statements to make sure that information isn’t missing, but it does nothing to decrease waste. It identifies faults and bad material to be cut out later.

A line scan system makes sense on a rewinder, but you need a system that can pick up trend defects on press.’

A process management system like BST’s Premium enables converters to take corrective action in real time. These systems can check pharma codes, barcodes, data matrix barcodes and detect color variations before they have reached unacceptable levels – allowing the press operator to amend them before waste occurs.

Inevitably automation is taking hold in other aspects of production. Field Boxmore Healthcare in Leicester, UK, part of Europe’s largest supplier of pharmaceutical cartons in Europe, is worked closely with Esko-Graphics to automate its repro procedures from the receipt of a customer’s digital file to the output of printing plates. It has implemented several modules within Esko-Graphics’ Scope workflow environment, including BackStage, PackEdge, Plato and DeskPack software.

‘Total automation is the way of the future,



particularly in the pharmaceutical and healthcare industry where the integrity of the file is paramount throughout the job. By reducing manual intervention, we automatically reduce the risk of errors,’ explains Duncan Macnally, general manager of Field Boxmore.

The strategy behind the BackStage digital workflow is to increase efficiency by automating repetitive tasks and virtually eliminating operator error.

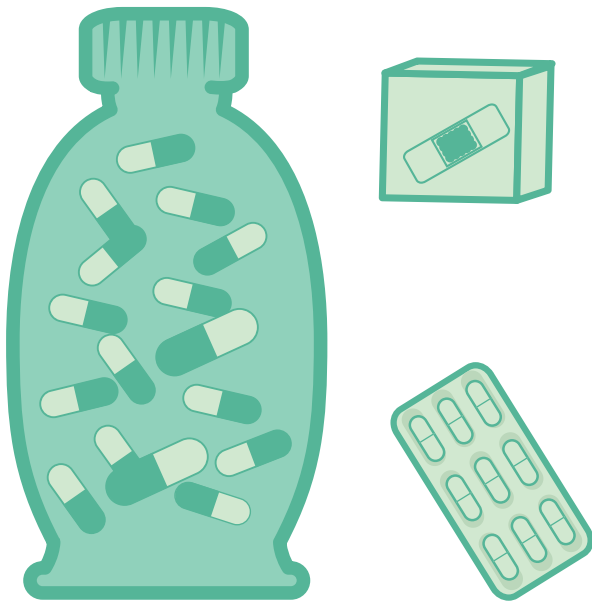
‘It means that our highly skilled operators don’t have to spend time on simple, mundane tasks as these are all carried out in background on the BackStage server. It gives them more time to spend on the complex jobs where their knowledge and experience really counts,’ says Shaun Smith, PrePress Systems support analyst.

### Innovation

Some of the wealthiest companies in the world come from the pharmaceutical sector. Any onlooker would assume drug companies have lavish packaging budgets, offering big margins to their suppliers. But Erin Linville, market manager for pharmaceutical at Avery Dennison, says her customers are seeing increasing price pressures.

‘In the US, the price of prescription drugs is on the news every night. The drug companies are under immense pressure when it comes to pricing and now they are coming back to their converters and asking for cost reductions,’ she says.

‘Historically Avery Dennison has tried to introduce new products, however pharmaceutical companies weren’t interested because of the cost



of re-qualifying a material with the FDA. They are now more willing to look at more options because they need to be more cost-conscious. We have recently introduced a new lower cost pharmaceutical grade adhesive – S4140 – to address this need.'

It can take up to 18 months for a package to achieve FDA qualification. Labelstock suppliers such as Avery Dennison have a range of products that have historically passed FDA tests, but they cannot offer 'FDA-compliant' materials.

'The whole package is tested and each component is assessed individually as part of a unique product,' says Erin Linville. 'We can only make recommendations based on materials that we have used in the past – for example, ones that resist sterilization or migration. We try and find out as much about the product as possible so that we can make recommendations.'

Pharmaceutical packaging isn't limited to drugs of course, and no other market has to cater to such a wide variety of containers: vials, ampoules, glass bottles, syringes, squeezable eye-drop bottles, blood transfusion bags. Sven Tolsma, pharmaceutical marketing manager at Raflatac in the Netherlands, says they have been focusing on the end user to get information and knowledge about the kinds of materials

they want for the next generations of packaging.

'Pharmaceutical packaging is always one step ahead, because new introductions need a lot of tests and time to go through,' he says. 'We see ourselves as the link between the pharmaceutical end users and our converter customers. The end users are chemists and so are we. We can offer them the samples and testing that they need.'

'A prevalent issue right now is the risk of migration. For example, packaging engineers have introduced a plastic ampoule made from LDPE rather than glass, and we are testing to find out if it is sensitive to adhesive migration. Migration would affect the liquids inside the ampoule and thus make the label part of the primary packaging rather than the secondary packaging.'

As medical ingredients become more and more concentrated, there is a trend towards small diameter containers. Labels have now been developed that wrap-around syringes with a diameter of 7mm.

'Screen printing on to syringes doesn't give you the same options as a label. You can't add variable information like a batch number or expiry dates, but you do need to have a specially developed construction to make sure that it adheres correctly.'

LGInternational of Portland, Oregon, is one of the world's leading manufacturers of specialty cleanroom labels and seals and security labeling components for the electronic, computer, pharmaceutical, and medical instrument industries. The company has recently developed a series of cryogenic labels which can be used in laboratory applications that need to go down to a temperature of -100°C. Several challenges arose during the research and development of the product.

'At these kinds of temperatures, adhesive becomes very rigid,' explains Lane Kagey, chief operating officer, 'but if you use a more viscous adhesive, you get problems with oozing. Additionally, when you take a phial out of these low temperatures, you get a frost forming on the container. If the frost has formed it can be difficult to apply a label.'

Using this experience the company is currently working on a construction that can be used in the extreme low temperature environments of liquid nitrogen. Used to problem-solving, LGInternational has also developed an autoclave label for a medical bag that could be sterilized at around 240°F under pressurized steam, and then taken off and stuck on paper.

'We are also trying to pass on some of our experience of



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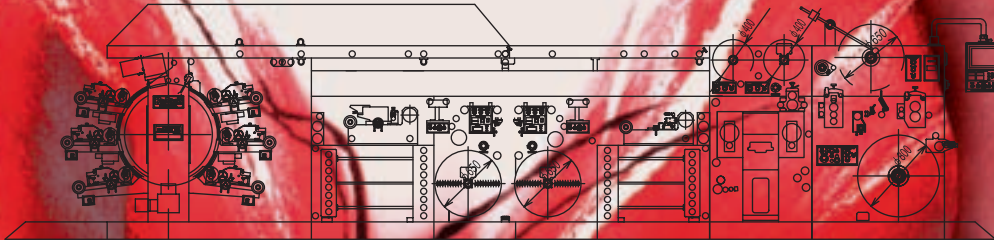
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working in a cleanroom environment to the medical industry,' says Kagey. 'Initially, in the clean room market, they didn't understand that even if you had something clean, you can still get issues with particulation and it affects yield. We are trying to get the biomedical industry to understand that even if a product is sterile, you can still have particulation issues.'

The company has a proprietary secondary cleaning system that blows air on the web and 'scrubs' both sides. Products are then specially packaged to retain their integrity.

### RFID track and trace

RFID has slowly started to infiltrate the pharmaceutical supply chain. Wal-Mart has mandated item-level tagging of Class II narcotics, and pharmacists across the UK have been trialing RFID technology in an effort to reduce dispensing errors. It is estimated that as many as 56 out of 10,000 prescriptions are wrongly dispensed and pharmacists are keen to see that number fall. The pilot claims a 100 per cent success rate in stopping the dispensing of pilot fake packs and after the 120 day trial was concluded, one in four pharmacists asked to keep their scanner.

Vince Reese, business development manager, Appleton, describes how the company has been involved in an RFID project to track and trace high value pharmaceutical products for a company called Promega. Promega produces biological reagents and reagent systems to be used in research and applied technology. Promega Express is an RFID inventory system for high value research materials. The reagents are tagged with 2.45GigaHertz RFID labels and stored in a special refrigerator.

'Each lab technician has an RFID card which allows them to access the freezer,' says Reese. The system logs which individual put in or took out which products and at what time. The system will also re-order stock automatically over the Internet.'

The Promega Express RFID tags use Appleton's SmartStrate, developed to provide cushioning against mechanical shock, a smooth printing surface and protection from ESD.

'The Promega Express chips were getting frequently getting damaged during shipments from their suppliers. Smartstrate reduced this damage significantly and the customer also liked the feel of the product.'

### Security

The FDA estimates that fake drugs alone comprise more than 10 per cent of the global medicine market, generating annual sales of more than \$32 billion.

Security and authentication are fast becoming the biggest concern for drug and medical device manufacturers.

'Security is the biggest thing in the industry right now,' says Albrecht of NOSCO. 'Counterfeit drugs are an epidemic problem and they have serious ramifications for the industry. It's a very big problem in Eastern Europe, Asia and Africa and it is becoming more of a problem in the US. Consumers are now becoming aware of the risk because of all the media coverage on counterfeit drugs.'

Frequent problems include counterfeiters buying low dose drugs, re-labeling them and selling them on as high dosage, or buying expired drugs and reselling them. Possible solutions might include UV or IR taggants in substrates, inks or

varnish, holograms, microtext or even luminescent adhesives that reveal whether an original label has been removed or cut. NOSCO offers overt, covert and forensic solutions, as well as mass serialization with either random or serial numbers.

'It's difficult to make changes because of all of the regulations and validations that are necessary with a new package,' says Albrecht, 'but most of our customers now have a security team and are looking at it from a global perspective. Across the board they are taking multi-layered approaches that incorporate covert and overt features. It's a significant expense, but the costs are small compared to liability and loss of brand.'

The FDA released its anti-counterfeit paper last July, but it just recommended that end users used multi-layered solutions. Tolsma of Raflatrac believes that end users are struggling without guidance on security solutions: 'Pharmaceutical companies don't know where to go and what their choices are and there are very few converters who are concentrating on security. Obviously you can't specify solutions and make it easy for the counterfeiters, but the pharmaceutical companies are driven by the regulators – and they are not regulating.' Pharmaceutical companies are beginning to invest in security solutions however, and with the counterfeiters hot on their heels, the potential market will always be evolving. ■





# CCL targets European pharma industry

CCL is developing a dedicated European pharmaceutical label converting operation. Andy Thomas travelled to its hub, CCL Label A/S in Brøndby, Denmark, to see how the strategy is developing

**A**s the world consolidates into a single market for global brands, new opportunities are opening up for converters to service end users on a global basis.

CCL Label, part of the giant Canadian-based CCL Industries Inc. group, has moved fast to take advantage of these possibilities, building new plants and acquiring label converters across the world and looking to strike up global partnerships with end users in selected added value sectors. A key target market is pharmaceuticals, and the European push is being led from the CCL Label A/S, pharma division headquarters in Brøndby, just outside Copenhagen in Denmark.

When Avery Dennison – under its then European president

Geoff Martin – set up Avery Etiketsystemer A/S in Randers and IWACO A/S in Brøndby there was no specific plan to specialise in pharmaceuticals. But after Geoff Martin went to CCL with the intention of creating a global labeling operation, he bought the Danish companies back from Avery as the core of a specialized European pharmaceutical division. The \$60 million acquisition also included Avery Dennison's label converting operation in Chilly-Mazarin, France, which is now being turned into a specialized pharmaceutical plant.

At around the same time, CCL added the former Jarvis Porter operation in Lewes, UK, to the European pharma division and began planning a dedicated pharma plant in Poland.



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## “The new plant gives CCL Label A/S a platform to meet the anticipated rise in demand for folding labels from the eastern European pharmaceutical industry”

The Polish operation will cover 3,000 sq metres, with room to double in size. Production will include traditional labels, folding labels and a number of special labels for pharma products. The new plant gives CCL Label A/S a strategic platform to meet the anticipated rise in demand for folding labels from the eastern European pharmaceutical industry. The plant will produce for pharma customers in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and the Baltic states.

Further acquisitions or the building of new plants in Europe will be considered where CCL sees a need to strengthen its local presence. Spain and Italy are high on the prospect list, and CCL Label A/S has moved closer to German pharma buyers with the appointment of Lutz Strack, a 14-year label industry veteran, as Germany market manager. Strack's new team is based at the international pharma division customer support centre in Randers.

### Global role

The pharma division has been strengthened with the employment of Ole Gade as director, sales & marketing, and his job will be to focus on international pharma customers. He has recently appointed Kurt Kjellerup, as director of new business development at CCL Label A/S. Kjellerup brings a lot of experience to the role. He has worked at the Brøndby plant for 20 years under its various owners, and has spent a lot of time successfully convincing Scandinavian pharma companies to accept expanded content labels (ECL) as an alternative to carton/leaflet combinations.

‘There have been major legislative changes in Scandinavia which have helped us,’ recalls Kjellerup. ‘It took five years for pharma companies here to change over from carton and leaflet, but now they would not go back to the old system.’ Also important was the Danish government's decision to allow certain classes of drugs such as pain relief tablets to be sold over-the-counter (OTC). The OTC packaging format has changed to blisters and more colors are being demanded in the packaging.

### Service industry

The service element of pharma label production is becoming as critical as in the consumer goods sector, and the successful converter must get involved in the full label approval/development/delivery cycle. CCL Label A/S is making increasing use of digital and ‘soft’ proofing where text and images must be verified by different departments within the end user and at the regulatory authorities. ‘This is one way we can help our customers get their product to market faster,’ says Kjellerup. ‘We like the end user to know that we are here to help their marketing and product development departments. In this industry it is most important to save even hours during the approval process by the health authorities. It means a lot to be first to market.’ Packaging cost reduction is another key driver for global players. ‘We advise our customers about a wide range of labeling issues,’ says Ole Gade. ‘For example if they buy 2-5,000 labels, they could buy 10,000 for around the same price. Or we ask if it's possible to take away some colors from the base label where it will not be noticed or play a significant role. If we do not offer this kind of advice, then someone else will.’

Because of the complexity of the label constructions, CCL Label A/S must also ensure the labels can be applied square onto containers on high speed applicator lines.

Under CCL Label Kurt Kjellerup has two key global roles. Firstly, he is tasked with building relationships with the major pharma players, especially in central Europe. ‘We will make pan-European deals with the big international pharmaceutical companies and on a global basis, but never forgetting we need to act locally and offer the same level of service across all our pharma plants.’

Kjellerup will also visit CCL operations around the world to see whether successful models can be replicated in other plants. ‘Up to now, each plant is creating specialty products which nobody else knows about. I will find out where our sales and technical people can go when they have a particular enquiry from a customer.’

An example is the RFID center of excellence in CCL North America. This expertise – including trials currently underway with the FDA – will be available to CCL companies globally.

Building a synergistic group freely sharing its technical and market expertise is not easy. Individual plant managers and press operators often fear their jobs will be transferred to other plants once their specialist knowledge has been shared. But Kurt Kjellerup does not believe this will be a problem for CCL.

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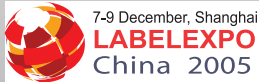
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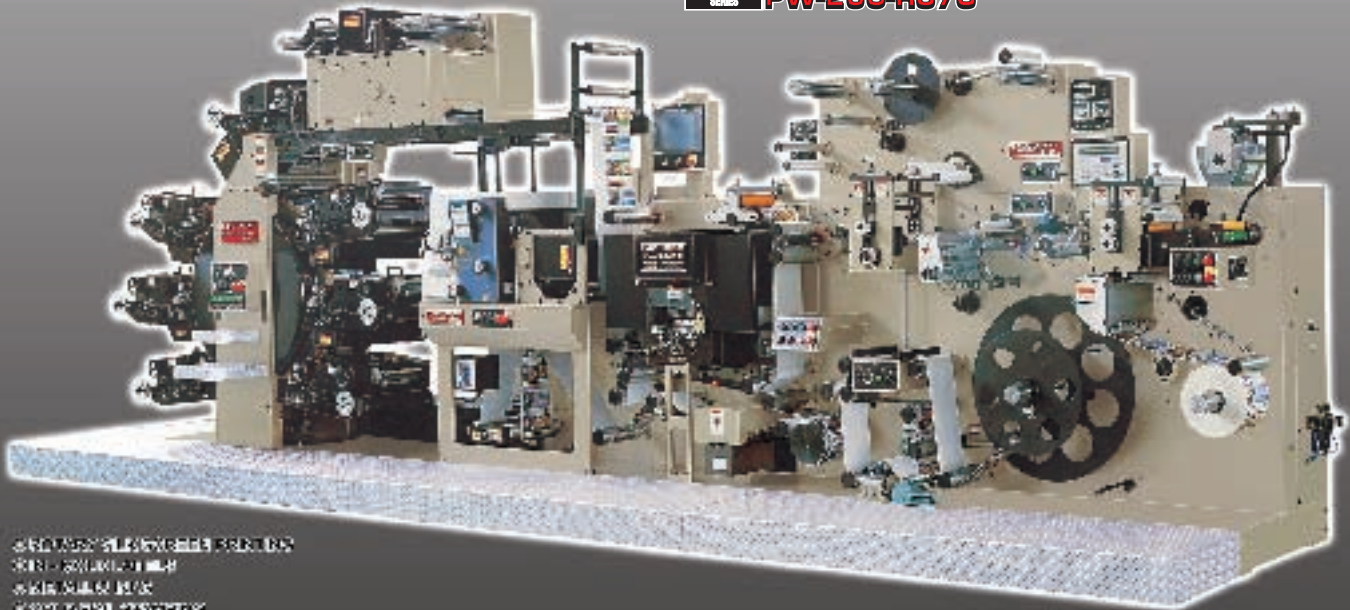
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### CCL Brøndby

CCL's investment in its European pharma division is evident at the Brøndby plant. A wide range of pharmaceutical label products are converted here, including promotional labels, single and double layer labels, folding labels, traceable labels, leaflet inserts and various tailor-made label solutions. Managing end users' logistics is another key element.

CCL Brøndby uses Gallus R160 letterpress machines for its short run pharma work and UV flexo for longer runs. CCL's strategy is to standardize on presses in particular plants, so Mark Andy presses from other group companies have been shipped to Brøndby, including two refurbished 8-colour 4150 machines from the US. 'Where we do UV flexo, we do Mark Andy,' says Gert Holdt Andersen, plant manager. 'This means we have common tooling across all the machines.' Once the new machines are delivered CCL will have a total of five 4150s operating across three shifts. That will take capacity in the Brøndby plant up by 66 per cent for printing base labels for use in both Fix-a-Form folding labels and in other high quality pharma labels.

The presses are specified with up to 8-colors and multiple Stork RSI screen heads, particularly important for the newly developed OTC market where it is increasingly common to get requests for labels printed in six or more colors, as opposed to 3-4 colors before.

The plant's production area has been increased in order to provide room for the new machines, but also to facilitate a more logical and efficient production flow. Goods transport and pedestrian areas have been separated, the logistics improved and there is more room around the machines. These factors help the company meet the pharma industry's Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) guidelines

### Patent dispute

CCL Label A/S holds the Denny Brothers' Fix-a-Form licence for Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Poland, the Czech Republic and the Baltic states. Denny Bros recently sued Swedish label converter AB W.H. Nordvall & Co. for patent infringement. Andrew Denny, managing director of the Denny Bros Group's licensing company, Fix-a-Form International, says: 'We will not tolerate infringement of Fix-a-Form patents. That's why we've taken legal action. We want to protect our patents, because we and our partners have invested considerable resources in developing the folding label concept.' Denny claims 'substantial losses' have been incurred both for the Fix-a-Form organisation in Sweden and for CCL Label A/S in Denmark, the licensee. SEK 6m in damages are being sought along with a commitment from Nordvall to cease production of the infringing product and destroy existing stocks.

**"Digital printing is currently not on the agenda: We do not find it sufficiently interesting to us for pharmaceutical printing"**

In a separate room are six folding lines which glue the extended text leaflets to the base labels, laminating where necessary. The rolls are rewound on Arpeco trackers.

In the finishing department is a Fleye Vision 100 per cent inspection system for label rolls and a Rotoflex pharmacode inspection-rewinder. The quality control department is independent of the production team, reporting direct to the CCL Label A/S vice president.

Digital printing is currently not on the agenda: 'We do not find it sufficiently interesting to us for pharmaceutical printing,' states Kurt Kjellerup. 'In digital you obviously do not have plates and the image carrier changes with each image. Our customers will not accept this.'

Leaflets are offset printed in a new machine hall, where there are two 6-color Heidelberg Speedmasters and a Shiki semi-rotary offset press. This is a full security printing operation, including locked storeroom for finished labels and security papers.

Sheet finishing is carried out on Polar guillotines and folding/gluing machines, where very elaborate constructions are carried out. ■

"What roll cleaning technology has been used by every single winner of the EFTA label print awards for the last 3 years? Visit [www.alphasonics.co.uk](http://www.alphasonics.co.uk)"



*Aquaflex presses under construction at the F.L. Smithe plant in Duncansville*

# Aquaflex reborn

The Aquaflex press brand has been rescued by F.L. Smithe, a Pennsylvania envelope machinery manufacturing company.

**Andy Thomas** reports on the reasons behind the acquisition, a new servo press and future plans for this famous brand

**T**he chaotic collapse of the Didde group left some of the narrow web industry's best known press names facing an uncertain, not to say bleak future. The Webtron and Zig Zag brands were eventually acquired by PCMC – which continues to manufacture upgraded Webtron machines at its Wisconsin plant – while Aquaflex was acquired by finance house American Capital Strategies. ACS's promises of serious investment in new press models failed to materialize and rumours spread once again of the Aquaflex brand's demise.

Then last March, a company unknown to most narrow web converters, F.L. Smithe, based out of Duncansville, Pennsylvania, recognized the value of the Aquaflex brand, and purchased the assets. To find out more about the company and its future plans, L&L travelled to Duncansville to interview vice president Mac Rosenbaum.

The first thing that strikes the visitor to the F.L. Smithe plant, nestling in the snowy foothills of the Allegheny mountains, is the company's serious historical and engineering pedigree. Founded back in 1904 by Ferdinand L. Smithe in New York City, the company is still run by four members of the Smithe family, including the grandson and great grandson of the founder. Mac Rosenbaum, who originally worked in the software industry, is the current president's son-in-law.



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“The Aquaflex name suffered under the past two ownerships for a multitude of reasons. We’re writing some new chapters that will cause the industry to sit-up and take notice”

F.L. Smithe moved to Duncansville in 1965 and rapidly became a dominant force in designing and building envelope converting machines, expanding worldwide in a fierce head-to-head battle with German competitor Winkler + Dunnebler. Smithe builds almost 90 per cent of the parts for its envelope machines, and has put these engineering skills to good use diversifying into threaded connectors for gas pipelines and envelope fasteners.

Mac Rosenbaum says F.L. Smithe looked to diversify its product portfolio when the envelope machine market slowed in 2000. ‘Today direct mail is growing and this is driving the envelope business back up again, but it has certainly been a tough couple of years,’ says Rosenbaum.

The decision to acquire Aquaflex was made after a consultant’s report showed significant growth in the labels, shrink/wraparound film, carton and flexible packaging sectors, and F.L. Smithe is committing significant resources to enter this market. ‘We aim to rebuild the Aquaflex name,’ says Rosenbaum. ‘The Aquaflex name suffered under the

past two ownerships for a multitude of reasons. That’s all changed under F.L. Smithe. We’re aggressively rebuilding the value of the Aquaflex name and writing some new chapters that will cause the industry to sit-up and take notice.’

The Aquaflex manufacturing operation in Montreal was closed in February, although engineering and technical support staff will continue to be based there. Aquaflex presses will now be built at the Pennsylvania site, and Mac Rosenbaum says F.L. Smithe is fully committed to the continued manufacture and support of the existing range of conventional Aquaflex presses, which range from the entry level 10” and 13” DBX label press, to the 10” and 13” quick change ICT Instaprep label press and the 13” - 28” LX multi-substrate press for film, flexible packaging, and cartons.

‘We’re winning customers back by the level of support we’re offering,’ enthuses Mac Rosenbaum. ‘When we bought Aquaflex the company did not have an adequate stock of replacement parts. In the envelope business we keep replacement parts for machines going back to the 1940s, and we will now build a similar inventory of spares for the Aquaflex machines.’

F.L. Smithe has also been investing heavily in technical sales support. ‘The Aquaflex sales force was one of the most important assets we bought,’ says Rosenbaum. ‘But before we acquired Aquaflex they did not have good sales support in the Midwest. Now we have hired two industry veterans, including Scott Smith, a 21 year service technician previously with PCMC, to cover the Midwest.’ Aquaflex engineers from the Florida and Montreal operations have also been retained. ‘We have also brought an industry veteran Sales Representative back, Bill Easley, to cover the Midwest for us. ‘The investment is clearly paying off. Of the first ten DBXs built in Duncansville, most have already been sold.

Although initially focused on Aquaflex’s bigger user base



## Servo Sense

Despite the incorporation of multi-axis servos on the FPC press, Mac Rosenbaum is insistent that servos are not the answer to every narrow web converting need.

'Servos are not the right choice for all converters. If you cannot demonstrate the correct return on investment (ROI) you should not buy a press, even a servo driven press. Additionally, converters need to investigate servo-driven presses carefully. Just because it says "servo" on it, doesn't mean the press is totally servo driven. Many servo presses are actually hybrids containing geared systems that may or may not deliver all the anticipated benefits of this advanced technology.' Interestingly, Rosenbaum's experience in the envelope industry shows that the best operators for servo machines come from a computing background. It is a lot easier to teach mechanical aspects to a person with computer experience, than to teach computers to a 25-year mechanical machine veteran.'



*This is a picture of 3 out of 4 of the current family members of F.L. Smithe standing in front of an Aquaflex 20" multiple substrate press on our floor in Duncansville, PA, as follows: (L-R) Mac Rosenbaum, vice president sales & marketing, son-in-law of current president, William Hornung, vice president administration, great grandson of the founder of F.L. Smithe, Stuart Roberts, vice president international sales, son-in-law of current president*

in North America, Mac Rosenbaum insists the brand's longer-term future is international. There are more than 50 Aquaflex machines installed in China. Many are complicated presses often incorporating gravure stations and weighing in at more than \$1M a piece.

F.L. Smithe retains envelope machine Technicians and Sales Representatives in Germany who will sell and service the installed base of Aquaflex machines in Europe. Another direct employee will sell and support Aquaflex products in Portugal, Spain and Latin America. A major focus of Aquaflex's presence at Labelexpo Europe in September will be to find additional international agents and distributors.

For the future, F.L. Smithe will extend the intensive training and support systems offered to its international envelope

machine customers to Aquaflex users, including training in Lean Manufacturing techniques. '10 years ago Aquaflex introduced the ICT 'change cart' (Instant Change Technology) concept to assist operators in more rapid and organized press changeovers. The ICT system organizes all the tools for the next job,' says Rosenbaum.

## New press line

'When we bought Aquaflex last March we sat down with the Aquaflex sales team, as well as the Aquaflex engineering team, and several of the senior envelope machine engineers, and asked "what do you need from us first to become the market leader again?" They said a servo press,' recalls Mac Rosenbaum. By the end of April both companies' design engineers had developed the concept for a new press.

A prototype station of the Servo FPC Flexographic Press was shown at Labelexpo in Chicago last year, a three-axis servo driven machine incorporating sleeved print cylinders and sleeved anilox rolls. The press series will be available in widths from 16-32ins, and speeds up to 1,000 ft/minute.

The press is designed to handle thin, unsupported labelling films – shrink, stretch and wraparound – as well as flexible packaging and PS labels. 'Label converters are looking at ways to diversify into more profitable markets, and flexible packaging is the next step for many of them,' says Rosenbaum. The first FPC press has been sold to Control Group, a pharmaceutical packaging printer that has specified an eight-color machine with a 28-inch web width. The Control Group is an existing multiple Aquaflex press user.

The new press shows that there are many areas where envelope machinery technology crosses over into labels, film and carton converting. F.L. Smithe introduced the envelope industry's first servo-driven web folding machine at Drupa 1995. Envelope machines built by the company today typically have between 14-48 servo axis. It comes as little surprise then, that the first new press developed jointly by the F.L. Smithe and Aquaflex engineering teams was a three-axis servo machine.

Envelope machines are all about controlling web tension and registration at high speeds, as well as in-line printing (up to 8-colors stacked flexo), folding, gluing, window patching and high speed drying. They incorporate sophisticated graphical interfaces that allow for the creation, downloading, and saving of existing machine settings. Modem support is also included for remote machine diagnostics. Many of these features are incorporated in the new Aquaflex FPC press.

There are intriguing possibilities for the future. As an example, the envelope patching system could be converted to insert RFID chips into PS labels. Another possible line of development would be an in-line carton press incorporating windowing.

From the Aquaflex side of the partnership comes not only pioneering experience in Instant Change (ICT) slide out cassettes and cell-based Lean Manufacturing principles, but also extensive die cutting experience. ■



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# A slit in time

The increased significance of quality control in label production has increased the profile of Inspection, slitting and rewinding. Report by **Barry Hunt**

**H**ow long will it be before most, if not all, prime label buyers start demanding quality control certificates with delivered batches? It's a tough one to answer. But one thing is sure. Today's business climate demands that converters must deliver accurately slit rolls, which have no missing labels or labels with defects. Off-line slitting/rewinding must therefore be carried out efficiently with minimum wastage and treated as an essential pre-delivery quality control stage. Before we examine the main technical issues, it's worth remembering that such considerations are central to the aims of the manufacturers of laminated label stocks, packaging and labelling films. In fact the machinery that converts master rolls into secondary rolls has much in common with that used by converters of pressure-sensitive label stocks.

Logistically speaking, manufacturers must be geared to produce and store a great many roll widths and deliver them speedily within a widespread customer base. It's essential to achieve flexible machine set-ups, which means a greater emphasis on computerised controls. In some cases it even

includes the remote planning of set widths and automatic set-up of slitting knives on machinery located at customers' sites', says Roger Astell, senior manager communications, Atlas/Titan division of the Bobst Group ([www.bobstgroup.com](http://www.bobstgroup.com)) in Bedford, UK. He adds that this approach influenced the design of the new Atlas Universal LS, a 2-metre wide slitter/rewinder with exceptionally fast changeover times. Features include an idler vacuum pull roll to avoid creasing thin films, cleaners located after slitting wheels and automatic cleaning of main shear-cut blades.

Devices like LCD displays with touch-screen panels and/or membrane key pads to control web tension, system status, machine diagnostics and production data are essential at this level of production. In recent years they have begun to migrate to certain types of slitter/rewinders for label finishing, along with servo-motors. Fitted on machines with centre drives they help keep web tensions constant. Also, by adjusting the core shaft speed as the roll's diameter increases there is less risk of overwinding the roll at one end and leaving it too loose at the other. Heavier-duty inspection slitter/rewinders may include adjustable gearboxes to handle rolls with larger diameters.

When buying or upgrading slitter/rewinders it naturally pays to match the various options with existing and expected production patterns. For example, the varying characteristics of paper and filmic label stocks will influence the choice of cutting methods using rotary shear knives, crush knives and razor slitters. Some applications justify using models with dual rewinds, or multi-spindle turret rewinds. Basic inspection will need a strobe light, while many operations will demand a roll lifter, individual label and butt-cut count, electronic web guiding, counting sensors and flag or splice detector as essential tools.

Another option is to incorporate a die cutting module to take either flexible or solid dies. Many converters use them to produce part-printed or blank label rolls, including thermal



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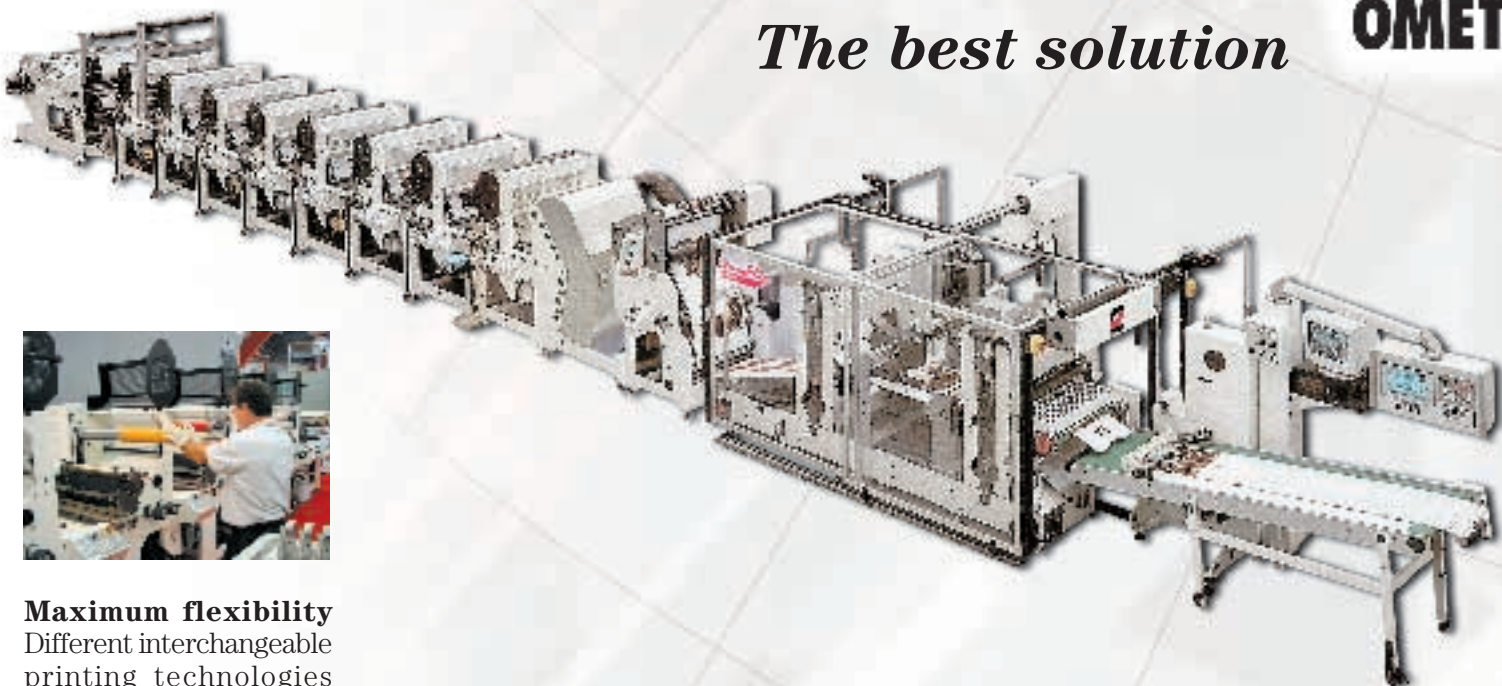
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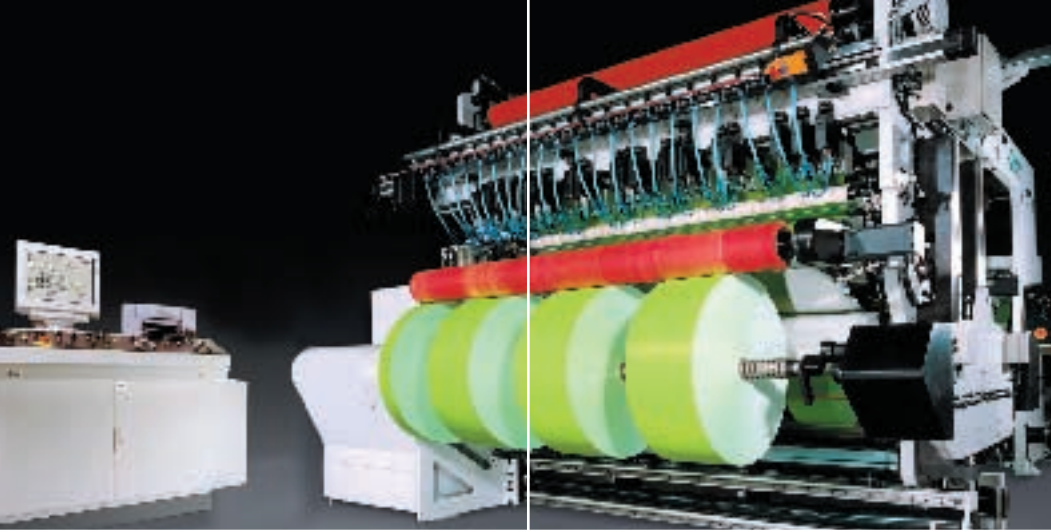
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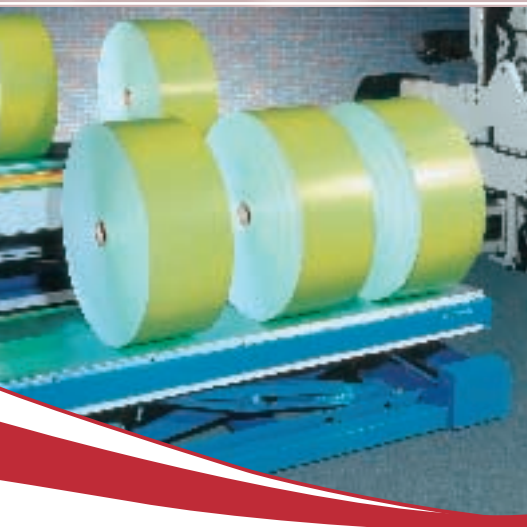


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transfer types, often adding a simple flexo overprinting module. Another possibility is fit a drop-on-demand ink jet printhead module where sequential numbering, fixed-data batch codes and industry-specific bar codes are required.

While an in-line process, it's worth noting that automated turret rewinding using two or more spindles is an alternative to conventional slitting/rewinding when processing large volumes of standardized, small rolls. Operators can remove finished rolls without stopping the host machine. Normally, a hot-melt gluing stage secures converted substrates to the roll's core. Alternatively, glueless rewinds will typically wrap the product around the core in two cycles of the mandrel and secure the tail of the label with a pressure-sensitive tab. They are recommended for preparing rolls of thermally-printed labels, where even a trace of glue would harm thermal print heads.

### Inspection

The increasing importance of slitting/rewinding as a quality control tool has raised the profile of off-line inspection. For many applications a basic strobe and one of the many video web inspection packages available today may be perfectly suitable. Advanced digital technology has led to many improvements in CCD area-scan camera technology as commonly used for on-press web inspection. For extremely

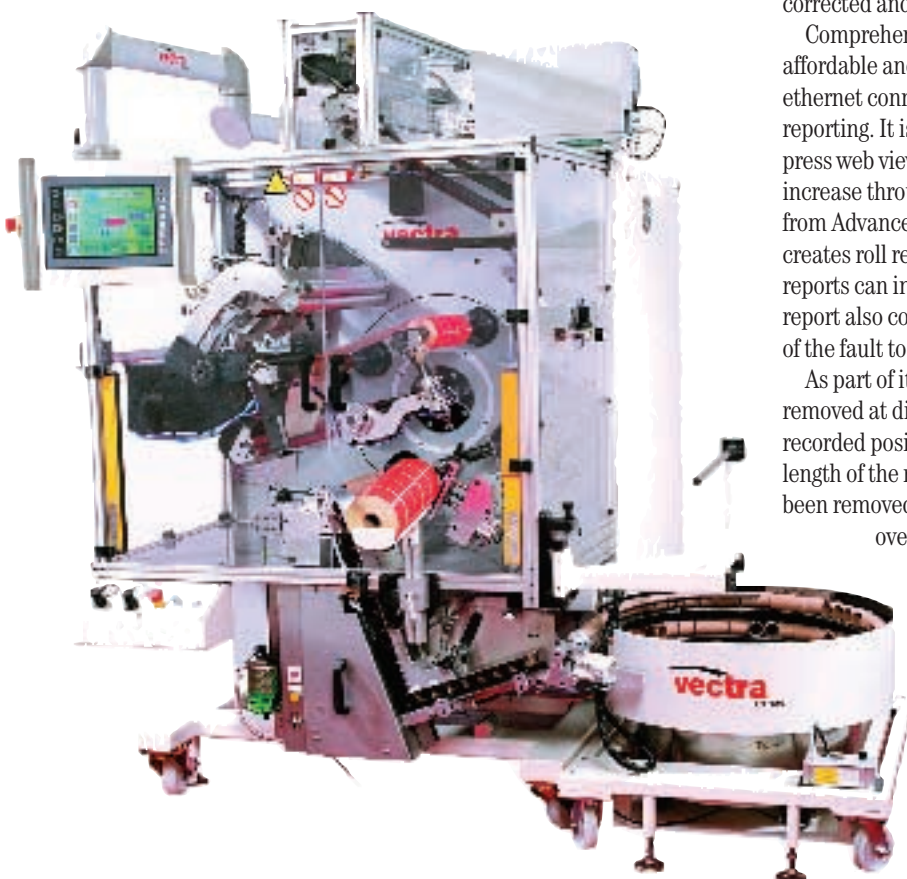
critical work, such as pharmaceutical and high-security applications, vendors of the 100 per cent vision systems will maintain that modern line-scan camera technology still cannot be beaten. These system are intended to catch random or repeating defects of printed and die-cut labels not caught during printing, including labels with missing data or labels missing from the roll. Operating in real-time, they can cause a controlled stop of the slitter/rewinder allowing

**“Automated turret rewinding using two or more spindles is an alternative to conventional slitting/rewinding when processing large volumes of standardized, small rolls”**

operators to line up the faulty part of the web with an inspection area on the splice table for rectification. Some models queue a collection of stopped faults for operator attention. Others allow for faults to be dealt with singly, with corrected and spliced webs being re-run through the camera.

Comprehensive vision systems have become both more affordable and sophisticated. Functions may include ethernet connectivity with on-line, real-time job status reporting. It is also possible to pass inspection data from on-press web viewers through to the slitter/rewinders and so increase throughput. An example is the PrintVision system from Advanced Vision Technology ([www.avt-inc.com](http://www.avt-inc.com)), which creates roll reports for jobs inspected on the press. These reports can include images of detected defects. The roll report also contains information about the type and location of the fault to facilitate easy removal.

As part of its R&D, AVT learned that defective material is removed at different stages in the production cycle, so the recorded positions of defective copy, based on the linear length of the roll can be inaccurate if a section has already been removed. The company's WorkFlow Link module overcomes this by placing a mark in the cut-off area of the web at pre-determined distances during the print run. A reader on the rewinder detects the marks and





WorkFlow Link first slows down and then stops the rewinder at the beginning of a defective section. Acting on displayed defect information, the operator removes it, makes a splice and restarts the rewinder for advancing to any other defective sections.

### Added-value inlays

Off-line finishing should be about flexibility and opportunities to add value to commodity items. One the latest methods is to integrate RFID or EAS (Electronic Article Surveillance) electronic inlays into primary, pre-printed and die-cut labels at the slitting/rewinding stage. AB Graphic International ([www.abgint.com](http://www.abgint.com)) recently introduced the Omega Ti 150 Converter. 'It gives users an entry-level into producing smart labels and cards so they can increase their market opportunities at a relatively low investment cost', says Tony Bell of ABG. It can achieve web speeds up to 60 m/minute while applicator speeds can reach 1,000 labels/minute. Its stable-mate, the Omega Ti 410, processes RFID swing tags, including those for authenticating non-contact entry systems in sports and entertainment centres. This model takes a printed web, applies

new UK and Ireland distributor, Holtby Williams International, was recently appointed. The Platform 20/20 pharmaceutical inspection and finishing machine remains the top model. It combines bi-directional inspection, fault editing and re-inspection with uni directional slitting, counting and rewinding. A single-pass operation is achieved by using a patented shuttle retrieval system, which buffers material and allows detected faults to be retrieved, corrected and re inspected, without moving the unwind or rewind rolls.

Marketing manager Brian Ivens confirms that most converting is still handled on conventional inspection slitter/rewinders. 'The accent is on durability and easy-to-use features that enhance productivity. There is also greater interest in vision-based inspection products in order to further remove any operator subjectivity with regard to quality control. The capabilities of these systems have increased and the prices have decreased significantly within the last several years.'

Inspection and slitting/rewinding is offered in two opposed modes by Rotoflex International ([www.rotoflex.com](http://www.rotoflex.com)): the HSI Horizontal series and VSI Vertical series, each has its own

**“Off-line finishing should be about flexibility and opportunities to add value to commodity items. One the latest methods is to integrate RFID or EAS (Electronic Article Surveillance) electronic inlays into primary, pre-printed and die-cut labels at the slitting/rewinding stage”**

a double sided laminate and RFID inlays, slits the web in half and laminates the first half of the web to the second, thus making a product that is printed on both sides, through die cut to register with an encapsulated RFID.

ABG also distributes the Flytec inspection slitter/rewinder. Here, added value comes from an Imaje S7 drop-on-demand ink jet printer for simultaneous reverse-side batch numbering. Besides a final inspection and finishing, users can number single-track label flows at speeds up to 150 m/minute. A PC-based camera gives a bar code reading option.

### Manufacturers' offerings

Well-known for its Tracker variants, Arpeco Engineering ([www.arpeco.com](http://www.arpeco.com)) is now owned by Precision Automation Co, Inc, which has relocated manufacturing to its headquarters in Cherry Hill, NJ. Sales, technical support and spare parts remain at Arpeco's original facilities in Mississauga, near Toronto. A

advantages and benefits. A new development is the six-model VLI E-Drive Series available in web widths from 250mm to 711mm. It features dual rewinds and a four-motor system (no clutch or brakes) to achieve tension control. Top speed is 260 m/minute. Options include a choice of slitting methods, strobe light and roll lift, which are also available on the three-model VSI range with full electronics package and adjustable splicing table.

Another North American manufacturer is Aztech Machinery of Phoenix, Arizona ([www.aztechmachinery.com](http://www.aztechmachinery.com)), but like similar companies sells globally using a network of international agents or distributors. It offers the Sidewinder BSR series with single or dual rewinds in three web widths. The SR line offers a faster top rewind speed of 1,000 ft/minute (304 m/minute) and an 18-inch web width version.

Kor Engineering ([www.korengineering.com](http://www.korengineering.com)) of Oakville, Ontario, offers the SR Series and VR Series (pharmaceutical) slitter/rewinders in various web widths up to 425mm with

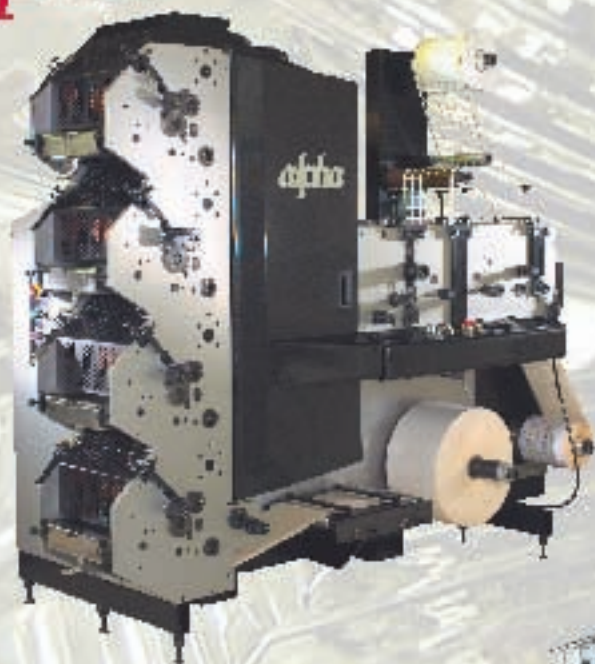
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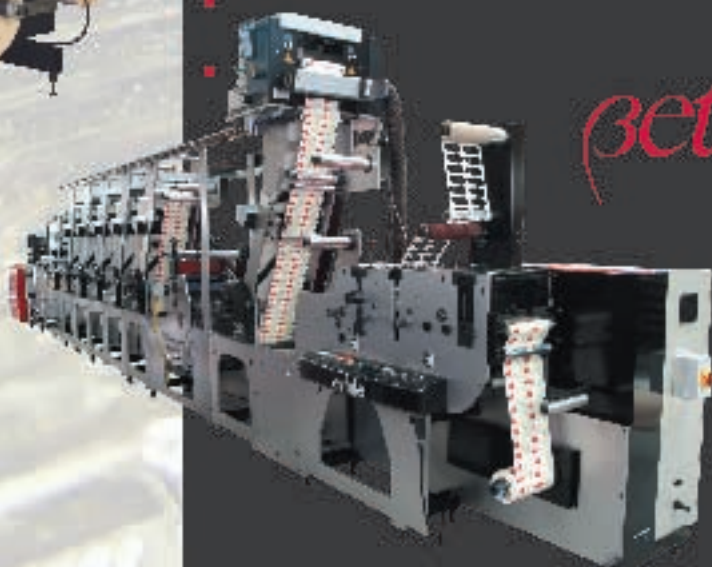
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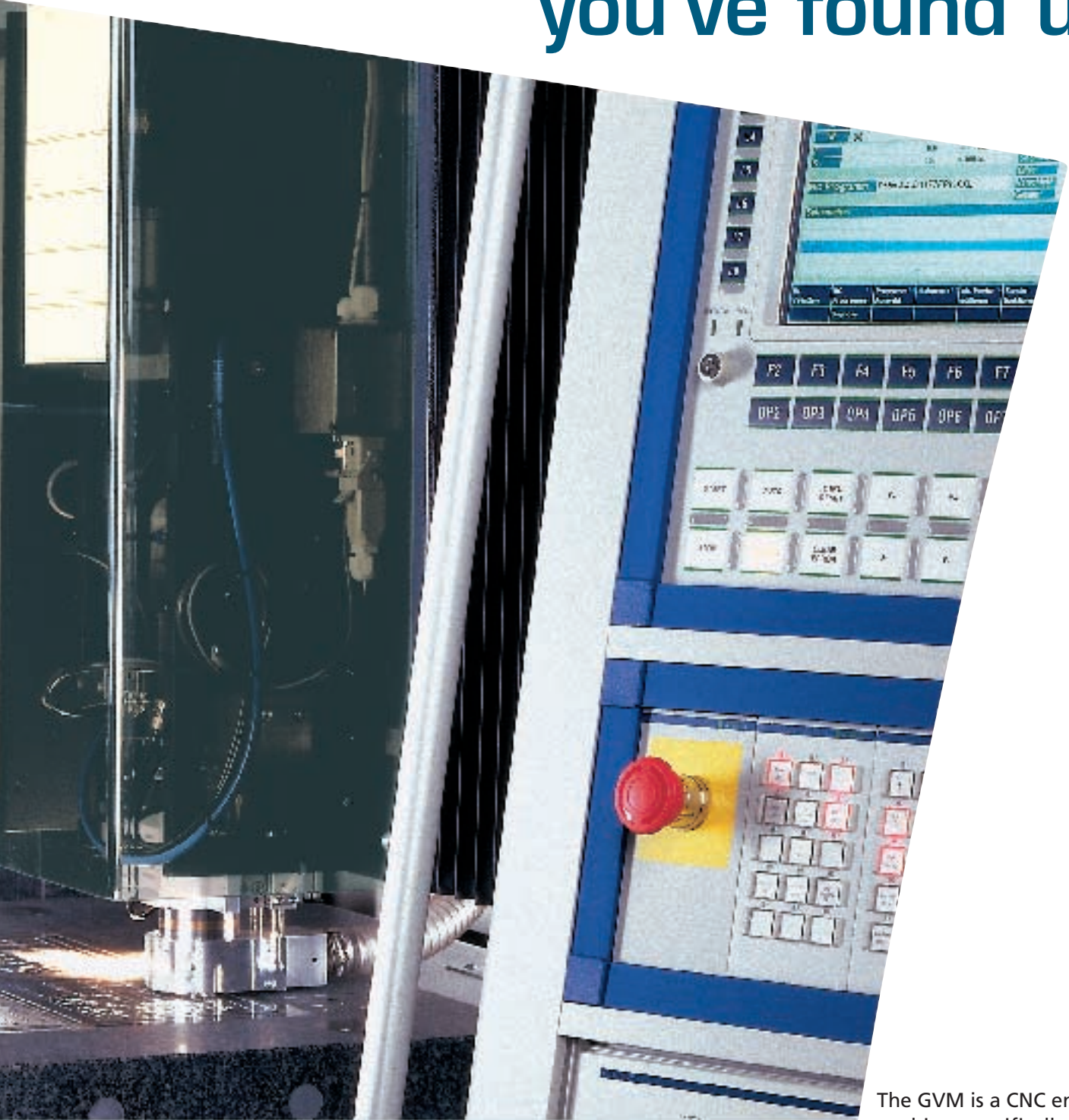
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The GVM is a CNC engraving machine, specifically developed for producing high-precision flexible dies and manufactured in Germany by Anderson Europe.

**GVM**   
engraving machine 



optional 100 percent vision inspection or strobes. The larger FW models extend from 510mm to 760mm in width. It also offers plain label slitter/rewinders, including the 305-mm wide DL machine for converting thermal transfer labels.

Ashe Converting Equipment from Ipswich produces a mixed bag of slitter/rewinder machines for label converters and large-scale converting operations. Aimed at the former group is the Opal series with a four spindle turret rewind with web inspection and slitting that can operate in either in-line or off-line mode. The UK firm also offers versions with either heavy or light-duty rotary die cutter modules, complete with re-registration control and missing label detection after die cutting. Its website ([www.ashe.co.uk](http://www.ashe.co.uk)) offers some useful technical information on basic slitting and winding techniques.

The Italian company Pietro Prati ([www.praticompany.com](http://www.praticompany.com)) manufactures the Jupiter TC 280 and TC 400, Saturn 280E and 330E and Venus TC 280S and 400S ranges of inspection slitter/rewinders (the figures refer to maximum web widths). It recently appointed GRE International as its sole agency for UK and Ireland, which promptly sold a Saturn TC 280E inspection rewriter with automatic unwind tension control to Sterling Labels in Essex.

LeoMat Construction ([www.rako-etiketten.de](http://www.rako-etiketten.de)) offers the LeoMat 300 and 400 models, with respective web widths of 310mm and 410mm and adjustable shear-cut blades. The larger, servo-driven LeoMat 500 has a 1 metre unwind diameter and

**“The latest entrant to slitting/  
rewinding section is unusual in being  
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dling and consistent tension control  
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narrow-web presses”**

a standard roll lifter. The S version offers integral die cutting units and matrix rewinds, while an electronic register control on the R version allows users to overprint pre-printed labels with an integrated print unit prior to slitting. Both 410-mm wide models run up to 200 m/minute. The entry-level LeoMat Junior comes in web widths of 310mm and 410mm.

On a smaller scale, Labelmate ([www.labelmate.com](http://www.labelmate.com)) makes a range of slitter/rewinders for processing small-format data labels printed across the web on label presses or non-impact printers. The company also manufactures basic unwinders, rewinders, label counters and dispensers at plants in Henderson in Nevada, and Brussels.

Finally, it's worth noting that the latest entrant to slitting/rewinding section is unusual in being a press manufacturer, although such issues as accurate web handling and consistent tension control at speed are integral to building narrow-web presses. Late last year Mark Andy ([www.markandy.com](http://www.markandy.com)) announced it would introduce the VSR 300, an inspection, slitting/rewinder offered in several web widths. The company already offers the stand-alone DCR 1000 and VSR 300D die cutter units, so the new machine will further its declared aims to become a single source supplier based on its narrow-web press building experience. ■

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# Winning the first order



**David Harrison**, pan-European sales director of the Skanem Group, gives a personal view of how to hold onto hard won business.

**E**ureka! You have won that first, long sought-after labels order from a company whose business is going to be of long-term value to your firm. Crack open the bottle of champagne and celebrate a future of plain sailing!

But wait a moment... that is a sure fire formula for failure, almost a guarantee that this hard won business will drift away on an ebb tide of dissatisfaction from a client who expected better.

Winning the first order from any prospective client is far, far more than just making an attractive price pitch and hoping it undercuts the opposition. In fact, while price is important it is only one component of the sales pitch that is computed after undertaking a lot of rigorous research that starts with... a shopping expedition.

Drop in at the supermarket where your prospective client sells the product and look carefully at the existing labels. This I call the 'shelf audit'. Look carefully for clues to ways your company can improve the sales appeal of those products by spotting the short-comings of those labels you want to replace.

Do the labels fit the bottle or container? Can design improvements increase its eye-appeal? Are the colours OK and consistent? Is it readable and the small print crisp and clear? Is it affixed securely? Are those labels robust enough to sustain handling or are they scuffed? Is the bar code in a position that is convenient for scanning?


All of these are the vital first questions you need to ask

**“Drop in at the supermarket where your prospective client sells the product and look carefully at the existing labels. This I call the ‘shelf audit’”**

yourself and the answers must be how and why your company can provide a better label that improves the sales prospects of the product.

The next step is to consult your own design department – the ‘artwork audit’ – to see if the existing design can be subtly changed to improve the label printing process. Can bar code panels, logos and colours be better harmonised across the range of the product to avoid making too many separate printing plates? That is important for two reasons – besides increasing the eye appeal factor it also increases the efficiency with which your company can produce the labels.

Now it is time to examine the substrate. Is it suitable for the product? If the label is for a bottle of shampoo it is going to get



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wet in use, so will the substrate stand up to water without disintegrating? If the label is for an oil product, can it cope with trickles without staining? If the container is not rigid, can the label cope with the flexibility?

Consumers can be finicky people and put off a product because the label becomes scruffy with use – or drops off! So 'stickability' is another factor to be considered.

Next comes a visit to the client's plant for a close-up inspection of the packaging or bottling facilities.

Is his applicator set up to maximise efficiency? If the product is produced in the millions yet the applicator can only cope with a couple of hundred labels a minute can adjustments be made or a better piece of equipment introduced that doubles line speed?

Check the in-feed, the 'beak' that detaches the label from its backing and introduces it to the packaging and the 'rub-down' to see if this part of the process can be made more seamless.

Continue the close inspection down the line. Are the guard rails in good condition and not causing damage to the newly-applied label? Is the overall environment conducive to producing a pristine labelling job?

Most companies are expert in their own production techniques but, to them, labelling is an ancillary operation and your expertise can well be greater than their's, so give them the benefit of it as part of the unstated service that you will provide with the contract.

Increasing the output reduces the cost and boosts the producer's profit – and that could be the clincher in winning a tightly-priced competitive pitch.

**Now it is time to look at the logistics.**

When, and how frequently, would the prospective customer want the labels? Would it be more convenient to do long runs and supply the labels in bulk, or would it be more efficient to undertake shorter print runs and supply at regular intervals?

Does the client want to stockpile vast reserves of labels or could your company hold the stocks and provide them on a just-in-time basis? Stock holding carries a cost and if that can be reduced for both parties by smooth planning, so much the better.

And agree with the client the arrangements for 'rush jobs' when there is a sudden upsurge in demand and he requires a rapid response for labels that call for additional print runs and deliveries out of schedule. Reliability is a great assessor.

Done all that? Now you can clinch the contract with a happy customer. And now you can crack the champagne... but Mumm's the word! ■

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# Wrap around label wins Gold OPPack Labeling Award

**Mike Fairley** reports on the winners of ExxonMobil's annual competition recognizing excellence in OPP labeling

**J**udged this year in Luxembourg, the pack selected by the jury for the Gold Labeling OPPack Award 2004 was for the 'Arwa' reel fed wrap around label film. This attractive mineral water bottle application comes from the United Arab Emirates, the enduser being the Al Ahlia Gulf Line General Trading Co. (Coca Cola Bottling UAE) with the Label Lyte material being converted by Pacman Middle East.

The jury remarked that the purity and quality of the product was reflected through the packaging, with the Label-Lyte film offering stiffness and easy machinability on the labeling machine, as well as very good flexographic print quality. They highlighted the economic and efficient use of label material, since the area used for labelling was restricted without neglecting the marketing function of the label.

The jury selection for the Silver Labeling OPPack Award was for Viva La Prugna, labelled with Label-Lyte Lithor in mould label film. This in mould (IML) application for tubs of dried fruit comes from Italy. Printer of the winning labels was GPS/Rotomec, while the in-mould labeller was Syra and the end-user Noberasco.

The jury remarked that the product was highly appealing, thanks to excellent printing and an attractive design, with the moulding and labeling in the same process, giving the chosen film a very smooth appearance and feel. They felt that the pack was also worthy of praise because it demonstrated a new kind of packaging for this kind of product.

The pack selected by the jury for the Bronze Labeling OPPack Award was for Elch Pro Universal Repair Coatings, an IML tub application from the United Kingdom, Germany and Belgium labeled with Label-Lyte Lithor in mould label film. The enduser is Rhodia Sealants and the in-mould labeler was Saier Verpackungstechnik. The printer was Drukkerij Verstraete.

The jury praised the application for being a new step in communicating the marketing message to the consumer, with good quality printing, enabled by the in-mould label process. They felt that the product set a new high standard of 'Do-It-Yourself' product packaging.

Held in the regional headquarters of ExxonMobil Chemical Films Europe in Luxembourg on January 14th 2005. The independent expert jury decision demonstrated a keenness for original packaging, executed with highest quality standards and with a strong leaning towards consumer appeal.

The jury comprised five experts within the packaging industry: Aude Giabicani, Senior Production Manager, Team Créatif Design Agency, based in France; Alexander Boiko, from the Russian Federation of Commerce and Industry; Edgard Schroyens, International Packaging Consultant based in the Netherlands; Dr Sergio Visona, Packaging Consultant for Conpack, based in Italy; Pierre Hamelink, Worldwide Product Manager, Bosch, based in the Netherlands.

Apart from the OPPack Labelling Awards, the jury also selected a winner and two runners-up in the 'Flexible Packaging Applications' category. ■

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Around 100 exhibitors participated at Flexo 2005, held at the NEC, Birmingham. **Barry Hunt** reports.



## Digital accent at Flexo 05

**W**hile a shadow of Labelexpo Europe, the biennial Flexo events held at the NEC offer UK visitors a useful roundup of all aspects of flexo technology, especially digital or conventional platemaking and consumables. This year Flexo 2005 had a new organizer, IIR Exhibitions, who decided to expand the show's remit by including suppliers of digital printing and converting technology.

About 20 per cent of exhibitors at Flexo 2005 featured some aspects of digital technology, although unfortunately not necessarily showing the actual hardware. This approach acknowledges that digital printing is a useful complementary option that has attracted the attention of flexo printers, especially with the growth of shorter runs within an added-value context. Digitised imaging of flexo plates and sleeves was

**“Digital printing has attracted the attention of flexo printers, especially with the growth of shorter added-value runs”**

a particularly strong feature at Flexo 2005, thereby proving the steady growth of this technology in western Europe, with UK label and packaging suppliers well to the fore. UK-based Lüscher Flexo exhibited the FlexPose!direct laser ablation system (which superseded the ZEDMini). Based on sealed CO<sub>2</sub> laser engraving technology, it produces plates or sleeves capable of holding a 1 per cent dot at 175 lpi for flexo or letterpress applications. The company claims increasing interest from flexo packaging printers in its 'positive' polymer sleeve technology, with 13 orders received worldwide since FlexPose!direct was launched at Drupa 2004. A smaller version with a 600mm width, the 250L, will be launched at Labelexpo Europe in September following beta trials at a Japanese trade shop. Also shown was the Swiss-built FlexPose!, a silver-mask ablation system for flexo, offset and letterpress plates aimed at label converters.

On the Litho Supplies stand, Creo gave the UK debut of the 'next generation' ThermoFlex Mid II with a standard 890 x 1,193mm plate size. Features include faster loading/unloading times of all plates in any size and thickness, while a new TIFF front end allows operators to improve quality and minimize plate waste. The platesetter comes with HyperFlex resolution enhancement software, plus Creo's family of flexo screening packages. Creo also showed the Prinergy Evo, an automated PDF workflow method for a smaller packaging businesses and label converters. Litho Supplies complimented the platesetter with a



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912 Exposure Unit from MJS Electrical & Technical and the new Lava thermal processor from MacDermid Printing Solutions.

Esko-Graphics featured the CDI Spark XT platesetter (plate imaging size of 900 x 1,200mm) with Scope Software updates (also suitable for all CDI platesetters) including Optics 80, Grapholas, Superskip and PlatePatcher. CDI Advance is a new automatic plate loading system. The company also announced a new sleeve option for the CDI Compact with cantilever arm for tool-free sleeve changing. New to the UK is the MultiCUT toolhead for the Kongsberg XL22 sample-making table designed for cutting, creasing and scoring low-volume corrugated and folding carton jobs. Esko Graphics' FlexRip and Kaleidoscope Scope workflow software for HP Indigo digital presses was featured.

HP Indigo focused on the labeling and flexible packaging capabilities of the new ws4050 digital color press, especially short-to-medium run shrink-sleeves. However, it may have regretted not bringing a machine to the show. Agfa was also without a working example of the factory, a web-fed digital ink

**“CDI Advance is a new automatic plate loading system. Esko-Graphics also announced a sleeve option for the CDI Compact with cantilever arm for tool-free sleeve changing”**

jet press developed by Dotrix, which it acquired in January 2004. Visitors could see, however, an interactive satellite link involving a user in Belgium, showing four job files going onto the press in real-time. The SPICE print engine (Single Pass Ink jet Colour Engine) uses UV curable inks and has a modular design for integration in OEM press lines.

Dantex Graphics showed the Aquaflex AQF 480 and 900 E/EF Digital in-line platemaking unit and AQF 500 Digital combination processor. They produce Toreflex and Torelief water-washable flexo plates plates in widths from 19 to 35 inches. Both the 480 E/EF and the 900E/EF have a recirculating wash system, a simple VDU operator interface, post exposure and de-tack and pulsed hot-air drying. The entire platemaking process takes about 32 minutes. The PLS 24 Pointlight Source exposure system has a new active multi-chamber ACCUVAC blanket for quick drawdown, high or low lighting options, and optional motorized position filter holder and diffusion screen. Also shown was the OpenRIP Flexo Label Edition and the Odessa digital proofing system.

DuPont Imaging Technologies featured its Cyrel FAST digital platemaking system using a thermal transfer process - no

processing chemicals are used - to produce exposed flexo plates or sleeves in less than an hour. The large-format TD4260 is the latest version for packaging printers. Among the handful of press suppliers, Focus Label Machinery introduced the Proflex press for the first time at a UK show. It displayed a six-color UV flexo and a four-color conventional flexo version of this compact, modular press. Available in web widths of 250 and 330 mm wide, the Proflex includes quick-change print cartridges, automatic plate throw-off and constant rotating anilox rolls. Options include delamination/relamination, rotary cold foil transfer, screen process module, turn-bar, sheet conveyor and enclosed/chambered ink ducts. Also displayed was a six-colour Centreflex CI press and the new single-colour Reflex. Besides blank labels, flood coated labels and laser sheets, a re-registration device allows the overprinting of pre-printed labels. Web widths are 250mm, 330mm and 430mm. The Reflex operates with a UV curing unit or infra-red drying as used on the Proflex and Centreflex models.

Nilpeter UK showed an FA-3300 modular press equipped with three UV flexo units and a BST PowerScope 3000 video web inspection system. Options for this model include rotary or flatbed die cutting, hot or cold foiling, adjustable UV curing lamps, chill drums and gravure cassettes. The FA 3300 also allows tool-free conversion of individual flexo print into screen printing units with the Nilpeter Drop-In cassette. Both conventional flexo plates and seamless sleeves can be used. Paper Converting Machine Co (PCMC) took an information stand to promote its Gearless line of flexo presses, as well as the 26-inch wide Evolution in-line press for labels and packaging. Drent Goebel promoted the VSOP variable-size hybrid press using offset sleeves. Web paths can be configured to suit individual paper, foil, film or carton board applications for label and packaging products. The range now comprises web widths of 520mm, 850mm, 1,120mm and 1,250mm, with tops speeds of 300m/minute on all models.

UV curing systems supplier GEW showed a space-saving e-Brick UV power supply unit, said to retain a high level of UV output with a 30 per cent less energy consumption compared with competitive systems. It also displayed JetCure, a compact UV lamp head engineered for curing ink jet inks. It is offered in both a shutterless and shuttered design depending on whether printing is a continuous or intermittent operation. Also featured was VCP Film for the UV curing system of unsupported label and packaging films. IST introduced the MBS-2 UV curing system with integrated URS cold mirror technology and water-cooled undershield. It was developed for narrow-web label printing, with reduced energy consumption (lamp output of 160 W/cm) in mind. This is claimed to reach production speeds on film and other substrates previously only possible with conventional UV systems using a specific lamp output of 200 W/cm. Also new are the electronic lamp control (ELC) for BLK and MBS versions and the UCS-N (user control system) for touch-screen control





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## “Tectonic International launched a low-cost print inspection system that offers wireless transfer of on-demand images from a print run to networked PCs”

over lamp units. Another new system is BLK-U2 specifically for CI flexo presses. It can be run either in normal atmospheric conditions or in an inert atmosphere in a closed loop. Among the ink makers present, ANI showed for the first time with its new partner BASF Printing Systems, following their recent merger under new ownership. Among new products was Flexocure Ivory, a UV flexo ink with a high level of opacity. While complimentary to CombiWhite high-opacity screen inks, the new ink can replace rotary screen for certain applications. Seen for the first time in the UK, HolographINK is a patented ink for obtaining decorative holographic effects with flexo printing on a variety of substrates. Intercolor introduced Optiflex SF UV inks for use with high-shrink film applications. They are said to offer a successful alternative to both solvent gravure and cationic UV curing on both shrink film and untreated metallized films. Besides UV flexo inks for printing cartons and flexible packaging, the company showed specialized thermochromic, UV luminescent, photochromic inks and high-lustre metallic inks.

Tectonic International launched KT2it, a low-cost print inspection system that offers wireless transfer of on-demand images from a print run to networked PCs for inspection by nominated personnel. 'Live image transfer' combines aspects of quality control and management monitoring, says the company. By contrast, its top-end Jaguar is a 100 per cent web inspection system for 'passive' and 'active' defect detection and color monitoring. Operation is through a touch-screen with a 17-inch TFT screen for job set-up and a 19-inch on-press print monitor. Having absorbed Compass Business Systems and Jenem Computers, Shuttleworth Business Systems has introduced a new MIS package designed for roll label printers. Included with the conventional costing/estimating and production scheduling MIS modules is Customer Relationship Management (CRM). Users can track and manage all activities, or events, from pre-press to delivery with an easy-to-use interface. Another function allows users to build libraries governing the selection of die cutter cylinders and anilox rolls, with full job history and life expectancy, to effect cost savings in this area. ■

## News extra

### UV upgrade for unsupported film

Belgium label printer Drukkerij Dejonghe now has the ability to produce unsupported films for wrap around labels and sleeves on its Gallus EM280 press thanks to the new VCP FILM UV upgrade solution from GEW.

The press was originally supplied in 2002 with a standard VCP UV system from GEW. In 2004 the need to print and convert heat sensitive films arose. States Alexis Dejonghe, managing director of Drukkerij Dejonghe, 'The original solution we were asked to consider involved removing all the existing UV lamp heads and replacing them with a completely different UV system that incorporated water cooled chill rolls. Since this meant substantial costs and a time-consuming process with associated lost production, we approached GEW for an alternative.'

According to Marcus Greenbrook of GEW, 'The solution Drukkerij Dejonghe sought was quite straightforward and already available. We had already foreseen the demand for unsupported film applications and developed the VCP FILM upgrade for label presses already out there in the field.' The upgrade involved keeping the original VCP UV curing module and adding components comprised of a water-cooled cylinder with two turn rollers. This simply required the addition of some water hose and a modest refrigeration unit. All of the original components were unchanged and kept in place providing a low cost upgrade.

Adds Alexis Dejonghe, 'The standard VCP system supplied with the press has always performed well but when faced with the growing market demand for wrap around labels and sleeves we needed an effective alternative. The VCP FILM solution was cost effective and the installation was completed quickly and effectively by GEW with very little production down time.'

'The system is well engineered and the performance speaks for itself, with the same temperature of material going into lamp number 1 as it does exiting lamp number 7. Since the installation, we have run film materials without any shrinking or distortion and without any registration problems.'



# Semi-rotary offset press boosts PS capacity at wine printer

French wine label convertor Ruel has expanded its PS capacity with a Codimag Viva 340. **John Penhallow** reports on the press manufacturer's 200th Viva installation

**V**isitors from all over Europe, and even from North America, recently braved freezing fog to make their way to Poitiers in Central France. The occasion in question was the inauguration of Codimag's 200th Viva press. The presence of such numbers of local dignitaries and international guests put Poitiers at the heart of the narrow web world, if only for a day.

The Viva 340 is a semi-rotary narrow web press, made in France by Codimag. Since the first Viva was designed ten years ago, two hundred of these presses have been sold to label converters throughout the world. Originally designed as a UV letterpress machine, the Viva has since 1999 been available also in waterless offset, and this was the model chosen by Imprimerie Ruel in Poitiers

**“We have to cope with a lot of format changes. With semi-rotary technology, there is no need to change cylinders, and the same sized blanket can be used for all repeat lengths”**

Ruel is a high-profile label converter, employing 140 people and with annual sales of over ten million euros. Like quite a few French label printers, Ruel specializes in wine labels. In fact wines and spirits labels currently make up 85 per cent of the company's business, and CEO Antoine Bourin is looking to the new press to help in his strategy of diversification into other label end-user markets. ‘We have traditionally been strong in wet-glue labels, and we now have four sheet-fed offset presses. However in 1997 we decided it was time to move into the self-adhesive business. In that year we installed a Japanese roll label offset press, and this was followed in 2001 by another, bigger rotary press from the same supplier.’ What made him decide to go for a Codimag press this time

round, we asked. ‘The trend is clearly towards self-adhesive, so we needed the extra capacity. The Viva 340 gives us higher productivity thanks to a bigger print area (305 x 340 mm), and allows us to run the whole printing and converting process in line, including hotfoil and screen-printing.’

**The Viva 340 installed at Ruel is a combination press with a total of 10 semi-rotary modules:**

- waterless offset unit
- screen-printing unit
- hot-foil stamping station
- flexo varnishing unit
- embossing station
- die-cutting station

It is equipped with a special ink duct system by AP for color reproduction, and has an in-line stripper rewinder supplied by PRATI. The screen-printing station is the result of a partnership between Codimag and Stork. Said Codimag's boss Alain Demo: ‘We have worked closely with Stork Print to develop the semi-rotary screen unit now available as an option on all our Viva 340's. Screen-printing is increasingly important to many of our customers who, like Imprimerie Ruel, want to expand into areas like cosmetics and body care labels. Today's Vivas are go-anywhere, do-anything combination presses offering all the quality of offset plus the unique advantages of the semi-rotary principle.’

Pascal Fabbri, Ruel's production manager, showed visitors the finer points of the new press, and in particular the very accurate water-cooled temperature control (this has to be fine-tuned for waterless offset, but at the same time avoids the need for an ink-water balance which is often seen as one of the drawbacks of conventional offset technology). ‘We have to cope with a lot of format changes,’ he explained ‘and that's where semi-rotary technology scores, since there is no need to change cylinders, and the same sized blanket can be used for all repeat lengths.’

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“Visitors could see how overprinting part of the silver foil surface could give the impression of a label with both silver and gold printing – but without the expense of running two hotfoil stations”

Of particular interest to visitors was the positioning of the rotary hot foil unit before the last of the offset print stations. Visitors could see how overprinting part of the silver foil surface could give the impression of a label with both silver and gold printing – but without the expense of running two hotfoil stations. ‘The waterless offset option is ideal for both paper-based and synthetic substrates,’ added Pascal Fabbri. The Codimag press was demonstrated running a filmic laminate, with a semi-rotary embossing unit newly developed by Codimag for this customer. Based on photopolymer plate technology, and using the advantages of the semi-rotary principle (one cylinder does all jobs), this embossing unit is presented as ‘the fastest set-up times and the most cost-effective solution for embossing on narrow web presses’.

Ruel does all its pre-press work in-house, using CTP for direct imaging of its offset plates. It also employs a team of designers. ‘All this is part of the service we offer to our customers’ says Antoine Bourin. ‘When you’re talking about speed to market, our design and pre-press departments offer the best and above all the quickest service to a client in a hurry – and that describes most of our customers today.’

Codimag, based near Paris, is one of the world’s leading manufacturers of semi-rotary presses for the label industry. The 200 Viva presses installed over the past decade are operating all over the world, including Russia and Australia. Most however were sold to label converters in France, Germany and Italy. The Viva 340 waterless, currently the top runner in Codimag’s stable, has seen sales of over 65 machines since it was first launched in 1999. ■

## Installations

### Go Tape and Label Inc Xeikon 330 digital press

Xeikon America, a wholly owned subsidiary of Punch International, has sold a Xeikon 330 digital label press to Go Tape and Label, Inc. of Miami, Florida for its short run label requirements.

Says Wendy Fried, president of Go Tape and Label, ‘Now that short run printing is really taking off thanks to the Xeikon 330, we are ready to expand services to both new and existing customers. With our client base already in place, variable data on labels and barcodes will be no problem. The 330 will improve our quality, overall turnaround time and delivery.’

As far back as 1991, the company made commitments to short-run label production and hired an in-house computer programmer to upgrade their technology with a customized program.

With business already developed in several consumer product markets that include labels for hair care products, sport beverages, bottled water, automotive oils and vitamins, Fried is planning to utilize the versatility of the Xeikon 330 to also print Point-of-Purchase (POP) for Go Tape and Label’s existing customers.

Go Tape and Label, Inc. has been serving flexographic printing customers since 1964, and has a geographical customer base which includes United States, Central and South America and the Islands.

### Logotech Gallus R200

Logotech, Fairfield, NJ, has installed its third Gallus letterpress, a 10-color Gallus R200 that features four silkscreen units, in-line hotstamping, and a UV coating and lamination stand.

The press allows silkscreen units to be placed anywhere on the line, and by incorporating them before or after certain other colors, rich silkscreen inks and thick laydown can then be used to optimum effect. The length of the machine facilitates the production of labels featuring special options such as peel-off or semi-attached coupons. A full report will appear in the next issue of L&L.

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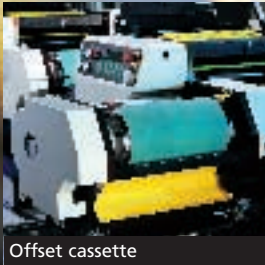
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# FINAT raises industry concerns with EU proposals

As the legislative program of the expanded European Union threatens to impact label printers and users, FINAT has strengthened its initiatives aimed at Brussels legislators

## Release liners NOT packaging

Early 2004, the revised version of the Packaging and Packaging Waste Directive was adopted by the EU, introducing three criteria by which it should be defined whether or not certain materials should be regarded as 'packaging materials'. In support of these criteria, in Annex I of the Directive, a list with illustrative examples of packaging and non-packaging materials was included. In addition, a number of materials including, release liners of self-adhesive labels, was specified in the Directive to be reviewed with priority as illustrative examples on their 'packaging/non-packaging' status by the so-called Article 21 Committee appointed by the EU commission.

On 2 February, the Article 21 Committee met in Brussels on this issue. On behalf of a group of paper and board packaging associations, the so-called Paper and Packaging Co-ordination Group (PPCG), a position paper was submitted to the committee members, reviewing the industry's position on the priority materials. However, it is quite difficult for outsiders to the label industry to understand the essential role of release liners in the production process of self-adhesive labels. And although FINAT supports the arguments raised in the PPCG paper, it was felt that a separate FINAT position paper was needed to clarify why release liners should not be regarded as packaging material, but as an integral part of the product. A copy of this position paper can be obtained by way of the FINAT secretariat ([info@finat.com](mailto:info@finat.com)).

**"It is quite difficult for outsiders to the label industry to understand the essential role of release liners in the production process of self-adhesive labels"**

At the time L&L went to press the outcome of the Article 21 Committee meeting was still unknown. More information will follow as soon as possible.

## REACH to enter parliament

The EU Commission proposal for REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals) is currently under examination by the European Parliament (EP). According to the Commission proposal, enterprises that manufacture or import more than one tonne of a chemical substance per year will be required to register it in a central database, and to communicate and take adequate measures to control the identified risks. In co-operation with a number of industries, at this moment case studies are being carried out, amongst others to assess the effect of 'deselection' of (especially small volume) chemicals for downstream users. 'Deselection' refers to the fact that these chemicals would be taken off the market as it would simply be too expensive to register and test them under the new regime.

Together with its lobby alliance partner, downstream user platform CheMi, FINAT is working on a position paper on REACH in which the industry position on a number of downstream user issues, like deselection, prioritisation and simplification of REACH, substances in articles, confidentiality etc. are put forward. The new chemicals bill is now about to enter its parliamentary phase. And as diverging business voices are making themselves heard, CheMi is considering the submission of amendments to the current legislation from the perspective of downstream users.

## Self adhesive labels and food contact legislation

The Council Directive 89/109/EEC of 21 December 1988 (in short Framework Directive) establishes the general principles applicable to all food contact materials, which makes this directive relevant for self adhesive labels directly in contact with



foodstuff. However under certain conditions, also labels on other Food Contact Materials (FCM) can be affected.

The Framework Directive introduces separate directives on substances used in the manufacture of materials and articles intended for food contact. For instance, plastics are regulated by the Commission Directive 2002/72/EC. The Plastics Directive only applies to materials and articles (mono- and multi-layered), consisting exclusively of plastics, which are bound together by means of adhesives or by any other means, which in their finished product state are intended to come into contact or are brought into contact with foodstuffs and are intended for that purpose. This means that multi-layer structures containing other materials besides plastics, even if the layer intended to come into direct contact with the foodstuff is a plastic, are not within the scope of the current Plastics Directive.

As adhesives are not seen as a plastic in the sense of the Plastics Directive, labels directly on the foodstuff do not have a plastic layer in direct contact with food and therefore are not

within the scope of the Plastics Directive. Furthermore, the focus of the Directive is on layers exclusively of plastics, which means that mono- or multi-layer plastic structures that are printed, coated, etc. are excluded.

However, the European Commission is working on a revised version of the Plastics Directive. The proposed changes in the so called 'Super Regulation' are expected to affect self adhesive labels. The most important change is the fact that the draft Regulation will apply to all layers of materials and articles in their finished state, whether in direct or indirect contact with the foodstuffs, provided the layer in contact with food is a plastic. The legal demands will apply to the whole label, 'as it is sold or used', including label stock material, adhesives, inks, coatings etc. This means that under the new regulation, labels on FCM's will be within scope if the food contact layer is a plastic.

For more detailed information on the position of self-adhesive labels within current and upcoming food contact legislation FINAT has prepared an information sheet, which can be obtained by way of the secretariat ([info@finat.com](mailto:info@finat.com)). ■

## Carton sector debates inline converting



**A**round 100 delegates attended the recent European Carton Manufacturers Association (ECMA) Seminar in Strasbourg on the 3 and 4 March to hear leading sheet-fed and web-fed press manufacturers and customers discuss the relative merits of 'Extended Printing Technologies – Do they justify the investment?'

Opening the speaking sessions, label industry specialist Mike Fairley drew parallels between the technology and service requirements of the label industry and those of the folding carton sector, and also highlighted the growth of in-line web-fed printing of labels using multi-color – and even multi-process – presses to add value, reduce time between processes and improve management information.

Keith Gilchrist, COO of Chesapeake and CEO of Field Group, highlighted some of the fallacies and realities of investment decision making, and reviewed the main drivers entering the investment equation between sheet and web printing solutions

and in-line and off-line converting operations.

These two opening speakers were followed by top executives of three leading offset press manufacturers – Heidelberg, Koenig & Bauer and MAN – who, between them, presented a concise overview of their latest technology allowing single step and in-line printing and converting of sheet printed cartons, as well as the economic aspects of their respective investment propositions.

Following lunch, a panel of speakers from Bobst, Drent Goebel and Gallus (and Gallus customers) assessed how reel-to-reel, in-line narrow and mid-web press solutions offered benefits in the production of cartons, particularly where added-value and in-line converting/finishing solutions were required.

An open discussion between the speaker panel and the delegates ended the seminar programme, which seemed to conclude that all printing technologies and options had a place in the carton industry and were currently being used.

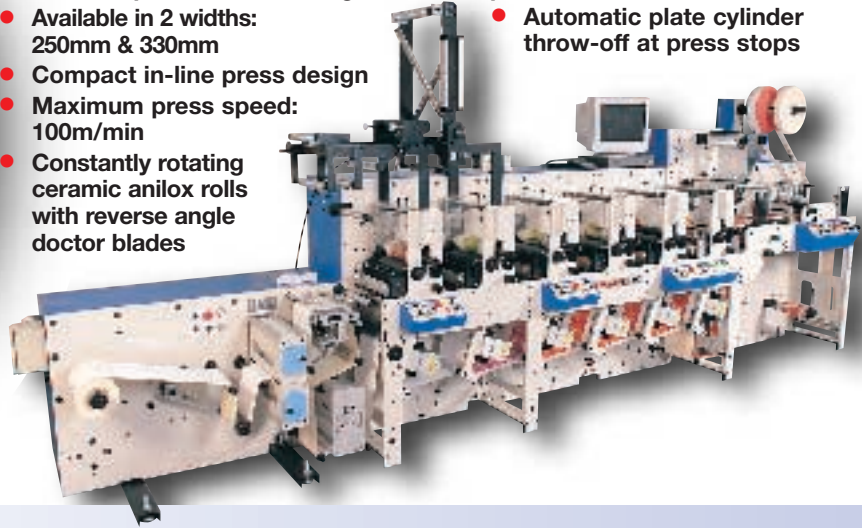
It very much depended on the type and size of carton, how many print and converting operations were required, the end-use sector and carton printer preference. ■

**Mike Fairley**

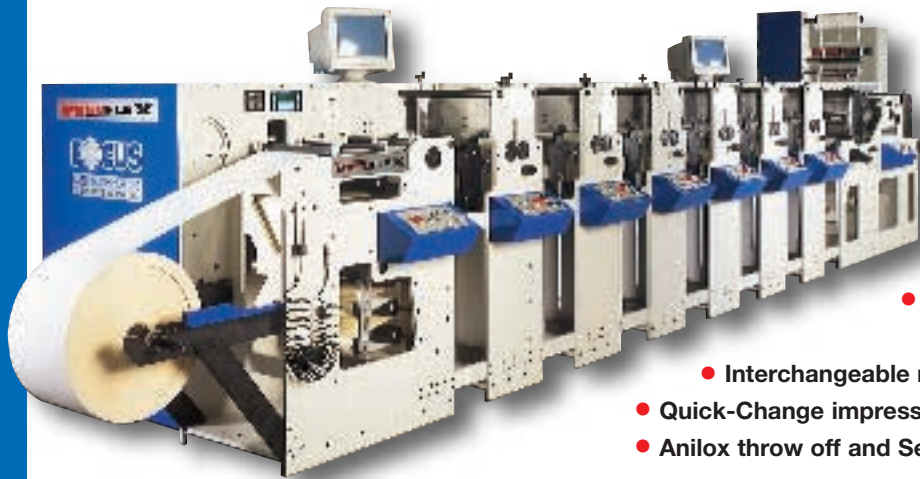
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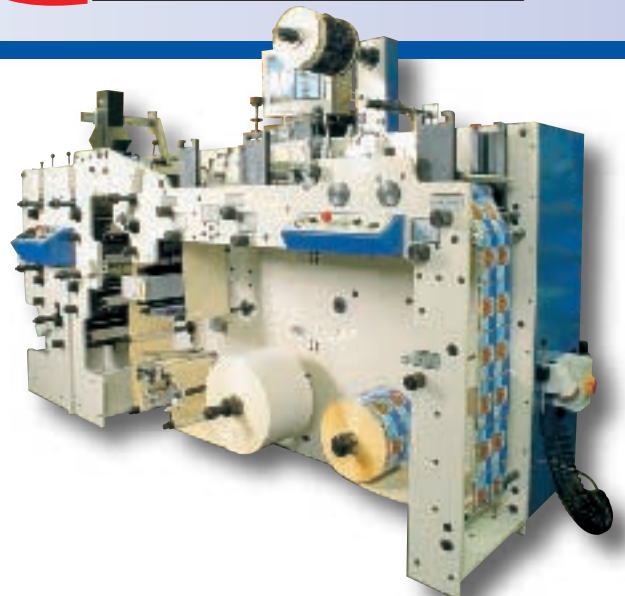
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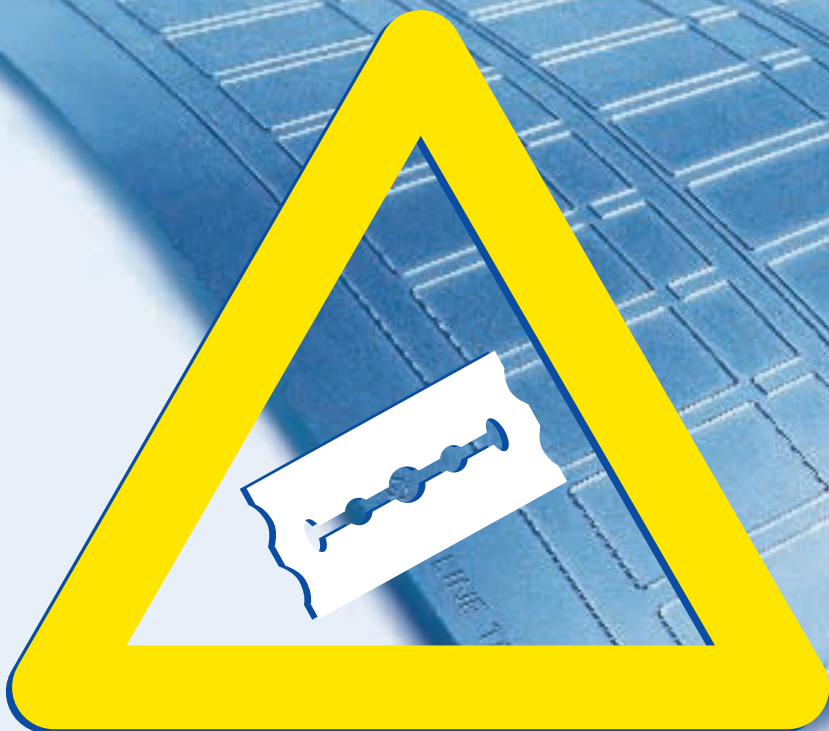
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# TLN

# Oceans of opportunity

The TLMI 2005 Converter Meeting, held in the stunning Los Cabos, Mexico, brought label suppliers together to share insight on exploiting new opportunities in the marketplace. **Katy Wight** reports

**T**he title of the TLMI 2005 Converter Meeting – Waves of change, oceans of opportunity – was apt considering its beautiful Pacific coast surroundings. The three-day conference focused on ways to grow and move a business forward and gave converters the opportunity to explore new technology like RFID.

## Differentiation Vs positioning

Dick Gorelick of the Graphic Arts Sales Foundation started the TLMI 2005 Converter Meeting with a presentation on 'Differentiation: creating value for your customers'. He outlined commoditization, seasonality and a lack of customer loyalty as the major challenges faced by converters today.

'Nothing that you do has any value until it is converted into a perceived benefit for the customer,' he said. 'It's a buyers' market and you better be unique, not just different.'

He urged attendees to become 'customer-centric' and provide proactive customer service. One way of doing this could be to provide key information on government compliance and labeling legislation changes and becoming more than a label converter.

On the flip side, Gorelick pointed out that many converters are perceived as differentiated by their customers, but they don't know it.

'You need to survey your customers,' he said, 'and then you can find out if they are just doing business with you out of habit.'

David Braun of Virtual Strategies gave a presentation on 'Remaining relevant as a converter', which he began with an outline of the manufacturing industry in the US over the last ten years.

'In the 1990s manufacturing was 22 percent of overall GDP growth and manufacturing was growing faster than the rest of the economy,' he said. 'In 2000, manufacturing production declined to 7.4 percent and 2000-2001 was the second largest manufacturing recession in the last 50 years. By 2003 we had reached a slow ascent again and production grew 1.8 percent.'

Braun concluded that manufacturing decline had induced a power shift, from the converter to the customer. To remain relevant, Braun insisted that converters should be analyzing the direction their customers are moving in – along with their customers' customers – instead of watching what their competitors are doing.

**"Converters should be analyzing the direction their customers are moving in – instead of watching what their competitors are doing"**



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“The people that are successful are physically and electronically integrated with their customers and effectively become their supply chain manager”

Braun punctuated this point with a quote from TLMI president Scott Pillsbury: ‘The people that are successful are physically and electronically integrated with their customers. They are deeply embedded with their customer’s organization and effectively their supply chain manager.’

Braun said that logistics is a common thread in all world-class, successful companies. He also added that successful companies change consistently to adapt to the marketplace, illustrating the point with the example of the Marriott Group. Marriott began selling root beer in the first half of the 19th Century, and has realigned its product line roughly every ten years since then.

### Smart Label Technology – Part II

With a focus on RFID, the first speaker at the Smart Label Technology session was Doug Bourque, director of sales, Texas Instruments. He said that TI is currently developing its own chip and is also working on a strap construction. Bourque suggests that the market is moving towards the strap – Mark Andy recently announced that it is launching strap-converting equipment.

Bourque said that RFID opportunities for converters lie in supply chain management, pharmaceutical, healthcare, payments, ticketing, manufacturing, retail, and personnel ID.

‘It has taken 15 years to get to the deployment of 400 million tags and we expect to do the same number again next year,’ he said. ‘The technology has improved and the industry is poised for exponential growth – we are going to be in the billions by 2006.’

Michael Arneson, the founder of Matrix and a Fellow of Symbol gave a slightly more cautious presentation. He highlighted the problem of chip yields, commenting that, ‘you can guarantee that 98 percent of your tags are good when they

#### Braun’s action list:

- Identify your true customer eg P&G’s customer
- Maintain customer focus by adopting a ‘can do’ mentality
- Keep or make your business flexible
- Know your costs. Sometimes you need to walk away from a customer
- Look at adding value-added products and services (both vertically and horizontally integrated)
- Don’t keep doing the same thing
- Explore partnership opportunities
- Add a service for your current customers
- Find ways to compete, other than on price
- Do something!

are going out the door, but you can lose another 10-20 percent before it gets to the customer.’ He also pointed out the vulnerability of the technology, explaining that reverse engineering could mean fake products could be circulating in a matter of months. However, he was positive about the technology’s potential: ‘the world is going to change and everything is going to be tagged.’

Arneson then outlined the characteristics and requirements Symbol has for its converter partners.

#### *Characteristics of preferred label converters*

- Track record with RFID
- Desire for innovation and growth
- Long-term commitment
- Process driven infrastructure to support demand
- Industry leadership
- Motivated sales team
- Vertical market expertise
- Requirements
  - Need dedicated RFID-only label presses
  - Automatic incoming RFID inlay testing system
  - Automatic final inspection testing
  - Inlay insertion system
  - More on the web

The final speaker on RFID was Jennifer Fortner, advanced technology ordinance surveillance (ATOS) deputy program

# TLMI

## TLMI converters share world success

Nine converter member companies of the Tag & Label Manufacturers Institute, Inc., (TLMI) won 10 awards in the 15th World Label Association Awards Competition. The awards were presented at the TLMI Converter Meeting in Los Cabos, Mexico.

In the contest, the first-place winners in individual label competitions held by TLMI, the Japanese Federation of Label Printers (JFLP), LTMA, India, and FINAT are judged against one another in a variety of categories to determine the 'world's best labels.'

TAPP Technologies, Langley, BC, Canada, won two awards: in the Offset Wine/Spirits category for its Nickel & Nickel Zinfandel label, and in the Offset Line category for its Pelino Vineyard Sangiovese entry.

Other TLMI members that won first-place awards included LogoTech, Inc., Fairfield, NJ, which was honored in the Letterpress – Color Process category for its Spiderman Foam Soap label; KimBells pack inc., Quezon City, The Philippines, in the Offset Line & Screen Tone category for its Tandua Rum 1854 entry; LSK Label, El Dorado Hills, CA, in the Flexo Wine/Spirits category for its Winston Hill entry; and McDowell Label & Screen Printing, Plano, TX, in the Flexo Cosmetics category for its Bronze Express label.

Other first-place winners included Spectrum Label Corporation, Hayward, CA, in the Non Pressure Sensitive Any Process category for its Kikkoman - Toasted Sesame Marinade label; Graphic Solutions International, LLC, Burr Ridge, IL, in the Innovative Use of Inline Procedures category for its 1.5 Volt Printed Battery label, and Dow Industries, Wilmington, MA, in the Flexo Line category for its Color Therapy Shampoo entry.

Finally, Spear, Mason, OH, won an honorable-mention award in the Screen Line category for its Kipling Light label.

manager, Naval surface warfare center, Indian Head Division, US Navy. The ATOS project was launched because the Navy had no way to collect data about its munitions in real time and needed a way to track out ordinance.

'During Operation Iraqi Freedom we had eight containers, each with four Patriot missiles inside,' explains Fortner. 'Four Patriots were dropped, but we had no way of knowing exactly which ones, which meant that we had to bring all eight pallets

back to check them. We had 32 missiles out of service at a cost of \$21.9 million.'

Ordinance is also susceptible to temperatures and shocks from transportation and the Navy needed to be able to accurately locate and continuously determine its status. It's also important for asset visibility. Weapons degrade over time and although the lifecycle of a piece of ordinance should be about 5-7 years during peacetime, it's more typical for them to be around for 25 years.

'Why is the Navy ahead on this? We sleep on our ordinance and we want to get rid of anything old or that has seen environmental extremes!' she says.

With linear barcodes, the Navy could need seven codes on one item and 2D barcodes could not be amended over time. The ATOS RFID tags are read/write with three text data fields to add information. The tags collect environmental data (although they don't have anything for vibration yet), which makes it easier to make remote judgements on whether it should be pulled out of service. The tags, which operate at 43.92Mhertz, also have a revival system so that data can be extracted even if the battery dies or the tag gets damaged.

'The system is particularly useful at ports where last minute changes are common,' says Fortner. 'You don't even need to find the pallets. You just have to make a change in the system.'

The final session of the converter meeting was led by Amanda Gore who spoke about the importance of putting fun back into business and safeguarding your health. Lon Martin of LG International ended up wearing rabbit ears, whilst Mike Ritter of Superior Business Associates clutched a magic wand and was heard promising to put the sparkle back into another converter's eyes. . . and the rest of what happened in Los Cabos, stays in Los Cabos!

## Eugene Singer Awards

Four converter member companies of the Tag & Label Manufacturers Institute, were awarded the TLMI Eugene Singer Best Managed Company Award at the institute's converter meeting in Los Cabos, Mexico.

Awards are given in four categories, based on annual sales volume. Those honored this year included

- Small company - Stixon Labels, Albuquerque, NM
- Mid-range company - Taylor Made Labels, Lake Oswego, OR
- Medium company - Consolidated Label Co., Longwood, FL
- Large company - Belmark, Inc., DePere, WI. ■



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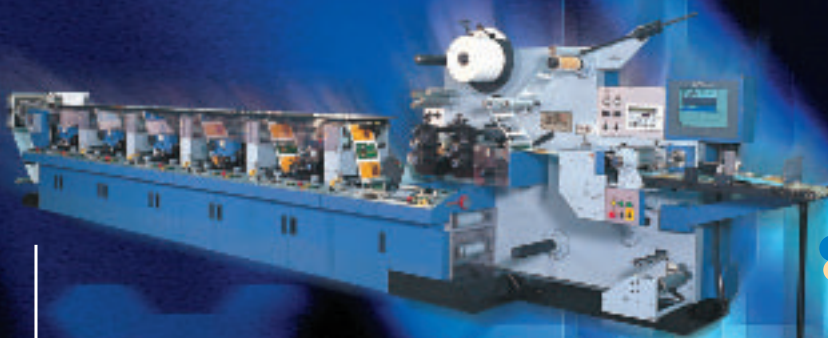
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# Brand protection

Covert security images can now be embedded in non-screened image areas of a label or carton following a major research project between KBA and Starboard Technologies.

**Andy Thomas** reports

**A**lthough it has long been possible to embed hidden security information into screened images, Israel-based company Starboard Technologies Ltd and press manufacturer KBA have taken the technology to a new level by allowing encrypted information to be embedded in a varnish coating.

The technique was demonstrated on folding cartons using a KBA Rapida 105 press at a forum organized by KBA at its Radebeul, Germany, centre, but it is equally applicable to sheet or roll-fed label converting.

The Starboard Technologies CIT (Concealed Image Technology) system involves security marking using encrypted 2D and 3D images which remain invisible to the naked eye and can only be recognised under a special decoding lens. The decoding lens matches the programmed image like a key matches a lock, and requires neither power supply nor special chemical/forensic methods.

These images can be applied with a variety of printing techniques including offset, gravure and flexo. The customer's files are processed ahead of the normal pre-press using the Starboard Technologies software, and the pixels and line segments manipulated in such a way that the information implanted in the image remains hidden.

If an attempt is made to copy the image by scanning or photocopying, only the visible image is captured - not the coding. The user pays a license fee to Starboard each time the system is used.

To date it has only been possible to use CIT with screened image data, so the technology could not be applied to a solid or special brand colour. But at the Radebeul symposium, Juergen Veil, head of KBA's sheetfed offset marketing division, revealed that his process technology team has developed a technique which uses the contrasts between different transparent

## Concealed image with toners

Starboard's CIT system, in collaboration with Autofont/Safepapers, can now be implemented on Hewlett Packard printers. Using regular toner on standard paper, the system is implemented on a DIMM installed in an HP LaserJet printer which adds a dual layer image to each printed page, independently of the printing application or communication protocol. The image - which can be updated over an existing network connection from a central FTP site - is stored encrypted in the Flash storage section of the Safe Paper DIMM, and can only be accessed by JetCAPS Safe Paper. Storing a variety of images and scheduling their use further thwarts attempts to 'crack' the image encoding. The 'top' layer of the image is visible as a picture or pattern while the second layer is invisible until viewed through the matching decoder. Two invisible layers can be used in a single 'seal' to implement a public/private authentication system.

varnishes to permit a CIT image to be placed on any chosen position on a sheet, including the non-image area.

The CIT technology has been tested on a wide range of materials including paper, fabric, plastics, foil and on image areas as small as a barcode. This means the CIT process could be integrated into an existing logo, for example.

CIT can also be used to secure products at different parts of the supply chain, using different combinations of covert encoding on the same label.

A single Starboard encryption can be made to contain several different images viewable with different optical decoding

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# Smart Labels

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### Counterfeit cost

The KBA security packaging seminar was informed that the value of fake brand products confiscated by German customs in 2003 rocketed by 134 per cent compared to the previous year to reach €178M. According to the calculations of the German anti-piracy association VBP, such forgeries wipe out up to 70,000 jobs in Germany alone each year. So there are major benefits to implementing brand protection as part of the package/label converting operation.

devices. This would allow authorised individuals with their own decoders to check, for example, that the container or product had not been diverted at various points in the logistics chain. Encrypted information can include additional information about a branded product, which might include country of manufacture, destined market and date of issue. The CIT system could also be implemented as part of an overt security solution – for example added to a hologram. This could be used on a tamper-proof seal affixed to a carton or a tax seal on liquor bottles. ■

*A special decoder is used to reveal the hidden security message, which can now be incorporated into a non-screened area of the image, including in the varnish*



## Installations

### Tinsley Robor Gallus RCS 330

Tinsley Robor has invested over \$1M in a Gallus RCS 330 press. It is an eight-unit machine, supplied with eight UV flexo print stations and three Gallus rotascreen units for rapid job change.

Tinsley Robor Md Andrew Scrimgeour commented, ‘The RCS 330 plus the Indigo digital press installed six months ago, has given us fantastic advantages.’

Lee Taylor, general manager, agreed: ‘The Gallus machine in particular is physically staggering. Gallus has taken us into a new stage of evolution. In a nutshell, it enables us to double, even quadruple, our volume, whilst providing a level of label quality and colour precision which puts us in a league of our own. The labels from this machine can match, and in some instances exceed, the quality offered by lithographic technology. Imagine this – a job which normally takes three hours to set up, consuming 1000 metres of material now takes just 20 minutes, and 50 metres of material. The figures speak for themselves.’

Tinsley Robor – part of AGI Media, a division of the US MeadWestvaco Corporation – works with a wide range of end user sectors from the food industry, to media packaging and from cosmetics to pharmaceuticals.

### Bluhm Weber Mark Andy 4150

Bluhm Weber, the international label solutions group made up of family owned Bluhm Systeme and the joint German American venture of Weber Marking Systems GmbH, has installed an 8-colour Mark Andy 4150 flexo line at its production facility in Rheinbreitbach, south of Cologne, Germany. The latest Mark Andy, which has eight UV cured print stations, joins three other 16” 4100 series presses and three smaller Mark Andy 820/830 lines, and brings the Group’s total of Mark Andy presses worldwide to more than 80.

According to company prokurist, Kurt Hoppen, ‘With product traceability now an essential part of the supply chain under EU directive 178, which applies to the food industry, the demand for accurately printed and applied labels in all forms is creating pressure on production capacity that the new Mark Andy 4150 can help to relieve.



# Smart Labels

## USA 2005

# The RFID Smart Label challenge

**T**here can be few label converters who have not been aware of the media coverage over the past year or two on the whole topic of RFID and smart labels. But how many label converters – or even packaging producers – have taken any action to become part of this fast changing world? Indeed, how many believe that it will have an impact on their business in the future.

Certainly much of the attention up until now has been largely focussed on RFID solutions for pallet labelling and how the industry can meet the new demands of major retail groups such as Walmart, Tesco or Metro. Not unnaturally, those converters already involved in producing bar-coded pallet and logistics labels have been gearing up to incorporate RFID solutions into those same labels. It is a big business opportunity for them.

But bar code pallet and logistics labels are only produced by a relatively small number of the 15,000 or so self-adhesive label converters that are to be found around the world – perhaps less than a couple of hundred at present. So, should the thousands of label producers involved in the printing of prime product or item-level labeling be concerned or interested about the forecast future growth of RFID smart labels?

The answer is almost certainly yes. Already major global drug companies such as Pfizer are saying that they will start to put RFID smart labels onto individual high value drug bottles as of this year. Similarly, some key international retail groups are indicating that they will commence product (item) level tagging of added value items and packs later in 2005. More such companies are expected to follow in the coming months.

Put together, current industry forecasts are estimating a



With the approach of the Smart Labels USA event in June, **Mike Fairley**, director Strategic

Development, Labelexpo, assesses progress towards RFID smart labeling of individual added-value products and the challenges this presents for the label converter

requirement for more than 1,000 billion RFID tags by 2015, of which some 99.5 per cent will be in the form of labels and around 95 per cent of those as product or item level labels – label volumes which will almost certainly impinge on thousands of label converters, particularly those involved in product labeling of higher-added-value products such as pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, wines and spirits and similar applications.

Rather than add even more labels to such items a far better solution – already being developed – is for label converters to produce high quality black-and-white or even color-printed product labels that incorporate RFID tags. Sounds difficult? Well, it's certainly a challenge for label converters who are primarily concerned with quality color printing.

“those converters already involved in producing bar-coded pallet and logistics labels have been gearing up to incorporate RFID solutions into those same labels”

How do they source, specify and purchase RFID tags for inserting into pressure-sensitive labelstock? Once purchased, how do they go about inserting the tag inlays? In-line on press? Off-line finishing systems? At the point of application? And what printing processes are suitable? Alternatively, they can source the RFID labelstocks from key suppliers with the RFID tags already incorporated and ready for printing/overprinting, but how do they successfully overprint? Or should they print the antenna and apply the chips themselves as part of the RFID smart label manufacturing process?

Currently, much development and activity is going on in all of these areas to find the best solution, or solutions, for quality and quantity RFID smart labels – both for pallet level and for item level labels – with companies such as Avery Dennison, Rafsec, Mark Andy, Tamarak, HP Indigo, Schober, Bielomatic, Precision,

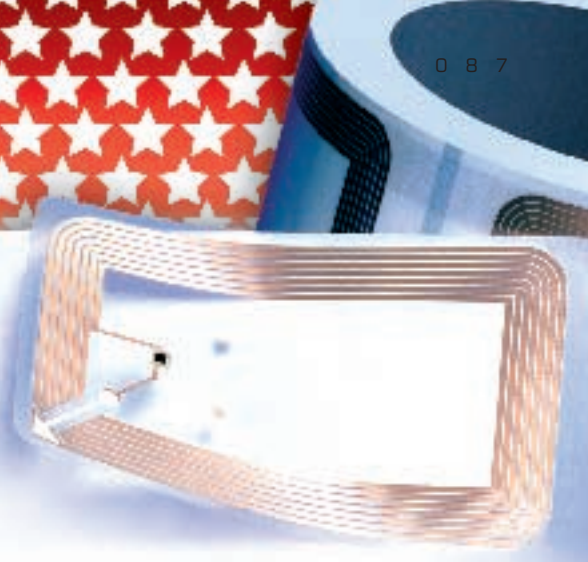
Stork, Domino, AB Graphic and others, looking to aid the converter in their future smart label market growth.

In simple terms, an RFID smart label is made up of an integrated circuit (IC) chip, a carrier substrate and an antenna – all incorporated into a pressure-sensitive labelstock. Where the IC chip, carrier and antenna are pre-prepared and supplied to the labelstocks manufacturer or printer/converter they are in the form of an inlet or inlay, which must then be inserted into the pressure-sensitive web to make the RFID smart labelstock. This can be done before printing, after printing, in-line, off-line, at the point of application.

There are a number of possible options.

So what are some of these options for label converters looking to be part of tomorrow's 1,000 billion smart label supply market? Solutions include:

- The specifying and sourcing of RFID labelstocks and finding out how best to print/overprint these without damage to the IC chips.
- The specifying and sourcing of RFID labelstocks and finding



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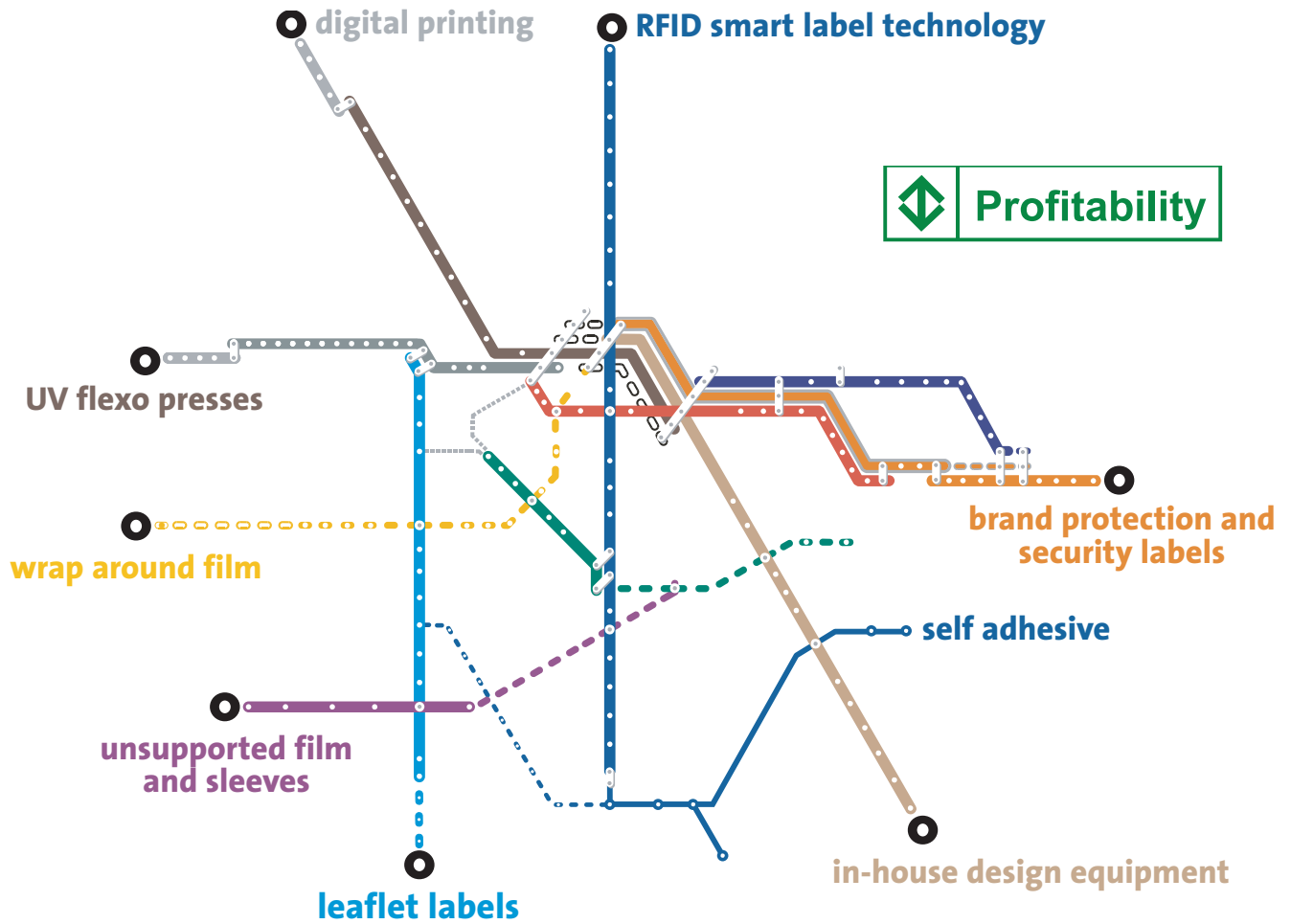


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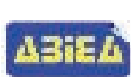
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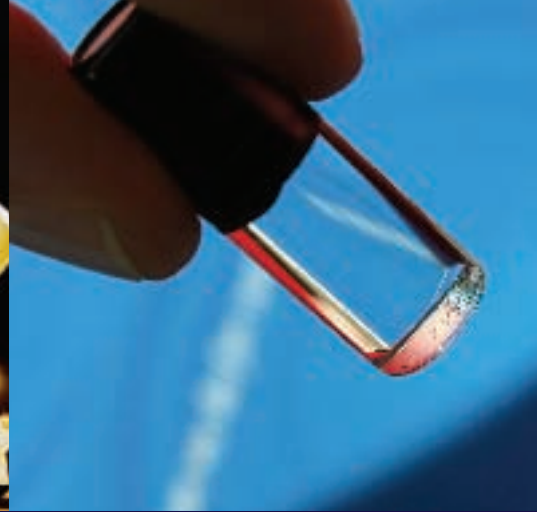


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out how best to print/overprint these without damage to the IC chips.

- Specifying and sourcing the RFID inlays (antenna and IC chip on a film base). Then incorporating the inlay into a pre-printed pressure-sensitive laminate by de-laminating and re-laminating. This might be undertaken totally in-line with the press, or by printing/overprinting the web and then integrating the RFID inlets off-line on a separate machine, or integrating on a print and apply line.
- Printing/overprinting of the pressure-sensitive labelstock as normal, followed by incorporation of the inlays at the point of application.
- Printing/overprinting of the facestock, as well as printing of the antenna using special inks. The IC chip is then applied to the antenna and everything brought together to make the RFID smart labelstock.

A range of variations on all these options are either currently available or being developed at the present time to meet the demand for printed (conventionally or electronically) smart labels containing RFID tags. However, in the longer term, it is anticipated that RFID smart labels will probably become chipless. That is, they will no longer contain a silicone chip.

Such labels will still be printed – and that includes all the RFID elements. Again, much work and activity is already going into the best methods of printing the necessary circuitry. What are the best (conductive) inks, or the most suitable printing process? Will we have totally printed transistor circuits in label produced by the converter in the future?

Even when the RFID smart labels have been produced they will still need to be verified before going off to the label user. Indeed, they will also have to have data written to the tags before use – again a challenge for the label converter to understand and undertake.

There seems little doubt that RFID smart labels are going to be a key part of the label industry of the future and that many label converters will become part of this fast-growing world. Pallet level RFID labels, product and item-level RFID labels, printed RFID technology – all hold a future for the label converter prepared to understand and invest in tomorrow's RFID label world.

Fall behind in this new RFID-enabled world and the label converter may well see part of his business disappear to a more

## “Pallet level, product and item-level RFID labels – and printed RFID technology – all hold a future for the label converter prepared to understand and invest”

enlightened competitor in the years to come. It is a challenge that needs to be addressed today – or certainly in the near future.

For those label converters looking to speed up their understanding and potential market entry into an RFID future, there are fortunately some forthcoming routes to finding the 'How to' answers. Tarsus, in association with IDTechEx, has a whole day, during the Smart Labels USA 2005 event in Baltimore from 27-30th June, for the label converter to understand why he should be interested in the new item level RFID markets, highlighting how they can get involved in smart label manufacturing, what kind of technology and investment is required, and who they should be talking to.

Tarsus is also developing a 'How to' smart label masterclass for label converters that will be run both before and after the Smart Labels conference, and to also be run alongside Labelexpo events around the world. These will be practical events to help converters understand how to specify RFID inlays or materials, the standards required, print methods, tag integration solutions, verification, how to write and read data, handling and storage issues, etc. For more details of these events the converter can visit [www.smartlabelsusa.com](http://www.smartlabelsusa.com) website.

Like bar coding technology, thermal price-weight printing, digital pre-press, management information systems, digital color printing, e-procurement, etc, that have come before, RFID smart label production is yet another challenge for the label converter to understand and apply to their business. The smart ones will have a smart future – the rest may well have a more uncertain time ahead.

*For more information visit [www.smartlabelsusa.com](http://www.smartlabelsusa.com).* ■



# Xpanded Label

A new company in Appleton, Wisconsin, is making its mark as a trade supplier of short run, complex expanded content labels. **Andy Thomas** reports

**J**im Volkman - well known to the North American narrow web industry from his days at Mid America, Dunsirn Industries and Avery Dennison – is on the business trail again. Volkman believes he has identified a niche for supplying short run, Expanded Content Labels (ECLs) to label converters and agencies, and has backed this by setting up a new company, Xpanded Label Technology, LLC in Appleton, Wisconsin. Jim's wife Sue is co-owner of the company.

When looking at the ECL sector, Volkman identifies four main categories, based on risk management, value and market dynamics:

- Informational text labels— examples include installation or use information, including multi-lingual formats.
- Promotional coupons and on-pack promotions such as recipes and sweepstakes
- Agricultural chemical applications such as pesticides, herbicides and the like
- Pharmaceutical and veterinary applications

At each level the technical converting requirements and compliance issues become more complex and difficult to manage. It is in this value added sector of the label market that Xpanded Label Technology looks to score as a trade supplier.

Many of the major label converters are engaged in producing complex promotional and informational pieces, but Xpanded will differentiate itself by its ability to deal economically in fast turnaround, small volume pieces.

'It is difficult for most converters to be cost effective in short and medium runs of ECLs,' comments Jim Volkman. 'They are complex products, so make-ready time can be long and tooling is expensive.'

Volkman points out that booklet label production is not easy, even for most experienced label printers, whatever their size. 'Although they can buy, for example, tip-on systems, make-ready tends to be long because they never specialise enough to get really good at it. Our future printer-partners have lamented about their own ECL make-ready times of five or more hours.'

Volkman is insistent that as a trade supplier, Xpanded Label

"It is difficult for most converters to be cost effective in short and medium runs of ECLs. They are complex products, so make-ready time can be long and tooling is expensive"

## A simple plan

Xpanded Label Technology's ability to produce short run, complex products economically and with short lead times is founded on the converting machinery specially designed and constructed by the company's engineering partner, Drilling Technical Services (DTS).

'The custom engineered manufacturing line meets our design criteria for a machine capable of quick change-over; efficiency of space and low operating cost,' says Jim Volkman. 'We will be able to change between jobs quickly and never miss a beat.'

The simplicity and reduced complexity of the line is key. 'We do not need a 10-color press with a tip-on unit. Our challenge was, how few stations can we get by with? It's a very simple but robust machine,' says Volkman.

Jim and Dave Volkman plan to be very hands-on, even when the company grows to a predicted 10-12 employees by the end of 2005.

Technology will never go around agencies or converters to their end users. 'We will never sell direct. We want trade partnerships and relationships which allows us to educate our partners in the exciting possibilities of ECLs. These products are complex ones

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“It’s not easy to communicate complex products like Expanded Content Labels. Our tools will allow consistent and effective communication with designers and end users”

to set a price and specification. So for companies which do not have their own experts in-house, we will offer that guidance.’

For its ‘tier one’ customers, Volkman envisages a tight working relationship. ‘They commit to work with us and we will work with their designated teams. We will supply samples and make recommendations to ensure fitness for use and handle all aspects of production.’

### Communicating complexity

Xpanded is developing software which will give its partners easy access to information on technical design parameters. ‘It’s not easy to communicate complex products like Expanded Content Labels. Our tools will allow consistent and effective communication with designers and end users. In an area where “stock sizes” are rare, our software programme will be able to draw up a template depending on how many panels, pages or amount of square inches along with the rest of the job’s specifications. This speed of response is a necessity.’

Xpanded will select qualified offset printer partners that can print to its specifications. ‘We will say “Here is the manual for crop marks, kinds of paper to be used, folding patterns”, and they will be expected to stick to those specifications.’

Volkman’s business partner and brother Dave Volkman, brings to the party a 20-year, multi-process background in print estimating and project management, and extensive ECL product experience which will be key in communicating on a technical level with Xpanded’s offset partners and customers.

The manufacturing of Expanded Content Labels are a

### Strength in depth

Jim Volkman brings a huge amount of experience to his new project. After spending 20 years with Mid America Tag & Label (now WS Packaging Group-Promo Edge), Volkman crossed to the supplier side of the fence for a stint at Dunsirn Industries. After Dunsirn’s acquisition by Avery Dennison, Volkman was appointed general manager of Fasson’s Rapid-Roll division where he helped introduce Avery’s flexible packaging product line to North American narrow web converters. ‘Pouches are easy to run – they are a slam dunk,’ recalls Volkman with his customary muscular enthusiasm.

notoriously litigious area for label converters, but Volkman does not see a problem for his company. ‘The technology we are deploying is beyond its patent life, so we do not see any legal issues arising. We respect the existing patents and enjoy seeing the innovation in the area of ECLs.’

What about future plans? Volkman says he will not move into extended text pharmaceutical labels, a completely different ballgame where a long track record is demanded by end users and there are fierce compliance requirements. But Jim and Sue Volkman chose the name Xpanded for good reason, and are already being asked by customers to consider growing into areas like RFID. ■



*(Left) The Xpanded labels plant in Appleton, Wisconsin. (Below) L-R, Jim, Sue and Dave Volkman*





# Criteria for a world class packaging/label supplier



By Bill Klein,  
Business  
Factors, Inc.

**T**he “World Class Packaging/Label Supplier” can now be found virtually everywhere—technology has definitely “leveled.” Market opportunities are global. The internet in many cases is replacing the local sales person/supplier. There is little place left to run and no place left to hide. Eastern Europe, China, S.E. Asia, and Latin America now have Packaging/Label suppliers that compete worldwide. The Packaging/Label Supplier must now stand and be proven capable and competitive in its own backyard. The customer prospect has become global in marketing and supplier strategies. The Packaging/Label Supplier must also do so. Check the following listing of criteria required to be in this challenging economic game we call the “Global Packaging and Label Industry.”

1. Has “real time” electronic customer/supplier transactions
2. Is capable of receiving customer orders/artwork electronically
3. Has fully developed electronic prepress
  - Separations
  - Step & Repeat
  - Films
  - Plate Making
4. Has integrated “order engineering”
  - Print Cylinders
  - Dies
  - Materials
  - Anilox Rolls
  - Inks
5. Has, at or near, state-of-the-art printing/converting technology
  - Equipment well maintained
  - Clean press and operating environment
  - Program for upgrade/enhancement

6. Has highly developed production procedures/ processes
  - Optimized Order Change Over
  - On-line/Off-line inspection
  - Off-line Setups
  - Production Data Feedback
  - Provides JIT delivery based on customer needs
7. Has fully-trained/highly-motivated production, sales, and administrative personnel
  - Team Effort/Quality Circles
  - Personal Goal Setting
  - Walk Around Management
  - On-going Formal/Informal Training
  - Solicits customer involvement in their “continuous improvement process”
8. Actively pursues quality improvement, cost containment/reduction
9. Has TQM/ ISO Certification
10. Highly focused on market niches, products/applications
11. Knows core customers’ production processes/business goals
12. New product development programs, based on the recognized changing needs of key customers and new “targeted” markets
13. Seeks, encourages partnering/strategic alliances with key customers/suppliers
14. Provides competitively superior value to their customers

Let me assure you that each and every one of the criteria is important. What makes this list of criteria important is that they represent the technical/operating capability of the packaging/label supplier. Without this capability, in place and in progress, there is no way that you can successfully pursue the pro-active marketing/sales philosophy needed to satisfy your core customers and to grow and build your business future.

You can no longer afford to be a “general” anything. Today business is:

- Too complex, too diverse, there are too many changes, too much technology (capital and skills), and too little profitability
- You must have a sharp focus; select the market segment/product line/customer type – the key word is “focus.” Furthermore, you need to know your core customers intimately: their production processes, business goals, marketing/sales strategies—you need to be a consultant supplier; learn what their unmet needs are (an important factor in new product/service development).
- This leads to the development of closer relationships with both customers and suppliers e.g. partnering/strategic alliances (we are seeing more of both day by day in our industry as well as all forms of business world wide). Frequent personal contact between packaging/label customers and converter-suppliers as well as between converters and their materials and equipment is vital. A PPC survey found that converters are open to and fostering “synergistic partnerships” more than anything else when selecting suppliers. Many of these same converters claim that their customers are also receptive to or actually looking for partnerships and strategic alliances with converters who are capable of meeting their needs for both product and service. ■



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ALLEN PHOTOGRAPH

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# Blank label rewinder

**W**ith the need for track and trace solutions, and more products 'on the move', the market for thermal transfer labels has been growing significantly in recent years. In early 2002, Steve Dalby, as sales manager of Adespan UK, saw the opportunity and set up FA Supplies in Harrogate, W. Yorks, UK. The company, a small-medium enterprise employing six, supplies mainly blank labels to customers in the food, beverage and industrial markets.

In a market where the complexity is low, the name of the game is keeping productivity as high as possible. Steve Dalby explains: 'To succeed as a small business in this market, your converting equipment must give a fast return on investment. It needs to be up and running,

without problems, with down-times kept to a minimum. The machine manufacturer's support is also necessary, so that any problems or queries can be resolved as quickly as possible.'

FA Supplies began its business with the BAR Graphics 'table-top' TT250D Elite Die Cut slitter rewinder, and have now have purchased a total of five BAR Graphic machines. 'The TT250D proved to be the ideal starter machine,' comments Dalby, 'being top-loading, compact and easy to master. This is an important point: we are a small team, so there is relatively little time left over for intensive training sessions, if we are to meet our customers' demands on time. We need solutions that enable us to hit the ground running. And that is exactly what happened.'

With costs quickly recovered on the first investment, FA Supplies invested in four larger machines, from the Elite series - two 250 DIs and two 330 DIs (250 mm and 330 mm web-widths respectively). These also offer inspection as well as slitting and rewinding, and are designed for longer production runs.

Typically, a machine at FA Supplies will perform anywhere between three and eight changeovers a day. The staff are able to change jobs in about 15 minutes.

BAR's machines feature a horizontal loading die system, with the exception of the table-top versions. Unique to all BAR's systems are the cartridge rotary slitting feature. Here, the blades can be set with the cartridge either away or on the machine without the need for alignment. It allows up to +/- 15 mm of lateral movement by the operator when the machine is running to ensure final adjustment.

In VIP-related markets like thermal transfer, further printing

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“The TT250D proved to be the ideal starter machine,’ comments Dalby, ‘being top-loading, compact and easy to master”

operations occur after the label conversion stage. As a result, the end users’ specifications vary to a greater degree than standard decorative labels, depending on the printing press used.

‘Customers’ requirements relating to mandrel diameter and torque will vary significantly,’ says Dalby. ‘That’s why it’s important for us to meet these demands and at the same time be able to perform quick change-overs, as well as a competitive cost of the mandrel itself.’

The 76mm diameter interchangeable mandrel is based on a ‘leaf’ design. It lets the operator reduce the diameter to 70mm by simply removing the outer core. Removing the mandrel simply requires releasing the four bolts with an allen key. BAR Graphic Machinery supplies mandrels in diameters from 13 mm (unsupported) and upwards of 25 mm (supported). Also, with independent tension control, rolls can be supplied according to the degree of slackness, or tightness required.

The rewind mandrel on all systems from BAR is pneumatically – rather than mechanically – driven. ‘That means better grip on each core, preventing slipping, even if the core itself is slightly out of specification,’ comments Dalby. A Label in – Label out facility allows simple directional change of the rewind mandrel at the switch of a button.

The TT250 offers speeds of up to 160 metres a minute, and a capability to deal with lengths up to 1,000 linear metres. Die-cutting speeds on the Elite 250 and 330 DI reach 250 m/min, and offer up to 2000 metres unwinding capacity with roll compensation. Web clamps on the splice table are interlocked. ■



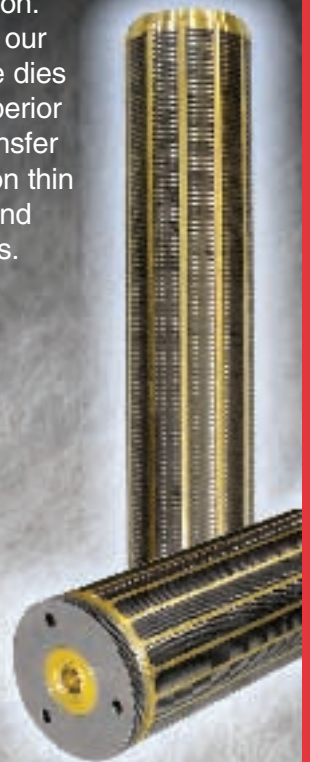
BAR's machines feature a horizontal loading die system

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# Labeling news

## Voting opens for Label Industry Global Awards

The second annual Label Industry Global Awards will take place this year on the first evening of Labelexpo Europe 2005, Wednesday 21st September, at the Autoworld museum in Brussels. The Judges have put together a list of nominations and the industry may now vote for the winners online at <http://www.labelawards.com/>. Voting for the Awards will close at the beginning of June.

The Label Industry Global Awards this year are in four key categories, with leading labels industry players sponsoring each one. The nominations are as follows (further information about each nominee can be found online at <http://www.labelawards.com/>):

### The R. Stanton Avery Lifetime Achievement Award Sponsored by Avery Dennison

- Angelo Bartesaghi, Omet Srl
- Lars Eriksen, Nilpeter A/S
- Calvin Frost, Channeled Resources
- Dr J.E.G (Mans) Lejeune, FINAT
- Charles Miller, Avery Dennison
- Juhani Stromberg, UPM Raflatac

### The Label Industry Award for Continuous Innovation Sponsored by Labels & Labeling, Label & Narrow Web, and NarroWebTech

- Gallus Ferd. Ruesch AG
- Nilpeter A/S
- Rotometrics
- Rotoflex

### The Label Industry Award for New Innovation Sponsored by HP

- ANI Printing Inks
- AVT
- Esko-Graphics
- Gidue
- MPS Systems bv

### The European Converter Award for Continuous Innovation

- Pago AG
- Arca Etichette
- Denny Bros
- Herma
- Illochroma
- Drorys Etichette
- Skanem



## Esko-Graphics workflow incorporates Certified PDF

Certified PDF has taken a major step towards industry standard status following the announcement that Esko-Graphics has incorporated Certified PDF into its Scope packaging pre-production workflows. Artwork Systems has already announced its packaging workflow systems will be Certified PDF-compliant.

The Certified PDF format is designed to meet the preflight requirements of modern prepress workflows, based on the Enfocus PitStop profiles as defined by the Ghent PDF Workgroup (GWG). The Ghent PDF Workgroup is an international assembly of industry associations whose goal is to establish and distribute process specifications for best practices in graphic arts workflows. Esko-Graphics is an active member of the GWG.

Adobe PDF is a file-format that may

contain many different types of objects and constructs; not all of them equally suited for print production. The Ghent PDF Workgroup's primary activity is to build sets of guidelines for the creation, exchange and quality control of PDF files between document creators and document receivers. Such guidelines or profiles are created for a number of specific market sub-segments, including packaging.

Jan De Roeck, marketing director Packaging Software at Esko-Graphics, comments: 'Preflighting incoming PDF jobs is a necessary task in print workflows – and even more so in modern packaging. Using the Enfocus PitStop Server within an automated Scope workflow, allows users to immediately – and automatically – create Certified PDF files.'

## GiDue adds graphics technology centre

GiDue has added a 500 m<sup>2</sup> graphics technology centre close to its headquarters in Turate, Milan. The additional showroom space needed for press demonstrations and development trials and follows a period of sustained growth for GiDue based on the sales of its Combat product lines.

States Federico d'Annunzio, managing director: 'The addition will provide increased showroom space and not only will we have this function on a separate site, more importantly, it provides us with better R&D facilities to enable us to accelerate our product development programme.'

## MPS claims breakthrough for UV flexo in Japan

MPS has sold a 10-color Effective Printer (EP) 560 UV flexo press to its Japanese distributor T&K Toka.

Currently, Japanese converters overwhelmingly use gravure, letterpress and offset to print labels, which are generally of a very high print quality. But recent legislation banning solvents is opening up new possibilities for UV flexo, while UV flexo quality can now challenge the 'traditional' print processes in Japan.

T&K Toka claims to be the top Japanese manufacturer of UV ink, and Norio Sakai, general manager, machinery department at T&K Toka Co. Ltd, believes this gives the company a powerful platform from which to sell UV flexo presses in Japan:

'Our knowledge, experience and technology in UV inks place us in a very good position to promote UV flexo presses,' says Sakai. 'UV flexo printing is very friendly to the environment. Also, UV flexo does not use water, unlike offset machines, so UV flexo machines accept a wide range of substrates from thin film and paper to thick carton board. Printers in Japan, and other countries in Asia, are beginning to accept UV flexo, so we see a great market potential for UV flexo printing machines. MPS has developed a high level of servo driven flexo presses which enable bright and vivid prints. These advantages should appeal to local printers.'

## Republican Senators vow to protect RFID in N. America

A group of Republican Senators in the US have pledged their best efforts to ensure that RFID deployments stay free of regulation.

The Senate Republican High Tech Task Force unveiled a list of 40 policy proposals, with RFID winning a special mention in the category dealing with the group's plans for protecting privacy and e-commerce.

The announcement said that the Republican Senators would 'protect exciting new technologies from premature regulation or legislation in search of a problem. RFID holds tremendous promise for our economy, including military logistics and commercial inventory efficiencies, and should not be saddled prematurely with regulation.'

The RFID industry in North America is facing a growing challenge from civil liberties groups concerned about the consumer privacy implications of storing

personal data on RFID chips.

The Federal Trade Commission has already stated that it will not issue guidelines for companies deploying RFID. Instead, the FTC said it believed that a combination of existing regulations and industry-led initiatives will protect consumer privacy. The task force's platform indicated that the Republican group will encourage market-based solutions to lead the way in protecting individual privacy.

EPCglobal, the nonprofit organization set up by GS1 and the Uniform Code Council to commercialize EPC technology, welcomed the task force's announcement. 'We are very pleased,' said Jack Grasso, senior director of public relations for the UCC. 'We also favor self-regulation and voluntary guidelines and are encouraged that they also recognize the tremendous benefits the technology offers.'

### Focus invests in new factory

Focus Label Machinery has completed a purpose-built manufacturing facility at its existing site in Bingham, Nottingham in the UK.

The facility comprises a 20,000 sq. ft manufacturing plant, offices, presentation rooms and customer reception areas. The former factory building has been fully refurbished as a dedicated assembly facility and incorporated into the new development, creating a 30,000 sq. ft facility.

The \$12 million investment includes new CNC machining centres, lathes and cylindrical grinding equipment, and is designed further to increase manufacturing capacity, improve workflow and reduce delivery times.

As well as additional factory and office space, Focus now has a dedicated customer training centre and demonstration facility for its entire range of printing presses, platemaking systems and other ancillary equipment.

### ANI acquires shrink ink specialist

ANI Printing Inks has acquired Macro Australia Pty Limited, a leading supplier in the Australian and New Zealand market of UV-Flexo inks, adhesives and varnishes for narrow web converters. Macro has pioneered free radical curing inks for use on high-shrink sleeves.

Ewald Draaijer, president & general manager, ANI narrow web division, comments: 'With the Macro acquisition we buy in to a well established local support organisation with a highly specialised product portfolio and some excellent synergies for us in Australia, New Zealand and the rest of the Asia Pacific.'

### Creo shareholders confirm Kodak takeover

Creo shareholders have voted to approve the acquisition of Creo by Eastman Kodak Company. At the meeting, shareholders also re-elected the ten current members of the Creo board of directors.

# Installations



## Lintec LPM300GT The Label Makers

AB Graphic International has sold a second Lintec LPM300GT semi-rotary letterpress machine to The Label Makers Ltd., Bradford in the UK.

The press is equipped with six UV printing units, foil blocking and laminating and includes an Omega Rewind system also from AB Graphic International.

The press joins an existing Lintec installation used for printing short runs and test marketing and compliments a range of high performance presses for the production of labels from single up to eight colours in print runs of 1000 to multi-million quantities from the simplest to the most sophisticated designs.

Comments Tony Bell, director, AB Graphic International, 'With brand owners constantly looking for new and innovative ways of marketing their products and run lengths steadily decreasing, the Lintec press is an ideal test and production vehicle. Two sets of cylinders are supplied with the machine so that



while one job is running the other can be prepared and changed over in seconds.'

The Label Makers produces a wide range of labels using UV litho, UV screen and UV flexo in any combination with foil blocking, embossing and over-laminating. In-line foiling, reverse printing, sprocket hole punching, perforating, sheeting and consecutive numbering with multi-ply peel and reseal facility are also offered.

## Labelsco Creo Thermoflex

Labelsco, one of the UK's leading self adhesive label, sachet and narrow web printers, has boosted its competitiveness with an investment in a digital computer-to-flexo plate solution from Creo. The system comprises a ThermoFlex narrow thermal platesetter driven by a Prinergy Powerpack workflow management system running Maxtone screening technology.

'Since the system's installation we have



**1&2. The Label Makers installs Lintec LPM300GT - wine labels are a speciality**  
**3. Paul Larkin operations director at Labelsco**  
**4. Gevalo takes delivery of DiMS! MIS**

been busy refining the process but already the results are way beyond what we were achieving before,' says Paul Larkin, operations director at Labelsco. 'People perceive quality as being a cost, but actually it is a saving. Quality and competitiveness go together hand in glove.'

Continues Larkin, 'In a conventional analogue film workflow it is impossible to control the process and dot gain is very erratic. We decided to invest in a digital workflow in order to achieve consistent repeatable results; greater control over highlight dots to improve sharpness and contrast; increase speed and reduced waste. If you understand the process, Flexo CTP can give you a higher degree of control over your results.'

## Gevalo DiMMS! MIS

Gevalo, a leading Belgian manufacturer of self-adhesive and non-adhesive labels, is to implement DiMS!' print management system to integrate all its business processes. The system will manage estimating, order flow, finished goods and e-commerce.

In the past few years, Gevalo has moved from being a mid-sized, regional label printer to an international supplier. In order to control this growth and fulfill the increasing demands of their

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# Installations

international customers, they needed a tool to provide them with better insight into all layers of the company, both on an administrative and production level. 'With DiMS!, we have an extremely useful tool at our disposal,' says Gevalo. 'The structured, end-to-end workflow facilitates clear operating procedures and a continuous data flow throughout the company. This leads to increased quality for our product and improved service to our clients. DiMS! not only enables us to control our current growth, but it also supports our planned expansion for the future.'

Gevalo specializes in distribution, logistics and industrial applications and was one of the first companies to produce RFID labels.

## **Uniflexo Ind. Grafica Ltda** **Omet Flexy** **Central de Empaques** **Omet Varyflex**

Omet has installed two presses in South America. In Brazil, Uniflexo Ind. Grafica Ltda, Barueri, Sao Paulo, has purchased a Flexy press via Omet Iberica and Brazilian agent Gammerler, which represents a number of major European brands. The 8-color machine has been specified for stretch and shrink-label production.

At the same time, a Varyflex is being installed at Guatemala carton printing company Central de Empaques, based in Guatemala Ciudad. The press was sold through another cooperation between Omet Iberica and local agent Cosalco. The press is a Varyflex 670 with eight UV-flexo and is dedicated to the production of carton boxes.

According to Omet, 'Central de Empaques was impressed by the production speed of up to the speed of 200 meters a minute and the innovative waste-suction device after die-cutting.'

## **John Henry Company** **GEW 'cool' UV retrofit**

UV system supplier GEW has supplied The John Henry Company, Lansing, MI with a VCP three lamphead system designed for cool curing. The retro-fit UV curing system enables the company to run a wide range of substrates on its existing Mark Andy press with significantly improved production and uptime. The system features slide out cassettes for fast lamp changes and maintenance back up.

States Art Dewley of The John Henry Company: 'We have to print and convert virtually all available substrates and our 10-color press just did not have the UV performance we needed. We became frustrated by the number of press stoppages and downtimes and contacted GEW to see if they could provide us with a solution. We subsequently took the decision to remove the original UV equipment that came with the press and upgraded with the GEW specified system. Since the GEW UV installation we have not had any curing problems and the system has saved us a ton of money in lost production. GEW provided a solution that solved our problems. We are planning to install another 13 inch (330 mm) press this year and have no hesitation in specifying GEW for this purchase. Their location in Ohio makes them ideally placed to provide us with the level of service and support we expect.'

The John Henry Company manufactures, distributes and imports specialty products for the horticultural, pharmaceutical and health care industries. With multiple plants across the United States, they are now in their 90th year of continuous operation.

Adds Brian Wenger, vp GEW, Inc: 'We have evolved through trouble-shooting production problems experienced by printers with the ever-increasing array of substrates they have to convert. We know

the difficulties inherent in curing UV inks on some of these materials, and the impact of substrate temperature, and have developed various heat management options to deal with them.'

## **Label Technology** **AVT PrintVision/Jupiter**

Label Technology, Inc., in Merced, California, has installed two of Advanced Vision Technology's PrintVision/Jupiter automatic inspection systems to improve quality for their narrow web applications.

The new AVT systems are installed on Label Technology's 20-inch Mark Andy press and on a new 26-inch PCMC Evolution press.

The PrintVision/Jupiter systems have been instrumental in enabling Label Technology to run the two presses faster for a substantial gain in productivity, according to vp manufacturing, David Bankson: 'The inspection systems pick up defects either too small or too light for our operators to see running the presses at 400 feet per minute.'

The Jupiter installations went hand-in-hand with a dryer upgrade on the 20-inch Mark Andy and the Extreme Drying System installed on the new PCMC Evolution. 'The AVT systems allow us to fully benefit from the speed that the new dryers deliver,' adds Bankson. 'We're running considerably faster with total confidence that we're producing defect-free, quality, saleable products for our customers.'

Making a major investment in a high-end defect-detection system wasn't an easy decision, Bankson observes. 'We put the AVT inspection systems on the two presses where we expected to realize the best ROI, and they have worked. They save critical amounts of material waste and press time for us, and we didn't have to wait 12 months to see that it was the right decision.'

Bankson notes that fewer re-runs on the

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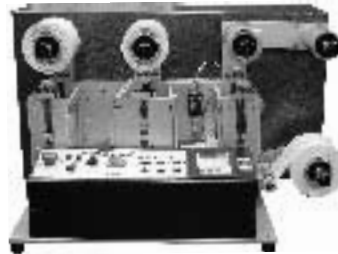


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\*NOTE: Custom built units (up to 40"), speeds, sizes, and configurations are available.

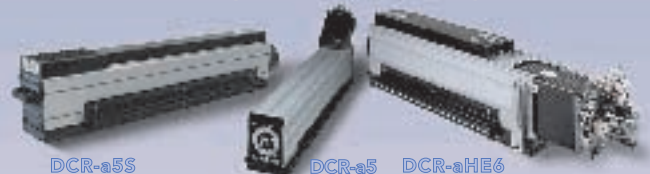
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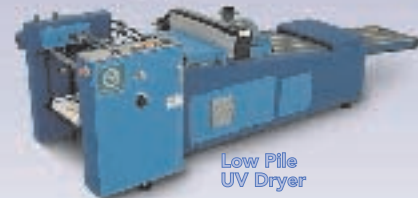
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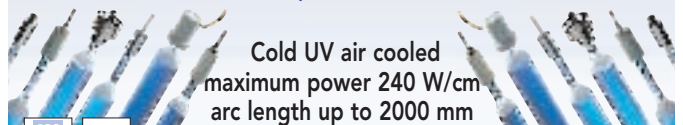
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# Installations



*Jonathan Stuart, group IT director at Paragon Group UK*

two Jupiter-installed presses have equated to more capacity on them. He has gained valuable press hours that otherwise would have been completely lost without the inspection systems, and is now looking at additional PrintVision/Jupiter systems for his other flexo presses.

The installation of the PrintVision/Jupiter system went very smoothly, according to Bankson. 'AVT's tech people have a solid understanding of the narrow web flexible packaging and label business and the unique production workflows we use.'

## **BEAB Etikett MPS EF-330**

Swedish label converter BEAB Etikett & System AB has purchased a 5-color MPS Effective Flexo 330 UV-flexo press from MPS' Swedish agent Premère Graphics.

BEAB Etikett & System AB is an ISO (9000 and 14000) certified supplier of integrated label services with markets in industry, retail and logistics.

For managing director Ulf Nordgård and production manager Jukka Vallin key factors were the EF-system's 'flexibility and short time to set for new orders.'

## **Paragon Optimus MIS with automatic internet ordering**

Following the latest enhancement to its Optimus 2020 MIS system, contract customers of Paragon Group UK are placing over 700 print orders a day over the Internet, cutting costs and speeding turnaround.

Paragon Group UK is part of Paragon Europe, specialist in documents, tickets, labels and print management. Explains group IT director Jonathan Stuart: 'The orders are either entered online or generated automatically by customers' systems and sent to our sites, where they automatically enter Optimus 2020 and the production process. There's no manual intervention whatsoever until the picking note is generated in the warehouse. We benefit from dramatically reduced admin costs, and customers get faster deliveries – we despatch almost every order the day we receive it.'

He describes the new capability as 'the latest example of the very advanced business process engineering we have introduced since we acquired the Optimus 2020 MIS system and started working with Optimus.'

Continues Stuart: 'Optimus 2020 is a major contributor to our strategy of continuously automating internal processes, from administration through manufacturing to warehousing and distribution. The system's openness means we can enhance the core technology by developing our own 'middleware' to really integrate Optimus into our business processes.'

He adds that automated order entry is just the latest example of such customisation: 'We've also developed paperless materials tracking from manufacturing to warehousing – staff simply enter data into Optimus 2020 using handheld wireless barcode scanners.'

The 59-user Optimus 2020 system – including Estimating Pro, Remote Data Collection, Sales Orders, Purchase Orders, and Customer Service modules – is Paragon's first print-specific management information system.

Paragon benefits from what Jonathan Stuart describes as 'multi-faceted customer support from Optimus', which is notable for the number of levels at which the two companies' cooperate. 'We work closely at a consultancy level, where Optimus helps us configure workflow within our operations; at the programmer level, where we develop the middleware that integrates Optimus 2020 with our business processes; and at what's almost a visionary level, where Optimus's senior people share ideas for future developments with us. For example, we're naturally watching JDF with interest, and knowing how Optimus is thinking helps us shape our plans for the format.'

Paragon Europe was formed in 1998 when Grenadier Holdings acquired the company from the US Moore Corporation. Paragon Europe employs over 1,000 people across seven manufacturing plants and 17 offices in the UK, France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Paragon Group UK has three manufacturing sites, in Sunderland (long-run confidential and security print), Castleford (short-run stationery), and Bradford (pressure seal), and recently opened Paragon Print Services in Leeds to provide print management and supply chain management. After several years of double-digit sales growth, annual UK sales are over £40 million – double what they were five years ago.

# New products

## Gidue

### 'Intelligent Register' for E-Combat

As a further enhancement of its ARC (Automatic Register Control) Gidue has launched the Intelligent Register system for its E-Combat model. The system can be supplied on new E-Combat models or as a retrofit on existing installations to optimise register accuracy and minimise waste throughout the production process.

Intelligent Register incorporates two additional features: a unique final sensor and new software. The sensor allows full register-to-register production that enables the press to automatically perform register set-up without operator intervention. The new software allows the press to automatically detect register behaviour on different substrates.

The system is based on self-learning software technology and identifies splices, press stops, emergency stops, changes in press speed and printed substrates without affecting press performance. Production is simplified as the entire operation is automated. Waste during set-up times and production is reduced and press register accuracy is increased independently of substrate or speed changes.

The company guarantees compatibility on retrofit installations to existing models.

## Arrowhive Equipment Ltd

### MRT-100 manual roll turner

Arrowhive Equipment Ltd has launched the RWM-100, a hoist-based mechanical roll turner, in the UK. Developed by Schlumpf Inc. of Windham, Missouri, USA, the MRT-100 manual roll turner is engineered to assist operators in lifting and turning rolls weighing up to 45 kg. The system features the Schlumpf quick-change tooling design that accepts light duty mandrels for grabbing rolls by the core.

Arrowhive Equipment can supply the MRT-100 with a number of performance

enhancing options, including 76mm expanding mandrels; pneumatic mandrel retract with switching; bumper retract for roll loading/unloading; core stops and extended mandrels; extended turner for roll widths greater than 500mm; integrated hoist controls, and mounting brackets for hoist pendants & controls. Custom configurations are available.

## AMAGIC Holographics

### KOLDfoil HXS security holographic cold foil

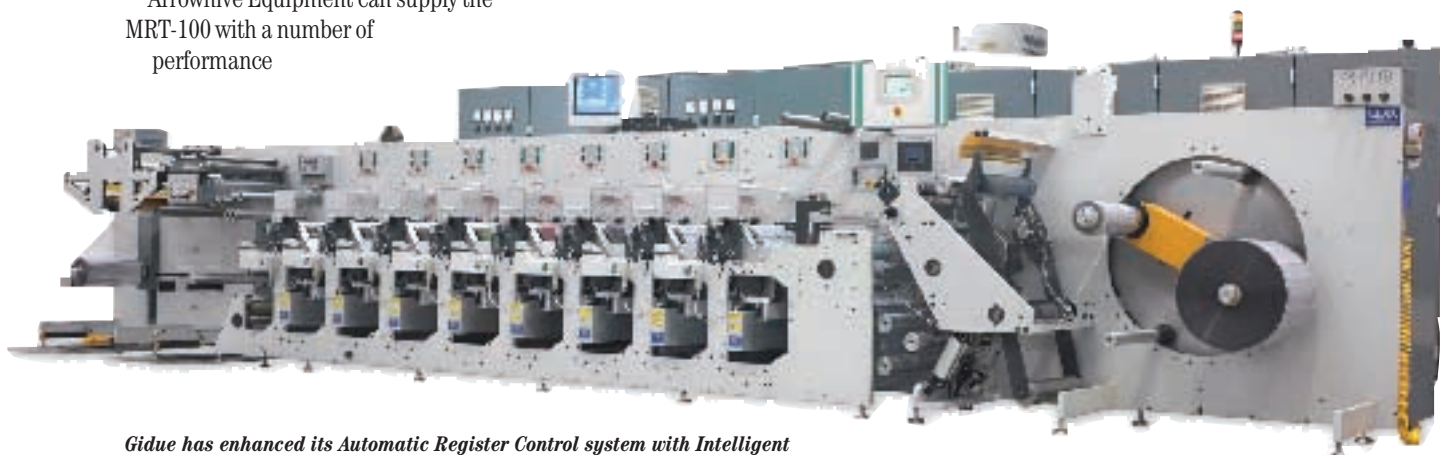
KOLDfoil HXS security holographic cold foil is available in generic security patterns or custom images used for product authentication and anti-counterfeiting. With KOLDfoil HXS, a label printer can now apply security holograms directly onto the label, in-line, during the printing process. The KOLDfoil HXS can be used for the wet lamination (cure-through) or dry lamination (conventional) cold foil printing process.

## Ciba Specialty Chemicals

### Metasheen metallic pigments

Ciba Specialty Chemicals is complementing its range of pigments through the acquisition of the high-reflectance aluminum Metasheen line from Wolstenholme International Limited, Blackburn, UK. The transaction includes the respective manufacturing facilities owned by Wolstenholme and the pigments will continue to be marketed under the Metasheen product name.

'This acquisition allows us to expand our product offering and complement our existing range with new effects,' said Armin Meyer, chairman and chief executive officer of Ciba Specialty Chemicals. 'These versatile metallic pigments give a wide choice of shiny, sparkling and mirror-like effects, allowing manufacturers and designers broad scope and high flexibility



*Gidue has enhanced its Automatic Register Control system with Intelligent Register for the E-Combat press range*

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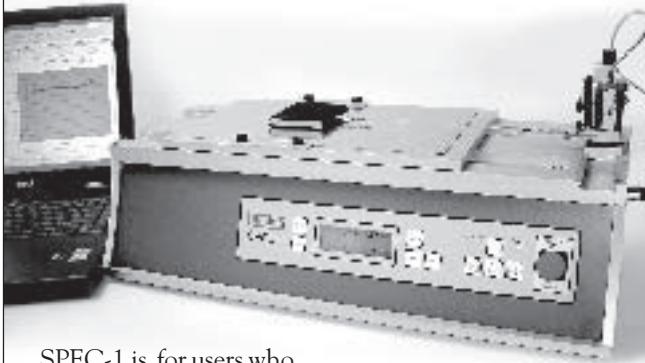


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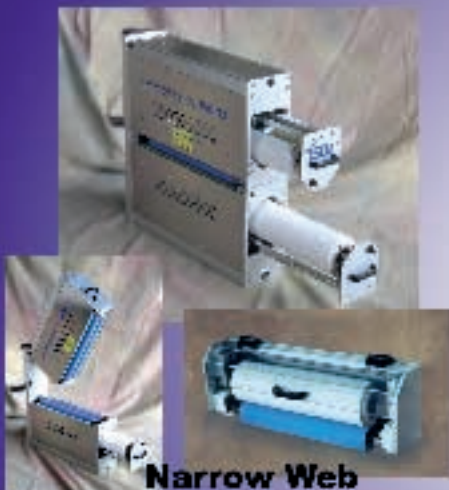
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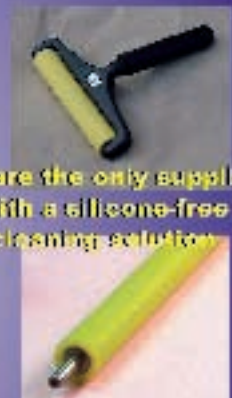
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## New products

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Metasheen are vacuum-metalized aluminum pigments giving high-quality, high value-added effects in end uses such as packaging, paints, inks and cosmetics. Applied as inks, Metasheen pigments can be placed exactly as required and can therefore be used to create individual packaging designs, for example. On very smooth surfaces, such as film and coated papers, the pigments can create a mirror-like finish. Metalized substrates can in addition be printed with conventional colors for further individual effects and designs.

### **IIMAK** **TF-160 direct thermal**

IIMAK has engineered and produced a direct thermal film which it claims is the thinnest currently available. At 1.6 mil, IIMAK's new TF-160 direct thermal film can offer significant cost savings. The film is opaque white and produces a black image that withstands moderate exposure to moisture, light and heat.

TF-160 can be used in a variety of high-end direct thermal applications that need the convenience of a single consumable. TF-160 is suited for healthcare identification, pharmaceutical labeling, frozen food and meat packing, fruit labeling, durable receipts, event passes, sporting licenses, airline bag tags, and temporary phone cards.

### **A.W.T. World Trade** **Tornado ink mixer and color blender**

A.W.T. World Trade, a manufacturer of screen printing equipment has announced the addition of a 220 V option on the popular Tornado Ink Mixer and Color Blender. This option is perfect for heavy-duty applications or those uses requiring a high torque rate.

The Tornado quickly and thoroughly mixes 1-quart containers to 5-gallon containers (1 liter to 25 liters). Containers placed on the Tornado turntable, with its self-centering clamping device, easily lock into place without any tools. Changeover of containers and blades is easy. Blades simply snap into place and you can adjust the height to fit different buckets. Four standard mixing blades are available to fit quart, 1-gallon, 3-1/2 gallon and 5-gallon containers.

Rather than mixing with spinning blades, the Tornado rotates the container while the specially designed blade blends the ink collected on the sides and bottom of the container. This ensures thorough and complete mixing of even the thickest viscosity without splashing or creating air bubbles.

The Tornado is ideal for color matching and blending glitters, fluorescence, modifiers and bases.

### **Totani America** **FD-60VSC pouch making machine**

The FD-60VSC is designed to produce several different pouch options for dry, liquid or retort applications: 1- or 2-lane plowed bottom stand up pouches, 4-edge sealed side gusset pouches, and 3-side-seal pouches. This unique capability expands production applications and maximizes machinery investment. The FD-60VSC also features press-to-close zipper capability and can be made slider ready.

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# New products

## Label Vision Systems

### INTEGRA 9500 bar code verification workstation

The INTEGRA 9500 bar code verification workstation is Uniform Code Council-certified (UCC) for EAN.UCC System users.

The INTEGRA 9500 will identify the proper bar code symbology and grade it according to ISO/CEN/ANSI standards or the general EAN.UCC specifications, as applicable. Any problem with the bar code is highlighted, down to the very bar and space causing the problem. Multiple combinations of symbologies, both 1D and 2D, and in any orientation, can be verified at one time.

## Appleton Manufacturing Division

### Roll Mover

The new Roll Mover from Appleton Manufacturing Division is designed to move heavy loads such as large paper rolls. Battery-powered for tether-free, hassle-free operation, the durable Roll Mover provides extended range and mobility to increase worker productivity. This design allows an operator to easily move heaviest rollable loads without the risk of tangled air hoses on the shop floor.

The convenience of a hoseless, battery-powered roll mover helps decrease worker injuries that are caused when loads are moved by hand. The unit's toggle handle with variable-speed throttle facilitates safely positioning large rolls in tight spaces. The Roll Mover's durability and its easy-change, quick-charge battery represent extended and sustained use.

## Ashe Converting Equipment

### Emerald inspection rewinder

Ashe Converting Equipment has developed a compact 100 per cent inspection rewinder.

This new member of the Emerald family incorporates line scan camera technology for full roll scan in one direction, with the ability to edit faults while running at speeds of up to 250 m/min (scan and reverse speed).

Ashe says this product provides converters with the ability to enter, at a low investment point, the demanding pharmaceutical/automotive markets.

The system is supplied with all AC digital drives. Both the machine control and inspection system are fully integrated and the Emerald 100 is equipped with precision closed-loop tension control and guiding in both directions. The system comes with a built in splice table and inspection lamp and

will be available in various web widths including, 330mm, 410mm, 510 mm and 800mm with a single high-resolution camera.

## FlexoArt

### Gallus EM280 upgrade

Following the success of FlexoArt's UV-Flexo unit for the Gallus R160/200, the chamber system manufacturer has launched a flexo chamber unit for the Gallus EM280 press, claimed the first solution of its kind. Using the same patented chamber suspension as in its full size systems, FlexoArt says there will be trouble-free printing even with problematic ink and varnish, and at high speeds, due to the vibration-free construction.

'The unit is sold as a complete pre-adjusted kit which is installed and ready to be used in just a few minutes. No tools or modifications of the machine are required and you even use the same handling and pump as before,' says Per Bengtsson, md at FlexoArt. The finished unit will be shown at Labelexpo in Brussels.

## Dow Corning

### Thermal solventless solution for temperature-sensitive films

Coating filmic substrates has always posed a challenge to manufacturers in the pressure sensitive industry. With Dow Corning's Syl-Off brand of solventless release coatings, manufacturers can now coat many different types and grades of filmic substrates using proven, cost-efficient, thermal-cure technology.

The Syl-Off SL 9100 series of products, Dow Corning's latest addition to the Syl-Off line, is designed especially for use on temperature-sensitive filmic substrates such as mono- and biaxially oriented polypropylene. They are also appropriate for use on substrates that pose anchorage difficulties, such as unprimed polyester films.

## Esko-Graphics

### Upgrade for Scope packaging workflow

Esko-Graphics has released BackStage 2.0, an important upgrade for Scope, the company's packaging workflow automation server.

BackStage 2.0 is completely JDF-enabled, capable of accepting instructions that direct BackStage tasks to correctly process a job, and to remotely drive other software functions via JDF commands. So BackStage 2.0 supports four different use cases: job creation linking an MIS/order

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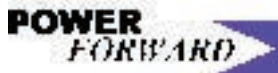
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# New products

entry system to the BackStageGraphics Information System; digital delivery between BackStage and an asset manager or proofing system; receiving feedback from a device such as a platesetter; and launching tasks, even from the web.

Other major enhancements and new features include a job tracking database, PDF 1.5 support, the DesignWizard which takes design templates and instructions for design changes, and automatically generates graphic variants such as barcodes, ingredients, and health warnings – avoiding re-entering data.

## **Esko-Graphics**

### **Plug-ins upgrades for Adobe programs**

Esko-Graphics' DeskPack 2.0 is a major upgrade of the company's software plug-ins for both Adobe Illustrator and Adobe PhotoShop.

New functionalities include the ArtiosCAD plug-in, animated 3-D VRML files, and a range of new Adobe Illustrator plug-ins including stepX, barX, OutRight, ViewX and Ink Manager. New Adobe PhotoShop plug-ins include Flexotools and spot color tools. These plug-ins bring powerful packaging pre-press production tools to the designer's and prepress operator's desktops, including full integration of these popular Adobe applications with Esko-Graphics' Scope BackStage workflow server.

'Esko-Graphics understands that consumer packaging company product managers and designers are increasingly becoming involved in the packaging supply chain workflow,' comments Frank Adegeest, Esko-Graphics senior product manager, Packaging Applications Software. 'They need tools, such as preflighting, ink management, trapping, barcode generation, 3-D soft proofing and step and repeat to provide production-ready artwork to the prepress supplier or converter, without making heavy investments in new production software.'

## **Anderson & Vreeland**

### **Milder flexo washout solution**

Anderson & Vreeland is now distributing Flexowash A, a specialty solvent-washout solution designed for improved processing of sheet photopolymers used in flexographic printing

Flexowash A is claimed to eliminate problems associated with perchloroethylene and chlorinated solvents, and to offer added features that improve plate processing. The new washout solution is milder and results in less plate absorption which reduces plate swell, and significantly

reduces processing and drydown times. Flexowash A provides longer solvent life and creates a non-hazardous waste that can be incinerated or landfilled (each distillation location should check with proper authorities before disposal).

To reclaim Flexowash A, customers call A&V's toll-free phone number. Anderson & Vreeland handles everything required to recycle spent Flexowash A, which is reclaimed and balanced back to virgin-like product through gas chromatography.

## **Harper Scientific**

### **Automated carousel roll storage**

Anilox roll supplier Harper Corporation of America's HarperScientific division has entered a partnership with J&D Associates to offer motorized carousels for anilox roll storage. The UL-listed systems are offered in customized heights and widths, and are easily loaded by one person. One carousel can safely protect and organize a set of rolls weighing up to 30,000 pounds.

J&D Associates, located in Middletown, Penn., is an industry leader in commercial storage systems.

## **Imprint Business Systems**

### **Global Gateway e-hub**

Imprint Business Systems in co-operation with First B2B, has launched the Global Gateway service that permits Imprint users to link to any company, or eMarketplace, or eCommerce "hub". Formats supported include EDI, XML, JDF, flat files and many more. Transport methods include EDI VAN, AS2, FTP, FTPS, and HTTP. Emails can be handled as securely as true B2B messaging. Global Gateway links currently include: PAPINET's Espresso hub, HSBC's ARIBA hub, MAP Merchants Group hub, ASDA Walmart, TESCO, Mayr-Melnhof, Iggesund and many other "e" communities with public and private links to trading partners.

Electronic trading can bring savings and efficiencies to printers, their customers and their suppliers, whether by EDI, the Internet, XML or other Business-to-Business (B2B) methods. The improvements come from automating the exchange of business information between customers' and suppliers' computer systems with printers' management information systems.



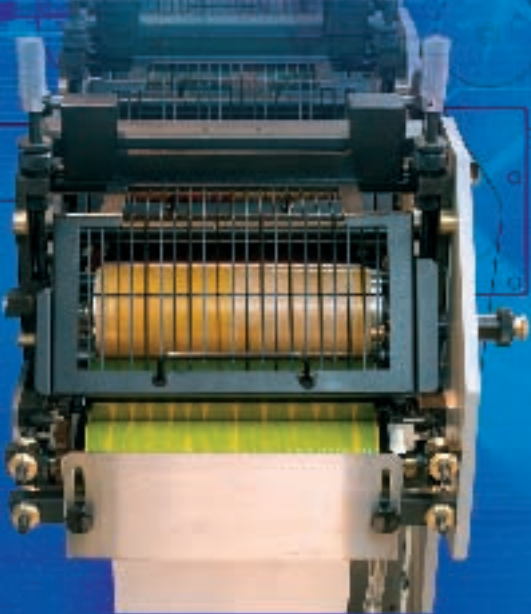
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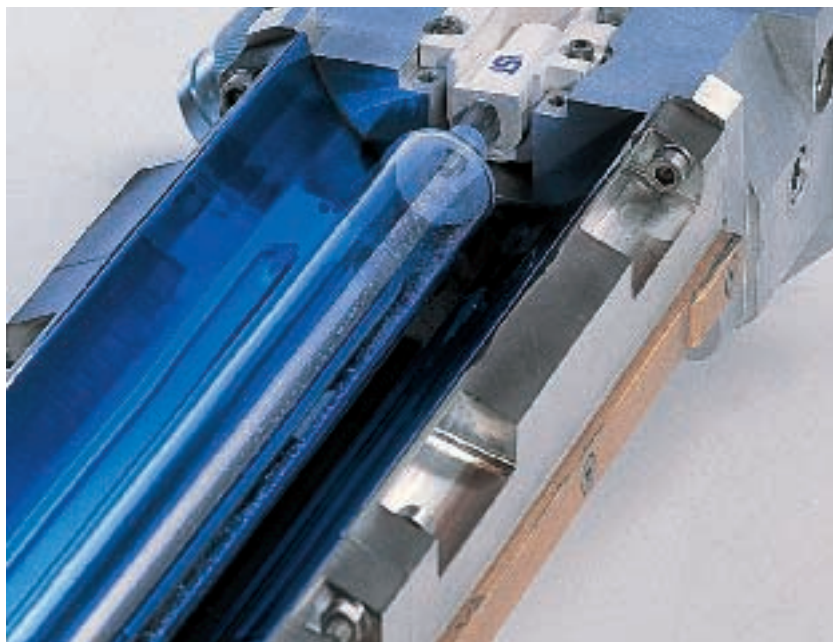
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## New products



*UV systems equipped with URS reflectors increase the amount of UV energy reaching the substrate by around 20 per cent.*

### Arca

#### Redesigns 2000 Print-Apply system

Arca launched the redesigned 2000 series Print Apply system and ArcaLog software for traceability at this year's Interpack exhibition. The 2000 series features a compact and integrated 'single chip' processor, as well as air-blow labelling and the ability to position the label perpendicular to the production line direction.

### IST

#### 'Cold' reflector technology

UV supplier IST Metz GmbH has launched a new 'cold mirror' generation of UV reflectors. With the URS reflector, IST claims that around 20 per cent more UV energy reaches the substrate for the same electrical output compared to conventional reflectors.

The URS reflectors combine the advantages of established aluminium and CMK (cold mirror) reflector technology. Only the UV energy is reflected whilst the IR energy (heat) passes through the dichroic coatings and cold mirror glass into a water-cooled absorber profile where the heat is removed.

IST Metz has carried out extensive field trials with different print processes including offset, flexo, screen printing and letterpress. These showed that with the new reflector technology it is now possible to achieve production speeds with 160 W/cm output lamps that were previously only possible with 200 W/cm lamps. This offers

benefits both in terms of energy savings and the reduction in heat on the substrate from infra-red energy. It is therefore possible to process heat-sensitive materials. Effective heat management is further ensured by a special absorber profile, says IST.

The reflector geometry can be adapted to meet the requirements of specific production processes.

#### **Kodak Polychrome Graphics** **Matchprint virtual proofing system**

Kodak Polychrome Graphics (KPG) has introduced Matchprint Virtual Partner, a color accurate full resolution imaging and collaboration engine with an open programming interface that allows it to be embedded into any existing digital production solution, such as digital asset management systems, job tracking or workflow management applications. It includes all of the features required to drive an integrated monitor proofing workflow such as collaboration, annotations, secure proof approval, online densitometer and support for remote hard copy proofing.

When customers log on to their web-based workflow from a Matchprint Virtual calibrated display they can immediately view, approve and mark up color proofs. Matchprint Virtual Partner works behind a third party application interface, providing users with application continuity while adding the capability of high resolution proofing and collaboration.

'Monitor proofing improves efficiency by removing time, distance and hard copy proofs from the workflow,' said Rob Pipe, business director, Virtual Proofing, KPG. 'Now, Matchprint Virtual Partner further increases this efficiency by integrating into customers' existing workflows and web applications.' The Matchprint Virtual Proofing System utilizes RealTimeProof streaming technology.

#### **Kurz** **Fine stamping foils**

Kurz has developed a hot stamping foil designed for fine stamping applications. The GTS 25150 foil produces superior edge definition results and is particularly suitable for filigree designs. The foil may be processed on all common stamping machines. It is available off-the-shelf in silver and different gold shades - all other standard Kurz colors may be ordered upon request.

#### **Mark Andy/Texas Instruments** **RFID conversion equipment**

Mark Andy has developed RFID label assembly equipment incorporating RFID straps and inlays from Texas Instruments (TI). Mark Andy's printing and converting technology, which uses an RFID inlay and strap insertion module developed by Tamarack Products, is designed for companies seeking to integrate RFID technology into traditional narrow web label manufacturing lines.

Later this year, TI will begin ramping to volume production on its EPC Generation 2 straps and inlays. EPC Gen 2 is a standards-based UHF technology platform that allows for global interoperability, read/write capabilities and migration to future EPC classes. Retailers including Wal-Mart, Target, Tesco, Albertsons and others have all made clear their plans to migrate to Gen 2 RFID

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# New products

technology. The TI-based RFID strap and inlay components will enable converters to produce finished EPC Gen 2 RFID labels for their customers, from reels of straps, that allow label converters to directly attach straps onto printed antennas, or reels of inlays, in which the inlay (chip and antenna) is inserted into a label.

Said Ken Daming, director of product management for Mark Andy, 'From consumer packaging to warehousing to tracking authentic pharmaceuticals, RFID has a promising future, and Mark Andy is taking the necessary steps to be a leading solution provider for the label converting and printing market. Working with RFID technology leaders like Texas Instruments is one of the building blocks Mark Andy has been focusing on as the label industry continues to evolve.'

Texas Instruments introduced the flexible RFID inlay with the introduction of Tag-it(tm) in 1998 and has worked with label converter companies, including Avery Dennison, Moore/Wallace and others, to build standardized smart label conversion processes for 13.56 MHz high-frequency (HF) RFID technology. TI's UHF inlay and strap product offering leverages this experience.

'Major retailers and their CPG suppliers will be seeking EPC Gen 2 tag solutions in the billions in the coming years, and TI is well positioned to deliver the high volumes and high-yields that label and printer manufacturers demand,' said Tony Sabetti, UHF/Retail Supply Chain director for Texas Instruments RFid Systems. 'In cooperation with equipment market leaders such as Mark Andy, and label converting customers, we will provide solutions that these companies need to meet the growing demand for EPC Gen 2 tags.'

## Camis

### Narrow web plate moulder

The Camis Irismall 600 narrow web plate moulder is designed specifically for label and tape converters. The system incorporates high magnification cameras with split screen monitor for the simultaneous control and registration of the microdots and/or cross hairs.

This Irismall 600 is fitted with high precision camera optical rail and cylinder support beam. Manually displaced cameras are linked to individual digital position indicators, allowing multiple plates to be laid without the need for extra cameras. The ergonomically designed plate mounting table allows large plates to be positioned in register prior to attaching to the double-sided tape, resulting in reduced damage to the polyester liner and a reduction in fugitive air bubbles. The Irismall 600 is available with a cantilevered sleeve change system (mandrel excluded) or with adjustable cones for shaftless printing cylinders.

The Iriflex incorporates the Taper Slide, which removes the

need to manually apply the tape to the cylinder. This system ensures the tape is applied accurately and without any fugitive air bubbles, creases and stretches, perfectly butt-to-butt, across and around the cylinder, says the manufacturer. It reduces the use and overall cost of adhesive mounting tape while preventing damage to sleeves from cut marks.

## Ecolabel

### High resolution inkjet printer

Ecolabel is now selling the Primera LX800 colour printer, capable of 4800 dpi print resolution and high throughput speeds – enabling users to include full colour photos, illustrations, graphics and text along with bar codes on pressure sensitive labels and tags.

## Raflatac

### PP Gloss White with new topcoat

Raflatac's PP Gloss White has a new topcoat. While the basic properties of the face film remain the same, the topcoat has improved scratch resistance and is highly resistant to pin-holing, says the company. In particular, it responds to the rising dominance of UV flexography in the pressure sensitive label industry and has been specially adapted for the latest UV inks on the market.

'Printable with all conventional techniques, PP Gloss White TC-4 is a reliable choice for labelling food packaging, home and personal care products and oil and industrial chemical containers,' says Raflatac. It is also overprintable by thermal transfer for use in retail, logistics and transport. This upgraded product will gradually replace all PP Gloss White stocks in Europe during the coming months.

## Water Ink

### UV Opaque White

Water Ink Technologies has introduced Bondtite White UV opaque white ink. According to the company, Bondtite White has excellent adhesion to a wide range of film substrates, and is compatible with Water Ink Technologies' complete line of UV and water-based inks. 'With Bondtite White, flexo printers can achieve excellent adhesion, superior trapping and fine graphic quality of overprinted inks,' says the company. 'Plus, it's safer for operators. Water Ink Technologies has eliminated all hazardous and chemically suspect materials from all PureFlex UV inks and coatings.'

# New products

## **Dow Corning** **Syl-Off 9100 series**

Dow Corning has introduced a line of solventless silicone release coatings that allows you to coat low-cost films (like unprimed PET) and temperature-sensitive substrates using cost-efficient thermal-cure technology. With Syl-Off 9100 series, you can obtain the anchorage you need without limiting yourself to costly films or compromising your product's clarity. The system gives you base coating, crosslinker, catalyst and additive choices so you can create the best possible performance profile for the substrate and application.

## **Rotomec** **Integration of gravure units to an offset press**

Rotomec is to integrate two print units from its RS 5002 gravure press line into an offset press for beer paper label printing. The units were demonstrated at a recent open house in Italy held by the flexible packaging press specialist, now part of the Bobst group.

The RS 5002 gravure units will apply two additional colors, white and gold respectively, and will be positioned one upstream and one downstream the offset press. The units are 798mm web width and print at a speed of 550metres/min.

Rotomec has a long experience in manufacturing gravure printing presses and coating & laminating plants for labels, but this configuration in-line with an offset press is a new development, showing the advantages of the successful integration of different printing technologies.

The servo-driven 5002 units incorporate a rubber inking roller for consistent and uniform inking at high speed. The system also provides for low volume inking through the press so that washing operations can be speeded up and there is less waste of ink when it is changed.

## **S+E Release** **UV Siliconised Thermal Paper**

S+E Release has developed a UV silicone coated thermal paper which enables laminators to manufacture self wound label stock. Thermal self wound linerless products are designed for tracking/ logistic applications where there is a need for portable or hand held mobile print and display labels. This lower caliper construction enables more metres per reel and fewer roll changes.

'The growth in supermarket self serve price weigh labels with the environmental concerns regarding release liner disposal have driven this development as well as achieving as much as 65 per cent more labels per reel,' says the company.

Typical applications will include product identification, price weigh and inventory labels, with end user markets including postal services, auto supplies and logistics labeling. S+E Release currently manufactures the T Liner in widths up to 1200 mm and at a weight of 75 g.

## **Kelgray Products** **Wireless-enabled RFID print/apply system**

Kelgray Products Ltd has launched a wireless-enabled RFID print and apply labelling system. The Easiprint RF printer applicator provides the facility to write RFID tags as well as printing traditional thermal labels, both of which can then be applied directly to the outer case or pallet by the applicator whilst travelling along a conveyor line.

The Easiprint RF system will also be available with 802.11b wireless network connectivity, which provides the user with the ability to design and



*Rotomec RS 5002 gravure units*

print labels from anywhere within the wireless network. Additionally, the wireless capabilities provide the flexibility to move the Easiprint RF system to other areas of the production facility, without being restricted by availability of Ethernet points (subject to wireless network coverage).

'We developed this product following requests from a major RFID hardware manufacturer and in response to concerns raised by many of our manufacturing customers on the increasing move towards RFID and WiFi,' says states Kelvin Smith, managing director. 'We felt the best solution was to combine the two technologies thereby providing a future-proof labelling system for our customers.'

## **Meech International** **Static monitor**

Meech International has launched its Model 987 Charge Sensor, a fully automated system which features an illuminated bar graph to provide an easy indication of the size and polarity of the residual static charge on the web. Alarms warn operators should the residual static charge reach an unacceptable level, and an output terminal allows connection to a Factory Management System for real time, continuous monitoring and historical data collection.

For converters employing gravure units, the sensor bar can be used within a classified hazardous zone, connected to a controller mounted in a safe area. The operator is alerted when the static charge level presents an explosion or fire hazard.

### Rad-Cure Corporation, UV flexo bichromatic security inks

Rad-Cure now offers UV and AQ bichromatic security inks for flexo application on paper and most plastics. When viewed at various angles, these inks will change from a colorless to a color, as well as bicolor and tricolor effects. This product grouping is offered in variations that will color shift when printed over light colors as well as dark colors - ideal for visual security that does not require any type of secondary reader apparatus, or as a decorative feature.

The product cures rapidly to a very smooth, high gloss coating with a clean and bright appearance, says Rad-Cure. Coating formulations may be varied dependent upon additional product characteristics required. This would include but is not limited to, water resistance, solvent resistance, benzophenone-free, low-odor and over-printability.

### Tesa Holospot anti-piracy enhancements

tesa scribos GmbH, a tesa group company, has added new features to its Holospot technology, designed to combat product piracy and diversion. The system is currently being used by Beiersdorf AG to protect Nivea-Products in East Europe from forgery.

The Holospot is a self-adhesive data carrier with a 1MM2 data field which, in the form of a minute label, is attached directly to a product. A laser writer stores information transformed beforehand by computer into a digital hologram.

Advantages lie in the large storage capacity of the material and in the versatility of the forgery-proof characteristics that can be combined and deposited on the Holospot.

Now visible features can be deposited on the label next to covert images or text which can only be read with a magnifying glass or

special reading devices. These comprise color-changing serial or code numbers that can be read with the naked eye.

### Weber Marking Systems RFID-enabled print/apply system

Weber has introduced the 5200rfid 'smart' label printer-applier, an integrated system that can print, encode, verify and apply pressure-sensitive RFID smart labels to cartons and pallet loads in one operation.

As labels are printed, digital information is encoded onto thin, ultra-high frequency (UHF) tags that are embedded in the smart label material. The encoded information is verified immediately by the system and the smart label is then applied to the top or side a carton or pallet load as required. For simple application of RFID labels, Weber offers the Alpha RFID that can apply smart labels up to 4.72" wide and 6" long at high speed, maintaining an application accuracy of  $\pm 0.04$ ".

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As a smart label is unwound from its supply roll, an RFID reader transmits digital information to the UHF tag. The information is verified immediately by the system and, if the tag is non-compliant, the applicator automatically disengages and the faulty smart label is rewound onto the unit's take-up roll for subsequent removal.

### Zebra Technologies RFID printer/encoder

Zebra Technologies has upgraded its Xi thermal transfer/direct thermal printer series into a combined 13.56 Mhz High Frequency (HF) RFID printer/encoder.

The R110XiIIIPlus is targeted at businesses in the pilot stages of implementing RFID programmes.

With its ability to produce swing tags, inserts and stickable labels of all sizes, the R110XiIIIPlus can be quickly and easily adapted to labelling different products in different formats. This gives users the versatility to trial multiple applications with minimal investment, according to Bernard Williams, RFID business development manager, Zebra Technologies EMEA.

'European FMCG suppliers and handlers are starting RFID pilot schemes but the many different types of labels currently being trialled, make the selection of a printer difficult,' commented Williams. 'This printer has been produced to simplify the decision for supply chain managers and future proof the investments that they make. The R110XiIIIPlus HF RFID printer/encoder can print on a wider selection of 13.56 Mhz tags than any other encoder currently on the market.'

Compliant tags include Philips' I-Code, Philips'EPC, TI's Tag-it, Inside Technologies' PicoTag, and the ISO 15693 from Philips, Infineon and Texas Instruments.

Williams explains the importance of HF encoding; 'The reason companies need HF RFID tags is that they still work even when there are lots of labelled items being scanned close together. This means they can be used to label individual cartons or pallets without the information colliding or becoming confused together when they are scanned. This is what makes the technology particularly suited to the FMCG business.'

### Omet In-line hologram insetting unit

Omet has field tested its hologram-insetting unit, which can deposit up to 6 layer holograms with independent pitches, in line, on the Varyflex press. The unit has been tested at speeds up to 80 metres/minute. The same unit can also be used as a hot foiling unit with foil saving capability. Foil infeed is programmed on the base length of the printed image and not on the pitch between the two images, saving material.



*Omet hologram insetting unit in-line on a Varyflex*



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- 1987 Kopack 250 9 col L/press. Flat & Rotary die.
- 1985 Gallus R160B 8 col l/press, 3 spare screen and flexo units, flat and rot. die.
- 2001 Etipol Combi 270 7 col L/press, + varnish.
- 2001 Etipol Combi 340 6 col L/press, Hotfoil, varnish.
- 1998 Nilpeter F3000 6 col flexo, 3 screen. Flat & rotary die.
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- 1997 CTC Turret, 300mm web, 5 spindal, core+tail glue.
- 1996 Remele Decklemaster 320. Foil lid punching unit.

For full details please contact Jon Wilkinson  
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