

Print & Packaging Innovation Asia

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Issue 9 2026



Buying a New Press and Making It Pay

Full article on page 4



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26th YEAR



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ASIAN PACKAGING EXCELLENCE AWARDS:



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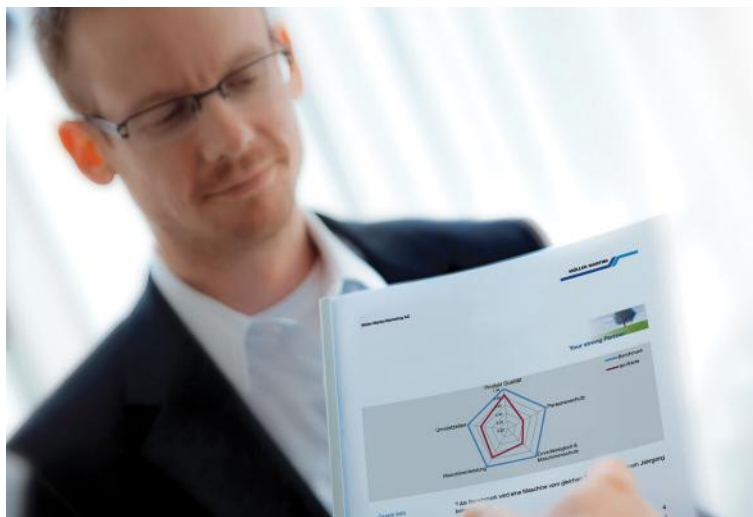
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Buying a **New Press** and Making It Pay



By Paul Myatt



The latest equipment is easy to admire. Working out whether it will make more money than the machine you already own takes a closer look. Paul Myatt considers when to invest and when to keep a good machine working.

Picture a printer returning from an exhibition. The new press looked excellent, the samples were beautiful, and the factory has already been rearranged in their head. Then someone in finance asks how much extra money it will make. The conversation becomes slightly quieter.

replaces measurement. Being fully paid for does not make equipment free to operate. Long makereadies, waste, breakdowns and overtime still cost money. If an operator says a machine runs beautifully once you get to know it, ask how much that introduction costs on every shift.

Look at saleable output, rejected work and actual repair bills. The original purchase price is money already spent; the decision concerns future cash flows, including any resale value sacrificed by keeping the machine. Equally, a low book value is no reason to retire equipment with several profitable years ahead. ACCA on relevant costs

New technology earns a serious hearing when the current operation struggles with work customers will pay for. Digital printing can help with small orders, frequent artwork changes and variable content. Automated conventional presses may improve changeovers and consistency. Better inspection or workflow software may remove an expensive source of errors. These benefits need proving on your jobs, at your required quality.

Follow the work all the way to dispatch. A faster press feeding an overloaded finishing department may simply produce a more impressive queue. Measure setup, waste, consumables and converting as well as printing speed. Sometimes the best investment is in the department everyone walks through on the way to admire the press.

Then examine the sales forecast. "We should easily fill it" is a promising opening to a conversation, but a weak basis for borrowing money. Identify the customers, volumes and achievable prices. Give confirmed orders more weight than enthusiasm. Work transferred from an existing machine contributes its improvement in margin or cost; its entire revenue cannot be counted as new business.

Be equally honest about labour savings. Saved hours become a cash benefit when they reduce a bill, avoid an additional hire or support profitable extra work. If payroll stays the same and there are no additional orders, you have gained capacity. Avoid counting those same hours as both lower wages and extra production.



Illustrative cash comparison	Base case	Downside case
Net initial cash investment	US\$300,000	US\$300,000
Annual savings on existing work	US\$60,000	US\$40,000
Annual contribution from new work	US\$60,000	US\$40,000
Additional annual running costs	(US\$20,000)	(US\$20,000)
Net annual cash benefit	US\$100,000	US\$60,000
Simple payback period	3 years	5 years

The cheque for the machine is only part of the commitment. Budget for site preparation, installation, training and software integration. Allow for materials and customer credit, then forecast service, licences, consumables and major component replacements. Include any net proceeds from selling the existing equipment. The ownership cost needs to cover the whole period you expect to use it. BDC on total cost of ownership

Take a hypothetical project requiring a net US\$300,000 upfront, including installation and initial working capital. Compare its cash benefits with continuing to use the existing equipment. In the downside case, fewer jobs use the new machine, so both savings and contribution from new work fall.

The base case recovers US\$300,000 through US\$100,000 of annual cash benefits in three years. Lower

utilisation stretches that to five. The machine has not changed, but the commercial proposition certainly has. Before signing, establish whether the business can fund the weaker case and whether the equipment will remain useful beyond that recovery period.

Payback tells you how quickly the initial cash returns. It ignores the time value of money and what the machine earns afterwards. A three-year payback is useful information, rather



My advice is to arrive at the exhibition knowing where your money is currently being lost

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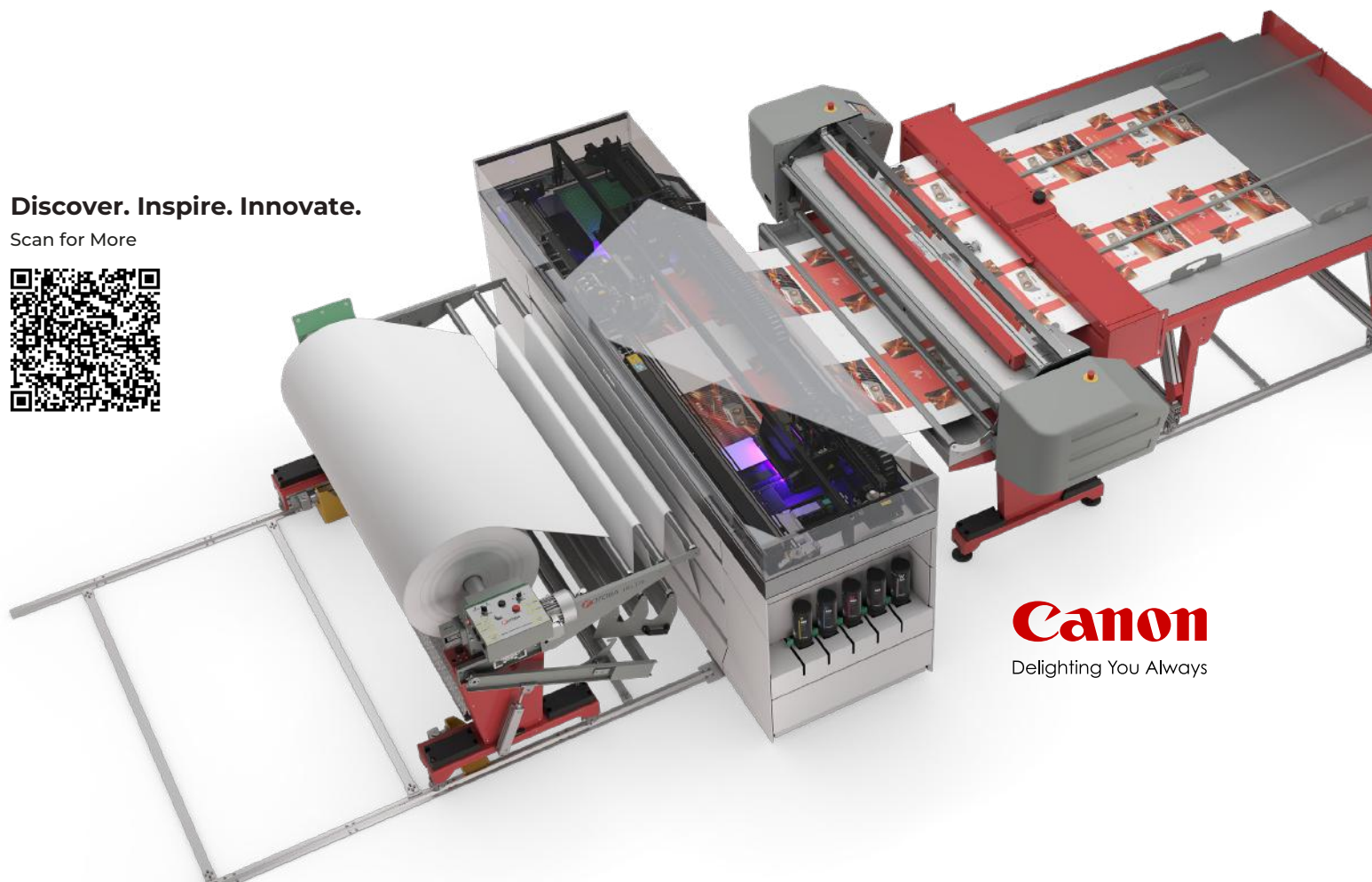
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You may also be able to improve the business without replacing the existing press. Keep it on suitable repeat work and add digital capacity for smaller, more varied orders. Upgrade finishing where it limits output. Consider refurbishment, or outsource unfamiliar work until demand is better established. New and old equipment can make perfectly profitable neighbours.

When testing a proposed investment, take the awkward jobs. Include the material that causes trouble, the demanding colour and the finishing requirement that slows everything down. Agree acceptance criteria, training and support. The supplier needs a fair opportunity to prove the solution, and you need evidence that survives the journey from demonstration room to factory floor.

If you keep the older machine, give it a plan too. Maintain it, check parts availability and set review points for downtime, repair spending and lost orders. A decision to wait is sensible when it buys useful time. It becomes expensive when it ends with an emergency purchase.

My advice is to arrive at the exhibition knowing where your money is currently being lost and what your customers will buy next. Enjoy the demonstrations, ask difficult questions and take the samples home. Then put the proposed investment through the same scrutiny as the old machine. Both should be expected to earn their place.

than a complete assessment of return on investment. ACCA on payback

For ROI, state the profit measure, investment basis and period. Ask finance to test the full lifetime cash flows as well. Net present value discounts future net cash flows at the required return on capital and deducts the initial investment. Include tax, residual value and working-capital changes, comparing alternatives over the same period. The terminology is less entertaining than the demonstration, but deserves equal attention. ACCA on investment appraisal

A sound investment can still create an uncomfortable first year. Deposits fall due, operators need time to learn and customers retain their own ideas

about when invoices should be paid. Build a monthly cash forecast covering those gaps and debt repayments. Allow for currency movements where equipment, supplies or borrowing are priced overseas.





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On the pulse of print.



39 Award-Winning Entries at the Innovation Print Awards 2026 Asia-Pacific & Japan

FUJIFILM Business Innovation announced the winners of the Innovation Print Awards 2026 Asia-Pacific & Japan (hereafter: IPA 2026 APJ) which celebrates creativity and technical excellence in production print. A total of 39 award-winning entries from 13 countries and regions were recognized for pushing the boundaries of digital print innovation.

The Innovation Print Awards (hereafter: IPA) has long served as a platform for print professionals to challenge boundaries, explore new technologies, and showcase their creativity. Now in its 19th year, the IPA 2026 APJ received 416 submissions from 13 countries and regions, including Australia and New Zealand.

This year's submissions showed strong trend in the Packaging, Creative Design, and Brochure categories, highlighting the diversity and innovation enabled by FUJIFILM Business Innovation's advanced toner technologies, including specialty colors, as well as its inkjet technologies. In particular, many entries used specialty colors, including the newly introduced Green toner available for the Revoria Press™ PC2120, to create visually striking outputs that go beyond traditional CMYK.

"Having served as a judge for the Innovation Print Awards since its

inception 19 years ago, I have witnessed the remarkable transformation of digital printing. The progress in technology has been extraordinary, with FUJIFILM playing a pioneering role in shaping the industry as we know it today," said Paul Callaghan, Head Judge for the IPA 2026 APJ. "

This year's entries demonstrated outstanding creativity and quality, with increased use of specialty colors such as Pink, Gold, Silver, and Green. The winners should be celebrated for their

achievements and for the standards they have set for the industry."

As the print industry evolves, FUJIFILM Business Innovation remains dedicated to supporting its customers and shaping the future of print. The IPA will continue to serve as a platform that inspires and challenges the industry while celebrating its best work, fostering collaboration and innovation across the global print community.



Best Innovation Award 2026 APJ

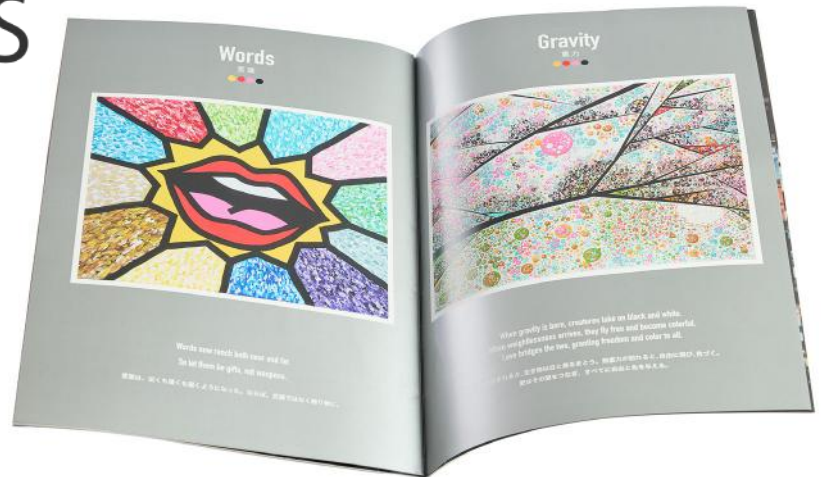
Company Name: Sampurna Printshop

Category: Rigid Packaging : Entry Name: Javatik Packaging

Printed On: Revoria Press™ PC2120 : Region: Indonesia

Inspired by the rich heritage of Surakarta batik and the symbolism of the gunungan in traditional wayang, this premium packaging reinterprets Indonesian culture through a contemporary design that resonates with modern audiences. Carefully selected colors representing the universe, human life, and nature are enhanced with vibrant Gold, Green, and Pink specialty toners, creating a striking visual presence. The elegant structural design and refined craftsmanship further elevate the packaging experience. Produced on the Revoria Press PC2120, the project demonstrates how digital printing can combine cultural storytelling, creative flexibility, personalization, and cost-effective short-run production. Its outstanding blend of tradition, innovation, and technical excellence earned it the Best Innovation Award 2026 APJ.

IPA INNOVATION PRINT AWARDS



Winning Categories and Winners

APJ 2026

Best Innovation Award 2026 APJ

Winner Sampurna Printshop | Indonesia

Books

Winner Image Quality Lab Co., Ltd. | Thailand

Runner-Up First City University College | Malaysia

Photobooks

Winner Chengdu Jiyijian Cultural Communication Co., Ltd.
Chinese Mainland

Runner-Up Sampurna Printshop | Indonesia

Brochures, Catalogues & Leaflets

Winner Enviro Print Group | Australia

Runner-Up Musa 24 Hours Printing | Singapore

Multi-Piece Campaigns

Winner Press Creation Co., Ltd. | Thailand

Runner-Up Fandata P/L trading as Engine | Australia

Wide Format Applications

Winner Image Quality Lab Co., Ltd. | Thailand

Runner-Up Beijing ZhongXianTuoFang Technology Development Co., Ltd.
Chinese Mainland

Rigid Packaging

Winner Sampurna Printshop | Indonesia

Runner-Up Visualtell Printing | Singapore

Packaging

Winner Refine Printing | Singapore

Runner-Up PT. KHIANT SUKSES BATAM | Indonesia

Digital Labels

Winner Refine Printing | Singapore

Runner-Up Hangzhou JiuCai Label Co., Ltd. | Chinese Mainland

Calendars

Winner KHANG VIET DESIGN & PRINTING CO., LTD | Vietnam

Runner-Up Seven Eight Nine Print Tech Co., Ltd. | Thailand

Food / Drink Menus

Winner Neo Digital Co., Ltd. | Thailand

Runner-Up Press Creation Co., Ltd. | Thailand

Art Reproduction

Winner Nanjing Amity Printing Co., Ltd. | Chinese Mainland

Runner-Up TVG Thai Co., Ltd. | Thailand

Creative Design

Winner Ad Imaging Solutions | Singapore

Runner-Up RAYS HARDWARE INTERNATIONAL CO., LTD. | Taiwan

Sustainability

Winner Okumura Printing Co., Ltd. | Japan

Runner-Up MIURA CO., LTD | Japan

Use of Specialty Colors

Winner Bunshodo Printing Co., Ltd. | Japan

Runner-Up Infopaper Technology (M) Sdn. Bhd. | Malaysia

Company Self Promotion

Winner Ngai Heng | Singapore

Runner-Up Guangzhou Zibai Sintech Ltd. | Chinese Mainland

Technology

Winner Sasao Printing Co., Ltd. | Japan

Business Effectiveness

Winner CHINOBEIKOKUTEN LTD. | Japan

Young Creative Designer

Winner Luo Jiajie - Shenzhen Polytechnic University
Chinese Mainland

Runner-Up Ma Wanping - Shenzhen Polytechnic University
Chinese Mainland

Point of Display

Winner BUP GROUP SDN BHD | Malaysia

Invitation

Winner Sampurna Printshop | Indonesia

Runner-Up D2 DESIGN & PRINT CO., LTD | Vietnam

Education

Winner PT. Klick Express Mitra Grafika | Indonesia

Runner-Up Image Quality Lab Co., Ltd. | Thailand

42 Global Achievements in Print Excellence

FUJIFILM Business Innovation announces the winners of the Innovation Print Awards 2026 Global (hereafter: IPA 2026 Global). A total of 42 award-winning entries were recognized for their creativity and technical excellence from among 442 submissions printed on FUJIFILM-branded production presses worldwide.

Now in its 19th year, the Innovation Print Awards (hereafter: IPA) was held as a global competition for the third time. This year's awards received entries from 29 countries and regions, including the United States, Mexico, Spain, Italy, Chinese Mainland, Thailand, India, and South Africa.

The number of participating countries and regions more than doubled, increasing from 14 in the previous year to 29 in 2026. The total number of submissions also increased to 2.6 times the previous year's total. This growth further expanded the competition's global reach. Entries showed strong trend in the Packaging, Creative Design and Brochure categories, highlighting the versatility and innovation enabled by FUJIFILM Business Innovation's advanced toner technologies, including specialty colors, and its inkjet technologies.

A Global Celebration of Print Excellence

The IPA 2026 Global brings together owners of FUJIFILM-branded production press from around the world, fostering a vibrant community of innovators who are pushing the boundaries of digital print. This year's winners leveraged FUJIFILM Business Innovation's advanced toner and inkjet technologies, including the Revoria Press™ series, Jet Press series, and Acuity series, to deliver standout applications and expand their product offerings.

The competition showcased the growing adoption of specialty colors, as press owners moved beyond traditional CMYK to create visually striking outputs. Following the recent launch of the Revoria Press™ PC2120, the Revoria Press™ series now offers the broadest lineup of specialty color

production presses, empowering customers to unlock new creative opportunities and broaden their capabilities.

"This year we saw a major increase in the entries coming from around the world. It's great to see that quality is a global goal for the companies that entered in this year's competition," said Paul Callaghan, Head Judge of the IPA 2026 Global. "Regardless of where they are from, all the winners take pride in the work they produce. It was a hard-fought competition, and our congratulations go to all this year's winners.

We're now seeing more and more printers around the world embracing not only specialty toners, but also a wide range of embellishment and finishing techniques. They are using these technologies to create work that is more distinctive, engaging, and impactful.

Printing today is a technology. It's an art. Technology has driven our industry to new heights, and with digital printing continuing to sustain and transform the industry, it will only continue to grow."

The IPA Global is a testament to FUJIFILM's commitment to empowering customers with the tools and technologies they need to succeed. FUJIFILM Business Innovation's toner and inkjet solutions enable vibrant colors, intricate details, and efficient workflows, while supporting sustainable practices. These technologies continue to drive innovation and inspire customers to expand the frontiers of what is possible in digital print.

As the print industry evolves, FUJIFILM Business Innovation remains dedicated to supporting its customers and shaping the future of print. The IPA Global will continue to serve as a platform that inspires, challenges, and celebrates the best in the industry while fostering collaboration and innovation across the global print community.

The winning entries and other submitted works are scheduled to be exhibited at events and showrooms across participating countries and regions.



INNOVATION PRINT AWARDS 2026

WE CONGRATULATE ALL
THIS YEARS WINNERS

FUJIFILM Business Innovation Corp.

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WINNING CATEGORIES

INNOVATION PRINT AWARDS 2026 - GLOBAL

Reflecting Continued Growth and Expanding Worldwide Reach

Global winners and runners-up across print, packaging, design, technology and creative production.

Best Innovation Award 2026 Global		
WINNER	Wegner GmbH	Germany
Books		
WINNER	Wegner GmbH	Germany
RUNNER-UP	Artes Gráficas Panorama, S.A. de C.V.	Mexico
Photobooks		
WINNER	KHANG VIET DESIGN & PRINTING CO., LTD	Vietnam
RUNNER-UP	Suvi Color Spot, INDIA	India
Brochures, Catalogues & Leaflets		
WINNER	LUPA	Israel
RUNNER-UP	The Standard Group	United States
Multi-Piece Campaigns		
WINNER	Dongguan City Dong Hong Printing Co., Ltd.	Chinese Mainland
RUNNER-UP	Nuova Tipografia Montaccini	Italy
Wide Format Applications		
WINNER	Wegner GmbH	Germany
RUNNER-UP	bigDAWGS®	Canada
Rigid Packaging		
WINNER	WIDE OCEAN PRINTING CO. LIMITED	Hong Kong SAR
RUNNER-UP	Tipografia Grafica Sette	Italy
Packaging		
WINNER	bigDAWGS®	Canada
RUNNER-UP	Seven Eight Nine Print Tech Co., Ltd.	Thailand
Digital Labels - Special Application		
WINNER	bigDAWGS®	Canada
Calendars		
WINNER	Jaeseung Group Co., Ltd.	South Korea
RUNNER-UP	TYPOSET, Ltd	Slovakia
Food / Drink Menus		
WINNER	M.I.W. Group Co., Ltd.	Thailand
RUNNER-UP	Neo Digital Co., Ltd.	Thailand
Art Reproduction		
WINNER	Guangzhou Dayon Digital Printing Co., Ltd.	Chinese Mainland

Direct Mail		
WINNER	Orangebox Limited	New Zealand
Creative Design		
WINNER	Direct Edge	United States
RUNNER-UP	Image Quality Lab Co., Ltd.	Thailand
Sustainability		
WINNER	IMPRENTA PISAMAR-TINTAGRAFIA 2.0 S.L.	Spain
RUNNER-UP	Inplastor AB	Sweden
Use of Specialty Colors		
WINNER	CARDS PLUS PTY LTD	South Africa
RUNNER-UP	OLSANGRAF, S.L.	Spain
Company Self Promotion		
WINNER	Kanovits Print Atelier (Kanovits Group s.r.o.)	Slovakia
RUNNER-UP	Rapid Centro Color Print Services	Spain
Technology		
WINNER	Shave & Gibson Security Printing (Pty) Ltd	South Africa
RUNNER-UP	Inplastor AB	Sweden
Business Effectiveness		
WINNER	Rajams Digital Offset Prints	India
RUNNER-UP	Tipografia On Time	Italy
Young Creative Designer		
WINNER	Julian Martinez-Faz - UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON	United States
RUNNER-UP	Leonel Salgado - UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON	United States
Creative Art Production		
WINNER	SUBARU GRAPHIC	Japan
RUNNER-UP	Techno Graphic	Malaysia
Point of Display		
WINNER	KYTA Industries (PTY) Ltd	South Africa
Invitation		
WINNER	In Nhanh Co	Vietnam
RUNNER-UP	TEAM Concept Print & Packaging	United States
Education		
WINNER	Sosyopix Internet Hiz. A.S.	Turkey
RUNNER-UP	Rajams Digital Offset Prints	India

High-end book production

Starbook Plowfolder

The automated Hunkeler Starbook Plowfolder enables extremely efficient production of digitally printed books starting from print run 1. Format flexibility for each print run is guaranteed by the completely variable page count and spine length per book, as well as semi-automatic changeover of different fold types within three minutes. Outstanding book block quality with perfectly straight, square, and flat book blocks make the Star Plowfolder the ultimate solution for the production of softcover and hardcover books.



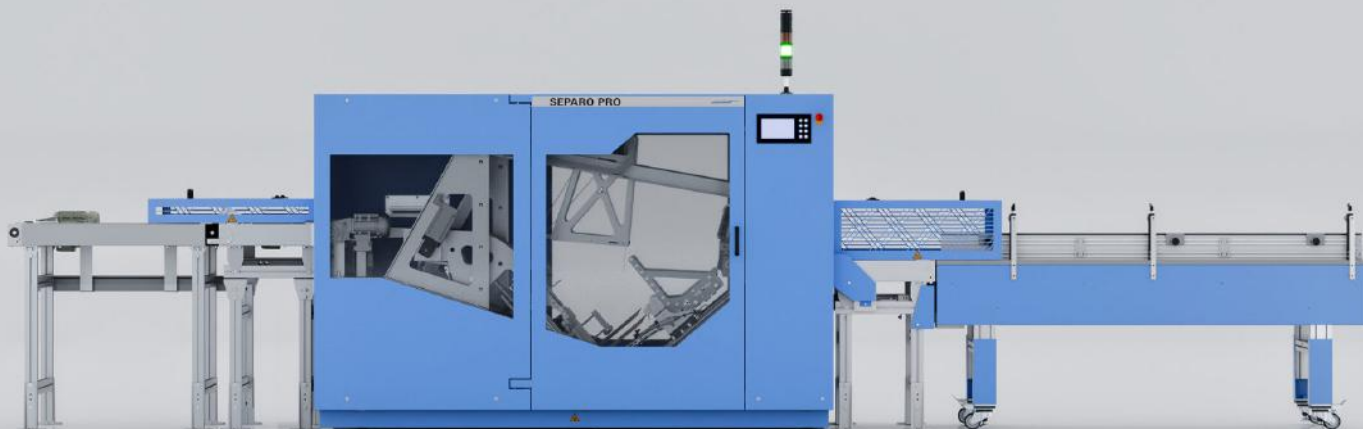
More information:



hunkeler.ch

Flexibly integrated into various production environments

With the new Separo PRO from Muller Martini, automated book-of-one production becomes even easier for full-service print shops.



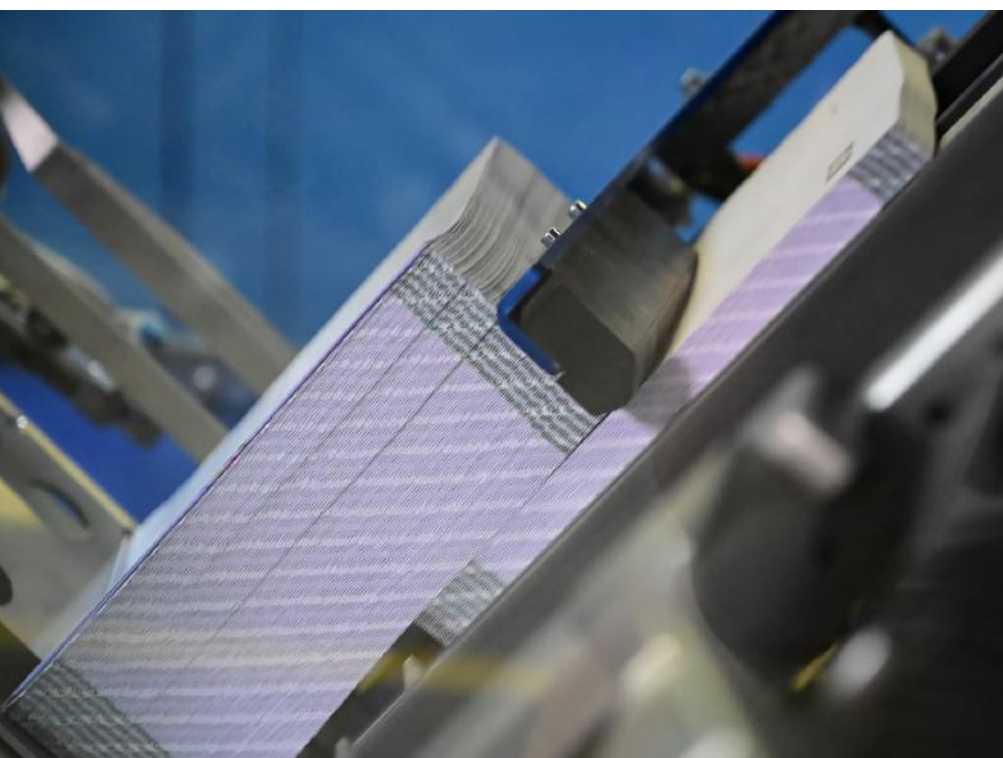
That's because the destacker reliably and efficiently separates pre-glued or thread-sewn book blocks for softcover and hardcover production. Even with varying block thicknesses and formats, it reliably processes the book blocks from stack to stack.

Thanks to the first-in, first-out principle (FIFO), the order of the book blocks

is maintained, which significantly simplifies the production process. The book blocks leave the destacker in the same order in which they were previously stacked. Individual, already-separated book blocks or stacks of single sheets can be transported directly via the bypass function.

The Separo PRO can be flexibly integrated into various production environments – for example, inline ahead of the two perfect binders Vareo PRO and Antaro Digital, as well as the Diamant MC hardcover book lines from Muller Martini. This allows users to increase process reliability and the net output of their system, while creating the conditions for cost-effective production of medium and small runs, right down to single books. The Separo PRO can also be loaded manually.

With up to 2,000 cycles per hour, the Separo PRO ensures efficient and reliable separation of book blocks. In run production, up to 4,000 book blocks per hour are possible under defined conditions. Initial field experience shows productivity gains of up to 30 percent. The destacker thus supports high net output and helps increase the profitability of the entire production line.





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Automation, AI and Data-Driven Production for Commercial Print Business at K-Print 2026

At KINTEX in Goyang, Heidelberg Korea showcased a connected production strategy built around automated prepress, smarter screening, hybrid production and cloud-based plant intelligence.



Heidelberg Korea used K-Print 2026 to demonstrate how automated prepress, digital production and data-driven workflow tools can work together in one connected ecosystem.



Live presentations and demos focused on automation, Multidot screening and hybrid production powered by Prinect.

Overcoming Labor Shortages with Automated Plate Production

Amid the rapid changes reshaping the printing industry worldwide, the commercial print market in South Korea is undergoing significant transformation. As print companies face rising material costs, a shortage of skilled operators, and increasing pressure to enhance competitiveness, Heidelberg Korea participated in K-Print, held at KINTEX in Goyang, to present solutions designed to address these challenges, with a particular focus on the commercial print segment.

As labor shortages, shorter turnaround times, and increasing numbers of short-run jobs become everyday realities, printing companies are under pressure to maintain and improve both productivity and quality with limited resources.

One of the most effective approaches is the automation of prepress operations. By automating the entire platemaking process, from plate loading and imaging to processing and bending, printers can significantly reduce operator workload while improving efficiency, minimizing human error, and maintaining consistent production quality.

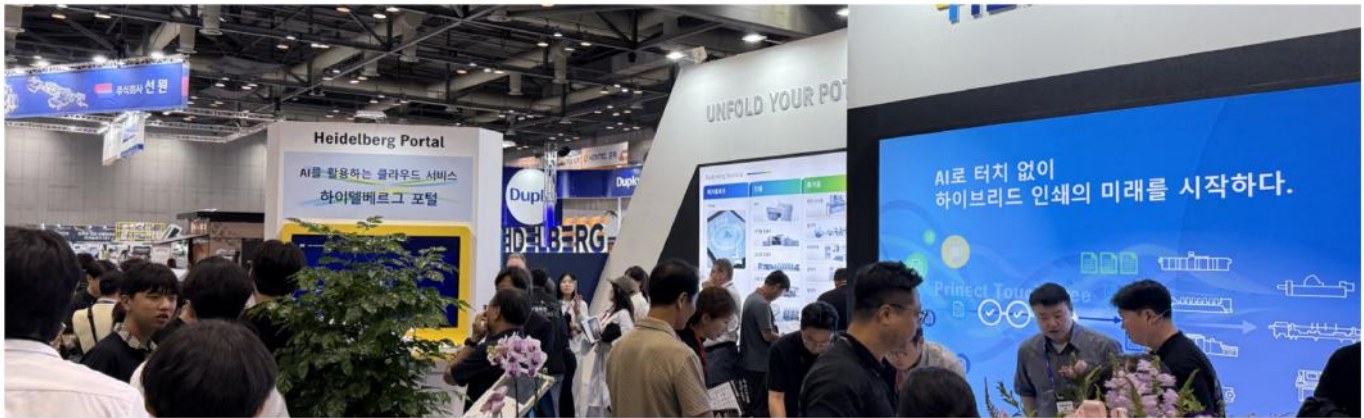
At K-Print, Heidelberg demonstrated a fully integrated system combining the Suprasetter 106 with the Compact Pallet Loader (CPL) and an automatic plate bending system. Together, these technologies automate the complete plate production workflow, enabling higher productivity with fewer manual interventions. The system also supports overnight and extended production runs, helping maximize production capacity.

The Suprasetter 106 is a flagship CtP system from Heidelberg, recognized for its highly accurate imaging performance and reliable operation. By integrating the CPL plate-loading system and automatic plate bending equipment, tasks previously performed manually by operators can now be automated within a seamless workflow.

“Reduce operator workload while improving efficiency, minimizing human error, and maintaining consistent production quality.”

Automated platemaking from plate loading through bending was a major talking point at the show.

The CPL automatically feeds plates from high-capacity pallets, allowing continuous production while minimizing plate replenishment activities. Its benefits become especially evident in unattended or night-shift operations, where stable plate output is critical. Combined with automatic bending, the system shortens job preparation times, reduces operator intervention, and lowers the risk of human error. By improving efficiency across the entire prepress process, it helps shorten lead times and stabilize quality, making it a practical solution for smart factory environments.



Crowds gathered to see Heidelberg's latest automation and workflow solutions in action.

“Reduce Ink Costs by Up to 20%” Through Multidot Screening Technology

As demand for higher print quality continues to grow, print companies are simultaneously facing rising ink and material costs as well as increasing pressure to reduce environmental impact. As a result, technologies that can maintain premium quality while lowering production costs are attracting growing attention.

One of the highlights presented at K-Print was Multidot Screening, Heidelberg's next-generation screening technology designed to meet these demands. By optimizing ink consumption while enhancing image quality, Multidot helps improve both profitability and competitiveness.

Unlike conventional screening methods, Multidot uses dots of varying sizes to reproduce image information more precisely. This enables more natural color reproduction, smoother tonal transitions, and more faithful rendering of fine image details.

The technology also minimizes moiré patterns and image noise while maintaining exceptional print sharpness. These advantages make it particularly effective for applications where print quality is a key differentiator, such as premium commercial print products and high-value packaging.

In addition, the ability to achieve superior visual results with lower ink consumption contributes to both cost reduction and environmental sustainability, helping printers meet economic and environmental objectives simultaneously.

Maximizing Productivity Through Hybrid Offset and Digital Printing

As print runs become shorter and delivery expectations continue to accelerate, print companies need production environments that combine flexibility with efficiency. At the same time, labor shortages and rising production costs are driving demand for higher levels of automation across the entire workflow.

Princt Touch Free further enhances efficiency by automatically analyzing job data and determining the optimal production route and schedule. By minimizing operator intervention, the system helps optimize production planning, reduce human error, and improve overall factory performance.

“Princt Touch Free and Jetfire 50 use AI to optimize the production of increasingly short-run jobs.”

Hybrid production was positioned as a practical response to faster turnaround demands and shorter run lengths.

To address these challenges, Heidelberg presented a hybrid production concept that combines offset printing, the Jetfire 50 digital press, and the AI-powered workflow platform Princt Touch Free. By intelligently utilizing both offset and digital technologies, the solution enables the most efficient production method regardless of run length.

The Jetfire 50 is a next-generation digital printing system that delivers the quality expected from offset printing while maintaining the flexibility of digital production. Since no plate changes are required, the press can efficiently handle short-run jobs, variable data applications, and fast-turnaround work while reducing makeready time and increasing productivity.



Heidelberg staff presented the smart production workflow to a packed audience at K-Print 2026.

HYBRID PRODUCTION

powered by Prinect



Heidelberg's hybrid production concept links multiple output technologies through the Prinect workflow environment.

Gain Complete Real-Time Transparency

Heidelberg Portal and the Smart Print Factory

Another key advantage is the ability to manage offset and digital production within a single Prinect environment. Jobs can be automatically directed to the most appropriate production method based on quantity, specifications, and delivery requirements. This creates greater production transparency while improving equipment utilization.

Together, Jetfire 50 and Prinect Touch Free represent far more than a digital printing solution. They form a platform for end-to-end production optimization, helping printers address labor shortages, increasing numbers of short-run jobs, and the growing need for smart factory operations.

While investment in automation continues to increase, many print companies have discovered that equipment alone is not enough to achieve lasting operational improvements. To continuously improve productivity and reduce costs, companies must be able to capture, analyze, and utilize the vast amount of data generated across the entire production environment.

This is where Heidelberg Portal comes into play. The cloud-based platform supports data-driven production management and business decision-making by connecting machines, workflows, and production data throughout the print shop.

The platform provides real-time visibility into machine performance, production status, and operational metrics. Beyond equipment monitoring, it also offers maintenance management, performance analytics, and remote support capabilities, helping reduce downtime through predictive maintenance and minimize production losses.

By analyzing utilization rates and production performance across multiple devices, Heidelberg Portal enables continuous process improvement and more efficient operations. As a result, printers can improve productivity while simultaneously reducing operating costs.

At K-Print 2026, Heidelberg presented a clear vision for the future of print production: connect every process, automate every possible step, and optimize operations through data.

Smart Printing Ecosystem

Heidelberg presented its K-Print strategy as a connected ecosystem: Suprasetter 106 and CPL for automated prepress, Multidot Screening for quality and efficiency, Jetfire 50 with Prinect Touch Free for intelligent hybrid production, and Heidelberg Portal for plant-wide visibility and analysis.

Within this vision, Suprasetter 106 and CPL provide an automated prepress foundation, Multidot Screening delivers quality and efficiency, and Jetfire 50 with Prinect Touch Free creates an intelligent hybrid production environment. Heidelberg Portal then connects these technologies through data, transforming the entire facility into an integrated smart production system.

Rather than focusing on individual pieces of equipment, this approach represents a complete Smart Printing Ecosystem designed to optimize the entire production process. By combining automation, digitalization, and connectivity, Heidelberg offers a practical pathway for addressing industry challenges such as labor shortages, quality demands, and cost pressures.

In an increasingly competitive market, success requires more than equipment investment alone. It requires a strategic approach to workflow optimization across the entire production chain, and the solutions presented at K-Print provide a clear roadmap for that transformation.



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Solo Murni Expands Packaging Business with More Than 20 Komori Presses

More than 20 Komori presses are currently in operation at Solo Murni. Most recently, the company installed four new presses, including a six-color Lithrone G44 advance, significantly increasing its production capacity.



“Our strengths lie in our high print quality, strong design capabilities, and unwavering commitment to our customers.”

Rio Haryanto
Director, Solo Murni

Founded in 1976 by Mr. Sinyo Haryanto in Central Java, Indonesia, Solo Murni has grown into one of the country's leading manufacturers of stationery and packaging products. Today, the company employs approximately 4,500 people. Its proprietary brands, including the widely recognized KiKy brand, are sold both domestically and internationally. The company produces more than 400 products, including notebooks, planners, memo pads, wrapping paper, gift boxes, envelopes, and a wide range of packaging products.

As demand for packaging has grown rapidly since 2018, Solo Murni has strengthened its focus on the packaging business and continued to expand its packaging product portfolio.

“Our strengths lie in our high print quality, strong design capabilities, and unwavering commitment to our customers,” says Mr. Rio Haryanto, Director of Solo Murni and son of the company's founder, Mr. Sinyo Haryanto. “Our products are distributed throughout Indonesia and exported to more than 13 countries around the world.”

Investing in Equipment to Improve Print Quality and Productivity

Rio Haryanto explains, “To offer a wide variety of products and designs, we first need to achieve the highest possible print quality. That is why we installed our first Komori press in 2010. Since then, we have been impressed by the machine performance, continuous technological innovation, high-quality service, and Komori's commitment to supporting our business.”

Today, Solo Murni operates more than 20 Komori presses in a variety of configurations, ranging from four-color to six-color and eight-color models, including the Lithrone G44 advance. This extensive press lineup supports the company's large-scale production operations.

Speaking about the benefits of the investment, Rio says, “Since introducing Komori presses, our production capacity has increased significantly. We have improved operational efficiency and greatly reduced waste. We are very satisfied with the performance of the presses, and our print quality continues to improve. Looking ahead, we will continue developing new products while also exploring opportunities to enter the large-format packaging printing market.”



Solo Murni operates more than 20 Komori presses in configurations ranging from four-color to eight-color models.

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WORLDWIDE EXPORT

PT Solo Murni



Solo Murni's proprietary brands are sold throughout Indonesia and exported to more than 13 countries.

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Operators' Confidence in Komori Presses

Sri Wahyudi, Printing Manager, comments, "Komori presses are very easy to operate. We can save the air settings for the feeder and delivery and quickly recall them for repeat jobs. Even when changing the printing speed from 10,000 sph to 15,000 sph, we can simply load the previous job settings, which gives us confidence when switching between jobs."

He continues, "KHS-AI (Advanced Interface) also helps reduce paper waste. The press reaches stable production conditions from the start, and ink supply is maintained at the optimal level. For repeat jobs, color quickly matches the target standard, so very little time is needed for color adjustment. By recalling saved job data, we can reach the target color using only about 150 sheets."

During production runs, press speed remains highly stable, and Komori presses consistently deliver both stable productivity and color quality. As long as roller settings and nip pressure are maintained according to specifications, color remains stable even at high printing speeds."

Regarding operation and management functions, Sri adds, "The PQC (Print Quality Control) interface is intuitive and easy to understand, making it very user-friendly for operators. In the latest version of PQC, key information such as ink fountain key openings can be displayed in text and numerical values, further improving usability."

In addition, the PDC-SX (Spectral Print Density Control - SX model) enables operators to perform register adjustments and color management with ease. Measurement results are displayed numerically, and adjustment results are reflected immediately, allowing us to maintain print stability throughout production. The speed of color adjustment and setting changes is especially impressive. Because various settings can be saved and recalled whenever needed, overall operational efficiency has improved significantly."



Lithrone GX40RP advance technology supports stable productivity, repeatability and color quality.

The speed of color adjustment and setting changes is especially impressive."

Sri Wahyudi
Printing Manager, Solo Murni

Solo Murni continues to pursue greater production efficiency while expanding its business for future growth.

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Konica Minolta launches AccurioLabel 231 for greater label productivity

Konica Minolta has expanded its digital label press portfolio with the launch of the new AccurioLabel 231, a toner-based production system designed to give small and medium-sized label converters greater productivity, automation and production stability.

The new press succeeds the AccurioLabel 230 and is positioned in the entry- to mid-volume digital label market, where shorter runs, faster turnaround times and an increasing number of individual jobs continue to drive demand for flexible digital production.

A major development with the AccurioLabel 231 is its ability to maintain improved colour registration accuracy while operating at its maximum production speed of 23.4 metres per minute. Print resolution has also been increased to 1,200 × 2,400 dpi, with Konica Minolta targeting sharper imaging, smoother gradients and improved colour reproduction across a broad range of label applications.

The press offers selectable production speeds of 23.4, 18.9, 13.5 and 9.45 metres per minute depending on the substrate being used.

One of the most significant productivity improvements is the increase in maximum continuous print length. With the optional IQ-530 Intelligent Quality Optimizer, jobs can run for up to 1,600 linear metres, compared with around 300 metres on the previous generation.

This longer uninterrupted production capability should prove particularly valuable to converters moving beyond very short digital runs and looking to handle increasingly substantial jobs without sacrificing the flexibility associated with toner-based production.

Automation becomes increasingly important

Konica Minolta has also increased the level of automated quality control available on the AccurioLabel 231.

The optional IQ-530 Intelligent Quality Optimizer provides real-time colour stability control and colour registration monitoring, together with automatic calibration and density adjustment.

By automating functions that traditionally require operator intervention, the company says converters can achieve more repeatable output while reducing setup time, waste and the potential for human error.

This reflects a broader trend across label and packaging production,



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Giving Shape to Ideas



where equipment manufacturers are increasingly turning to automation to address both productivity requirements and the shortage of highly skilled press operators.

Ease of operation remains an important part of the AccurioLabel concept. The 231 has been designed around an intuitive operating environment that allows commercial printers and label converters to enter digital label production without requiring extensive specialist training.

The machine uses dry-toner electrophotographic technology in CMYK and does not require substrates to be pre-coated. Supported materials include paper, polypropylene and PET, along with a range of self-adhesive and selected textured label stocks.

A new IC-615 controller also provides improved RIP performance, while AccurioPro Flux with the Label Impose option supports job preparation and imposition.

Building on an established platform

The AccurioLabel 231 joins the higher-volume AccurioLabel 400 within Konica Minolta's digital label portfolio.

Konica Minolta says installations of its AccurioLabel systems have now reached 2,000 worldwide, reflecting the continuing adoption of digital production among conventional label converters as well as commercial printing companies looking to diversify.

Masashi Morii, Head of Industrial Printing Business Development at Konica Minolta Business Solutions Europe, said the new system had been

developed particularly for ambitious small and medium-sized businesses seeking to increase operational performance while reducing waste.

For converters, the practical focus of the AccurioLabel 231 is clear: longer uninterrupted production, greater automation and more consistent quality while retaining the relatively straightforward operation that has helped toner technology establish a strong position within short- and medium-run label production.

As run lengths continue to fragment and brands demand greater versioning, personalisation and faster delivery, systems such as the AccurioLabel 231 demonstrate how digital label production is progressively moving beyond simply handling short runs and into a broader production role.





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Digital can printing creates craft beverage brands in Asia

A beverage brand testing a new flavour needs packaging that can keep pace with demand. Ordering more decorated cans than it can confidently sell ties up cash and creates the risk of obsolete stock. For a seasonal promotion or a regional launch, the packaging commitment can become a barrier to trying the idea at all.

Digital printing directly onto aluminium cans offers a way to produce different designs in quantities closer to actual requirements. Quantix is addressing this application with Novum, a modular inkjet system that combines can decoration with automated handling. Its appeal for Asia Pacific lies in the relationship between design flexibility, production efficiency and the economics of smaller orders.

Printing innovation on the can surface Novum applies the image directly to the outside of the can using industrial inkjet printheads. Digital artwork controls the deposition of ink, removing the need to manufacture printing plates for each design. This makes artwork changes more straightforward, although file

preparation, colour management and sample approval remain part of producing a consistent result.

Quantix describes a single-pass printing process with UV LED pinning to stabilise the deposited ink before final curing. Accurate droplet placement and controlled ink behaviour are central to reproducing fine text, photographic images and smooth gradients on a curved surface. The practical test is how consistently those details reproduce across a production run.

The tactile decoration described by Quantix adds another unique design option. Controlled deposits of ink and selective varnish build raised features on the surface. Suggested applications include a textured motif, a citrus-

peel effect or droplets that give the appearance and feel of condensation. Designers can use these effects selectively to draw attention to a particular element of the artwork.

For a beverage brand, this brings visual design and touch into the same packaging brief. The effect needs to suit the product and justify its production cost. A well-executed texture can give a limited edition or premium range a distinctive finish, with the final sample showing precisely what the process can achieve.

A production line that can develop with demand

The printer forms part of a wider production system. Quantix describes



es new opportunities for Asia



a configuration with upstream depalletising and downstream palletising, bringing the supply of empty cans and the handling of decorated cans into one coordinated line. Paolo Venturelli, CEO of Quantix, describes the objective as "a comprehensive, highly automated production cell".

Coordinating these stages can reduce manual handling and make production easier to manage. The commercial benefit depends on the performance of the whole line, including loading, printing, curing and discharge. Consistent output of saleable cans is the useful measure for an operator planning capacity and delivery dates.

Novum's modular architecture is intended to let customers configure the system around current applications and expand it as requirements develop. Quantix identifies additional printing, treatment and curing capacity among the possible developments. This gives an investor a basis for discussing a staged installation, with the scope and cost of later upgrades established at the outset.

European users provide commercial reference points

Quantix's European customer references include CanLab in the Netherlands and Jet Can in Serbia. These businesses provide a starting point for prospective customers seeking to understand how digital can printing fits into commercial operations.

CanLab offers digital printing alongside labelling and sleeving, serving beverage customers across several product categories. That choice of decoration methods is instructive. The appropriate process depends on the design, quantity, finish and delivery requirement of each order. Digital production gives the supplier another option when those requirements change.

For an APAC business considering the technology, customer reference discussions are an opportunity to examine everyday production: the work being accepted, preparation between designs and the consistency of finished cans. Relevant applications and operating experience help turn a technology discussion into a realistic production plan.



Paul McKay (Asia Pacific regional representative) and Paolo Venturelli (Chief Executive Officer) of QUANTIX DIGITAL srl. Image supplied by Quantix

Making the APAC business case

Across Asia Pacific, potential applications include craft beverages, local brand launches and designs tailored to individual markets. A producer serving several destinations may need different artwork or language versions without wanting to hold a large stock of every version. Digital decoration can make that mix easier to accommodate where the order quantities and production costs support it.

The investment case should therefore begin with a representative mix of jobs. Ink and varnish consumption, labour, preparation time, maintenance and rejected cans all contribute to the cost of a saleable unit. Reduced stock exposure and the ability to accept additional work can also have commercial value. Their contribution depends on the customer's order book and utilisation of the line.

Direct printing also removes the separate label or sleeve from applications that would otherwise use one. Producing closer to demand may reduce surplus decorated stock. Those are specific opportunities to examine; a wider environmental assessment must still account for the materials, energy and waste involved in the complete process.

For converters and beverage businesses, a useful first step would be to test actual artwork on the intended cans and compare the finished result with the production and cost requirements. This puts print innovation into a decision that can be evaluated: whether the line can deliver the required designs, finish and quantities at a commercially workable cost.

Paul McKay represents Quantix Digital in Asia Pacific and is the regional contact for enquiries about the technology and its applications. For businesses assessing digital can printing, that provides a local point of contact for taking the discussion forward.

APAC enquiries Paul McKay | Quantix Digital Asia Pacific
paul.mckay@quantix-digital.com



UV inkjet can decoration accommodates photographic images and colourful graphics.



A close-up of Quantix's tactile print effect shows the texture of the decorated surface.

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Strategic innovation drives growth for Splash Graphics

Built on more than 30 years of bold strategic moves and technology partnerships, Splash Graphics continues to think bigger—most recently by expanding its flexographic platemaking operations with a second FLEXCEL NX System.



“

For us, the most important benefit of working with Miraclon and FLEXCEL NX Technology is taking advantage of their steady drumbeat of innovation,” says Splash Graphics co-owner Dhiren Sanghani.

“For us, the most important benefit of working with Miraclon and FLEXCEL NX Technology is taking advantage of their steady drumbeat of innovation,” says Splash Graphics co-owner Dhiren Sanghani. “The Miraclon technical team is constantly making improvements, coming up with new technological differences every few years.”

That steady drumbeat of innovation is also why the Chicago-based pre-media provider recently expanded its flexographic platemaking operations by adding a second FLEXCEL NX System—this time a 50" x 80" format. According to Dhiren, this investment “boosts platemaking capacity, increases flexibility, and helps us produce and ship a greater variety of plate sizes to printers and converters nationwide faster.”

Built on more than 30 years of bold strategic moves and technology partnerships, Splash Graphics’ latest investment continues its pattern of thinking bigger at pivotal moments in the company’s history.



Thinking Big - Innovation Milestones

The company’s growth story began in 1992, when Co-owner Valji Patel started the business in partnership with Bhavesh Vanani and Dhiren. Initially providing prepress services to Chicagoland printers, they made the first major pivot in 1995 by adding multi-color presses and finishing systems, transforming into a full-service printing company.

Splash Graphics’ next big move occurred in 1999 with computer-to-plate (CTP) technology. Though it was a new technology at the time, they jumped into the deep end by investing in the largest Creo CTP available — a 58" x 78" unit — and a Creo digital proofing system. Valji Patel notes: “Besides feeding our own presses, we were shipping large-size plates all over the country. We were early adopters of this game-changing technology.”

In 2006, Splash changed the game decisively once again by selling its printing operations and returning to a focus on prepress and platemaking services. Valji explains: “Instead of prepress diminishing—as we had feared in 1995—our prepress was flourishing, so this became our 100% focus. Two years later, in 2008, we expanded into flexo prepress with FLEXCEL NX Technology.”

Today, the company is focused on brand support, flexo, and offset prepress services. Prepress for food packaging is the company’s largest market at 60%, followed by medical, healthcare, and shrink-sleeve labels. Additional services include packaging mock-ups and large-format display and signage.



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Strategic innovation drives growth for Splash Graphics

Continued from previous page



'Always looking for differentiation'

Dhiren describes the 2008 move into FLEXCEL NX Technology as "a deliberate effort to differentiate ourselves from the competition." Valji and Bhavesh took on the task of evaluating the flexo platemaking options. FLEXCEL NX Technology had only just come on the market, but their verdict was that it was the "something different" they were looking for.

"Flat-top dot technology was genuinely revolutionary, unlike anything else around, and delivered unmatched image quality and consistent print results on customers' presses," adds Bhavesh.

“

Flat-top dot technology was genuinely revolutionary, unlike anything else around, and delivered unmatched image quality and consistent print results on customers' presses," adds Bhavesh.

A partnership that keeps evolving

Dhiren credits continuous advances in FLEXCEL NX Technology with sharpening the company's competitive edge: "The Miraclon technical team is constantly making improvements. PureFlexo™ Printing is a classic example—we were a beta site for the triple-form patterning and now use it whenever the work suits it."

"Miraclon's commitment to innovation fits perfectly with our own philosophy of constantly offering customers new solutions through pressroom problem solving and press optimization. After all, we've been there—our journey from prepress to printer and back to prepress makes Splash Graphics uniquely qualified to help customers improve quality, productivity, and repeatability."



Splash Graphics at a glance



Founded: 1992



Core strength:
Prepress and platemaking



Markets served:
Food packaging, medical, healthcare, shrink-sleeve labels



Services:
Flexo and offset prepress, packaging mock-ups, display and signage

Built on more than 30 years of bold strategic moves, innovation, and technology partnerships, Splash Graphics continues to set the standard in flexographic prepress.

The journey continues.

The focus remains the same—helping customers print better, every time.

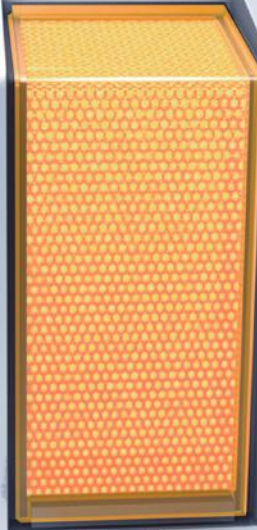
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SMARTcure is IST METZ's AI-supported control system for UV and LED curing processes.



Modern label printing presses require maximum flexibility

With swap4cure, IST presents a modular platform for UV, LED UV and thermal drying – developed to meet the demands of label printing today and tomorrow.

The system combines UV, LED UV and thermal curing on a single platform, enabling rapid switching between the technologies. Complemented by LEDcure NX, SMARTcure and the prospect of FREEcure, swap4cure helps machine manufacturers and print shops to design their systems to be flexible, energy-efficient and future-proof.

Label printing is undergoing a profound transformation. New substrates,

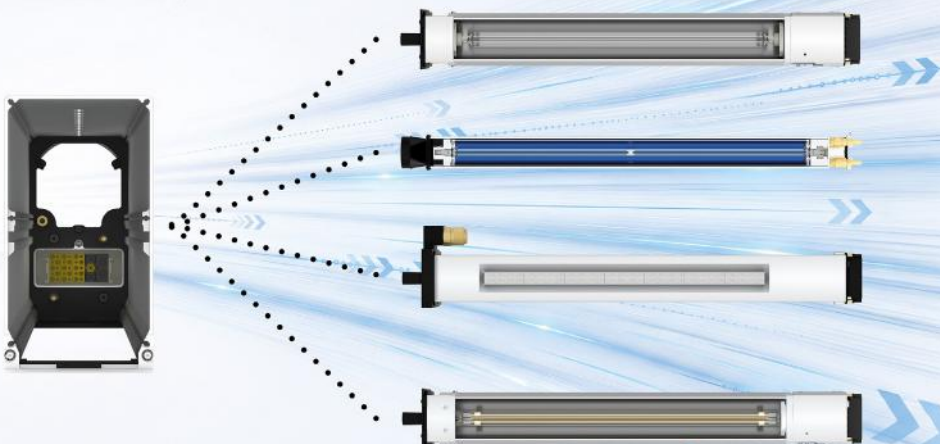
water-based inks and varnishes, increasing production speeds, and stricter requirements regarding sustainability and energy efficiency are constantly changing the operating environment. At the same time, regulatory requirements – particularly in the packaging and food sectors – continue to grow. For machine manufacturers and print shops, this means one thing above all else: maximum flexibility.

Modern label printing presses must now reliably handle a wide variety of printing processes, ink chemistries and production requirements. A single curing technology is increasingly insufficient for this. What is needed are modular press designs that can be adapted to changing applications whilst ensuring maximum productivity, process reliability and cost-effectiveness.

With swap4cure, IST is introducing a platform that meets precisely these requirements. The modular system allows users to switch easily between conventional UV curing, LED UV and thermal drying using infrared and hot air. Depending on the print job, users can decide which technology is best suited – without having to commit permanently to a single curing process.

In addition to technological flexibility, the development process focused primarily on machine availability. Modular quick-change systems reduce maintenance times and significantly simplify servicing. At the same time, long-life UV lamps, highly efficient reflector technology and robust system components ensure

swap4cure



swap4cure: The modular platform for UV, LED UV and IR curing

A woman in profile is looking towards a large industrial machine. The machine is emitting bright blue and purple light beams, creating a futuristic and high-tech atmosphere. The woman's face is partially in shadow, and she is wearing a dark top. The machine has various components, including a control panel with buttons and a small display. The background is dark and industrial, with other machinery visible in the distance.

**Endless possibilities
and applications with
UV, FREEcure and LED UV.**

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consistently high performance and low operating costs.

Energy efficiency is also becoming a decisive competitive factor for modern printing presses. IST's latest generation of LEDs combines high optical output with an efficiency of 50 per cent and enables demand-based power control. This is complemented by SMARTcure, an AI-supported assistance system that analyses production data and determines the optimum UV dose for each print job. As a result, only the energy actually required is used, whilst process stability and reproducibility are simultaneously enhanced.

With a view to future developments, swap4cure also paves the way for FREEcure, a new generation of UV

curing. Through the targeted use of high-energy UVC radiation, it will be possible in future to support photoinitiator-free UV systems and create new opportunities, particularly for food and packaging applications.

For machine manufacturers, this platform-based approach means greater future-proofing for their equipment. New ink and coating systems, changing regulatory requirements or future curing technologies can be integrated without having to redesign the entire machine concept.

The requirements for modern label printing presses can now be summarised in five key points:

- maximum flexibility in curing and drying technologies,
- high energy efficiency and sustainable production processes,
- short changeover and maintenance times for maximum machine availability,
- intelligent, data-driven process control,
- future-proofing through modular platform concepts and upgradeability.

With swap4cure, IST is pursuing precisely this approach: a platform that meets today's production requirements whilst supporting the technological changes of the coming years.

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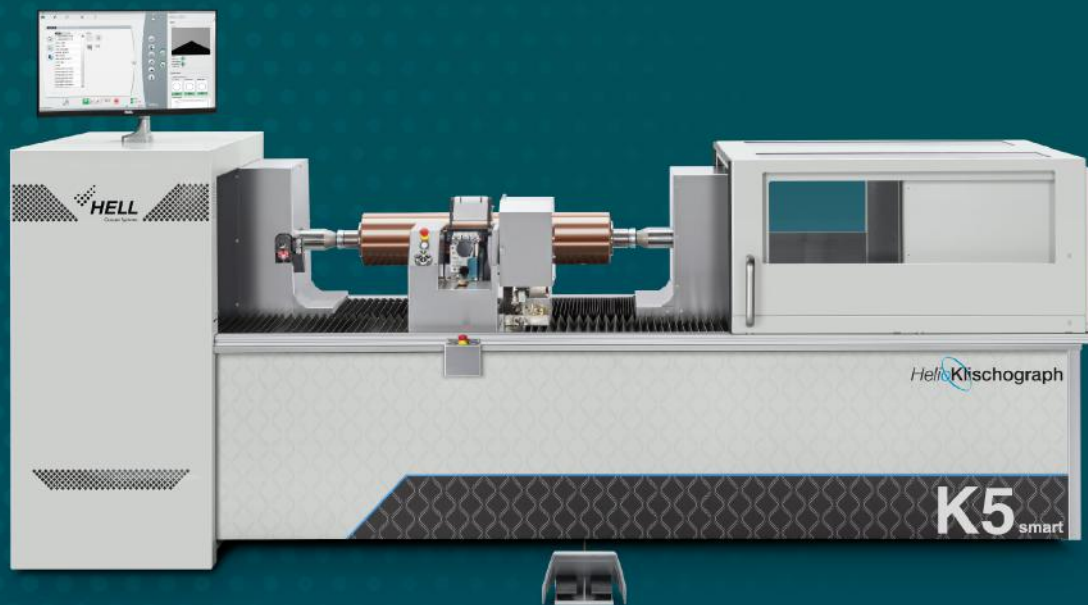


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Hybrid Software Strengthens APAC Presence

Hybrid Software, a global provider of prepress, workflow, and 3D design software for the labels and packaging industry, today announced the appointment of Vidhu Gautam as Senior Sales Manager, Asia-Pacific.

The appointment underscores Hybrid Software's ongoing commitment to strengthening its operations and presence across the APAC region, with India identified as a key growth market.

Gautam brings extensive sales experience in the printing and packaging technology sector and will work closely with printers, converters, and trade shops across Asia-Pacific to expand adoption of Hybrid Software's PACKZ, Cloudflow, and IC3D solutions.

"Asia-Pacific is one of the most dynamic and fast-growing regions for labels and packaging, and its printers and converters are increasingly looking for the kind of innovation that helps them stay competitive globally," said Bert Van der Perre, VP/GM Labels &



Packaging of Hybrid Software. "India in particular stands out as a key growth market for us, and we are delighted to welcome Vidhu to the team. His experience and understanding of the region will be invaluable as we

deepen our commitment to bringing world-class prepress, workflow, and 3D design technology to customers throughout APAC."

"The labels and packaging industry across Asia-Pacific is evolving quickly, and printers here are looking for technology partners who understand their growth ambitions," said Vidhu Gautam, Senior Sales Manager, Asia-Pacific, Hybrid Software. "I'm excited to join Hybrid Software and to help bring its solutions to more printers and converters across the region, with a particular focus on unlocking the opportunity in India."

Hybrid Software continues to invest in its Asia-Pacific operations as part of its broader global growth strategy.

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PEOPLE
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SAME MISTAKES. FASTER.

AI

AI IN CONTROL

- DESIGN ✓
- PRINT ✓
- PACK ✓
- SHIP ✓

HUMAN OVERRULED

AI HAS TAKEN OVER DESIGN & CREATIVITY TOO

AI NOW CREATES

- CONCEPTS ✓
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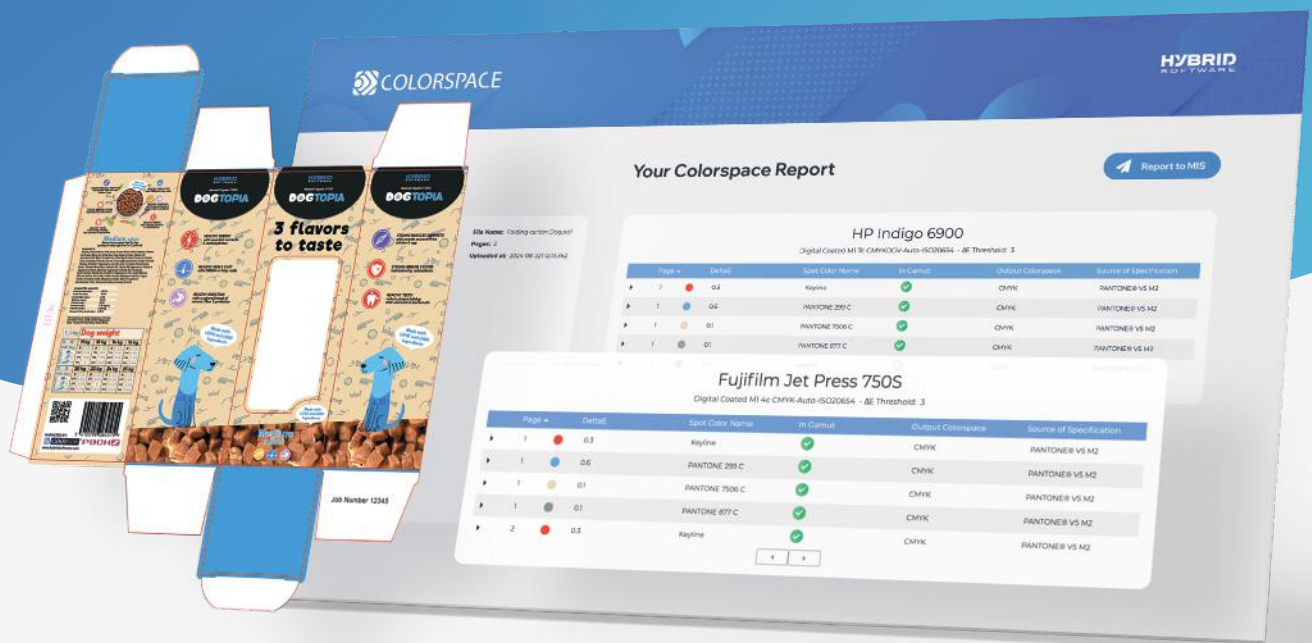
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EFI & Agfa's DPS Business to combine & form global, Industrial Inkjet company

Combination to Create a Broader, More Diversified Business with a Comprehensive Product Portfolio, Expanded Geographic Reach and Enhanced Capabilities to Serve Customers Across Key End Markets



Electronics for Imaging, Inc. ("EFI"), a leading industrial inkjet business and portfolio company of Siris, and Agfa-Gevaert ("Agfa") have announced a definitive agreement to combine Agfa's Digital Printing Solutions business ("Agfa DPS") with EFI.

An affiliate of Siris will hold a 60% interest and Agfa 40% in the jointly held company, bringing together the operating capabilities of EFI and Agfa DPS. Siris and Agfa will act as equal partners under the new governance structure.

The agreement builds on the global partnership established by EFI and Agfa in 2024, which allowed both companies to broaden their product offerings through complementary technologies and expertise.

The combination will create a scaled industrial inkjet business with capabilities across some of the industry's fastest-growing segments. Supported by a global service network, the company will bring together expertise in print engines, inks, software and workflow, helping shorten the path from development to production for customers.

EFI is a global leader in industrial inkjet, with particular strength in digital single-pass corrugated packaging, roll-to-roll, hybrid and textile printing through its Nozomi, VUTEK and Reggiani platforms. Agfa DPS brings strong positions in display graphics, décor and packaging, supported by its Jeti TAURO, Onset PANTHERA and SpeedSet ORCA platforms.

Together, EFI and Agfa DPS expect to generate approximately €540 million (\$625 million) in pro forma revenue in 2026. The combined company will serve thousands of customers in more than 100 countries, supported by complementary geographic strengths in North America and Europe and a global sales and service network.

The business is also expected to benefit from synergies through cross-selling, greater scale, expanded geographic reach and access to new applications.

"Today's announcement reflects our long-term commitment to digital printing and our conviction in the

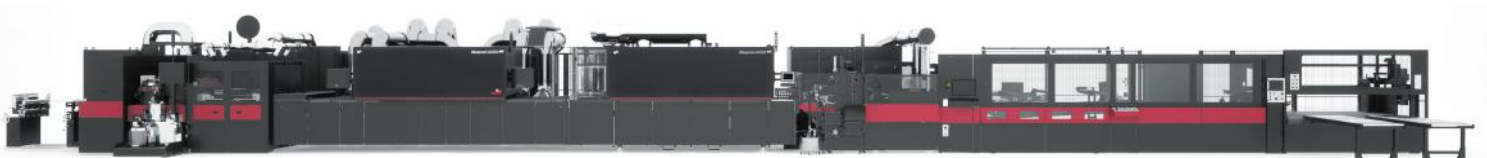
future of the industry," said Pascal Juéry, CEO of Agfa-Gevaert. "By bringing together Agfa DPS and EFI, we are creating a stronger business with greater scale, broader access and enhanced innovation capabilities."

Frank Baker, Co-Founder and Managing Partner, and David Calamai, Managing Director, of Siris said the combination brings together complementary capabilities, creating a business with greater reach and depth across more markets.

"At Agfa, we believe this combination can help accelerate the adoption of digital printing across the industry," said Vincent Wille, President of Agfa DPS. "By combining technology leadership, global reach and deep application expertise, we can help our customers achieve new levels of productivity, agility and sustainable growth."

EFI CEO Frank Pennisi said the companies' partnership over the past two years had demonstrated the strength of their complementary technologies and teams. "This combination is a natural next step that allows us to build on that momentum with a broader platform, accelerating innovation and expanding the solutions we can deliver to customers across industrial inkjet."

The proposed transaction is expected to close by the end of 2026, subject to employee consultation processes, regulatory approvals and customary closing conditions.



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AGFA 

A New Generation of Press-Specific Flexo Adapters

XSYS, has announced the launch of the new rotec® Core X Adapter Family, a portfolio of carbon-fiber adapters developed to help flexographic printers maximize print performance, productivity and process stability through press-specific engineering.

This next-generation adapter family is the result of extensive testing. XSYS conducted the program with leading flexographic press manufacturers. During development, XSYS evaluated more than 40 prototype constructions at OEM technology centers and customer sites. The results confirmed that adapter performance is strongly influenced by the dynamics of each individual press. These factors include vibration behavior, mechanical characteristics, and operating conditions.

Designed around individual press dynamics

These findings led to the development of a two-tier product concept: The rotec® Core X Ultra Adapter Series consists of several press-specific versions designed for selected machine platforms. Each version uses tailored carbon-fiber architecture and internal constructions. Furthermore, these designs optimize stiffness and flexibility. They are engineered to match the dynamic characteristics of the press. As a result, the optimized Ultra concept required lower impression settings. This helped increase plate life by up to 10% and improved process stability.



The rotec® Core X Pro Adapter complements the Ultra range as a high-performance adapter available across all major press platforms. The adapter combines advanced carbon-fiber construction with integrated bounce-reduction technology. It offers improved print stability and reduced bounce effects. At the same time, it delivers strong commercial value.

Validation through OEM collaboration A key part of the development program was direct testing with OEM partners. "The collaboration with XSYS demonstrated the value of validating adapter development directly on the press," said Lukas Skalický, R&D Manager at SOMA. "This approach led to the identification of a SOMA-specific version of the rotec® Core X Ultra Adapter that delivers top print quality and further enhances the performance potential of SOMA presses."

At Comexi, the evaluation program highlighted the performance of the rotec® Core X Pro Adapter. It performed well across a broad range of applications. "We were particularly impressed by the Core X Pro Adapter", said Carles Rodríguez i Nieto, BU

Director Flexographic Printing at Comexi. "It delivered an outstanding balance of print quality, bounce reduction, and economic value, making it a practical solution for many Comexi customers."

Development of the Core X platform remains ongoing. Meanwhile, XSYS continues to work with additional OEM manufacturers. The goal is to evaluate adapter behavior on different press architectures and expand the range of press-specific solutions available to flexographic printers.

"Our objective throughout the project was to better understand the interaction between adapter construction and press dynamics," said Andreas Koch, General Manager Sleeves & Adapters at XSYS. "The Core X platform gives printers a more targeted way to select the adapter technology best suited to their production environment and performance expectations."

The new rotec® Core X Adapter Family is available through XSYS and its global distribution network.



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New Ecolyne distributor in Greater China

Label converters across Greater China get a powerful new combination: the industrial print quality of Xeikon's Ecolyne dry-toner platform, backed by Weigang's local engineering, manufacturing and service muscle.

Xeikon and Weigang sealed the partnership today, with Pepyn Dinandt, CEO of Flint Group Packaging Solutions, Walter Benz, President of Flint Group Digital Xeikon and Ryan Zhou, General Manager of Weigang Technology, attending the signing.

At the core of the cooperation is a Distribution Agreement granting Weigang rights to sell, service and support the Ecolyne platform in Greater China. Alongside it, the companies signed a Manufacturing and Sourcing Agreement covering Ecolyne production, and a broader Contract Manufacturing Agreement providing a framework for a manufacturing cooperation over time. Product-specific, geographic and implementation details for the broader agreement will be announced as individual projects progress.

Designed for industrial-scale digital label production, Ecolyne combines dry-toner print quality and substrate flexibility with the throughput

converters need to run label jobs efficiently. Bringing Ecolyne to Greater China through Weigang pairs that capability with established local engineering, manufacturing and converter relationships.

"Ecolyne is at the center of this cooperation," said Walter Benz, president of Flint Group Digital Xeikon. "It is the platform we have developed for converters who want to start producing labels digitally using a true industrial setup, with the print quality, substrate range and uptime that their customers expect. By combining our technology with Weigang's regional strength, we are making Ecolyne more accessible and more responsive to customers across the region."

"Becoming the distributor of Xeikon's Ecolyne platform in Greater China is an important step for Weigang and a natural fit with our existing label printing portfolio," said Ryan Zhou, general manager of Weigang Technology. "Ecolyne addresses



exactly the kind of high-quality, productive digital production that converters in the region are moving toward.

Combined with our engineering, manufacturing and service footprint, we can bring Ecolyne customers closer to the technology, with responsive local support. It is a strong foundation to grow digital label production together with Xeikon across Greater China."



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Heat transfer labels : underestimated decoration technology

When we think of packaging decoration, the first technologies that come to mind are often self-adhesive labels, shrink sleeves or direct-to-object printing. There are, however, a number of proven technologies that are underestimated within the label industry.

These technologies include heat transfer labelling. Heat transfer decoration technology might not be new, but it can still help printers and converters expand their application portfolio, particularly when it comes to high-value promotional decoration.

Heat transfer decoration can be used for many products, including paint pails, food containers, plastic containers, promotional pens, mugs, water bottles and promotional items. For label printers. This technology creates interesting possibilities for label printers because, in addition to producing labels that are to be applied to packaging, they can apply decoration directly to a product or object.

What is a heat transfer label ?

In contrast to a conventional self-adhesive label, a heat transfer label is not applied in the form of an adhesive substrate.

The design, text or image is first printed in reverse on a temporary carrier (usually siliconised paper or polyester film). An applicator then brings the carrier into contact with the object that is to be decorated. Heat and pressure are then applied to transfer the decoration onto the surface of the



object. The carrier is then removed, and all that remains on the object is the printed image.

Depending on the application, the process may also involve an adhesive, a primer or a surface pre-treatment (such as flame treatment) to prepare the object and ensure good adhesion. Heat transfer labelling is of particular interest because it allows decoration to be transferred directly onto a product without the use of a conventional label. Industrial and promotional applications : two different market realities

Industrial heat transfer is mainly used for plastic containers such as pails, pots,

and PP or PE tubes, in a context of high volumes, low unit cost and production efficiency. The key requirements are visual quality, mechanical resistance and competitiveness. This technology is positioned as an alternative to IML, direct printing, screen printing, dry offset, flexography, gravure and sleeves.

Promotional heat transfer labelling is used on objects such as pens, mugs, water bottles and promotional items made from plastic, metal or ceramic. It is characterised by short runs, a high degree of personalisation and a higher perceived value, and there are strict requirements when it comes to image quality, detailed rendering and durability in use. Competing technologies in this market include sublimation printing, pad printing, screen printing, hot stamping, direct inkjet printing, self-adhesive labels and sleeves.

Industrial heat transfer labelling: quality and high volumes

Industrial heat transfer labelling is used mainly for plastic containers for consumer goods, such as paint, oil, food products, cleaning products and other goods packaged in pails, pots or tubes.





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conventional- and digitalprint? GMG ColorServer Multicolor automatically converts all spot colors into the desired output color space.

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The volumes involved are often high. The decoration must be of good quality, adhere well to the container and withstand handling, transport and use. As these are consumer goods, however, unit cost remains an essential criterion.

Heat transfer labelling can, therefore, be considered an alternative to other decoration technologies, such as in-mould labelling, direct-to-object printing, screen printing, dry offset, sleeves, or conventional heat transfer labels printed using flexography or gravure.

The industrial application of heat transfer labelling clearly demonstrates the process's potential, as it results in high-quality, durable decoration that is well suited to high-volume products. Label printers should note, however, that this process is often integrated by the container manufacturers themselves. In many cases, pail or pot producers apply the decoration directly. Industrial heat transfer labelling reflects the maturity of the technology, and this is not normally the easiest entry point for label converters. Promotional heat transfer labelling: the most accessible opportunity

The promotional segment has to contend with different priorities, and a decorated object often has a higher perceived value. Decoration identifies a product and also contributes to its appeal. Personalised pens, mugs, water bottles, coolers, promotional items and corporate gifts all need to look refined and be durable in use and can involve a high level of detail.

In this market, volumes can be much lower. Some customers might want to produce just a few personalised items, or even one-off objects. They value personalisation, image quality and the ability to respond quickly to specific requests, rather than just volume.

Digital printing is of particular value when it comes to heat transfer labelling. The technology makes it possible to produce trials, mock-ups, short runs and personalised objects with greater flexibility. Brands can test several designs, prepare a campaign, personalise objects and check a concept without having to commit to large volumes immediately.

For label printers looking to expand their application portfolio, promotional heat transfer labelling represents a genuine commercial opportunity. It allows them to move beyond traditional labels and position themselves in the object decoration segment by offering applications with a higher visual value. Digital heat transfer, short runs and personalisation

Historically, some heat transfer applications were more closely associated with large volumes and analogue processes. Digital printing has changed this by making the process more accessible for short runs, multiple versions, personalised visuals or variable elements, depending on the needs of the project. It also helps speed up work on prototypes, design tests and specific campaigns.

This flexibility is particularly important in the promotional segment, where customers are not always looking for high volumes. Sometimes they want a distinctive object, precise personalisation, a high-quality finish or faster delivery. Digital printing helps label printers meet these expectations while maintaining a high level of visual quality.

The process is also of interest from the perspective of the materials used. In the heat transfer process, only the printed decoration remains on the final object. The temporary carrier is removed after transfer and can be recycled (depending on the recycling possibilities available). This also helps to reduce the amount of material

remaining on the finished product compared with traditional labels, which remain on the packaging.

Success depends on technical expertise

Transferring an image onto an object using heat and pressure is a technical application that might appear simple, but the final result depends on many factors: the print carrier, the surface to be decorated, the adhesive used (if any), the pre-treatment, the temperature, the pressure, the applicator, the consumables and the durability requirements for the final product.

Converters that are considering this application need to bear this in mind. Success depends as much on the digital press as on mastering the entire process.

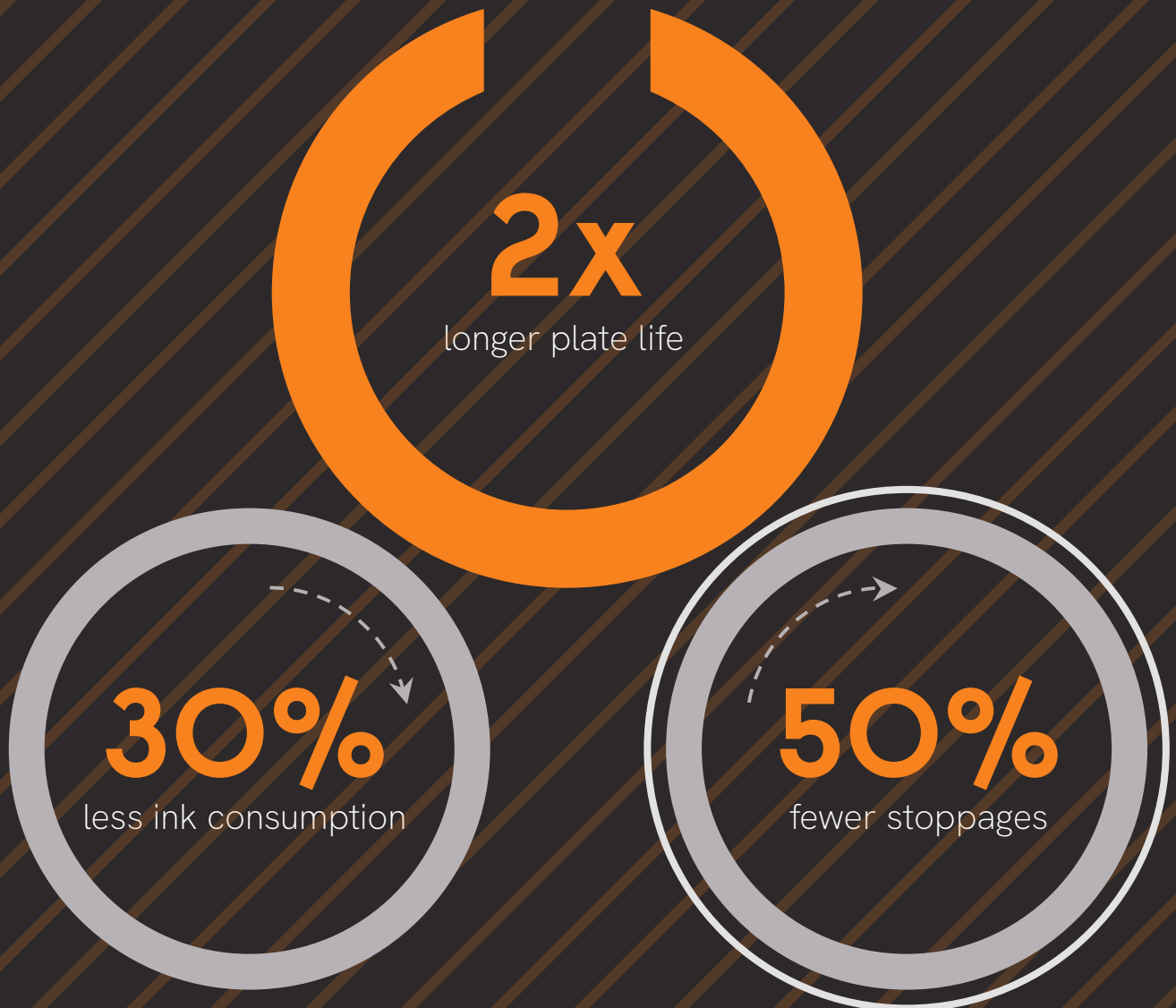


The untapped potential of heat transfer labels

Heat transfer labelling is not a new technology but it remains relatively unknown in the label industry. In any event, it is not always considered by companies that are thinking about diversification and that is precisely what makes the technology interesting.

In industrial applications, the technology has proven its ability to decorate high-volume containers with good quality labels that are resistant in use. In promotional applications, it opens up more directly accessible opportunities for label converters: short runs, personalisation, mock-ups, objects with a high perceived value and high-quality visual applications.

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BOBST launches brand-new built on fully redesigned platform

The BOBST MASTERFOLD foldergluer range for corrugated board converting has undergone a complete modernization, aligning with the company's strategy to deploy its vision across all product lines and equipment. The result is a machine which delivers greater production efficiency, simplified operations, and exceptional safety, setting new standards in the corrugated board industry.

The flagship workhorse of BOBST's corrugated board foldinggluing range has been updated to incorporate state-of-the-art technologies and exceed the highest safety and security standards on the market. The transformation increases the machine's automation capacity, uses new digitalization and connectivity capabilities to streamline the set-up process, and delivers maximum operator-friendliness.

As Sasha Bourgeois, RD&E Director of BOBST folder-gluer line, explained: "We have completely modernized the MASTERFOLD 170 | 230 | 300 to create a new machine which sets a benchmark for corrugated board folder-glueers."

Minimum setup time, maximum accuracy

Equipped with HMI SPHERE, the new MASTERFOLD can now be linked to the BOBST Connect data platform, helping converters to make informed decisions based on data directly retrieved from their machines. The platform enables remote job data setup from the back office and a simple download of job parameters on the machine, while Matic setups, such as the automated positioning of the main transport equipment, the calibrating shaft, and the speed variator of the folding section, contribute to faster changeover times.

On the feeder, pneumatically locked feeder ramps streamline changeovers, while the fully Matic blank aligner, which was recently introduced on



the EXPERTFOLD 106-215 and now available on the MASTERFOLD, simplify and accelerate feeder setup. "The machine setup time in general has been reduced by up to 20 minutes. Automated positioning of the transfer and delivery section alone adds up to 15 minutes of productive uptime for repeat jobs," added Sasha Bourgeois.

These changes bring the top-of-the-range machine into a new era of digital, connected and automated converting, maximizing machine uptime and setup precision. Configuration data can be prepared in advance, reducing operator workloads and minimizing the risk of human error.

Pierre Binggeli, Head of the Folder-gluer line, Peripherals and Robotics at BOBST, said: "A new generation of operators expect modern equipment, while converters are confronted with inexperienced staff and customer requirements such as short deadlines and job runs. Digitalization and automation are therefore an important part in our commitment to address these needs."

Key changes aim to reduce reaction times and walking distances when operating MASTERFOLD, enhance production visibility, and simplify setup procedures. The new HMI interface is clearly structured and takes the operator step-by-step through the different machine modules. Command

new MASTER-FOLD line platform



panels on each of these modules allow direct and immediate intervention, even at the back of the machine.

Additionally, a video overview of the main folding-gluing steps at the feeder and the transfer section provide clear operational feedback and essential information for quick intervention. During production mode, the machine can be slowed to 5m/min so the operator can pass through the safety light curtains and perform adjustments inside the running machine.

Driving sustainability

Combined with stable blank transport and precise folding and gluing, the enhanced MASTERFOLD line prevents production waste and unnecessary returns. With an additional liquid creaser, skewing can be further minimized and the gap between the folded corrugated cardboard panels

accurately set. A glue and fold control device can also be integrated into the machine and combined with the ACCUEJECT ejection device, so that non-quality boxes are automatically removed from the production process and zero-fault output is guaranteed.

Reducing the physical workload on the shop floor is an important part of creating a more sustainable and attractive work environment for operators. This is especially important in corrugated board converting. Improving working conditions therefore goes hand-in-hand with enhanced safety and security. Security light curtains keep the machine parts accessible, while ensuring complete security during production. The new MASTERFOLD 170 | 230 | 300 are fully compatible with the EU security standards that will take effect in 2027.

The new servo motors on each machine module contribute to lower energy consumption, while the BOBST Connect Energy Monitoring allows to identify additional opportunities for electricity savings.

In addition, industry-leading service and support help BOBST customers to get the training, support and equipment necessary to get optimal performance and maximum return on investment from a machine that will last for generations.

“With the enhanced MASTERFOLD, we’re going beyond the machine itself to combine connected workflows, automation and dedicated data support. It’s all about helping converters reduce setup times, improve consistency and get more value from every job by giving them the tools and insight.

Flexo vs. Other Printing Methods: How Do They Compare?

by Alexandra Blanck
Content Manager, Esko

When choosing a printing method for packaging, you'd be surprised by how many factors are involved. It's so much more than just print quality. Run length, substrate, setup requirements, speed, design complexity, versioning, and finishing can all influence which process makes the most sense for a particular job.

Flexographic printing, or flexo, is widely used across packaging applications. But it is only one option. Digital, offset and lithographic, gravure, and screen printing each have their own strengths and production requirements.

So how does flexo compare?

Understanding the differences can help packaging printers and converters determine where each technology fits, and where flexo offers the right balance of quality, efficiency, and flexibility.

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Understanding the differences can help packaging printers and converters determine where each technology fits, and where flexo offers the right balance of quality, efficiency, and flexibility.

What is Flexo Printing?

Flexography is a direct printing process that uses flexible, raised-image plates to transfer ink onto a substrate.

A flexo workflow brings together several components, including plates, anilox rollers and ink-metering systems, inks, substrates, and drying or curing systems. These elements work together to control how the image is transferred and reproduced on press. Flexo is particularly well established in packaging where printers need to work with a range of materials and production requirements.

Plate imaging and exposure are therefore important parts of the process. Esko's flexo portfolio supports these stages with dedicated imaging and exposure technologies designed to support consistent, press-ready flexo plates.

Flexo vs. Digital Printing

One of the biggest differences between flexo and digital printing is what happens before the job reaches the press.

Flexo is plate based, so jobs require plate preparation as part of the production process. Digital printing avoids physical printing plates, reducing setup requirements, and enabling faster changeovers.

The economics shift once production begins, however. Digital inks can be considerably more expensive than conventional flexo inks, while flexo's upfront plate costs can be spread across the length of the run. As volumes increase, that can make flexo more economical despite the additional setup.

These differences can have a significant impact depending on run length and the number of versions being produced.

Short Runs, Long Runs, and Versioned Packaging

Digital printing is particularly well suited to shorter runs and applications





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involving frequent changes or multiple versions. Variable elements such as barcodes, consecutive numbering, batch information, expiration dates, and changing text can be incorporated more easily into digital production.

Flexo, meanwhile, is well suited to scalable packaging production where the economics of plate-based setup can be spread across medium to longer runs.

That distinction is becoming less clear-cut as packaging portfolios become more complex. Even when flexo is the chosen print process, prepress automation can help printers manage shorter runs, more SKUs, and frequent artwork changes more efficiently. Tools such as Phoenix, for example, can automate planning, nesting, and imposition for packaging production, while automated artwork and prepress workflows can reduce some of the manual work associated with increasingly fragmented jobs.

Substrate Compatibility

Substrate is another important consideration.

Packaging production can involve paper, paperboard, films, and other materials, each with its own requirements for ink adhesion, drying, finishing, and converting. Thin films can be particularly demanding.

Offset and lithographic printing are closely associated with paper and smooth paperboard applications, while flexo is widely used for labels and flexible packaging across materials

including films, foil, corrugated materials, paperboard, and paper.

Digital printing generally supports a more limited range of substrates than flexo, particularly when it comes to films and other demanding packaging materials. Substrate compatibility, ink adhesion, material handling, and downstream finishing requirements can therefore place greater constraints on where digital printing is used.

Variable Data and Personalization

Digital has a clear advantage when every printed piece needs to be different.

Variable text, images, barcodes, and other changing information can be incorporated into digital jobs without creating a new physical plate for each version.

For packaging converters using multiple print technologies, this does not necessarily mean flexo and digital have to function as completely separate workflows. They can be complementary.

Prepress tools can support variable data and artwork preparation across digital and hybrid environments, helping converters manage jobs based on the requirements of each application.

It is also worth noting that an increasing number of new printing presses are now designed as hybrid presses, combining multiple printing technologies in a single workflow.

In many cases, fully equipped flexo presses combine multiple print stations with one or more in-line digital print heads. This hybrid approach combines the cost-efficiency and productivity of flexographic printing with the flexibility of digital technology, enabling the addition of variable content such as barcodes, text, serial numbers, QR codes, and other customized elements without disrupting production.

Extended color gamut printing can add another layer of flexibility. By using a fixed set of inks to reproduce a wider range of colors, converters can combine shorter runs of different SKUs and extend the overall print run rather than treating each SKU as a separate job. This approach is increasingly used in flexographic printing to improve efficiency across more complex packaging portfolios.

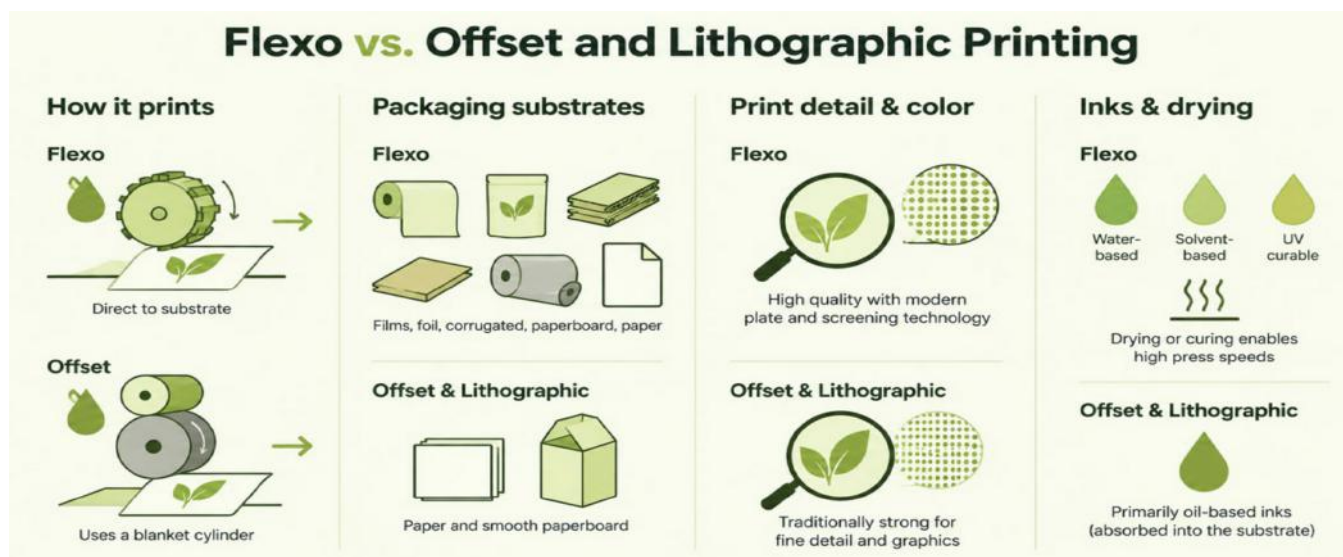
Flexo vs. Offset and Lithographic Printing

Flexo and offset differ fundamentally in how the image reaches the substrate. Flexography is a direct printing process: the raised image on the flexo plate transfers ink to the material being printed.

Offset printing uses an intermediate step. The image is transferred to a blanket cylinder before being transferred to the substrate.

That difference influences the types of applications and materials each process can support.

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Flexo vs. Gravure Printing

How it prints	Plates vs. cylinders	Substrate compatibility	Image quality	Best for
Flexo  Raised image transfers ink directly	Flexo  Flexible plates (lower setup)	Flexo  Wide range of substrates (films, foil, corrugated, paperboard, paper)	Flexo  High quality with modern imaging and screening technology	Flexo  Flexible runs and changing jobs
Gravure  Recessed cells transfer ink	Gravure  Engraved cylinders (high durability)	Gravure  Best for stable substrates (thicker materials)	Gravure  Traditionally the standard for high-quality reproduction	Gravure  Very long runs and high volumes

Offset and lithographic printing are closely associated with paper and smooth paperboard applications, while flexo is used across a wider variety of packaging materials, including flexible films, foil, corrugated materials, paperboard, and paper.

For packaging converters, the substrate is usually one of the first factors to consider when comparing flexo and offset.

Print Detail and Color Reproduction

Print quality is another common point of comparison.

Registration, dot gain, ink trapping, screening, and other process controls can affect fine detail and color reproduction in flexographic printing. Offset has traditionally been associated with strong reproduction of fine text and detailed graphics.

But modern flexo technology continues to narrow that gap.

Higher-resolution plate imaging, screening, exposure, and color management technologies can help flexo printers achieve greater consistency and higher levels of detail. The upshot is that the print method alone does not tell the whole quality story. Plate quality, process control, screening, color management, proofing, and press conditions all contribute to the final outcome.

Drying and Production

Ink and drying systems also affect production efficiency.

Flexo uses water-based, solvent-based, or UV energy-curable inks, with drying or curing capability influencing

achievable press speeds and overall performance.

This makes the relationship between inks, drying, substrate, and press conditions an important part of flexo production planning.

Flexo vs. Gravure Printing

Flexo and gravure create and transfer images differently.

While flexo uses flexible plates with raised printing areas, gravure uses engraved cylinders containing recessed ink-carrying cells.

That difference has implications for setup, economics, and the types of jobs each process is best suited to.

Substrate characteristics can also influence the choice between the two processes. Gravure presses typically rely on tension to move material through the press, which can make very thin or stretch-sensitive substrates more challenging to handle. As substrate thickness decreases, the risk of stretching or tearing can increase. Flexo can therefore offer greater flexibility for some demanding packaging materials.

Plates vs. Engraved Cylinders

Flexo plates and gravure cylinders involve different prepress and setup requirements. While the relative cost of plates and cylinders can vary by market, gravure cylinders are designed for durability across very long production runs.

As a result, gravure is particularly suited to long runs where cylinder preparation and setup can be spread

across a high volume of printed material. Flexo provides greater flexibility across changing jobs and production requirements.

Image Quality

Gravure has long been the standard of high-quality reproduction, including demanding photographic packaging applications.

However, flexo technology has made great strides in this area, even surpassing gravure quality today. Improvements in imaging resolution, plate exposure, screening, and ink laydown are helping printers produce smoother solids, tonal transitions, and more consistent print.

Technologies such as Esko CDI Quartz and advanced screening are designed to push flexo quality further, including in applications where converters may previously have defaulted to gravure.

Sustainability regulations such as PPWR are accelerating the shift toward recyclable packaging and driving the adoption of mono-material structures and other sustainability-focused designs.

These substrates introduce new printing challenges, particularly as materials become thinner and more stretch sensitive. Maintaining tension and print register can become more difficult, placing greater demands on process control and increasing the technical complexity of gravure production.

Flexographic printing is emerging as a compelling alternative, particularly with the Esko Quartz Ecosystem.

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Flexo vs. Screen Printing

How it prints

Flexo



Raised image transfers ink directly

Print detail

Flexo



High resolution and fine detail

Ink laydown & effects

Flexo



Thin, even ink layer

Production use

Flexo



High-speed, scalable production

Screen printing



Ink pushed through a mesh screen

Screen printing



Larger dots, lower resolution

Screen printing



Thick ink layers, opacity and tactile effects

Screen printing



Slower, specialized process often used in-line for specific effects

Combining CDI Quartz imaging and XPS Crystal exposure, the ecosystem delivers the consistency and quality needed for demanding recyclable substrates, setting a new benchmark for flexo performance in sustainable packaging.

Flexo vs. Screen Printing

Flexo and screen printing generally serve different purposes rather than acting as direct alternatives.

Screen printing is often used in-line alongside other printing processes when a package requires a thick or tactile ink deposit, strong opacity, or other specialized effects that flexo cannot achieve in the same way.

The processes also differ significantly in print resolution. Screen printing is limited by the mesh size of the screen and typically reproduces much larger minimum printable dots than flexo.

Flexo can reproduce considerably finer details, while screen printing is better suited to applications requiring heavier ink deposits, opacity, or tactile effects.

Production Requirements

Screen printing is generally a slower, more specialized process, while flexo is designed for high-speed, scalable packaging and label production. Rather than choosing one process over the other for an entire job, converters may use screen printing selectively alongside flexo when a design requires its particular ink laydown or tactile effects.

In these environments, the prepress workflow needs to support the requirements of multiple print technologies within the same production process.

Summary: Considerations for Comparing Printing Methods

There is no single printing method that fits every packaging job.

A better comparison starts with the requirements of the work itself.

Run Length and Setup

How much needs to be printed, and how often will the artwork change?

Plate-based or cylinder-based methods involve more preparation before production begins. Digital removes the need for plates, making it attractive for short runs and frequently changing content.

For medium to longer runs, flexo and other conventional processes offer a better fit for high-volume production.

Substrate

The material being printed can quickly narrow the options.

Films, foil, corrugated materials, paperboard, and paper all behave differently during printing. Ink adhesion, material handling, drying, and finishing requirements should therefore be considered alongside the print technology itself.

Print Quality and Process Control

Fine text, gradients, solids,

photographic imagery, registration, and color requirements all affect the choice of process.

With flexo, plate quality, screening, dot gain, ink trapping, and registration are among the variables that influence the final result. Prepress and color management tools can help control these variables and improve repeatability.

Ink and Drying Systems

Ink choice is a relevant consideration as well.

Water-base

d, solvent-based, and UV energy-curable systems each place different demands on drying or curing. The capabilities of the press and drying system therefore impact production speed and efficiency.

Finishing and Workflow

Printing is only one stage in packaging production.

Artwork preparation, approvals, prepress, printing, finishing, converting, and version management all need to work together. As packaging portfolios grow and run lengths become more fragmented, workflow efficiency becomes just as important as press speed.

Automation reduces manual setup across processes such as job creation, step-and-repeat, imposition, nesting, and variable data, helping converters manage work across flexo, digital, offset, and gravure environments.

Conclusion

Ultimately, choosing between flexo, digital, offset, gravure, or screen printing comes down to the requirements of the job: what you are printing, what you are printing it on, how much you need, how often it changes, and the quality and production requirements you need to meet.

For converters working across increasingly complex packaging portfolios, understanding those trade-offs is the best place to start.

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