

Digital Packaging Strategies

Whitmar Publications  www.digitalpackagingstrategies.com

Newsletter

issue no.7 - October 2006

in this issue ...

Viewpoint: Managing change page 2

- EFI extends reach
- KGC upgrades Pandora 2.9 software
- Recognition for Esko
- Diary Dates

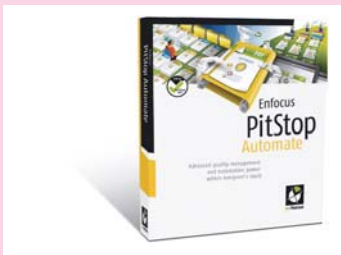
Technology spotlight page 3



- Esko Graphics' DeskPack solution

DigiPack preview pages 4 & 5

- DigiPack exhibitors



Big issue: The colour of success page 6

- Alcan's commitment to continuous improvement

Digital in action: From design to shopping cart page 7

- Exclusive interview with Caroline Talot, 3M France

Digital sound bytes page 8

- Product, sales & industry news

HP Indigo's new ws4500

According to HP Indigo EMEA sales manager Tim Carter, of the 55 trillion pages produced annually, around 12% are printed digitally. An increasing proportion of that is within the packaging sector, and with the introduction of the new ws4500 seven colour press, Indigo is moving towards achieving its objective of targeting an overall 20% market share.

'Our founder Benny Landa predicted back in '93 that 'anything that can become digital will become digital, and printing is no exception'. That is proving to be true, and no more so than in labelling. We increased our installed customer base across Europe to 175 this year; the ws4500 is expected to add a further 80 units in full production within the next twelve months,' said Mr Carter.

Key features of the ws4500 include the extension into seven colours (the new addition is green) to realise over 90% of the Pantone gamut, and a new splicing table that can save ten minutes per substrate change. Inks for new jobs can now be replaced without disrupting existing production, and as a result of a partnering arrangement with Esko, the addition of Scope workflow support has the capability to reduce colour matching time by as much as 50%.

Purchase price, including front end workflow and customised DigiCon finishing system from AB Graphics, is around €650 000. Upgrades are also to be made available to existing ws4050 users at a cost of just €25 000, although these are unlikely



ws4500 press operator.

to become available until mid 2007.

Much of the ws4500 development work has been carried out in conjunction with customers, notably Eshuis (NL) which has been acting as the alpha test site over the past few months and is the first European converter to go into full production. According to managing director Peter Overbeek, 'This machine will produce 1.5 million impressions per month, and can manage over 10 different jobs per shift. This extended IndiChrome solution supports our strategy for not using spot colours, and the new software makes it easier to switch jobs between digital and conventional when necessary.'

The ws4500 brings Eshuis's complement of Indigo presses up to four. The first UK adopter is Hull based Springfield Solutions, which earlier installed a ws4050 press 18 months ago. 'We expect all customers with ws4050 to upgrade as they will then achieve 99% of the ws4500 functionality,' said Mr Carter. 'We are also actively promoting a conventional for digital trade in policy in order to take capacity out of the market and increase volumes on our customers' equipment.'

FESPA on the march

Almost 200 suppliers have already signed up for FESPA's next flagship event, FESPA 2007 (Messe Berlin, 5 to 9 June 2007), accounting for 14 km², which is half of the floor space available. Companies taking stands in excess of 200 m² include Agfa, Avery, Fujifilm Sericol, M&R, MHM, Mutoh, Sakurai, Spandex and Thieme.

Digital technology will have a significant presence at the show says exhibition director Frazer Chesterman. 'As a result of the success

of FESPA Digital in Amsterdam, many exhibitors didn't hesitate to sign up for FESPA 2007 in Berlin,' he commented. 'We are absolutely confident that visitors to next year's show will experience the best of screen and digital exhibited under one roof. It will be particularly interesting to monitor the presence of screen/digital hybrid solutions, given that one of the big launches at FESPA 2005 was the M-Press from Agfa and Thieme.'

Supported by Hewlett Packard www.hp.com/go/graphic-arts



viewpoint

Managing change

Persuading the packaging print community that digital can not only complement but also compete with conventional technology is one thing – living with the consequence of winning the argument could be something else again. With HP Indigo well on track to becoming the leading press equipment supplier within the labelling sector, universal adoption is now more a case of when rather than if. Two-thirds of all jobs fall into the short run category, and quality comparisons are largely taken as read.

What might not have been hitherto considered, however, is what is going to be the impact on all that redundant conventional outputting capacity when digital hits the quantum growth point of adoption. The most likely outcome of under utilisation is undercutting, which explains why Indigo – and hopefully its toner based and inkjet competitors – is taking steps to remove unwanted capacity from the market in order to head off potential price wars.

For converters still sitting on the fence, an early New Year's resolution would be to have a long hard think about how secure they feel in the capabilities of ageing kit. There can't be a much better time for trading in that letterpress machine in part exchange for a device more fit for purpose in a changed world.

diary dates

17 – 19 October	Digital Print World FOC to pre-registered visitors Organised by IIR Exhibitions	Earls Court, London tel. +44 (0)207 017 7029 www.digitalprintworld.co.uk
18 – 19 October	Packaging Innovations South FOC to pre-registered visitors Organised by Easy Fairs	Sandown Park (UK) tel. +44 (0)20 8622 4419 www.easyfairs.com
24 – 25 October	DigiPack Conference & Exhibition Full delegate fee €588 Organised by Oriex	Cité des Sciences, Paris tel. +33 (0)1 48918989 www.digipack-congress.com
24 – 27 October	LuxePack FOC to pre-registered visitors Organised by Idice	Grimaldi Forum, Monaco tel. +33 (0)474734233 www.luxepack.com
25 – 27 October	14th European Inkjet Conference Delegate fee €1095 Organised by IMI Europe	Fira Palace, Barcelona fax. +44 (0)1223 235901 www.imieurope.com

Kodak scores 'SmartMarks'

Kodak Graphic Communications has added new features to its Pandora 2.9 software that will further automate the process for creating packaging layouts. Users can now dynamically modify applied step and repeat parameters, saving time on such tasks as positioning 1-ups on the layout, changing the step amount, or placing registration, colour bars or other production marks. The new software also provides the ability to import dies for folding carton layouts.

The software allows users to drag and drop predefined SmartMarks: intelligent marks that position and automatically size themselves on a layout. Any of the 60 built in packaging marks or

any user generated custom marks can be made into SmartMarks. Likewise, label marks, text marks with variable data, and details such as date, colour and job name that are dynamically previewed and inserted when printing can also be defined as SmartMarks.

Pandora 2.9 software features one of the most simple and flexible user interfaces in pre-press packaging. With extensive availability of drag and drop actions, most printers ramp up to full speed on the software in just one day, making it an attractive tool for commercial printers diversifying into the packaging market.

EFI extends reach

Having recently snapped up large format inkjet systems supplier Vutek, EFI is back on the acquisition trail through the purchase of Jetrion from the Flint Group (US) for an estimated \$40 million.

Jetrion specialises in digital printing, providing a complete spectrum of industrial inkjet systems, custom high performance integration solutions and specialty inks to the converting, packaging and direct mail industries. It recently announced plans for a full colour UV inkjet label press (see page 8), and is a pioneer in hybrid digital printing systems for several high growth digital print segments such as labels and packaging,

which require variable printing capabilities.

'Jetrion's advanced technology and very talented team is a great addition to our inkjet business and a key element in fulfilling our strategy to expand our presence in the industrial inkjet market,' said EFI CEO Guy Gecht. 'We are especially impressed with Jetrion's packaging and label printing expertise, and we see this as an emerging market opportunity for digital printing given the increasing demand for short runs, variable content and fast turnaround in these segments. In addition, the Jetrion and Vutek development capabilities complement each other quite nicely.'

Global recognition for Esko

FEFCO, the European Federation of Corrugated Board Manufacturers, has teamed up with Esko to introduce a new, updated version of its standards library for the corrugated and solid board packaging industries. The new all electronic edition has been entirely developed using

Esko's ArtiosCAD software and comes with an innovative visualisation tool for 2D and 3D representations, including a folding sequence.

Esko received the 2006 PIA/GATF InterTech Technology Award for WebCenter, a key part of the Scope suite of packaging pre-press software. WebCenter is a communication and collaboration platform that allows packaging supply chain partners – from brand owner to retailer – to share files, discuss

jobs, track projects, perform approvals, and view animated 3D models of products with their packaging.

Meanwhile, the appointment of Arjen Maarleveld as new packaging solutions senior vice president has further strengthened the company's team. Mr Maarleveld will be responsible for managing and further growing the packaging business, leading all product management, research and development and global support for pre-production software.

Esko Graphics' DeskPack

Claimed to be the only solution that turns Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop into full on design and pre-press tools, DeskPack is an integrated component within Esko's Scope workflow system

DeskPack's modular structure enables users to perm out the precise tools best suited to meet specific needs within the overall pre-production process, explained packaging software marketing director Jan De Roeck. 'In at least 90% of all cases, packaging design will originate on the desktop where mostly products from the Adobe Creative suite are the preferred platform and what designers feel most comfortable with,' he said. 'With DeskPack our concept was that rather than import and export Illustrator data, why not extend the existing program with a number of plug-ins so that designers could stay within what was a familiar environment and finish the job.'

First introduced just over two years ago as a relatively straightforward solution, the number of different plug-ins available has rapidly increased in line with a positive market response. There are now over 400 DeskPack installations in the UK alone, incorporating plug-ins for just about everything including preflighting, trapping, viewing separations, bar coding and step and repeat operations.

There is always scope for improvement, however, and four new additions to the portfolio are due for release this month:

• 3DX

First shown as a technology preview at Ipex, 3DX is essentially based on Esko's ability to design structures in ArtiosCad: primarily for folding cartons or corrugated boxes – also POP and shelf display – for which it understands folding angles, cut and crease lines. When imported into Adobe Illustrator, 3DX is able to directly view the result of the graphic design in three dimensions based on that CAD structure – something that was hitherto not possible, because although there were a couple of 3D tools already in Illustrator, they weren't

Jan De Roeck

based upon the actual structural design file that was going to be used for production.

'It takes away the complexity for a designer having to think in three dimensions; it also enables people that aren't necessarily designers to become more directly involved within the creative process,' said Mr De Roeck. 'A lot of brand owners have these systems in-house; it is now going to be a lot easier for them to do a very accurate assessment of what their work in Illustrator will look like when it is on the finished box. Retail ready will definitely benefit.'

• ImageX

Particularly good for flexo applications, ImageX addresses a long standing issue within the production environment regarding embedded images in Illustrator documents.

Once an image is embedded in Illustrator, there is no way it can be accessed for re-touching, ink switching or separation changing in PhotoShop. ImageX will translate embedded images into externally linked images for Illustrator.

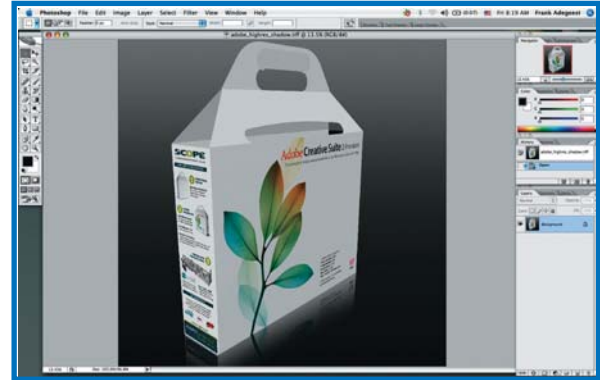
• ScreenX

Hitherto, only high end repro applications could assign multiple rulings, multiple angles and multiple screen types into a single separation. With ScreenX, this functionality is now available with Adobe Illustrator: so you can select a single ink/single separation (spot or standard CMYK) in the event of needing to give the line art a different screen size. As long as the RIP – which needn't necessarily be an Esko one – has support for multiple rulings then it can be fed this information.

• SeamlessX

This new plug-in is ideal for specialty items: for example, an endlessly repeated image or message to be printed inside a chocolate wrapper. Invariably printed endlessly, often in gravure or offset; with SeamlessX the complexity of ensuring that design repeats endlessly around the printing cylinder is eliminated as it will automatically take over the calculation, the correct spacing and the repetition to properly wrap the pattern around the cylinder.

'In many circumstances you won't need all of these plug-ins,' said Mr De Roeck. 'If you are a trade shop specialising in flexo, you would probably be interested in the PhotoShop plug-ins but not the other ones in Illustrator. If you were a folding carton manufacturer or a labeller, then



you would be interested in step and repeat or a trapping plug-in for Illustrator. DeskPack is adaptable to meet all requirements.'

As part of the overall Scope workflow solution, DeskPack has also been directly instrumental in narrowing the gap between high end and low end pre-press work. Mr De Roeck added, 'Many of our long standing customers originally maintained two different departments within their organisation with a thick wall in between: Illustrator workflow for the day to day work; Esko high end for the more complicated applications. Increasingly, what we are now seeing is that there is basically just a single workflow where Illustrator becomes a true client of the entire pre-production workflow. With our trapping module, for instance, the plug-in for Illustrator operators now have the same access to the high end technology. For the customer that becomes a lot more cost efficient.'

Pricing guide

Esko offer 'step-in bundles' and also sells individual DeskPack plug-ins dependent upon customer requirements.

DeskPack is subject to a one off purchase price for indefinite use, although the great majority of users also opt to commit to an annual maintenance contract to negate additional spend for upgrades. A typical bundle for a single station, that comes with a plug-in to make barcodes (BarX) plus additional basic tools such as TrapX or ViewX is likely to cost around €3800. Prices per additional station are around €1700 each. Cost of plug-ins varies. For example, a single licence for BarX is just €199. Average price per plug-in is about €600, with TrapX currently the most expensive at €2200

In this second DigiPack preview, the focus is firmly upon the attendant exhibition that will be taking place alongside and throughout the duration of the two day congress (Cité des Sciences et de L'Industrie, Paris: 24 – 25 October).

A total of 18 companies are represented, virtually all of which are fielding specialist speakers within the conference programme itself:

- Adobe** software technology
- ADAM** digital asset management
- ATT** track & trace technology
- Colorviz** colour management solutions
- Dassault Systèmes** product lifecycle management
- Enfocus** certified PDF
- Eskopackaging** pre-production
- Eukerdruck** pharmaceuticals labelling
- GMG** colour management advisory solutions
- HP Indigo** digital print
- Imagelinx** workflow solutions
- Impika** digital inkjet
- Jura JSP** high security pre-press systems
- Kallisto** prototyping and 3D digitisation
- Kodak Graphic Communications** digital proofing solutions
- M-Real IBP Deals Europe** procurement and print management
- Terciel** packaging optimisation solutions systems
- Universal Couleurs** colourmetrics consultancy

'What is so exciting about DigiPack is that this is the place where the brand owner can meet with almost every player within the packaging supply chain,' said Jan De Roecke, whose company Esko Graphics is the congress's founder partner and principal sponsor. 'It is not just focused upon the packaging trade shop, but also brings in the packer/filler at the back end of the chain; also, the SolidWorks user base that is actually designing the product itself, as well as the primary packaging manufacturers too. It is a marketplace where almost everyone can get together.'

HP Indigo industrial products category manager Christian Ménégon is equally enthusiastic. 'The last DigiPack was very successful for us and generated some positive leads. This wasn't necessarily what we were

looking for, as our primary objective is to generate awareness amongst the brand owners – who are of course our customers' customers – as to the benefits of digital print technology.

'It is also a very timely opportunity for supporting our partnering relationship with Esko, and we will be demonstrating how its Scope workflow solution can be applied to both label printing and also small folding cartons of up to 350 micron thickness within the cosmetics and pharmaceuticals sectors.'

Advance DigiPack exhibitor highlights include the following:

ADAM

A secure, versatile digital asset management solution that provides the ideal toolbox for web based media management, combined with graphical production tools and complete PIMS. Storing, finding and ordering assets is easy. Automated page layout keeps publications up to date and dashboard functionality gives you complete business process control. Endorsed by Microsoft and Agfa.

ATT

Will be focusing on Brand Protection solutions including authentication and traceability through secure codes, digital tags and nanometric tags; and customer relation solutions including secured marketing codes, operating systems for web service, mobile telephones, and models for industrial integration in existing production processes.

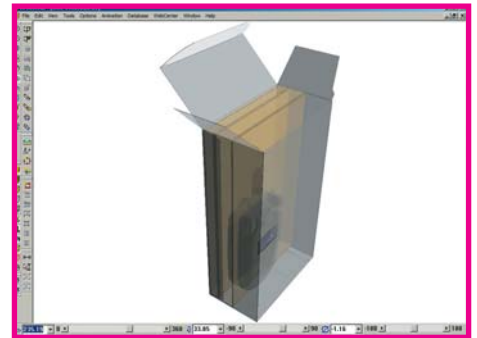
Colorviz

Solutions ranging from colour formulation to the 3D visualisation of prototypes, providing for better collaboration from the design phase right through to the manufacturing of packaging. Software at the booth includes Colibri for formulation, Mosaic for data base management and Indigo for 3D visualisation

Dassault Systèmes

A pioneer in the 3D software market since 1981, Dassault Systèmes (DS) develops and markets PLM application software and services that support industrial processes and provide a 3D vision of the entire lifecycle of products from conception to maintenance. The company's 90 000 strong customer base extends across 80 countries.

From specification management to advanced capabilities for design and manufacturing simulation, DS solutions help managers make better product decisions whether to match consumer expectations or to improve production value chain: avoiding

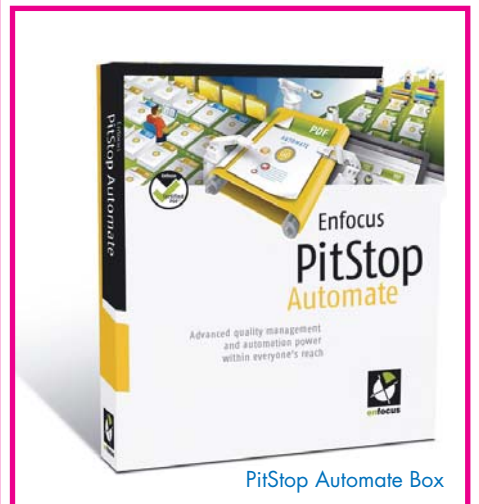


SolidWorks Artios CAD

costly fabrication errors, cutting down costs and time to market, fostering product innovation. The portfolio consists of Catia for designing the virtual product; SolidWorks for 3D mechanical design; Delmia for virtual production; Simulia for virtual testing; and Enovia for global collaborative lifecycle management, including Enovia VPLM, Enovia MatrixOne and SmarTeam.

Enfocus

PDF has become the industry standard for inter company file exchange in graphic arts. The latest releases of page layout programs and Adobe Acrobat have grown to include additional PDF capabilities. Though basic PDF creation and preflight tasks can be done from within some products, Enfocus' technology and products pick up where these others leave off with features and capabilities that bridge every critical gap in professional PDF workflows. Beyond preflight, these products allow for automatic error correction. The company's proven Certified PDF technology guarantees reliable PDF creation and file exchange. The editing capabilities of PitStop Professional, PitStop Server and PitStop Automate are indispensable in any print and pre-press production environment. When it comes to guaranteeing that PDFs



PitStop Automate Box

flow reliably all the way through production from start to finish, Enfocus is more essential than ever.

Certified PDF technology allows graphic arts professionals to guarantee quality, eliminate ambiguity and communicate precisely at every stage in the PDF workflow process. It ensures that a PDF document was preflighted with the appropriate PDF profile and stores both the preflight report and PDF profile inside the PDF. Upon opening, you get immediate visual feedback whether the file is certified, eliminating unnecessary preflighting and saving both time and money. If any changes are made, the file re-preflights itself to insure compliance and catch any errors as they happen. A Certified PDF file records all changes made, making it 'self aware' as it moves through the workflow. Different versions of the file can be compared and a roll back to previous versions is available.

GMG

GMG specialises in premium colour management solutions, and has over 6000 systems currently in use across advertising agencies, pre-press bureaux, offset, flexo and engraving printing companies. At DigiPack, it will be focusing upon the following systems: ColorProof colour management software; DotProof using the original bitmap data; FlexoProof, which is ideally suited to the demands of the packaging industry, as it handles specific data formats and includes a complete library of specific Pantone colours; the ColorServer solution for the automatic transformation of colour areas (CMJN-CMJN; RGB-CMJN; and RGB-RGB); InkOptimizer; Proofcontrol; and GMG Media, which comprises a whole range of

proof substrates in different formats made to meet stringent requirements relating to sensitive colour applications.

Imagelinx

Imagelinx provides a global service to consumer goods companies, which ensure consistent print quality for its entire packaging graphics, regardless of substrate or printer. An innovative range of services



Christophe Roucher, Imagelinx

increasing speed to market and reducing costs includes creative design incorporating mock ups, 2D and 3D imaging; artwork management and reprographics for all substrates and print processes; print production management for print feasibility at design stage and printer certification; and information technologies services (on-line approval and project management systems, database management, client systems integration and client consulting). Imagelinx's processes and services are fully supported through ITlinx's ICON system to facilitate a

Palmolive bottle



seamless packaging graphic workflow. The company has also gained invaluable experience in implementing digital workflow and data management, making it ideally positioned to implement and organise training; develop customised IT applications; facilitate change management and offer a full outsourcing service of project management.

Impika

Xaar printhead technology developer OEM Impika develops and manufactures high speed, high resolution digital inkjet printing technologies with a wide range of applications including packaging. Systems can print set and variable data in one or more colours on various kinds of substrate: rigid (cans, bottles); semi-rigid (cardboard boxes); and flexible (films, pouches) in particular for the cosmetics, pharmaceutical, food and other markets. They can also project a protective varnish, decorative metal inks and security inks. The company will show examples of RFID tags at its booth.

M-Real IBP Deals Europe

In addition to packaging, IBP services include packaging procurement, design, print management, security and point of sale solutions. IBP will be demonstrating the digital workflow in use to ensure global uniform package production, focusing on design creation, digital proofing, DAM, security and anti-counterfeit solutions and the on-line approval system for graphic and structural design.

• as an official DigiPack media partner, 'Digital Packaging Strategies' will also be represented within the exhibit area, and looks forward to meeting all existing and prospective subscribers attending the congress

Fact file

The DigiPack conference and exhibition is being held from 24 – 25 October at:

Cité des Sciences et de L'Industrie
Espace Condorcet
30 Avenue Corentin Cariou
75019 Paris
(Metro line 7: Porte de la Villette)

Registration for DigiPack can be done online at www.digipack-congress.com

Delegate fee for the two day programme is €598 (€358.80 for one day only)

Hotel accommodation is available by contacting:

ATI CONGRES
tel: +33 (0)1 47 27 15 15 fax: +33 (0)1 44 05 01 48
e-mail: digipack@ati-abotel.com www.ati-abotel.com

Organised by:

ORIEX
25 Rue André Joineau
93310 Le Pré-Saint-Gervais
France
tel : +33 (0)1 48 91 89 89
e-mail: jpappert@oriex.fr

The colour of success

It could be said that of all the colours it applies to the high barrier films, pouches, bags, rigid containers and labels that Alcan Packaging Food (Europe) produces for its high profile, brand owner, customer base within the food and beverages sector, the most important of them all is black.

As part of its Integrated Management System, Alcan has initiated a continuous improvement initiative led by a relative handful of its 6200 employees spread across 26 different manufacturing plants throughout Europe. To date, just over 70 of them have attained 'black belt' status including Alcan Digital Colour Management (adcm) project manager Fabian Bönsch, who is working together with a team responsible for ensuring that colour consistency is rigorously established and maintained as a given job progresses from receipt of digital artwork right through pre-press to production.

Working across an increasing number of global projects, Mr Bönsch is now spending on average just three working days a month at Alcan's Swiss based office; for the remainder of his time he is out at other pan-European production sites, supervising on-going customer jobs and consulting internally on how best to meet day to day challenges such as reducing press time and streamlining workflow.

The main focus though is on successfully and smoothly getting incoming orders from artwork to the point of output. 'However good a job you do with all the digital data, if you

don't properly manage the standards in your production then the results will be unsatisfactory, so this has a lot to do with getting the measurements right, storing the results to save time in the event of repeat business' he said.

Whilst this is primarily a customer driven initiative – at no additional cost – there are significant gains for Alcan too. Mr Bönsch continued, 'In principle, it simplifies our life as well. Before we were operating in this way, then say there was a re-launch of a particular product a lot of time would be spent in checking and exchanging Chromalins between the customer and ourselves. Alcan has now started managing this more and more online, with the customer feeling confident at being able to sign off for content ahead of final production rather than having to view the job on press. This was invariably a waste of time and also impacted adversely on our own productivity.'

Under Mr Bönsch's supervision, adcm is site specific and operates to different levels of implementation dependant upon the actual requirements of any given job. In summary, creative files are received digitally and then prepared to a colour correct proof stage for client inspection.

'What we receive very much depends upon the level of competence within the issuing agency or client in-house department,' he noted. 'Mostly, it gets to us in the form of a variety of ready to repro files (ArtPro, Illustrator) to which we will have to do additional work in-house. A small part of what we receive will be ready to engrave files that have already been separated into PostScript; hopefully, that will increase as customers get used to this way of working.'

Intended to save time, improve service, raise standards ensure colour consistency and build customer loyalty, adcm has been in place for the past year and in time is intended to become a standard level of service across the entire operation. According to Mr Bönsch, customers have responded particularly well to the proof press facility. 'It allows for much less pressure as it doesn't have to fit in with production,' he said. 'Customers can pick their own time as to when they pass the job, rather than knowing that decisions have to be made on

the factory floor with a huge gravure press waiting to print.'

Whilst specific brand colours are endemic within the packaging industry, the company is seeing some shift in customer requirements towards less complex solutions. 'The main challenges are always related to design: for example, the use of difficult vignettes by agencies striving to achieve product differentiation. Some of our customers are looking to reduce the amount of colour to more realistic levels,' said Mr Bönsch.

Continuous improvement

Continuous improvement is aimed at maximising opportunities by improving a company's competitiveness and efficiency. Alcan Packaging's Continuous Improvement programme combines two complementary approaches – Lean Manufacturing and Six Sigma – to provide a full range of tools from which to choose the most appropriate improvement techniques in any given situation.

Six Sigma is a data driven methodology for eliminating defects (driving towards six standard deviations between the mean and the nearest specification limit) in any process from manufacturing to transactional, and from product to service. To achieve Six Sigma, a process must not produce more than 3.4 defects per million opportunities. A defect is defined as anything outside of customer specifications; a Six Sigma opportunity is then the total quantity of chances for a defect.

This is accomplished through the use of two sub-methodologies: DMAIC (define, measure, analyse, improve, control), which is an improvement system for existing processes falling below specification and looking for incremental improvement; and DMADV (define, measure, analyse, design, verify) used to develop new processes or products at Six Sigma quality levels. According to the Six Sigma Academy, black belts save companies approximately \$230 000 per project and can complete four to six projects per year.



Fabian Bönsch.

From design to shopping cart

As part of this month's focus upon the digipack conference and exhibition (Cité des Sciences et de L'Industrie, Paris: 24 – 25 October), 3M France head of packaging Caroline Talot, who will be leading the afternoon session on day one of the conference programme: 'From design to shopping cart', talks exclusively to DPS about how the one of the world's top ranking, most innovative corporations employs digital technology to keep pace with new product development across six different market sectors.

Q. Can you outline the scope of your operation?

CT: 3M operates seven manufacturing plants and one large European distribution centre in France, all of which are supported by a centralised packaging operation manned by a team of 20 staff. In addition to managing the local market requirement, we also extend across other activities throughout Europe.

Sales turnover for the EMEA region represents \$5.2 billion (approximately 25% of total 3M global sales), and in France alone is in excess of \$1 billion, which makes us 3M's sixth most productive country worldwide. About 70% of the packaging that we are directly responsible for goes to

two main sectors: consumer and office products, and industrial and transportation. The four

other markets that we service are healthcare; electronics and communications; security; and display and graphics. All in all, my department is responsible for managing the packaging of nearly 12 000 different product lines, for which we work closely with an internal sourcing operation.

Q. How are you able to maintain brand consistency across such a diverse range of products and very different market sectors?

CT: The business is the driver for me; we operate from a base point that our principal customer is 3M itself. My team is involved at a very early stage in all core projects, so is very aware of what is required in terms of graphics, communication, branding strategy and so forth, all of which is automatically incorporated within the packaging brief.

We are working in partnership on a regular basis with about eight small graphic design agencies in France, which have a well established understanding of our corporate requirements. It may be, however, that marketing wishes to nominate its own choice of agencies, in which case, we have to contend with the difficulties of ensuring that what they provide in creative terms can conform to established 3M formats and style guidelines.

Q. How is communication handled between the 3M packaging department and its suppliers?

CT: For the French consumer and office business, a lot of the creative consultation work is progressed via face to face meetings. Beyond concept stage, all of the information is exchanged through a digitised process by using e-mail and PDF files; for the business outside of France, we tend to work exclusively via online meetings

The extent to which we

are able to operate digitally is dependent on individual supplier capabilities of course. For instance, for some healthcare activities it is all done online with digital proofs; in other sectors, it may be that files are sent to suppliers as CDs.



Caroline Talot.

Q. How long do you estimate it takes from original concept to bring a new product to market?

CT: Time to market is always going to be determined by the particular market we are working in. Within the consumer and office sector, for example, packaging lead time can be as little as two weeks and no more than eight. For a straightforward line extension or an adaptation of an existing pack – say, switching from Post-it Note Canary Yellow to Post-it Note Pink – then it is pretty much instant, as all it requires is an instruction at the point of production. Conversely, for a product within the industrial market it might be up to three months because of all the toxicological aspects to the packaging that have to be considered.

Q. Most of your products are high volume lines. Does this allow for any opportunity to utilise digital print?

CT: Last year, we started digitally printing some of the labels for our 3M Scotch-Weld structural adhesive range. As a result have been able to achieve considerable cost savings – both in terms of production, and also by reducing our inventory levels. This operation was all managed online and has been developed in partnership with Reprocolor, a Xerox iGen3 user based in Bethuné close to one of our plants.

For some own label Post-it products we have also been doing some customisation of labels ourselves within the department, and then sending the artwork online for printing at our Beauchamp manufacturing site.



Offset on the left, and digital provides a clearer colour for the pack on the right.

Jetrion's new label solution



4000SeriesPrinter.

The new Jetrion 4000 series of digital inkjet colour presses developed for short and medium length narrow web production runs including variable data imaging, could have a built-in advantage over competitive systems since the only consumable required is the UV4000 set of CMYK inks developed and manufactured by Jetrion itself.

The first press has already been installed in a US production facility in the United States, and Jetrion is currently in discussions with label printers and label end users for placements of the digital inkjet colour press in other label production environments. Production units of the 4000 will ship in the first quarter of 2007.

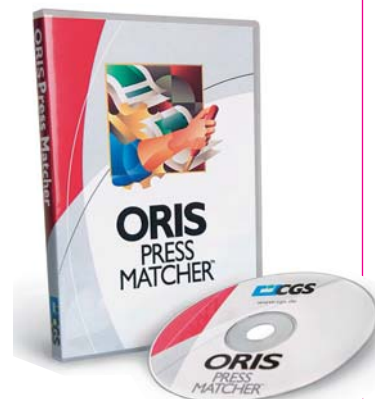
Commenting on the new press, president Dr Ken Stack said, 'Jetrion's UV digital inkjet colour technology holds tremendous promise with its greyscale quality of print making it a perfect fit for secondary labels and industrial labels; an important sub-segment that makes up over 50% of the market. It is

another important landmark in our commitment to introduce new inkjet technologies and products that advance productivity and quality in digital printing.'

Available in 4", 6" and 8" width, the Jetrion 4000 incorporates Xaar based greyscale printheads and high performance UV curing technology. Designed as a press rather than a stop and go laser printer, standard converting and finishing equipment can be seamlessly added.

Any colour you like

Colourbyte has just introduced the Oris Press Matcher, an automated colour workflow that matches the colour across digital presses, copiers, wide format printers and traditional printing methods such as offset, flexo and gravure. It uses an advanced 4D colour gamut mapping process to automatically convert digital files prepared for one printing



Oris Press Matcher.

condition to one or more different printing conditions. This means the 'look' of a print campaign can be precisely controlled no matter what devices are involved.

'We have users in digital studios who cannot get the same colour output on multiple wide format printers because they are from different manufacturers or have different RIPS or ink systems,' said director Tim Stockley. 'Whatever the outputting device the Oris Press Matcher will ensure a consistent colour standard enabling much greater flexibility and efficiency in production and offering some great new business opportunities'.

Also new from Colourbyte for large format printers is 'The Big Media Swatchbook' containing over 50 different materials including matte; photo and proofing papers; backlit and colour separation films; pop up, roll up and vinyl banners; and self-adhesive media.

Ink selection warning

The escalating use of untested consumables in inkjet printers can have serious financial implications for users of the equipment, cautions Linx ink product executive Kate O'Mahony.

While inks and solvents that have not been developed by the printer manufacturer may cost less



The Big Media Swatchbook.

than those that have, any gains are likely to be short term with a high risk of future printer damage and production line downtime. By comparison, reputable coding and marking suppliers will design their inks and solvents for a specific printer and test them in the printer for which they are intended.

'Unverified inks are becoming an increasing problem for many manufacturers because they cause costly downtime,' said Ms O'Mahony, citing two specific examples of Linx customers who have experienced these types of problems owing to the use of unapproved ink and solvent: alignment failure caused by a blocked printhead nozzle, and wear in the printer pump caused by the non-approved consumables.

'In both cases, the companies had to cover the costs required to repair the printers in addition to the financial loss incurred through lost production time, which was around three days for one customer,' continued Ms O'Mahony. 'It is therefore vital that any ink and solvent is suitable for and has been tested in the machine in which it is being used - and that is why the majority of coding and marking suppliers recommend that their inks should be used in their machines.'

PARIS 2006, OCTOBER 24 & 25

DigiPack

FROM DESIGN TO SALES OUTLETS, THE GLOBAL DIGITAL PACKAGING SUPPLY CHAIN CONGRESS

www.digipack-congress.com

Editor: Des King
Tel. +44 (0)1926 744637
Email: des.k@whitmar.co.uk

Subscriptions: Lisa Page
Tel. +44 (0)1892 514437
Email: lisa.p@whitmar.co.uk

Publisher: Marie Rushton
Tel. +44 (0)1892 514991
Email: marie.r@whitmar.co.uk

Design: Whitmar Publications Ltd



©Whitmar Publications Ltd ISSN 1750-3256

Digital Packaging Strategies is published 10 times a year by Whitmar Publications Ltd. www.digitalpackagingstrategies.com
30 London Road, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 0RE, UK Tel: +44 (0)1892 542099 Fax: +44 (0)1892 546693