LMI Packaging Improves Flexo Print Quality and Inventory Control Practices by Partnering with All Printing Resources

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– Christine Busch, Creative Services Manager, LMI

LMI PACKAGING

Overview

Located in Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, LMI Packaging has been serving the unique needs of the flexible packaging industry for more than half a century across end-use segments including food, beverage, health & beauty, household products and pet care. Long steeped in Midwestern values like mutual respect and collaborative enterprising, the company's philosophy of 'working together, growing together' permeates through all aspects of LMI's business – from internal development, to process improvement, to technology advancement.

The Challenge

With its fleet of state-of-the-art, high definition flexo presses, LMI is constantly seeking ways to print the highest quality while keeping a close eye on costs. One of the company's application mainstays is complex lidding applications. More recently, they have ventured into pressure-sensitive application formats. The company was seeking a closer partnership with a plate supplier who would offer the technical service that they needed, at the precise time that they needed it.

The Solution

After evaluating multiple suppliers, LMI made the decision to switch to All Printing Resources (APR) and their MacDermid range of flexo plates. When asked why the company ultimately offered to go with APR, LMI's Creative Services Manager, Christine Busch, explained, "It was all about APR's service culture. It just seemed like whenever we were in need of something, APR was there – and they still continue to be here when we need it. They're so knowledgeable in so many areas. We use Esko products and the other plate suppliers we were looking at didn't have the people in-house who really know the software well, and would ultimately have had to send us to somebody else for support. Whereas APR was here within a few hours if we needed them to be, they know everything about the Esko product line, and they helped us upgrade our CDI system."

Plate inspection and mounting preparation.

Preparing label artwork for output.

The Results

During the supplier evaluation process, LMI was having some challenges with their existing plates reaching the high-definition levels required for some of their flexo applications. Christine continues, "APR delivered some plates for us to trial, and we were able to get the 'pop' with some of our applications that we really needed. We've had a lot of success with the flat dots once we upgraded our CDI system. It's a better print. I always say that with a round dot, you can smash the plates down on the press as hard as you can and you'll still get that halo look. With a flat dot, it's flat, so you can't really push that dot down and it has helped us to eliminate haloing. Partnering with APR has also brought our plate costs down."

LMI hasn't only found success with APR's service and plate offerings, the company has also come to rely on APR's **SupplySentry RFID Inventory Management System**. LMI's SupplySentry system was installed last year and is tracking everything the creative services department uses including papers, plate materials, towels, stickybacks, tapes and even ink for desktop printers. Christine further comments, "Before installing APR's SupplySentry, we always had somebody

ordering materials but didn't know when the last box of a certain material was gone. We were in a place where we had to spend the money to rush orders of tape, stickyback or doctor blades because somebody used the last box and the person who orders materials wasn't aware of that."

Christine concludes, "APR is always on top of these orders now. We'll get a call from them and someone will say, 'Hey, we sent you an order last week but it doesn't show anything on your shelf. Did you guys put the product away?' And it turns out that we've been really busy and we actually used up all of the product and need to place another order – so they're always one step ahead of us. It's really nice having somebody looking after us in that way."

All Printing Resources, Inc.

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