



Basil Forbes, Win-Pak's print manager, and finishing department assistant, Nicholas, are greatly impressed with the efficiency of the Rotocon RCSI 330 slitter-rewinder and integrated E+L inspection unit.

## Win-Pak tackles digital labels

Win-Pak, traditionally a supplier of end-of-line packaging systems, has diversified into digital label production, and is enjoying considerable success, reports GILL LOUBSER.

**FOR more than three decades, we've known Win-Pak as a supplier of end-of-line packaging systems and products, primarily in the pallet stabilisation arena, with its comprehensive offering of strapping materials, pallet wrapping and shrink films, grip sheets, slip sheets, and products such as Slip-Stop palletising liquids and applicating tools.**

Now, however, although that traditional segment of the business continues to thrive, the picture has shifted dramatically following a decision, taken in 2015, to enter the field of digital printing of labels and packaging.

This division – known as Win-Pak Labels & Packaging – has become a flourishing second string to the company's bow, in three years showing an amazing 190% year-on-year escalation in turnover. It's not surprising, therefore, to learn that Win-Pak's proprietor, Anthony Pearse, has been investing heavily in the latest digital printing and finishing technology to keep pace with this burgeoning business. Although it has not yet reached equilibrium with the base business, it seems it soon will! And not only has serious capex gone into leading-edge printing and converting equipment, the premises in Muizenberg's Capricorn Park have been considerably expanded to allow space for these additional activities and to streamline workflow.

A tour of the premises, guided by printer manager, Basil Forbes, reveals a bustling operation. The most

recent investments have included a new HP Indigo 6R digital press, replacing the original Indigo 4500 purchased in 2015; a previously-owned Digicon Omega finishing line, purchased from a European label printer in a deal facilitated by Rotocon's ever-expanding used equipment division; and, also from Rotocon, an Ecoline RCSI 330 slitter-rewinder, complete with an Erhardt+Leimer (E+L) SmartScan inspection system.

But that isn't all. More capex has gone to the purchase of a Berra silkscreen printer, plus a recent upgrade to retrofit a foiling unit – all in the interests of supplying customers with the special finishes they require for their digitally-printed labels. In-house capabilities now include die-cutting, laminating, varnishing, high-build silk screening, pattern varnishes, embossing, hot-foiling and variable data printing.

### Ensuring speed and flexibility

The HP Indigo 6R is a productive and trustworthy HP Indigo press, the result of a carefully crafted and executed reconditioning process. It offers the same gravure-matching print quality and high productivity as the HP Indigo WS6000 series, producing a variety of high-value applications, at an affordable price.

According to Basil, the choice of the Rotocon RCSI 330 slitter-rewinder was easy, as Win-Pak has had a close association with the Rotocon team for some time, as a primary supplier of tooling.



It has arrived so recently that the protective plastic wrap is still in place! Win-Pak Labels & Packaging's print manager, Basil Forbes, is proud to show off the company's latest digital label press – an HP Indigo 6R.





'The Rotocon slitter-rewinder and the integrated E+L SmartScan inspection unit (pictured above) are now providing the speed and flexibility we need to process jobs quickly and efficiently,' Basil confirms.

'The SmartScan quickly picks up any errors, ensuring that only perfect labels are dispatched to our customers, while meeting their critical lead times.'

According to Basil, this equipment line-up well suits Win-Pak's business of providing labels for the high-end of the market. 'Our market for small runs of digitally-printed labels is primarily the wine industry,' he says, 'but in our customer hierarchy wine labels are closely followed by labels for upmarket cosmetics and FMCG products. We're also able to print on unsupported film up to 20µm, and supply flexible packaging for products such as pouches, as well as for short-run promotions and market trials.'

A big feather in Win-Pak's cap was last year's attainment of ISO 22000 accreditation, giving customers peace of mind when it comes to demands for certified food-grade packaging.

In addition to direct sales, Win-Pak also enjoys notable custom from local packaging converters who don't have their own in-house printing facilities. A prime example is a Capricorn Park neighbour, Pouch Dynamics, now outsourcing digital printing to Win-Pak to provide FMCG customers a speedy service when it comes to mock-ups of pouches for marketing assessment.

'Speed is the way to win the marketing battle,' confirms Pouch Dynamics MD, Heinz Prospech. 'Within three days of receiving the artwork, we can provide a prototype with perfect colour matching on high-quality laminated pouch material, thanks to Win-Pak. That's real service for our customers.'

In addition, Win-Pak enjoys a symbiotic relationship with a number of local flexographic printers, providing them with digitally-printed substrates when short runs are concerned, and, in turn, passing on orders for longer runs to the flexo printers.

And, finally, as another service to customers, especially smaller bottlers and fillers without automatic label applying machinery, Win-Pak has taken on the South African agency for the Australian-built BenchMATE labelling machine. This simple and efficient machine is ideal for smaller, start-up operations or, indeed, any business with short-run labelling needs.

'The BenchMATE applies a single label or a front and back label and is faster than most semi-automatic labellers,' says Basil. 'In addition, it's engineered to face harsh production environments.'

## R Stanton Avery Pioneer Award goes to Alex Knott

**DOW Chemical Company's Alex Knott (pictured right) has been named as the recipient of the R Stanton Avery Pioneer Award for the 2018 Label Industry Global Awards.**

Judging for this year's awards took place during the recent FINAT European Label Forum in Dublin, where a panel of international judges considered entries across four award categories.

Sponsored by Avery Dennison, the R Stanton Avery Pioneer Award honours the contribution made by an individual that has really impacted the label and package printing sector, whether the pioneering work has spanned two years or two decades.

Alex Knott is a senior scientist in the company and leader of a global team that has pioneered innovations in pressure-sensitive silicone release liner coating technology, including the introduction of Dow's Flat Release Systems. This technology has not only revolutionised high-speed, low coating weight, high-performance and labelstock release liner production, but has also been a key factor in helping to drive down silicone coating costs.

Finalists for the Award for Innovation, sponsored by Flint Group Narrow Web, are (for companies with more than 300 employees) Esko, Fujifilm North America, Paper Converting Machine Company and Rotometrics; and (for companies with up to 300 employees) Dienes Corporation, Eaglewood Technologies, Hamillroad Software, MGI and Phoseon Technology.

Finalists for the Award for Sustainability are Avery Dennison, Signode India and UPM Speciality Papers.

Winners will be announced at a gala evening on September 25, during Labelexpo Americas in Chicago.

