



THIS HIGH-GRAPHICS RSC SHOWCASES TOUCHPOINT'S FLEXO PRINTING EXPERTISE.

technical

BOARD GRADE
Doublewall F and C-Flute (ECT 51)
NUMBER OF COLORS
Six
ROTARY DIECUTTER
MarquipWardUnited ServoGrafix
IR DRYERS
JB Machinery
ANILOX ROLLS
Pamarco
PRINTING PLATES
PRP Digital ExSpect™
INK
American Inks and Coatings V5
FOLDER GLUER
Tanabe

A POST-PRINT SUCCESS STORY

FireKing, a security and loss prevention company in New Albany, Ind., wanted an eye-catching box to promote the launch of its new FireShield filing cabinet. While litho printing would have been the logical choice, Touchpoint, an independent sheet plant in Seymour, Ind., was able to achieve litho-like quality using post-print processes.

Touchpoint partnered with Creative Packaging, an independent in Shelbyville, Ky., to produce the RSC. Creative contacted Touchpoint because of its high-graphics printing capabilities. For the last few years Touchpoint has been focused on serving the high-end graphics market, investing in new equipment and working closely with industry suppliers. The FireShield box showcases Touchpoint's post-print skills.

Brandon Wilson, Director of Manufacturing Excellence, says the size of the box and the anticipated order quantity made litho a less attractive printing option. "Given that the repeat order volume was going to be large, litho was cost-prohibitive. Also, due to the size of the box it would have had to be two-piece to do it in litho." The dimensions are 50 1/8 x 89 5/8 inches.

It Starts With Prepress

Wilson says the substrate and the printing plates were two key components that contributed to the successful outcome. "I can't stress enough that it all starts with good prepress relationships," he says.

Touchpoint consulted with PRP in Indianapolis, Ind. "They have partnered with us on nearly every high-graphics job that we've done and they really have a good feel for what our press requirements are as far as traps and gain curves," he says. "They give us a good firm leg to stand on when we can take a customer art file that was designed for litho printing and make prepress adjustments to output a digital dot replicated proof that we can show our customer and say, 'Here's your art converted into flexo from litho,' and the customer is typically pleased with the look they will get."

Design Excellence

PRP developed a patented printing plate called Digital ExSpect®, which delivers flat top dots. The plate was used to print the FireKing box. Wilson says the plate virtually eliminates fluting and ensures color consistency in process areas. "A lot of plate vendors are now offering flat top dot technology, but we have had the most success with PRP's solution."

The board grade was doublewall F and C-flute (ECT 51)

using Kemiart Lite+ topline from Flutes in Indianapolis. "The product is very heavy so they needed doublewall protection and an ECT 51 grade F/C is nearly the same thickness as E/B so you don't have to adjust for internal dimensions or panel allowances, and the F-flute being on the outside is much better to print on than E-flute. The F/C is almost like printing on plywood. It's a phenomenal printing surface," he says.

The box was printed and diecut in one pass on

Touchpoint's MarquipWardUnited 66-inch six-color ServoGrafix rotary diecutter, which was installed about two and a half years ago, and then glued on a Tanabe folder-gluer. The diecutter has IR dryers from JB Machinery and 440 LPI anilox rolls from Pamarco.

The box is six colors with an aqueous coating. The artwork is 87 lines per inch and incorporates smaller process images and skin tones. "It's a complicated box to print," Wilson says. "If this was the first high-graphics job that we had tried we probably would have been apprehensive."

Impressive Results

Wilson says large format litho-like artwork is Touchpoint's niche. "Jobs where the re-order volume and the size prohibit it from being converted into litho and the display quantities are high enough to justify the expense of the printing plates and the prepress are ideal for flexo. As long as it's not cost prohibitive, we've found a lot of success in that."

Customers who are accustomed to litho are often impressed with Touchpoint's flexo results. "They are a bit apprehensive initially because they want litho quality. Is it going to be litho quality? No, but it's close enough that a lot of people can't tell the difference or don't mind the slight drop in resolution for the cost savings that they're going to get," he says.

"The most important asset we have is a great printing crew that really understands the technical aspects of post-print flexo," he adds. "Our crews take a lot of pride in the work they do and can oftentimes be found taking a box home to show their families what they accomplished." ■

