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Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG

Postfach
69159 Wiesloch
Germany

Gutenbergring
69168 Wiesloch

Matthias Hartung

Phone +49 6222 82-67174
Fax +49 6222 82-9967972

Matthias.Hartung@heidelberg.com
www.heidelberg.com

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Doubling productivity in packaging production – HEIDELBERG unveils new Boardmaster at Interpack 2023

- **Interpack 2023: New flexographic web printing system for high-volume folding carton production addresses key challenges of packaging producers**
- **Brand corporations increasingly using more sustainable option of folding cartons**
- **Heidelberg underlines leading role in packaging market**
- **First systems already installed at sites of large packaging customers**

Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG (HEIDELBERG) is unveiling a world premiere for the growth segment of high-volume folding carton printing with the completely new HEIDELBERG Boardmaster. This flexographic web printing system with a machine availability of up to 90 percent and a maximum printing speed of 600 meters per minute delivers double the productivity and thus dramatically reduces the total cost of ownership in industrial packaging production. As the global demand for packaged goods continues to grow, packaging and label printing is experiencing structural growth, making it an important core segment for HEIDELBERG.

“With the world premiere of our HEIDELBERG Boardmaster, we are responding to key customer challenges in the packaging market – cost pressure, the skills shortage, and the need to optimize productivity and sustainability,” says HEIDELBERG CEO Dr. Ludwin Monz.

HEIDELBERG has unveiled the Boardmaster at Interpack 2023, which runs from May 4-10 in the German city of Düsseldorf and is one of the world’s leading trade shows for the packaging segment.

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Flexographic printing is now the number one technology in the packaging market and is continuing to benefit from the globally stable and significant growth of packaging and labels. It is already being used to produce some 15 percent of the total folding carton volume and this proportion is continuing to increase, with flexo folding carton printing volume exhibiting above-average growth of 2,4 percent in packaging printing.

Brand corporations increasingly using more sustainable option of folding cartons

International brand corporations in particular are looking to combine printing quality with ever greater sustainability and recyclability across their entire packaging portfolio, and they are increasingly moving away from plastic. In the food sector, plastic is still the dominant packaging material by some margin. According to a recent study by Smithers, however, the proportion of fiber-based packaging made from materials such as board and paper will overtake plastic in the medium term and assume the top spot with a proportion of over 40 percent. The new HEIDELBERG Boardmaster is especially suited to the food and beverage sector's folding carton applications, which are becoming increasingly popular worldwide due to a growing global demand for packaged products.

HEIDELBERG Boardmaster reduces total cost of ownership in high-volume folding carton production

“The HEIDELBERG Boardmaster enables industrial packaging producers to significantly reduce their operating costs. With its numerous benefits for customers, the Boardmaster also provides an attractive alternative for many users who have so far opted for VLF – very large format – sheetfed offset printing,” says Christian Steinmassl, who is in charge of the Packaging segment at HEIDELBERG.

The Boardmaster was developed completely from scratch at the HEIDELBERG competence center for high-volume flexo folding carton printing at the company's Weiden site in Bavaria.

- Development work was carried out in close collaboration with international packaging customers and factored in their key challenges – cost pressure, the skills shortage, and the need to optimize productivity and sustainability. The first systems have already been installed.
- The solution is designed to dramatically reduce industrial packaging customers' total cost of ownership.

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- Each print deck has two print units. While one unit is busy with production, the second one is being readied for the next print job. Depending on the configuration, a machine availability of up to 90 percent is possible in production.
- The printing speed is up to 600 meters per minute, which corresponds to around 38,000 print sheets in format 6 (sheet width 148 centimeters) per hour.
- Substrates with grammages of between 70 and 800 grams per square meter can be processed.
- Depending on the postpress concept (reel to reel, reel to sheeter, or reel to die cutter), it is possible to avoid losing any time during production.
- The HEIDELBERG Intellimatch prepress scanner safeguards printing quality, also ensuring the print decks are adjusted correctly and fully automatically.
- Conserving resources is a key focal point:
 - Less than ten meters of paper waste per job change
 - Far higher energy efficiency as a function of productivity than in offset printing
 - Recovery of warm air that is generated
 - Using water-based inks improves the material's recyclability
- High investment security is ensured, as the system's modular design means users are able to grow in line with market requirements and adapt the relevant machine configuration to changed market conditions.

Figure 1: The new HEIDELBERG Boardmaster dramatically cuts the total cost of ownership of packaging producers involved in high-volume folding carton printing.

Figure 2: With the new HEIDELBERG Boardmaster, the company is underlining its market and technology leadership in packaging printing.

Figure 3: The HEIDELBERG Boardmaster addresses the key challenges facing packaging producers – cost pressure, the skills shortage, and the need to optimize productivity and sustainability.

Figure 4: Higher productivity, lower costs – the HEIDELBERG Boardmaster is also an alternative for many packaging customers using very large format (VLF) offset printing in their production operations.

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Figure 5: The HEIDELBERG Intellimatch prepress scanner ensures print quality and fully automatic and correct setting of the printing units.

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Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG

Group Communications

Matthias Hartung

Phone: +49 6222 82-67174

Fax: +49 6222 82-9967972

E-mail: matthias.hartung@heidelberg.com