

HEIDELBERG Unveils New Web Printing System

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As the global demand for packaged goods continues to increase, packaging and label printing is experiencing structural growth, making it an important core segment for HEIDELBERG. The company unveiled the new Boardmaster for the growth segment of high-volume folding carton printing.

This flexographic web printing system with a machine availability of up to 90 percent and a maximum printing speed of 600 metres per minute delivers double the productivity and thus dramatically reduces the total cost of ownership in industrial packaging production.

'With the HEIDELBERG Boardmaster, we are responding to key customer challenges in the packaging market: cost pressure, the skills shortage and the need to optimise productivity and sustainability,' said HEIDELBERG CEO Dr. Ludwin Monz.

HEIDELBERG unveiled the Boardmaster at Interpack 2023, which ran from May 4-10. 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.



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 fibre-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.

'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,' said Christian Steinmassl, who is in charge of the Packaging segment at HEIDELBERG.

The Boardmaster was developed completely from scratch at the HEIDELBERG competence centre 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 optimise productivity and sustainability. The first systems have already been installed. The solution is designed to dramatically reduce industrial packaging customers' total cost of ownership.

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 metres per minute, which corresponds to around 38,000 print sheets in format 6 (sheet width 148 centimetres) per hour. Substrates with grammages of between 70 and 800 grams per square metre 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 10 metres 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.

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