

PACKAGING NEWS

How Digi Leaflet delivered flexibility and lower costs in the Booklet Label supply chain



Digi Leaflet Technologies has been working with a world-class chemical manufacturer to resolve a number of issues within their booklet-label printing supply chain. The brief to enable them to react to market opportunities, increase manufacturing agility and reduce costs. Their issues are very clearly not unique to them...

Production output limited, increased complexity, excess working capital tied up in stock through

- Long lead-times or late deliveries of printed media
- Cost penalties for ordering small quantities
- High cost items with limited sourcing opportunity
- Loss of control from outsourcing key steps in product supply chain
- Write-off of obsolete

printed media

- Reworked finished goods to service “other” markets
- Loss of agility to turnaround urgent orders

As the client brand portfolio had grown the ability to manage the complex product labelling had diminished. Efficiencies in the Supply Chain were a constant objective but it was accepted that as part of doing business set-up costs, adhering to MOQs and managing of old label stock levels were a “fact of life” to grow markets. After all, there aren’t many alternatives to create cost effective booklets and labels, reduce waste and increase flexibility whilst reducing lead times are there, right? Wrong!! Digi Leaflet Technologies understands how these issues negatively impact on the client’s ability to

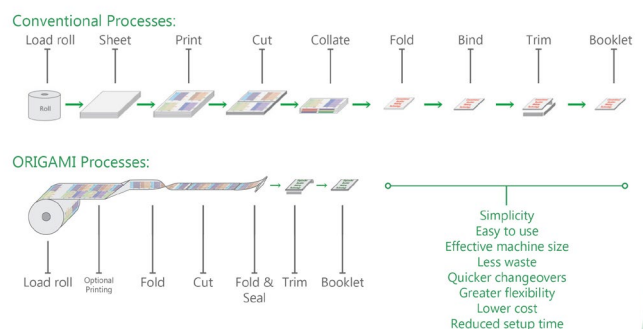
perform and to maximise opportunity. For example, when producing new packs to meet a specific market strategy, or leverage a valuable product use extension, speed to market and compressing the supply chain is key. Components need to be sourced rapidly, without penalty to ensure maximum benefit is achieved. Historically, booklet printing, with its multi-stage process, complex artworks and many handling points has been unable to react to urgent demands for new formats, short run or short lead time orders and is seen as a major bottleneck.

By exploiting the capabilities of CMYK digital print technology and devising a unique and novel method of folding and forming thin films to create lightweight full-colour booklets, the solution presented as the ‘Origami’ method met all performance goals and

delivers true cost benefit with improved agility in the Supply Chain.

The Digi Leaflet Origami machine and its “brothers” in the range delivers operational flexibility, low cost of manufactured product at a lower cost of entry than conventional technologies with a real simplicity of use, allowing the option of in-house production or through existing print and conversion partners. Rapid changeovers between jobs provides the agility and capability to produce small batches to order, cost effectively - in full alignment with today’s dynamic manufacturing trends whilst avoiding penalties and the constraints of traditional MOQ’s.

The patented Digi Leaflet Origami method is ‘disruptive’ and challenges the existing economic model in this converting sector. Having also developed the faster



booklet-only system after customer feedback Digi Leaflet Technologies Ltd has realising an even more cost effective unit delivering up to 60 booklets output a minute. The simplicity of the system means that the

need for print experience to operate it is negated. The Digi Leaflet booklet utilises thin-film raw materials to produce robust, lightweight, full-colour CMYK communication formats to effectively deliver

your informational requirements. At the same time, the booklet formats coupled with the excellence of Digital Print deliver improved readability for product information whilst permitting the freedom

for the designers to produce attractive content within a familiar booklet information flow.

Digital (packaging) in the supply chain

What does Digital in the Supply Chain mean? We get asked all the time by our clients “we want to go Digital in the Supply Chain”... really, what does the client mean?

Well, to put our perspective to it there is the “translation” of the request. Our response is typically “Do you want to be more Agile?”.... “Ah yes, they say that’s what we want but what does Agile mean?”

In the dynamic world we now live in there is digital this and digital that and even before 4G is working wholesale there is the cry for 5G....HAS THE WORLD GONE DIGITAL MAD?

What’s really required is a coherent and effective delivery of Agile thinking and performance; increase efficiencies despite the drive for the current trends of personalisation and customisation which are behind all the brands; Nutella to Marmite, Coke to Vodka. How to deliver that uniqueness in the product offer?

Up until relatively recently there was the ability to digitally print labels, nothing too complex, just flat panel labels. Since then the growth in ceramic tile, laminates, fabrics, electronics and more printingand so it goes on. What we at iDi Pac Ltd are passionate about doing is taking this excellent technology into

newer and more exciting areas by integrating the supply chain needs through to product delivery and that often means that the entire packaging system needs some, if not all, its components.

So, as a small example we are working on a project currently that has the fabulous brief of asking for personalisation on a pack and product line that has little ability to forecast outputs accurately; seasonality and country variations put paid to that....all on a system that up until today hasn’t been a major area of development for short run capability.

The client would like to adopt a make to order approach, they would like to run at line speeds and then have quality that meets the demanding retail environment.....and by the way the shippers and POS materials need to be equally bespoke and flexible in their designs and manufacturing capability. It’s a jigsaw of capabilities and design! The materials are in the main thin (ish) films that are used in a complex supply chain.....we can’t say more just now!! What we chose to deliver had to meet the client brief of being cost effective, Agile principles integral to the manufacturing process, that we should minimise capex spend

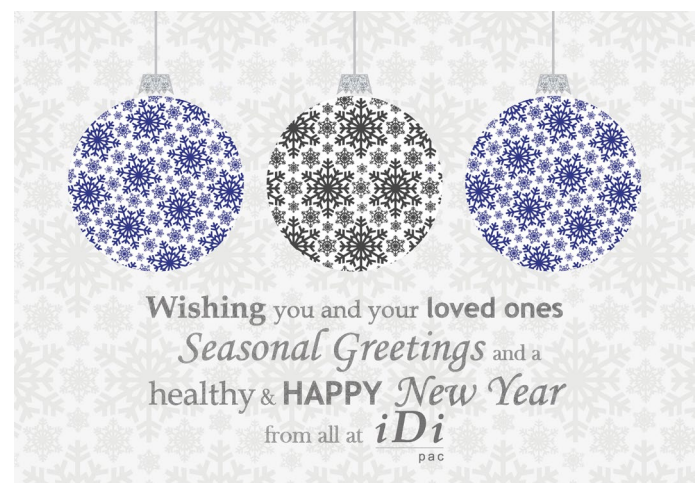
and deliver true bespoke capability The plan is working, the developments are proving challenging yet achievable, the back office systems are integrated into an excellent and responsive artwork system that is currently delivering best in class performance for change control complete with traceability, best in class turnaround times and with the added benefit of feeding digital capable systems; print, publish and despatch, truly Agile performance.

Fundamentally the project has adopted the principles of Agile thinking and applied it across the entire SC; forecasting processes through to artwork origination, approvals and controls through to

manufacturing systems and capabilities that deliver the functionality within the pack solution that has been “tweaked” to accept the digitalisation of the pack.

Personalisation and customisation, they are achievable IF you consider the whole SC. Move from the parochial thinking into a holistic and innovative view to create that vision, technology can deliver at that point!!

iDi Pac wishes you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



Be sure not to miss out on our “12 days of Packaging Christmas” on our Twitter
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