

BULLETIN

Frankenstein's Label - The SuperLabel...



Concept for multi-item scanning (source: <http://bit.ly/2woq65m>)

The options available today in printing and integrated technology enable the humble label to not only be a carrier for a simple brand logo & message but to interact with its environment, share that information and even communicate with connected devices to generate a relevant action or activity. I thought it fun to explore the possibilities of what this SuperLabel could be like if all its powers were combined in one. Where to start???

Temperature indicator

Photo chromatic inks react to UV or sunlight and are often used as a brand design gimmick (think Coors beer cans) but are also pitched as a product quality/security feature to be used in the supply chain. Leuco dyes are coloured when they're at a cool temperature but as the heat increases and active layers within the label construction react to temperature change (absorbed by the label substrate) they become

translucent. This reveals the human readable symbols, text or colours that may be printed on the underlying layer of the ink. Leuco dyes can also be mixed with another colour, resulting in two-tone effects as the temperatures changes.

Time indicator

Technology is available to preconfigure printed time indicators calibrated from mere minutes up to a year's duration. These are promoted for use where product lifespan data is important, such as critical durations in medical items to more routine service scheduling for household and industrial consumables.

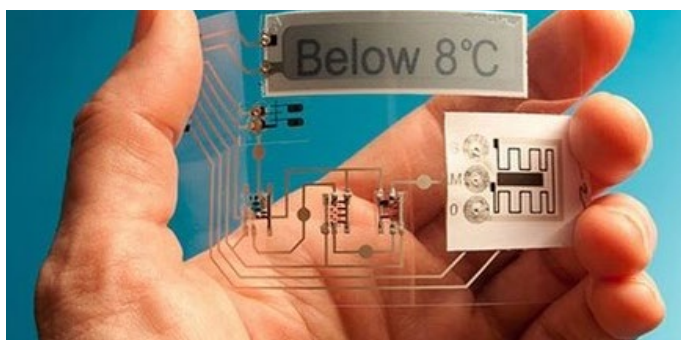
NFC

Near Field Communication tags are part of RFID. Operating in a specific

Mhz frequency they allow communicating between a mobile phone with wireless technology & media content. The tag can carry more data than barcodes, URLs or QR codes. This technology offers more security such as being password protected and tracked and traced to a specific individual or an account. Applications can be as broad as adherence directions for medications, confirmation of product authenticity to a fun brand message. Recently drinks brand Johnny Walker used this tech to engage with users of their product, incorporating a sensor detecting when the bottle had been opened to share related content.

Smart Glyph

Use your phone camera via the Smart Glyph app to read a products barcode



Temperature Indicator label

and the brand can play any AV content it decides to link it too. This content could change to reflect different brand activity - but still only requires the original barcode to be read & activated. All the content selection is managed upstream.

Laser cut dieline

This technology can be exploited to create unique label shapes without the need to commit to a machined, physical asset that requires upkeep/changeovers/storage etc. The only limiting factor being complexity of design, which can slow line speed.

Low adhesion/re-apply

Not all labels require an adhesive that prevents removal. Low-adhesion, pressure sensitive labels can be removed without damaging the surface or leaving any residue.

Hybrid printed

Utilising the best of both worlds. It's acknowledged that digital is improving in quality and delivers perfectly acceptable

definition for most applications, but its use in concert with established high-volume methods can enable delivery of targeted brand messages or bespoke content, which brand owners are still experimenting with & exploiting.

Textured finishing

Varnishes and other coatings, either in uniform or 'spot' application, generate a variety of visual and tactile decorative effects usually for more premium products. Depending on the complexity of the print line they are applied as either on or off-line actions. As a complete counter to 'added' effects, some brands trying to promote artisanal credentials do away with finishing options and print on the reverse of unlined board as a nod to 'authenticity'.

Embossing/debossing

Invest in a drum with a repeating design profile and our SuperLabel design will not only look interesting, with attention



Johnnie Walker Label knows when it's been opened.

drawn to the subtle surface difference, but feel rewarding to the touch. Most often deployed for gifting, luxury products.

Braille

Nordson have developed a system from its hot melt technologies which can apply small beads of adhesive to create braille symbols as a requirement for medical packaging - which, yes, is not part of label production but in this Super-Scenario I will

stretch to be included.

Foil decorated

Not new by any means but a technique consistently employed by brands that, when skilfully applied, promotes an air of quality. Part of the online/offline printing armoury

What have I left out? Our SuperLabel can't yet apply or recycle itself but it can do a lot in-between.

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