

ROTOCONTROL Crackingnews

Sign & Seal in second digital move

Last year's news from Sign & Seal Labels was its first tentative step into the digital printing arena. A recently-installed Screen Truepress Jet is taking the business another giant stride forward in terms of digital technology for bespoke label designs.



FOLLOWING his purchase last year of Cape Town's first Konica Minolta bizhub C71cf digital press, Henk Crous, owner of Sign & Seal Labels, has now made another brave investment decision. This time he's chosen a Screen Truepress Jet L350UV+ digital press to supplement the Konica Minolta, launching his business even deeper into the growing market for bespoke label designs and ever-shorter runs.

In addition to the Screen Truepress Jet, purchased through Rotocon, a second, simultaneous investment has been made in a Rotocon RDF 330, considerably enhancing finishing operations.

At the same time, Henk's ever-burgeoning business was in dire need of additional production space. To solve this problem, an adjacent unit has been added to the Winelands Park (Kuils River, Cape Town) premises, and this is now home to a fast-growing digital printing division, and a closely-aligned DTP department.



A beaming Henk Crous (centre), owner of Sign & Seal Labels, is over the moon with his latest purchases – a Rotocon RDF 330 finishing machine and a Screen Truepress Jet L350UV+ digital press. Looking equally pleased are Rotocon's Michael and Pascal Aengenvoort!

'I'm now able to play a much bigger role in the supply of customised labels and meet growing demands for shorter run lengths,' says Henk.

'Many of our customers have been on our books for years and our business has grown alongside them as their needs have developed and been met,' Henk goes on to explain.

'These days, our customers require an increasing number of different label designs, and ever-faster turnaround times. It was to meet such varied demands and to retain the flourishing short-run business that I made the leap into digital printing.'

Behind this phenomenon, he notes, is exponential growth in private labels, now recognised as a global driving force. While Henk concedes that we're only seeing the start of this trend in South Africa, he's adamant that the local market will swiftly follow suit. 'The timing was right for me to jump on to the digital bandwagon,' he declares. 'There are huge opportunities ahead.'

allows production of a wide gamut of vibrant colours and smooth tones at high resolution.'

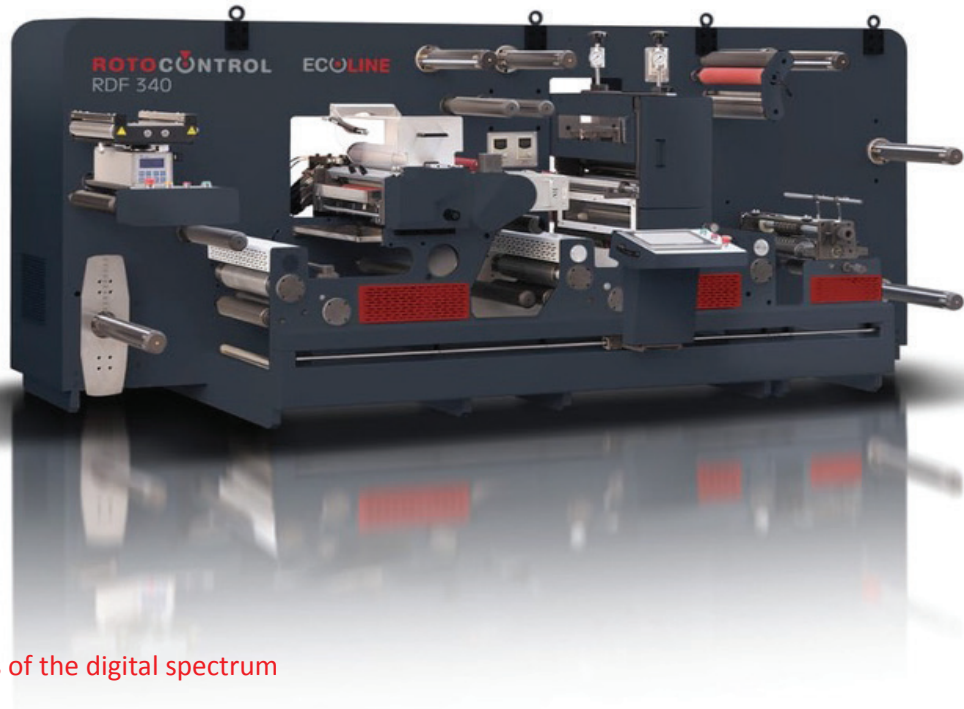
Complementing the new press is Rotocon's own servo-driven RDF 330 digital label converting and finishing line, the twentieth such machine sold in South Africa during the last year.

While the RDF 330 enhances Sign & Seal's capacity for printing, die-cutting, sheeting and offline cold-coiling, it's not just capacity that's improved, it's also quality and speed.

The machine can foil up to 24 000 labels/hour (depending on label layout) and also features a servo-driven foil-saving mechanism.

Also supplied by Rotocon is a stacker/conveyor for in-mould labels that opens up yet another promising business stream for Sign & Seal Labels.

Says Henk Crous: 'While my purchase decisions were based on print quality, machine up-time, and print speed, also important was the local support and training offered by Rotocon's fully-trained service technicians.'



Coping with both ends of the digital spectrum

So much for market trends. Let's take a look at the technology.

While his two digital presses are at opposite ends of the spectrum, which Henk describes as 'a paradigm shift in technology', he's adamant that there's a place for both in his business.

In addition to the capabilities of the Konica Minolta bizhub, the Screen Truepress Jet L350UV+ brings a new level of functionality and productivity to label production. Its prominent inkjet-head technology ensures both outstanding quality and throughput, producing striking labels on a variety of substrates, including unsupported film.

As Pascal Aengenvoort remarks: 'This high-quality, ultra-reliable digital label press delivers flexibility, low cost of ownership and a swift return on investment, printing at anything from 16 to 60m/min on a 350mm web. Particularly impressive are Screen's high-definition CMYK+W+Orange UV inks and advanced colour management system that

Open days woo (and 'wow') customers

When it comes to marketing his enhanced capabilities, Henk is staging a series of open days at which current and prospective customers can witness a range of products being printed on the new Screen label press and finished on the Rotocon line.

'They are blown away when they see jobs that would formerly have taken a few days being completed in minutes. They're also amazed to see that digital print can match the quality of flexo print,' he remarks with a broad grin.

As he sums up: 'Customers are exposed to the best global practices and require local suppliers to match or exceed their expectations. With these latest investments we have got the recipe exactly right to meet those expectations and to run a highly-successful business.'