

Case study

Ren-Flex offers the first digitally printed in-mold labels to South African market



First HP Indigo 20000 Digital Press in South Africa meets changing demands and enables innovative marketing

Challenge

- Respond to customer demands for cost-effective samples, short-runs and fast turnarounds
- Establish USPs in variable data in-mold label production
- Help customers keep their brands fresh and engaging

Solution

- HP Indigo 20000 Digital Press
- HP Indigo SmartStream Mosaic

Results

- High-impact in-mold labels
- Added value labels with variable data
- Ability to expand services and offer new products



“Digital printing is the future. Today, customer demands are very stringent, brand owners and the molders are looking for shorter runs, quicker delivery, color consistency, and sharp print – all of which can be achieved with the HP Indigo 20000 Digital Press.”

– Albe Naude, COO, Ren-Flex

Ren-Flex was established in 2010 by the Ren-Form group to provide high-quality printing on plastics for the rapidly growing in-mold labels market. While Ren-Flex prints for in-mold packaging suppliers, it has extensive contact with brands and users to develop strategies and explore how to use new technologies effectively.

“The feedback from customers about packaging printed on the HP Indigo press using Mosaic variable data designs is phenomenal. They love the packaging; they love the clarity; and they love the print, which is very eye-catching.”

—Altatf Hassan, CEO, Epic Foods Pty Ltd

Industry:

Labels & Packaging

Company name:

Ren-Flex

Location:

Johannesburg, South Africa

HP equipment:

HP Indigo 20000 Digital Press
HP Indigo SmartStream Mosaic

Website:

renflex.co.za



Sign up for updates
hp.com/go/getupdated

Challenge

Creating a modern vision

The labels market in South Africa is very competitive, and for a new company like Ren-Flex, the challenges are considerable.

“We were established specifically as a company to print on plastic for the in-mold labels (IML) market,” says Albe Naude, COO, Ren-Flex. “At first, there were two critical things to get right: quality and service. We installed the best equipment and began to build our customer base.”

The company installed a nine-color web offset press with three extra flexo stations for applying varnishes and coatings. It also installed the latest perforation, die-cutting and finishing equipment.

“We have seen a rapid shift in the trend from self-adhesive labels to IML, and needed to be able to respond to that change,” he explains. “The IML market is growing at about 15% annually, so there is a real opportunity. We have seen this trend especially in dairy and dairy-related products.

“At the same time, there have been increased demands for shorter runs and faster turnarounds,” Naude says. “With a conventional web press, this is simply not practical, and we needed to find a solution for our customers that would also provide a platform for us to grow.

“It’s not just the printers who are facing competition, but also our customers, who need to stand out on the shelf and offer their goods at competitive prices,” he adds. “We needed a way to help them, too. To do that, we began to look for a digital printing solution that would enable us to meet those requirements, and help us to create a vision for the future.”

Solution

Attractive print proposition

“As we are traditionally a web printer, we were attracted by the idea of a web press that could do short-runs, meet tight deadlines, and perform variable data printing,” says Naude. “For our customers, we knew this would be a very attractive proposition.”

Ren-Flex installed the first HP Indigo 20000 Digital Press in the Republic of South Africa.

“We are able to print much bigger labels than on our offset press because of the 740 x 1100mm (29 x 43in.) image size,” he says. “Also, the food-grade inks used with the HP Indigo 20000 Digital Press are essential for IML printing.”

For Marketing and Augmented Reality Manager, Erika Hearnshaw, the arrival of the HP Indigo 20000 Digital Press, opens a broad range of new applications that can be used for the success of customers, and Ren-Flex.

“The idea of moving from traditional static print to the opportunity of speaking to customers on a one-to-one basis using variable data printing is very exciting to me, and that’s just what digital print offers,” she says.

“We’ve already used HP Indigo SmartStream Mosaic several times, in runs of 400 to 4,500 copies, and have used it in conjunction with an augmented reality campaign that adds value and makes the customer’s relationship with the brand more special.

“There’s not a lot of brand loyalty out there, and I believe that this is what brand owners want,” Hearnshaw says. “Enhancing customers’ experience using variable data printing is a good way to achieve that.”

Results

Making a difference on the shelves

Epic Foods is one of Ren-Flex’s customers. It owns several major brands and has enjoyed the benefits of digital printing. The company is an innovator in the spread category of the South African market and has a high brand profile.

“We’ve worked with Ren-Flex for some time,” says Altatf Hassan, CEO, Epic Foods Pty Ltd. “We liked the idea of using digital printing to trial some of our new innovative products.

“For example, when we were re-launching our line of seven dips, we estimated quantities and ordered accordingly, without worrying about minimums,” he explains. “Later, as demand became clearer, and as not all the dip variants sold in equal numbers, we have been able to order different quantities for each variant, and print them all at the same time.”

Having seen examples of what the HP Indigo press could do using HP Indigo SmartStream Mosaic, Epic Foods thought it would be a good technique to use with its dips.

“It’s important to have a strong image out there, and be eye-catching on the shelf,” Hassan says. “The use of variable data for generating images that make each package unique, creates a powerful impact. Our customers love it and have come to expect it from the Epic Brand.”

For Ren-Flex, its experience of the power of digital label printing is creating momentum.

“Our markets have now gone from normal big brand owners to include smaller companies that want to have IML,” Naude concludes. “In the future, we’ll be looking at printing shrink sleeves, wrap-around labels and pressure-sensitive labels as well as IML. I’d love to see another two HP Indigo 20000 Digital Presses in my factory.”

Learn more at

hp.com/go/indigo

