

DuPont Packaging Graphics

ADVANCING FLEXOGRAPHY

Case Story



siba company management: The three siba managing directors, (from left to right) Jörg Ambrosius, Ralph Simon and Mathias Buergin, were able to build up a successful company and strengthen their market position in less than one year.



siba products: A selection of typical products printed by siba customers shows that today's flexo printing technology has attained the highest level of quality. High-quality and sophisticated offset and gravure printing products are now often produced with flexo printing technology.

siba in Lörrach, Germany, relies on maximum quality and speed by choosing DuPont™ Cyrel® FAST technology – with finished printing plates ready in less than one hour

Flexographic printing plates to meet the highest standards

From 0 to 12 in six months: This could be used as a brief description of the successful founding of siba, a flexographic service provider in Lörrach, Germany. This young service company is an absolute entrepreneurial exception. The three founders and current partners in the company, Matthias Buergin, Ralph Simon and Jörg Ambrosius, have brought about a company launch that has yet to be matched. Just six months after getting started, siba already employs a staff of 12 and continues to grow.

Of course, we might wonder how this kind of success comes about. One of the main reasons behind their success is that these three experts already had many years of experience as managers in the flexographic industry and therefore knew exactly what the challenges would be in starting their own business. They made the decision to specialise in specific markets and to focus on providing maximum quality as well as outstanding technology. This technology includes the production of printing plates for flexographic and gravure printing. In addition to producing narrow gravure cylinders for applications such as printing on cables and pharmaceutical capsules, they have also focused on the production of flexo printing plates for the pharmaceutical and medical fields as well as for the cosmetics and food industries. The company's excellent location at the border triangle between France, Germany and Switzerland and in the city of Lörrach, which has a high concentration of pharmaceutical companies, was ideal for this. Today, their main customers include renowned medium-sized to large flexographic printing companies, manufacturers of labels, packaging inserts, flexible packaging, pharmaceutical capsules as well as cable print shops.

Customers trust siba

Today, siba offers end-to-end, customised production of flexographic printing plates, ranging from reproduction and colour management to the physical production of the printing plate. The company has a young, highly motivated team that works to meet the individual requirements of the specific printing motif in question, as well as the printing parameters set by the print shops. Furthermore, siba pays particular attention to the development and simulation of final printing results specific to flexographic printing using the latest proofing technologies. Managing Director Mathias Buergin uses this strategy to provide his customers with a service that they not only like to use but that they also trust. He says: DuPont™ Cyrel® FAST technology is one of the technical factors



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for siba's success. Having already gathered experience in solvent-based processing systems prior to starting the business, Mathias Buergin knew it made sense for siba to rely on Cyrel® technology from DuPont™. Rising quality specifications on the part of customers over the past years and the opportunity to become faster and more flexible led the company to invest in the thermal and solvent-free DuPont™ Cyrel® FAST process immediately after its founding in October 2010. After gathering extensive information and reviewing various solutions while visiting other manufacturing operations, the company opted for the EskoArtwork CDI Spark 4835 flexo plate imager for imaging digital flexo plates up to 1200 x 900 mm, the DuPont™ Cyrel® 1000 EC/LF combination exposure, light finisher and post-exposure unit, as well as the DuPont™ Cyrel® FAST 1000 TD processor, which is solvent-free and offers an extremely fast access time.

Taking the lead with the best technology available

With this combination of efficient, high-precision machinery and the staff's longstanding expertise, siba has achieved a technological advantage in recent months. Mathias Buergin explains: "The thermal process in itself already delivers a high level of quality, but with our expertise and the outstanding support we receive from the technicians at DuPont, we have been able to optimise our production process even further. The high resolution quality in imaging along with optimised exposure and plate development means that it is no longer a problem for us to depict micro text, negative lettering, gradients, direct sequences of positive and negative lettering, and many other quality features that had been reserved for offset and gravure printing until now. We claim to be even better than gravure printing in certain areas." Thus, siba has created the possibility to take data from offset and gravure printing and convert it for flexographic printing, partly as a result of implementing the corresponding software and hardware technology in the preliminary stage.

The company is currently working with four Artpro workstations, where data supplied by customers, generally in Illustrator®, Indesign® or in the native Artpro format, is processed. At siba, proofing is a basic prerequisite prior to exposure. To do so, the company uses the Star Proof solution, which comes from England and facilitates excellent halftone dot simulation. siba also applies its expertise when it comes to the proof. In recent months, employees have developed individual colour profiles for all printing situations, even for specific printing substrates and colours, to ensure that each customer can be certain that they are receiving customised quality.



siba polymer: Today, DuPont™ Cyrel® flexo plates offer a high level of quality equal to that found in offset and gravure printing.

Fast, reliable and clean

For siba, thermal flexographic printing plate production provides numerous advantages when compared with the solvent-based process. The company's location and its ethos mean that it attaches great importance to environmentally friendly production, making DuPont™ Cyrel® FAST technology and the aforementioned components the perfect choice. Mathias Buergin describes the production process: "The solution we have installed is an entirely clean process. No chemicals, no complex handling. In principle, production could even be moved into a living room. The fleece from the DuPont™ Cyrel® FAST system can be disposed of along with normal industrial waste, thereby saving us time and money."

A new plate for the customer in one hour

The most important criteria for the company, however, are the system's speed and high level of flexibility. siba is currently producing approximately 180 m² of flexo printing plates every month. Considering siba's customers primarily use small formats for their production processes, this figure means that the company produces several thousand plate sets. This process requires maximum precision and speed.

Since printing plates are supplied to customers on average twice a day, the speed advantage over a solvent-based system is among the main arguments in favour of this solution. Customers cannot afford to have costly printing machines stopped for longer periods of time while waiting for new printing plates. Mathias Buergin explains the company's competitive advantage: "The configuration we use means we are 60 to 70 per cent faster than a solvent-based solution. We are therefore in a position to bring a new plate to a customer within one hour in emergency situations. That is sometimes less time than it takes to configure the printing machine. And this is precisely the advantage we offer that customers value. The highest level of quality in the shortest amount of time at fair prices."



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