

Change of print

Katrin Hoffmann, PR manager at **DTM Print**, describes her company's products and how they fit in line with the latest demands of both label-makers and consumers alike – be that with technologically advanced printers, or sustainable runs and hardware.

How do labels fit into the purchases of consumers?

Katrin Hoffmann: On nearly all products and packaging you will find a label. Whether it's a safety, part-number, regulation, warning, contents or brand label – there are so many different applications. When purchasing a product, brand labels are the first thing consumers see. Labels that draw our attention to the product. Depending on the design of the product, labels and packaging make a strong team and should complement each other. In addition, labels are a source of information for consumers: labels on cosmetics tell you how to use the product, or the list of ingredients and allergens on food products prevents people buying the wrong product. That, in the end, make foods safer as required by Natasha's Law in the UK from October 2021.

How important is the connected consumer to the future of label and labelling?

Today's consumers are digitally engaged, use digital channels and adopt new technologies on a daily basis. They also connect with one another through apps and social media channels; changing how consumers act and make decisions.

Labels convey information to be part of brand awareness. Consumers now want to interact with brands, and are increasingly willing to make decisions based on the quality of the experience they receive. They share those experiences and will switch to competitors for better experiences. Elements like QR codes on a label allow consumers to obtain more information about the product, its origin and how to use it correctly. It can be used to offer special promotions. Personalised labels, especially, are a fantastic way to win connected consumers.

Another important aspect for manufacturers is traceability. QR codes, digital water marks as well as smart labels – such as RFID labels – help to accomplish just that. In the food and

drink industry, consumers are looking for goods that are organically certified and contribute to a healthier lifestyle. Consumers want to know where the product they are buying was originally made, if it was genetically modified and how it may affect their health. Consumers demand information about ingredients and allergens. Those demands are backed up by food regulations all around the globe that have the safety of consumers in mind.

What are the latest developments in the all-in-one systems from DTM Print?

DTM Print is an international OEM and solution provider for label printing systems. We offer our own printing solutions, such as the DTM CX86e Colour Tag Printer or DTM LF140e Label Finisher, and work closely with well-known manufacturers like Primera Technology and OKI.

Our product portfolio offers great speciality print solutions such as the



DTM Print's range of label printers offers solutions for small to large production runs, providing installations 'tailored' to the customer's requirements.

LX610e Pro – offering full-bleed label printing and any-shape cutting in one process – the direct-to-food printer Eddie and the FX-Series using metallic foiling to give brilliant ‘eye-catching’ results. The product range includes complete label printing and finishing and applicator solutions, providing installations ‘tailored’ to the end user’s requirements. The LX610e Pro by Primera Technology is a full-colour desktop label printer/plotter that combines colour inkjet label printing with a built-in digital die-cutting mechanism. The LX610e Pro comes with the easy-to-use software PTCreat Pro, which can be used with Mac and Windows. PTCreat Pro allows fast production of custom labels of virtually any size or shape all in one process. Unpacking the LX610e to printing your first pre-designed labels is straightforward, with no extra experience needed.

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The DTM LF140e Label Finishing System is a compact system for simple, fast and cost-efficient label processing on-site, for print service providers (PSPs). It can handle all the operations involved, including unwinding the pre-printed rolls, laminating and digital contour cutting, waste matrix removing, slitting and rewinding the finished rolls. Pre-printed rolls with a media width between 100mm and 140mm can be processed making it the ideal addition for all types of roll printers, such as Primera’s LX-Series of inkjet printers or the toner-based OKI Pro1050.

Can you provide a little more technical detail about the various strengths of the different products in conventional and digital print?

DTM Print’s solutions fully complement analogue offset, flexo and thermal transfer processes. The strength and knowledge of our company are digital printing technologies.

The LX-Series of full-colour label printers uses the latest inkjet technology, offering high-quality, razor-sharp prints with 4,800 dpi print resolution, without

horizontal banding; interchangeable dye or pigment inks; and low maintenance, by utilising ultra-high capacity ink cartridges. You can choose from a wide variety of label stock (such as Genuine DTM Label Stock or from other label suppliers) fitting the requirements of each specific application. Depending on the model, the maximum print width is 127mm or 210mm.

Most desktop label printers are slower than the large label presses, but desktop label printers offer, firstly, a small amount of waste – actually none when the design is set up and aligned correctly, [then] you can start producing labels with the first print; secondly, desktop solutions run hands-free when set up. Much less staff training is needed. Depending on what the customer needs (a stack of labels for manual application or a re-wound label roll so that it can then be applied automatically with an applicator) a connected rewinder winds the

printed labels to a perfect roll – all in one process. Or, thirdly, low maintenance cost and time, giving photo-realistic prints and easy label personalisation and serialisation.

OKI’s Pro1050 Label Printer is an example for a dry toner solution. It is based on LED technology, can print in five colours (CMYK plus white), and handles medium-to-large runs of colour labels on demand with a maximum print width of 126mm and a print speed of 152.4mm/s. Labels are water, chemical and UV-resistant. In comparison with traditional laser printers, the Pro1050 uses LED technology with lower maintenance and longer lifetime cycles. LED print heads deliver a precise pixel setting for crisp and brilliant labels. Print engines with LED technology require less space as there are no rotating parts or optics necessary, making the printer smaller, environmentally friendly and energy efficient, using significantly less raw materials in the manufacturing process.

The definite USP in this range of printers is the ability to print white, which opens up endless possibilities and takes creativity to a new level, as transparent or coloured label materials are no longer a problem.

How can print systems be more sustainable?

Reduction of physical and environmental footprint is important. Our DTM CX86e Colour Tag Printer is the world’s smallest LED dry toner colour label printer using digital LED technology. LED print heads have no moving parts, significantly less raw materials are consumed in the manufacturing process, and a space-saving design and significantly longer service life are achieved. With a size of 198×195×380mm [W×H×D], and a weight of 9.5kg, the CX86e is more compact, robust and reliable than other printers in its class. Saving resources and energy is and always will be very important.

It’s a much-needed development that toner-based printers are manufactured that way, saving energy in the printing process itself. Another development that’s worth mentioning is the new polymer-based toner, which allows [for] more flexibility when using various media, as well as lowering the fuser temperature that, in turn, saves energy while printing.

Our inkjet printers, such as the LX600e and LX610e Pro, are eco-friendly and sustainable with very low energy consumption, low weight by using less material, and use non-toxic ink supplies as well as 100%-recyclable components. The major advantage of inkjet printers is that you don’t have a lot of waste – actually none, when the design is set up and aligned correctly. And with on-demand printing, only the quantity of labels needed are produced – [meaning] less stock and less waste, and a huge cost saving.

What are the biggest trends you are seeing in the market now and mid-term?

Personalisation will continue to be a huge trend. It offers added value, and strengthens the connection between product and consumer, and increases loyalty. Bespoke products lead to more sales as they stand out from the crowd. The second development that comes to mind is sustainability. Consumers want to know if the goods are environmentally friendly, if energy and resources are saved, if you can recycle the packaging, and if non-toxic inks and materials are used. ●

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