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SOWING THE SEEDS OF SUCCESS

The Real Flower Company was looking for a way to put its potted flower plants in the right light by printing its own high quality labels on-site. The company found the ideal solution in the DTM CX86e colour tag printer.



The Real Flower Company is all about luxury bouquets created from exquisitely scented roses, English flowers, herbs and foliage grown on its own English and Kenyan Fairtrade and sustainable farms.

Owner of The Real Flower Company is Rosebie Morton, who founded the company in 1999 with a vision to grow and sell beautiful scented flowers, whilst placing provenance, sustainability, and good business ethics into all the company does. She first started growing scented garden roses in the walled garden at her family farm in Hampshire.

Unlike most flowers and roses, which often have the scent gene removed, these flowers have their scent gene firmly intact – just as nature intended and they smell divine. They are ideal for any occasion and will be a display of beauty and scent.

FRESH AS A DAISY

On its website The Real Flower company says about the flowers: 'We have worked for years to grow and source everything we use in the bouquets that we make and sell, placing scent, provenance and quality at the heart of all we do. Our flowers are a bit like our family, we care for them as we would a loved one'.

Robert Marsden is the farm manager and he and his team take care of each and every bloom growing on the farm. He and Rosebie judge when the flowers are ready. They are then handpicked to ensure freshness and optimum scent and passed to florists at the farm in Hampshire, or at one of two London shops where they become the bouquets, arrangements and displays for homes, businesses and events.

Over the years The Real Flower Company has grown. Besides the farm in Hampshire, its Sweet Peas are grown at a second farm in Chichester. To offer customers wonderful, scented flowers year round, the company also partners with a Fairtrade flower farm in Kenya. Both farms share the same values and vision 'to grow beautiful flowers whilst also caring for the planet, environment, and community'.

COME UP ROSES

Besides cut flowers, The Real Flower Company also sells plants in pots, such as rose bushes. And for those pots it was looking for a printing solution to produce own labels. The company found it in the DTM CX86e colour tag printer from DTM Print. In the past, it sold the plants without any information. 'We also hand wrote plant names on loop and lock labels which was not very professional,' explained Robert. The labels



offered very limited information about the plant, sometimes fell off and were lost. He continued, 'It was difficult to promote a plant without any data shown unless the plant was in peak bloom, which minimised selling opportunities.' That had to change.

The printing solution that the company was looking for needed to produce water and UV resistant labels in a cost and time effective manner. The CX86e is a dry toner printer featuring digital LED technology. Meaning the printed output is pin sharp, waterproof, UV, as well as chemical resistant, and therefore very durable – perfect for the use The Real Flower Company intended.

The CX86e is a very compact solution with a footprint of just 20 x 38 cm and a height of 19.5 cm. Because of its small size and low weight of just 9.5 kg the printer can be used almost anywhere and is easy to move around the site. With this LED dry toner printer full colour prints can be produced within seconds directly at the farm and the team can print stakes, loops and labels for all the potted plants. Robert is happy with the result explaining, 'The label shows an image and a description of the plant and how to grow it and provides all the information the buyer needs when buying a new plant, which helps a lot with sales.'

BUMPER CROP

The labels adhere to the pots well and are used indoors and outdoors. It is important that they last a season, as it might take a while to sell a potted plant. DTM Print suggested the PermaTec line of reliable outdoor resistant material, that is made of a mixture of sand and polyethylene. It is available as labels with a strong adhesive as well as different shapes of stakes, tags and hangers without adhesive. Due to its resistance to scratches, sun, rain and frost, Permatec is the perfect material for horticulture, garden centres, nurseries or growers such as The Real Flower Company.

Spring, when the majority of the plants are potted up, is the key time for the CX86e. Then it produces 10 to 100 labels at a time, leading to approximately 1500 to 2500 pots, and

therefore labels, per year. With the CX86e, special attention was paid to simple maintenance. Only a three colour toner cartridge that lasts for thousands of prints needs to be changed. This eliminates the need to stock individual toner cartridges and the device is ready to use again in just a few seconds. Further components of the printer such as drum unit, transfer belt and fuser have been designed for a long service life with more than 100,000 prints. Those can also be replaced by Robert and his team. Shortly after the purchase of the printer in February 2022, DTM Print visited the farm to help with training and answer specific questions about label design and use of images.

The CX86e is supplied with NiceLabel Free (DTM Edition) for simple creations of label designs or upgrade for data import and variable data printing. The printer can also be used with other popular label design software such as BarTender and graphic software such as Adobe Illustrator and other Windows applications. In addition, the printer comes with a three year warranty.

GREEN FINGERS

The Real Flower Company works hard to create the best possible sustainable business practices and today operates a carbon negative and climate positive business, taking pride in its 'LEAF' mark and Fairtrade accredited farms. The CX86e makes a small contribution to that as this dry toner printer uses the latest digital LED technology. That means that as LED printheads have no moving parts, unlike the classic laser technology, significantly less raw materials are consumed in the manufacturing process, and a space saving design and a significantly longer service life are achieved, saving resources and energy in the process.

Robert is delighted, saying, 'We are already selling a greater number of plants which we feel is maybe down to the fact that the customer sees on the label what the flower will look like, and has all the information regarding looking after them. It also makes us look a lot more professional.'