

JACK SCHLOESSER RECEIVES DUPONT LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD & CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF CONTRIBUTION TO THE FLEXO INDUSTRY

A simple comment in a Dupont meeting room resulted in a special award for lifetime flexo contributor Jack Schloesser. According to Raymond Bodwell, DuPont Marketing Manager, the evolution of the award was fairly spontaneous. "We (DuPont internal) were meeting in January to discuss theme, content and invitation list for the March Tradeshop Council Meeting. As we were going through the invitees, someone commented that Jack has been involved in TSC since the very beginning. From there a free range discussion took place about his involvement and contributions to the industry."

Another member commented that he shouldn't go unrecognized, so as a group, DuPont decided to honor Jack with a first ever Lifetime Achievement Award.

DuPont's Tradeshop Council annual meeting has been attended by Jack since its start 21 years ago. This year, the council was held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida from March 26-28th. During the dinner meeting, with some assistance from Jack's son Jeff, DuPont surprised Jack with the award. He was taken aback, but graciously accepted.



(from L to R) Raymond Bodwell, Bob Zoelle, Eric Marsh and Lisa DiGate of DuPont present Jack (center) with award

Jack comments, "I was completely surprised by it, but it means a lot to be recognized by DuPont." Back at OEC, we were thrilled for Jack to be rewarded for all of his hard work, dedication and contribution to the progress of the flexo industry. Fifty successful years in one industry is truly a great accomplishment. Congratulations Jack!

JACK SCHLOESSER'S JOURNEY

Jack Schloesser was just a young kid when he started working at OEC. His dad, Carl, had been in the engraving business for over twenty years and had just taken sole ownership of the Oshkosh Engraving Company. Fresh from Ripon College, Jack dug right in and started learning the trade from the ground up. He first worked as an apprentice in the camera department under a journeyman. At that time, it was a requirement to join the union if you were working in certain positions.



Vintage OEC logo 1972-1988



The person who makes a success of living is the one who sees his goal steadily and aims for it unswervingly. That is dedication.

– Cecil B. DeMille

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A durometer is the tester used since 1907 to determine the hardness of a wide variety of rubber and soft plastics. Photopolymer and rubber printing plate hardness are determined using the Shore test. It is an international standard for measuring the hardness of most non-metallic materials. There are twelve (12) Durometer types that exist but photopolymer and rubber plate hardness is measured with a Type A. Plate hardness is expressed in terms of Shore A, such as 55 Shore A. The scale range of a Type A Durometer is 0-100. A plate at 30-50 Shore A could be considered a soft plate, with plates measuring 50 and above being medium to hard. A .067" plate at 70 Shore A would be considered hard. Plate thickness will influence the reading, based on the same material type being measured. Thicker is softer (lower number) and thinner is harder (higher number). Finished plates and not raw material are most often referred to when referencing Shore A readings.

Photopolymer plates with a lower Shore A reading (softer) will provide improved ink coverage on substrates that do not have a smooth surface. A softer plate will conform to an uneven substrate surface without the need for overpressure. A higher density plate mount tape should be used when running a soft plate. This will allow the plate to "do the work". Photopolymer printing plates softer than 40 Shore A are typically used in corrugated printing, due to the nature of the

material surface on which they print.

Hard plates require more plate-to-substrate impression pressure than softer plates to achieve good ink coverage on substrates that do not have a smooth surface. A hard plate may not allow complete ink coverage without added pressure.

Even with additional pressure, the coverage could be less than desirable. Overpressure will result in premature plate wear, the appearance of over-impressed copy, and dirty plates and print.

Photopolymer printing plates that fall within the range of 40-65 Shore A are probably the most common used by Flexographic printers. Depending on press operating parameters and print requirements, a medium to hard plate will meet or surpass most printing requirements.

Hard plates will provide the best print results under certain conditions, when run in combination with the appropriate compressible plate mount tape. If questions arise, consult with your OEC Graphics sales representative to determine the plate type that will best suit your needs.



JACK SCHLOESSER'S JOURNEY

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Jack worked his way through the business, spending time directly in production positions, then moved into the office where he worked on billing and administrative duties. He was learning the business from the ground up.

At 27 years old, the reigns were put in Jack's hands upon his father's passing. He believed he was ready to handle the situation with his well-rounded knowledge of the company. Jack had a vision to

pursue technology and integrate it virtually from the start. In 1972, it was clear that the Oshkosh Engraving Company had outgrown its facility on State Street in Oshkosh. A 20,000 square foot facility was built and the name of the company was changed to OEC Graphics, Inc., reflecting the new direction of the company which involved more than just engravings.

One of the first major additions to the



Jack and son Jeff pose in renovated lobby circa 1992.

new building was a photopolymer platemaking unit, brand new technology in the early 70s. Later that decade, OEC went on to purchase some smaller companies in order to add services and increase their customer base. This included the purchase of Wisconsin Typographers, Graphics Industries and Paragon. Once OEC's art department was strengthened, Jack looked to purchase one of the first color scanning and pagination systems available in 1980. At that time he was making sales calls all over the region as well as running the company. He knew it was time to hire some outside sales representatives. Slowly, Jack was building the business up to become an industry leader.

The largest move Jack made for the company came in the early 90s. Stork was considering the sale of their seamless photopolymer sleeve product which had not been fully developed for commercial use. A few companies were vying for the acquisition, OEC being one of them. Jack explains, "I saw a great opportunity for the company to set ourselves apart in the marketplace with an exclusive flexographic product that showed great potential." Stork decided to grant OEC the rights to the

seamless sleeve which OEC trademarked "Seamex®". OEC spent a number of years in research and development of Seamex, finally making it suitable for commercial use. Today, over 50,000 Seamex sleeves have been delivered to the marketplace worldwide.

With Seamex came a 16,000 square foot addition to accommodate the new manufacturing line. Throughout the 1990s, OEC continued to increase capabilities, adding a second line of Seamex, digital proofing and digital output devices. By this time, OEC now had 100 employees and was enjoying record growth. On a digital fast-track, Jack's interest was directed towards making the plate and sleeve-making process entirely digital. "We developed our own coating to be used in the photographic laser process;

OEC Graphics' expansion is already

By Dave Gray
of the News-Observer

OEC Graphics, 555 W. Waukau Ave., Oshkosh, expanded its second expansion in two years last summer and is already filled to the brim.

OEC Graphics added on 16,000 square feet of space for offices and manufacturing area. The 8,000-square-foot new area and the manufacturing area are already filled.

In 1992, OEC added 10,000 square feet to the building to house a seamless printing sleeve system that the company purchased in 1991.

In the past year the firm has almost doubled its employment to about 100 people, and president Jack Schiewasser keeps looking for more-qualified employees.

"We started the latest expansion in November of 1991 and finished in April of 1992," Schiewasser said of the 16,000-square-foot addition. "We needed room for art expansion."

"We also needed room for manufacturing in order to be cutting-edge."

putting devices.

A flat plate making system and a laser drill system were recently added.

The firm also purchased Graphics Industries, Inc. of Appleton, an offset pre-press company.

OEC acquired the rights to the Seamex seamless sleeve system in 1991.

Schiewasser said he had been considering producing a laser rubber roller like the one produced by the Stark Co. in Charlotte, N.C.

In 1989 he heard that Stark was considering a sale and took a plane down to Charlotte four days later. Within two weeks he had a signed contract for the business and moved it to Oshkosh, building a 10,000-square-foot addition in seven weeks.

Schiewasser said the new product moves OEC Graphics into an internationally respected position in the industry.

OEC goes with flow to pagination

By Dave Gray
of the News-Observer

Oshkosh OEC Graphics Inc. has been able to "go with the flow" and produce more than 100,000 color proofing and pagination systems for its customers.

The firm entered into the color pagination market in 1986. The first color pagination system was developed by the firm and was the first color pagination system to be used in the industry.

OEC Graphics, 555 W. Waukau Ave., Oshkosh, Wis. Founded — 1912. Employment — 117. Principal — Seamex manufacturing, composition, photo engraving plates, photopolymer plates, offset negatives, and scanned color separations.



then searched the world for a direct-to-plate laser unit that would accommodate both flat plates and Seamex sleeves." When Jack discovered the missing link he was looking for, he traveled to Germany to view Schepers' Digilas laser. Shortly after, in the spring of 1997, the Digilas was shipped from Germany to OEC's doorstep.

OEC Graphics became one of the first companies in the U.S. to install a laser unit and the only U.S. company to have a laser unit that accepted sleeves. As demand increased for a completely digital workflow, OEC added a second Digilas laser in 1998. In 2001, OEC added a Creo laser and a DuPont Fast processor, which significantly expanded the digital plate workflow.

Now that OEC was positioned as a digital prepress powerhouse, Jack began looking for other ways to expand. In 2002, he acquired CAD Coat, LLC, a Chicago based prepress supplier to the flexographic, corrugated and offset coating plate markets. That same year, Jack brought his other company, Horizon Color, a corrugated prepress supplier, under the OEC umbrella to become OEC Graphics, Inc.-Appleton. OEC opened a facility in Greensboro, North Carolina and acquired Imaging International (Deerfield Beach, Florida) in 2003 and in 2004, acquired Image I.T. (Appleton, Wisconsin) now OEC IT. The following year OEC purchased screen printer Tec Graphics (Neenah, Wisconsin). This series of acquisitions and consolidations was the result of Jack's goal of strengthening the corporation while continuing to add new capabilities.

Aside from acquisitions, OEC has branched out into other areas. Seeing a growth opportunity, Jack purchased a Durst Lambda large format digital output device in 1999. Since that time, OEC has developed a



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full-fledged display group division with a number of digital printing devices. OEC has also entered into North American manufacturing and distribution contracts with Polymount International and Gerber. This has allowed OEC exclusively to sell Polymount's Twinlock® self-adhesive sleeves and Plate Cleaner products as well as Gerber's Sector blanket cutting system.



In 2007, OEC Graphics has nearly 250 employees and has diversified into a prepress and digital printing leader known for its technological innovation as well as the ability to provide all services under one corporate umbrella. At 70 years old, Jack still spends his days at the company implementing his vision.

Although he may take a little more time for himself, he has no interest in retirement. As Jack explains it, "There are just too many exciting things going on in the industry today. I want to be around as long as possible to see it." ■



E-SURVEY REQUEST

In October, OEC will be sending out a customer satisfaction survey to a select group of customers. When you receive this e-survey, we urge you to fill out the information and send it back at your earliest convenience. OEC is truly interested in what you have to say so we can use that information to improve. Help us in our quest for excellence!