CORPORATE

VISUAL INSIGHTS

OEC-IT MERGES WITH APPLETON AFTER MAJOR RENOVATIONS COMPLETED

OEC's gradual reorganization became complete in late November when the 35 employees from OEC-IT made the official move to OEC Appleton, increasing the number of employees in that facility to 57. Now identified simply as OEC Appleton, these two groups have joined their unique capabilities to be a more cost-efficient, streamlined facility.

OEC Appleton's renovation was a four-month project in which 15,000 square feet of space was converted. The building was virtually opened up and divided with modular partitions which allowed for the flexibility needed to house additional departments. Employees gave their input on how to best utilize the space available for their department in order to position equipment in relationship to data ports. The result is an impressive functional layout, merging office space with manufacturing.

Another major part of the renovation included the installation of T8 energy efficient lighting throughout the entire plant along with state of the art heating and air conditioning systems managed by computerized digital management systems. Outside, OEC constructed a storm water retention pond to manage its own storm water runoff and planted hundreds of trees and shrubs. Lou Kiefer, OEC's corporate facilities manager who headed up the renovations states, "With OEC's commitment to the environment, the company will do our part to improve the planet for generations to come while continually increasing profits through substantial energy savings."

OEC AND WRE/COLORTECH ENTER INTO STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

OEC Graphics and WRE/ColorTech announced in 2008 that they will be expanding upon their current business relationship, forming an integrated partnership. This partnership will give OEC Graphics' packaging customers a direct link to WRE's gravure engraving expertise, while WRE's customers will have access to OEC's Seamex® ITR photopolymer sleeves and digital flexographic plates, as well as Twinlock self-adhesive sleeves, asset management solutions and display graphics.

WRE/ColorTech

INSIDE

Ask Dick!
TECHNICAL SPECIALIST

DESIGN SHORTFALLS CAUSE REGISTRATION CHALLENGES

GO

How many times have you as a printer criticized a design on press because it was causing color-to-color registration or other printing issues? Well, you're not alone, as this "after-the-fact" type of critique most likely happens on a daily basis all around the country. It would be beneficial to all parties involved beginning with design creation, to thoroughly understand the capabilities and limitations of the Flexographic printing process and the presses on which these designs will print. Far too often, by the time the printer reviews the design he is to reproduce, it has already been approved by the end customer. Changes are difficult or not able to be made. Granted, press capabilities can vary from printer-to-printer depending on their equipment. More and more people are realizing that, in order to achieve the highest level of image reproduction at press, effective communication is essential from the onset of the project.

Many times the prepress provider, in review of a file upon receipt, will make suggestions to the printer to consider for change or for presentation of suggested changes to their customer. This review often occurs at the printer prior to the trade shop receiving the file. Although suggestions for improvement cannot always be implemented it is always worth the attempt.

Implementing even subtle design changes can improve productivity, reduce spoilage, eliminate reproduction frustrations, eliminate additional "after-the-fact" expense and result in a much more satisfied customer.

When the job goes to press the following challenges can occur:

• Insufficient keyline width to trap and hide underlying colors.

• Line copy is made up of multiple screened colors causing blurred edges.

• A font style or size may not be best suited for the application.

• There is an inadequate amount of trap or hold-back/cut-back.

• UPC bar codes are printing in cross web direction.

• Keeping screens printing clean; improper screen values.

OEC AND WRE/COLORTECH continued

"This integrated partnership will be an on-going process, but will ultimately give both companies opportunities for long-term, sustainable growth," said Jack Schloesser, President of OEC Graphics. With their combined experience in excess of 150 years, OEC Graphics and WRE will work together to service customers with multiple needs while simplifying projects through a single unified digital workflow. OEC and WRE will now have additional capacity to service packaging converters and consumer product companies.

"Our companies share core values and complementary services and locations; we want to capitalize on these synergies," said Brent MacKay, President of WRE. The objective of this partnership is to create a seamless, integrated infrastructure that instills confidence in both OEC and WRE's abilities to meet clients' needs and exceed their expectations. If your company has a need for gravure services, please contact your sales representative to discuss how OEC can provide both flexo and gravure products seamlessly.

OEC RENOVATIONS continued

Along with the building renovation came the merging of services. OEC-IT was known for their creative design, packaging prepress and commercial page production, digital proofing and color, film output, CTP ready files and the OEC asset management product line. OEC Appleton is the corrugated prepress leg of the company, offering proofs, digital photopolymer and liquid photopolymer plates as well as digital and conventional corrugated platemounting. Distinctly different, they have already proven to be complementary. OEC-IT work can now be initiated and finished under one roof while OEC Appleton gains increased capabilities in the front end portion of projects.

The merging of employees has also been met with great enthusiasm. According to Jim Fulcer, OEC Appleton General Manager, "The two groups have worked together on transition projects which allowed for collaboration and the chance to get to know each other, learning more about the services and capabilities each bring to the table. The sales team has also pulled together, sharing leads and working to develop our messaging to the marketplace." OEC customers that have had a chance to tour the newly remodeled facility have all given positive reviews. Although aesthetics are appreciated, customers agree that speed to market is their bigger concern. From all accounts, the new OEC Appleton is headed on the right track.

The OEC Appleton front lobby and open-concept operator workstations

Construction at OEC Appleton

OEC Wins Golden ADDY®

OEC Graphics was honored with a Golden ADDY® award in February for our complete redesign of the ASP (Armament Systems and Procedures) catalog. The goal of the catalog was to educate the customer on new and innovative products from ASP while increasing the page count from 40 to 112. The impressive catalog has a clean, organized design which makes ordering simple. OEC worked with Studio 44 (DePere, WI) on photography and the piece was printed by Castle Pierce (Oshkosh, WI). OEC is pleased to be a part of the successful project and also congratulates ASP on the honor. The ADDY Awards recognize excellence in advertising throughout Northeastern Wisconsin.

OEC INCREASES OUTPUT WITH LARGER FORMAT UV INKJET

OEC's Display Group has upgraded to a new UV Inkjet Flatbed digital press. This press doubles the resolution of the previous press to a stunning 1200 dpi with faster press speeds, opening us up to a broader market in which to compete. Customers can expect cleaner graphics with increases in OEC's throughput. John Sweeterman, Display Graphics Manager, states "OEC has been successful in penetrating the POP, retail, event and exhibit, trade show display and vehicle and outdoor advertising markets. This addition to our digital printing arsenal will keep us competitive within the marketplace." OEC's UV Inkjet is installed and has been running smoothly on a variety of large format projects.

VISUAL INSIGHTS

Trade Show Updates

IFA 2009

OEC Graphics' Display Group recently attended IFA 2009 (International Franchise Association) in San Diego, February 15-16. As members of IFA, OEC attended the show last year and found that the franchise owners were very responsive to our booth. OEC's Display Sales and Marketing Manager, John Sweeterman explains "We are an ideal partner to the franchise industry with full digital printing, asset management and distribution capabilities. OEC is very well positioned to help franchisors control branding and graphic consistency through the use of our digital asset management tools as well as offering print on demand or inventory managed programs for our clients." This combination of services has put OEC well ahead of our competition in cost effective retail graphics programs for franchise clients.

FFTA 2009 Annual Forum and INFO*FLEX

OEC is preparing for another of the Flexo industry's best annual sales and networking opportunities at FFTA's 2009 Annual Forum and INFO*FLEX Exhibition. This year the event is being held in Orlando, May 3-6. OEC will be featuring eco-friendly Twinlock self-adhesive platemounting sleeves and Plate Cleaners as well as our signature Seamex ITR sleeves and Digital Facilities Management program. Please visit us at **booth 323/422** if you plan to attend.