



HOW OEC GRAPHICS IS STILL THE LEADER IN DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

OEC's continued leadership in the pre-media industry is based heavily on our strategy to offer cutting edge technologies to provide a competitive advantage to our customers. Here are some reasons why OEC Graphics is still the superior choice for your organization if digital technology is important to you.

We Pioneered The Printing Sleeve

OEC has had a decade-long jumpstart on the competition with our Seamex® sleeve manufacture, which was launched in the late 1980's. We researched and developed our own sleeve coatings and manufacturing process and brought it successfully to market. Always looking to the future, we saw the potential for digital ITR sleeves and made it a reality with our first laser purchase in 1997, introducing digital flexo imaging to North America. Since that time, we have purchased and upgraded numerous digital laser units to refine the performance of our digital Seamex sleeves.

OEC Offers The Most Solutions

To continue providing the technical solutions that offer the greatest competitive advantage to our customers, we have invested in additional product lines. Recently, OEC has added a complement of pre-manufactured options to our ITR portfolio. OEC continues to offer, by far, the widest range of ITR solutions in the industry, including: Cyrel® Round Thin and Classic, as well as Flint's Nyloflex ITR both Thin and Classic. In addition, OEC is a premier installation of DuPont's FAST Round system, a solventless processing application modeled after the FAST thermal plate technology. As the largest provider of FAST facilities management installations, we recognize this program as being uniquely suited to deliver this technology press-side. This unique breadth of ITR solutions sets OEC Graphics ahead and apart from all of our competitors.

We Are The First HD Flexo Certified Company In North America

OEC has been recognized by EskoArtwork as HD Flexo Certified. This certification is only offered to those companies that have passed EskoArtwork's strenuous HD Flexo certification tests. EskoArtwork's HD Flexo competence center in Itzehoe, Germany tests and validates submitted print samples before certifying HD Flexo users. OEC has worked hard to integrate HD technology into both our plates and ITR sleeves. We're honored to have received this recognition for our award-winning HD technology.

Fully Integrated Technology

The OEC-IT™ Workflow solution is the backbone of the business relationship with OEC's partners. We provide this product as part of most partnership agreements with our customers. The OEC-IT™ Workflow solution provides exceptionally flexible and powerful functionality.



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Ask Dick: pH

When on-site at printers, I am sometimes asked the question by press personnel, "What is pH anyway?" It is, simply, a numeric value indicating the degree of acidity or alkalinity of a water-based ink or solution. The entire range is from 0-14, 7 being neutral. A value between 0-7 is acid and 7-14 is alkaline. The typical pH operating range for water-based inks is 8.5 - 9.5.

It is important that the pH of water-based printing ink be monitored and controlled to within the ink suppliers' recommended operating range. The amines, or alkali compounds in the ink that raise the pH, solubilize and maintain the re-solubility (ability to rewet) of the resins. Most of these resins have a viscosity curve that is indirectly proportionate to pH. As the pH decreases, the viscosity increases.

and air circulation around the printing unit(s).

If the pH is too low, anilox roll drying-in will be affected, the ink will not release as readily from the cells of the anilox roll and from the plate to the substrate. Dirty printing can result. A decrease in color strength will also occur.

It becomes more important to monitor and control the pH of water-based inks when the ambient air temperature or the temperature of the ink increases. This is because the amine(s) have a higher evaporation rate than water and flash off more readily. The need exists to check pH more frequently under these conditions.



Depending on the ink system used, the type of amine used to maintain the pH could be different. Some amines are significantly more stable than others. Use of the more stable amines in a system will help to determine the frequency of checking the pH. The ink supplier can provide valuable input here.

As pH increases, the ink dries slower; as pH decreases, the drying rate increases. Especially with screened images, it could be advantageous to run the pH near the high end of the recommended operating range to maintain the clean print of the highlight dots in the screened image. Other factors influencing the pH operating level could be press run speed, print cylinder circumference/print repeat (dwell time from inking until ink transfer), ink trap,

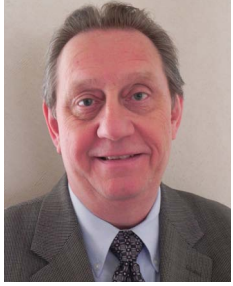
Many types of pH meters exist from a variety of manufacturers.

Last, but not least, if the pH is not controlled to within the recommended operating range, end-use properties of the ink may not be attained or maintained, resulting in product failure in the field, rejections or claims.

The availability and use of a pH meter at press side, reading to two decimal places and a variance range of +/-0.01, is a necessity.

MARSHALL HOGENSON JOINS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TEAM

OEC Graphics is happy to announce the addition of Marshall Hogenson to our Business Development Team. Marshall



comes to OEC after an 11-year tenure as Director of Brand Owner Solutions and Global Accounts Sales Manager at EskoArtwork. He was responsible for the sale and

commercial support of Esko software, CDIs and Kongsberg tables.

In his role, Marshall became familiar with OEC and was impressed by the entrepreneurial spirit and progressiveness of the organization. When approached to join OEC, Marshall felt that after his years with Esko he was ready for a new challenge. As he shares, "It is exciting to be a part of a dynamic group pulling together to grow the company further as we move into its second century. The honesty and integrity of OEC Graphics also influenced my decision to join the company."

Marshall will be responsible for generating growth opportunities within the pre-media and platemaking segments of the company. He has broad and deep industry knowledge and a sales style that focuses on business, not products. According to Marshall, "My goal is to understand a client's business and their needs, opportunities and challenges while finding a solution that drives out cost and grows revenue." CEO Jack Schloesser has confidence in Marshall. "He brings over 25 years of successful business experience to OEC and will be a great asset to our company and our customers."

Marshall will be based out of his home in Prior Lake, Minnesota where he lives with his wife, Terri. He has a grown son, Ben, who is engaged to be married. He enjoys live music and theater, ice hockey, baseball, cooking, traveling and boating in his spare time. Despite his current residence, Marshall is originally from Racine and is definitely a Packer fan.

Marshall can be contacted via email at marshall.hogenson@oecgraphics.com or directly at **612-280-8472**.

HOW OEC GRAPHICS IS STILL THE LEADER IN DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY *(Continued From Cover)*

These custom-build solutions include:

- Order entry
- Estimating
- Plate usage and order/reorder status
- Sleeve tracking (location and condition)
- Real-time project tracking – prepress, plates, mounting
- Artwork approvals (PDF)
- Archival of graphic elements (packaging artwork, templates, etc.)
- Complete job history

OEC's packaging workflow management solutions are fully customized and integrated software packages that allow for greater control over a company's packaging and graphic assets. These systems reduce errors and time by streamlining the packaging management process. OEC has invested heavily in the tools and the talent to be a resource

through the entire supply chain, which allows us to be the most effective partner with which to ensure a successful launch and future of a brand or project.

Custom Technical Partnerships

For nearly 100 years, OEC Graphics has been leading the way in delivering cutting-edge innovation to converters and printers. Our formula for success is simple; partnership and appropriate technology. Our success has come through a true partnership with the client; your success is our success. As an independent company, we have relentlessly chased the most advanced technology and customized it to your specific needs. Whether our customization comes in the form of product technologies, delivery systems or software solutions, OEC's successful customized technical partnerships start with one thing...listening.

So, let's start the process. Listen, create, deliver.

OEC RECEIVES PRINTING INDUSTRIES OF WISCONSIN TOP AWARD

OEC received three awards for outstanding achievement in the 11th Annual Graphics Excellence Awards, a statewide printing competition hosted by the Printing Industries of Wisconsin, the state's trade association for printing and the graphic arts.

Competing against nearly 800 exceptional entries, OEC Graphics received the Best of Category – Digital Large Format. OEC also received an Award of Excellence for Wigwam American Wool Wood Display, a recyclable Point-of-Purchase materials piece. The company was recognized with another Award of Excellence in Specialty Printing for our promotional ChromeDomz Logo Sign, a customizable marketing piece developed by OEC. John Sweeterman, Display Graphics Sales Manager shares, "It's an honor to be recognized by the industry as a company that produces top quality, award winning materials."



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TRADE SHOW UPDATES

OEC will be exhibiting at the upcoming FTA INFO*FLEX 2011 taking place at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis, May 2-3.

We look forward to discussing what OEC's Custom Technical Partnerships can offer customers. We also want to update attendees on the latest offerings we have in HD, plate and sleeve products. If you plan to attend INFO*FLEX, please stop by our **booth 1016/1018** and say hello.

FORUM
2011



SETTING THE PACE FOR
FLEXO PACKAGING EXCELLENCE

OEC
ECO
FLEXO PRINTING
SOLUTIONS



OEC recently returned from exhibiting at Walmart's Sustainable Packaging Exposition, April 12-13 in Bentonville, AR. Participants have to pass Walmart's rigorous standards to be accepted as exhibitors. OEC is proud to have been invited back to the exposition to educate Consumer Packaged Goods companies regarding Twinlock® and Seamex® and how sustainable products can improve scorecards by as much as 5%.

OEC SHARES IN ADDY AWARD SUCCESS

OEC is happy to announce that our customer, Imaginasium, was awarded gold and silver ADDY awards for sales kit packaging developed for Mitsukan. OEC helped engineer and print the sales kit for the Mitsukan brand. ADDY awards are given out by the Fox River Ad Club, a professional trade association serving the advertising and communications community of Northeastern Wisconsin. Their gold-level ADDY award will go on to compete at the American Advertising Federation's 8th District level, competing against firms from Wisconsin, Illinois, Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. We congratulate Imaginasium on these awards, as well as the additional 11 they received including Best of Show – Interactive.