



visual insights

WINTER 2023

Introducing SEAMEX® E3 OEC ITR ELASTOMER SLEEVES

OEC Graphics is excited to reveal our newly expanded ITR product line, SEAMEX® E3. OEC recently received delivery of the new AKK Cosmos Flexo 2300 in our Oshkosh facility and production of ITR elastomer sleeves has begun. Joining our ITR SEAMEX photopolymer sleeve line, we are excited to offer a complementary alternative to OEC's original SEAMEX product with the latest in ITR elastomer technology.

Choosing the AKK Cosmos Flexo unit was based on several factors. AKK, based in Germany, was able to build the model exactly to our specific requirements. Customizing our laser build fit with OEC's philosophy of remaining innovative to fit the needs of each of our unique customers.

Like OEC, AKK is also a family-owned, multi-generational business which aligns with the business model we represent. The company not only manufactures lasers, but they will also repair elastomer units of other manufacturers, which is a testament to their expertise in this market. Lastly, the AKK laser itself represents the latest in elastomer technology, boasting a high tech, dual beam which is twice as fast as some other models in the industry.

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INTRODUCING

SEAMEX® E3
ELASTOMER

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(SEAMEX E3, continued)

The manufacturing of ITR elastomer sleeves is based on precision within file preparation, however, the unit does much of the hard work. Large files stored on the cloud are manipulated to proper print requirements, handling up to 5080 dpi. OEC can control the height of the dot on the machine and determine how far down the rubber is ablated. DLE (direct laser engraving) is a one-person operation within a contained unit, the AKK simply ablated off the rubber based on specifications. A chemical-free, environmentally-friendly solution is used to wash the sleeve when it is finished. The results are seamless sleeves that are ideal for high-speed press runs.

**Possibly the biggest question remains:
How does SEAMEX E3 (elastomer) compare
with SEAMEX (photopolymer)?**

While both are seamless ITR products that run well on high-speed presses with no plate lift, they do have distinct differences. A SEAMEX photopolymer sleeve has the ability to put cushion under it, which makes it ideal for higher print quality work, including vignettes.

A SEAMEX E3 elastomer sleeve allows for an adjustable undercut or adjustable shoulders (dot), which can help rubber sleeves print extreme highlights. The rubber also makes it resistant to

scratching. Both sleeves bases can be reused, but SEAMEX E3 does prove to have a longer shelf life due to its lack of chemical processing, ability to be ground down multiple times, and also have a partial layer of rubber added back to the sleeve, which minimizes the material needed for the remake. All of these factors make SEAMEX E3 a slightly more economical choice, however the original SEAMEX is best for print quality needed for high-end work.

With over 30 years of ITR sleeve manufacture, it made sense for OEC to add SEAMEX E3 elastomer sleeves to our product line. According to Jason Nelson, OEC's Corporate Director of Operations, "We are focusing on enhancing the SEAMEX E3 product to outperform all previous expectations of printing with an elastomer sleeve. We will accomplish this by leveraging our long history of manufacturing photopolymer SEAMEX products. We look forward to expanding into the market with our newest seamless technology." OEC's expertise in this area will allow us to bring a customized elastomer product to the next level, while continuing to offer our proven SEAMEX ITR sleeve. When considering which sleeve is best for your company's needs, please contact your OEC sales representative for further discussion or call 224-828-1266 to speak with an OEC representative.



[TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT]

OEC Introduces Market Segment Leaders

CHANGE CAN DO AN ORGANIZATION GOOD. When Rich Rogals, OEC's new VP of Business Development, saw the distinct markets OEC serves, he envisioned a sales structure to capitalize on talents and strengthen the group. Rogals chose three individuals who had the business acumen within their specialties and would welcome the idea of leading and representing those in their market segments. Those individuals are Larry Davis as Flexo Segment Leader, Scott Felty as CPC (Consumer Product Company) Leader and Andrea Manor as Corrugated Segment Leader.

» **SCOTT FELTY**
CPC SEGMENT LEADER



Scott Felty's interest in printing started in a high school class, which later led him to UW Stout where he received his Bachelor of Science degree in Graphic Arts Management. His first job was as a customer service representative for

a local prepress company where he worked with consumer product company (CPC) clients and private label business. Scott went on to manage graphics and then sold to CPC's for a competitor, eventually joining OEC in a CPC sales role in 2005. With Scott's experience, it made sense for him to lead the CPC group. Scott's focus has been to work through the

"MY GOALS ARE TO INCREASE SALES AND HAVE EVERY PERSON ON THE SALES TEAM SELL TO A CPC ACCOUNT TO HAVE IN THEIR PORTFOLIO."

commercialization process with the team, making sure they understand what OEC can provide, from FUSION custom asset management to display graphics and everything in between. They communicate what is working and not working with one another, providing ideas and support. According to Scott, "My goals are to increase sales and have every person on the sales team sell to a CPC account to have in their portfolio."

» **LARRY DAVIS**
FLEXO SEGMENT LEADER



After graduating from RIT in Printing Technology, Larry began his career in the printing industry as a process engineer focusing on color separations and color preproduction. After several years, he expanded into

electronic imaging; that combination eventually led him into sales. Larry was an obvious choice to lead OEC's Flexo team, having been with the company in

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a sales role since 2004. As he states, "Our team goal is to capitalize on the synergies of our group using our collective knowledge to get the OEC message out to the industry in a widespread fashion. We believe we are a stronger unit if we encourage cross-selling among our team members." He shares, "OEC is very diverse, and our group collaborates in order to reach our potential and capture all of our opportunities."

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» **ANDREA MANOR**
CORRUGATED SEGMENT LEADER



Andrea Manor has enjoyed 10+ years in the packaging & printing industries. She started with a degree from UW Stout in graphic design, taking her first job as Graphic Coordinator and Tooling Manager with a Northeast

Wisconsin printer. This began her path of immersing herself in the world of corrugated print. As Andrea was looking for career advancement, she learned more about OEC and found it would be a good fit with new challenges and opportunities. With her design background and ability to think like her customers do, Andrea has been successfully selling corrugated printing plates since her arrival in 2016. Chosen as the voice of the corrugated team, Andrea guides a group of four through questions and concerns that come up within their market segment.

“OUR GOAL AS A GROUP IS TO ADVANCE THE CORRUGATED SECTOR WITHIN OEC. WE’RE FOCUSING ON INDIVIDUAL GROWTH, ALONG WITH LONG-TERM STRATEGIES FOR LEVERAGING OUR CUSTOMER CONTACTS TO SELL ACROSS THE ENTIRE US MARKET.”

She explains, “Our goal as a group is to advance the corrugated sector within OEC. We’re focusing on individual growth, along with long-term strategies for leveraging our customer contacts to sell across the entire US market.”





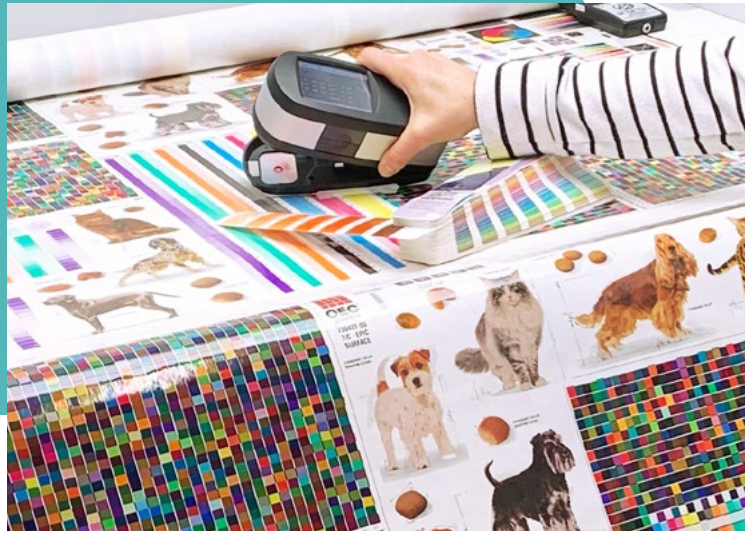
The Importance of a Fingerprint - Part 2

This is the second part of a two-part series discussing the preparation and running of a fingerprint.

Fingerprinting is a method for determining the performance, capability and gamut of a printing press. It is a process, identifying the factors on the press, which are then used to determine the graphics specifications. The purpose of the fingerprint is primarily to provide information for the printer and the graphics supplier, but there are a number of other areas that the fingerprint covers.

BY FINGERPRINTING YOUR PRESS YOU CAN DETERMINE THE STANDARDS AND SETTINGS FOR THE PRESS:

- The customer, plate supplier and printer now have predictable information to carry out the graphics.
- Separations will be able to produce plates tailor-made to suit the specific graphics to a particular printing press.
- The press operator now has standards to set the job.
- The customer can approve proofs with the knowledge that the printer can match the proofs on the press. Proofs today are made to match within tight specs of the press based on the profile information.
- The customer will have consistent, predictable print from run-to-run.
- Ink companies will note the ink used for following production runs.



» ACHIEVING A GOOD QUALITY PROFILE

Discuss with your sales person what printer marks you want and need on your profile to gather all the necessary information.

Good impression settings so that the 4-color screens are printing even from highlights to the solid; no low spots or over impressions.

Check the entire tone scale on all 4-colors for good, clean, even printing.

Read solid density with the densitometer/LAB of the four process colors making sure you are hitting the FTA density targets.

The market is moving towards using density in combination with LAB reading to capture ink strength as well as hue.

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TECH TIPS

with **BRUCE PAGEL**, TECHNICAL SALES MANAGER



(the importance of a fingerprint, continued)

Fingerprint set up should target FTA standards; the graphics supplier will evaluate the data and supply actual printed press density profile specs back to printer for future production runs.

Read your tone scale for screen impression settings. A 1% dot should be 10% to 12% or lower for good lights and the 50% target should be close to 68% for good mid-tones. These numbers are important to achieve balance as well as to get as large of a color gamut as possible. The better the highlight, the better your vignettes will fade down to a light edge.

Visually inspect the overall quality of all the print. Solids should be free of picking, pinholing and streaking. Make sure that the screens for your four-color process colors look clean and even and the dots are well formed. The ICC profile screens must be in register and clean with no print skipping.

» MULTIPLE TESTS

On your fingerprint test you have a number of tests that are taking place at once.

Establishing your four-color or seven-color densities so that when printing using these four or seven colors, while setting up a new job, it is necessary to get the inks back to the set densities. The densities and your screen profile is how the job will be separated to make any pictorial that is in your design successful. If these conditions are not returned to when the original fingerprint was set up on the press, you will have increased downtime and will not match the proof.

The next test that is taking place is the ICC profile production run.

In color management, an ICC profile is a set of data that characterizes a color input or output device, or a color space, according to standards by the International Color Consortium (ICC). Profiles describe the color

attributes of a particular device or viewing requirement by defining a mapping between the device source or target color space and a profile connection space (PCS).

This is color calibration; every proofing type and printing process has a limit on the saturation levels of the colors it can achieve on a given substrate know as color gamut.

The color gamut comes from your ink color, impression settings of screens, solid ink densities, LAB and substrate.

The ICC profile is read by a computer automatically and is not easily capable of making adjustments for bad print. It only reads what you produce on the sample and if it is skipping print or has dirty screens, this will affect how the computer then predicts the colors you will produce on the press. This can cause spikes and hooks in the color gamut.



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(the importance of a fingerprint, continued)



It is very important that the press crews understand that the fingerprint is what will make their lives easier when setting up new jobs. The time and the care must be taken to assure that the samples submitted for your profile are as good as they can be. All information at the time of the fingerprint must be captured. Ink system, viscosity, ph if water base, anilox used if numbered, but also what line count? And what is the volume, BCM of the anilox? What substrate is the finger print run on? If reversed printed with white back-up, then what is the opacity of the white? What plate material and backing was used? What are the press settings at? Record the production press speed and identify lamination procedures.

There is a lot that goes into achieving a good fingerprint that will help you with your customer satisfaction, reduced downtime and improve print quality. It is worth spending the time to do it right.

Some printers may look at a fingerprint as an inconvenience and a waste of time. The fact of the matter is, it costs time and money not only on the printers' part, but also for the ink company and the graphics company if done improperly. If everyone takes the time and has a vested interest in doing it right, it helps us all be successful.

Brand Revitalized: A Packaging Case Study

CHARD International had a problem. Their products were exactly what they wanted, their packaging was not.

They needed strategic help repositioning the brand, and help telling their story so the brand would stand out on retail shelves.

AMPHORA helped them understand and define the concept. We moved CHARD from a product brand to a lifestyle brand, capturing a larger market including the urban homesteader. We created the tagline “Make it Yours” and refreshed their packaging. This helped CHARD connect with the consumer by projecting the ideal brand experience, embodying their values and aspirations.

The refreshed brand was picked up by a range of regional retailers in record time and sold off the shelves immediately. The demand grew and new products took shape. Our expertise in packaging allowed us to seamlessly adapt the design to many packaging forms, while maintaining the integrity of the brand standards.



“WE’RE TRIPLING OUR SALES THIS YEAR, AND OUR NEW PACKAGING AND BRANDING ARE IMPORTANT PARTS OF THAT SUCCESS. IN EVERY MEETING WE HAVE WITH OUR RETAIL BUYERS, WE GET VERY POSITIVE FEEDBACK ON OUR NEW LOOK AND HOW IT PERFORMS IN STORES.”

*Vice President Marketing,
CHARD International*

*Need help with your brand or packaging? Contact
Lori Jepson at ljepson@weareamphora.com
or call 920.410.1395*

OEC's Trade Show Season in Full Swing

Here are some of our early stops in 2023



Kicking off the season, we attended the American Craft Spirits Association show in Portland, OR, February 9-12. This was a great opportunity to showcase our display graphics and prepress capabilities at their annual distiller's convention.



OEC will be heading out to the Petroleum Packaging Council's spring meeting in Savannah, GA, March 5-7th to promote our FUSION custom workflow solution systems.



The FTA's Spring Forum and Infoflex will also be taking place April 16-19th in Columbus, OH. OEC is excited to roll out SEAMEX E3 at this gathering of printer/converters, who attend to hear about the new technologies and product offerings within the world of Flexo. Come visit us at booth #723 if you plan on attending!



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SPRING ACSA	SPRING PPC	SPRING FTA
February 9-12 Portland, OR	March 5-7 Savannah, GA	April 16-19 Columbus, OH

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