

Press Release

York Repro-Graphic Group Turns to Asahi Photoproducts AWP Flexographic Plates for Fixed Colour Palette Printing

Assuring the future of flexography

Tokyo, Japan & Brussels, Belgium, 1 September 2016 – Asahi Photoproducts, a pioneer in flexographic photopolymer plate development, today announced that the York Repro-Graphic Group (YRG) has adopted the premium quality Asahi AWP™ flexographic plate system for its clients using the fixed colour palette printing process. Designed for high quality print performance, the AWP water wash plate outperforms the best digital plates currently available for flexo and produces higher quality than Flat Top Dot plates. For the first time, a digital photopolymer plate can hold extremely small stable dots – smaller than those of solvent processed plates – and its stability on press is superior to solvent plates, with numerous associated environmental and waste reduction benefits. Its precise register ensures faster make-ready and reduced waste on press.

Mark Gration, group managing director at YRG, said, “We are seeing growing demand for packaging produced using the fixed colour palette printing process due to its many efficiencies, including reduced ink inventories, faster make-ready, fewer press stops and less waste. It significantly reduces job changeover times since no wash-ups are required between jobs. But to achieve the quality that brand owners demand requires precise registration. That’s why we chose to use Asahi AWP water washable plates for those clients using fixed colour palette printing. The quality that can be achieved with these plates surpasses Flat Top Dot printing quality, making the AWP plate the best plate in the market for this purpose.” YRG, the first repro house in the world to comply with the ISO-12647 colour standard, strongly believes in the ability of the fixed colour palette printing process to ensure the future viability of the flexographic printing process.

Moving forward, YRG plans to further develop its in-plant platemaking services at customer printing sites. “This will enable us to help our clients further reduce turn times in the plate-to-press process to meet the needs of the changing market environment, which is increasingly

demanding just-in-time production,” Gration states. “And the Asahi AWP system’s ease of use and environmental friendliness will be an important factor in moving this process closer to press operations.”

The Asahi AWP technology has been designed from the outset as an environmentally sustainable plate solution, minimizing wherever possible waste of precious resources. The plates are water washable and do not rely on harsh solvents. The water is also reused in the process, being filtered and recycled through the plate processing system. The system is also free from the harmful volatile organic compounds (VOC) emissions that are typically generated by solvent and thermal processes.

The entire plate manufacturing process does not generate any waste other than unexposed polymer residues, which are collected as ‘dry cake’ and safely repurposed as a combustive agent for incineration waste plants. AWP plates do not absorb much water, reducing the drying time of the plate by up to two to three times that of solvent cleaned plate systems. This results in cost and space reductions for the plate making room, as energy-demanding hot air dryers are not required.

Image captions

- Image 1: Mark Gration, Group Managing Director and Paul Chant, Asahi Photoproducts UK Branch Manager
- Image 2: Dave Parker, YRG Eclipse Site Manager next to the Asahi AWP 1116PD plate processor.
- Image 3: YRG Eclipse site in Cottingham

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About Asahi Photoproducts

Asahi Photoproducts is a subsidiary of the Asahi Kasei Corporation which was founded in 1971 holding its European Headquarters in Belgium, Asahi Photoproducts is one of the leading pioneers of flexographic photopolymer plate development. By creating high quality flexographic solutions and through continued innovation, the company aims at driving print forward in balance with the environment.

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