



## Press Release

# Gateway Packaging Company improves Overall Equipment Efficiency (OEE) by 53% with Asahi Photoproducts AWP™ Water-Washable Plates

*Unique Clean Transfer technology of Asahi AWP™ plates improves quality, productivity*

Tokyo, Japan, & Brussels, Belgium 30 November 2017 – Asahi Photoproducts, a pioneer in flexographic photopolymer plate development, today reported that Tennessee-based Gateway Packaging Company has chosen to partner with Asahi Photoproducts and its North American Distributor CTGA after an exhaustive benchmarking process in its search for an improved platemaking process. Gateway operates three manufacturing locations serving the United States and Canada and produces packaging for consumer packaged goods manufacturers and industrial packaging for the food, agricultural, chemical and charcoal industries.

As a leading high-end printer/packaging converter and the largest pet food packaging provider in North America, Gateway Packaging is continually seeking ways to improve products and solve problems for its customers. By switching to Asahi Photoproducts AWP™ flexographic plates with Clean Transfer, the company has taken another step along its path of continuous improvement. Gateway also installed an Asahi Photoproducts AWP 1116 PD Processor as part of the revamping of its platemaking process.

“With the variety of flexographic plates and platemaking solutions available in the market, we wanted to do a thorough evaluation to ensure our investment decision was the best possible choice,” said Tharrin Akers, Prepress Manager. “With that in mind, we benchmarked solutions from the leading players, ultimately bringing our selection to the top two, including Asahi Photoproducts. As a final test, we ran a number of production jobs using plates generated by CTGA to compare efficiency with our current process, and we were very pleased with the results achieved using the Asahi solutions.”

The production test was run on an F&K 20six flexographic press using 40-pound coated white paper and solvent inks, with a run length of 675,000 feet (205,200 meters). The press ran at



## AsahiKASEI

1,400 feet per minute (427 m/min.). The run using competitive plates experienced a total production time of 483 minutes or 11 hours with a total plate cleaning time of 177 minutes and a requirement to clean plates every 2.5 rolls of media at 32 minutes per time.

“When running the Asahi plates,” Akers explained, “we were able to run the press at a 17% higher speed – 1,640 feet per minute (500 m/min.) – and only had to stop for plate cleaning once. And that only required cleaning two plates, consuming 20 minutes. The result was a total production time of 432 minutes or 7.2 hours and an astonishing 53% improvement in Overall Equipment Efficiency (OEE).”

As a result of these tests, Gateway decided to make a significant investment in a new platemaking department, implementing Asahi Photoproducts AWP™ water-washable plates and adding a Kongsberg cutting table, a Glunz & Jensen Concept 401 ECLF Exposure Unit, and the Asahi Photoproducts AWP™ 1116 PD Processor. Gateway estimated a payback period of 10 months for this significant investment based on the productivity and quality gains it would deliver.

Asahi AWP™ plates feature Clean Transfer Technology, which allows a kiss-touch printing pressure setting. It makes use of low plate surface tension, made possible by a specially engineered Asahi polymer chemistry, to inhibit liquid flow. The ink forms a globule, with a large contact angle and high pinning point. This results in a cleaner and more homogeneous ink transfer from plate to substrate, helping flexographic printers meet the ever-increasing quality demands of their customers. It also ensures precise register and fewer press stops for cleaning or plate changes, increasing Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE).

For more information about the Clean Transfer Technology and other flexographic solutions from Asahi Photoproducts Europe, visit [www.asahi-photoproducts.com](http://www.asahi-photoproducts.com).

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### Captions:

Omar Abuaita, CEO of Gateway Packaging Company

gateway 2: left Tharrin Akers, Prepress Manager Gateway Packaging Company, right David Bell, Technical Sales Representative, CTGA


gateway 3: David and Tharrin inspecting the quality of an Asahi AWPTM plate.

graph OEE: OEE & speed improvement



## 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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Please visit [www.asahi-photoproducts.com](http://www.asahi-photoproducts.com) for more information or contact:

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