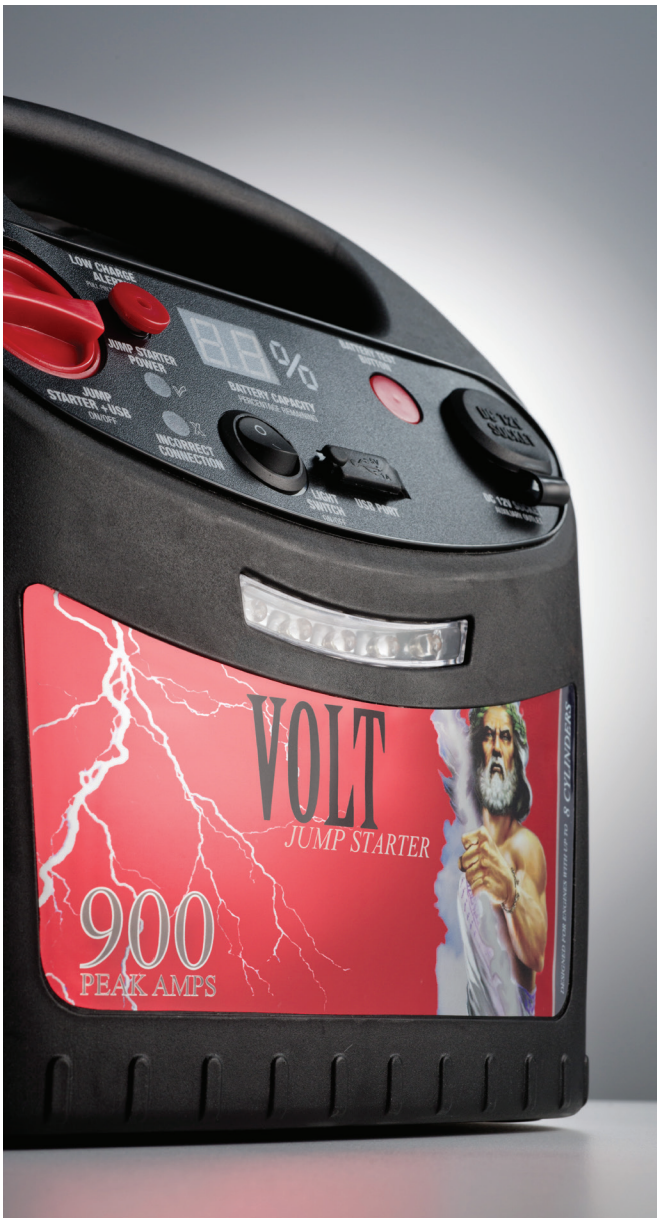
Combining digital printing with UL® -recognized label components



The investment required to set up analog presses and print a short run of labels — and repeat the whole process with new plates for each label variation — can be costly and time consuming. In the durables market, where many applications require UL 969 testing to certify that label materials will last the life of the product and endure extreme environmental conditions, the added time and cost of obtaining UL recognition can turn converters away altogether.

The Avery Dennison Durables Portfolio for HP Indigo makes it easy for converters to enter the durables market with cost-effective, high-performance labels. The portfolio streamlines the process by offering label materials that are pre-tested, printed with HP ElectroInk 4.0 to meet the UL standard for Marking and Labeling Systems.

Cost-effective short runs

Long runs may make sense for UV or water-based flexographic printing. But in the durable goods market, where shorter runs are common, digital printing offers a more efficient solution.

Using electrophotographic printing, HP Indigo industrial roll presses transfer complete images in a single pass directly from file to press, eliminating the need to create and set up plates for each color, run registration until the colors align, clean the plates after each run and replace them when they show wear or become obsolete.

Each eliminated step equals savings for the converter, making digital printing a more cost-effective and time-efficient method for short runs.

Quicker turnaround time

By eliminating steps from the traditional printing process, digital presses accelerate turnaround and time to market. With no plates to change, HP Indigo allows converters to print a variety of labels almost instantly. This flexibility lets converters easily customize labels with unique model, performance and production information. It also allows brand owners to deploy late-stage differentiation and/or to quickly update label content when regulations change.

Prerecognized label construction

If converters seek UL recognition of labels printed with HP Indigo on their own, the evaluation process could cost thousands of dollars and take months. The time and money involved in certification could undo the savings gained by transitioning a job to more efficient digital printing. End-user customers may search out another qualified converter instead of waiting months for labels that meet industry standards.

It should also be noted if any component of the printed label fails during the UL 969 evaluation, converters must repeat the entire process: reprinting and resubmitting sample labels, paying the full testing fee again and waiting several more months for certification.

Adopting the Avery Dennison pretested portfolio of UL-recognized durable label materials into your existing UL file significantly reduces the time, expense, risk and hassle of entering the durables market. The UL-recognized file includes the complete printed and overlaminated label construction, not just blank stock, allowing converters to reap the benefits of digital printing with the confidence that components have already passed the durability standards required by UL 969.

For example, because digital inks are thinner and more transparent than UV Flexo inks, they aren't particularly lightfast, so they won't hold up outdoors when exposed to UV light and weathering over time. Without extra protection, digital inks won't satisfy the rigorous UL testing required for outdoor applications.

HP Indigo industrial roll presses transfer complete images in a single pass directly from file to press.

A critical component of the Avery Dennison UL-recognized Durables Portfolio for HP Indigo is a tough UV blocking 1 Mil polyester overlaminate film that offers excellent chemical resistance, high clarity and a reduced UV transmission rate. This facestock is paired with a clear adhesive proven to have high anti-aging properties and a 1 Mil durable polyester release liner. The smooth polyester liner ensures good adhesive wet-out and clarity.

By adopting the Avery Dennison UL–recognized listing into their label file, converters can reduce the process to as little as two weeks. And perhaps more important, doing so eliminates upfront the question of whether their finished labels will meet the UL 969 standard.

Low barriers to success

Because the margins are significantly higher in a specialty label market such as durable goods, the profit opportunities for converters are tremendous.

With the efficiency of HP Indigo, paired with the ease of the Avery Dennison Customer-Ready Durables Portfolio, converters can strike a balance with cost-effective short runs, quick turnaround times and UL-recognized performance across a variety of substrates and conditions to be successful in the durables market. >

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