



Press Release

Asahi and Esko unveil breakthrough automated flexo platemaking solution at virtual.drupa

Tokyo, Japan & Brussels, Belgium, April 21, 2021 – Asahi Photoproducts and Esko have showcased their breakthrough, fully automated flexo platemaking line CrystalCleanConnect at this year’s virtual.drupa event.

Asahi Photoproducts, a pioneer in flexographic photopolymer plate development, has collaborated with Esko, the global developer of integrated software and hardware solutions for the packaging and labels markets, on the innovative flexo platemaking solution. CrystalCleanConnect fully automates the entire flexo plate production, from imaging to plate cutting, reducing the number of steps in the flexo platemaking process from 12 to just one which equates to a reduction from 36 min operator plate making time to only 2,5 min.

“With CrystalCleanConnect we have brought together key hardware and software technologies from both organizations to deliver a number of breakthrough advantages from design to print,” said Pascal Thomas, Director of Flexo Business with Esko. “CrystalCleanConnect delivers a cleaner, more environmentally balanced operation that simplifies the flexo platemaking process, improves safety and boosts print quality consistency.”

According to Pascal, CrystalCleanConnect offers operational as well as environmental benefits to businesses. “With the removal of so many process steps, there’s an immediate 90% reduction in required operator time, which not only eliminates the potential for human error but also delivers immediate efficiency gains. Quality is assured through Asahi and Esko technologies working in complete harmony, and the combination of improved efficiency and quality delivers an average increase of 25% in press OEE.”

A holistic approach to connecting technologies

Dieter Niederstadt, Technical Marketing Manager for Asahi Photoproducts stated: “Flexo needs to simplify its processes while improving quality, consistency and profitability. In doing



so, flexo can create new business opportunities and positively transform into a printing technology in balance with the environment”.

“This breakthrough innovation is different in many ways to other solutions on the market,” Dieter said. “It is not just an assembly of available plate making processes delivered inline, but rather a holistic approach to connecting technologies, up and downstream of the prepress value chain, using an intelligent automation hub as the backbone and heart of the solution. CCC is truly pushing boundaries to the current scope of plate automation delivering a mount-ready plate as well as being the first automated production solution without the need of VOC based washout solvents in the plate making process.”

Pascal Thomas added: “At Esko, we have long been dedicated to improving the platemaking experience, in terms of quality, productivity and connectivity. Together with Asahi Photoproducts, we are taking the flexo platemaking process to a brand-new level, enabling our customers to be even more competitive while also ensuring they can meet today’s demands for flexible and sustainable supply. With CrystalCleanConnect, our ultimate objective is to improve our customers’ overall business performance and profitability.”

Visit www.asahi-photoproducts.com/en/CCC and www.esko.com for more information.

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Image and caption:



CrystalCleanConnect, the first automatic plate making system including inline cutting in balance with the environment.

About Asahi Photoproducts

Asahi Photoproducts was founded in 1971 and is a subsidiary of the Asahi Kasei Corporation. Asahi Photoproducts is a leading pioneer in the development of photopolymer flexo printing plates. By creating high quality flexographic solutions and through continued innovation, the company aims at driving print forward in harmony with the environment.

Follow Asahi Photoproducts at    .

Visit www.asahi-photoproducts.com for more information.

About Esko

Esko, a Danaher company, is a global provider of integrated software and hardware solutions that digitize, automate and connect the go-to-market process of consumer goods.

For CPG and Pharma brand owners, the Esko collaborative content creation platform for packaging, label, and marketing collateral equips marketing, branding, regulatory, and packaging teams to increase productivity, reduce costs, save time in their content processes, and consistently meet their deadlines for marketing and packaging projects.

For packaging manufacturers, the Esko range of prepress, flexo platemaking and print inspection solutions connects people, processes and tools and brings consumer products to life with accuracy, quality, efficiency and speed.

Packaging for 9 out of 10 major brands is produced by Esko customers.

Headquartered in Gent, Belgium, Esko operates worldwide with a unique focus on packaging and labels the consumer can trust.

For more information about flexographic products and solutions from Esko, visit www.esko.com.

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