

ULTRA FLEX IMPROVES QUALITY, PRODUCTIVITY AND SUSTAINABILITY WITH DUPONT™ CYREL® PERFORMANCE PLATES

Background



Founded in 1974 in Brooklyn, NY, **Ultra Flex** has grown to become a global leader in supplying innovative flexible packaging solutions for consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies in the food and healthcare markets. This safe quality food (SQF) certified printer is known worldwide for delivering consistently high quality work and excellent customer service.

Management and employees alike take great pride in their ability to respond quickly to customers' needs, which has earned Ultra Flex the distinction of helping its customers get to market faster.

Challenge

Ultra Flex management is always looking for ways to improve productivity and sustainability—without compromising quality. They were particularly interested in using extended gamut printing because this technology promises to deliver many benefits, including: increased press uptime, less material waste, less time in job change-over and consistent, repeatable color.

In fact, they set a long-term goal of shifting to 100% extended gamut printing. The challenge was finding a printing plate that would enable them to make this goal a reality.

Solution

DuPont™ Cyrel® Performance Plates are a family of next-generation digital printing plates specifically designed for the flexible packaging printer-converter. As Ultra Flex would soon discover, the Performance Plates provide many benefits, such as superior solid ink density and long tonal range that make them ideal for use in extended gamut printing.

Compatible with a wide array of substrates and inks, **Cyrel® Performance Plates** can be used for a wide variety of applications, including: flexible packaging, tag & label, envelopes, carrier bags, folding cartons, pre-print liners and beverage cartons. The Performance Plates are available in solvent (**DSP**) and thermal (**DFP**) versions.



DuPont™ Cyrel® Performance Plates benefits:

- Exceptional ink transfer provides smooth, high density solids while maintaining the highest quality highlights; results in outstanding contrast and dynamic range
- Long tonal range and high ink density means Cyrel® Performance Plates are a true combination plate, suitable for a variety of segments
- Rugged and clean printing for long, uninterrupted print runs
- Less make-ready time on press; comes up to color quickly
- Sharp type and open reverses
- Low dot gain
- High resistance to ozone and white light results in excellent storage capability
- Excellent compatibility with solvent-based, water-based and UV inks

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Results

Ultra Flex management wasted no time in putting the new DuPont™ Cyrel® Performance Plates to the test on a large job consisting of 67 separate SKUs that had previously been run using traditional flexo printing plates.

“In the past, we would have run this job with spot color solid plates for the backgrounds,” said Todd M. Addison, vice president of Ultra Flex. “But with the Performance Plates, we ran it with expanded gamut inks and completed the entire series with one press wash-up. We just changed sleeves and kept running. And, our background color variation was less than two delta E for the entire job.”



From left to right: Eli Blatt, president; Todd M. Addison, vice president; and Robert T. Smith, vice president.

Eli Blatt, president of Ultra Flex, had been an early proponent of the extended gamut technology, believing that it was a powerful discipline that could drive quality, efficiencies and cost reduction. Based on the high quality results

and ease of use experienced during this initial trial, Blatt and his team decided to use DuPont Performance Plates to print 56 new jobs.



“What makes a really good print sample?” Insights from Joshua Kroudo, Technical Director, Ultra Flex.

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Technical director Joshua Kroudo was extremely pleased with how easy it was to run these jobs with the Cyrel® Performance Plates. “We didn’t have to match colors, play with it or perform wash-ups,” explained Kroudo. “And our delta E was below two

on every single job. We’ve never before seen solids like we see with the DuPont Performance Plates.”

According to Zalman Zohar, printing manager at Ultra Flex, “We can combine solids and screens on the same plate because Cyrel® DSP is a true combination plate. Even with a low volume 800-line anilox roll we still get outstanding solid density while keeping the screens clean. And, the Performance DSP plates allowed us to run screen process and solid areas on the same cylinder without getting pinholes.”



In addition to delivering quality that is remarkably close to gravure printing, Ultra Flex was now able to run in lanes, seeing a time difference of 30% to 50%, which represents an enormous savings for the company.

With the use of DuPont Performance Plates and extended gamut printing, Ultra Flex is also able to reduce the time required for color matching and reduce or eliminate press wash-ups.

“Not only does this save us money, but we’re now ‘greener,’” said Addison, “And because our CPG customers are holding us accountable for sustainability, this is a tremendous help.”

With the success it has seen to date using DuPont™ Cyrel® Performance Plates, Ultra Flex is now one step closer to achieving its goal of 100% extended gamut printing.

“We’d like to run all of our jobs as higher quality extended gamut and DuPont Performance Plates are making that possible,” said Addison.

Summing it up, Blatt said, “It’s a win/win for everyone. We can continue to grow our business without investing in a new press because of better press utilization. Nominal brand jobs can now run together side-by-side, with each lane being a different SKU. This means smaller SKUs



DuPont™ Cyrel® Performance Plates

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can run together, saving our customers a lot of money and giving smaller brands a level of quality they previously may not have been able to afford. In addition, they can get their products to consumers quicker. And, we are able to improve our sustainability.”

For more information about DuPont™ Cyrel® Performance Plates, visit www.cyrel.com