



ATHENA GRAPHICS

Athena Graphics experiences stability and reliability in prepress workflow, thanks to DuPont™ Cyrel® EASY plates

BACKGROUND

Headquartered in Roeselare, Belgium, Athena Graphics NV was founded in 1991 by Geert Cosaert († 2014), father of the current managing director Ignace Cosaert, whose great-grandfather also led a graphic company in 1918.

Athena Graphics is one of the most dynamic, leading trade shops in Europe with production sites in Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Vietnam. They supply prepress work for packaging as well as offer many quality services and solutions to printers and brand owners.

The growth of the company is a result of their continuous investment in the newest hardware and software. In 2011, Athena Graphics moved into a new location, featuring a unique modern-day building providing 100 employees with an extraordinary infrastructure, enabling successful teamwork.

With more than 80,000 SKUs (Stock Keeping Units), 12 Mio. € turnover per year and working with more than 100 consumer brands, Athena Graphics has been established as a dynamic prepress company with a promising future.



Headquarters in Roeselare, Belgium.

VISION

Athena's vision in plate making is based on stability and reliability. Stable plate production managed by stringent process control is key to meeting flexo customer demands for predictable colours with high definition. Every single plate is monitored and production parameters are saved, which then enables the tracking of each individual plate. Athena Graphics invests yearly in the most recent technologies, software and devices. Recently, their most important investment was a high-performance plate, which can be processed with their HD Cyrel® Digital Imager and exposed on their new Crystal XPS exposing unit.

CHALLENGE

Athena Graphics began running several tests with plates from various suppliers, including Cyrel® EASY ESX. From the very beginning, they noticed that minimum dots were more stable, shoulders were less steep and experienced a better cross linking.

The results were outstanding. Athena Graphics' printer customer confirmed a better density combined with a lower printed minimum dot, without struggling with trailing edge void. Measurements of dot gain within the entire run, showed improved and higher stability, even in the highlights. This stability is primarily due to the flat top dot in the plate combined with full HD exposure.



Quality control for high lights



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SOLUTION

Ignace Cosaert, CEO of Athena Graphics Group said, “In the past, we had a wide range of plate types. For 1.14 mm plate thickness, we had at least six different plate types. Cyrel® EASY ESX has become one of our most important plates. Of course, we still have many jobs that need an older plate type due to historical reasons but in this thickness, the majority of our volume is Cyrel® EASY ESX. This delivers operational benefits, including less waste and faster production times, which are two key factors for our web shop. We are now able to easily deliver plates in 24 hrs.”

In 2017 Athena Graphics won, amongst other awards, the EFTA Benelux Flexo Award for the most remarkable technological innovation with “SmartFlexo”. SmartFlexo is a new concept developed by the R&D department. Digital files are reprographically optimized and the Cyrel® EASY ESX plate with integrated flat top dot technology is used to simplify the prepress process.

According to Athena’s experience with Cyrel® EASY ESX plates, more pantones can be converted than before and “black line” and “black halftone” can be merged in one separation without having a density lower than 1.70. This concept allows brand owners and printers to reduce the number of colours in their print jobs. The EASY ESX plate is working strongly and consistently in a wider range of substrates and their corresponding variety of surfaces.

RESULTS

Ignace Cosaert confirms, “Before releasing this plate, we investigated a lot in finding the right combination between the plate and the Full HD setting. When needed, we could count on DuPont’s experiences. Our internal research took some time but resulted finally in a unique product. A few printers have said that Cyrel® EASY ESX plates produced by Athena are among the best plates for stability, high density and repeatability. Set up times are significantly better as well.”



Kristof Lobeau checking finest text elements on Cyrel® EASY ESX plate



Fr.t.l.: Claude Corneillie, Plate Production Manager, Kristof Lobeau, Project Manager Flexo, Athena Graphics; Christian Wesselmann, Sales Rep. North West Germany + Benelux, DuPont



State-of-the-art flexo department

For more information on DuPont™ Cyrel® or other DuPont Packaging Graphics products, please visit our website: www.cyrel.eu

For more information on Athena Graphics’ products please visit www.athena-graphics.be