**Press Release**

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**Miraclon announces winners of the 2021 Global Flexo Innovation Awards**

***Print process conversion to flexo, fixed-color palette printing, improved efficiencies in print production workflow and sustainable print observed as key trends in the flexo printing industry***

Miraclon today announced the 13 winners of the Global Flexo Innovation Awards, which recognize businesses that are driving the transformation of the flexo industry with the help of KODAK FLEXCEL NX Technology. Over 200 entries from 24 countries were judged by an independent panel of eight flexo industry experts during a hybrid session that saw the judges convene both in person and through digital collaboration applications.

With high quality a pre-condition of entry, submissions were evaluated on four criteria: the efficiency of the company’s workflow, conversion from other print processes to flexo, the degree of creativity in the graphic design and the level of sustainable business practices in the project. Excellence in two categories received a silver award (seven winners), in three categories a gold award (five winners) and in all four categories a platinum award, demonstrating to the industry and to the winner’s customers a commitment to the highest level of print production. This year, Lorytex (Uruguay) became the first winner ever to receive the platinum commendation. The judges also awarded Highest Honors to four of the winners that they believed demonstrated the biggest impact on advancing the flexo printing process.

“At a time where all of us were experiencing the additional challenges because of the pandemic, these winners prove that we’re not only part of an incredibly resilient industry, but one that continues to innovate with companies that drive creativity and efficient, consistent and sustainable manufacturing processes,” comments Grant Blewett, Chief Commercial Director, Miraclon. “The high conversion rates from other printing processes to flexo, focus on fixed color palette printing, and efforts to maximize on-press productivity and efficiency that also contribute to sustainability that we have seen in so many of the entries, all demonstrate how much the flexo industry is set to become the print process of choice for packaging.”

Out of the top 13 companies, seven winners are based in Latin America, three in Europe, two in North America, and one in the Asia Pacific region. “We’re pleased to see companies from around the world innovating and being creative in growing their businesses as well as driving the transformation of the flexo printing industry,” continues Grant. “Each one of the winners, as well as the companies that received special mentions, demonstrated incredible commitment to the advancement of flexo and set great examples of what can be achieved when fully utilizing the tools and technology at their disposal; it should motivate the rest of the industry to do the same.”

The full roll of honor is as follows:

**Highest Honors Winners (in alphabetical order)**

* **Bosisio SA, Celomat SA & Mondelez SA, Argentina (Joint Entry) - Gold**

Bosisio SA and Celomat worked together to prove flexo a cost-effective and high-quality alternative to gravure for Mondelez, meeting their need for shorter turnaround times and lower costs. This included Expanded Color Gamut (ECG) implementation.

* **Fathom Optics, Grace Label Inc and Confluence Brewing Company, United States (Joint Entry) - Gold**

In what the judges described as “a really impressive innovation,” Grace Label and Fathom Optics created a striking 3D multi-dimensional moving image on a standard flexo press without any additional steps – an achievement the judges had not seen before.

* **Mega Embalagens, Multipack & Pontyn, Brazil (Joint Entry) - Silver**

Mega Embalagens combined the Extended Color Gamut (ECG) process with the Flexcel NX printing matrices to combine four different jobs, resulting in a saving of three printing setups and 23 plates in addition to the 40% reduction in setup time.

* **Sunshine FPC & Trisoft Graphics, United States (Joint Entry) - Gold**

California-based Sunshine FPC, as vertically integrated manufacturer, and prepress trade shop, Trisoft, converted a gravure job imported from overseas, thus yielding freight and time savings as well as improved quality control. By printing on a sustainable plant-based substrate, Sunshine reduced the total gauge, size and dimension of the package, eliminating a lamination process and reducing waste and power consumption.

**Winners (in alphabetical order)**

**Platinum:**

* **Lorytex, Uruguay**

Lorytex became the first-ever GFIA Platinum winner with an outstanding all-round performance. Transforming flexible packaging that was previously gravure printed in China to local flexo production, the entry demonstrated exceptional cooperation between Lorytex, the converter and the brand to overcome several technical challenges and implement an ECG workflow.

**Gold:**

* **Cromograf & Strong SA, Uruguay (Joint Entry)**

The four-color Expanded Color Gamut (ECG) workflow implemented by Cromograf and Strong delivers considerable savings in plates, mounting tapes, special inks and solvents, as well as faster press set-up. The entry also showed design innovations, including moving press marks inside the print; the resulting 1% reduction in substrate consumption translates into significant cost savings.

* **U. Günther GmbH & Flexo-Service Cl. Jaehde GmbH, Germany (Joint Entry)**

U. Günther’s Impulse Screen technology and FLEXCEL NX Plates enable older flexo presses and aniloxes to print at higher standard resolutions — up to 269 lpi instead of 150 lpi — matching, and often exceeding, the results possible with gravure. Other benefits recorded include resolution two times finer than gravure; ink savings of up to 15% per job; and speed increases of up to 25% per run.

**Silver:**

* **Litoplas Colombia**

This gravure to flexo conversion highlights what is possible when the converter and brand work together closely. The three jobs entered are all examples of Expanded Color Gamut (ECG) projects. Litoplas Colombia did an excellent job of implementing the workflow and demonstrating the company could achieve the savings and quality levels required by a major global brand.

* **Numex Blocks India Ltd**

The customer wanted to explore a ‘direct-to-tube’ printing workflow to remove the variability in recycling and eliminate a manufacturing step. As most jobs were eight colors, Numex had detailed discussions with printer and brand to establish how best to improve colors or textures, including the choice of varnish. Using FLEXCEL NX Plates, excellent results were achieved at 150 lpi and a production speed of 130 tubes per minute.

* **Tadam & Gruppo Sada spa, Italy (Joint Entry)**

Tadam’s customer Sada proposed converting from offset to flexo to streamline the production workflow, and as a result shortened the production time from 20 working days to six hours. The job was printed using FLEXCEL NXC Plates and DIGICAP NX Advanced Patterning, achieving a minimum dot hold of 1%.

* **Technofilms, Guatemala**

Technofilms reduced the spot colors used in this job from four to two, translating into a 22% reduction in set-up times. In another job, the company used new packaging materials manufactured from more sustainable polyethylene foam films to reduce weight – by 11% in this case – and enable more efficient packing for transit.

* **Teruel – Papeis Amalia Ltd, Brazil**

Teruel worked with three brands to adapt and create packaging designs and new substrates that not only matched the quality of the product when previously produced gravure, but also enhanced sustainability credentials and eliminated steps in the post-print process to significantly shorten production times.

* **Victory Graphics & Caps Cases, United Kingdom (Joint Entry)**

Produced for luxury fashion brand The Rake, Victory and Caps used a single FLEXCEL NX Plate to create the photographic-quality image with its challenging mix of highlights and dark shadows. Printed inside the box, the image created an enhanced ‘unboxing’ experience for consumers in a highly efficient manner — the post-print cost 30% less than litho, and flexo post-print also significantly reduces lead time for re-orders.

In addition to the 13 winners, the judges highlighted the contributions of the following entrants with a **special recognition**:

* **CR Serigrafia Srl & Esbe Srl, Italy, (Joint Entry)** produced an excellent example of direct printing onto rigid packaging.
* **Mondi Halle GmbH, Werner & Mertz GmbH, Knecht GmbH and Flexicon AG, Germany (Joint Entry),** worked together to create a genuinely innovative pouch design to improve recyclability and sustainability.
* **Papierfabrik Palm, site plant Seyfert, Reichenbach an der Fils, and D&W Flexo-Manufaktur GmbH & Co. KG, Osterwieck, Germany (Joint Entry),** cooperated to create an impactful and novel packaging design — a cardboard bag that can easily be transformed into a cardboard box.
* **Rotoplast d.o.o., Croatia,** converted a job from gravure to flexo by creating a ten-color design with a paper-touch varnish finishing effect — something previously the preserve of gravure and a novel achievement using flexo.
* **Z Due, Italy,** impressed judges with an excellent collection of work converted from offset and gravure to flexo, enhanced using the company’s own BlueEdge screening technology.

The independent judging panel for the Global Flexo Innovation Awards comprised experts in the packaging value chain from design to print production and sustainability. The members were:

1. Christopher Horton (USA): Graphic Services Consultant (Lead Judge)
2. Laurel Brunner (UK): Journalist and Consultant, Verdigris
3. Stefano d’Andrea (Italy): Flexo & Industrial Graphic Expert
4. Dr. Kai Lankinen (Finland/Germany): Chairman & Co-owner, Marvaco Ltd
5. Sebastian Longo (Argentina): President & Managing Director, Fotograbados Longo S.A.
6. Ken McGuire (USA): Research Fellow, Procter & Gamble
7. Jason Goode (Australia): Packaging Design and Development Professional
8. Dr. Chip Tonkin (USA): Chair – Department of Graphic Communications, Sonoco Institute of Packaging Design & Graphics

For more information on the Global Flexo Innovation Awards winners and their winning entries, visit [www.transformingflexo.com](http://www.transformingflexo.com).

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**About Miraclon**

KODAK FLEXCEL Solutions have helped transform flexographic printing for more than a decade. Brought to life by Miraclon, its industry-leading FLEXCEL NX and FLEXCEL NX Ultra Systems give customers higher quality, improved cost efficiency, better productivity and best-in-class results. With a focus on pioneering image science, innovation, and collaboration with industry partners and customers, Miraclon is committed to the future of flexo and is positioned to lead the charge.

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