**Customer Story**

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December 9th, 2021

**500-Plus Conversions to Flexo ECG with KODAK FLEXCEL NX Plates Win Lorytex the First-Ever Platinum Flexo Innovation Award**

In 2019 Montevideo-based Lorytex won a Gold Award at the inaugural Global Flexo Innovation Awards, sponsored by Miraclon. At the time, Roberto Dolinsky, managing director of the Montevideo-based flexo prepress tradeshop, voiced his hopes for the extended color gamut (ECG) technology for which Lorytex is an enthusiastic advocate. “I really believe ECG will change how brands and converters regard flexo,” he said. “When we demonstrate the efficiency and quality possible with ECG, there’s real interest. I believe that in the future as much as 50% of packaging could be produced with flexo and ECG.”

Two years on, and Lorytex is once again on the Global Flexo Innovation Awards rostrum, this time as the proud winner of the first-ever Platinum Award, and Dolinsky’s ECG prediction shows real signs of coming true. In 2019, Lorytex met three of the criteria against which Awards are judged: creative use of graphic design, production workflow efficiency and commitment to sustainable print. For 2021, the company went one better and added the fourth — process conversion —for successfully converting over 500 jobs to ECG in the last 18 months.

**Remarkable achievement**

It’s a remarkable achievement for any business, but especially for Lorytex; the company, as Dolinsky acknowledges, is a relatively small operation. Over the years, however, its competitive edge has been sharpened by operating in the fiercely competitive Uruguayan market. Says Dolinsky: “We face competition from Brazil and Argentina, of course, but also from China, so you need something special that makes you different from the competition.”

For Lorytex, that something is ECG. The company has almost five years’ experience in the technology, largely thanks to KODAK FLEXCEL NX Technology from Miraclon. Explains Dolinsky: “We started on the ECG path in 2016, when we changed to FLEXCEL NX Technology because we believed its stability and process control were the best route to good results with ECG. It was also around the time that Miraclon released Advanced DIGICAP NX Patterning Technology, which gave even more stability and print control.

Today Lorytex is the clear leader in ECG within Uruguay, and beyond. “When a brand or a converter is considering ECG, they’ll almost always come to us first,” says Dolinsky. But more than technology expertise distinguishes Lorytex’s proposition to clients; the company has a distinctive vision of its role in the flexible packaging supply chain, one described by its corporate strapline ‘Linking Brands With Converters Through Color.’

**Chain of innovation**

Roberto Dolinsky expands on this: “The more all three are involved, the better the final result. For our part, we don’t just produce square meters of plates. We’re part of a chain of innovation, bringing tools to improve quality and productivity in as environmentally-friendly a way as possible.”

Lorytex’s winning entry — multiple SKUs of cereal doypacks — vividly demonstrates not only this approach in action but also the considerable benefits of converting flexible packaging from gravure to flexo, and in this case to ECG instead of ‘traditional’ flexo.

Brand owner Saint Hnos del Uruguay previously had the project printed gravure in China but wanted to explore ‘reshoring’ production to a local supply chain. Several reasons were behind the decision. Supply chain issues raised by the Covid-19 pandemic were a powerful argument for the shorter delivery times possible with local production, along with lower transport costs and a sustainability premium. Flexo ECG would enable multiple product varieties to be ganged together, delivering faster turnround of shorter runs of more product varieties and enabling Saint to respond faster to changing consumer demands. Finally, energy, ink and solvent consumption costs would all be considerably reduced.

The converter Saint worked with on the project was Strong Converter SA, part of Grupo Maccio. Strong has worked with Lorytex for almost ten years, most recently on exploring the application of ECG, which became more serious after Lorytex’s 2019 Global Flexo Innovation Awards win. Explains print manager Gustavo Bisogno: “We’d been aware of ECG for some time, but when Lorytex won the award we thought, ‘This must be a really innovative technology.’ So, when Saint explained what they wanted to achieve through local production, it was logical to bring Lorytex into the team.”

**‘Spectacular results’**

The outcome of the project more than exceeded expectations — in fact, Marco Picorell, CEO of Saint Hnos, describes them as “spectacular.” The ECG conversion succeeded on all counts, not only matching gravure quality but delivering significant productivity improvements over both gravure and ‘traditional’ flexo. Producing the five SKUs using the latter would have involved eight colors (CMYK + Silver + White + 2 Pantone spot colors) and taken 336 minutes. With ECG the production time was cut by 45% — to 184 minutes — and major cost savings were made in freight, gravure cylinder production, and lower ink and solvent consumption.

As a result, Saint Hnos has now moved 90% of its packaging to flexo ECG, and is reaping other benefits besides lower costs, greater productivity and faster time-to-market. Says Picorell: “Our marketing team now designs for ECG, and so have a new freedom to think in full color and outside the box.”

Looking to the future, he sees continuing to strengthen relationships with brands and converters as key to growing the business, both in Uruguay and overseas. He adds that Miraclon is a key partner in this: “To grow our business and support our customers’ investments, we need a platform we can trust and one that is being continuously developed. That’s what FLEXCEL NX Technology, and the team behind it, give us.”

**ENDS**

**About Miraclon**

KODAK FLEXCEL Solutions have helped transform flexographic printing over more than a decade. Brought to life by Miraclon, KODAK FLEXCEL Solutions – including the 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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