

Packaging specialist
Rattpack GmbH



DIGITAL PRODUCTION STRATEGY HELPS RATTPACK RISE TO PHARMA INDUSTRY DEMANDS

Company Name: Rattpack GmbH
Industry: Pharmaceutical packaging
Founded: 1950
Location: Austria and Germany
Services: Printed carton packaging, leaflets & inserts
Relationship with Canon: 2007

Objective

To have the flexibility to produce shorter runs of sensitive black & white patient instruction leaflets, as well as enabling high quality printing on lightweight media up to 45gsm for pharmaceutical packaging inserts

Challenges

- To meet growing demand for shorter run lengths and quicker turnaround times
- To print reliably on delicate lightweight paper at high volumes, with perfect front-to-back registration
- To meet the security needs of the highly regulated pharmaceutical industry

Approach

Rattpack Print and Packaging has been evolving its black & white digital print line-up over the last 10 years, with the aim of increasing flexibility to manage shorter runs and print on lighter substrates in line with market demand

Benefits

- Increased productivity and reliability of black & white production
- Flexibility to accommodate urgent jobs & offer shorter turnaround times
- High quality printing on challenging lightweight substrates as low as 45gsm, meeting stringent industry regulations

Canon

The demand for digital

Rattpack GmbH is a printer specialising in packaging applications, including folded cartons, leaflets and packaging inserts. Part of the Rattpack Group, it has seven sites in Austria and Germany, with over 500 employees in total. One of the sites, Rattpack Print and Packaging in Vienna, Austria, is focused on the production of packaging inserts and instruction manuals for the pharmaceutical sector.

Back in 2007, Rattpack Print and Packaging installed a first generation Océ VarioPrint 6000 mono digital printing system. The printer was designed for high volume black and white production, and for short run printing of highly sensitive documents, as well as enabling high quality printing on media up to 60gsm for applications such as pharmaceutical packaging inserts. At the time, printing on a wider range of lightweight substrates was not possible and Canon worked with Rattpack to deliver a tailored solution to enable the company to print on the lightest possible substrates.

Martin Schmutterer, Business Development Manager at Rattpack Print and Packaging, explains, “The pharmaceutical sector is highly regulated, which makes security absolutely critical. We keep an audit trail of all printed output for 20 years to ensure we adhere to industry regulations.”

Consistent with the quality assurance processes used in all areas of pharmaceutical manufacturing, Rattpack is required to perform a line clearance between individual print jobs for pharmaceutical inserts, to eliminate the risk of incorrect information being included with a product. This critical part of the production process was proving a challenge to Rattpack using offset equipment and led the company to look for a digital print solution.

With the introduction of the Océ VarioPrint 6150 digital print solution, the line clearance process became significantly quicker and easier, with minimal operator intervention.



Legislation on the readability of packaging inserts, for example font sizes, is constantly changing; the text needs to be as clear and decipherable as possible for the pharmaceutical user, without any mistakes. This frequently changing legislation, and the increase in pharma products targeting specific audiences, for example, medication produced only for women, has substantially impacted production run lengths.

Martin Schmutterer,
Business Development Manager

Rattpack immediately reaped the benefits of its digital investment in speed, quality and reliability of black and white production, supporting the growth and development of the business over the following decade.

In 2017, with 80-90% of Rattpack's output still produced in mono, the company decided to upgrade its digital print capabilities to meet rising volume demand for pharmaceutical leaflets and inserts due to demographic trends and increasingly stringent legislative requirements for user information. At the same time, the company had seen how innovations in digital print over the last decade had optimised the technology for even shorter run lengths. This led to the decision to invest in an additional digital printing device, the Océ VarioPrint 6320 Ultra+, to support short run production.

A delicate approach

Rattpack was also seeing escalating demand from its customers for printing on lightweight paper below 50 gsm.

“Today, pharmaceutical inserts need to be printed in multiple languages, which has led to the folded leaflets getting thicker as more and more information is required”, explains Schmutterer. “As a consequence, we now have to use lighter paper so that it can be folded more times to ensure it fits within the carton packaging.”

Rattpack presented this challenge to Canon resulting in close collaboration to develop and test a solution that could print on media up to 45gsm. Following successful trials, in autumn 2017 Rattpack invested in two of the newly launched Océ VarioPrint TITAN series presses; an Océ VarioPrint 6330 TITAN with the Light Weight Media Option for product inserts and an Océ VarioPrint 6180 TITAN for manuals.

Schmutterer expands on why the Océ VarioPrint 6000 TITAN series offered the right solution for the business: “Printing on lightweight paper is particularly difficult, because it is so thin and can tear easily. It isn't a very stable substrate and moves around a lot, which proves challenging when printing and then folding the sheet to fit into the packaging. There is no other solution in the market that can print reliably on such lightweight paper, at high volumes.”

Rattpack has seen an increase in productivity due to the features of the Océ VarioPrint 6000 TITAN series printers that support the lightweight media capability. For example, the Gemini Instant Duplex Technology allows for printing simultaneously on both sides of the sheet, which eliminates the risk of the paper jamming or even tearing when turning. The one pass duplex function ensures that high speed printing up to 328 ipm is possible while restricting the speed of the paper, as well as assuring accurate front-to-back registration. In addition, the Light Weight Media Air Guide

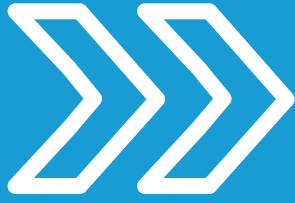


With digital print technology from Canon, we have been able to reduce print run lengths from 50,000 to under 10,000 on average, which has significant financial benefits to our business. We can produce pharmaceutical leaflets economically thanks to digital print and don't have wasted stock if, for example, regulations change. Now we only print exactly what's required by our customers. With the Océ VarioPrint 6000 TITAN devices, we can create more jobs in less time.

Martin Schmutterer,
Business Development Manager

Technology passes the lightweight paper between two airstreams, maintaining the stability of the sheet during printing to minimise errors.

With the solutions from Canon, Rattpack has the flexibility to halt a digital print run to accommodate an urgent job, in contrast to having to complete an offset run and make the press ready for another job before being able to start again.



Speed, quality
and reliability

Over a decade of partnership

Rattpack and Canon have a long-standing relationship that spans more than 10 years. Their close working partnership has been integral to Rattpack expanding into digital print production and having the flexibility to print on lighter substrates in line with market demand.

With Canon's support and technical expertise, Schmutterer is looking positively at the future of digital print and its impact on the Rattpack business.

"We predict that five years from now our whole print environment will no longer include offset, as we transform to a fully digital print operation to handle the increase in volume of digitally printed packaging inserts. With help from Canon, we're looking to completely automate our end-to-end digital printing processes, which will open up new possibilities for our business."



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Canon has continually understood our business needs as demand for reduced delivery times and shorter run lengths has increased”, comments Schmutterer. “Our ability to offer shorter turnaround times, delivering printed output in four days, rather than four weeks, means we can now give our customers a premium service. Plus, the unique technical capability to print on lighter substrates as low as 45gsm means we are able to extend our current product offering and provide new services to our customers.

Martin Schmutterer,
Business Development Manager

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English Edition 0147W156
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