

# Olympus powers on

**LEADING UK CONVERTER** Olympus Labels has significantly reduced its power consumption following installation of GEW's E2C curing systems on three Nilpeter FA-4 presses. Andy Thomas reports

Over the last three years, Olympus Labels – one of the UK's leading privately held label converters – has embarked on a major program of investment in high-end Nilpeter combination presses.

The company now has three highly specified 8- and 9-color FA4s, along with existing FA2500s. Olympus has been consistently in front of the press technology curve. One of the FA-4's is fitted with Nilpeter's FP-4 latest in-line flatbed emboss/foiling stations, and a second with the new and more robust Nilpeter/Stork drop in Screen unit.

Olympus' recent success reflects a growing confidence in the UK economy, with the company reporting an unusual surge of buying activity around Christmas. The company's key markets are high-end cosmetics and body care products, and increasingly, wine and craft beer labels. Although primarily supplying UK-based brands, Olympus' output is exported as far afield as Hong Kong and the Chinese mainland, and across continental Europe.

In common with an increasing number of UK label converters, Olympus has found itself close to the limits of its electrical power requirements, hampering the potential for further growth.

This situation has now been alleviated by the adoption of GEW's E2C UV lamp technology.

'This has generated a factory-wide 21 percent power saving, allowing us to put in another Nilpeter FA-4 press and move our business to the next level,' says joint managing director Adrian Brown. 'We achieved this by converting two existing FA-4 presses to the GEW E2C UV system and specifying the new FA-4 with E2C. We put our faith in GEW to deliver what they said they would and they have not let us down.'

Brown is in a good position to identify the impact of the new UV installation since introducing a Prism Management Information System (MIS) to the company. The Prism MIS allows management to keep track of each operator's shift activities – when the press was running, when in makeready and when down due to faults.

'After some software updates we have had virtually 100 percent UV efficiency and no downtime because of the

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lamps in the nine months they have been installed - and that's running 24/7 five days a week,' says Brown.

The greater energy efficiency of the E2C lamps' reflector design, added to the fact that Olympus runs its complex multi-process jobs at around half full press speed, means the lamps are operating at only 40 percent of full power and last in excess of 3,500 hours. The lamps are turned up a little for difficult to cure silvers and whites.

This compares to 80-90 percent power settings for the previous UV lamps, which in turn generated more lamp burnouts and shutter issues.

'We do actually run the presses a little faster than before because the operators are confident they will not have a problem with the GEW UV system,' says Brown.

The lower curing levels were set after an empirical process of trial and error.

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GEW has long advocated this approach to setting UV power levels as it has such an impact on reducing production costs. 'Traditionally, converters set their systems up using a fixed W/cm or percentage power value, however this only measures how much electrical power goes into the lamp, not how much UV is coming out or how well the ink is curing,' the company's UK sales manager Chris Nuttall explains. 'With modern low-energy UV curing systems, these traditional power settings can typically be halved to minimize power consumption, whilst still enabling increased press output.'



ADRIAN Brown, joint-MD Olympus Labels



GEW E2C UV lamps on Nilpeter FA-4