

A cocktail recipe for success

BY PETER KOHN - MARCH 2009 ISSUE OF PROPRINT.

Alcohol has its place in society, as long as we're sensible about it, and the same can be said about the pressroom. So, while we won't soon be seeing the day when the country's Heidelbergs, Rolands, Komoris, and other great marques become teetotalers, so to speak, we will see them cutting down a bit on the hard stuff and going for a ready-mixed cocktail. Peter Kohn takes a look.

THE traditional approach of mixing alcohol and fountain solution together may soon become a thing of the past. In fact, Tim Roberts of LithoTech International (LTI) in Sydney believes that time may already have arrived. Tim Roberts describes LTI's fountain solution and alcohol combination, branded '2in1', as a success story, and major users agree. Paul Purcell, production manager at Sydney Allen Printers in Rydalmere, New South Wales, was first introduced to 2in1 three years ago by a maintenance engineer in the pressroom. At the time, it was being used on UV presses. Purcell decided to trial it. 'I was looking at getting away from alcohol solutions altogether and I trialled several fountain solutions with no alcohol and they caused a lot of everyday problems with printers. A lot of old-school printers don't like the idea of not using alcohol. This is a substitute and I gave it a go, and didn't look back.'

He says 2in1 has performed strongly on Sydney Allen Printers' Heidelbergs, a ten-colour Speedmaster perfecter and six-colour CD, on which he uses CPI's Cervo inks and Hostmann Steinberg inks with no ink problems, no calcium problems. Potential OHS issues have been resolved. 'We don't have as much smell in the factory.' Sydney Allen's does a lot of

general commercial work and Purcell is pleased with the improvements. 'It's sharper, a lot of alcohol replacements carry too much water, the brightness stays in, and you don't use as much ink. And we're using a lot less fountain solution. We're dosing at about four-and-a-half percent, whereas your normal alcohol dosing was up around 10 to 12 percent.'

2in1 has made an impact at Hannapak at North Richmond, in Sydney's west. Printroom manager Bill O'Brien told ProPrint he turned to LTI to solve issues that arose from changing fountain solutions for UV printing. 'We had a small window with ink and water balance. 2in1 made the window a lot bigger, and helped with the life of plates too.'

At Hannapak, 2in1 is used with Flint inks on three MAN Rolands, two 700s and a 900, to process a wide array of long-run package printing. It enables faster start-ups and performs brilliantly, even on metallic inks, with a big window separating violets, dark browns and greens, said O'Brien. At Carter Holt Harvey Australia (CHH), print technical manager Vaughan McCullough has been using 2in1 on the company's extensive package printing operations for some years and is elated at the results, in terms of ink-water balance and colour consistency. CHH was the first company to try the MGE FX-1 Filtration

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System in Australia, said McCullough. 'We've adapted the system into our fountain refrigeration tanks and we've been able to achieve up to ten months' fountain usage without dumping or replacing our fount.'

In fact, McCullough said the majority of CHH's press fleet, 10 Roland 700s and 900s and a 50-inch Komori, have been used without dumping the fount at all. The CHH facility at Mount Waverley, in Victoria, has now purchased its first FX-1 Filtration Unit.

Said LTI's Tim Roberts, '2in1 is the only FOGRA fountain solution and alcohol combination specifically designed for offset printing.' He said over

1,600,000 litres of 2in1 have been sold in Australia and New Zealand. Well over 5,000,000 litres have been sold globally, in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Germany, Austria and South Africa. Its usability is widespread, Roberts told ProPrint. 2in1 has been dosed through all the alcohol dosing systems, from basic systems to the latest innovations from technotrans (Alcosmart AZR), Baldwin (IPA Sonic) and Unisensor (AlcoPrint 3000). ✕

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