



Stork Prints DLE 6510

## DLE Controls Z Axis, Prints 250 Lines

### Fast, Consistent Platemaking Means Printers Break Through Barriers

**Y**ou can't sit on what you are doing today! You have to push the envelope and look to the future," declares Paul Zeinert, Anderson and Vreeland's direct engraving product manager. "It might require an investment in capital and risk. Printers need to continue to embrace new technology to improve quality so flexo becomes more attractive than offset or gravure in various applications"

Zeinert maintains that, "A&V has grown over the past 50 years by supporting its customers and minimizing their risk as they adopt new technologies for improvement—most re-

cently, that entails direct laser engraving (DLE) technology for photopolymer plates. "We recognized the importance of direct laser engraving more than five years ago and positioned the company to be a leader in providing this technology to flexo printers. We invested three-plus years of time and significant capital before selling our first direct laser engraving system. Today, the flexo market is positioned to benefit from the combined technologies of DLE and in the round (ITR) to greatly improve print quality and print efficiency."

With the new technology in lasers and materials, DLE has become an impressive technology for flexography. Zeinert says, "It has the capability of printing up to 250 lines and controls the Z axis for improved pressure control on press. Because of the Z axis capability, flexographers can do things that were previously unheard of in flexo."

Examples include running large solids with fine dots or fine line work on the same plate, or having a screen with no minimum dot throughout the plate. This improved performance is taking work away from rotogravure. The disadvantage of DLE has been speed, according to Zeinert. "We believe this will be addressed in 2012 with some new developments."

He believes, "DLE will become the fastest process for flexo platemaking in 2012, making it the process to be recognized. With the capability of Z axis control and a polymer that is specifically designed for DLE, Anderson & Vreeland will give rotogravure a run for its money." ■

#### TECHNOLOGY TO WATCH

##### Direct Laser Engraving In the Round

- Introduction Date: 2009 continuing through 2012
- Benefits: Improved print quality and efficiency
- Impact: DLE is positioned to become fastest process for flexo platemaking
- Experience: Flexographers report running large solids with fine dots or fine line work on the same plate, or having a screen with no minimum dot throughout the plate
- Partners: Stork Prints
- Watch for: Improvements in speed in 2012
- 2012 Exhibitions: INFO\*FLEX, Labelexpo Americas