

Packaging in Motion:
New LenstarFlexo Process Presents
Engaging and Accessible Shelf Appeal

The LenstarFlexo process that created the 3D label on the cover of this issue is the result of collaboration among several stakeholders who believe that the future of this process will be a great opportunity for packaging applications. Pacur Inc. (www.pacur.com) in Oshkosh, WI, supplied the lenticular roll stock for the cover labels; the Pixalen Studio (www.pixalenstudio.com) converted the label design for flexographic lenticular printing and outputted the Kodak Flexcel-NX plates for printing; CCL Label Specialty Group (www.ccllabel.com/promotion) printed the flexographic lenticular label; and the Capsule design firm (www.capsule.us) in Minneapolis created the design of the flexographic lenticular label as well as the overall cover design.

Bruce Hammerbeck, v.p. of marketing at Pacur, explains that the LenstarFlexo process has had a gradual rollout over the past year, and it is aimed directly at packaging. “There are all sorts of markets this can go into,” Hammerbeck says. For packaging, he understands the all-important moment of truth is getting a shopper to pick a package up, because purchase then usually follows.

The design of the lenticular lens is critical for roll fed flexo, as the lens is thinner than for litho offset. “We basically have put together a turnkey solution for prepress, including plate-making, that we can take to the flexo printer,” Hammerbeck says.

“Not every press has the necessary equipment, however.” Timothy Goggins, studio director of Pixalen Studio, explains the 3D technique they call Chromalen3D, which creates a tiled, looped lenticular pattern. “In flexo, we limit the lenticular effect to a single color,” explains Goggins. “The color can be any of the CMYK process colors or a spot color.” Chromalen Motion takes the effect through a looped motion sequence, like the sample on the cover of this issue.

Goggins goes on to explain that this particular project used six colors—CMYK plus one spot color and a flood white. Using spot colors makes it possible to isolate the effect using the precise color desired. However, the spot channels require additional vision and attention to detail during the reproduction process. “I hope that the cover label will inspire creative minds to push this new medium,” says Goggins.

Aaron Keller, managing principal at Capsule in Minneapolis, MN, relished the challenge of transforming two-dimensional art into three dimensions in motion. He explains that adding the technological requirements to take advantage of this unique medium requires early planning and precise printing control of the flexographic lenticular. The specifics are deep in the details and require professionals who have been through it before.

“The technology is advancing greatly with vastly improved printing quality and materials,” Keller says. “When working with lenticular labels, it is crucial to have a vision, but really trust your partner to direct the solution with the greatest impact.” When designing a LenstarFlexo file, Keller says that simplicity in style and depth of concept are critical. “If the style is too complex, it doesn’t allow the technology to contribute as much to the package design,” says Keller. “Secondly, if the concept and brand lack depth and therefore rely wholly on the technology, the effort will only be a facade.” Both the concept and visual style must work together with the brand in almost equal measure.

All stakeholders believe there is a tremendous future for flexo lenticular labels in packaging. “The labels will visually speak to consumers,” says Goggins. “We expect that flexo lenticular will be used first in promotion and new product launches. Its power to lure consumers will even give it a place in brand identity.”

Learn more at www.LenstarFlexo.com. As an added bonus for *Package Design Magazine* readers, LenstarFlexo is offering a promotional packet with additional LenstarFlexo samples and a designer’s guide with information on how to design for this new packaging medium. The link to the order form is www.LenstarFlexo.com/pdm.

###