**PRESS RELEASE**

**Mex, Switzerland, 13th February 2020**

**BOBST – together with its industry partners – opens the doors to its new Flexo Center of Excellence, enabling a full end-to-end flexo process experience**

BOBST hosted an Open House at its new Flexo Center of Excellence at Bobst Bielefeld on 13 February 2020, giving attendees the opportunity to experience the entire flexo process from start to finish. The Competence Center at Bobst Bielefeld’s has been extended to include a pre-press room, meaning it is now a fully comprehensive Center of Excellence for the flexo process, specifically for Extended Color Gamut (ECG) for wide-web CI flexo presses. The Center benefits from an “open-partnership” system, meaning all of BOBST’s valued industry partners are present, ensuring the integration of all the elements that combine to make a flawless end-to-end process.

“Bobst Bielefeld is now the ultimate Center of Excellence,” said Mark McInulty, Managing Director Bobst Bielefeld. “It provides an invaluable central facility for testing and continuous development of the ECG process for BOBST and industry suppliers in our open-partnership system. The Center helps our CI flexo printing customers to maximize the advantages derived from the implementation of the ECG process to the fullest.”

The use of ECG is growing steadily. The process uses three additional ink colors – orange, green and violet (OGV) – on top of the conventional colors of cyan, magenta, yellow, and black (CMYK), enabling a match with 90%+ of the Pantone book, compared with approximately 60% previously. For a converter, its adoption means many sizable economies of time and cost: no more changes of inks and resulting washing of print decks, no need for a huge ink inventory for storing spot inks, no time wasted in ink mixing and a guarantee of color consistency for jobs that are run a long time apart or in different parts of the world.

BOBST equipment shown at the Open House included:

* **VISION CI:** launched in October 2019, it offers the best in class performance value. Fast and easy to setup and change over, it features technical innovations, automation and exclusive smart technologies that ensure repeatable process consistency with water or solvent-based ink printing, minimum waste and easy manufacturing for all run lengths, on a wide range of substrates.
* **EXPERT CI:** a CI flexo press with innovative features helping to maximize CI flexo process consistency, making it a perfect fit for the requirements of the 7-color ECG printing process. The press delivers stable and controlled printing results and exceptional productivity with both solvent and water-based inks. Attendees were able to see the EXPERT CI print sustainable flexible pouches made from new high barrier mono-material laminates, which were first revealed at K 2019.
* **The Digital Inspection Table:** a novel quality control technology that incorporates digital projection for proofing purposes, whilst providing real-time visual representations to match product with digital proofs.
* **E-services:** world-class machines deserve world-class services. Attendees saw some of the solutions from the BOBST Services team, which help printers to optimize productivity and quality, while reducing downtime and environmental impact.

**Partnerships for the perfect process**Open House visitors experienced the entire flexo process from file to the printed reel by talking to the various BOBST partners at different stations about different topics, starting from the pre-press facility that houses latest generation equipment shown live at the event:

* **U. Günther Prepress** illustrated its capabilities in packaging design-to-print process with its connected services and cost reducing solutions, delivering optimized performance for an efficient design-to-ECG print process.
* **Miraclon**: the pre-press room houses a KODAK FLEXCEL NX Wide 4260 System for production of KODAK FLEXCEL NXH Plates in the center. Miraclon helps to meet the unique challenges of ECG printing with patented plate technologies that enable ink transfer to be controlled and optimized for a defined process print condition. It brings to the ECG project of press and plate harmonization, more than a decade of experience working with printers and prepress specialists globally to drive greater adoption of process printing for flexo.
* **Glunz & Jensen:** the pre-press room houses a Flex-i-Pro 470 plate-making machine, along with the hot air dryer Concept 401D and the exposure unit 401 ECLF for large flexographic plates 1200 x 1530 mm. Glunz & Jensen brings to the project its 45 years of experience in innovative, high-quality plate making solutions for all plate processing requirements.
* **Esko:** the pre-press room houses an Esko XPS Crystal 4835 exposure unit, a Kongsberg X20 cutting table and the complete pre-press software required to produce ECG print ready files. Together with BOBST, Esko puts the spotlight on the value created by their partnership, showing attendees on how they can drive their own business forward on the journey of digital transformation, be it in customer communication, prepress editing, workflow automation, color management or business integration.

Other partners illustrated their technologies and knowledge within the framework of the harmonization of all the elements that concur to achieving the best and most efficient results with ECG printing.

* **Rossini’s** contribution to the ECG project are Starcoat Light sleeves, which offer exceptional dimensional stability and accuracy over time, and Fastbridge adapters, which offer superior absorption of vibration whilst allowing considerably faster print speeds.
* **Lohmann** presented the DuploFLEX5 range of plate mounting tape highlighting how the complex technology hidden in the “thinnest” tool for the flexographic printing process contributes to make ECG printing possible.
* **Zecher** explained that to produce a high quality anilox is self-evident, but optimizing and influencing the consistent and reproducible print quality through the help of an anilox is a major differentiator.
* **Daetwyler** presented MDC-Gamutstar, the blade specifically designed for the ECG process, delivering high precision and extended blade life for long runs and multiple jobs.
* **Flint Group** enlightened attendees about the powerful possibilities of ECG printing as a game changer for flexible packaging in delivering greater adaptability, shorter lead times, higher quality and higher definition. Flint Group supports the ECG project with its FlexiPrint solvent-based inks which were used in the print demonstration on the EXPERT CI flexo press.
* **Follmann** spoke about the cost-efficiency of water-based ink printing and their positive contribution to CO2-reduction. The single-component solution of the brilliant ink system, fast make-ready times while ensuring color fastness, longer plates lifetime and a stable printing process also contribute to cost efficiency. Follmann inks were used in the print demonstration on the VISION CI flexo press.
* **X-Rite Pantone’s** presentation focused on color consistency control in ECG printing and how its industry-leading technology solutions, designed to streamline the digital color workflow process, support packaging converters in profiling their press to get the most accurate fingerprint data.

Presentations were followed the by print demonstrations on the VISION CI and on the EXPERT CI flexo presses equipped with all the latest technologies presented by the partners in the ECG open partnership project. Quality control of the print samples was made on the Digital Inspection table, while E-services were demonstrated live in the Bobst Bielefeld dedicated Training Center facility.

“Every single partner we work with brings so much to the table in terms of innovation and optimizing the flexo process,” said Mark McInulty. “The Open House is actually the perfect example of seamless collaboration in action – many companies coming together to combine their expertise and resources to create an optimized experience for our customers. We are delighted to work with all of our partners and to welcome them to the Center of Excellence.”

**About BOBST**

We are one of the world’s leading suppliers of substrate processing, printing and converting equipment and services for the label, flexible packaging, folding carton and corrugated industries.

Founded in 1890 by Joseph Bobst in Lausanne, Switzerland, BOBST has a presence in more than 50 countries, runs 14 production facilities in 8 countries and employs more than 5 600 people around the world. The firm recorded a consolidated turnover of CHF 1 635 million for the year ended December 31, 2018.

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