**PRESS ARTICLE**

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**Pantone validation for BOBST extended color gamut (ECG) on gravure press provides ultimate stamp of quality**

*First ever Pantone validation for gravure printing press proves that true ECG color consistency on gravure has been achieved at last.*

Color consistency. Every brand owner demands it on their product packaging, and understandably so. People make up their minds within seconds of their initial interactions with products. And color alone influences 85% of shoppers’ purchase decisions.[[1]](#endnote-1)

Color variations suggest a lack of product quality, which can heavily impact brand identity and customer loyalty. Many brand owners say they frequently encounter color inconsistency or inaccuracy across different suppliers, and that color-related challenges and rework have a negative impact on their company.[[2]](#endnote-2)

With that in mind, Extended Color Gamut, or ECG, has been a major driver of color consistency in the packaging industry in recent years, while simultaneously boosting production efficiency. ECG is a process to digitize color matching offline, thus making it stable, easy, repeatable, consistent and independent of human interpretation. ECG refers to a set of inks; 4 or more, but typically 7, to achieve a color gamut larger than the traditional CMYK ensuring color repeatability irrespective of operator’s skill.

oneECG is BOBST’s ECG technology deployed across analogue and digital printing processes in label, flexible packaging, folding carton and corrugated board industries. BOBST launched oneECG several years ago and it has been a great success, enabling color consistency across multiple machines across all industries.

But historically, there was one exception. In the early days of ECG, it had not quite been perfected for gravure machines. BOBST was passionate to address this customer pain point and worked tirelessly to enhance its gravure machines to enable perfect oneECG. In just a few short years, BOBST was confident they had achieved it. oneECG was now the most developed technology for printing with seven standardized colors in gravure.

But in the wider industry, an element of uncertainty and skepticism remained. Could true color consistency be achieved on gravure through oneECG? BOBST decided to put it to the ultimate test – Pantone validation.

**Pantone validation: credibility for color consistency**

Pantone is of course known for its color matching system and for being used by millions of designers and producers in many industries worldwide.

BOBST was keen for the challenge of Pantone validation, which would prove the accuracy of oneECG on gravure beyond doubt. Pantone put BOBST through a rigorous test with diverse color types, involving many extremes and non-standard situations.

The testing was undertaken on BOBST’s gravure machine platform, the MASTER RS 6003 – a highly flexible platform, which can be configured into a multi-functional production line. Complementary converting operations can easily be added inline with printing to address a very broad spectrum of diverse product requirements and applications.

Pantone provided a list of over 2,300 Pantone Spot colors to be reproduced in ECG on the BOBST MASTER RS 6003. After receiving this list, BOBST worked on pre-press preparation and color separation for every single spot color. BOBST printed all of them in one step on the MASTER RS 6003 and then sent the print sample to Pantone in the US for their analysis, measurement and evaluation of the color match and color quality.

The verdict? The MASTER RS 6003 passed with flying colors. The machine has become the first rotogravure press in the world to receive Pantone validation.

**More than just color consistency – the full potential of gravure can be realized**

For brand owners and converters, the results bring more than peace of mind. It completely opens up the possibility of oneECG on gravure and with it, 100% job consistency and repeatability and a dramatic reduction in machine downtime. oneECG also allows multiple jobs to be run, opening up gravure printing and all other technologies for medium and short jobs. The MASTER RS 6003 enables profitable production of smaller and medium-sized orders from about 5,000 m². Orders can be delivered faster with high profitability, whether they are small, medium or long runs.

oneECG works with a fixed set of up to seven printing inks, so gravure printers only need to change the printing cylinders for job changes, while the inks remain in the printing machines. This reduces ink waste while also reducing storage space for cylinders, anilox rolls and inks.

During drupa 2024, BOBST shared the news about the Pantone validation to attendees, who were impressed and pleased, feeling that it added credibility to oneECG in gravure.

For brand owners and converters that require premium quality packaging, gravure has always been an excellent option. But doubts about color consistency – and the inability to meet increasing demands for shorter print runs – made it less desirable. Now, with the leap forward in innovation provided by the Pantone-validated MASTER RS 6003, all of this is possible, setting them on the path for a highly productive and profitable future.

1. Kumar S. The Psychology of Colour Influences Consumers’ Buying Behaviour – A Diagnostic Study

   October 2017. Ushus - Journal of Business Management 16(4):1-13. DOI:10.12725/ujbm.41.1 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/inconsistent-brand-colour-reason-your-business-cant-grow-david-stead/

   **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 board industries.

   Founded in 1890 by Joseph Bobst in Lausanne, Switzerland, BOBST has a presence in more than 50 countries, runs 21 production facilities in 12 countries and employs more than 6 300 people around the world. The firm recorded a consolidated turnover of CHF 1.960 billion for the year ended December 31, 2023.

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