



HP Indigo Installs 1,000 Presses for Labels and Packaging as Industry Shifts to Digital

ROSEMONT, Ill., Sept. 14, 2010 – At today's opening of the Labelexpo Americas conference, HP announced it has achieved a milestone of 1,000 HP Indigo digital presses installed among labels and packaging customers, and unveiled solutions that help converters decrease turnaround times and grow their businesses.

The HP Indigo exhibit includes new and unique capabilities for its digital press portfolio, helping move jobs more quickly through the production process to produce more work per shift, improve print quality and extend into new business areas such as folding cartons and flexible packaging. They include:

- cut-and-stack label and folding carton production on a sheetfed [HP Indigo press 5500](#) to handle short runs on a broad range of media
- extended media gamut capabilities for the high-volume [HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press](#) to help converters extend beyond digital labels into flexible packaging and folding cartons
- an optional dryer for flexible packaging production to expedite jobs from the digital press to finishing
- technology upgrades for the HP Indigo WS6000 that expand the press's range of compatible media, provide greater color consistency on long runs, and allow for higher levels of utilization
- new software and finishing offerings, including technologies from members of the [HP Graphics Solutions Partner program](#).

A once-niche technology becomes mainstream and popular

"In the 10 years since Indigo and HP signed their first strategic agreement, we have grown our customer base from a small number of pioneers using Indigo technology for label printing to 1,000 HP Indigo presses worldwide using a broad range of labels and packaging applications from HP and our partners," said Alon Bar-Shany, vice president and general manager, Indigo division, HP. "This includes 130 installations of our higher-volume HP Indigo WS6000 in more than 30 countries."

Today's announcements strengthen HP Indigo's position as the "one-stop shop" for

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digital press solutions – from all types of labels to shrink sleeves, flexible packaging and folding cartons. HP Indigo customers also can choose from an extensive selection of certified substrates, HP SmartStream prepress/workflow solutions and finishing technologies from a variety of HP Graphics Solutions Partners.

A preferred solution in digital label and packaging converting

HP Indigo is one of the top-selling label press brands in the converting industry. The company's HP Indigo ws4500 and WS6000 digital presses enable converters to provide fast turnaround, high-quality and streamlined multi-SKU production.

With HP Indigo digital printing, converters' customers can better manage their brands – improving sell-through with targeted design, while lowering capital expenditures, time to market and obsolescence. Brand owners that specify HP Indigo production for the label and packaging work they buy gain the ability to affordably launch new products and gain better visibility on shelves thanks to the unique, high-quality HP Indigo liquid electrophotographic printing process.

In an [article published earlier this year](#), Charles Pombert, senior purchasing manager for Precision Foods, St. Louis, described the way digital printing helped double sales for three of Precision's retail canning and preserving products:⁽¹⁾ "In the retail sales space, you need high quality, high impact graphics so your product jumps off the shelf. Digital labeling has offered that to us."

Sheetfed HP Indigo production in its Labelexpo debut

For the first time at a converting industry event, HP will show its sheetfed solution – a cut-and-stack label-printing workflow featuring an HP Indigo press 5500 – producing offset-quality, short-run and personalized work.

The HP Indigo 5500 exhibit includes a POLAR LabelSystems solution for the production of square-cut and die-cut labels. POLAR, a leading provider of high-speed cutters, is one of the newest members of the HP Graphics Solutions Partners program.

A thick substrate kit option for the HP Indigo 5500 also gives it the ability to print on board up to 18 points thick, giving converters additional options for digital folding carton production.

HP Indigo WS6000 productivity brings digital to mainstream applications

The HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press on display at Labelexpo Americas – a high-volume device that can be more cost-effective than analog on up to 80 percent of label jobs converters produce – has become a preferred solution worldwide for streamlined production of labels and packaging.

The HP Indigo WS6000 prints shrink sleeves and folding carton substrates in addition to a broad range of labels. Its ability to print on films as thin as 0.47 mils also makes it an ideal solution for flexible packaging, with an in-line drying system for the press reducing the typical flexible packaging curing times.

"We see the ability to offer high-quality flexible packaging as a major advancement for the CPC market," said Kathy Popovich, director of Marketing for Innovative Labeling Solutions (ILS), a Hamilton, Ohio-based converter. ILS uses its HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press in combination with the AB Graphic Digilam to



provide turn-key flexible packaging solutions.

ILS joins numerous other progressive converters in the Americas using the HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press to improve their clients' brand value, including: Baumgarten Gráfica Ltda. in Blumenau, Brazil; Dion Label in Westfield, Mass.; Flexo Print in Guadalajara, Mexico; Steinhauser Inc. in Newport, Ky.; and pharmaceutical packaging specialist Nosco in Gurnee, Ill.

HP Indigo customers will benefit from technical performance upgrades also announced at Labelexpo Americas. New HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Presses will come equipped with 20 new features, including new blankets for better substrate compatibility; a new primer designed for synthetic substrates; a new enhancement unit for the photo imaging plate; compatibility with the [HP Indigo Print Care](#) diagnostics and maintenance solution; and Continuous Color Control, a tool that gives operators added assurance of consistency on long runs.

The new HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press features are scheduled to be delivered as a free upgrade to existing HP Indigo WS6000 customers starting in Q1 2011.

Progressive, profitable printing – from planning to prepress to finishing

Labelexpo Americas marks the U.S. debut of new [HP SmartStream Production Analyzer](#) and SmartPlanner 3.0 solutions for accurate, informed plant management. Available now, the SmartPlanner advanced estimating tool and the Production Analyzer business planning solution for multipress environments provide data that can help converters analyze their operations and tailor their production operations to increase productivity and maximize profitability.

Another new software solution, Tailored Solutions' Label Traxx 5.6 print business management software, integrates with HP Indigo production operations through EskoArtwork's BackStage software. The link between HP Indigo operations and Label Traxx helps users eliminate rekeying of important information and provides prepress personnel and customer service representatives with immediate status updates as jobs proceed through the production workflow.

HP's best-selling digital label and packaging press, the [HP Indigo press ws4500](#), is producing shrink sleeves in the HP booth. Printed sleeves are being finished with a K1 seamer from Karlville – an entry level model for narrow web digital and flexographic converters looking for a reasonable investment.

HP also is exhibiting front-end workflow technologies developed by EskoArtwork, the leading provider of label and packaging prepress solutions, and finishing systems from AB Graphic International. The AB Graphic systems offer a range of essential finishing features, available through the company's Digicon2 product line, including a flexible packaging lamination unit compatible with the HP Indigo WS6000 and ws4500 models.

Thinking outside the box: business development offerings for digital success

To complement its portfolio of label and packaging solutions, HP also supports Indigo customers through consulting, training and other key services that are part of the [HP Capture Business Success](#) business development program. HP's booth includes a section devoted to the Capture program where converters can learn about one of the graphic arts industry's most comprehensive offerings of customer



education, tools and community features.

The Capture program's consulting offering gives customers a chance to learn from industry experts and apply successful business approaches to the digital label and packaging market.

"The Sales Training Course presented to the Label World sales team by HP Indigo business consultants was not only exciting and well paced, it was one of the most motivating sessions my group has ever experienced together," according to one customer, Skylar Rote, vice president of sales for Label World, Rochester, N.Y. "HP's support team helped our sales force develop a set of value-added ideas for selling digital printing."

Industry-leading quality and productivity in digital label and packaging production

A real-time display of press productivity – the daily "Tower of Production" demonstration – highlights the number of jobs that can be printed per shift compared to conventional flexography. Working to an eight-hour production schedule each day at the show, the HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press is printing a variety of labels on various substrates, recreating the environment at a typical converter's facility.

HP's Labelexpo booth No. 3223 at the Stephens Convention Center also showcases entries from the annual HP Indigo Digital Labels and Packaging Contest. These print samples underscore why HP Indigo technology is the only digital platform to win major print quality contests when judged against flexographic- and offset-printed labels.⁽²⁾

About HP

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- (1) Dan Alaimo, "Digital Labels Give Precision Foods Edge in Manufacturing, Marketing," CPG Matters, January 2010.
- (2) HP Indigo-printed labels were best-in-show winners in the *packagePRINTING* magazine 2007 Excellence Awards and the Tag & Label Manufacturers Institute 2008 awards competition.



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