



Captivating your audience

Mark Dinsdale,
managing director,
GMP

Recognising technological and logistical advances in recent years, print is now more accessible than ever and available on an array of platforms. Customers are no longer restricted to their local print vendor. They are instead able to branch out on a national and international scale to be more selective to their needs. What happens when the competition is suddenly expanded to include the entire world?

Print is simply not as it once was. An added picture or graphic alongside content is not enough to capture the attention of the everyday consumer, who is bombarded with products and messages daily. Creativity is the key to creating something that truly captivates. Print still has its place to connect with millennials, but boundaries need to be pushed to create endless combinations of special effects to lift print beyond the paper.



Here at GMP UK we asked ourselves, what can we offer our customers that will give them the tools to do just that? What can we develop that will offer endless creativity at their fingertips, whilst proving to be a valuable asset to their business?

We focused our innovation on developing a select range of thermal laminators that not

only provides high quality lamination, but that also gives the ability to 'sleek' with our specially designed GMP foils. Sleeking is an exciting new technology that we first introduced to the industry at The Print Show 2015 at the NEC. Our Q-Topic and Protopic

“What happens when the competition is suddenly expanded to include the entire world?”

stole the show, raising a lot of interest for those in the digital printing world. Dan at Eazyprint was on hand to show his sleeking skills, creating some wonderful prints.

Sleeking simply means you can foil your digital print using a variety of colours, metallic finishes, traditional spot matt and gloss, as well as speciality holographic effects—and you can do all of this with just one laminator.

Stimulate a reaction

Emma Oliver,
creative papers product manager,
Antalis UK

The printing industry has faced some significant challenges in the past decade, especially from the evolution of digital media, which is now competing head-on against printed communication. However, despite the decline in print volumes, the demand for high quality, creative print offerings that offer maximum visual impact and multi-sensory interaction are bucking this trend and continuing to rise. It is in this area that online and digital communication simply cannot compete with the printed page.

While the printing of a product has to be top quality, it is the characteristics of the selected substrate that will truly set it apart from the competition and give the extra dimension of added visual impact to stimulate a reaction.

By selecting a creative substrate, using an alternative printing technique, or applying a different finish can totally transform what could otherwise be a very plain, unassuming piece of print. Textured papers that appeal to the senses and are desirable to the consumer, that engage through touch and feel, bring print



to life. There is also the choice of vibrant and stunning colours, foils, metallics, translucent substrates, and high gloss or ultra-matt papers that all add to the appeal of the product.

In terms of special effects, we have seen a return to the 'more is less' approach, whereby designers are taking the time to select the right paper and deploy less print, to enable the properties and finish of the paper to do the majority of the work for maximum visual impact. The use of foil blocking is also making a comeback, as well as creative finishing, such as embossing that all help to make the product stand out.

At Antalis, innovation and creativity, listening to our customers and anticipating trends are all key considerations when bringing new products to market. The introduction of our new Mohawk Superfine uncoated paper range for digital print is a prime example. Mohawk Superfine is one of the finest premium papers

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available, delivering stunning results. Available in an ultra-smooth or eggshell finish, Mohawk Superfine inspires beautiful design with a luxurious tactility that gives the printed product a quality, timeless appeal that is proving popular with premium art and photobooks.

Advances in digital printing technology has without doubt increased the range of substrates that can now be printed on. And, with so much choice of substrates on the market, from new synthetic paper such as the Polyart, Rives Sensation Matt with its natural flat texture, the vibrant colour and textured finishes of the Curious Collection range, to the beauty and fine quality of Mohawk Superfine, there is no end to the creative possibilities of print.



To make your print product stand out in a tough market, it pays to get creative. **Jo Golding** investigates special effects that can be achieved to add significant value to print products



This February edition of *Print Monthly* focuses on an exciting, developing part of the print industry which this feature will go into more depth about. The idea of adding more value to print has been born out of a need for print-service-providers to stand out from their competition, which has become absolutely critical in today's more saturated market. Just look at the cover of this *Print Monthly* and the special effects it uses to enhance this striking image. It is clear how even the use of spot varnish can really make the right image pop and increase its perceived value.

In this feature, I will discover how different special effects such as foiling

and materials such as creative papers, can be used to enhance a printed product. I will talk to experts in the industry about the most requested effects, and find out whether it is worth spending your hard earned cash on the materials and technology to make it happen.

Mark Dinsdale, managing director of GMP, was excited to talk about the latest technology in finishing that is allowing people to do more than just laminate. 'Sleeking' technology, as it has been coined by GMP's partners in Korea, involves a standard laminating machine with a special added feature.

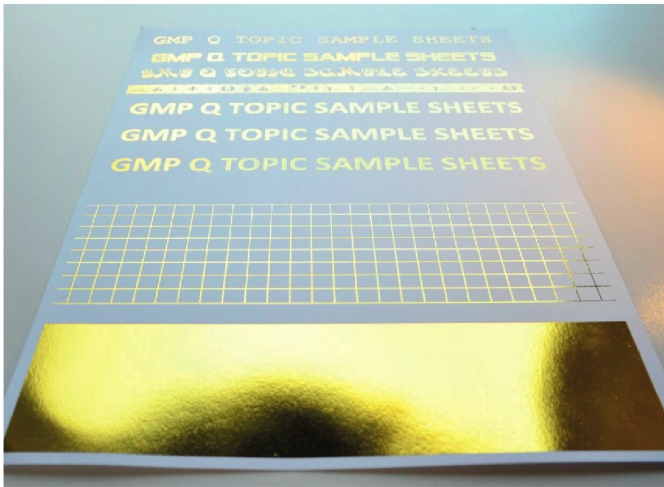
"What underpins the sleeking process is a carrier film onto which a foil, which could be silver or gold, has been

GMP's sleeking technology is drawing in a lot of interest, allowing digital printers to achieve different effects using a standard laminating machine

applied. What we do is we take each sheet of paper, put it through a digital printer, and wherever you put toner you then pass the sheet through the laminator," explains Dinsdale.

He continues: "As it goes through the laminating process, the foil comes off the carrier film onto where the toner is. It's similar to foiling. Then what you can do is put the sheet back through the digital printer and you can print on the background, for example, to give a completely different effect. We've also got it available with a gloss or a matte, so you can then start producing spot varnish."

Dinsdale goes on to say that sleeking allows digital printers to achieve



There is a golden opportunity up for grabs for creative print-service-providers to stand out from the competition, by adding special effects to print

coverage of an A4 sheet, it's about 4p. If it's a gloss or matte, it's around 2p. This is way more cost-effective than traditional foiling. If somebody spends £100,000 on a Xerox machine or HP Indigo, they can put one of these machines alongside it to do standard laminating and many different things. It is this finishing part that seems to be exciting people."

In terms of whether sleeking is adding real value to print, the proof seems to be in the sales. "They're being able to sell prints for three, four times the normal price purely because of the gold and silver effects. People will pay the money for them," adds Dinsdale.

Finishing touch

Celloglas is a key UK-based player in the speciality print finishing market and has a range of innovative technologies that span spot UV varnish, fragrance, silver latex (which is used for scratch cards), and glow in the dark media. Its foiling covers metallic colours, black foils, white foils, as well as embossing. Lamination can be carried out with a standard gloss, matte or silk finish. As well as many other finishing capabilities, Celloglas owns the brand Mirri—a range of metallic board and paper for packaging, POS, and magazine or book covers.

Celloglas was the company behind many special magazine covers including *Good Things*, *The Dish*, and *Imagine FX*.

"A gold foil was chosen by *Good Things* magazine to match their Christmas cover design, including a stunning recipe produced by James Martin," explains Steve Middleton, sales director at Celloglas, adding: "A proof was digitally printed and foiled on the header to test the result before the full run was produced, with the gold foil being applied at Celloglas in Reading and returned to the printer for binding.

"*The Dish* is a food magazine that features in the *Sunday Times* every month. Glitter varnish was screen applied with a print run of 870,000 copies. Creative ideas were discussed with magazine publishing manager Laura McClennon at News International and glitter varnish was chosen as an enhancement for this Marks and Spencer's sponsored magazine. The glitter varnish also enhanced the reader experience, adding a festive dimension to this special cover."

Celloglas also put the finishing touches on *Imagine FX* magazine. Middleton says: "Celloglas finished the

different effects using a standard laminating machine, such as variable data foiling, and that 'people are using it in areas we never even thought of'.

Sleeking has been used to produce items such as wedding stationery, business cards, greetings cards, prom-

What we've found is that people are buying it especially for the sleeking," enthuses Dinsdale.

Dinsdale assures me that it is also a cost-effective solution: "The laminating machine that we recommend is less than £10,000, that's a semi-

“It is this finishing part that seems to be exciting people”

otional print, and even university certificates where individual names can be printed in gold.

"We developed it thinking people can still buy it as a standard laminator.

automatic machine called the Q-Topic 380. It's no more expensive than any other laminator on the market and has added features.

"If you looked at gold or silver full



Mark Dinsdale of GMP says sleeking is allowing people to sell prints for three or four times the normal price due to the 'gold and silver effects'



Celloglas produced this special magazine cover for Good Things, where a gold foil was chosen to match their Christmas cover design



Steve Middleton of Celloglas explains how a glitter varnish was screen applied to The Dish (Marks and Spencer's sponsored magazine) for a print run of 870,000



Imagine FX magazine was finished with a Cellotouch laminate for protection and a Cellofoil CF Satin Gold effect

October issue with a Cellotouch laminate and a Cellofoil CF Satin Gold effect. Cellotouch lamination adds protection, while making covers feel silky smooth to touch. The gold foil was applied first and then the laminate was applied on top."

Middleton recognises foil as a popular value-adding trend: "Foil is consistently popular with magazine

turnaround time that fit project requirements."

Middleton concludes about the importance of doing something different with print: "In a digital age, decorative print finishes add an extra dimension to print, providing interaction through a scent, a soft feel or added sparkle. Short-run and long-run jobs are turning to print finishes to make their print

“ In a digital age, decorative print finishes add an extra dimension ”

covers because a die for the foil can be made in the shape of a magazine header and then re-used using a range of colours on the cover, enhancing it each time. Overall varnish is often applied after to give the magazine that typical glossy feel, by using the Cellocover service."

The Cellocover service is a twin coating machine that applies up to two effects in one pass. Middleton adds: "The Cellocover service at Celloglas has seen high demand for velvet coating, applied to magazine covers at high speed and combined with a spot UV in one pass. This coating allows large print runs to have a soft feel finish at a cost that is affordable and a prompt

communication more memorable, thus increasing ROI through increased engagement."

Make it bespoke

Vivid Laminating Technologies' engineering and design team, at the start of 2015, started work on a project that resulted in the Matrix Pneumatic and Duplex Systems, which can create finished prints using foils and spot UV-style effects.

David Smith, marketing communications manager of Vivid, says: "The Matrix can achieve these effects due to the adjustable pressure from the pneumatic rollers. It's a really quick and easy set-up without the need for

CUT TO THE CHASE

Watkiss Automation has been making waves in the competitive die-cutting market with its Digifust 6080 digital cutter, which it showed for the first time at The Print Show in 2015. It can be used for short-run personalised packaging, greetings cards, stickers, labels, and boxes. These items can then have special effects added to them to make them that bit more special.

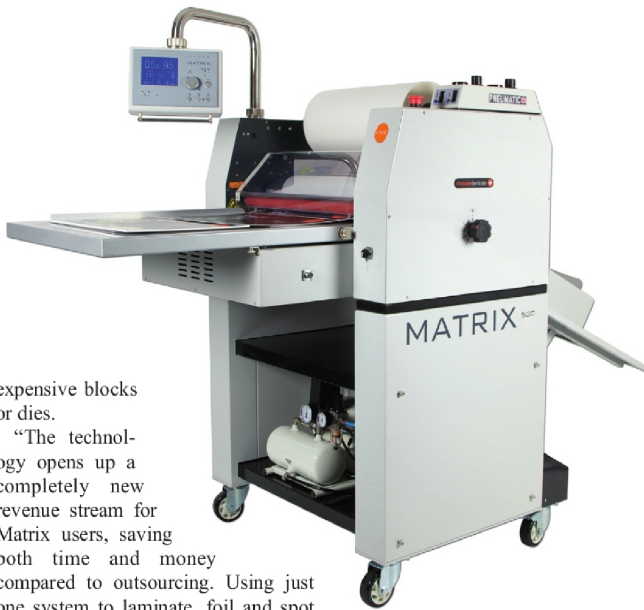
"When you're looking at printers diversifying, the Digifust 6080 digital cutter is a good product for that because it does allow them to get into a different sector, but without too big an investment or too great a departure from what they're doing," explains Jo Watkiss, communications director of Watkiss Automation.

Watkiss notes the importance of standing out: "You can also use the Digifust for embossing. You could emboss onto a folder, hard back book or a greetings card. There are lots of ways you can add special effects to personalise your offering. I think



Short-runs of high-quality packaging are a highly profitable product that can be produced using the Digifust 6080 digital cutter

that everybody needs to differentiate their offering because printing is a competitive sector and quite price sensitive. The way to get away from that and increase your margin is by offering something a little bit different."



The Matrix MX-530P pneumatic laminating machine from Vivid Laminating Technologies can achieve special effects due to the adjustable pressure from the pneumatic rollers

expensive blocks or dies.

“The technology opens up a completely new revenue stream for Matrix users, saving both time and money compared to outsourcing. Using just one system to laminate, foil and spot UV offers an even greater return on investment, as multiple applications are possible. One-off bespoke jobs and print proofs can now be produced in-house in seconds.” The company has also launched gloss-spot film and foils in silver, gold, copper, red, and blue.

in print isn’t always necessary, but they can be used to make your customers print look and feel different and of a higher quality than others.

“Laminating a business card will give it that extra protection and longevity and if the card gets put in a

will still look good and catch your eye.”

Do more with paper

However, it is not just equipment manufacturers and print-service-providers that are reaping the benefits of value added print, paper supplier Antalis has exciting materials that are ideal for producing different designs.

Emma Oliver, creative papers product manager at Antalis UK, says: “We have one of the widest selection of creative papers that offer a host of special effects that add value to the overall printed product. These include highly textured papers with extreme and unusual finishes that add a sensual element, as well as vibrant colours, metallic and high gloss, sheer and ultra matt finishes.

“Our Curious collection is always in high demand from designers and printers looking for something to make their print stand out. In addition, we’ve just launched a new product called Mohawk Superfine, one of the finest printing papers on the market today. Its ultra-smooth, eggshell finish gives superb formation, a luxurious tactility and timeless appeal.”

Oliver has noticed an increasing interest in creative papers and finishes recently: “In particular, we have seen a lot of screen printing using glitter inks; foil blocking has also been trending recently and we are continuing to see a rise in minimal print onto premium papers where the creativity of the substrate provides the maximum visual impact.

“The printing industry is becoming more and more competitive. Therefore, anything that enables printers the ability to differentiate themselves, as well as offer greater added value to their printed product is hugely important. Innovative and creative substrates offer just that and can make a significant difference between a good piece of print and an outstanding, visually appealing must-have product.”

After speaking to experts in the print industry, it is clear that special effects can have a positive impact. Whether it is making one-off wedding invitations stand out on a crowded notice board of letters, or ensuring your business card will be picked up first from a pile of cards procured from a business meeting. With innovative technology, equipment, and materials being produced all the time for this one purpose—to add value—it is no wonder that more people are picking up on the trend.

Factoid: GMP’s ‘sleeking’ is a new term used to describe image transfer that bonds to ink on a laminated surface, allowing an array of special effects to be created. It is similar to foiling, but claims to be easier and much more cost-effective.

Smith has noticed, through demonstrating different effects at events like Graph Expo, Duplo’s London Calling, and The Print Show, that certain items prove more popular than others. He says: “We’ve had a lot of business cards, book covers and packaging, but also wedding stationery that uses variable data for guests. One example was a ‘Save the Date’ card, with each guest’s name printed and then gold foiled. Each one looked amazing and was completely unique.”

Smith highlights the importance of making an impression in today’s print industry: “No matter what market you are in, you will always have a competitor, whether you’re an estate agent or running a courier firm. First impressions count and if the first impression you get is a business card, a letter or a brochure, it has to stand out from the crowd. Using special effects

draw for six months before being looked at again, the chances are that it



Antalis recently launched Mohawk Superfine describing it as ‘one of the finest printing papers on the market today’