

ASQ Labels goes digital with Domino's **N610i**



Overview

Based in Belgium, ASQ Labels, specialises in label printing for a variety of sectors, including high quality food and beverage brands, as well as providing flow-pack printing, wrappers and single-layer packaging. The company has recently invested in UV ink jet technology with the purchase of Domino's **N610i** digital colour label press, which has enabled it to diversify into new market sectors.

*“We are now in a position to enter new markets that I am 100% convinced we would not have been able to approach if we had not invested in UV ink jet and specifically the **N610i**.”* Raf Joos, CEO, ASQ Labels



Fast facts

- Active in the label printing industry for over 25 years
- Specialises in labels for high end food and beverage products
- Installed Domino's **N610i** digital ink jet label press in 2014
- Domino's highly opaque white was the convincing factor
- Use the Domino press every day printing at 50m/min
- Now have new customers, new jobs and moved flexo jobs to the **N610i**

“It is a very opaque white - it looks like it’s been screen printed. That was the moment we were won over by the Domino N610i.” Raf Joos, CEO, ASQ Labels



ASQ Labels was founded in 1988 in Lummen, during a time when the Belgian government was incentivising new businesses in the area. By 1998 the labelling company had 45 employees and had relocated to a 2000 sq. metre property. ASQ originally serviced a wide range of markets, until the recent economic crisis forced the company to re-evaluate its focus.

“We were a heavily sales-driven organisation that, until 2008, was successful in the automotive, transport, logistics and warehousing sectors,” recounts Raf Joos, CEO of ASQ Labels.

He continues: “That’s when we realised we needed to commit to a market sector that was effectively recession-proof and that high end food and beverage products would be a key area of interest, as there will always be a demand for high quality labels with eye-catching graphics to go with the product. Today we are heavily involved in the Belgian beer and chocolate sectors.”

Raf began looking into a UV ink jet solution in 2010, but initially was not convinced by the technology as it was still in its infancy. The system the company needed had to address three key requirements: first and foremost, the digital solution had to be able to print directly onto the standard substrate materials used by ASQ without the need for pre-coating; secondly, the system had to be able to print the high-resolution, bright images that ASQ’s customers expect to see on their product labels; thirdly, they needed to print transparent labels.

It was not until witnessing first-hand Domino’s N610i digital press at Labelexpo Europe 2013 that ASQ took notice of the possibilities that UV ink jet could bring. Raf continues: “When Domino invited us to their headquarters in the UK, we were given the opportunity to print a series of different label samples on a range of our standard flexo substrates. Not only were we impressed with the end result, we also realised that the press’ inclusion of opaque white would prove extremely useful for printing onto transparent materials. It is a very

opaque white- it looks like it’s been screen printed. That was the moment we were won over by the Domino N610i.”

The N610i operates at speeds of up to 75 metres (246ft) per minute with a 600dpi native resolution and is available in 4, 5, 6 and 7 colours. The highly opaque white ink which delivers a silkscreen-like finish is ideal for printing solids through to fine detail onto metallic and clear label materials.

Elke Buckinx, Operations Manager, comments on the smooth installation of the N610i. “Everything was well organised and went according to plan. After just five weeks, we were producing labels for our customers. We now use the Domino every day. We have a mixture of new customers, and definitely new jobs which are more colourful. We have moved a number of jobs over that we previously printed on flexo, such as short runs and we now print several versions in one run, without the need to change the plates.”

Wim Wouters, who operates the N610i comments; “It’s very easy to use and very fast – we print at 50m/min. There is very little wasted paper, and when you reprint a job, the file is already there, and you always get the same colour, exactly like the first time you printed it.”

Raf continues with an anecdote: “Belgium is well known worldwide for its beer. We took advantage of the N610i’s personalisation option to print our own personalised beer labels and sent them to our customers in the brewery sector. They were very impressed with the possibilities this presents.”

He concludes: “We are now in a position to enter new markets that I am 100% convinced we would not have been able to approach if we had not invested in UV ink jet and specifically the N610i.”