

A Major Advance in Water-Based Processing of Flexo Plates

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Abstract

The FLEXCEL NX Ultra Solution provides plate makers with another way of producing KODAK FLEXCEL NX Plates. The solution offers solvent-free, VOC-free, water-based processing that allows printers to create a press-ready plate in less than an hour. The FLEXCEL NX Ultra Solution removes disadvantages and challenges that have plagued aqueous plate-making solutions for the last 25 years.

Traditionally, aqueous flexo plate solutions suffered from a buildup of unexposed polymer and debris that weren't easily dissolved or suspended in water, creating challenges for plate makers and printers alike. Miraclon's new and innovative technology avoids the rapid buildup of photopolymer debris that causes frequent processor cleaning and has made aqueous plate-making solutions inconsistent and uncompetitive in the past. Utilizing a unique plant-based processing agent, the KODAK FLEXCEL NX Ultra Solution enables better conditions for plate makers, delivering a process that's easier to handle and a cleaner environment. Debris cleaning can add additional hours of downtime to the prepress stage. Miraclon reports that normal washout times of competitive aqueous systems are twice as long as with the FLEXCEL NX Ultra Solution, averaging 14–21 minutes versus 7 minutes.

Plate makers can create more than 32 finished plates per shift, a considerable increase compared to the amount of plates per shift that thermal or solvent processes can achieve. The ability to turn a plate in less than an hour means that when a plate on press needs to be switched out, the wait time is much shorter than an average solvent plate, meaning less downtime on press and higher productivity overall.

Clients and brand owners working with printers utilizing FLEXCEL NX Ultra technology receive quality graphics with consistent, reliable performance. They also experience additional flexibility to make last minute design changes thanks to the ability to get plates on press faster.

Miraclon Corporation

The KODAK FLEXCEL NX Ultra Solution combines quality print performance with water-based processing to deliver a press-ready plate quickly, cleanly, and consistently in a high-volume production environment. The judges agreed that this technology will be the catalyst for more printers and pre-press providers to convert to aqueous platemaking.

Note: This manuscript was not received in time for publication in the *2020 TAGA Proceedings*.