PrintSafe
CODING SYSTEMS

Case Study

Batch Code Printing on
Cartons with udaFORMAXX
and alphaJET CIJ

Carton Coding Machine Offers Significant Cost Savings for Busy Cosmetics and Toiletries Contract Packer

Nottinghamshire company, DMW Logistics' contract packing division operates from a purpose built 20,000 square foot packing hall.

The company has built a strong reputation for gift and promotional packing for major retailers. With Christmas the busiest time of year, the number of staff more than quadruples in the period from July to November.

Production Manager, Stefan Wilcockson explains: "We'll go from a steady core team all year round and then ramp up significantly through July, hitting a peak in mid-August. This year, we were busy all of the way through to the end of November."

He adds, "With COVID-19 it has been especially challenging, but we have managed things very carefully with split shifts and different start times. It has been great to be able to offer temporary employment to people from the hospitability industry who otherwise wouldn't have been working."

Automating Batch Code Printing

A udaFORMAXX carton coding machine from PrintSafe handles around 90% of DMW's date and batch code printing.

The company had previously only needed to put a batch code on outer cases, but with new EU legislation cosmetic and toiletry gift sets were required to have a batch, and sometimes expiry date, on each individual unit.

Commercial Director, Nicole Vaulks, explains the decision to purchase the udaFORMAXX carton coding machine in 2017: "We used to hand label every pack, but with production numbers in the millions we were looking for efficiencies. We looked around at different options and found the carton coding machine from PrintSafe. It has been really good for us."

Speed, Accuracy and Flexibility

The udaFORMAXX is a standalone integrated feeding and coding system that offers flexibility for integrating different printers and label applicators. The machine takes flat-from packs from an infeed hopper and, in this case, transports them underneath an integrated small character inkjet coder which prints batch numbers and expiry dates. The machine operator can then collect coded packs from the outfeed hopper ready for the packing line.

dmw

A particular benefit for DMW Logistics is the ease of adjustment for different packaging sizes and shapes. Stefan Wilcockson says: "There's not much that we can't code on the machine. With the gift sets, we get lots of weird and wonderful shapes. But as long as it goes through safely and quickly, we'll code it on the udaFORMAXX. It's much simpler and easier for us to use the machine than it is to print labels and apply them."

Another benefit is print accuracy. The area available for printing a batch code can be very tight on some packs. Because the udaFORMAXX holds the pack securely in place as it moves under the printhead, the code is printed in exactly the same location each time.

Operators can easily set the exact print position by entering a print offset, either through the feeding machine menu or using the printer menu.

Option to Rent then Buy

When making the decision to purchase the udaFORMAXX, DMW Logistics benefited from PrintSafe's machinery rental service. Stefan Wilcockson explains: "It was something completely new for us.

> *The beauty with PrintSafe was the option to rent the machine and try it for a couple of months, knowing that we would get the rental costs back if we purchased it.*

We looked at various options and various suppliers. The beauty with PrintSafe was the option to rent the machine and try it for a couple of months, knowing that we would get the rental costs back if we purchased it.

"We were able to test how feasible it was, what the throughput was, and very quickly establish that this was the way we wanted to go."

Significant Cost Savings

> *With the machine in place, we've saved 15 people per day for 6 months of the year.*

The udaFORMAXX carton coder has significantly reduced the time and effort needed to batch code individual packs.

Stefan Wilcockson says: "We've gone from 90% hand stickering to 10% hand stickering. When we were printing and applying labels, we would have someone printing the labels for around 4 hours a day and one person on each line applying them.

"At peak, we operate as may as 18 lines. That's 18 people hand labelling.

With the machine in place, we've saved 15 people per day for 6 months of the year. Instead, we have just one person operating the carton feeder."

Christmas Rental System

For Christmas 2020, DMW Logistics rented a second machine from PrintSafe to handle an exceptionally busy production period further complicated by COVID-19. Having two machines, reduced the amount of time needed to change between different packaging formats such as duo and triple packs. With the two machines running, the company was able to code tens of thousands of packs daily over the 6-month period.

Support from PrintSafe

Stefan Wilcockson and another two operators received training on the udaFORMAXX when it was first installed. The machine is serviced annually ahead of peak production. Stefan Wilcockson says: "Very early on we had a few questions on using the machine, but a quick phone call to PrintSafe and a conversation with one of the engineers would answer any queries we had. We get the machine serviced at the end of June each year so that we know that everything is running optimally ready for peak. If we need any supplies, we contact the aftersales team and they get things out to us straight away."