

BPIF cartons



Digital Printing

The traditional role of cartons within the packaging sector has been to deliver volume production of 'standard' designs regularly, efficiently and to a very high standard. However, over the last few years in response to changing market conditions, product life cycles have become shorter and run lengths have reduced, accelerating a need for digital print. On demand, versioned print is already well established for labels and flexible packaging. The global 'Share a Coke' campaign, for example, saw nearly a billion bottle labels digitally produced with people's names instead of the iconic Coca-Cola brand.

These key factors, combined with the technology's low environmental impact, have contributed to carton converters investing in digital print. Carton-makers can now offer print on-demand digital systems that can trigger emotional engagements with brands through customisation and personalisation. As a brand owner, marketer or retailer, short production runs – and shorter lead times – can also help to reduce product inventory and obsolescence. Every printed sheet can now be different. For a brand owner wanting to test-market new products or work with focus groups authentic prototypes can be produced easily and cost-effectively.

The shorter runs also facilitate more spontaneous brand promotions, sponsored events, seasonal redesigns and increased product variants.

Digital technology is evolving rapidly but currently printing presses fall into three categories:

- Narrow web circa 330mm wide, but with the potential for in-line varnish and die cutting.
- B2+ sheet fed presses that operate with existing die cutting and finishing equipment.
- Large format (1400 x 1000 or above) sheet fed presses which can produce small run hand-finished cartons or again, use existing finishing equipment converting an image printed several times up on the sheet.

However, common to all digitally printed cartons are very short lead times arising from no printing plates, no set-up charges and virtually no waste. Production runs will be smaller than litho (down to one carton if needed!) but by using a BPIF Cartons' member you will benefit from the years of experience in designing and producing cartons to ensure they are fit for purpose.

The Carton Way

BPIF cartons

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