Six 'Clear' Ways In-Plants Can Add Value

Xerox describes how printing with clear toner can help in-plants add value to their organization

By Tricia Bhattacharya

If a new printing capability could boost image quality, direct attention to key messages and qualify an in-plant for more marketing work, what in-plant would not be interested?

Digital printing with clear toner is such a capability. It adds aesthetic value, making images "pop," and strategic value by focusing the reader's attention. Add in the variety of creative effects clear enables—from watermarks to pearlescence and metallic appearances—and it's power in customer-facing documents becomes, well… clear. It can make an in-plant more strategically relevant to the marketing department—and the organization.

Be aware: clear toner isn't varnish. It's not as shiny, and it doesn't add a protective layer. However, it can simulate many spot and flood varnish effects and, unlike varnish, it can be applied to variable information. Applying clear toner also is the more productive process: it is applied during printing rather than in a post process, and requires no drying time.

And using it is straightforward. Designers add a layer for clear in their design file—just as they do for varnish—and press operators can add clear toner with just a few mouse clicks at the press.

Here are six key ways clear toner adds value:

1. **Enhances image quality**—Clear toner increases saturation, making colors appear richer, water wetter, lips glossier and so on. Where standard xerographic solids are typically shinier than halftones, clear evens the tones, adding depth and dimension. Photo quality rises to the next level. Images can "pop" off even textured stocks.

2. **Focuses attention**—Much like highlight color, clear toner can focus reader attention on key messages. Clear effects are most noticeable where contrasts are greater, such as on matte stock, or when used in conjunction with other creative effects, such as embossing.

3. **Reinforces impact of personalization**—Personalized pieces seek to present relevant information that causes recipients to respond. Clear toner can reinforce this intent by drawing attention to the most relevant or actionable content, even if it's variable. Design and production processes use the same techniques as for other variable work.

4. **Expands the creative palette**—Clear toner can be used in unlimited ways to add creative effects and artistic backgrounds. Images can be given pearlescent and metallic appearances. Subtle patterns and backgrounds play with the contrast between clear-enhanced saturated colors and flatter colors in non-clear coated areas.

5. **Increases strategic relevance to the marketing department**—From an operational perspective, clear's greatest impact is in helping in-plants get more marketing business, bring more work in-house and offer greater flexibility in its solutions. It makes the in-plant more strategically relevant to the marketing department and the organization.

6. **Provides another tool in the security arsenal**—Because clear toner can't be copied, watermarks and other effects can play a role in maintaining the security of printed documents, as well as for artistic effect.

For in-plants interested in clear toner printing, Xerox offers the Xerox® Color 800/1000 Presses, which maintain rated speed when printing clear toner on a wide range of stocks from light weight 55 gsm to a robust 350 gsm. Xerox also provides comprehensive business development support with a clear dry ink kit. It contains guides to design, production and marketing, including source files for print samples, brochures, posters, a Flash demonstration and a sales training presentation, which in-plants can brand and use in their marketing.

Two things are very clear: the toner and the opportunity.

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