

# Digital Labels

Turning ideas into product experiences with variable data printing. BY PATRICIA TRUSTY

**M**arketing its digital printing capabilities as complementary to its established flexo printing equipment has met with great success for Profecta Labels Inc. of Boucherville, Quebec.

"In today's customer-focused marketplace, success depends on knowing your customers as well as you know your own business," says Cynthia Cyr, Profecta's marketing director and a member of Profecta's research and development committee. "The requirement for customer intimacy has become so essential to retaining customers that businesses will not remain competitive without the technology and processes necessary to deliver completely personalized options. We consider variable data label printing to be one of the greatest innovations in the printing business today."



*A special limited edition wine featuring different original artwork, all printed on the same roll. Hockey fans received water bottles introducing team members.*

The company's HP Indigo digital presses answer the needs of both large and small businesses in terms of providing quality custom packaging. Businesses can make limitless changes to each piece, or change either text, graphics or both, and on every single label.

"Growth in digital business begins with educating yourself about the technology and understanding it at a level where you can connect the dots between what digital business solutions your company can offer and what your client needs," explains Cyr.

"Once this knowledge is attained, you can start by servicing the needs of your existing client base. Then research compatible industries with similar needs which can be approached for future business development."

Digital opportunities exist in every industry: personal care, pharmaceutical, food and beverage, nutraceuticals, household cleaning, grocery, manufacturing, durable goods, health & beauty and home décor. Profecta approaches each customer with the mind-set that it is a provider of ideas, a challenge solver and a solution provider.

Everyone within the organization is encouraged to keep an open mind, and to keep their eyes and ears alert to any ideas even

from unrelated industries. The company has an idea bank sorted by categories that make sense to an industry. These ideas are a treasure box that the R&D committee refers to for inspiration.

Cyr recalls a blog post by Peter Renton related to an article written by Joann Hines. "Her article spoke about adapting ideas—look outside your product category for new innovations that could be applied to your product. That was my personal inspiration last year to create the Sheer veneer label, a product which ended up winning the HP 2008 worldwide competition for best use of a substrate. I have gotten many inspirations from the Peter Renton blog since then. ([blog.lightninglabels.com](http://blog.lightninglabels.com))

"You have a message to communicate to your prospective customers. Speak to them visually and evoke an emotional connection," suggests Cyr. Profecta provides clients with various variable data label samples designed with this philosophy in mind. Some are pictured above.



■ A vineyard owner selected original artwork of a local artist for some special edition labels. Every bottle has a label with a different original piece of artwork, and all were printed on the same roll.

■ A local hockey team introduced its players to spectators on bottles of water handed out in their arena. The personalized water bottle idea can be used for sports or fundraising events, company barbecues or any promotional activity.

■ A cross promotion with a travel agent and an airline resulted in versioned bottles of sunscreen given out to passengers during the flight to their vacation destination. Each label had the travel agent and airline logos, welcoming the passenger to his/her specific destination, with the image of the destination beach to match.

■ Personal care products for babies, pets, teens, food products, cosmetics, or any product that can be mail/website ordered are perfect for web-to-print template design opportunities, where the customer can go online, select design elements and create a personalized product label, and then have products sent to them. Clinique, Sprite, Kleenex and Heinz are a few of the companies who have offered this fun, engaging, rewarding experience to their customers.

"When you connect on a one-to-one level with customers using a message or an image designed specifically with them in mind, the chances of converting that individual to purchasing your product grow by leaps and bounds," says Cyr.

Profecta is doing just that as they provide their customers with innovative marketing ideas, which they in turn print on their digital presses. **CP**