

HIGH-END PRINTING AND GRAPHICS AT SUTHERLAND PACKAGING HAVE PROGRESSED TO A POINT WHERE EVEN DIFFICULT JOBS ARE EASY.

A GROWING NICHE



SUTHERLAND PACKAGING PRODUCED FOUR DIFFERENT SIZED SLEEVES FOR THE SEEDLINGERS COW POT PLANTER.

Messinas is a New Jersey based lawn and garden company that started in 1998 with one product. Today, the firm has several product lines that can be found at garden centers, farmer's markets and nurseries across the U.S. Sutherland Packaging has been designing and manufacturing the company's packaging for many years. The Start and Sprout corrugated sleeve and wood grained corrugated crate are two of the more recent jobs for Messinas' new brand of Seedlingers products.

Both jobs had a certain degree of difficulty from a structural and graphics perspective, but because Sutherland Packaging has perfected its printing processes, "This stuff is second nature to us anymore," Sales Manager Eric Stanton says. The Newton, N.J., sheet plant specializes in direct print for higher-end graphics packaging and point-of-purchase displays.

technical

NUMBER OF COLORS

Sleeve – Five

Tray – Four

SUBSTRATE

Sleeve – 200# E-flute

Crate – 44# B-flute

EQUIPMENT

Apstar HG rotary diecutter

ANILOX ROLLS

Pamarco

INK

Ditech York

CAD

American Inks and Coatings

PRINTING PLATES

Mark Trèce

PREPRESS

ArtiosCAD

Kongsberg sample table

Graphics Detail

The Seedlingers corrugated crate holds bagged fertilizer or bottled product and is set up in the store. "They wanted to have an old fashioned wood crate look," Stanton says. "Obviously, corrugated lends itself pretty well to that, but it was still a matter of reproducing the graphics to simulate wood. We've been pretty successful with wood grains. We've done quite a few now."

The four-sided rollover tray is four-color process printed on 44# B-flute Kemi. The 50- x 60-inch sheet is printed and diecut inline on an Apstar HG 66- x 120-inch five-color rotary diecutter with Pamarco anilox rolls — 300 lpi on the first and last down and 360 lpi in the middle — and JB Machinery IR dryers on three of the print stations.

The graphics are quite detailed, capturing many of the features of a wooden crate, including the nails in the side panels. "A lot of that has to do with the artwork and then being able to reproduce it onto corrugated. It really does look like a wood crate," Stanton says. "It's just not the wood grain. It's the whole pattern. It makes it look like it has the outside pieces with nails."

For the Seedlingers cow pot planter, Sutherland Packaging produced four different sized sleeves, which added a bit of a challenge holding a 1/64th inch registration trap running four or six out across the press.

"The customer wanted something unique to use to wrap around this unusual shaped pot made out of cow manure," Stanton says. "It's different from a conventional shaped package. It has some trapezoidal features to it."

The self-erecting sleeves are four-color process plus spot brown printed on 200# E-flute. The images for the sleeve and the wood crate were 65-line



THE GRAPHICS ON THIS CORRUGATED CONTAINER DETAIL MANY OF THE FEATURES OF A WOODEN CRATE, INCLUDING THE NAILS IN THE SIDE PANELS.

screen. "Because of the way we have the anilox rolls aligned, 65 is the sweet spot," Stanton says. "We push it to 85 depending on how much yellow is in a job."

Perfecting The Process

The Apstar is set up as a multi-purpose press to run solids and high graphics. "The high graphics has evolved as we've upped our game every year," Stanton says. "When we put that press in we focused on being able to do solids and some fine print and then a couple of clients wanted us to push the envelope and we did and it has progressed from there. Each job keeps building on itself."

Stanton credits Sutherland Packaging's partnership with Mark Trèce, a Joppa, Md., prepress supplier, with its success in the graphics market. "They really know our press and what we're capable of. We have worked together for the last six years since we've had the Apstar. We just keep dialing it in every

year tighter and tighter. We started off probably with a 3/32nd trap, but today we're at 1/64th."

Makereadies on the Apstar average 20 minutes and jobs are turned around fairly quickly.

"We've come so far in six years and really perfected this process. If you blink, the job is done," Stanton continues. He jokes that he used to get excited when a high graphics job was completed. Now, it's just another day at Sutherland Packaging.

"Twenty years ago everybody decided they were going to be a display and high-end graphics printer. The problem was the technology hadn't caught up. You need good ink, a good technician for ink, which we have, you need operators who love this stuff and look forward to the challenge. Twenty years ago you didn't have that. We did it right and put all those pieces in place in advance," he says.

"We're a small to mid-sized company. We consider ourselves artisans. It permeates down from the top. Whatever it takes to get the job done," he adds. ■