



Application Note



Cosmetics, Personal & Home Care

Coding solutions that drive efficiency, reducing costs and manufacturing complexity

The challenge

Cosmetics, personal and home care products with many scents or colors often necessitate customized packaging by batch. This requires significant amounts of pre-printed package inventory and increases manufacturing complexity as package materials must be switched every batch changeover. Pre-printed packaging plus SKU complexity raises the risk of mislabeled products which can adversely affect brand reputation.

The Videojet advantage

Videojet advanced coding technologies can print more than just a batch, date or lot code. Videojet equipment can print variable text, bar codes, logos, images and more. These features are ideal to add color number, ingredients, UPC, DataMatrix codes, shipping bar codes, icons and other package customization to your brands. Sample applications include:

- Continuous inkjet (CIJ) or Laser marking directly to product packaging
- Laser on a secondary carton
- Thermal transfer overprinting (TTO) on a label or shrink sleeve
- Thermal inkjet (TIJ) on a paper carton or blister package
- Large character marking (LCM) on shipping cases

Managing pre-printed packaging inventory takes work.

Upgrading to Videojet digital coding solutions can reduce pre-printed package inventory costs and manufacturing complexity.

Many cosmetics, personal and home care products come in a variety of different scents or colors which are produced in the same factory, often on the same line. Usually, each separate color or scent requires its own package with unique variable data such as a UPC code, color name or logo. Individual products might also have special product use instructions, expiration dates, or ingredients. Finally, shipping cases and pallets often require large text, logos and shipping bar codes. Today, much of this information is pre-printed onto films, labels, cartons or cases and placed on the product by batch as it's produced. This process creates manufacturing waste and complexity because pre-printed packaging has to be stored and managed for each unique product.

Reduce costs

Videojet advanced coding technology can print more than just batch, lot and date: bar codes, color names or numbers, logos and ingredients are just the start. Digital coding technology can print almost any single-color pattern, image or text in-line during production. With digital coding, standard packaging can be used for all colors and scents and variable product information can be added during packaging. This means there is no need to replace or change packages during changeovers for each product color or scent. Less frequent package changes reduces changeover time and enables operators to focus on making sure the line is running. By reducing the number of packaging SKUs used in your facility, you can also save floor space (from less inventory) and package costs (from bulk discounts). Leveraging coding technology to replace pre-printed information on packaging can save you the cost and hassle of managing pre-printed packaging.

Reduce manufacturing complexity

Value-added coding increases manufacturing flexibility. With Videojet digital coders, you can quickly add a seasonal message on a product around a holiday or a "new look" stamp on innovative new packaging. Changes in regulatory requirements such as ingredient disclosures are more efficient with digital coding because all changes can be easily made via the intuitive digital coder controller interface instead of designing and ordering new packaging. This can help eliminate wasted out-of-date or incorrect pre-printed packaging.

Value-added coding solutions

While there are numerous ways to use Videojet coding technologies to customize your packaging, here are a few ideas to get you started.

CIJ or laser marking direct to product packaging. Both continuous inkjet (CIJ) and laser marking technologies are excellent for printing advanced variable information directly to almost any type of product packaging. CIJ and laser marking systems can print on glass, plastic, specialty containers, flexible paper / plastic, and metal aerosol cans. Messages can be as simple as a 2-digit color number or as complex as a product logo and image. This works well for color cosmetics, fragrances, nail polish, hair dye, or scented soaps and lotions.

Laser on cartons. Laser marking systems are ideal for value-added coding on cartons. The technology works by using an RF signal to stimulate carbon dioxide (CO₂) which generates a laser beam to ablate or remove the surface coating of cartons, exposing the lighter color underneath. This process results in a clear, crisp code or image which is often mistaken for pre-printed content. Lasers can also print scannable 2D and QR codes at high speeds promoting customer interaction on multiple package types.

TTO on shrink sleeves or labels. Thermal Transfer Overprinting (TTO) is a cost effective way to print high resolution messages (300dpi) directly onto labels or shrink sleeves in-line. TTO is a digital technology with the ability to generate variable data including dates, lot codes and time for each print. Examples include printing UPC and color names on shrink sleeves for lip glosses, or printing on flexible film around spray cleaner bottles. TTO technology is directly integrated into your package line for an easy and seamless manufacturing process.

TIJ on paper cartons or blister packages. Thermal Inkjet (TIJ) is a cost effective, clean and easy-to-use ink technology which is ideal for paper packaging. Videojet TIJ technology delivers an optimal combination of long decap time and short drying time, making them well suited for varnish-free surfaces on folded chipboard boxes and other paper substrates. These printers provide high quality (600dpi) print even after long printing breaks and feature an all-purpose ink for a range of applications. Ideal applications include the back of blister packaging used for cosmetics, air fresheners and other small personal and home care products.

Large character marking (LCM) on cases. Large character ink jet printing is a cost-effective way to customize standard corrugate shipping cases. These systems can replace or customize your pre-printed shipping cases making them retail ready with product pictures, bar codes, logos and shipping information. Customized cases help enhance efficiency in your supply chain and allow adding software systems which track your product through the distribution channel.



Laser bar code on carton



CIJ bar code on blister packaging



TTO code printed directly onto lip gloss label



TIJ 2D bar code on paper carton

The bottom line

Using Videojet coding technologies for coding in-line and on-site means:

- The ability to customize standard packaging with unit or batch-specific information
- Quicker changeovers
- Less pre-printed package inventory
- More flexible manufacturing

There are numerous ways to leverage more efficient coding for your products. Videojet can help find the right solution for you. Our experienced sales team can help you determine if value-added coding can reduce your costs and simplify your operations. With a wide range of advanced coding technologies and over 640 application-unique fluids and supplies, Videojet has an optimal coding solution for your personal and home care products.

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