

Inspire

TOPIC

How SOMA Optima² Flexo Presses Adapt to Sustainability Challenges

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Plate Mounters



Flexo Presses



Slitter Rewinders



Laminators

Plate Mounting
 Drive Tuning
 Intelligent R&I Setting
 Changeovers 
 Service



Efficient Changeovers without Errors

The trend of shorter runs (jobs) in combination with a lack of operator skills can cause a lot of challenges. Our answer to these challenges is Optima's **Intelligent Automation of all change-over processes**. The result for our customers is fast, efficient and reliable changeovers performed by even inexperienced operators.



PAVLA KUSA INTRODUCTION

Dear Readers!



In this edition of our Inspire newsletter, find out how every print shop can successfully delve into functional packaging via our unique and very flexible portfolio of upstream and downstream units.

More powerful machines, increased digitalization, greater automation and more sustainable solutions are set to define the direction of the printing and production of flexible packaging over the next ten years. In light of rising prices for resources, ever shorter print runs, fewer available skilled operators, and global pressure for more sustainable and functional packaging, this is essential because profit margins are increasingly tightening within these processes.

That is just a small list of the challenges that printers, in the segments we serve, face every day. It has also become a challenge for our team. We strive to offer solutions that will ensure our customers maintain a better position in their competitive struggles.

In this edition of our Inspire newsletter, find out how every print shop can successfully

delve into functional packaging via our unique and very flexible portfolio of upstream and downstream units. Those working with paper can apply—inline—reliable barrier functional properties. For those working with mono-materials comprised of a single component—like certain plastics—we can help guarantee 100% recyclability of final packaging. For those working on the third sustainable

approach, fully compostable solutions, we can also assist.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition.

Pavla Kusa



90° Flexo Unit IPU

TOPIC

Optima

Intelligent Printing Units (IPU)

Optima's Intelligent Printing Units (IPU) – provide the flexibility to produce various packaging efficiently in a single pass operation.

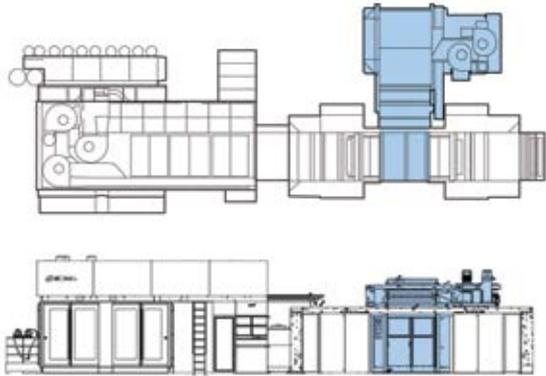
- ✓ Production of flexible packaging with added value
- ✓ Combination of different printing technologies
- ✓ Increased efficiency and productivity due to single pass operation

**MOST
POPULAR**

90° Flexo IPU

Dual operation either upstream or downstream, space saving design

HORIZONTAL / VERTICAL TUNNEL

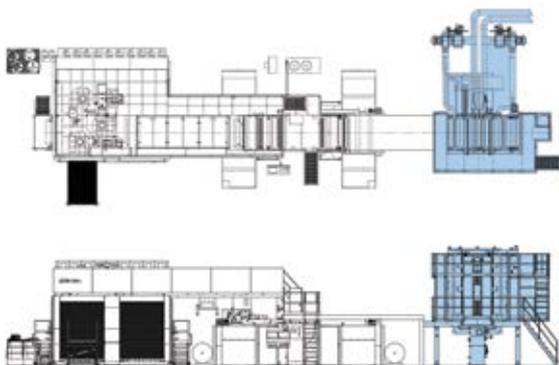


application side	surface or reverse
printing deck(s)	up to 2
print width	880/1050/1270/1450 mm
max. mechanical speed	500/600 m/min
max. print repeat	850/1300 mm
horizontal tunnel	4,5+2 m or 6+2 m - - - or
vertical tunnel with drying zones	2+2 m or 4+4 m - - -
inks	solvent-based / water-based / UV cured
applications	additional print, heavy coatings, varnish, heatseal, functional coatings, primer

In-Line Gravure IPU

Only in downstream configuration

VERTICAL TUNNEL

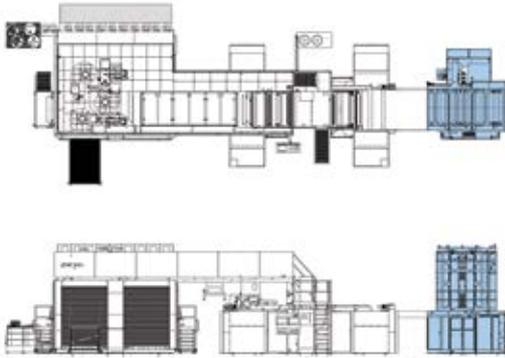


application side	surface or reverse
printing deck(s)	1
print width	880/1050/1270/1450 mm
max. mechanical speed	500/600 m/min
max. print repeat	850 mm
vertical tunnel with drying zones	3,6+3,6 m
inks	solvent-based / water-based / UV cured
applications	heavy coatings, cold seal, heat seal, paper touch varnish, functional coatings

In-Line Flexo IPU

Only in downstream configuration

VERTICAL TUNNEL

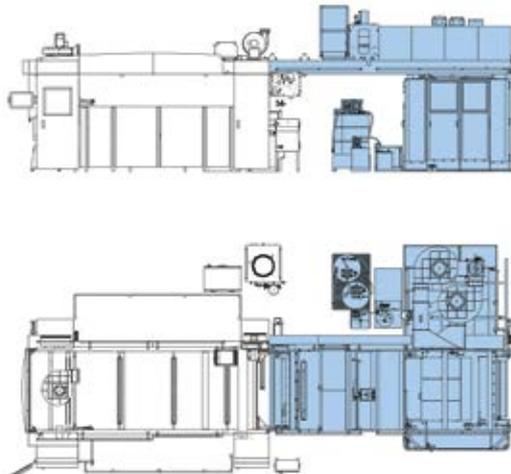


application side	surface or reverse
printing deck(s)	up to 2
print width	880/1050/1270/1450 mm
max. mechanical speed	500/600 m/min
max. print repeat	850/1300 mm
horizontal tunnel	4,5+2 m or 6+2 m
vertical tunnel with drying zones	2+2 m or 4+4 m <small>OR</small>
inks	solvent-based / water-based / UV cured
applications	additional print, heavy coatings, varnish, heatseal, functional coatings, primer

Laminator + Flexo IPU

Combination of solvent-less laminator with flexographic downstream unit

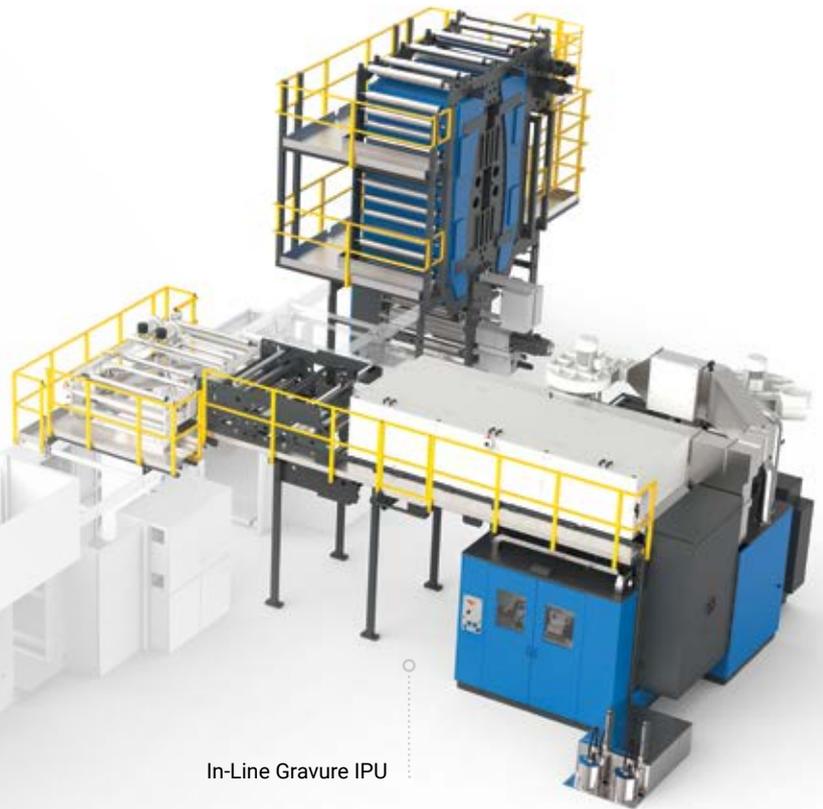
HORIZONTAL / VERTICAL TUNNEL



application side	surface
printing deck(s)	1
print width	880/1050/1270/1450 mm
max. mechanical speed	400 m/min
max. print repeat	850/1300 mm
horizontal tunnel	4,5 m + 2 m
inks	solvent-based / water-based / UV cured
applications	solvent-less lamination, barrier coating (surface or in-laminate), papertouch coating (surface)

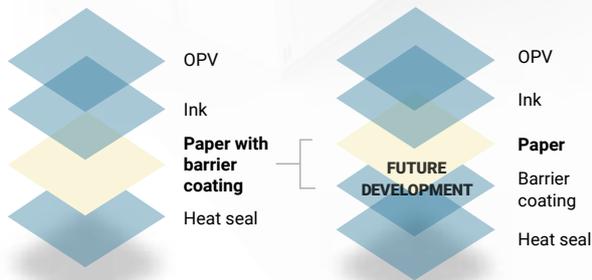
The Future of Packaging with Optima's IPU

Optima's IPU can provide the way to produce various sustainable or value added packaging in the future.



In-Line Gravure IPU

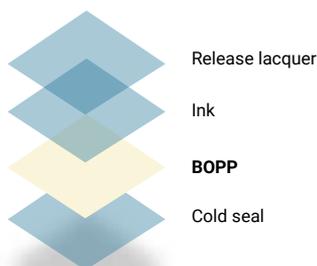
Sustainable Packaging



Optima² + IPU Flexo



Value Added Packaging



Optima² + IPU Gravure





 **ECG**
EXTENDED
COLOR
GAMUT

ECG print on paper

TOPIC

How SOMA Optima² Flexo Presses

Adapt to Sustainability Challenges

Sustainability of the planet will continue to be a significant issue for printers and converters; not only because brands require it, but also because it is the right thing to do. Of course, there are many objectives, including less waste, less ink, less energy, and less CO₂ expended. For brands, this goes far beyond printing; for example, into transportation, consumables and packaging recycling. As energy has become an even more crucial commodity (one need not look farther than Europe), SOMA has been adding features to optimize energy consumption wherever we can.



ECG printing has become a hot topic and a number of companies offer solutions. When it comes to expanded color gamut economics, the resulting environmental impact is just as important as the aesthetic advantages.

This puts pressures on the manufacturers of the substrates and inks as well as SOMA, who must make them print well on press. To that end, SOMA is doing all we can to handle all environment-friendly technologies such as water based printing, paper or biodegradable materials printing, ECG or energy cured inks (UV).

There has become a two-pronged approach from SOMA. One is to assure successful ways to print attractive graphics on difficult substrates. The other is to offer ways that operation of the Optima² press itself puts less strain on waste and energy requirements.

Innovative substrates

Packagers and, more importantly, brand owners, are always looking for new materials that are easier to work with, and substrates and inks that are safe—for food products, in particular.

There is an influx of new materials that assure packaging is fully recyclable, or reduces the carbon footprint, while not impacting on product quality, or the appearance of the packaging.

There is also an effort to offer various barrier coatings to replace laminates, applied either on the press, a downstream unit, or at a separate station. From a basic brand's interests, it complies easily with food safety standards while allowing 100% recyclability of the packaging. Manufacturers of these new substrates are trying hard to assure that anything they develop can be fully useable on current packaging equipment.

Ink systems

With new substrates and a trend away from harmful materials, there is a movement away from solvent-based inks, with many more preparations of water-based inks. In fact, in its 2022 report, *The Future of Water-based vs. Solvent Printing to 2027*, Smithers projected aqueous inks to grow 5.6% annually through 2027, compared to solvent ink growth of +1.3%.

Another sustainable solution is UV LED ink. It is a volatile organic compound (VOC) emission-free process, with no ozone extraction required, resulting in reduced infrastructure exhaust systems, air exchange and power delivery. Moreover, UV LED ink



A greater environmental approach in packaging is guaranteed. One option is bio-renewable packaging. The second option is 100% recyclable packaging. It seems that the path is not defined yet, as both technologies have their pros and cons. Yet, surely, there will be new printing challenges associated with this—and SOMA will ensure that our presses can handle these challenges.

makes design graphics pop out from the package. Greater ink pigmentation also means less ink volume is required.

Ensuring heating systems are effective

For solvent and water-based inks, one way to assure that slow-drying inks are dried as efficiently, and as fast as possible, is to create 'intelligent drying'. If you can create an almost closed loop drying system, you can dry inks efficiently. Only when it reaches the defined LEL level (solvent saturation in the exhaust), will the system output a minimum amount of air (and energy) needed to drop the LEL level to a defined level. SOMA has achieved this with our i-DRY intuitive

Efficient deck drying head with ergonomic cleaning

drying setting for optimal energy savings. The software upgrade can set the press to different drying performance levels for individual machine modes.

SOMA i-Dry is an extremely efficient system for stand-by modes, low speeds, or printing designs with low ink coverage. The effective system can automatically adjust the speed of ventilators and/or keep them on a minimum level during stand-by mode. The three-fan drying system consisting of a between-deck drying loop and drying tunnel loop helps to dry ink quickly. It can also deliver exceptional energy savings via integrated heat recuperation from regenerative thermal oxidizers (RTOs). The burned fumes energy is recovered and used to preheat the air drying systems in the press.

Sustainable expanded color gamut (ECG) printing

ECG printing has become a hot topic and a number of companies offer solutions. When it comes to expanded color gamut economics, the resulting environmental impact is just as important as the aesthetic advantages. By avoiding the ink changes between runs, a printer can reduce wasted ink and washing detergents. This results in a more ecological package printing process with more run time, less set-up time, less cleaning, and less waste. Ink inventories are reduced because there is less need to store expensive spot colors. It also means no anilox change, reduced usage of solvents for washing the press, and the ability to print multiple jobs on the same run. Furthermore, gang-run printing allows high flexibility to print short jobs more ecologically and efficiently.

SOMA continues to explore ways to make ECG printing as efficient as possible. For example, we have collaborated with the Flint Group and Marvaco to work on eco-friendly full HD ECG printing on BOPP film. During webinars we have demonstrated ways to reduce the use of inks, minimize flexo plate consumption, save waste and totally eliminate ink washes during job changes.

Color Management

Don't forget color management for conventional CMYK + spot color printing. A good color management and/or matching solution will allow printers to reduce makereadies as much as 25%, increasing capacity, saving ink, and reducing waste.

Minimum waste during press make-ready

If you can prepare the next job while the previous one is still running, you have a leg up on time and reducing waste. Some systems measure data used for make-readies on the press, during the plate mounting procedure. The SOMA IRIS Intelligent Register & Impression Setting system offers printers a powerful solution for short runs. When a sleeve is inserted into a flexo press, registration and topography/impression data is read from an RFID chip and prepared for fully automatic operation. It helps to assure that every job is automatically in registration and impression quickly. This reduces makeready time and assures faster completion of jobs—along with almost zero-meter set-up waste—a flexible, agile, and sustainable solution for short runs.

A number of sustainable features that can add up

There are many more features that every press manufacturer can offer to make a company more sustainable. Here are a few:

- **SOMA has improved insulation in the Optima² flexo press:** By maintaining temperatures in the deck and tunnel drying, the press is more efficient.
- Sometimes SOMA's **press monitoring system** can have as much influence as any mechanical improvement. The advanced, modern press monitoring system can allow supervision and long-term monitoring of flexographic press efficiency and energy consumption via the Internet, from the office or anywhere in the world.
- **Energy recovery:** Installing the latest, most efficient drives—some of which can include electricity retrieval—can reduce the amount of power required to operate the press. With a recuperation system, the kinetic energy—the total random moving energy—can be converted into useful electrical energy. SOMA uses Bosch Rexroth drives with IPM (Integrated Permanent Magnet), which save up to 8% energy. The savings are measurable and helpful.
- **Gas/electric hybrid drying system.** The SOMA Optima² includes a system where the operator can make a decision based upon gas or electric energy costs at any given time. While they run separately, both systems are installed, and the operator chooses, on a panel, which will

operate during printing.

- **SOMA Ink Cartridge system:** Certain inks, particularly expensive spot colors, special effect and metallic formulations can be costly—and it is always a shame to waste any ink. On average, about five to seven liters of ink are in the press system in one deck (doctor blade chamber, pump, hose, etc.). When a print job is finished, this ink is returned to a bucket, yet some percentage of the ink is always lost on its way back, due to cleaning or residue. The SOMA Ink Cartridge system can reduce ink volumes and residual waste. With the SOMA Ink Cartridge system, only a minimum of 1.5 liters (maximum up to 4.5 liters) is ever in the system. Based on current experience, SOMA has seen an average of 17.9 % in ink savings.

What should we expect? What could happen in the future? A greater environmental approach in packaging is guaranteed. One option is bio-renewable packaging. The second option is 100% recyclable packaging. It seems that the path is not defined yet, as both technologies have their pros and cons. Yet, surely, there will be new printing challenges associated with these—and SOMA will ensure that our presses can handle these challenges.

It all starts with the press

A flexo press is still the heart of a print facility. Any way that the SOMA Optima² can be improved to save inks and substrates, print exquisite graphics with sustainable materials, and be energy efficient is advantageous. It makes a company more attractive to a brand owner, safer to its employees, and more cost effective. And, most important, it provides the company an ethical standing on this earth. Pay attention to what your flexo press can do.



Just a bit more than a year ago, in June 2022, SOMA announced that we successfully opened two new fully-operational manufacturing facilities, Assembly Halls A and B. These are used for the assembly of all SOMA machines and are located at our headquarters in Lanskrout, Czech Republic.

Hall A is used for the final assembly of flexo printing machines.

COMING SOON:

New SOMA Manufacturing Assembly Areas in Hall C

Built to Meet Future Growth

As demand for SOMA flexo presses and other equipment increased, SOMA put into action the development of manufacturing capabilities and capacity that would assure the most efficient production workflow for the assembly of our products. Also important was a comfortable, yet suitable, site for effective SOMA customer equipment facility acceptance tests.

Just a bit more than a year ago, in June 2022, SOMA announced that we successfully opened two new fully-operational manufacturing facilities, Assembly Halls A and B. These are used for the assembly of all SOMA machines and are located at our headquarters in Lanskrout, Czech Republic.

We are now very busy working on Hall C, which began in June with the goal of completing construction by the end of 2023.

The contents of Hall C will be a logistics center and a modern paint shop. Changing rooms and office facilities will be included within the administrative portion of this hall.

At the same time, the installation of warehouse technology and the rather demanding paint shop technology will take place. They should be available for trial operation by June 2024, at the latest.

The logistics center, with an area of 1,730 m² (nearly 19,000 square feet), will be equipped with several types of shelving systems that will be used to store both purchased inventory and manufactured items. The lower shelves of the pallet racks will be used for simple and quick distribution of small goods. The upper shelves of these racks will be used for storing larger parts

in pallets—serviced by a special system stacker. An interesting feature is that the operator cab of this pallet stacker can be lifted together with the pallet, to a height of up to nine meters. Large oversized parts will be stored in cantilever racks. The output of the logistics center will be complete carts of equipment parts that will be delivered to the adjacent assembly area.

A large paint shop will be built within a second portion of Hall C. It will bring together two different types of painting systems within an area of 1080 m² (roughly 11,600 square feet). In addition to the wet paint technology used by SOMA today, powder coating technology will also be installed. This is particularly helpful for thin sheets and steel structures.

The new paint shop will be able to accommodate even the largest equipment parts. Handling them will be done by means of an overhead conveyor. The suspended part will be moved from the degreasing area to painting, and then to the drying area. A truly technological innovation within the new paint shop will be the hybrid heating of the painting and drying ovens. This new technology will make it possible to heat the enclosures with either gas or electricity. Combined with the use of solar panels installed on the Hall C roof, this system will

bring significant energy savings.

The convenient location of the paint shop will allow the easy transport of heavy parts directly to the assembly area. Machine ‘skins’ will be painted at the last possible moment to keep them as attractive and clean as possible, and will be transported, in sets, in special technological pallets directly for assembly. This will eliminate possible damage to the paint during storage and handling.

To make the workplace as comfortable as possible for SOMA guests and employees alike, there will be an underfloor heating and cooling system for all areas. There will also be large windows installed at the logistics center reception area.

The new spaces in Hall C will make the logistics processes significantly more efficient, while those in the new paint shop will use high capacity capabilities to assure the smooth flow of painted parts directly for assembly.

TESTIMONIAL

Walnut Packaging Inc. invests in an

often-ignored way to improve packaging productivity:

A new SOMA Pluto slitter



"Our customers all want the same thing: deliveries on time, exceptional quality, and the best prices. We give customers what they ask for—and if we can do better, we will. We help design projects from the beginning to the end product."

Pier of Long Island, Long Island City



Scan to read more about Slitters



SOMA is pleased to announce that Farmingdale, NY-based Walnut Packaging Inc. has been successfully operating its new SOMA Pluto III.2 slitter/rewinder.

Walnut Packaging Inc. provides customers the highest quality plastic bags at a competitive price. Their product range covers an extremely wide range of bags, from die cut shopping bags to produce, header and ice bags. They serve companies delivering a variety of products, from confectionery and snacks to poultry and meats, and household and personal care products.

“My father founded Walnut Packaging Inc. in 1962 as a converter with one bag machine. Over several years we grew and purchased more equipment,” remembers Jose Alvarado Jr., Vice President. “We invested in our own press and started mounting plates and printing, moving from our original facilities in the Bronx, to East Farmingdale. We expanded, reaching out to work with bigger and better customers. Keeping up with the times, we invested in new converting machines, a SOMA Premia printing press, slitter, and optic mounter.”

This remarkable background gave Walnut Packaging Inc. an advantage working with an extensive array of designs. They have experience with many different substrates, including polyethylene, polypropylene, polyester, shrink films, metalized films, and various co-extrusions. “Our customers all want the same thing: deliveries on time, exceptional quality, and the best prices. We give customers what they ask for—and if we can do better, we will. We help design projects from the beginning to the end product. In fact, we patented a poly bag a few years ago to pre-

serve the life of potatoes. It has helped the industry.”

Recently, Walnut Packaging Inc. wanted to invest in a faster, high quality slitter with updated technology that was quick to make changeovers in different sizes. “We also decided that we did not want an inline slitter. We had decided that if you have a problem with any of your inline equipment, you have to stop everything. With an offline system, everything else can still run while you resolve the issues,” says Alvarado. They invested in a SOMA Pluto slitter.

A sometimes overlooked area where printers/converters can be more efficient is slitting. The Pluto III.2 slitter/rewinder with automatic knife/ blade positioning and automatic laser core guiding ensures quick and precise knife settings and core settings for new jobs. A variable knife shaft permits tangential slitting with lower and upper rotary knives or with razor blades against a grooved segment. The Tenzomat II tension control system provides precise unwind and rewind tension control—slitting very thin and difficult substrates. Several touch screen panels help operate the machine. It offers mid and wide web printers and converters a cost-effective solution for slitting a wide range of substrates.

“We are using our new Pluto slitter on more different materials, because the tension is easier to control. The cutting capacity is also greater. If we run 40” or 50” wide on

our press for a 10” piece of art, the job can be done in a quarter of the time. It goes through the slitter and ends up with 10-inch rolls,” explains Alvarado.

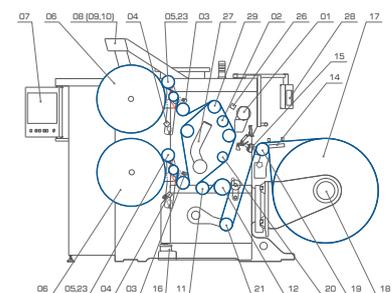
Most slitters don’t allow people to quickly set up jobs. “One thing our slitter does differently is that the unloading mechanism delivers the finished slit rolls to a stand that rotates horizontally or vertically. So, we can take rolls off the machine and put them aside, making it much easier to move on to the next roll,” comments Alvarado. “My guess is that our new slitter is 35% faster than what we were using.”

Even with the speed, the slitter delivers exceptional quality. “We’re getting a much cleaner cut,” says Alvarado. “There is a job we do with micro perforations. With the new slitter, we can cut it with much smoother micro perfs. It even provides a cleaner end roll cut.”

Operators find the new slitter much more user-friendly. “With some slitters you have to use a cart to load rolls, and there is the potential for one to drop, causing an accident,” comments Alvarado. “Our slitter has a device that picks up the roll itself. Operators don’t have to stress out with big, heavy rolls.”

“Walnut Packaging Inc. is a great example of a converter who has always believed in maintaining technology that keeps up with customer demands,” remarks Garrett Taylor, SOMA Sales Director, North America. “We are proud that their business has thrived by using SOMA equipment and are happy to have had them as a long-term customer here in the US. We also commend them for their foresight to realize that even slitters can measurably increase productivity.”

“Our new slitter was worth the investment. It’s well built, and I like the way it runs. As the Vice President, the most important aspect for the company is that the slitter helps our customers save money,” concludes Alvarado.



SOMA Upgrades its Presence at the Flexo Xperience Center (FXC)

SOMA installs a new, second generation Optima² flexo press and announces appointment of Kamil Sawicki as Print Specialist at FXC

SOMA, co-founder partner along with MacDermid of the Flexo Xperience Center (FXC), in Atlanta, GA—is pleased to announce that it has installed a new SOMA Optima² flexo press at the facility. The second generation Optima² features the FTA Technical Innovation award winning Changeover Wizard. The press is currently up and running and is available for demonstrations and industry testing. It was recently showcased during the Expanded Color Gamut event held at the FXC in June 2023.

The FXC brings many of the industry's best innovation providers together in one place. From design to post-press and evaluation, the FXC is a flexo center that provides hands-on experience with the latest technologies through collaboration, research, experimentation, and learning. Its objective is to help everyone achieve excellence in the flexo process and to Move Flexo Forward.

SOMA Optima: Outstanding quality and fast makereadies

The SOMA Optima² flexo press has earned a global reputation as an outstanding, easy to operate flexo press, especially for short runs. The press features the SOMA IRIS (Intelligent Register and Impression Setting) system for automatic job settings, which helps bring Intelligent Automation to a facility.

To meet the challenges of efficient changeovers with inexperienced operators, visitors to the FXC can learn how novices can master job changeovers with the SOMA Changeover Wizard, an innovative component of new SOMA Optima² flexo presses, and recipient of a prestigious 2022 FTA Technical Innovation Award. The SOMA

Changeover Wizard flexo press user interface guides press operators throughout all the steps involved changing from one job to the next. In doing so, it reduces the number of tasks or may shorten tasks required, defines their optimal order, and automates as many steps as possible, minimizing operator error.

Kamil Sawicki, new full-time print specialist, arrives at the FXC

In addition, Kamil Sawicki, an experienced flexo press operator, has arrived at the FXC as the resident high-speed print specialist, dedicated to all press activities there. Mr. Sawicki will manage all activities at the press room, and is also part of the broader SOMA support team dedicated to the US market.

Sawicki has spent the past few months training on all features of the SOMA Optima² flexo press. He has also been a print specialist and later as a senior flexographic printer at one of the leading printing and converting companies in the UK. He brings with him exceptional mechanical and process engineering skills.

"Kamil is a terrific addition to the FXC staff. He understands the entire range of SOMA

Optima printing presses, and has extensive work experience operating flexo printing presses in daily high-pressure environments," comments Garrett Taylor, SOMA North America Sales Director. "While test runs are certainly part of the agenda, collaboration with FXC partners, educating visitors about flexographic printing, and training novice and experienced press operators are vital parts of his role. Kamil will also be providing SOMA resources for research projects so we can move flexo forward. There are so many areas that can be covered, from improved quality and efficiencies, to assuring successful extended gamut implementations and building on sustainable solutions. Kamil is skilled and ready to offer his technical expertise."



"Kamil is a terrific addition to the FXC staff. He understands the entire range of SOMA Optima printing presses, and has extensive work experience operating flexo printing presses in daily high-pressure environments," comments Garrett Taylor, SOMA North America Sales Director.

Optima² flexo press demo at the Flexo Xperience Center, Atlanta GA



Gore Park Fountain at Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

DTM Flexo Services Increases Focus on SOMA S-Mount Mounters in Canada

SOMA is pleased to announce that its existing agent in Canada, DTM Flexo Services, has decided to expand its product range with SOMA by exclusively offering the SOMA S-Mount as a stand-alone mouter for mid- and wide-web packaging in Canada.



A SOMA S-Mount can mount plates for any flexo press, but also is the only mouter that offers intelligent automation compatible with three different automatic impression and registration systems, including SOMA IRIS. Therefore, it is possible to run the impression and registration settings of these different press manufacturers automatically from one S-Mount mouter.

Based in Stoney Creek, near Toronto, DTM Flexo Services is a Canadian flexographic printing and converting industries sales and service representative serving the Canadian flexographic market from coast to coast. DTM Flexo's team has over 70 years of combined hands-on technical flexo experience, and a complete understanding of the flexo process, from prepress to press to post press. DTM Flexo Services began representing the SOMA range of equipment to the Canadian market in early 2021.

The SOMA S-Mount plate mouter puts the emphasis on fast and accurate plate mounting. The S-Mount has made it significantly easier for the operator to mount plates with increased accuracy, and also can help when the sleeve is placed into the press. When used along with IRIS, an Intelligent Registration and Impression Setting system, there is no longer a manual burden on the press operator to set or adjust controls. It is done automatically with minimum waste involved.

"I recently visited SOMA headquarters in the Czech Republic, had a close-up look at the equipment, and was very impressed with the company's technology and manufacturing expertise," notes David McBeth,

DTM Flexo Services President. "Companies are more comfortable installing different presses in their facilities. More and more are evaluating automation as a necessary feature in flexo presses. A SOMA S-Mount can mount plates for any flexo press, but also is the only mouter that offers intelligent automation compatible with three different automatic impression and registration systems, including SOMA IRIS. Therefore, it is possible to run the impression and registration settings of these different press manufacturers automatically from one S-Mount mouter. That can make mounting less complicated in mixed-press facilities, and perhaps will limit the number of mouters that are required. In our opinion, it is the most flexible mouter in the market."

"SOMA is excited about the new focus DTM Flexo Services has placed on SOMA S-Mount mouters, and the work we are accomplishing in Canada," exclaims Garrett Taylor, SOMA Sales Director, North America. "We are actively participating together on a number of opportunities. Most of these include presses and mouters."

SOMA Holds a Successful Open House at MACA Italy

SOMA demonstrates two demanding jobs, including complete makereadies, printed on plastic with water-based inks on a SOMA Optima² flexo press

On October 4, 2023 SOMA held a VIP Open House for printers and converters at MACA srl. (www.macasrl.it) headquarters in Calvi, Italy. This year, MACA installed a new SOMA Optima² flexographic printing press and SOMA S-Mount A plate moulder.



“SOMA is grateful that MACA allowed us to conduct this important event at their print facility. They are a remarkable example of what you can do with SOMA flexo equipment,” comments Petr Blasko, SOMA Marketing Director.

Live Demo

Automatic Plate Moulder S-Mount



Intelligent Flexo Press Optima²

Since 2001, Maca has developed and produced flexible and responsible packaging for foods, beverages, pharmaceuticals, and home and personal care products, with infinite customization possibilities. They rely on flexible thinking with a strong focus on eco-sustainability. Medium and high definition flexographic technology allows them to offer extremely high quality printed products at reasonable costs, even for medium and small print runs.

During the open house, a number of demos were shown MACA's automated SOMA S-Mount plate moulder and SOMA Optima² flexo press. SOMA performed complete make-readies using IRIS technology between the S-Mount plate moulder and the Optima² CI intelligent flexo press. Once plates were mounted, two demanding print jobs were run. Given greater consumer demand for sustainable as well as food-safe packaging, guests learned about water-based printing on plastic and the use of SOMA Intelligent Automation, contributing to sustainable packaging solutions. Highlighted was SOMA Advanced Bounce Control on the Optima² press. The system guarantees perfect dots with superior print stability at exceptionally fast speeds.

The next-generation SOMA Optima² CI intelligent flexo press is equipped with new Intelligent Automation features that boost

efficiency and minimize operator errors. In doing so, print quality is better and press operation is more efficient. The automatic S-Mount plate moulder offers full automation of plate mounting. The accurate and repeatable perfect registration makes it easier to set the register when the sleeve is placed into the press. When that process is used along with the accuracy of the IRIS print setting system, there is no longer a manual burden on the press operator to set or tell the press where to adjust register and impression. It is done automatically with minimum waste involved.

“SOMA is grateful that MACA allowed us to conduct this important event at their print facility. They are a remarkable example of what you can do with SOMA flexo equipment,” comments Petr Blasko, SOMA Marketing Director. “Italy, with its exceptional printing facilities, is a very important market for SOMA. We are proud that flexo printers there are investing in our SOMA S-Mount plate moulder and SOMA Optima² flexo presses. We were happy to have met such accomplished printers at our open house.”



Gravure-like print quality

Low dot gain, superior dot stability

Perfect dots due to ABC*

Exceptional contrast

Water-based on plastic

Natural, smooth transitions to zero

Printed Designs

* Advanced Bounce Control system that guarantees top speeds with absolute print stability.

Atrani, Italy along the beautiful Amalfi Coast

SOMA Opens a New Service Center in Latin America

SOMA also announces the appointment of Leonardo Pozo as Regional Service Manager

SOMA is pleased to announce that we have established a new service center on October 1, 2023 to assist customers in Latin America. With the center, based in Guayaquil, Ecuador, SOMA brings exceptional, local service and support. The permanent growth of our center is the result of SOMA's dedication to our customers in Latin America and commitment to provide excellent, accessible assistance.



“With the opening of our new service center, we promise to deliver quality service to assure the utmost satisfaction; speedy service to minimize downtime; and confidentiality, assuring personal and business information are safe,” assures Milan Papacek, SOMA Head of Service Services.



SOMA S-Chat already provides a very convenient type of service communication making it possible for SOMA to remotely respond to potential problems. However, SOMA understands it is only possible to actively and adequately respond to our customers' needs if a local service center is available.

With the establishment of a service center, we have greatly increased our regional presence and, above all, clearly demonstrates how important our customers in Latin America are.

In the service center, SOMA provides a wide range of services, which until now were only available from our service department in the Czech Republic.

Some of the key services include:

- **Installation:** In cooperation with local companies, SOMA technicians are able to provide the installation of delivered products—within an agreed time frame and with the proficiency expected from SOMA.
- **Repair and Maintenance:** SOMA's team of experts is ready to help with the repair and maintenance of SOMA equipment. The company has state-of-the-art tools and the knowledge to provide fast and reliable local service support.
- **Diagnostics and Training:** SOMA wants our customers to be completely educated about the status of their devices. We offer advanced diagnostics and training to help operators better understand SOMA systems and to optimize their operation.

- **Spare Parts:** SOMA will be happy to provide help to ensure parts orders and delivery meet customer expectations.

Concurrently, SOMA has appointed Leonardo Pozo as Regional Service Manager. Mr. Pozo has extensive training experience servicing just about any piece of printing equipment, from flexo and offset presses to platemakers, and from digital cutters to finishing equipment—and, of course, the entire SOMA product line.

“With the opening of our new service center, we promise to deliver quality service to assure the utmost satisfaction; speedy service to minimize downtime; and confidentiality, assuring personal and business information are safe,” assures Milan Papacek, SOMA Head of Service Services. “We look forward to working with customers from our new service center, providing exceptional, local help.”

SOMA customers in Latin America are encouraged to reach out to the SOMA service center at:

**SOMA Service Center
Guayaquil/ Ecuador**

Phone: +593 95 878 3769

Email: pozo@soma-eng.com

Interview with **Andre Diestelkamp,** SOMA Service Technician for Germany



SOMA is an innovative company which, with its motivated team, is dedicated to the tasks demanded by the market. This philosophy fits perfectly with the capabilities and values of Inter-Flex.



Please tell us a bit about your company.

Inter-Flex GmbH has been a global player in the printing and packaging industry for the past 23 years. Our wide-ranging portfolio includes service and maintenance, machinery modifications, new product technology reproductions, turnkey projects, training and consulting.

What are you responsible for with SOMA? What services can you provide SOMA customers?

We provide technical support to SOMA customers who are located in Germany.

Why did you decide to partner with SOMA? What impressed you about SOMA?

SOMA is an innovative company which, with its motivated team, is dedicated to the tasks demanded by the market. This philosophy fits perfectly with the capabilities and values of Inter-Flex.

How do SOMA presses, mounters and slitters help serve the German market?

They offer a perfect option to the renowned German manufacturers of printing presses.

Please tell us a bit about yourself, professionally. How did you get to the role you have, now. What are some of your special experiences?

Since 1988 I have been working exclusively in the field of printing technology. I have joyfully watched the development of the industry's technology for years. With the founding of Inter-Flex GmbH in 2000, our network was able to serve significant areas of the industry and, in this way, build an extensive portfolio and products and services.



Product Portfolio

Flexographic Presses



Optima



Optima²



Optima² extended repeat

Laminators



Lamiflex E

Plate Mounters



S-Mount



S-Mount FA

Slitter Rewinders



Pluto III.2



Venus III.2



Venus III.2-Turret

Die Cutters



Bulldog



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