

Xerox Drives Serialization Solution for Pharmaceutical Packaging

OTC Group

Using the powerful combination of Xerox® iGen® Press print capabilities and the Xerox® Automated Packaging Solution (XAPS), OTC Group has developed a workflow that allows for the application of UPI and AIDC tracking information to be applied at the time of printing, eliminating the possibility of packaging theft between the printing and packaging process.



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– Adam Egan
OTC Group
VP, High-Performance Packaging

Packager solves pharmaceuticals challenge by providing serialization on folding cartons via digital printing to fulfill the “track and trace” U.S. federal mandate.

As pharmaceutical executives struggle to implement the Drug Quality and Security Act, which places strict requirements on tracking and tracing drug packaging, OTC Group of Ontario, Canada, partnered with Xerox to provide a state-of-the-art digital print solution that goes beyond the legal requirements, creating a process—and packaging—that defies theft and counterfeiting.

Challenge

Theft and counterfeiting is a real problem for the pharmaceutical industry. Along with the obvious health and safety issues surrounding sale of counterfeit medications, there is a financial toll—estimated to be between \$75 billion and \$200 billion worldwide.

One of the focuses of recent legislation to thwart counterfeiting revolves around serialization—the practice of providing a unique product identifier (UPI) in plain text and a barcode allowing automatic identification and data capture (AIDC) on product packaging. These measures allow tracking and traceability throughout the supply chain as well as once the product reaches the market.

Currently, one of the most common solutions to comply with serialization regulations involves using an inkjet printing process to apply the necessary identifiers at the last stage of packaging. The drawbacks to this approach are many, especially when package printing and assembly are provided by an outside vendor, as frequently happens in the production of pharmaceuticals. Without the ability to track packaging between the printing facility and the packaging facility, there is ample opportunity for fraud.

Solution

The Xerox® Automated Packaging Solution (XAPS) seamlessly joins four components—printing, coating, stacking and die cutting, all inline and allowing production of folding

cartons with advanced anti-counterfeiting measures efficiently and affordably. Using the powerful combination of Xerox® iGen® XAPS and Xerox® FreeFlow® variable solution (i.e., FreeFlow® Print Server and Variable Information Suite), OTC Group has developed a workflow that allows for the application of UPI and AIDC tracking information to be applied at the time of printing, eliminating the possibility of packaging theft between the printing and packaging process.

Additionally, by utilizing the unique digital print and production capabilities of the iGen Press, OTC Group is able to incorporate additional security features from the Xerox® FreeFlow Variable Information Suite—including Xerox® Specialty Image Text such as MicroText Mark, Correlation Mark and Xerox® GlossMark®—into the package design itself, adding to the difficulty of package counterfeiting.

For one current client, needing an 800,000 printed folding carton run, OTC Group estimates that their solution has eliminated millions of dollars in risk exposure by providing traceability at every level, with the ability to account for every package printed—including waste—and providing that data to the client in electronic format.

Results

According to Adam Egan, OTC Group’s VP of High-Performance Packaging, their Xerox® iGen/XAPS solution has allowed them to perform as the market demands. “We are able to own a process that provides a significant benefit to our client,” he said. “While many in

the pharmaceutical industry struggle with the ability to conform to serialization and track-and-trace accountability, we’ve engineered a process that works.”

Overall, with the Xerox® iGen Press and Xerox® Automated Packaging Solution, OTC Group has been able to:

- Take advantage of new market opportunities in pharmaceuticals and beyond
- Improve integrity and efficiency working inline
- Be more cost effective with production runs while expanding the range of services they provide
- Provide innovative solutions for their clients unavailable anywhere else

OTC Group is a high-performance packaging and data company based in London, Ontario, offering new production and printing technology, design flexibility and engineered data-segmentation tools. They provide brand marketers and retailers cost-effective, high-speed packaging and promotion solutions with customization and personalization, as well as special event marketing and market- or demographic-specific short runs.

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