

Sustainability in packaging drives pre-media company Athena Graphics



“the year of a perfect sustainable world”

The future depends on the sustainable work we do today. For sure our business should also embrace sustainability. Simply put, it should be a business approach to creating long-term value by taking into consideration how a given organization operates in the ecological, social and economic environment. Athena Graphics (based in Belgium, the Netherlands and France) is already many years a pioneer in applying sustainability in his packaging business “artwork, pre-press, plates and asset management”.

In this context, a new position has also been created which is filled by Herlinde Derycke. She will continue to focus on sustainability in Athena Graphics Group. A not unimportant detail, Herlinde has won the Febelgra award 2019 (Belgium printing federation) with her excellent thesis on sustainability.

By making a strong commitment to innovation, optimization and standardization we contribute to a sustainable climate policy. Athena Graphics takes numerous measures to limit its impact on the environment.

Smart Flexo is an award-winning technology that reduces the need for plates and inks during your printing process. With this technology, 2 to 3 printing forms can be eliminated, resulting in reduced set-up times, less material consumption and less cleaning. The specific Pantone colours are converted into quadri and immediately print in a stable way.

Extended Gamut printing (CMYK + 3 extra inks) reduces ink and film consumption resulting in shorter set-up times, fewer plates, lower production costs and less waste. By using the same set of inks for all print jobs the need for wash-ups when switching jobs is eliminated.

Our plate wash system uses **EcoWash products** that are a healthier and more ecological alternative to the solvent variants. We regenerate these ourselves, which means that we can reuse up to 94% of the product. This also means that our supplier has to pay less visits to deliver the product, which has a positive impact on CO2 emissions.

The transport of our plates is also done by **night deliveries** that are optimally loaded and follow the shortest route. The plates are firmly packed in recycled materials that we received from our suppliers in order to minimize waste. We separate our waste religiously and at present we are conducting research into the valorisation of our polymer waste.

Our **high-quality proofs** in combination with GMG software and Epson printers provide a realistic image of the printed result. Consequently, press approvals are no longer necessary and transportation costs are reduced.

Thanks to “**remote proofing**” proofs can be made instantly in your office with the same quality and colour correctness as proofs made in the office of Athena: predictable, constant and colour-perfect certified proofs in minutes. This solution cuts transportation costs and helps to reduce the ‘time-to-market’ of your products. Moreover, Athena Graphics can also simulate colours on challenging substrates such as recycled folding carton.

In a world that changes faster than time itself your business needs a partner that travel at those same high speeds. Athena Graphics understood the need for streamlining your artwork and packaging process already 15 years ago. This is why they developed Athena Portal, a platform for tailor-made solutions that simplifies the packaging chain. Via the centralization of all the packaging related tasks on the **Athena Portal**, you limit errors and delays. Better collaboration with the stakeholders during the creation of the packaging assets, less e-mail traffic, easier search, less loops, centralized database, task management, centralized reporting capabilities... just to name a few benefits that helps reducing mistakes and reprints which contribute to sustainability in general.

For an optimal use of our servers we make use of **virtual servers**. In this way, we economise up to 80% of our energy consumption. The servers are being cooled via ‘in rack cooling’ and ‘free cooling’.