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HYBRID SOFTWARE – ACCELERATING INNOVATION IN PACKAGING

Hall 7A/F41

HYBRID Software, now the fastest growing software company in the graphic arts sector, plans to use drupa2016 to further strengthen its position as a major pre-press innovator by launching a range of industry-leading products. In addition to a string of installations worldwide, HYBRID has extended its global distributor network, expanded its workforce and formed several strategic new partnerships with other key vendors.

Technical highlights at drupa2016 will include a groundbreaking cloud-based enterprise workflow solution, variable data options for digital package printing, warping and 3D facilities for shrink sleeves and cartons, plus a 64-bit scalable RIP for PC and MAC platforms, the only RIP of its type on the market. Visitors to the stand will also be able to hear about HYBRID's expanded gamut color management for package printing as well as the latest developments in automated workflows, from MIS to digital output.

"The launch in 2013 of CLOUDFLOW and PACKZ were milestones for the company, transforming its product line and customer base," says chairman Guido Van der Schueren. "Although we still provide integration with third party products, our customers asked for more innovation in pre-press and workflow, and this has become a strong focus for HYBRID Software.

"The significant successes we have been experiencing since our last drupa are due largely to our commitment to listen to customers and our willingness to act upon their input. This in turn has required some highly imaginative thinking by our research and development teams, who have created innovative solutions to meet these needs. New ideas and fresh approaches in the pre-press sector have been absent for too long. There is no doubt that HYBRID is helped greatly by its background – it is both an IT company that understands packaging and a packaging company that understands IT."

Today, HYBRID Software has more than 70 employees across five Continents and over 500 customers. During February the company announced an OEM deal with Think Laboratory, a global supplier of gravure engraving equipment, which allows the Japanese manufacturer to offer the full range of HYBRID's native PDF workflow products. HYBRID also announced in February an alliance with UK firm Global Graphics that provides digital press manufacturers with access to an unrivalled package of RIPS and workflows. drupa2016 will be the launch pad for these new combined solutions.

"The increasing use of digital technology in the field of packaging means that HYBRID's involvement in this area is also becoming greater," says Guido Van der Schueren. "Within the last few months we have been appointed by HP Indigo as a worldwide SmartStream partner, which enables Indigo press users to have ready access to HYBRID products. Our other digital press partners include Konica Minolta, Oki Data and Xeikon/Flint.

"Amongst engine vendors we work closely with Screen, AV Flexologic and Zünd across all flexo and corrugated segments. We also have good relationships with most MIS suppliers as well as a host of technology companies, including GMG, Creative Edge and matchmycolor. We have made a tremendous investment in developing a complete product offering for the pre-press market and in building a global organization to deploy them. drupa2016 is the perfect platform to launch the full range of HYBRID Software products and solutions on the global stage!"

New CLOUDFLOW Share

CLOUDFLOW is a web-based workflow solution that connects multiple workflows, devices, and even distributed production sites through a common interface and centralized database. Supported on Windows and Mac OS X, CLOUDFLOW interacts with external systems such as file servers, MIS/ERP systems and web portals, and can submit files to workflows in several ways.

The sophisticated features range from intelligent flattening, trapping and separation management to the generation of step and repeat marks, plus production file management and a wide variety of pre-press functions. CLOUDFLOW Share, which will be shown for the first time at drupa2016, is a unique method of transferring data between multiple sites and provides important advantages over existing file transfer systems. CLOUDFLOW Share is based on native PDF technology, which is totally open and compatible, and gives users the ability to link different CLOUDFLOW systems in order to transfer jobs, files, licenses, users, workflows etc.

The new software works with CLOUDFLOW systems that share a database, but also with completely independent CLOUDFLOW systems operating separate databases. This allows

the use of lower bandwidth Internet links and eliminates the need for expensive leased communication lines. The high level of automation reduces manual intervention significantly, resulting in improved productivity and flexibility plus time and cost savings.

Customers can efficiently transfer files to sites where there may be more capacity or specialized expertise, with the ability to transfer only that part of the job which needs updating, a function that is handled automatically by HYBRID's software. Users can easily find out the position of any job, where it is and whether it is on schedule. CLOUDFLOW Share works with standard file servers and can even be used with workflows from other vendors.

New CLOUDFLOW RIP

The CLOUDFLOW RIP is an important addition to the company's suite of software for the packaging and label markets. The 64-bit RIP is based on Harlequin's powerful Host Renderer kernel, with a custom user interface developed by HYBRID Software specifically for labels and packaging. It supports native PDF files and is the fastest RIP on the market, scalable to any desired level of performance.

The RIP is available in two models, either standalone or integrated into a CLOUDFLOW workflow. In the standalone version the RIP is supplied with its own browser-based UI, allowing the user to set up presets and then run jobs. It also includes sophisticated quality assurance tools to measure density, angles and frequency of screened plates, either individually or in full composite color.

In a CLOUDFLOW environment the RIP runs as part of an operating workflow, handling functions such as routing files based on metadata and obtaining information from other systems. It can easily be combined with other HYBRID products such as PROOFSCOPE and PACKZFLOW for soft proofing and pre-press automation functionality.

"The CLOUDFLOW RIP can take full advantage of the distributed architecture of CLOUDFLOW to achieve extremely high productivity," says Guido Van der Schueren. "As with all of our CLOUDFLOW products, the new RIP runs on one or more servers, locally or in the 'cloud', and the user can control it via a web browser. The RIP provides sophisticated screening and calibration control facilities and also supports object-based screening, enabling users to have comprehensive control over the screening process for critical flexo jobs."

The calibration feature gives full control when applying press and print curves enabling, for example, precise application of cutbacks in both highlights and shadows when handling press curves. These curves can be assigned per separation or globally.

New Variable Data Printing

HYBRID has been pioneering the use of variable data printing within the labels and packaging sectors and has developed PRINTPLANNER for its customers and digital press OEMs. PRINTPLANNER is very well suited for combination forms featuring multiple jobs on a single press run. Its VDP module can be used, for instance, to produce labels on demand where a barcode needs to change regularly to match the date of production. Implementation of a new print run could be controlled automatically from an Excel sheet.

New MyCLOUDFLOW

Being shown for the first time at drupa2016 will be HYBRID's exciting software-as-a service product, MyCLOUDFLOW, which lets companies purchase capacity within CLOUDFLOW rather than having to buy a license and configure systems. New customers can take advantage of a complete CLOUDFLOW workspace online via a public cloud, using standard or customized setups. Existing customers can backup files, as well as CLOUDFLOW data such as workflows, and can extend licenses and computer power to meet the demands of peak production with a lower initial investment.

"HYBRID's products are all built upon a native PDF architecture – they don't convert file formats or require plug-ins. The native PDF technology is supported by three key pillars: integration, pre-press and customer facing tools. Their modular design means that they can be purchased as standalone software, but they can also be linked in various formats to create the most flexible and efficient workflows in the graphic arts industry."

PACKZ

HYBRID's PACKZ was launched at Labelexpo 2013 and has rapidly gained a reputation as a leading professional PDF editor for packaging and label workflows. The native PDF software, which runs on Mac OS X and Windows platforms and provides 64-bit multi-processing and multi-threading facilities, eliminates the need for file conversions or proprietary file formats. The vast array of features includes color mapping, trapping, step and repeat, warping and visualization in 2D or even live 3D.

PACKZ supports centralized ink and color management based upon open standards. When used with matchmycolor software, PACKZ helps users design, specify, produce, manage and control brand-based color at every stage of the global color supply chain. "PACKZ can separate designs to allow expanded gamut printing and can convert colors for any digital, flexo, gravure or offset printing process using a flexible ink set, ranging from two to more than ten colors," says Guido Van der Schueren. "Users can interface PACKZ with multi-channel profiling software, such as GMG's OpenColor, to enable highly

accurate color conversions. PACKZ and native PDF are increasingly becoming standards in packaging and are incorporated within leading workflows, such as Kodak's Prinergy."

The trapping technology in PACKZ is another example of HYBRID's relentless drive for innovation. The new SmartTrapper algorithm calculates automatically the most effective traps and even provides guidance to the operator, verifying the trap result by highlighting areas where human attention may be needed. This standardizes the trapping process while providing much greater productivity than other trapping methods.

Other new features in PACKZ include a seamless tabular step and repeat calculator and creator facility for producing continuous impositions. The nested step and repeat feature for folding carton work can flip the structural data in order to generate a step and repeat for the reverse side of the carton. The quality assurance functionality allows simultaneous previewing of back and front impositions on top of each other. PACKZ can also be used to view content in a CFF2 library without having to import the structural design files.

Using the new 'analyze and fix' feature, an operator can perform checks on a design and correct issues with supplied files, such as verifying the text height according to European regulations, converting Illustrator blends to images, detecting font issues, verifying color information and image quality, and removing redundant paths. PACKZ can save changes incrementally and can show previous edit sessions of the document history. HYBRID has also added a character recognition feature that enables the operator to easily convert text that is no longer editable into a live version that can be updated and resaved.

New PACKZ Warping

HYBRID will introduce at drupa2016 a new warping and 3D functionality within PACKZ. The easy-to-use and intuitive tools allow the user to take an existing document and create a precise deformation of it, which takes into account the substrate to be printed on plus the shape and size of the object it is to be applied to, including irregular shapes and overwraps.

This solution can be utilized for simple or complex conical warping, disc shaped metal cans and shrink sleeves for symmetric and irregular shapes, such as a bottle with a handle. The results can be seen immediately on screen in 3D, simplifying and speeding the process of verifying the final result. PACKZ has a direct link with Creative Edge's IC3D for real-time 3D simulation of shrink sleeves, folding cartons and labels.

New PACKZVIEW

PACKZVIEW is a free, downloadable app for previewing and inspecting production PDF files. It allows the instant previewing of complex PDF files, including multipage documents, and it displays transparency and overprints in the same colors that will be printed on press, a big advantage over other 'free' PDF viewers. The software is available to non PACKZ users and can easily be installed by, for example, designers and print buyers who wish to view files from their printer more accurately than other tools allow.

Order Lifecycle Management

HYBRID Software began life in 2007 as an integration software company for the graphic arts industry, and this expertise still plays an important part in the business. These products have been developed extensively over the years and features continue to be added in order to meet the changing demands of the packaging industry.

The ability to create custom job tickets has been improved and these can now be integrated with existing MIS/ERP systems to display all job data in a web browser. The facility can be used to augment MIS functionality with customizable tools for production management, costing, scheduling, JDF integration and reporting. HYBRID's growing library of out-of-the-box solutions includes FlexoTracker, a browser-based production dashboard showing real-time data about flexo plate usage and waste across multiple CTP devices and manufacturing sites.

With tools to connect all major MIS/ERP and web-to-print portals, HYBRID has seen a rise in requests to create and integrate complete workflows, from MIS through pre-press to conventional and digital press output. The integration products support HYBRID's pre-press tools, and vice versa. HYBRID's customers, and the packaging industry overall, benefit by having access to innovative tools which set new standards for efficiency and productivity.

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ABOUT HYBRID SOFTWARE

With offices in Belgium, Germany, Italy and the US plus a global partner network, HYBRID Software is a software development company focused on innovative productivity tools for the graphic arts industry. HYBRID Software's CLOUDFLOW workflow, PACKZ editor and integration

products offer a unique set of advantages that include native PDF workflows, vendor-independent solutions based on industry standards, scalable technology and low cost of ownership. These products are used by hundreds of customers worldwide in all areas of pre-press and print, including labels and packaging, folding cartons, corrugated, wide format and digital printing.

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Events:

DRUPA: May 31. - June 10. 2016 (Hall 7A, stand F41)

