

Unbound Sheet-Fed Gravure Printing



Many of today's print producers and print buyers still believe that some products can't be produced in gravure, for example continuous-tone printing. But gravure is capable of printing, as opposed to the other processes, all kinds of images on many different types of substrates.

Experts in gravure printing, printing machine designers, ink companies, and cylinder makers are showing the way and finding solutions for any kind of customer request. People involved in gravure are convinced that there is nothing better than gravure.

Cylinder costs are not a question anymore, and gravure short runs are routine and successful, especially if a printer has the capability of using sheet-fed printing. Today, informed printers compare print processes by the total cost to produce the same quantity of copy at the right quality (net output or overall cost to produce). If we talk about gravure, we mean high-quality printing for cosmetic packages, cigarette packaging, labels, and security printing, as well as many other speciality applications.

Studies by a renowned pigment manufacturer show that high-quality packaging in eye-catching designs and with brilliant colors is an increasing trend, enabled by the technology improvements for stable ink dispersions of mineral pigments such as pearlescents. Packaging from Asia has been in a leading position for long time.

Year after year, the development of gravure presses and engraving equipment has advanced. Since Drupa 2004, Moog has been producing sheet-fed gravure presses that have a modern look, one that it is common to new offset presses.

Today, sheet transfer between the printing stations is by cylinders. Integrated into this equipment are high-tech drying and the diagonal correction of the sheets. The drying systems have changeable elements for:

- High-speed air knife by room temperature
- High-speed air knife by room temperature plus additional temperature
- High-speed air knife by room temperature plus IR drying for water-based inks
- High-speed air knife by room temperature plus UV drying between the units and in the delivery

Traditionally, brilliant printing with stable production has been the hallmark of gravure. Sheet-fed gravure printing is especially suited to providing print buyers with the most options for print production. Using a gravure/offset combination for printing is the strategy for security print issues, making counterfeiting of brand articles much more difficult. In a sheet-fed environment, the inline gravure stations are well suited for this type of combination.

For this same reason, having an insufficient number of printing stations is not a problem with sheet-fed machines. The job can be run in multiple passes, and additional runs through the machine are easily kept in register. Embossing of material after the printing is made by plates or cylinders. And varnishing in all varieties, including UV-varnishing with gloss points up to 98, is easy to obtain.

A sheet-fed gravure press is a tool that provides unlimited capabilities—and the investment pays! 