



MD Nicolas Brunaud (second left) with team



Codimag Viva 340 waterless offset press



Mathieu Perez, pre-press manager, demonstrates Zahara water-wash plate production

French wine label converter opts for Presstek Zahara plates

An early adopter of Presstek's recently introduced waterless offset plate technology is Print Dorure in France. Andy Thomas reports

Print Dorure, a medium-sized label converter well known in the Bordeaux area for its high quality wine labels, has become one of the first users of Presstek's new Zahara waterless offset plate.

The company started using Zahara plates in mid-2015 shortly after the product's commercial launch, and recently installed Presstek's Eko Kleen water-wash system, allowing the converter to dispense entirely with solvents in the platemaking process.

'We have had excellent results and are very happy about the Zahara plate quality and stability, and Presstek's support,' says managing director Nicolas Brunaud.

The company runs two Codimag Viva waterless offset presses: one 2-color (black and red) and a 4-color press, both with hot foiling and flexo varnish station. In addition there is a Graficon-rebuilt Gallus R200 letterpress and a Gallus intermittent (wet) offset TCS 250, 5-colors with hot foiling, flexo varnish and screen.

Before adopting Zahara plates, Print Dorure used Toray waterless plates, which require a solvent wash. 'This gave us problems, as it was dangerous for health,' says Mathieu Perez, pre-press manager, who had to wear protective gloves when working with the solvent wash.

The Presstek Eko Kleen processor takes

two minutes to make a plate using only water. 'We change the water every three months, and it's easy to dispose of the old water,' says Perez. 'It is both economic and environment-friendly. The plates are ready to print as soon as they come off the processor and last longer on the press. When printing, the plate carries high ink densities, displays very good contrast and sharp, clean images and text.'

Comments Brunaud, 'The Zahara plate offers many benefits. It is chemistry-free and environmentally friendly. It's simple to handle and this eliminates variables caused by the condition of the developer. We find the plate runs longer than competitor products and it images up to 200 line screen.'

The Zahara plate can be used in both of Print Dorure's thermal offset CTP systems.

'An additional benefit is the plates are scratch resistant, allowing us to image the plates some days before,' says Brunaud.

Print Dorure's pre-press department is housed in a separate building, which is also home to the company's sheet-fed business. This consists of two Heidelberg Speedster presses, used mostly for commercial work but also for wet-glue wine labels.

Technical specifications

Zahara is a thermal, non-ablative aluminum plate compatible with UV printing. It images up to 200 line screen and is specified for run lengths up to 100,000. The plate is full daylight handling. It took two years to bring the Zahara plate to market and it is the subject of multiple patents.

Unlike competitive plate technologies which require pre-treatment with silicone oils and post-processing with chemicals, the Zahara plate is entirely chemistry-free and just requires water processing. The results are no degradation of the plate between runs, elimination of variables caused by developer condition, and much simplified processor maintenance. The plate itself is easy to use and handle since there is no cover film to remove. It is solvent and scratch resistant.

Against early predictions of 'death by digital', waterless offset is retaining its market share, with active companies including Codimag, Iwasaki and Sanjo. KBA is now beta testing its new Varius waterless offset press.



Codipag is the exclusive partner for the Presstek Zahara plates in France