



## **The History of Multi-Color Corporation**

### **How It All Began**

Multi-Color Corporation, today one of the world's largest printers of consumer product labels, is a company that has built its success on a rich industrial background. Multi-Color's story began in 1916, originally established as the Franklin Development Company, a group with the foresight to invest in the day's latest technology. In 1916, the latest in print technology was the sheet-fed three-color press. Recognizing the importance of this innovation, Franklin incorporated the Printing Machinery Co. (PMC) to manufacture and sell the new presses. PMC later changed its name to MulticolorType and decided to focus on printing rather than press manufacturing.

Throughout the years Multi-Color grew as a leader in innovative technology, each change being developed for the benefit of the customer, using customer input as a guide. In the 1950's rotogravure was introduced for those companies with a need for long runs. Eventually eight-color presses were brought on-line to accommodate the changing marketplace of the 1960's and 1970's that required greater diversity in label design and presentation to attract the increasingly sophisticated consumer.

In the early 1980's both consumer products companies and suppliers of blow-molded bottles became eager customers of Multi-Color's latest innovation—the in-mold label. Today the in-mold label is the industry standard in labeling, saving fill time for those products that are packaged in plastic bottles. These labels provide the complete recyclability that environmentally aware consumers demand, at a reasonable cost.

### **How the Company's Technological Leadership Position Expanded**

In 1991 Multi-Color realized that speed to market was becoming an increasingly critical factor for our customers. Since the company's primary printing technology was rotogravure, Multi-Color wanted to reduce a critical lead-time component, the gravure cylinders. Investigating all cylinder manufacturing technologies available, it was determined that a new process from Japan would provide the most competitive edge in the market. Laser Graphic Systems was, consequently, added to Multi-Color's technologies. Based in Erlanger, Kentucky, this facility supplies cylinders to the Scottsburg, IN and Framingham, MA plants, as well as key outside customers. The complete digital process operates without films and cylinders are imaged via a laser stream and then etched using a proprietary chemical process. A high quality gravure cylinder is manufactured with attributes that cannot be duplicated in the industry.

Quickly becoming a comprehensive business resource for consumer products, food and beverage customers, Multi-Color sought to expand into the larger pressure sensitive label market. In 1999, Multi-Color purchased the assets of Buriot International, a Batavia, Ohio printer of specialized Pressure Sensitive (PS) and In-Mold labels(IML). The Batavia plant uses state-of-the-art flexographic and screen printing and cold foil application to produce high-end pressure-sensitive labels for health and beauty aids, wine and spirits, pharmaceuticals, and household cleaners.

Taking the nation's leading in-mold label (IML) manufacturer into the rapidly growing field of heat-shrink labels and tamper-evident neck bands, Multi-Color Corporation completed the acquisition of Uniflex Corporation in 2000. The business was transitioned to the Scottsburg, IN plant, housing rotogravure printing and conversion capabilities. This addition creates manufacturing system that includes both gravure and flexographic printing capabilities for shrink sleeve label customers.

With the Batavia plant near full production capacity by 2001, Multi-Color acquired Premiere Labels, Inc. of Troy, Ohio. Premiere Labels brought technology and product offerings to complement the Batavia plant, further strengthening Multi-Color's position in the pressure sensitive label market and with consumer product companies worldwide.

Working toward a long-range strategy of continuing to broaden the products and services available to the consumer products industry, Multi-Color purchased Quick Pak of Cincinnati, Ohio in 2002. Quick Pak is a leading provider of promotional packaging, assembling and fulfillment services to major health & beauty companies, consumer product manufacturers and national retailers. The acquisition of Quick Pak expanded the service component of Multi-Color's business strategy. In addition, the purchase broadened the Company's revenue stream by providing the complementary consumer packaging services that support customer marketing strategies.

In early 2003, Multi-Color made another consistent addition to the business portfolio with the purchase of Avery Dennison's Dec Tech division, the pioneers of the Heat Transfer Label technology (HTL) more than 40 years ago. Through this acquisition, Multi-Color became the world's leading provider of both in-mold and heat transfer labels. With approximately 40% of its sales outside the United States, the Framingham, Massachusetts-based plant expanded Multi-Color's sales base in Latin and South America, while also adding narrow web gravure printing capability to Multi-Color's wide web gravure, flexographic and lithographic printing platforms.

With the acquisition of IPC&L's heat transfer business in mid 2003, Multi-Color further increased its leadership over this technology. The business was consolidated to the Framingham, MA facility.

In January 2005, Multi-Color made its seventh (and largest) acquisition since 1999, with the purchase of NorthStar Print Group, Inc. With manufacturing facilities in Green Bay, and Watertown, Wisconsin and Norway, Michigan, the NorthStar transaction brings added expertise in decorative product solutions. In addition to a strong glue-applied component and added in-mold and pressure sensitive capabilities, the acquisition allows Multi-Color to offer promotional products such as peelable labels, scratch-off coupons, static clings and shelf talkers and tags. The NorthStar purchase also included a wide range of graphic, technical and inventory management services that deliver on Multi-Color's core value of customer focus.

Moving forward at a record pace, Multi-Color Corporation has made it possible to provide a complete line of label solutions, offering a variety of packaging, assembly, technical and graphic services; all designed to assist our customers with their own cost reduction programs by helping them lower their overall packaging costs.

Headquartered in Cincinnati, OH, Multi-Color has nine facilities across the United States. Its products are shipped to more than 650 customers in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Central and South America.

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