



## The Case for Generic Case Printing

When it comes to Generic Case Printing, Iconotech is the oldest name in the game. Switching from Pre-printed cases to Generic Case Printing is how companies save significant dollars and resources by consolidating SKU's into common case sizes and letting the power of quantity purchasing take over. "Everything about the traditional model for purchasing Pre-printed corrugated cartons is wrong," said Bill Petersen, Account Manager for Iconotech. "When companies make the switch to a Generic Case Printing Program, they can save anywhere from tens, to hundreds of thousands of dollars annually and make substantial progress in the conservation of resources and the elimination of excessive warehouse space, printing plates, scrap and obsolesce."

"The trigger to order pre-print comes from a production schedule or a sales forecast and is SKU related," continued Petersen, "which is almost always inherently wrong. As a result, ordering Pre-printed corrugated shipping cases unfortunately leads to inventory overload, because it is driven by fear and speculation. Fear, because shutting down a production line, delivering late, delivering short, or not at all has extreme consequences. Speculation exists because you would do anything to avoid problems with deliveries. This is the start of a downward spiral. Human nature will always err on the side of buying sku specific cases early so they will be in inventory when production is ready. It also leads to over purchasing to eliminate the possibility of running out during a production run. From the buyer's standpoint, it is the lesser of two evils to over purchase than suffer the consequences of shutting a line down. However, excess inventory is subject to becoming lost, forgotten, damaged or obsolete. Ultimately, it becomes scrap."

"By contrast, ordering generic cases puts the control in the buyer's hands. With a generic case program, the trigger to order is based on usage for a COMMON CASE SIZE, not on a SKU, and this is HUGE. Ordering a greater number of a generic case sizes rather than a lesser number of a specific SKU, drives the unit costs down dramatically in addition to reducing inventory. The hazardous aisles, jumbled inventory, overloaded warehouses, leased outside space all go away. Space once taken by obsolete inventory can now be converted back to productive activities. Case inventories can easily be viewed to verify if stocks are getting low. Yes, the buyer will have to plan for a certain safety net of generic cases, but the safety net for 10 generic case sizes pales by comparison to that of 500 skus. And if one supplier cannot make a delivery, the absence of printing plates makes it possible to get it from another supplier."

Linda Bertelsen, Marketing Director for Iconotech added, "The fact that you are no longer tied by printing plates to one corrugated supplier puts real purchasing leverage in your hands. Imagine the cost advantage of bidding out case purchases to several suppliers, a terrific assurance of getting the lowest cost."

Rick Swearingen, General Sales Manager for Iconotech noted that, "Generic Case Printing can be accomplished in several ways. The two most common methods are Ink Jet and Labeling. Ink Jet attempts to replicate a pre-printed case with text, graphics and bar codes. However, print quality does not consistently stand up in comparison to pre-print, and there are issues with reliability and high maintenance costs. Being online, ink jet also adds its own share of downtime to the production line. Labeling solutions offer the promise of higher reliability than ink jet and the opportunity to provide better graphic quality as well. However, they cannot compare to pre-print in terms of print area for including the desired graphics and text on the case, and as a result, offer little marketing impact. Labels offer a confined print area suitable only for the essential product



identification necessary for the supply chain, and the larger the label the more cost is added to the box. Hand applying labels is slow, sloppy and labor intensive. Automatic print and apply labeling machines mounted on the production line carry the same threat of downtime as ink jet equipment. Anytime you install anything In-line, you have potentially created a bottleneck that can restrict the flow of production." "That is the beauty of our systems", chimed in Petersen, "The line starts with us."

Swearingen continues, "It is possible to try to do Generic Case Printing with in-house Flexo Printing. While you can achieve good printed results if done correctly, the problems associated with the process can be overwhelming. First you have the cost of each of the individual printing plates. Then you have to store all of the plates somewhere. Imagine if you have 500 of them? And, maintaining print quality is very much subject to operator skill as well as the condition of the print plates"

By contrast, Iconotech Case Printing Systems offer simplicity, flexibility and pre-print quality. "Because everything is based in the PC, our system is nimble and has the ability to make changes within seconds. There are no plates to store and no lead-time for plates to be made. The machines are virtually maintenance free and the ink is a non-toxic oil-in-water emulsion. With the graphics capability and the large 32" x 11" print area, opportunities abound to enhance product marketing and even create point-of-purchase cases. In the end, the user gets the huge cost advantage of buying and inventorying generic cases and a system that is flexible, reliable and easy to use all at less than one cent per case side including labor."

To learn more about Generic Case Printing or the Iconotech line-up of case and bag printers, visit our web site at [www.iconotech.com](http://www.iconotech.com) or call our sales staff at 800-521-0194.