

SUSTAINABLE SOLVENTS FOR THE SUPERWIDE

EFI has introduced its Vutek BioVu inks for the superwide sector, the first environmentally-friendly solvent inks made with totally renewable resources.

BioVu is another of EFI's 'green' initiatives and part of the company's long-held commitment to improving the environment and benefiting its global customers.

"Unlike many new products, which are step change improvements, BioVu ink is a revolutionary advancement that will improve not only our customers' environmental footprint, but also their bottom lines," said Guy Gecht, EFI CEO. "It represents our commitment to protecting an increasingly fragile Earth, one we hope others in the industry will follow."

BioVu ink is made from food-grade ingredients yet delivers the benefits of traditional solvent inks without the compromises inherent in eco-solvent and aqueous inks. This includes the same colour gamut as traditional solvent inks so that users can seamlessly switch to these inks with no workflow or prepress process modifications. It is the only ink recognised by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), thereby establishing an entirely new category of truly environmentally-friendly inks.

Like other solvent-based inks, BioVu provides extreme durability, strong bonding to uncoated surfaces and great resistance to UV light and mechanical wear. But unlike other solvent inks on the market, BioVu inks are designed specifically to run in high-production environments and provide high print quality while delivering the best health and environmental profile in the marketplace. Although water-based inks are also environmentally friendly, they have significant limitations in terms of the applications for which they can be used.

Other solvent-based inks positioned as environmentally-friendly still offer poor health and environmental profiles and contain volatile organic compounds (VOCs) with hazardous air pollutants (HAPs), a component deemed by the U.S. EPA to have a particularly poor toxicological profile when released to the environment through evaporation.

"Each year, commercial formulators use millions of pounds of chemical ingredients that one way or another find their way into the environment," said Scott Schinlever, vice president and general manager of EFI's ink division. "Our customers have made it clear that they want the ability to print superwide graphics without bothersome fumes or expensive ventilation systems. Our environmentally-friendly BioVu ink, made from renewable resources, is the only ink that effectively addresses these concerns."

Other business benefits of Vutek BioVu inks include lower disposal costs since there are no hazardous materials (hazmat), reduced odour on final printed materials, and a more comfortable working environment for employees. In new shops or installations, no ventilation and burner systems are required to meet health and safety regulations since there are no harmful VOC emissions. ●

CLEAN UP ...AND SAVE

Doing the right thing for the environment shouldn't cost you more, especially now that Böttcher Australia is putting its money where its principles are by offering discounts on 'green' products.

A common misconception in the printing industry is that embracing environmentally-friendly operating principles will necessarily result in an increase in production costs. 'Green' alternatives are often regarded as being more expensive or offering inferior performance. In response, Böttcher Australia is aiming to demonstrate that the opposite is the case and, to achieve this, the company is offering its customers a discount if they undertake to switch to products that have minimal impact on the environment.

The goal of the new scheme, called Print + Rewards, is to encourage the take-up of more environmentally-sensitive options and thereby demonstrate the inherent benefits of switching to less harmful products and work practices. The scheme offers users an extra incentive to employ Böttcher's advanced formulations and, in the process, discover the proven benefits, both environmental and financial, that can be achieved as a result of moving to low impact solutions.

"We have devised our own 'green guide' of environmentally-safe products to use and are confident of being able to demonstrate how using these formulations is better all round for printers, both financially and in terms of the environment," said Mitch Mulligan, Böttcher Australia managing director. "We believe so strongly in the benefits of these products and the need for safer solutions that we're prepared to back our judgement with a financial incentive."

For instance, customers who switch to using 'green guide' products from a high VOC or unsafe wash, or who decide to use an IPA-free or -reduced fount will immediately receive a 10 percent discount on the list price for those products.

Böttcher Australia has long been a pioneer in the introduction of environmentally-friendly consumables across a range of products including founts, cleaning solvents and washes. All Böttcher products have a reputation for promoting harm minimisation through reduced waste, longer running life, re-use and recycling of products and the introduction of low-odour, high flashpoint washes and solvents. Products are designed to reduce their effect on the environment and provide safe, non-hazardous working conditions for employees and the wider community. ●