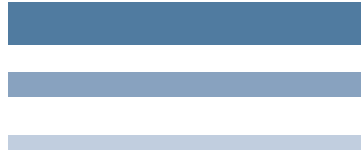


# Asahi

Photoproducts



# REINVENTING PACKAGING PRODUCTION

EBOOK BY ASAHI PHOTOPRODUCTS

Asahi**KASEI**



## THE GOAL OF THIS EBOOK

For consumer product companies, the quality and consistency of packaging is critical to ensuring brand integrity and a vital element of communication with today's consumers. This includes a consistent appearance of brand colours and logos regardless of the material or printing technology used. At the same time there is the drive to reduce packaging waste with the aim for a sustainable balanced packaging product.

Over the past few years, there have been significant advances in the flexographic printing technology that is commonly used in packaging production for branded products. It is Asahi Photoproducts

experience that when brand owners and/or agencies are educated about the possibilities enabled by technology advances they are better able to collaborate with their converting partners to achieve the end goal: faster time to market, controlled costs and improved quality.

In this ebook, readers will learn how advances in flexographic printing have enabled leading converters to increase quality, take advantage of the efficiencies of printing with a fixed set of inks, and improve overall equipment effectiveness (OEE) to deliver high quality packaging faster and more affordably in balance with the environment.

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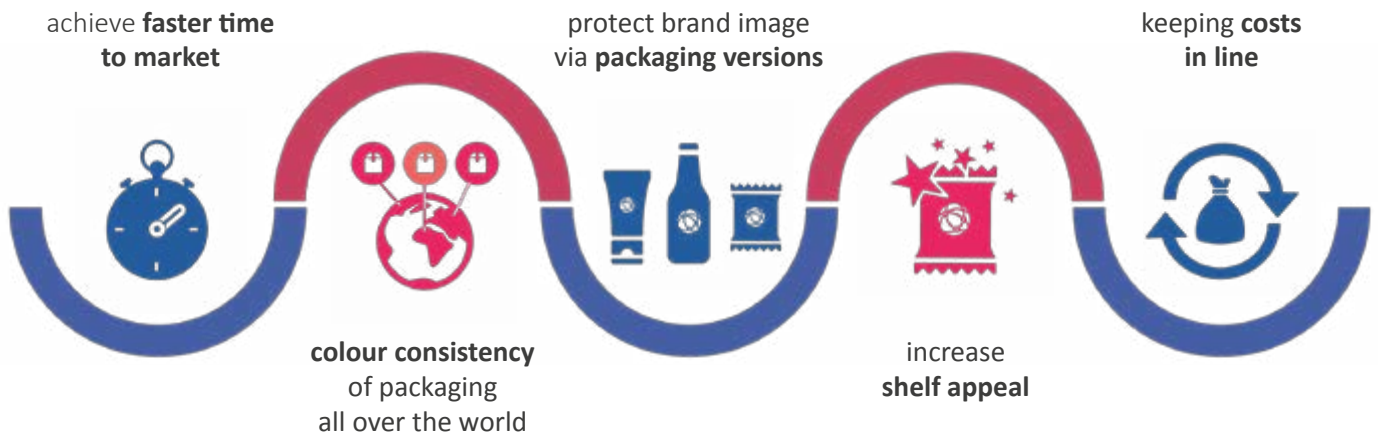
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# EXCEEDING BRAND OWNER EXPECTATIONS

## Reinventing Packaging production

As brand owner, you face a number of challenges as you work to bring products to market in an ever more competitive global marketplace. Key objectives typically include:



Leading converters and premedia houses are updating their technology and staying current with trends in order to meet or exceed these objectives, and in the process, are reinventing packaging production. As a brand owner,

gaining a better understanding of the possibilities enabled by new technology, especially in flexographic printing, will help you in rethinking how your packaging is produced and by whom.

# FACING THE FUTURE

## Trends in Flexography

Over the past few years, there have been a number of technological advances in flexography that have made this printing technique more competitive with offset, digital and gravure printing. These include innovations in flexo plate chemistry that improve the quality and speed of print production as well as reduce the environmental footprint of the printing process by delivering higher overall equipment effectiveness (OEE).

This is important to understand, since these types of improvements mean your suppliers can produce your packaging faster, with less waste, and with no sacrifice in quality. In fact, these new technologies can often deliver even better quality without an accompanying increase in cost.

Another important trend that is contributing significantly to the competitiveness of flexography is the growing adoption of fixed colour palette printing, also referred to as Extended Colour Gamut (ECG) printing. This technique uses a fixed set of inks, typically CMYK or CMYK/OGV, to minimize or eliminate the need for spot colour inks and improve the printing process OEE even more.

That means packaging producers are able to improve productivity and keep costs in line by minimizing the need for large inventories of special inks, eliminate the time and effort of washing the press up between jobs, and get up to colour faster during production. Fixed colour palette printing is key to achieving all of them! Read on to learn more.



New technologies can often deliver even better quality without an accompanying increase in cost

## Benefits of Fixed Colour Palette Printing

Fixed colour palette printing using seven ink colours – usually Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and Black (CMYK) plus Orange, Green and Violet can virtually eliminate the use of spot colours and delivers better quality than CMYK alone. This printing technique can also match a wider array of spot colours than CMYK alone can. Some experts estimate that fixed colour palette printing can match as much as 90% or more of the more than 2,000 named Pantone spot colours.



Almost no colour in the tone Extended Gamut Guide requires more than 3 inks, but by running a 7-colour printing operation, most, if not all, of your brand colours can be achieved with this more efficient process!

In addition to virtually eliminating the need to use multiple spot colour inks, fixed colour palette printing also reduces press make-ready and change-over times. In fact, in many cases, there is no need for

wash-ups between jobs since there is a fixed set of inks being used. Simply change the plates and quickly run-up to colour. This significantly improves throughput and brings down the cross-over point between flexo and digital. In label printing, where digital printing has made the most inroads, the cross-over point can be as low as a 400-metre job length.

The good news for brands is that the benefits of fixed colour palette printing can be achieved with virtually no change in the design process. Designers can use Pantone colours to their heart's content, and your packaging provider or repro house has software available that can convert those colours to a fixed palette. Of course, even more efficiencies can be achieved if the design process uses a fixed palette. Designers ready to make that leap can use a familiar Pantone guide – the Extended Gamut guide – to determine whether their desired colours can be achieved with a fixed palette.



Some experts estimate that fixed colour palette printing can match as much as 90% or more of the more than 2,000 named Pantone spot colours



# THE ASAHI EXPERIENCE

Through its outstanding product portfolio, dedication to innovation and partnerships with best-in-class suppliers to the flexographic industry, Asahi Photoproducts and its global distribution network act as a one-stop supplier of next-generation flexographic solutions. Most Asahi plates feature a

unique and innovative technological advancement we call Pinning Technology for Clean Transfer. This results in precise plate-to-plate registration, less ink consumption, faster run-up to colour, less make-ready waste and fewer plate changes or press down time due to plate cleaning.

## Asahi solutions deliver:



High quality printing with minimal waste and smooth transitions to zero



Extremely high overall equipment effectiveness (OEE) at the printing press that can shorten cycle times and keep costs in line



Ideal technologies for efficient, quality printing using a fixed colour palette



Industry's highest levels of environmental sustainability, including reduction in solvent use and fewer VOCs for a cleaner work environment



## Pinning Technology for Clean Transfer

**Pinning Technology for Clean Transfer** is a unique Asahi plate technology that is a specifically engineered polymer chemistry designed to transfer all remaining ink to the print substrate due to the photopolymer plates having a low surface energy. Not only does this deliver stunning graphical quality, but it also improves overall production efficiencies due to reduced make-ready waste, fewer plate changes and fewer press wash-ups.

This technology also ensures the precise plate-to-plate registration required to effectively employ the fixed colour palette printing process.



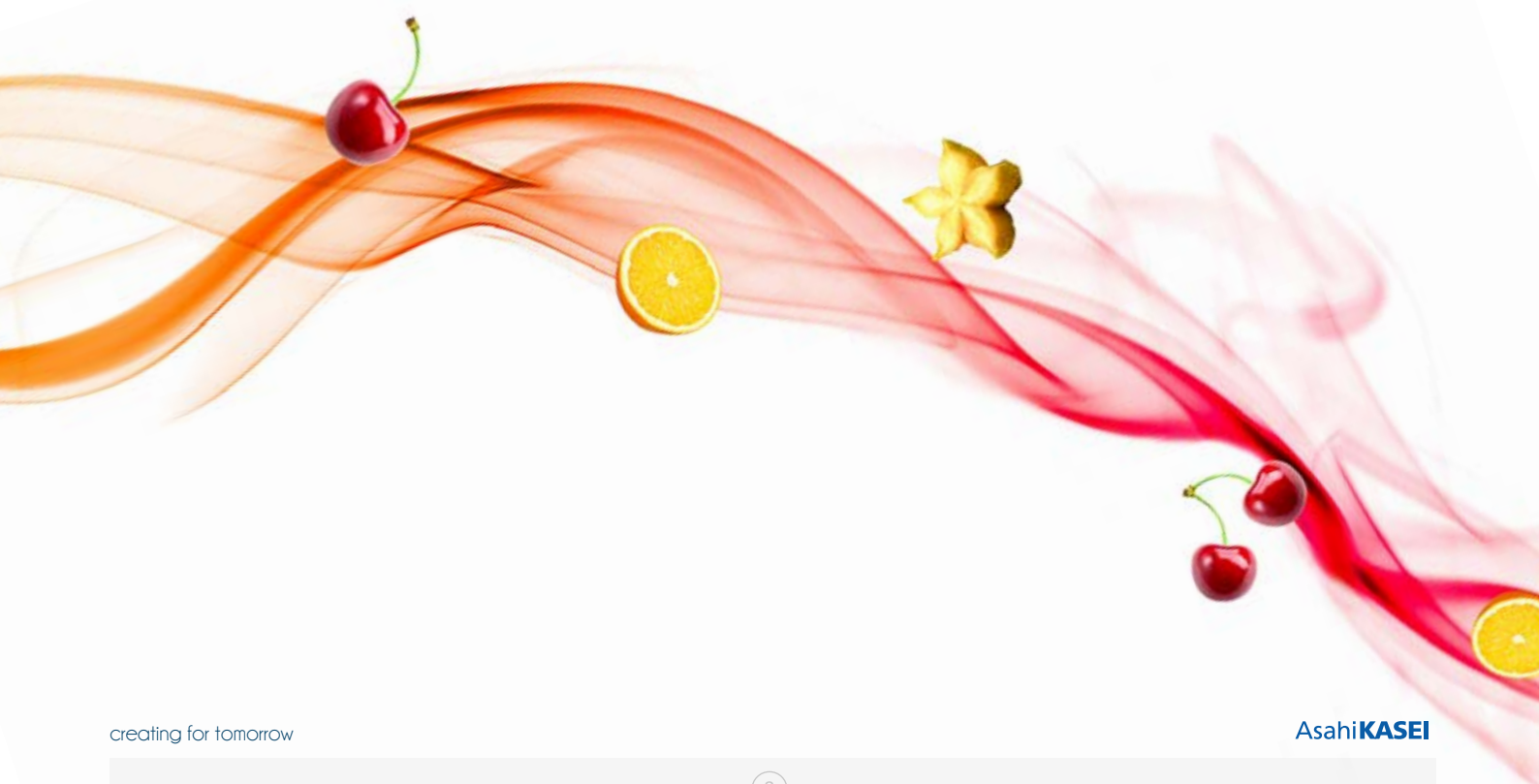
AWP™



TSP™



TOP™





## Improving Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE)

Asahi has participated in a number of studies and projects over the last couple of years that demonstrate beyond a doubt that its technology delivers significant OEE and cost benefits.

For example, in a recent controlled test comparing Asahi water-washable plates to standard solvent-based

plates, results indicated converters could achieve an immediate ROI when switching to Asahi plates.

The combined improvements in press efficiencies are obtained by the fact that the plate needs less printing impression, which produces stable and consistent colour.

A conventional plate was compared in a two year evaluation to the Asahi AWP™ plate technology at The Robinette Company, USA.

Printing Press OEE was calculated to be **49%**.

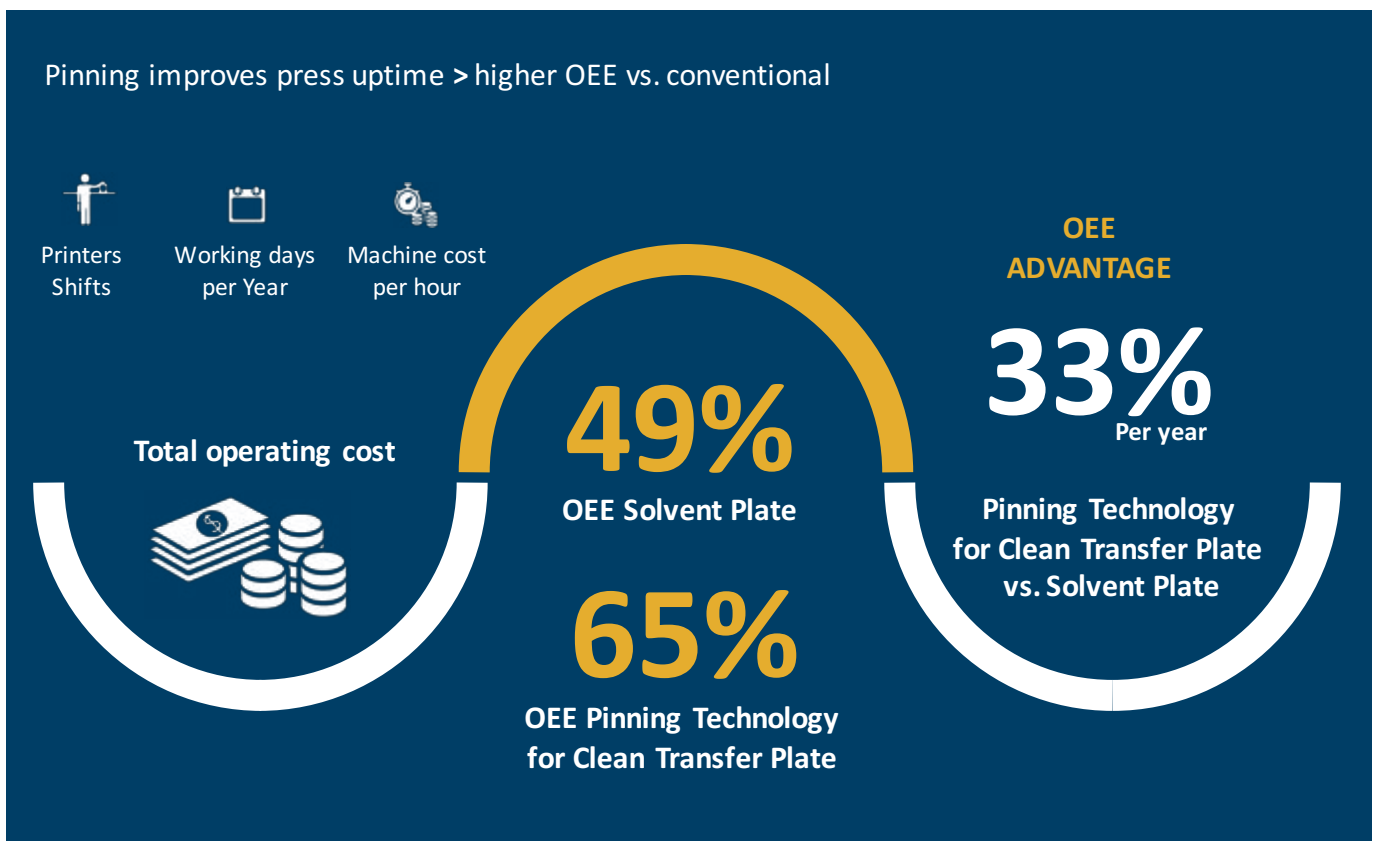
When switching to the Asahi Pinning Technology AWP™ plate, the printer experienced a much faster job make-ready time as well as a tremendous reduction in plate cleaning intervals.

Printing Press OEE was calculated to be **65%**.

The use of Asahi plates resulted in less waste material and showed a 33% improvement in overall equipment effectiveness (OEE) with fewer press stops for plate cleaning and more consistent overall quality. For a 24-hour operation, this translates to the ability to process at least two additional jobs per day at a higher quality

level with more contrast and less environmental impact.

And for you, the brand owner, this means faster time to market with no compromise in quality and the potential to reduce costs due to the increased efficiencies.



# BUT DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT...

## The Robinette Company Improves Plate Throughput and Printing Press OEE by 33%



INNOVATIVE • RESOURCEFUL • RESPONSIVE

The Robinette Company, founded in 1987 in the USA, is a full-service flexible film and paper packaging manufacturer and converter specializing in sustainable packaging for the food, beverage, nutraceutical, construction, textile and health care markets. With a 100,000+ square foot flexible film converting facility and a 125,000+ square foot paper converting facility, The Robinette Company can provide sustainable options in films and/or paper.

The Robinette Company installed the Asahi digital photopolymer water wash plate processing system to eliminate the solvents used in traditional photopolymer plate processing equipment. The installation of the Asahi AWP™ system has improved its plate throughput by 30%, and Asahi's Pinning Technology for Clean Transfer has enabled Robinette to increase the resolution of its process printed images and extended gamut printing.

Due to its engineered photopolymer structure, the AWP™ plate also significantly reduces press down times for plate cleaning during the printing run and as such improves the printing press Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE) by up to 33%.



## The installation of the Asahi AWP™ system has improved its printing press OEE by 33%



The printing results were outstanding and the comments from the operators were: **“easy to set impression, improved ink release, less plate cleaning required and the highlights printed clean”.**

**Gene Martin**, Plant Manager  
The Robinette Company

# BUT DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT...

Uniflex Reduces Costs, Increases Quality

## UNIFLEX

Uniflex, located in Minsk, Belarus, is one of the largest flexographic printing companies in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Eastern Europe. The company offers a wide range of high quality flexible packaging such as vacuum bags, pouches, sachets, roll packaging, and self-adhesive labels in up to 10 colours and using a variety of materials. Uniflex is the recipient of a number of prestigious international industry awards that validate the quality and functionality of its flexible packaging and its heritage of innovation.

Uniflex chose to partner with Asahi Photoproducts to achieve the best possible quality in fixed colour palette printing. This included using Asahi's AFP™-TOP and AWP™ flexographic plates with Pinning Technology for Clean Transfer.



We particularly appreciate the precise register, full ink transfer and improved Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE) we achieve using Asahi's AFP™-TOP and AWP™ plates using Pinning Technology for Clean Transfer, and as well as the ability for us to move to a higher line screen, up to 200 lines per inch. We are able to virtually eliminate the need for spot colour inks and the associated costs of purchasing, managing and storing a large number of special colour inks.

**Eugen Lungin**, Production Manager,  
Uniflex



# THE ASAHI PHOTOPRODUCTS PORTFOLIO

Asahi Photoproducts has more than 40 years experience in the manufacture of photopolymer printing plates and platemaking systems, which are being used in flexographic operations worldwide. Asahi offers a wide range of plate types to meet any flexographic printing need.

Of particular note is the water washable flexographic printing plate AWP™, which shows the lowest CO2 footprint compared to solvent or thermal developed flexo plate making as reflected by internal studies.

Furthermore, it improves the ambient working environment as it does not utilize hazardous VOC solvents to wash the plate, reducing solvent use by as

much as 15 liters per plate compared to solvent-based plates.

Due to its engineered photopolymer chemistry, the AWP™ plate also significantly reduces press down times for plate cleaning during the printing run and as such improving the printing press Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE) by up to 33%.

Asahi is exclusively distributed in the USA by Correct-Touch Graphic Arts

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277 Mallory Station Rd  
Ste 126-B  
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#### WAREHOUSE LOCATIONS:

##### WEST COAST WAREHOUSE

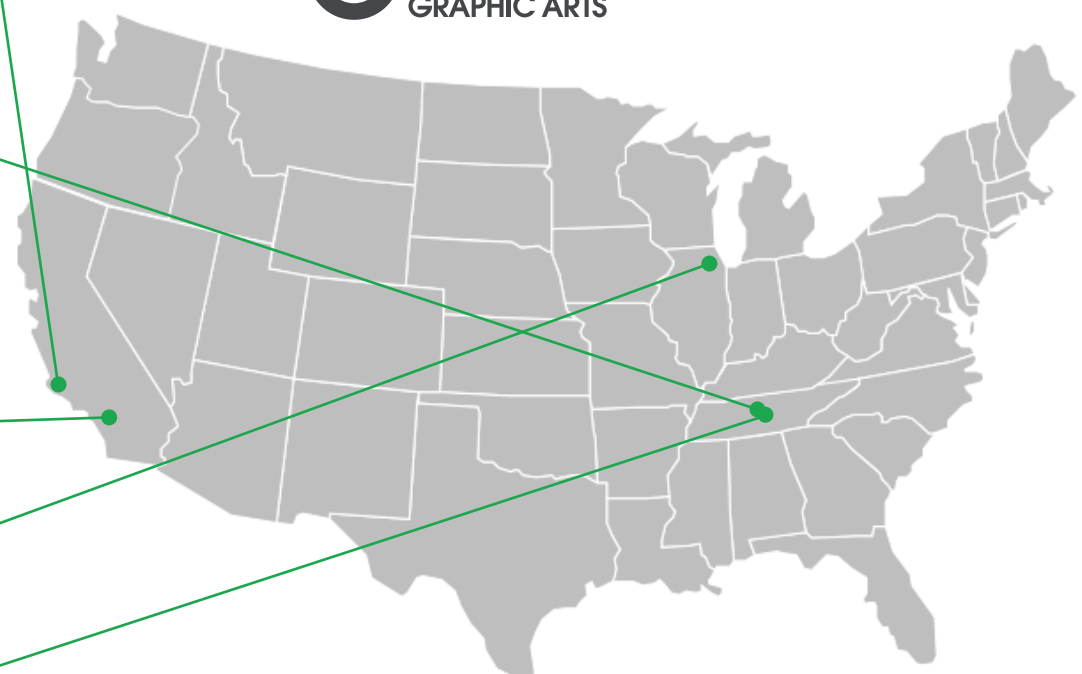
1775 S. Pointe Avenue  
Ontario, CA 91761

##### MID-WEST WAREHOUSE

1000 Estes Avenue  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

##### EASTERN WAREHOUSE

6050 Dana Way #300  
Antioch, TN 37013



# LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY FOR A BETTER BRAND EXPERIENCE

By taking advantage of the latest flexographic technologies across the packaging production supply chain, brand owners are better positioned to address the common supply chain challenges we addressed at the beginning of this ebook:

## Asahi for a better brand experience

Achieve faster time to market

Better protect brand integrity & consistent brand colour around the world

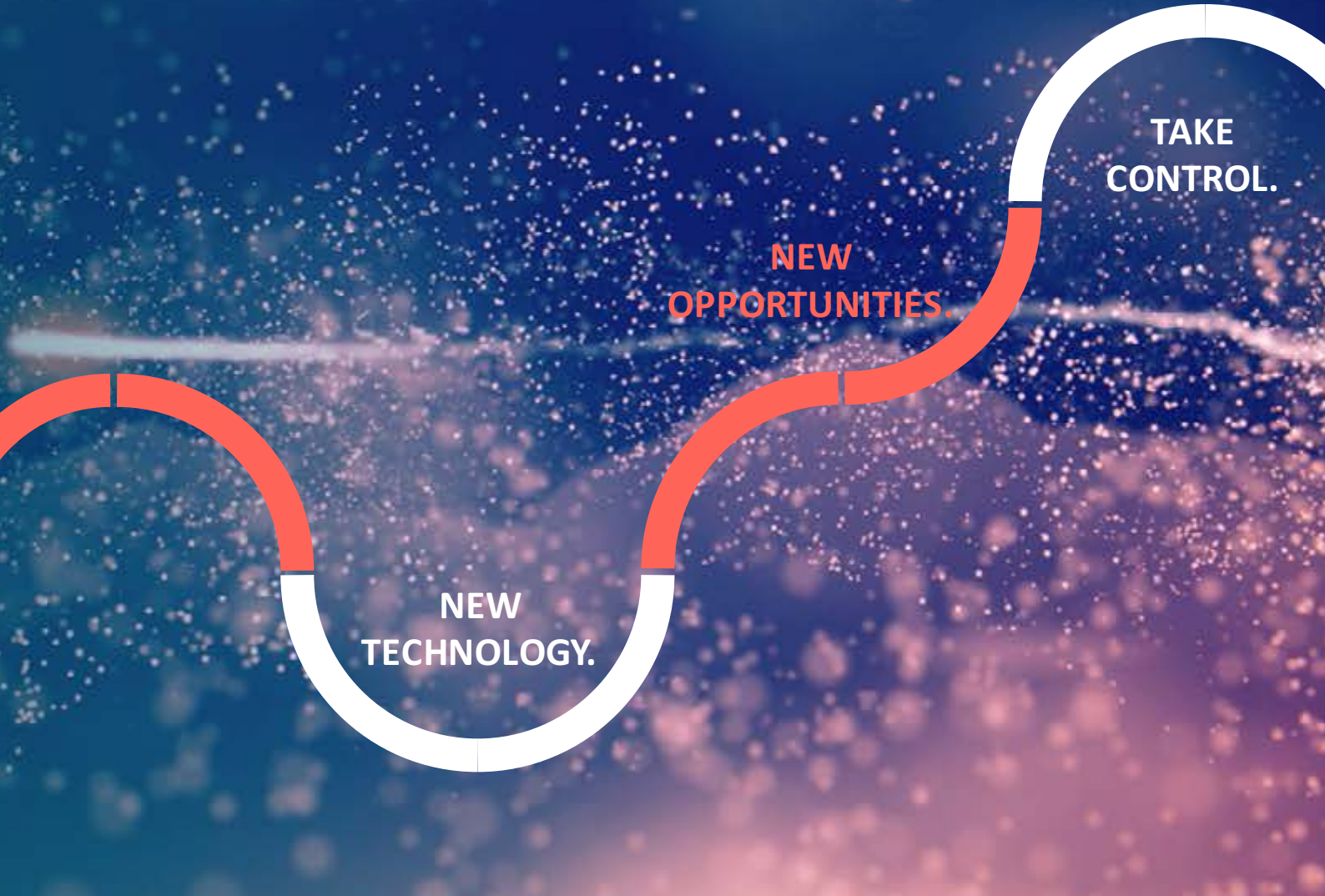
Produce packaging versions, leveraging seasonality, regional differences & much more

Benefit from stunning graphic quality that makes packages virtually leap off the shelf

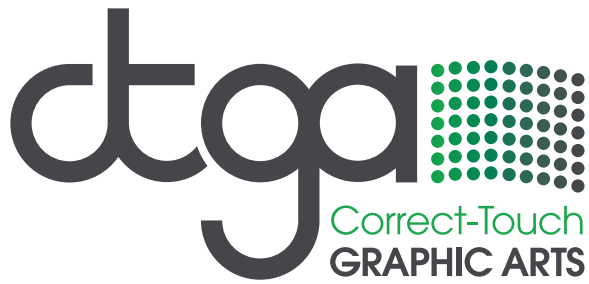
Keeping costs in line



Asahi Photoproducts is a subsidiary of the Asahi Kasei Corporation, which was founded in Japan in 1931 and is one of the leading chemical companies in Asia. 33,000 employees work in research, production, sales and application technology. Asahi Photoproducts is one of the leading pioneers of flexographic photopolymer plate development. By creating high quality flexographic solutions and through continued innovation, the company aims at driving print forward in balance with the environment.







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