

MOONACHIE, NJ, September 12, 2013 /**24-7PressRelease**/ -- LPS considered a number of factors, including customer requirements, creative influences, consumer behavior, and advancements in packaging to arrive at four contemporary design trends as seen from a manufacturer's perspective.

"Printing options for flexible packaging are virtually limitless," commented Domenick Pasqualone, Vice President of Sales at LPS. "Package designers are continually pushing the limits of creativity, and generating amazing ideas to make brands stand out from their competition. However, for the brand owner to realize the best results, it's vital to work with a partner who has the talent, expertise and capabilities to produce a package that fully brings that creativity to life."

**THE ALL-NATURAL LOOK**The ever-growing universe of natural and organic consumer products continues to drive the industry to introduce packaging and printing techniques that emphasize the messages of quality and freshness. From food and beverage to beauty and personal care, and even in pet products, positive consumer attitudes toward pure, natural ingredients and formulations resonate when a package's artwork features matte finishes, earth tones, and more understated color palettes.

As an example, companies that market organic foods in stand up pouches that are looking for a more natural appearance to their packaging are designing packages with matte finishes. With the proper preparation and choice of color and pattern, products that cannot be packaged in paper because they require barrier protection can be packaged in laminates printed to closely resemble the surface of a brown paper bag, parchment, linen or any other natural texture.

Achieving a natural finish on flexible packaging often represents only part of the challenge for some consumer brands, especially when they also require a window to show product contents. "We're able to achieve this look very easily, while matching all of the subtle textures and effects from the original artwork," explains Pasqualone. "The result is really the best of both worlds for organic brands: a natural looking exterior texture with a transparent window to showcase the wholesome products inside."

**VIVID, STRIKING VISUALS**In the highly competitive battle for buyer attention, the infusion of heightened visual impact in flexible packaging is being used aggressively to enhance point-of-sale appeal and communicate high-quality. Today, this is especially true for the growing universe of store brands as they routinely appear adjacent to - or above - their name brand counterparts.

On larger packages, photographic and highly detailed illustrative images are being printed edge-to-edge to achieve extreme visual impact. On smaller packaging, where space is a premium, precise visuals are being used to generate product appeal, while leaving sufficient area for brand identification, promotional messages and ingredient listings.

Advancements in high-definition (HD) flexographic printing are directly supporting this trend. Gravure printing has been considered the standard to feature high-quality images but has its limitations, primarily its cost and volume requirements. Now, LPS Industries offers the option of an HD flexo process that compares favorably and is more cost-effective for a wider range of brand owners. Consistent, vibrant colors combined with higher print quality are the results of the use of smaller printable dots. Other benefits include more stable tones, smooth gradients, sharper images and a greater color palette.

"A package that features amazing, eye-catching images can make or break a product at point-of sale." adds Pasqualone, "The key is not only choosing the right packaging partner, but also involving them in the design process as early as possible. By doing this, you'll save time, minimize costs and eliminate problems before they have a chance to occur."

**COLOR CONSISTENCY IS CRITICAL** Bright colors, fluorescent colors, metallic colors; on today's flexible packaging, color is everywhere. And, as with high-quality image reproduction, technical advancements also have shaped this trend. This holds true for color effects as well, such as printing gold ink on a metallic foil to produce a dazzling sparkle-like effect. Virtually any color or color effect can be reproduced on any size package. This is especially vital for brands with proprietary color formulations or unique color combinations.

With today's press profile capabilities, a brand-specific color can be sampled, have its unique formulation identified, be matched on press and then have the specifications catalogued for future use. For brands with many lines of products and package sizes, color matching is critical to brand uniformity, and companies like LPS are incorporating advanced computerized ink cataloging and mixing systems to maintain color consistency. Once color profile data has been established, inks are automatically and consistently mixed to achieve the precise formula, enabling the printer to duplicate the exact colors over and over again in every future run.

Pasqualone comments, "At LPS, we maintain a color formula library for all of our clients. Even if their last order was placed several years ago, we're able to instantly call up their colors through our digital ink system and automatically mix the inks to achieve exact color matching."

Other techniques are being used to maintain color and design integrity throughout the package's lifecycle. Bright colors are having their chroma maximized and protected from scratching by using a technique known as reverse printing. In this process, instead of surface printing the package, the application of colors occurs on the back side of a clear substrate in a mirror image of the desired result. The substrate is then laminated as the outer layer of the rest of the structure and when viewed, the image is seen as intended while being protected by an outer layer of film. This technique is especially suited for food and medical products where absolute content integrity and compliance with industry regulations are of the highest priority.

A SMART BALANCE OF SCIENCE AND ART Across all trends, technological progress has created a virtually limitless range of printing options and choices for flexible packaging design. Recent innovations, like gearless printing, simplify the printing process by replacing the large, heavy cylinders used at each color station with sleeves of different thicknesses. This results in more flexibility for wider variation of dimensions and repeats on a press run as well as substantially reducing the changeover time. The net effect is to reduce the cycle time and deliver what each customer needs sooner.

Included in making these design trends a commercial reality are the people who drive the technology and operate the equipment. Their deep knowledge of computer hardware and software, along with materials and printing equipment, has greatly contributed to meeting today's exacting and evolving package design requirements.

"Many times we'll receive a package design that may exceed 10 colors," Pasqualone observes. "Through our knowledge and experience of flexographic printing, we're able to recommend slight modifications utilizing our color management tools to reduce the number of inking stations and accomplish the same look with fewer colors. As a result, our customers benefit from a cost-effective approach to achieving the desired visual impact for their package." This result also holds true for converting a CMYK design to spot colors, to achieve greater richness in the design elements.

Pasqualone concludes, "At LPS, our technical experts and equipment operators also approach a project from the graphic artist's point of view. This ideal balance of creativity and technology helps our clients successfully achieve their flexible packaging objectives by applying the right technology and the right equipment to create the greatest value."

About LPS Industries LPS Industries was founded in 1959 by John M. Robinson as a converter

## LPS Industries Highlights Top Trends in Flexible Packaging Graphics

Written by Australian Business

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of military specification barrier materials. Today, under the direction of Madeleine D. Robinson, CEO, LPS Industries is a diversified manufacturer and leader in the flexible packaging industry, providing packaging solutions for a diverse range of markets, including medical, food, pet, transportation, electronics and agricultural. LPS Industries is an ISO 9001:2008 registered company, and a woman owned and operated enterprise.

For more information on the company's products and services, please visit [www.lpsind.com](http://www.lpsind.com) or contact:

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