



Project summary

- ¹ The key objective of this project was for Eurogriffe to optimise the carpet label handling process for Balta, a worldwide leading manufacturer in floor covering, a process which was required to ship its carpets worldwide.
- ¹ Eurogriffe opted for digital colour print solutions from Xeikon and made optimal use of their unique advantages to create genuine added value for the customer.
- ¹ With the Xeikon 330 Eurogriffe provided Balta with a single carpet label that holds all of the required information previously contained in three labels.
- ¹ Some 30,000 unique labels are printed every day, with every label being defined by 180 different parameters.
- ¹ JIT delivery has been on time and without interruption since the start of the project in 2003 when Eurogriffe opted for Xeikon.
- ¹ Thanks to its digital expertise Eurogriffe now sees label opportunities in the mattress industry as well as in floor, tyre and drink can labels.

Contact details

Eurogriffe S.A.S.
Z.I. de la Rouge Porte B.P. 11
59431 Halluin Cedex
France
T: +33 (0)3 20 23 84 94
F: +33 (0)3 20 23 86 10
E-mail: info@eurogriffe.com

Since 2003 Eurogriffe has been a member of the Ipex Group, a Belgian holding specialised in variable data printing.



Beyond graphic excellence



Punch Graphix provides innovative, competitive and environmental friendly imaging and printing solutions for the global graphics industry. Under the Xeikon brand name, Punch Graphix designs, develops and delivers high-end digital colour printing systems, software and consumables for the commercial, document printing and industrial markets. Under the basysPrint brand name, Punch Graphix designs, develops and delivers mid to high-end imaging systems for offset prepress commercial markets.

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Punch Graphix International nv • Tel.: +32 (0)3 443 13 11 • Fax: +32 (0)3 443 13 09
www.punchgraphix.com • info@punchgraphix.com • Duwijkstraat 17, 2500 Lier - Belgium

Eurogriffe optimises carpet manufacturer's logistical process by printing digitally.

The challenge

Optimising Balta's carpet label handling process.

Eurogriffe is a label printing company located in the North of France. It has a traditional base in the confectionary and the textile industries where flexographic printing and offset printing are still the most common printing technologies employed. One of its customers Balta, a worldwide leading manufacturer in floor covering, wanted to optimise its carpet label handling process required to ship its carpets worldwide.

Says General Manager Eurogriffe Wim De Buck: "Originally each Balta carpet required a set of three different labels before it could be shipped to customers all over the world."

The set consisted of a 'decoration label' showing a colour image that identified the carpet; a 'product information label' with the carpet specs; and a 'logistical label' containing information such as the customer's name, the price, bar codes, and the delivery address.

"The first label was usually printed by an external printer who used flexo, while the other two were printed internally at Balta on pin-fed matrix printers. This complex operation required a stock of 200 different decoration labels, several matrix printers and a considerable amount of co-ordination and manual handling. As you can imagine, the intricacy of this setup led to cumbersome operation and frequent mistakes."



EUROGRIFFE



The solution

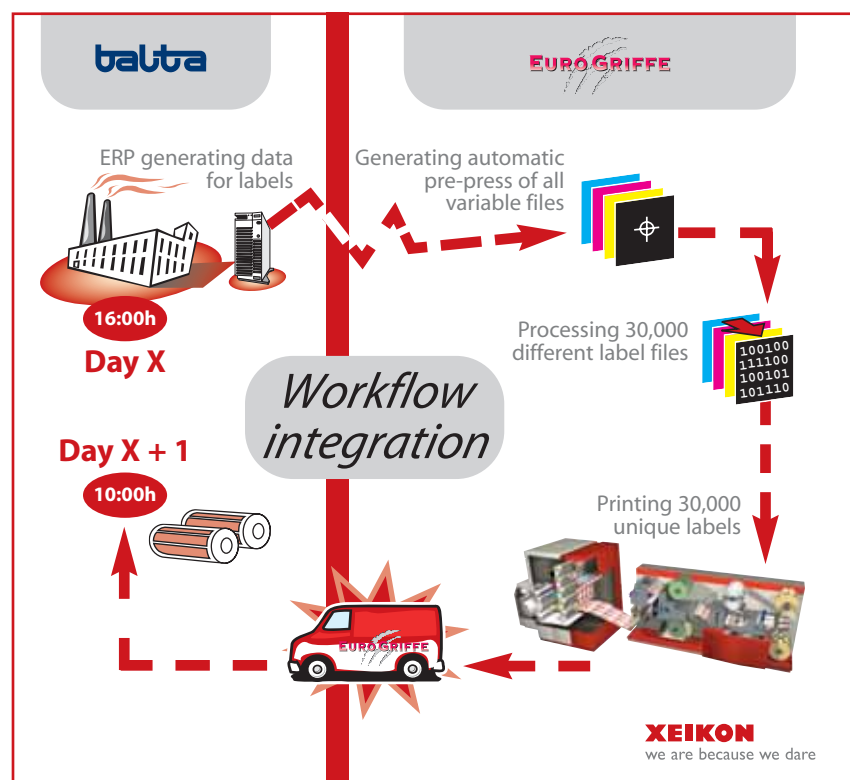
JIT delivery of digitally printed carpet labels containing the info of three labels.

Already in 2002 Eurogriffe introduced digital printing in its services. "Although digital printing is often referred to as a technology for short run applications, we at Eurogriffe quickly understood that its true value lay in making optimal use of the unique advantages to create genuine added value for the customer", states Wim De Buck. "That is exactly why we turned to Xeikon. They evidently understood and supported this view, as was clear from their dedicated label press, the *Xeikon 330*.

With a tandem of two *Xeikon 330s* Eurogriffe now provides Balta with a single carpet label that holds all of the required information previously contained in three labels. Some 30,000 of these unique labels are ordered every day, with every label being defined by 180 different parameters. Every afternoon at 16:00h Eurogriffe downloads automatically-generated information from the Balta ERP system available on its FTP server. This information is fed into an automated pre-press workflow linked to a local image database, compiling the files

for printing 30,000 unique labels. Next the label files are transmitted to the Xeikon X-800 digital front-end which prepares the data for printing on the Xeikon press. The labels are then printed on a paper label stock that is internally produced by Eurogriffe, and before 10:00h the next morning they are delivered at Balta. Xeikon made this JIT delivery for Eurogriffe possible. It has been on time and without interruption since the start of the project in 2003. More than ever for Eurogriffe the choice is clear: Xeikon.

"This choice was based on five key points", mentions De Buck. "The flexibility in length thanks to the full rotary printing process; the possibility to use a wide variety of substrates such as paper, synthetics and textile without pre-coating or pre-treatment; the productivity of the printing press and its digital front-end; the service and support offered by Xeikon in the setup of the production workflow; and the fact that Xeikon offers continued technological updates to its equipment. Why doubt?"





The impact

A satisfied customer and new opportunities in new markets.

Eurogriffe has another satisfied customer thanks to the wide ranging benefits of a three-to-one label application: Balta now has an optimised and flawless solution for its logistical needs, makes savings in equipment, personnel and warehouse costs and improves at the same time the service level towards its customers.

Moreover, the experience working for Balta opens up new opportunities and markets. It is easier now for Eurogriffe to convince other carpet manufacturers to have their labels printed digitally.

Eurogriffe also sees opportunities for labels in the mattress industry, where the requirements are for large format (up to 800 mm long), offset-quality labels in small quantities - it seems like the mattress industry was just shouting for the Xeikon digital printing solution. Eurogriffe believes it already serves some 40% of the French mattress market.



Other new applications that are printed digitally at Eurogriffe are floor labels

- a logistical application integrating features such as variability, UV technology and automated recognition;

tyre labels - a completely variable and colourful marketing tool; and drink can labels - a true short run application tailor-made for discotheques and special events. Since going digital, Eurogriffe hasn't stopped, resulting in a digital print turnover of more than 120 km per month.



"Digital printing will never replace flexo printing. But with benefits such as variable data integration, JIT, quick response and short run printing, it offers new opportunities for which there undoubtedly is a place in the label market."

Wim De Buck - Eurogriffe