



Greening of the Factory: GOEX Takes Environmental Commitment Into Operations

Just as important to using "green" products is using "green" business practices to make them. By consuming less water and energy in their operations, companies can contribute as much (if not more) to environmentally sound business practices.

In addition to offering sustainable and recyclable substrates, GOEX has looked for ways to bring more to green business practices into the business. Last year, the company converted to a more environmentally positive chiller system that recycles water used in production instead of using municipal water.

The closed loop system rechills water for continual use. "It wasn't an inexpensive capital investment, but the switch had a quick return on investment" noted Brian Cowan, GOEX Vice President of Technology. ☞



Your Substrate Supplier: The Secret to Fast Response

As printers know all too well, business in the world of POP and screen printing — actually printing in general — is mainly event-based.

No one can predict when the next big box retailer will redesign all their stores, or when another will open 10 new locations, and need a full complement of signage immediately. Does your vendor have the capacity to support your success in these fast paced opportunities?

When jobs are unpredictable and immediate, printers and their suppliers get short notice. Getting the business depends on being the printer who turns the work around faster at a competitive price. But no matter how fast you are, you can't print unless you have something to print on, and with plastic substrates, you really have to know your supplier. Understanding the capacity of substrate suppliers and their ability to respond with flexibility is a key indicator of their qualifications to meet your needs.

One Source for Multiple Substrates

As you've probably found out, sorting through potential substrate suppliers is a job in itself. Some deliver faster, while others offer variety and quantity. If your needs don't change that much, if you mainly print just one resin on a standard sheet size, you can put a reliable process in place to get that substrate quickly and consistently. Using a single size or type of substrate makes it easier to find an alternative supplier.

But what if your opportunities aren't cookie-cutter simple? What if you need multiple

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materials and sizes all the time on a moment's notice? Do you want to have to find a new supplier for every job proposal? Is a two-week lead-time satisfactory? Not likely.

The Advantages of a Single Supplier Model

One of the best models for flexible, responsive job bidding is working with a single supplier who carries almost all of the plastic substrate materials you might need. You don't have to break in a new vendor or juggle multiple relationships to run your business.

Having readily available substrate variety works to the advantage of the print shop that doesn't want to turn away business or delay a response. It benefits the print manager who doesn't want to negotiate with multiple vendors every time a job comes in requiring a different type of substrate. This creates delays and inconsistency, when the key to winning the sale is speed and quality.

GOEX Leads Market in Breadth of Product Line

One thing that distinguishes GOEX from other substrate providers, especially for POP and screen printing applications, is the breadth of our product line. Other companies may convert one or two specific resins. GOEX offers one of the broadest product lines available.

GOEX has a product offering suitable for just about any plastic substrate application. When a retail customer's primary emphasis is cost, GOEX has a cost-competitive solution. When

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GOEX

Personally
from the President

We don't run our business; our customers do. That is, our strategies, products and practices come from paying attention to what customers need to reach their goals and make a profit. This could mean providing a broad product base for one-stop substrate supply, or meeting market demand for recyclable and sustainable materials.

We believe success comes from being prepared, flexible and open to new ideas. New ideas and innovation energize us. That's why we are excited to tell you more about the stock sheet program to ensure our customers can easily get stock sheets for routine printing jobs. Sustainable business practices have become a requirement and an expectation across many industries that our customers serve. We are proud of our efforts in this area, too. We have built a complete line of recyclable and sustainable materials to help clients meet the needs of their customers for environmentally sound products. Taking this trend into the factory, we have implemented a closed loop water cooling system that benefits the environment and has reduced our water consumption by over 90 percent.

In this issue of Sheetline, you'll learn more about the ways we take our cue from the market and from customers. What ideas do you have for us?



Sincerely,

Joshua D. Gray,
President & CEO,
GOEX Corporation



Screen Printing: An Application with Opportunity

Screen printing remains a vigorous pocket of opportunity within the broader print marketplace. Evolving conditions in retail signage and point of purchase store displays have made this printing method more essential to businesses than ever.

Consider this. Once upon a time, retail stores had dozens of clerks, but that model has gone by the wayside. Today cashiers are likely to be the only staff on duty in many stores. The ability to differentiate products on the shelf is how marketers capture buyers' attention. This has become the job of screen printed signage and POP displays.


For its quality, versatility and durability, screen printing has become the preferred medium for inside signage. Hot markets are restaurants, gas stations, and big box retailers that depend on visuals to draw attention to clothing, electronics and other consumer goods. (External screen printing applications typically involve specialty applications such as backlit and drive-through signage, pump toppers and window displays.)

The Reality of Screen Printing Supply and Demand

In reality, one printer couldn't support all the signage needs of a large national retailer. Business buyers of screen-printed signage tend to spread out their work across a stable of printing vendors. This allows them

to react quickly to marketing launch requirements and campaign locality purposes.

Some retailers have accumulated a handful of printers across the country to ensure they have enough resources wherever volume signage is needed. "We have found in working through some end users that they have lists of people they work with," said Bob Waddell, GOEX Vice President of Sales, "and sometimes the size of that list is surprising." Buyers typically go to specific printers to support certain regions or for different applications.

Want to learn more about screen printing markets and applications? Resources like The National Association for Printing Leadership (NAPL), www.napl.org; the Specialty Graphic and Imaging Association (SGIA), www.sgia.org; printing equipment manufacturers, ink manufacturers and of course, GOEX substrate professionals can be helpful resources. 

"The ability to differentiate products on the shelf ... has become the job of screen printed signage and POP displays."




Ask the Right Questions. Get the Right Start.



Screen printing, no longer the realm of artsy prints and t-shirts, has maintained its vitality by moving to digital output, and it remains a lucrative opportunity for printing professionals. From big box retailers to gas station chains, there is a steady need for fresh supplies of screen-printed POP and signage materials. Success demands quality, competitive pricing and aggressive lead times to turn one-off campaigns into ongoing supplier relationships.

If you're considering screen printing as a business, you've probably already done some research. If you've had limited experience printing on plastic, it's even more important to learn all you can about this application. These questions can help get you started:


- Do you understand the **marketplace**? Don't assume anything, because it can be a dynamic environment with shifting opportunities.
- Do you have the **right equipment** to support screen printing? Some people think their presses are capable, but plastic is different. Know what capabilities will be required, because there are different print methods and not all are good for every type of application.
- Do you understand the customers you would sell to? Within your target base, explore specific areas of **concentration**. Display materials are different from signage. You might find one area appeals to you more than another.
- True screen printing is mainly done on polystyrene, while POP can use a broader variety of resins. What could you ask **substrates suppliers** to find out if their products are right for a specific application? Can they handle the supply end for multiple applications, so you don't have to juggle different vendor relationships and pricing structures. 



GOEX Screen Grade Stock Sheets: Ready When You Are

A long lead time for a printing job? Not likely! Success in the printing business comes from turning jobs around quickly. For screen printers whose clients require plastic substrates, fast, competitive response depends on getting material for the job as soon as possible.

GOEX offers stock styrene sheets in a variety of popular gauges, so customers can get this versatile substrate when they need it. Almost any stock sheet order can be shipped within 24-48 hours. "We don't want to turn any current or potential account away for lack of small quantities of styrene, so we maintain a stock inventory of 50" x 100" sheets in about eight different gauges," said Richard Hamlin, GOEX National Accounts Manager. Printers who purchase the stock sheets get the same material quality and performance as large commercial printers would get.

By having access to stocked sheets, printers are assured of quick access to material for small order opportunities. They can also show customers exact artwork prototypes and the actual color of their printed images. "Another important benefit for our customers is that they can continue working with a supplier they know and trust for all their substrate needs. That's the GOEX way," said Hamlin. 



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the deal is performance driven, GOEX has an alternative to meet that need. If there is a bias to using a certain resin like PVC, GOEX can offer alternatives with similar performance.


Can You Get Quantities Quickly?

Along with that, GOEX has a wide variety of production capabilities. GOEX can produce different plastic substrates on all our extrusion lines, so customer orders can be made as quickly as possible. For our customers, this translates into getting not only the substrate, but also the quantity that's needed.

“We professionally support both ends of the spectrum. GOEX can do reasonably small volumes of materials such as orders of just 5,000 pounds, but if someone wants 400,000 pounds, GOEX can do that within a competitive lead time, too,” explained Richard Hamlin, GOEX National Accounts Manager.

Who Do You Want to Work With?

When evaluating a sourcing partner for substrate supplies, think about how it would be to work with the company. How easy is it to get the attention of the right people? When you work with much larger companies, printers often deal with mid-level personnel who may not always be in a position to directly solve customers' problems. They might have to escalate issues or take questions through layers of bureaucracy.

GOEX is one of the last privately held companies in this market, and its approach aligns more closely with customers' cultures and comfort levels in doing business. “While GOEX may be larger than many of our printer customers, we are still closer to their mindsets in terms of dealing as individuals and unique relationships. This allows more personal interaction and long-term relationships, from owner to owner and president to president, as well as providing support and help without a lot of layers in between. This isn't possible with multi-national, multi-million dollar corporations,” said Hamlin. 

Dispelling the Myths about Recycled Substrates

Along with the growing acceptance of environmentally sound printing substrates, is the potential for myth and misunderstanding.

One misconception about recyclable materials is that if 50 percent recyclable content is good, 100 percent must be better. This sounds reasonable, but it can be a dangerous idea to trust. By their nature, recycled materials meet different standards for performance and aesthetics. It depends on the requirements of the job. While there are products such as 100 percent recycled PVC, users must take into consideration the results that are desired. The print world is a visually driven market, and some recycled substrates are excellent for durability, but because of their composition, they might not be suited to a more visually cued job.


Lower Cost Isn't Always the Goal, But It Can Be

Another misconception about these types of materials is that because they are made of recycled goods, they must cost more. Not always so. If the goal is to save money, recyclable materials might be the best choice to support that goal. Providers have made significant progress in bringing the costs of recycled materials in line with other substrates. While they may not be the cheapest alternative for some applications, they are not more costly either. At GOEX, recycled products are typically less expensive than 100 percent virgin product.

The fact that a manufacturer uses up to 50 percent recycled materials in a product doesn't equate to 50 percent savings in cost. There are costs involved in production, and the processing methods are not any less advanced than substrates derived from other sources.

Most Popular Reason for Choosing Recycled

So when does it make sense to turn to sustainable and recycled substrates? We find one of the top reasons is that a printer has a business client that wants to use these materials to support their environmental positioning.

When your clients want to promote their use of recycled materials in signage, POP and other applications, GOEX can work with you to find a product and price that make sense. If the goal is save money, we can recommend an alternative. It's all about working with your goals. 

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