



All wrapped up Hollow figures: sweet shapes with a past.

Chocolate Easter rabbits or Father Christmas figures – everybody loves them, from eighty-year-olds to toddlers. Progress in printing technology has influenced the success story of hollow figures. Nowadays the sweet and glossy chocolate figures come wrapped in designs that range from traditional to zany. And they're more colourful than ever before. Technical limitations on the creativity of wrapping designers are disappearing fast.

1955 Around this time, bakers and confectioners began selling hollow chocolate figures. These first hand-made figures weren't wrapped, but were decorated using icing sugar, pudding mix, etc.

1958/59 First wrappings printed in 3-4 colour flexography, still called aniline printing at the time (because the colours contained BASF aniline dyes). The figures were wrapped by hand.

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1965-70 Flexography with up to 6 colours made the figures more colourful and differentiated. The first wrapping machines for small figures were developed by Loesch in Forchheim. Large figures were still wrapped by hand.

from 1970 Printing now possible in up to 10 colours. Rasch in Cologne began to specialize in wrapping machines for hollow



figures – first round and cone-shaped, then step by step for more complex shapes. Starting with 6 machine types, the company now offers 15 types.

The printing machines have become more sophisticated and precise. In the early 1990s, print media changed, with laser-etched flexo sleeves replacing plates. This is still largely the case today, although occasionally wrappings are gravure printed. Deciding factors are the print run and the design. Since the 1980s, there's been an explosion in wrapping design diversity.

Easter Down Under

Rabbits are among Australia's main environmental pests, so it's understandable that many Australians find it hard to appreciate the charm of chocolate Easter bunnies. Instead they prefer to give and get Easter bilbies – chocolate replicas of an endangered bandicoot species.

Trendy figures like Riegelein's "Nina & Hagen" have joined more traditional Easter rabbit designs in the stores.

Notwithstanding radical changes in design and printing methods, the wrapping material of choice is unchanged. Printed aluminium foil is what the best-dressed hollow figures are wearing this year – tailored for them by H&N.



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Bottle decoration

New Easter outfits are sure to grab attention

There's a long tradition of celebration beers for special events. Think of the Munich Oktoberfest and its different Festbier brands. Or flavourful Christmas beers and ales. These festive brews are naturally set off by special label outfits.

Special events are the ideal opportunity to launch new products extending an existing product line. A beer especially brewed for Easter for example becomes an "Easter beer" with the appropriate bottle decoration showing the typical Easter humour in its design. The cheerful Easter Rabbit grinning on the label

has encouraged a lot of regular pils and export ale drinkers to try something new and different. And they look for it every year.

A festive boost for business

There are any number of opportunities to profit from this approach. Festivals, celebrations and even big local events can be turned to good effect to market new products. The restaurant trade welcomes this attractive boost for business. At festive events, people are in the mood to enjoy themselves and appropriate, eye-catching labels encourage spontaneous purchase decisions. Once tried and enjoyed, the new products will build a loyal customer base.



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Research and development

All-round success: New OPP labels for detergent bottles

Labels for PET detergent bottles have to meet exacting criteria. In addition to paper labels, Sim`Edit now offers the detergent industry OPP wrap-around labels as a competitively-priced alternative to laminated labels.

In the course of several months' work, Sim`Edit developed an optimized printing process with inks that guarantee high detergent resistance.

New colour inks and coatings

In-house research, innovation and close cooperation with customers in the detergent industry have resulted in new specific colours and coatings that meet all the specifications for detergent labelling. They bond extremely well with the

polymer substrate (even at the very high speeds of a gravure printing press) and are highly resistant to detergents.

Cost and speed are powerful benefits

The new OPP labels cost between 30 and 40% less to produce than conventional laminated labels. They are printed on transparent 35µ or 45µ film, the same grade as used for 'standard' OPP labels. Very fast order turnaround (3 weeks) is another strong argument against competitors' products.



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Plastic labels

Shrink sleeves for brilliant Easter eggs

Sleek and glossy shrink sleeves attract customer's attention and 360° printing maximizes advertising space. Plastic shrink sleeves fit anything, even Easter eggs! There's an Easter sleeve for you in this copy of Packaging Unlimited. And here's how to shrink-sleeve 3 eggs!

1. Choose large eggs (at least size L). If the eggs are too small, the sleeves will slip off. Hard boil the eggs and let them cool slightly. Don't pour away the boiling water, you'll need it later.

2. Make 3 sleeves by cutting the tube of film along the transparent lines. Choose a motif and slide the ring of film completely over an egg.

3. Lower the egg (on a dessert spoon) into boiling water for a couple of seconds. As soon as the sleeve has shrunk to size, take the egg out of the water. It's that easy!

Daniela Schäffer

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Packaging Unlimited profits from expansion of Constantia Flexibles

Hueck Folien GmbH & Co. KG is now a member of the Constantia Flexibles Group. So watch this space for news and information from Hueck. Main business areas of the Hueck Group are aluminium bottle neck foils as well as food and pharmaceutical packaging.

H&N labels in Tanzania and Turkey

H&N is strengthening its position in its existing markets for plastic labels and moving into new markets. The company won the contract for rotogravure printing of the labels for Coca Cola's Dasani bottled water brand in Tanzania. In Turkey, H&N will be supplying the labels for Saka spring water, one of the brands in the portfolio of Turkish food giant Gida SA. The wrap-around labels will be printed in high-quality rotogravure.

H&N acquires majority stake in NOVIS, Romania

H&N GmbH has taken over 60 % of the shares in NOVIS Srl in Romania. NOVIS is the Romanian market leader in labels. NOVIS is supplier of important customers such as Coca Cola, InBev, Heineken and SAB Miller.

Technique

What would we do without it!

Versatile and fast, digital printing is the answer in many situations.

Digital printing is ideal for short, fast print runs. Think product tests, prototypes and samples. Or POS product launches. Or photo shoots and spots. With small digital print runs on any of a great variety of substrates it's possible to produce labels, shrink banderole or wrap-around labels for many different markets. For small runs, digital printing is a fast, affordable route to very high print quality. You get quality comparable to offset printing at a fraction of the cost.

Solid benefits for hollow figures

Digital printing prints from the four-colour colour range and can be combined with a décor colour. This makes it possible to achieve special effects, e.g., high-gloss, or opaque colours by underprinting with white ink. It's a really good way to try out new designs for hollow chocolate figures for instance. It can be used to produce single units of foil wrappings for prototypes or premoulded chocolate figure

packaging. Another highly practical application is to print either just the contours or the whole design on a foil reel, which can then be used with a wrapping machine to test the whole packaging sequence for a new Easter rabbit or Father Christmas design.

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