

# REDUCING AVOIDABLE PRODUCTION COSTS

Research has shown that many printers are absorbing a considerable amount of cost in production unnecessarily due to the need to adjust the inks to match the desired colour on the press.

It is convention to accept that adjusting the ink to achieve the colour required by customers is a fact of life in flexo printing. Some printers target a specific *DeltaE*, others target a close approximation. However if we look at the percentage of jobs that need ink adjusting, the time taken and the cost of running a press and totalise it up on a per annum basis the cost is quite considerable:

Here are three examples from flexible packaging , label and corrugated printers based on information collected at over 200 printers over the past 3 years:

	Jobs per day per press	Number of presses	Approximately 40% of jobs need ink adjusting at 20 mins / correction / day	Times (x) 6 days a week, 50 weeks / year	Typical cost of press at average speed, including all fixed and variable costs	Production time & cost loss due to ink adjusting; Time x Cost =
Flexible Packaging	5	3	2 hours	600 hours / year	€ 600	€ 360,000
Label Printer	4	6	8 hours	2400 hours / year	€ 160	€ 384,000
Corrugated Printer	3	3	3 hours	800 hours / year	€ 600	€ 480,000

Clearly if a reasonable percentage of this 'ink adjust' cost could be saved, and production increased, greater profits could be achieved.

What we now know is that 'ink adjusting' in many cases masks the real issue, which is imbalanced anilox rolls which cause the need to adjust the ink.

Part of this cost – which has been proven at many printers – is because of the different ink release from a set of anilox rolls. For example process colour rolls should all be very similar volumes, however due to wear in use or inadequate cleaning, the aniloxs are often not releasing similar volumes and hence ink adjusting is needed. So by managing your anilox inventory and ensuring the rolls are correctly matched should reduce your 'ink adjust' costs. Even if the saving is only 25% of the above figures the savings are considerable.

**How to test and manage you anilox inventory:** There is now a simple to use, fast, electronic 3D volume scanning unit that has been specifically designed for printers to measure their anilox's in- house. This unit – the *AniCAM*, which is used by over 50% of the global anilox manufacturers, has been designed to help identify rolls that are out of specification and are causing the need for ink adjustment.

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## TRY IT FOR YOURSELF:

1 Calculate the cost of ink adjusting over a year by filling in the data below:

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Your figures:	___	___	___ hours	___ hours / year	€ _____	€ _____

2 If the value is in excess of €50,000 per annum, we believe it's worth contacting us to discuss solution opportunities.

We look forward to hearing from you.