

Long-standing reputation of delivering the best quality.

Jan Laeremans, managing director at Vitrapack and a visionary in the field of color optimization in the print packaging industry, reflects on the partnership with Co-efficiënt.



Vitrapack has a long-standing reputation of delivering the best quality. Why did you start an optimization project?

We've always been very focused on color consistency and take great pride in meeting or exceeding the expectations of our clients. We contacted Jan Verdonck from Co-efficiënt to improve our efficiency and realize a cost reduction. Consider it a pro-active step to stay ahead of the curve. Our main objective? Prevent the wasting of resources and shortening the startup time of our machines. Colors should match color proof approved by the client on the first print run, without any further adjustments — thus without loss of material or time. We made sure our objectives were measurable and continuously monitored the project with a specialized piece of software. That gave us objective proof that we were getting a good return on investment.

How did you go about setting up the project?

Jan and his team first performed an audit, focusing both on technical and

organizational aspects of the company. As they have extensive experience in managing similar projects in the packaging industry, they used the collected data to map out a realistic, detailed action plan and attainable KPI's for our company. That plan contained clearly defined milestones, required resources and intended results. We built a project team that was made responsible for the step by step execution of the plan. And, rest assured, it has been challenging at times. Almost all departments in our company were involved.

What has been challenging for you personally?

You're dealing with processes that span several years. Keeping the team eager and highly motivated throughout the entire project has been challenging. Jan's experience with change management has definitely been an asset. Also, it requires a clear vision and loads of energy to get and keep everyone on board. It's my job as managing director to realize this. Luckily, Jan's team has supported our internal project team throughout the project. Their

enthusiasm pushed our team members to perform at their best. Also, they provided support both on a practical and on a theoretical level. Jan and his team have spent almost two decades gathering and improving the scientific knowledge about color measurement and patterning techniques. The knowledge transfer that occurred throughout the project has put us in a different league, allowing us to continue the project independently and provide our clients with the best professional advice about color they can possibly get.

What would you say is the most important results for Vitrapack?

You could consider the printing process as a long, industrial chain with several links. If one link is not perfectly attuned to the rest, then you're wasting time, energy, resources and money. We analyzed all stages of the production process and identified opportunities for improvement. That analysis has paid off. We've definitely achieved our primary goal: improving overall efficiency and realizing cost reduction. If I would have to break

“Working with Co-efficient allowed us to improve our efficiency and realize a significant cost reduction. Our efforts to stay ahead of the curve have definitely paid off.”



that down into different components, I would identify three elements: I've already mentioned the enormous boost in knowledge and expertise in our team. Secondly, we've further improved the quality of our products. We can prepare and print colors within tolerance and continuously monitor them objectively. And last but not least: we realized commercial benefits. Continuous tracking reduces the start-up time of new orders at the printing machines, allowing us to handle a larger workload. Both we as a company as our clients benefit from the fact that we managed to realize a cost reduction, which is key to survival in a very competitive market. Our efforts to stay ahead of the curve have definitely paid off.

Did this project have an impact on your business as a whole?

Partnering with Co-efficient has created international exposure for Vitrapack, especially among brand-owners who expect nothing but the very best in the domain of color quality and color stability. At Vitrapack, every generation that ran the family business has had a drive for color standardization and continuous modernization. Also, we have a long tradition of offering pre-press services to our clients. We had a very solid foundation, but I'm pretty sure the project we realized together with Co-efficient has had a decisive impact on Koroza's proposal to become a center of excellence in their group.

Do you believe you would have managed all of this without external help?

In all honesty: no. We have a great and dedicated team, but Jan brought something crucial to the table. And even though he claims the execution of a project like this is not rocket science, it would surely have taken us a lot longer to achieve our goals without his topical expertise and clear guidance. Simply put, it would have cost us a lot more money if we had tried to develop everything in house, using a trial and error method. Jan's experience and methodological action plan is the shortest and most efficient route to success. I'm glad that we decided to start working with Jan many years ago. It has allowed Vitrapack to be one of the first companies in our industry to reap the benefits of contemporary innovations. It gives our company an enormous competitive advantage. Also, to end on a personal note, it gives me enormous satisfaction that I'm paving the way for an entire industry, pushing the boundaries, just like my grandparents and parents did.

Jan Laeremans and Vitrapack

Jan Laeremans is CEO of Vitrapack. Until May 2019 Vitrapack was a family business, with an annual turnover of €24 million. His grandparents started the business in 1935, in the city center of Antwerp, Belgium. In 2020, the company hit a milestone: Vitrapack joined the Koroza group, a cluster of printing press companies with an annual turnover of €270 million. Vitrapack employs 90 people on several sites in Belgium. They mainly work for European customers and print both on foil and on paper, for food and non-food industry. They are highly respected for their expertise in both flexographic as rotogravure printing. A continuous effort to innovate has earned them the reputation of top-notch quality.



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