

Flexo Wash system is a winner for South Africa's leading flexible packaging converter

One year ago, Nampak Flexible in Pinetown, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, installed a Danish-built Flexo Wash plate washer and anilox roll cleaner. As one of Africa's leading flexible packaging converters, specializing in extrusion and lamination, as well as gravure and flexographic printing, providing customers with on-time delivery and top-quality print is of prime importance to Nampak Flexible.

To provide customers with the best possible quality and to reduce press downtime, Nampak looked for improved cleaning methods specifically to improve these two aspects. Prior to investing in Flexo Wash units, everything was cleaned manually. First a chemical was applied to the rolls, then they were wrapped in foil for 20 minutes, after which the foil was removed and rolls were rinsed and dried. Apart from the taking a great deal of time, the aniloxes were not cleaned effectively. Plates also were cleaned by hand; and if the wrong solvents were used, the plates would break. In addition, dots were often damaged because of manual cleaning using uneven pressure.

To save time and money, Nampak Flexible decided to automate these cleaning processes.



Dhanjay Parbhoodeen, Flexo Print Manager in front of their Anilox Roll Cleaner

According to the company's Flexo Print Manager, Dhanjay Parbhoodeen, this is exactly what happened. 'Since using the Flexo Wash units, we have had less downtime on the presses. Now we only take about five minutes to clean the rolls and we're 100% certain that the rolls are clean when they're put back into the presses. We also keep our colour matching time down to ten minutes and this means savings on inks,' he says.

'Cleaning is always a filthy job,' he continues. 'Before we got the Flexo Wash units, we spent a lot of time cleaning up the aftermath of manual cleaning. Now we simply place plates on the conveyor or place the roll in the anilox roll cleaner. They both run in a closed loop system, so we don't have any spillage on the floor. Staff who used to spend time on cleaning now has time to do other tasks.'

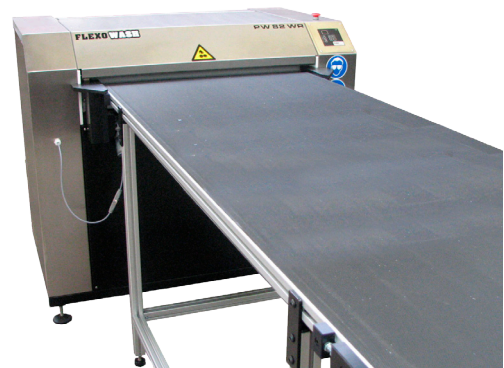
Each week, about 50 rolls are cleaned at Nampak Flexible's Pinetown operation. Now rolls are cleaned only three times a week, resulting in less downtime and fewer problems, and a constant supply of clean aniloxes.



'We're very satisfied with the machines. They run well and the operators wouldn't know what to do without them now,' Dhanjay declares.

'And, as our customers become increasingly aware of environmental impact, we're happy to tell them that we clean our aniloxes and plates in an environmentally-friendly way. We no longer use solvents – only eco-friendly liquids from Flexo Wash.'

Nampak's decision to purchase Flexo Wash units was because it was already a well-known brand. 'Other Nampak plants have Flexo Wash machines and we were fortunate that we could try them out at our Cape Town operation. It was also important to have the excellent co-operation of the South African agent, Ipex Machinery. We have known them for many years and are very satisfied with the service they provide,' Dhanjay concludes.



Flexo Wash units are available in several different sizes to meet every printer's specific needs, whether for labels, flexible packaging or corrugated board. They are particularly easy to operate and 100% automatic.