



Time Is Money

How pressure seal forms and machines can help you save both

By Sarah Semple

Photo: Getty Images by LdF

Change happens. Whether it's a personal change or through your business, no one is exempt. How we respond to these changes is what matters. In our professional lives, continued success comes through finding new ways to grow revenue streams, which means evolving with the times and responding to client needs. The pressure seal market is no different. The best way to stay up-to-date is by recognizing what's changing and discovering why it's ultimately happening. Print+Promo spoke with Kate Torpey, director of sales for InfoSeal, Roanoke, Va.; Samuel Dorsten, product marketing specialist for Wilmer, Dayton, Ohio; and Art Waganheim, vice president of sales at Paitec USA, Davie, Fla., to give distributors the inside scoop on all things pressure seal. Check out the benefits, learn about the challenges and see what's popular.

Follow the trends

We all receive some sort of envelope in the mail daily, if not weekly, but the more eagle-eyed observer will spot a change in mailer format—particularly, when it comes to bills, report cards

and marketing materials. For Dorsten, a move to pressure seal, a secure, one-piece self-mailer without the use of an envelope, is the trend.

“We want to offer pressure seal documents for distributors joining the trend,” he said. “Customers are not just converting their checks to pressure seal, but other business documents as well. By offering many available stock options, our distributors are able to let their imaginations work to create new uses.”

According to Torpey, growth is happening in the direct mail and transpromo mailing sectors.

“Growth is coming from [a] unique format that adds value to the direct mail segment with perforation, die cuts, scratch-off and other interactive components,” she observed. “We are [also] seeing tremendous growth in the inkjet arena. The value-added pre-finished rolls for the high-speed inkjet printers are a huge advantage to printers and direct mail shops. Perforation, windows, ID cards, remoist glue and other value-added, pre-finished features help utilization on the high-speed inkjet equipment and reduce finishing time and waste.”

Something else distributors should know is there's no sign of printers and copiers slowing down, especially now. Waganheim

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PRESSURE SEAL IN ACTION: A CASE STUDY

Print+Promo spoke with Jim Romano, executive vice president and partner of CTP Solutions, based in Agoura Hills, Calif., on the topic of a recent pressure seal order the company handled for a client. As a distributor partner of InfoSeal, we wanted to know how and why this order was so successful.

Romano explained that not only does the distributor service, sell to and consult to service bureaus to fulfill pressure seal, but CTP Solutions also works with companies that use it for direct business. The one case in particular that Romano talked about involved a service bureau that does rebate checks for specific promotions, which then go out to a large group of people. Ultimately, this is also one of the reasons pressure seal was the right choice for the client.

“Pressure seal becomes very functional, very realistic for security [and] authenticity for a small dollar rebate that a recipient or a consumer is looking for, or has applied for,” Romano said. “It’s a very quick and diligent way for a rebate company to offer that rebate, and it’s going to be used in the mailstream. So, a recent order had taken what was just fundamentally a very small postcard—a very small dollar rebate, \$10, \$5, \$15—[and] we were able to show them not only the imaging capability to this, [but also] the security of this and the functionality of it, that would turn it into a self-sealing, pressure-sealing product.”

Something else that Romano alluded to was that they found postcards were getting lost in the mail or stuck with other junk mail. As for the rebate, this was something that recipients were noticing and

picking up, partially thanks to an assist from InfoSeal when designing the creative concept.

Prior to this, the service bureau didn’t have experience with pressure seal, but it picked CTP Solutions based on its needs.

“They reached out to us, [and] CTP [Solutions] uses a consulting method to show them economical processes [and] secured processes, and why they chose us was [because] of our knowledge base of imaging devices, our background in both micro and check printing, and the fact that we’re experts in self-sealing,” said Romano.

As for the outcome, the client was extremely happy, especially since the piece was sent out to the recipients in a timely manner, and the brand-named product that offered the rebate was pleased with their identity, the look and the concept.

In the end, Romano explained that this was a fairly simple process in terms of challenges, and it was all thanks to pressure seal. “[When it comes to] fraud-prevention, duplicates, accountability of it [and] tracking of it, pressure seal accommodated all of that,” he said. “We were able to use inside tracking, barcodes, mailing detail that was able to give feedback, unit reporting for them that worked back in with them, so the document actually was cost-saving in many ways when you added up all of the touchpoints and the data needed, all the verification back as a service bureau, you know that you’re working for that brand name product to fulfill something.

“You have to verify them that 100,000 pieces went out this week, or 200,000 went out this week,” he added. “And that was important with the design, the concept and then follow-through with that. We were able to give them all that into the pressure seal document, and obviously prevent any frontline over fraud-prevention of people swiping them, and trying to duplicate them or replicate them, [and] we were able to share ways to prevent that.”



Unique and value-added features of InfoSeal’s pressure seal self-mailers result in increased response rates for direct mail programs.

further explained that there are still a lot of opportunities with pressure seal.

“Just as there have been predications for years that email and digital communications would be the end of printers and copiers, the proliferation of those communication technologies has actually made basic, printed direct mail more effective,” he said. “As a result, ‘snap packs’ are making a big comeback. And because of the increasing fears of electronic hacking, paper paychecks continue to be a mainstay of pressure seal opportunities.”

Reap the benefits

There are several benefits to choosing pressure seal, with the first being efficiency. The one thing we constantly hear is how time is money, and if you’re looking to cut down on some of the time envelope stuffing is costing you, this is something huge to consider.

“Pressure seal formats streamline the workflow on the production floor,” noted Torpey. “Whether inline or near-line solutions, pressure seal saves labor costs, production time and material costs. Simply put—no inserting and no envelope.”

Waganheim echoed this sentiment.

“If a business wants to simplify its processing and distribution of single-page documents and forms, pressure seal technology allows

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them to do so without the needs for unnecessary envelopes,” he said. “When configured as an ‘inline’ device directly interfaced to a business’ printer, this technology also can eliminate the many manual steps necessary to typically process such forms and documents with an inserting machine.”

One last key piece to know is that everything is in one place now, which ultimately brings us back to our first point on how pressure seal can save you money. Dorsten admitted that the upfront cost of a machine can easily intimidate customers, but made a case for the long-run savings.

“Everything you need is in one complete package,” he said. “With documents and equipment working together, you get everything you need for your business. Not only are you getting your business documents, but now you get an all-in-one mail piece. You can see a difference almost immediately in cost savings.

“Instead of buying your forms, envelopes, and having an employee stuff, seal and ship ... now all you need to do is print your check or form and send through our folding sealing machines,” he continued. “Giving your customers’ employees greater productivity and ease to get your documents sealed and shipped is Wilmer’s goal.”

Dorsten recalled a time when Wilmer assisted a customer with a pressure seal job, and explained that the customer was sending around 200 payroll checks a week and learned that there was a better solution than to stuff and manually seal envelopes.



PSMailers pressure seal self-mailer equipment is designed to fold and seal documents in less time than conventional printing and mailing processes. (Originally from PSMailers article featuring Wilmer.)

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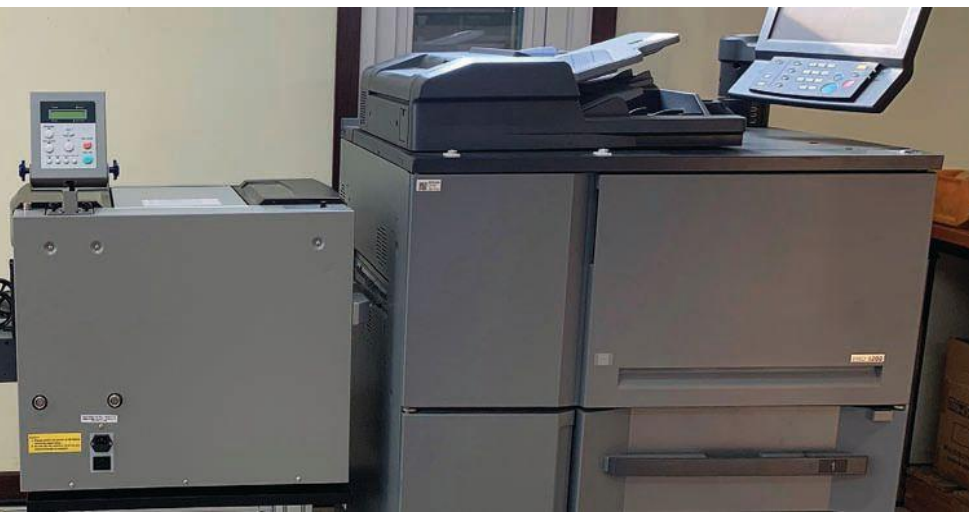
From there, Dorsten pointed out that although the customer was interested in finding out if pressure seal was the right method for them, there were concerns, especially since this would mean changing their company's business routine.

"Wilmer was able to send one of our sales reps to the customer's location and actually demo a machine for them," he said. "As a 'hands-on' customer, this helped a great deal. They were able to see how the machine ran firsthand and were able to see it in action. Once the customer saw how easy the process was to fold and seal

importantly, they are telling us that basic operational dependability is more important to them than fancy electronic controls which add unnecessary costs to the machines."

Dorsten went on to explain that Wilmer customers can rely on the company's sales reps and website for guidance when deciding which machine would be the best purchase, as the company also provides an online tool to help make this process easier.

"Some forms require a larger machine based on paper weight and fold type as well," he explained. "These larger machine models are typically used for higher-volume users, but are also recommended for unusual fold types or thicker paper. They are built and designed with different components to handle these documents and perform without issue."



Paitec USA inline IM17100 interfaced to high-speed console printer.

our documents, they were ready to make the switch. This is only one of hundreds of customers who have started to convert to the pressure seal process, and we are finding more and more customers every day who are satisfied with the ease and convenience of the pressure seal system."

Research machinery

Pressure seal machines are not a one-machine-fits-all. Before purchasing equipment, it is important to ask the right questions and do your research on which model will best suit your business.

One of the first steps is to determine daily volume, according to Waganheim. "Daily volumes matter most. As an example, a customer might only process 10,000 forms per month, but arrives at that volume by processing 2,500 forms one day per week," he said. "A basic, low-priced pressure seal machine might be good for 10,000 forms processed over 30 days, but such a machine will be too slow for 2,500 forms processed four times per month."

Waganheim revealed that for Paitec USA, clients are looking for machines that not only meet their requirements, but also having a machine that they are able to rely on. Sure, high-tech machines can be great, but sometimes having all those extra costs added on to the price tag isn't needed. If there's a way to cut down on price, why not do it?

"Customers are moving upscale on their machine needs to faster units with larger infeed capacities," Waganheim said. "Most

Stay ahead of problems

Just as there are plenty of benefits, there are also challenges associated with pressure seal, and they mainly have to do with the maintenance of your machines. Think about it this way, you wouldn't buy an expensive iPhone without a protective screen and case, and the same goes for your machines—knowing beforehand how to prevent or solve issues and care for a pressure seal equipment is valuable information.

Our experts shared similar thoughts on the role of maintenance. Waganheim said it's critical that you regularly clean the parts of your pressure seal machines.

"When processing documents which requires MICR ink, it is important for the user to regularly clean the infeed, fold and seal rollers of their pressure seal machines," he said. "Build-up of the rub off of MICR ink on those rollers, and even the process ink used for privacy screens and other images, can lead to slippery feeds, which could cause double feeds and jams."

Dorsten advised paying special attention to the forms as well. "Pressure seal documents do require more attention than some may assume," he said. "Wilmer gives our customers a guideline for storage and usage with every carton. This [guideline] explains optimal storage conditions and humidity, printing procedures and what to avoid when storing your pressure seal products. This helps eliminate the heat-related curling issue. When the documents are stored correctly, there should not be any issues when the time comes to print and ship."

When asked about other things distributors should know, Torpey, arguably, summed it up best.

"Pressure [seal] is not complicated," she said. "It provides [various] solutions to customer mailing needs. Pressure seal products have increased open rates and increased ROI. The piece is designed to be opened—distributors that have conversations about how the piece performs with the customer are having tremendous success in selling new business." ■