

INKCUPS' Helix® - leaving a lasting impression on Glassware

In an innovative departure from traditional glassware printing methods, still widely-used, global industry leader INKCUPS just took glassware printing to the next level with its full-colour, seamless graphics.



GLASS PRINTING

The great added value of Inkcup's recent glass decorating solutions is clear: new stunning graphics and eye-catching design elements are now possible where earlier options only offered a one-colour image, or etching.

Today the company's flagship Helix® digital cylinder printing machine, as well as its corresponding auxiliary machines, make multi-coloured glassware printing possible - from small diameter vessels such as shot glasses and shooters to larger items such as growlers and spirit bottles. Indeed, it's thanks to the latest updates to Inkcup's popular Helix® printer that the techniques offered by the Helix® line now come as notable trendsetters for the glass decorating market.

NEW HELIX® MACHINE UPGRADES

Helix® printers offer printing upgrades with the extended range kit modification, which increases the diameter capabilities of the printer. Previous models of this machine were limited to printing on straight-walled and tapered cylinders with the diameter range of 2 to 5 inches. However, recent modifications and the addition of the Extended Range Kit now allow a minimum diameter of 1.5 inches - a refreshing tooling feature that helps companies diversify glass production with ease.

TRANSPARENT PIN-CURING SYSTEM

Another recent highlight is the transparent pin-curing system, or TPC, which was designed to enable UV inkjet printing on clear or 'see-through' products, from plastic bottles and glassware to spirit and wine bottles. Compared to previous methods, this novel printing machine system streamlines the printing process for clear vessels. This is a departure from the past, which saw UV inkjet

printing on clear vessels via a stuffing agent, or 'foxtail', which blocked UV light from penetrating transparent vessels and left print-head life compromised. Instead the TPC system allows glass vessels to remain uncontaminated and sterile while reducing print-head wear and significantly decreasing production times. The TPC feature revolutionizes clear vessel printing production as well, both on the Helix® and in the printing industry - thereby simplifying the process and improving efficiency. Not only. The TPC system can also be retrofitted to any existing Helix® printer.

PROGRAMMABLE TILT UPGRADE

A further feature, which saves each product's specifications within the system software, is the programmable tilt upgrade by which the angle of a fixture can be adjusted for tapers. This allows for a simple, quick changeover during the printing process, such that the vessel angle can be saved for a subsequent return to the measurements saved. It's as easy as setting a number to a product type, then arranging the corresponding angles. Lastly, the fixture auto-adjusts - all of reducing changeover time by as much as a third of the amount of time it takes without the feature.



DL INK UPGRADE

The DL Series ink is a UV ink that's an ideal solution for excellent adhesion on glass. It can either be utilized in a UV flatbed inkjet printer or in a rotary inkjet printer like the Helix®. The DL Series is cured using UV LED light and it can be paired with primers for longer-lasting adhesion. The ink works perfectly with MagiCoat® Glass Primer, making glassware pieces more durable and resistant to wash cycles. The DL ink is available in a full colour range: Cyan, Light cyan, Magenta, Light magenta, Yellow, Black, White and Varnish, and it's FDA 21CFR compliant too, which makes it a safe and reliable ink to use on glass.

MAGICOAT® PRE-TREATMENT SYSTEM UPGRADE

Brand new for treating glass, the MagiCoat® Pre-Treatment System utilizes a flame treatment technique as well as a spraying system for the water-based MagiCoat® Primer. Boasting eight individually-rotating systems, each item is flame-treated to eliminate debris and coatings - thus achieving a smoother, sleeker adhesion result. It also offers a variable mist system to uniformly spray each glassware piece with MagiCoat® Primer, so enabling up to 200 residential washes and up to 600 industrial washes.

INNOVATIVE PRINT TECHNIQUES

The Helix® cylindrical printers line is well-known for its offer of numerous innovative print techniques for glass applications. In primis, full coverage printing is the ability to print on the entire length of a straight or tapered piece of drinkware - from tip to bottom as well as 360° all around. Moreover, the Helix® offers mirror print - a technique resulting in a 'mirror image' from both the inside and the outside. Especially important for glassware and other clear vessels, this feature affords consumers the possibility to see white behind the artwork rather than the same amazing multi-coloured graphic on the front. Here, just mirroring print on its own greatly enhances the quality of the piece.

Tone-on-tone, contour print

and photorealistic printing are three other revolutionary printing techniques available to Helix® operators. Tone-on-tone mimics an embossed look by utilizing varnish without any colour to enhance the glassware piece. Contour print creates a 3D look and feel by layering ink. Finally, all Helix® cylindrical printers offer photorealistic print capabilities by using an additional two colours of ink, namely light cyan and light magenta, which will jointly achieve beautiful prints that can capture both true skin tones and smooth gradients.

ENDLESS PRINTING APPLICATIONS

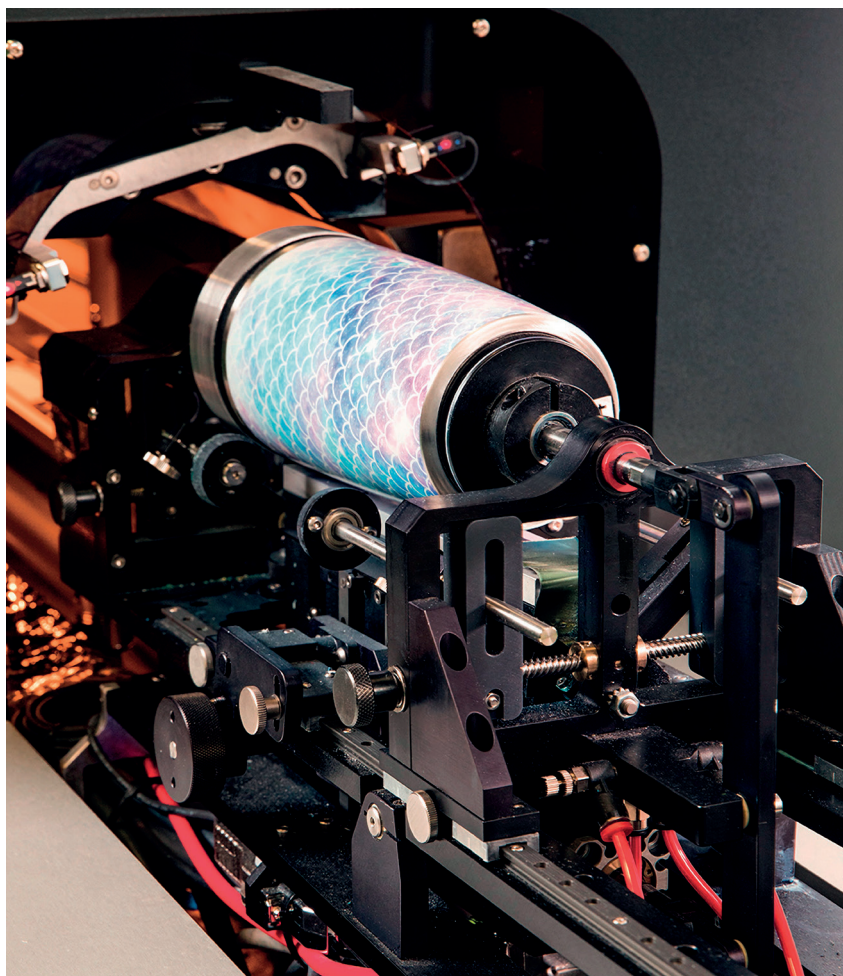
The Helix® machines allow for printing on a wide variety of products and vessels. For glass decorators, the ability to offer a wide selection of drinkware can

be a great differentiator. Thanks to recent upgrades, the Helix® line is able to accommodate glassware that ranges from assorted shot glasses to pint glasses to beer bottles to wine tumblers to wine bottles to growlers. For decorators printing on glassware and other substrates, adjustments to the Helix® machine will render it sufficiently flexible to switch from glass to stainless to coated metals.

UP AND COMING MARKET TRENDS

Among the more prominent emerging market trends is the demand for supply chain transparency. Today's consumer aims to be aware of the entire process- from sourcing to delivery. Environmentally-friendly alternatives are preferred and our planets' future is hugely important. For these businesses a quick and easy printing machine for ever evolving information is a necessity, which also explains why storytelling will become ever more necessary for future purchases.

In sum, Inkcups Helix® machines are not only high-performance, but they also create high quality images on a variety of product types and substrates. A fast and reliable print-on-demand solution for e-commerce companies and independent producers, Helix® machines permit everyone in the market to differentiate their brand while appealing to a wide range of purchase occasions as they increase profit margins with exceptionally-decorated glass products. ■



INKCUPS

INKCUPS EUROPE

Gewerbestrasse 15
57258 Freudenberg - Germany
Tel.: +49-2734-4782050
E-mail: info@inkcups.com

www.inkcups.com/europe