

GLOBAL SPECIALTY CHEMICALS COMPANY CUTS DOWN ON GHS AND LABELING CONCERNS WITH ON DEMAND PACKAGING LABELS

Epson's Automated Solutions Provide Color, Compliance and Cost Containment

Since July of 2013, New Jersey based Elementis has kept a labeled chemical drum outside of its building through rain, heat, sun and snow. The empty chemical container doesn't represent a failed experiment, but rather it serves as a testament to how Elementis was able to collaborate with industry-leading partners to provide faster, more reliable service to its customers, even amidst global changes to chemical and packaging shipping regulations.

Elementis is a global specialty chemicals company providing functional additives that improve the quality of its customers' products. From paint additives, to drilling fluids to cosmetics, the company utilizes manufacturing technology and scientific innovation to enhance a product's flow, performance and value. To deliver these solutions effectively on a global scale, Elementis maintains a safe, sustainable product handling and delivery service. With more than 30 locations worldwide, including several U.S. manufacturing locations in New Jersey, California and Missouri, Elementis places an emphasis on maximizing the efficiency of its product handling operations and remaining up-to-date on regulatory requirements for its chemical products. As a result, the company has always been an early adopter and one step ahead when it comes to conforming to environmental and safety regulations on a global, national and regional level.

When countries around the world began integrating the United Nations' Globally Harmonized System for classifying labels (GHS), Elementis took notice and began preparing its internal resources for packaging and labeling compliance. While the deadline for GHS adoption in the U.S. of June 2015 was recently announced, Europe and Asia-Pacific countries like Japan and China began adopting standards as early as 2009. The implementation of GHS regulations represents an international effort to standardize how chemicals are classified and labeled in the workplace. All of this is done with the goal of improving employee safety and the efficiency of international commerce. In addition to a major re-classification of chemicals, hazards and emergency response options, label formats must be standardized and produced with colorful elements to ensure workers can clearly identify the chemical product being handled, regardless of region.

"When you are helping customers deliver on a global scale, you have to be aware of the regulatory changes that are happening in different regions. GHS in particular was something we embraced as a company from the get-go because it provided an opportunity to reduce risks and improve efficiency," said James Hagan, Global Director, Product Stewardship & Regulatory Affairs at Elementis.

Prior to its internal shift to GHS compliance, Elementis relied on laser jet printers to generate product labels for shipping. Producing its labels in this manner resulted in several inefficiencies. For example, the laser printers often jammed during large print jobs and produced non-durable labels which would curl from heat emitted by the printer or fall off containers because of incompatibility with certain adhesives. Since the company processes hundreds of products for multiple industries every day, it was essential for Elementis to be able to reliably and consistently print labels that are accurate and GHS compliant.

"We can't move products out the door unless they are labeled, and the last thing we want is for our customers to miss a shipment," remarked Hagan. "Our previous process was not only

inefficient, but from a topline standpoint, all of the jams and print job management meant that our manufacturing staff couldn't pay as much attention to other responsibilities."

Industry collaboration played a major role in helping Elementis identify an effective solution. Working with TSI, a specialized label manufacturer, and The Wercks®, a software solution provider, Elementis was introduced to Epson's on demand color labeling technology. This was not only an answer to the company's GHS needs, but an added opportunity to improve its overall labeling operations. To explore the benefits of on demand color labeling, Elementis provided one of its distributors with an Epson ColorWorks™ C831 wide label printer and the response was telling for Global Director James Hagan: "We gave it to them for a test run and after a couple of weeks with the printer, the distributor wouldn't give it back."

Following the initial trial run, additional printers were incorporated in the company's facilities in New Jersey, Missouri, Wisconsin and California. The printers not only integrated perfectly with GHS software and labeling tools but improved operational efficiency and helped contain plant costs relating to production downtime, label stock inventory and specialty adhesives. From a durability standpoint, labels now stick to even the most difficult type of container materials and adhere to durability standards required under GHS such as the BS 5609 chemical labeling standard for international shipping.

For plant managers and employees, initial skepticism about the printers quickly turned into enthusiasm and increased productivity. The reliable, easy-to-use label printers run two times faster than the old laser printers, producing about 2,000 labels per month while eliminating printer jams that previously occurred during large production runs. In addition, the printers have given the facilities added flexibility to tackle various label sizes and product SKUs.

For Hagan, the switch has not only meant an easier transition to GHS compliance but fewer headaches for the company's labeling operations. "These printers are significantly faster, more reliable and are contributing to the overall efficiency of our plants. Our people are worrying less about print jams and labels, and focusing more on new ways to add value to our customers."

Elementis is looking to expand on its new-found labeling efficiency with plans to add more than three dozen new Epson printers in North America in 2014 including the recently launched ColorWorks™ TM-C3500 label printer. That same chemical drum remains outside as the weather in New Jersey turns colder. And the label is still intact. For Elementis, it is a quiet display of the durability and reliability on demand color labeling has given its operations.

To learn more about the brand new ColorWorks C3500 or C831 label printers, and on demand color labeling solutions for GHS visit <http://pos.epson.com/colorworks/index.aspx>. To contact an on demand color specialist, email colorworks@ea.epson.com, or call 630-865-6455 (Central/Western region) or 716-901-1813 (Eastern region/Canada).

About Epson America, Inc.

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