

Tubelite Inc.



S U C C E S S
S T O R Y

Tubelite uses Epson's color label printers to improve shipping accuracy and reduce costs.

“Epson's label solution has reduced our costs and been extremely successful in eliminating delivery errors.”

Scott Morey
IT & Process Improvement Mgr.
Tubelite Inc.



Epson's ColorWorks™ C3400 inkjet printer with Just in Time Color™ labeling is a cost-effective solution for manufacturing.

Tubelite Inc., a part of Apogee Enterprises, is one of the building industry's premier manufacturers of aluminum storefronts, entrances, curtainwalls and daylighting systems. Tubelite is known for its high-quality products, dependability and timely deliveries. Tubelite's headquarters, distribution, warehousing and assembly operations are in Walker, Michigan. An additional facility in Reed City, Michigan, houses the company's aluminum extrusion operation.

Tubelite known for quality and service

Tubelite has customers throughout most of the United States and prides itself on servicing them quickly, efficiently and accurately. Its customers must receive the right product, on time without any errors. In addition, clients require a wide variety of customized products to be delivered to multiple locations on a daily basis. Because of the complexity of the orders, Tubelite needed an error-proof solution to ensure that the correct order was delivered to the correct location every time.

Needed accurate, color labeling system

Initially Tubelite implemented a solution that required manually applying color-coded dots on product labels and the bill of lading to differentiate the order for each stop along a route. While delivery errors were reduced, the process was highly labor-intensive and still left room for human error. The dot solution

also meant additional administrative costs for purchasing, maintaining and managing inventories of various colored stickers.

Tubelite turns to Epson for solution

After researching other options, Tubelite turned to Epson for an automated solution that would meet all their needs for a more robust and cost-effective labeling system. Using Epson's ColorWorks C3400 label printers, Tubelite assigned specific codes for each ship-to address in its system to generate a corresponding color-coded indicator. These indicators, automatically printed on every shipping label and packing slip for each delivery, eliminated the labor and administrative costs of the previous system. In fact, the labor savings alone paid for the product in less than 4 months.

More savings with Epson

Another advantage of the Epson solution was the ColorWorks C3400's networking capability. “Our previous printers didn't function well on the network, which forced us to have dedicated PCs on our production floor,” commented Scott Morey, IT and Process Improvement Manager at Tubelite. “The Epson printers, with built-in network capability, allowed us to switch to IP printing and migrate to a centrally hosted ERP environment. In the long run the savings gained here are even more significant than the labor savings.”

Epson label solution a success

Testing and implementation of this multi-plant solution took approximately three months. Along with integrating the solution into their system, the ColorWorks C3400's labels were tested to ensure the ink wouldn't smear or fade under wet conditions and that the ink dried fast enough to support high print volumes of up to 5,000 labels per week, per printer.

"The benefits of the Epson technology solution have extended out to our customers," continued Morey. "Because we can easily identify shipment materials for any particular day, we require less time to load and unload, allowing internal personnel and our drivers to be more productive and our customers to be confident they are getting the right order at the right location."

H I G H L I G H T S

- Tubelite uses Epson ColorWorks C3400 for color coding of shipping labels and bill of ladings.
- The ColorWorks C3400 networking capabilities allowed Tubelite to switch to IP printing and centralized control.
- Epson's label solution increased operational efficiency, order accuracy and reduced costs.

ColorWorks C3400 has what it takes

Designed for commercial environments, the ColorWorks C3400 inkjet printer delivers the quality and reliability that Epson is known for. It features high-speed printing, easily adjusts to handle 1.2" to 4.4" widths, supports leading barcode and 2D symbologies and offers easy

user access with front-loading labels and ink cartridges. And Epson's patented MicroPiezo® inkjet color technology ensures crisp, clear, easy-to-read graphics, barcodes and text.

Committed to protecting the environment

In addition to being an industry leader, Tubelite is also committed to energy efficiency and sustainable designs for buildings and communities. Tubelite has joined with the United States Green Building Council (USGBC), and has implemented its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program. In addition, Tubelite is participating in Epson's inkjet recycling program which reduces waste and ensures that ink cartridges are recycled in a licensed facility.

Partner with the leader

Epson's advanced printing technologies are at work in over 200 million systems around the world. Our color printing solutions are designed to support real-world applications and solve customer problems—while delivering significant cost savings and protecting your existing technology investment.

In addition, Epson has a long history of achievements in protecting the environment and is now one of the leading environmental companies in the world. In recognition of this, Epson is a member of the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index, an ENERGY STAR Partner, a SmartWay Transport Partner and has been named a Sustainability Leader and awarded Silver Class status in the SAM Sustainability Yearbook 2011.



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