

**Challenge:** To implement and develop a strategy at Label Apeel Ltd., in Leicester, which would reduce material waste through awareness and encouraging good practice amongst its employees, thereby increasing efficiency and profitability.

**Solution:** Label Apeel enrolled on a five-day Vision in Print Material Waste Reduction programme, uniquely tailored to its needs.

### Background

The Packaging sector faces huge pressures to change, whether from overseas competition or brand owner pressures on price, therefore it is perhaps no surprise that the label printing industry is becoming increasingly competitive.

Label Apeel is a small family firm of 40 employees, established in 1994, which specialises in manufacturing labels for the food and pharmaceutical industries. It offers customers an integrated service from artwork to printed product.

Despite looking to improve other aspects of the business, waste reduction management was not originally part of the overall game plan at the company, as raw material spend was accepted as an unavoidable operating cost to the business.

*"The programme has focused our attention on material wastage which was around 16% of our material spend of £1 million per annum. We have now achieved a reduction in waste of over 60% in unrequired overs and can look forward to substantial ongoing savings year on year."*

Stuart Kellock, Managing Director

## techniques to success



### Focusing on the problem

Prior to the programme no measures were in place to deal with waste reduction. Action was taken to monitor the amount of paper used throughout press and finishing operations. Measures to determine the amount of wastage created through make-readies, running waste and unplanned overs were also established, these identified what the main contributors of waste were to the overall figure and a number of relevant waste disposal points were set up throughout the company.

The team was encouraged by the ViP engineer to take part in a brainstorming session that looked for the main causes of waste, including unplanned overs, make-readies, part reels and overs left at the rewind. Joe Bennaton, Operations Manager said, "Through brainstorming sessions we realised that we carry out several wasteful activities that we'd never thought about. For example it is easy sometimes to run the remainder of a reel through the machine, or not to use part reels."

### Techniques

Using their newly-gained understanding of data analysis techniques the Label Apeel staff were encouraged to improve the management of part-reels for set-ups. In the past the company would not have considered many part reels worth salvaging. To rectify this the team developed a clear and easy to follow visual process for controlling part reels. The minimum reel diameter diagram was an instant success.

# customer case study 7

## material waste reduction programme

### The experience

"The programme was extremely thorough and the ViP engineer was always on hand to offer advice and guide us" said Joe.

*"The real effectiveness of the course was in its personal approach to Label Apeel as opposed to more general programmes. As a cross functional team from print, purchasing, warehouse, finishing, operations management and despatch, we have learnt that we all have a vital role to play."*

Joe Bennaton, Operations Manager

With the aid of the ViP engineer, the team put its skills into good use investigating overs that had been identified as a major cause of material waste. It developed a matrix consisting of a sample of jobs and amount of material required vs. the customer order and waste. Through reducing the number of unnecessary overs at every stage of the process, the team immediately saw the potential waste savings and the benefits that could be gained.

The team became aware that for any tangible gains to be made the "buy in" of the entire organisation was required. Under the guidance of the ViP engineer the team developed a campaign, which used visual displays to highlight the true cost of waste throughout the workforce at Label Apeel.

### The results

Having already completed an earlier ViP programme, one team member had already been chosen as a 'Lean champion' and has been an active key representative on all programmes to date. It is the champion's role to manage and carry out all material waste reductions at Label Apeel, so as to ensure sustainability of these new practices.

### Find Out More

More information on these services is available on [www.visioninprint.co.uk](http://www.visioninprint.co.uk)

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## techniques to success

The plan has taught the team to be self sufficient, confident in its approach to tackling waste issues in the workplace and to implement them through Standard Operating Procedures, which in-turn streamlines the entire printing process.

Stuart Kellock notes, "Our business expectations have grown since undertaking the programme. We have reduced waste and increased profitability. Our staff has learnt new tools and techniques, as well as gained an increased understanding of other department's issues and requirements. As a company we've developed an awareness of waste across all employees. It was felt that previously the cost of material waste was very much out of sight and out of mind."

Like most printers, Label Apeel's materials are the largest direct cost to the business. Data obtained through this programme indicated that 14% of material was used on running waste, overs, plate and colour changes, while only 3% was lost on set-ups.



The team was able to illustrate that through implementing new procedures and following Best Practice the company's projected benefits are £96K from reduced overs and 7K from improved management of part reels.