

Conversions

Spring into Tradeshow Season

Info*Flex, NPE, drupa, and the W&H and GARANT In-house EXPOs

Prep those passports, lace up your sneakers, and get ready for a spring filled with tradeshows and high step counts! We're looking forward to connecting with so many of you, having fruitful conversations, and unveiling some exciting new technologies.

The major headliners for our upcoming season include three big shows, alongside the W&H and GARANT In-house EXPOs.

We will kick off with flexography at the FTA Info*Flex from May 5-8 in Kansas City, MO, where the North American flexographic industry comes together annually. Visit our team in Booth 205 to discuss your challenges and goals, and to get insights into new announcements in Germany later in the month.

Running simultaneously, from May 6-10, is NPE, North America's largest plastics tradeshow, which is back in Orlando after a six-year hiatus. Our exhibit will focus on MDO, automation, retrofits, circular economy products, our ESG



Get in the Loop! W&H and GARANT In-house EXPO in Lengerich during drupa 2024

strategy, etc. An international team of W&H experts in film extrusion, package printing, and converting will be available. Register for free using this link: <https://2024.npe.org/3998>.

Then it's off to Germany! Mark your calendar for drupa, the world's biggest printing tradeshow in Dusseldorf (May 28 - June 7). W&H and GARANT will be in Hall 15 Booth 51 and introducing new machinery with live demos. Make sure to come by! (continued on page 4)



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President's Corner

So long, Peter ... but not goodbye

Peter Steinbeck, my longtime friend, colleague and boss, retired recently after a hugely successful 33 year career at W&H. Many, if not most of the readers of CONVERSIONS, knew Peter personally and saw him as THE face of Windmoeller & Hoelscher Germany.

When CEO Dr. Juergen Vutz retired in 2021, I referred to it as the "Vutz Era". If one considers Peter, his father and his grandfather, there have been Steinbecks in leadership roles for over 100 years, since 1922. The Steinbeck Era!

At our Gala event celebrating W&H's 150 year anniversary in 2019, Peter welcomed the 1500 VIP guests from around the world and stated quite simply, modestly (and accurately) "I am probably the only person at W&H who has actually met and gotten to know each and every one of you". Peter's personal skills and incredible retention of details about a customer and their company, served him very well, as W&H's global sales more than tripled during his tenure as CSO and CEO.

Needless to say, I am his biggest fan!

I first met Peter in the summer of 1984, long before I had ever heard of W&H. I had been in college with his sister, Birgit, and was visiting their family while working in Bielefeld Germany, approximately an hour away from Lengerich. I found him to be extremely affable, curious and easy going, clearly very smart and slightly mischievous.



Management team building in 2021



Andrew Wheeler

We met occasionally over the next few years at social events when I was living in Germany, but it wasn't until his father, Walter (then CEO of W&H), contacted me in 1988, that I had any inkling that we might work together. At that time, Peter had finished his engineering degree and MBA and was working at Digital Equipment. I started working at W&H in 1988, one year before Peter joined!

In 1990, Peter came here to W&H Corporation in the US. His father wanted him to learn and understand not only the US/Canadian market, but also the US style of doing business. Peter and his new wife, Kris, moved to Rhode Island for 2 years. Jim Feeney (President of W&H Corp) gave him a title that denoted his importance, while not describing what his duties were ... "Director of Special Projects"

During that time, Peter's affinity for the US grew as he developed close personal relationships with many of our customers. He, like many of us, fully subscribed to Jim Feeney's credo, that at the end of the day, customers still want to deal with people that they like, trust and believe in. Do the right thing and you will always be successful! This was a business tenet that Peter NEVER forgot.



President's Corner continued

In 1992, Peter and Kris were called back to Lengerich (with their new German/American born son, Philipp and Kris's beloved black Toyota 4Runner). Peter joined his father and Heidi Windmoeller on the Management Board for Finance and Controlling.

When Walter Steinbeck retired in 1998, Dr. Juergen Vutz took over as CEO and Peter took over as CSO, putting him back in front of customers, a place that he loved and where he thrived. Traveling the world, preaching the gospel of W&H, his minions (me included), became the enthusiastic salespeople who were not merely selling machines, but selling the brand of W&H. Customers became fans, joint venture partners, all marching to the same beat...success! When Juergen Vutz retired in 2020, Peter was named CEO.

In all the years that Peter was my boss, he never told me what to do, he always asked how he could help achieve our goals. That did not mean that he wasn't critical, with his incredible memory, he forgot nothing about a customer, a project or a loss. It was all personal to him, and he took it personally.

Peter and Juergen Vutz led W&H through a period of unparalleled growth. Our excellence in machine building, combined with a relentless and creative R&D department and a hungry and enthusiastic salesforce, led one customer to remark that we should change the company's slogan *Passion for Innovation, to Passion for Domination!*

I loved it!



Always with a smile on his face when traveling to North America



The Board of The W&H Group
(l to r) Martin Schulteis (CFO), Dr. Sascha Witt (CSO), Peter Steinbeck, and Dr. Falco Paepenmueller (CEO)

From a personal standpoint, I value Peter as a friend even more than I did as a boss. Peter and Kris came to my wedding, and later, during some horrifically tragic moments in my life, he was there the next day ... not jetting in to be the hero, but wanting to stand next to me as my friend. That meant more to me than anything else ... still does.

Peter had the enviable capability to recognize and analyze situations and nuances, regardless of language. There were very few "lost in translation" moments over the decades, which led to a great appreciation from our customers, who would often say "Peter gets what we are about". Along with a true lack of ego, this led to a CSO attitude that emphasized teamwork and understanding the customers, NEVER bad traits.

After so many years in leadership, Peter felt confident retiring with the knowledge that he had helped to assemble a fantastic team who espoused his beliefs in integrity, honor, persistence and creativity. I have the utmost confidence in new CEO (but longtime W&H director and CTO) Dr. Falco Paepenmueller, CSO Dr. Sascha Witt and CFO Martin Schulteis. Big shoes to fill, but they are up to the task.

Enjoy your retirement Peter, you have left the company in capable hands!



Ultimate Flex: 10 Years of Water-based Printing Excellence

Water-based Inks, FTA Training, and a Wine Vineyard

Founded in 2013 by Janak Patel, Ultimate Flex, located in the City of Industry, CA, has strategically positioned itself as an expert in water-based printing within the flexible packaging industry since the get-go.

Unswayed by concerns over the cost and challenges associated with running water-based inks, the company, armed with a 52" 10c MIRAFLEX flexographic press from W&H, made a resolute choice in favor of environmental sustainability.

A glance at the impressive array of print samples on the conference room wall attests to the exceptional print quality achieved by the Ultimate team. Kiran Jhaveri, Plant Manager, attributes much of this success to Brian Gabon, Press Supervisor, and the press team, who mastered flexo printing through determination, hands-on experience, and training programs provided by the Flexographic Technical Association (FTA).



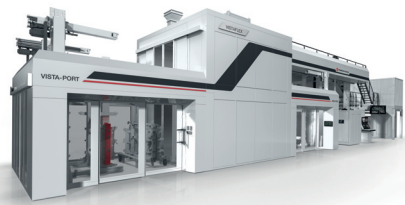
Brian, Ultimate Flex's Press Supervisor in their CA facility

Ultimate Flex, established as the flexible packaging division in the Ultimate Paper Box family, aligns seamlessly with its parent company's ethos. Both entities prioritize the use of cutting-edge manufacturing equipment and champion environmentally conscious practices.

If you think Patel's interests lie just in printing and paper boxes, think again! Beyond the packaging realm, he diversified his interests in 2018 by acquiring Ultimate Vineyards and Maurice Car'rie Winery in Temecula, CA. Cheers to that!

www.ultimateflex.com | www.ultimatevineyards.com

Spring continued from page 1



LIVE Demos on the VISTAFLEX II at the W&H In-house Expo



Transportation between drupa and the W&H and Garant Expos is provided

Less than two hours to the North are the W&H and GARANT Innovation Centers in Lengerich, where we're holding In-house EXPOs for four days during drupa. The In-house EXPOs give visitors the unique opportunity to see the full range of W&H machinery running live demonstrations in one place: multiple printing processes, blown and cast film extrusion, and converting technologies. Down the road at the GARANT EXPO, their paper packaging machinery will be on display (see page 6).

One highlight we can share is a very rare event. For the first time, the VISTAFLEX II will temporarily be in Lengerich and running demos at the In-house EXPO. Thank you to the machine's owner, Glen Galloway, from Bema Inc., for letting us showcase the press before shipping it to his plant in Elmhurst, IL.

To learn more about these events or to join us at the W&H and GARANT In-house EXPOs in Lengerich, reach out to your W&H representative or email Catherine.Mattson@wuh-group.com



FLEXA II Stack Press for Hart Industries

Charting a Course in the Paper Industry

Headquartered in Baltimore, MD, Hart Industries recently made its first investment in W&H technology with the acquisition of an 8c FLEXA II flexographic stack press. Established in 1969, this third-generation family-owned company is a leading supplier of specialty packaging products in the paper-based flexible packaging converting space, with collaborations with several global consumer products companies. Today the company is run by Tim Hart, president, with the support of his sons, TJ, who heads up technology, and Michael, who leads quality and compliance.

TJ is driving the momentum towards modern equipment. "I have known of W&H since I was in high school, so when Vladimir Utovac reached out, I was interested. The timing was perfect. We went into the discussions thinking we needed one thing, then realized the FLEXA II was right for us," said TJ. The company knows stack presses well; they already three flexographic stack presses and a central impression press. They do not plan on retiring any of these presses when the FLEXA II arrives. The new press will support growth, enhance adaptability and flexibility, and keep Hart at the forefront of the industry.

Hart sees a lot of efficiency gains coming with the FLEXA II, both with the technology and the onboarding process. "We are going to be able to print on both sides, run a larger variety of papers, and prep the next job when the press is running," said TJ. The FLEXA II boasts inline slitting, automatic turret winders, and the latest deck technology from W&H, which will modernize the current large repeat production process.



FLEXA II Stack Press at W&H Innovation Center

He is equally excited about what this means for "learning," a term he prefers over training, because it promotes long-term active learning and collaboration. "The numerical feedback on set-up will build our skill sets faster because we'll immediately see cause and effect, and create a collaborative environment, which is crucial for adapting to new technology," he adds.

The company, which has 75 employees, has doubled its business since 2019 and credits this growth to effective supply chain management and the adoption of advanced processes like extrusion coating and lamination. Harts currently serves the food and beverage, candies and confection, construction materials, and medical and personal care markets.

Hart is dedicated to sustainability, working with the paper circular economy, water-based inks, and specialty coatings. They are exploring recycling certifications and plan to incorporate extrusion of biopolymers in the future.

www.hartind.com

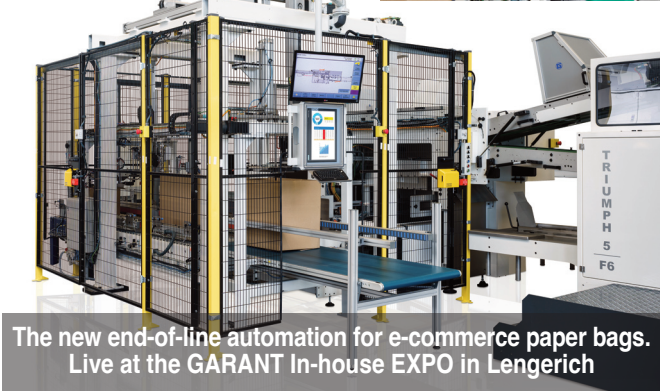
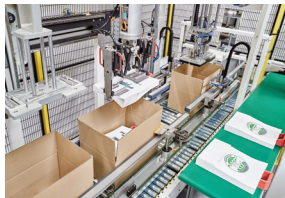


GARANT: Growth & In-house EXPO

News from the W&H Group's Paper Bag Division

"Since establishing an office at W&H's Rhode Island location in 2021, GARANT has experienced a significant increase in demand for paper packaging machinery across the North American market. Michael Reinhardt, Sales Manager at GARANT, emphasizes, "This growth in the paper packaging sector is driven by online and local retailers seeking options that are suited for curbside recycling programs."

Reinhardt further notes, "There is a place for both plastic and paper solutions, and I am pleased that W&H and GARANT can provide both. Being co-located with W&H strengthens our capacity to offer robust local service and spare parts, enhancing our commitment to customer satisfaction."



The new end-of-line automation for e-commerce paper bags. Live at the GARANT In-house EXPO in Lengerich

In May, during drupa, GARANT is set to host an In-house EXPO on the same dates as the W&H In-house EXPO. Here is a glimpse of what you can expect to see:

- Two-ply block bottom, industrial packaging (with/without handle) on TRIUMPH 5-F6 for fast format changeovers while conserving material.
- Cross bottom bags for hygiene applications, featuring overwrap for baby diapers on EXTRA 5-FS with coated paper and sealing lacquer.
- E-commerce shipping and return mailer bags with two closure strips and inline paper tear strip on MATADOR e.BAG and the new fully automated inspection and packaging system.
- GARANT Production Monitoring for efficient order and production management, analysis options, and process optimization.
- The new GARANT Energy Monitoring, a system for analyzing energy consumption in production.

We invite you to join us!

For more information, please email Michael.Reinhardt@wuh-group.com or visit www.garant-maschinen.de/drupa.

Products being produced live at the In-house EXPO: industrial packaging, hygiene packaging, and e-commerce mailers.



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Kiliper Corporation Expands Flexibility

Second Windmoeller & Hoelscher Flexographic Press

Kiliper Corporation, a manufacturer specializing in flexible packaging (rollstock, pouches) and labels (stretch sleeves, roll-fed) has placed an order for its second flexographic press from Windmoeller & Hoelscher—a 52" 10c MIRAFLEX II. Scheduled for production later this year, this investment marks Kiliper Corporation's commitment to expanding their flexographic printing capabilities.

"We're excited to add this second MIRAFLEX II to our line-up. Our first press from W&H, also a MIRAFLEX II, has a printing width of 41" and 8 colors and has taken our company to a new level. The extra width and additional color decks on this new machine will provide us with additional capacity and additional capabilities, both of which will allow continued growth. We'll have a lot of flexibility in what we can print, and we'll be able to take on more flexible packaging projects," said Tom Kiliper, Owner.

As Kiliper Corporation continues to grow, it's been important for them to continue to offer short run offerings. In partnering with W&H and bringing on a quick changeover press such



as the MIRAFLEX, they've been able to continue with this approach. Two years ago, the company announced it had achieved 27 job changeovers in just one 10-hour shift on their first MIRAFLEX II. Since then, they've had days that have as many as 38 job changes. Kiliper highlighted their approach: "We have become so strategic and so good at preparing and executing these short runs that we've really carved out a niche for ourselves. It's allowed us to take on jobs other printers might turn away," added Kiliper.

Kiliper Corporation's pipeline is strong, and the company has high expectations for both long- and short-term growth. "Historically, we've seen our pipeline turn into solid customers, so now is the right time for us to secure the press so we'll be prepared for next winter's production," said Kiliper.

The 30-year-old family company in its second generation is run by Kiliper and his sister, Lindsay Kiliper-Maysent, who is the head of the company's operations.

The 52" 10c MIRAFLEX II press is equipped with W&H's fully integrated VISION web inspection system with DEFECT CHECK, BARCODE CHECK, PDF CHECK, and which provide the machine operator with real-time oversight and control of the job on press. For quick changeovers, the press will have EASY SET HD for fully automatic impression setting and EASY REG M for automatic registration setting as well as the TURBOCLEAN inking and wash-up system.

www.kilipercorp.com

W&H is Expanding in Rhode Island!

This spring we're breaking ground! We're doubling the size of our warehouse to make space for an increased inventory of W&H and GARANT spare parts, reaffirming our commitment to getting you the parts you need quickly. We're also scaling up our office space to accommodate our growing team and foster a collaborative environment. **Stay tuned for updates!**



People in the News



Christopher Baker

Chris was “discovered” on a extrusion line installation by fellow W&H technician, Taylor Armstrong, who after watching Chris work thought he should join the W&H team. Chris comes to us with more than 12 years of mechanical millwright experience, installing LNG plants and turbines, working shutdowns of paper mills, steel mills and chemical plants, and even engineering on a tugboat. We're excited to have him on board.



Paul Cucco

Paul recently joined W&H as Regional Sales Manager for the Northeast. He brings valuable experience from roles such as Technical Manager at C-P Flexible Packaging and Packaging Engineer at First Quality and B. Braun Medical, Inc. Additionally, he gained insights in market intelligence through an internship at Nova Chemicals. Paul holds a B.S. in Packaging Engineering from Clemson University.



JP Eubeler

Since mid-2023, JP has served as the Product Sales Manager of Extrusion Systems at W&H, bringing significant expertise. His background includes roles as CEO/MD of Next Generation Analytics and Collin Lab and Pilot Solutions in Atlanta, GA, and Head of R&D and Product Management in agricultural films and nets at RKW in Germany. JP holds a doctorate in Chemistry & Biology.



Marcus Fero

Marcus joined W&H in Lengerich in 2004 and has seen more of W&H and our customers around the world than most. During his first decade, he traveled as a field service technician specializing in gravure presses. Then he got the chance to move to our Bangkok office, where he focused on training and machine operations. Since 2023, Marcus is a member of our North American field service team. Prior to W&H, he worked at Heidelberger Druckmaschinen and completed apprentices in offset printing and industrial mechanics.



Dan Kaehler

Dan has been at W&H since September 2023. In his role as Service Project Manager, he is responsible for blown film extrusion line installations in the Northeast, Southeast, and Western U.S. regions. Dan comes to us after an impressive career at Continental, where he spent seven years in positions ranging from Reliability Engineer to Development Engineer to Area Manager. He holds a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering and B.A. in German from the University of Rhode Island.



Brad Humbolt

Product Sales Manager, Printing & Converting, for corporate accounts. With his decade of experience in the packaging industry, including as a plant manager, Brad brings expertise in quality, safety, process improvement, project management, and sustainability product design. Furthermore, he has extensive experience with W&H equipment. Brad holds a B.S. in Plastics Engineering & Technology and an MBA.



Alba Mercado

Alba joined the W&H Parts team in September 2023. With over 15 years of experience in administrative roles, including eight years at the National Chain Group in Warwick, RI, where she served as the Supervisor of Quality Control and Shipping, Alba brings enthusiasm along with exceptional organizational and customer service skills. A native of Colombia, Alba moved to the United States in 2012. She holds a B.A. in Accounting from the Universidad Libre in Colombia.



Shariq Nasam

Shariq started his career with W&H in India in 2019 and relocated to Rhode Island in 2023 to join the IDC team. Before becoming a part of IDC, he traveled extensively through Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Africa, India, and the subcontinent, servicing printing presses. Shariq holds a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and a diploma in Instrumentation and Control. Proficient in four languages, he enjoys spending his free time cooking and reading non-fiction.



Vijay Kumar Yadav

Vijay joined the US-based team in September 2023 in field service and IDC. He started at W&H in India in July 2019 as Field Service Technician focused on printing and electrical. He studied Electrical Engineer at Dr. Abdul Kalam Technical University in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. Hobbies include music, cricket, and basketball.



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