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Trelleborg innovation meets the needs of Chinese printers

Trelleborg's printing solutions operation has been involved in the design and manufacture of offset blankets for more than 50 years and is now the world's number one producer. In the following article its President, Paolo Gagliardi, explains how the company has been steering development and investment to meet the specific requirements of offset printers in China.

“One of the great benefits of being at the top of the tree is that you can see further than your competition. With manufacturing facilities around the world, supported by a comprehensive network of established dealers and distributors, we are in an ideal position to see market and technical trends emerging in certain areas before they have spread globally. This provides us with a unique knowledge and ability to steer our extensive European research and development facilities to meet the very specific needs of a sector or country.

“We also pride ourselves on our willingness to listen and we actively encourage our dealers to obtain feedback from printers on their needs with regards to offset blankets. This approach is extremely important in China. With the efforts of Philip Huang, Greater China Sales & Market Director, and his team, we have made great strides over the last three years in developing solutions based on the precise requirements of the market. It's core to the philosophy of Trelleborg's printing solutions operation to have a global approach with local reach.”

Trelleborg built an offset blanket manufacturing facility in Shanghai in 2006 and significant investment in the site since then has resulted in several milestones. For example, it is the first offset blanket manufacturing facility in China to fully implement a solvent recovery system. The site has been awarded ISO 14000 and meets the same high standards as



Trelleborg's European offset blanket production sites. In addition, the sophisticated converting equipment installed in Shanghai makes it the most reliable and accurate blanket converter in China, with the ability to customize solutions to meet individual requirements.

"Protecting the environment is high on the agenda of the Chinese government and the use of solvents in the printing industry is a big issue," says Paolo Gagliardi. "The print buyers of most major corporations are also applying pressure to printers to prove their business is run to certain recognised standards related to the environment. Trelleborg is able to help printers meet the criteria needed to obtain a Green Printing certificate, without which many key organisations will not consider them as a supplier.

"We've been delighted by the success of the Shanghai facility, which now meets most of the demands of its Chinese customers. Some specialist products are imported from Trelleborg sites in Italy and America, such as blankets for the newspaper and packaging sectors, but at the same time Shanghai is actually exporting blankets to Europe and America! It's a tremendous achievement and a huge endorsement of the commitment and skill of the employees involved.

"We have a fantastic team of managerial and technical experts at Shanghai and they work very closely with the headquarters in Italy and the extensive network of experienced dealers that have been established throughout China. The team has been strengthened recently by the appointment of Livio Maccan as Director for the manufacturing facility. Livio's connection to the Vulcan brand goes back to the days when he worked for Reeves, which Trelleborg acquired and amalgamated into its printing solutions operation. We're very pleased he has taken on this new role.

"China is an extremely important market for Trelleborg and this is why we have invested so much time, effort and resources into creating a structure that provides a platform for us to significantly grow our share of the offset blanket sector. Printers can be assured that we are here for the long term."



Trelleborg has an unrivalled range of solutions for printers in the commercial, packaging and newspaper sectors, as well as specialist fields such as security and business forms. Its Vulcan, Rollin and Printec brands are probably the best known and respected in the industry. A great deal has been invested over the last few years in its R&D department in Italy in order to expand the material science, testing and analytical capabilities. The company says it intends to develop an increasing number of new products specifically for the Chinese market.

Several new solutions have been brought out for use in UV printing situations, in particular the latest energy-efficient UV technologies such as LE/HUV and LED UV. Included amongst these is Vulcan Sunrise, a 1.95 mm blanket that enables superb solids and halftone reproduction while eliminating ink back-trapping.

The new Vulcan Pack UV has been created for use on multi-color presses for metal decorating or producing packaging. Alongside excellent halftone reproduction and ink transfer, this blanket has very quick release properties and high UV chemical resistance.

“We are never complacent and we never take anything, or anyone, for granted,” says Paolo Gagliardi. “Our total commitment to providing the best and most comprehensive offset blanket portfolio has resulted in an unrivalled range, so if the requirement is for general commercial print or a highly specialist niche like metal decorating, we have the answer.

“Our teams understand the challenges facing today’s Chinese printing industry and that excellent quality and price have to be backed up by first class service and support. On the surface, printers are bombarded with choice when it comes to offset blankets, but if you examine these offerings closely some do not provide the desired combination of quality, price, service and support. If you add in variety, then Trelleborg comes out top, which is why we are number one in the world in this field.”

Trelleborg is also keen that printers can access information easily, whether this is technical data/advice, details of recent customer success stories, news on the latest product launches or the location of their nearest distributor. Last year the operation launched a website for the



Chinese market and this includes digital tools and a WeChat social channel dedicated to Chinese printers.

“We will continue to expand the website, just as we will our blanket range. Over the coming months the production of some products will be moved from our facility in Italy to Shanghai, as we prepare to produce an even greater volume in China for the domestic market. It’s an incredibly exciting time. We’ve ensured that we have the right people in the right place and that they have all the elements needed to provide customers with offset blanket solutions that cannot be matched.”

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For more information or high-resolution images, please contact:

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Profile of the Trelleborg group and Trelleborg’s printing solutions operation:

Trelleborg’s printing solutions operations, part of Trelleborg Coated Systems, offers first class solutions for the printing industry with worldwide recognized brands, such as Vulcan®, Rollin®, Printec® and Axcyl. Its solutions are leading edge in the offset and flexo printing markets for a variety of applications including newspapers, magazines, catalogs, business forms, labels, metal decorating and packaging. www.trelleborg.com/printing

Trelleborg is a world leader in engineered polymer solutions that seal, damp and protect critical applications in demanding environments. Its innovative solutions accelerate performance for customers in a sustainable way. The Trelleborg Group has annual sales of SEK 31 billion (EUR 3.23 billion, USD 3.60 billion) and operations in about 50 countries. The Group comprises five business areas: Trelleborg Coated Systems, Trelleborg Industrial Solutions, Trelleborg Offshore & Construction, Trelleborg Sealing Solutions and Trelleborg Wheel Systems, and the operations of Rubena and Savatech. The Trelleborg share has been listed on the Stock Exchange since 1964 and is listed on Nasdaq Stockholm, Large Cap. www.trelleborg.com

