

# UV Technology Places Hub Labels at the Center of Innovation

By Jeff Stines, American Ultraviolet

For Thomas Dahbura, president of Hub Labels, a trip to the grocery store gives him a chance to see his company's products in action. Every time a customer reaches for a bottle of Log Cabin syrup, Hershey's



***A Hub Labels operator inspects print quality at the end of a multi-stage UV curing Gallus Press equipped with American Ultraviolet UV lamps.***

chocolate milk, or a kid grabs the shampoo with a bright, beaming image of Sponge Bob Square Pants, Hub Labels has done their job. Head-turning labels are a vital weapon in the battle of consumer packaging and Hub Labels, as their name implies, is at the center of it.

Hub Labels, headquartered in Hagerstown Maryland was founded in 1978 by Thomas's father, Bud Dahbura and today serves some 700 active customers who make everything from perfume to greeting cards. The 110,000 square foot facility, which has been expanded four times

over the years, now houses over twenty high-speed presses that turn out some of the packaging industry's latest high-tech looks in product labeling.

Part of Hub Labels success comes from their early appreciation for what ultraviolet light (UV) curing could bring to their process. "Over the years UV has been our quiet partner" says Dahbura. "Without it we could not have accomplished what we have". UV inks allow Hub Labels to produce better looking labels at lower cost and with higher reliability than conventional technology. "UV allows us to produce some of the most sophisticated award-winning labels in the business" says DJ Corbitt, key accounts manager at Hub Labels. For example, UV processing enabled Hub Labels to take top honors in the Flexography/Color Process category of the prestigious Tag & Label Manufacturers Institute (TLMI) awards. "To win the



***High-output, highly focused UV curing stations provide Hub Labels with better print quality and fewer problems than conventional print***

first place award in the premier label showcase event's most difficult category shows that Hub Labels is certainly one of the top-tier label companies in the world and that our commitment to excellent has been recognized by our peers," said Dahbura.

Initial concerns over UV technology’s performance and reliability have long been put to rest. “On high a high-speed press, even a short unexpected interruption adds up to big losses in a hurry. So, if I am



***Centralized UV lamp controls make it easy for technicians to quickly fine-tune the output of each curing station to achieve the perfect results.***

hearing about a UV problem – that’s bad” says Dahbura. “But I don’t hear about UV problems”.

To keep their UV process “quietly” humming away, Hub Labels maintenance technician, Kevin Roof, teamed press manufacturer Gallus with American Ultraviolet. “Loyalty has been a longstanding key to how we operate”, explains Roof. “This means loyalty from our customers but also loyalty to our vendors. Gallus and AUV have a proven track record of working closely with us to provide excellent products and service”.

Roof worked with American Ultraviolet engineers on customized UV lamp designs that allow his staff to service and maintain the UV systems quickly and easily. The high-powered, highly-focused American Ultraviolet Ultrapack® design allows Hub Labels technicians to replace a UV lamp in just a few minutes. The modular design makes changing lamps as easy as replacing a printer toner cartridge. The old lamps slides out and a new one slides into place. The whole operation takes only a few minutes with a minimum of downtime and hassle. Sophisticated electronic controls that give the press operators instant touch-screen control over each lamps output and other operating parameters allow the process to be precisely fine tuned for perfect UV cure in each printing stage.



***Changing an AUV Ultrapack® UV module is as quick and simple as changing a toner cartridge on a printer.***

The resulting UV process enables the company to print labels with higher print quality and with more brilliant colors and top coatings that do not suffer from the delamination problems that plagued some of the traditional varnishes. The versatility that UV provides, has allowed Hub Labels to print everything from labels for food and beverage to health and beauty products, and from membership cards to bumper stickers.

Since their founding Hub Labels continues to grow in both the breadth of services they offer, and in the technologies they provide. Not only do they offer up to 15 color printing, including 4-color process, varnishing and over-lamination, but also in-line hot stamping, cold foil, embossing, silk screening, die cutting and dozens of other value added services. Hub Labels is also pioneering the use of liner-less labels which eliminate the environmental waste associated with conventional liner backing. Liner-less labeling and UV



*Award winning labels have garnered Hub Labels a well deserved reputation as an industry leader.*

processing both reflect a green philosophy at Hub Label that focuses on environmentally conscious products and processes.

“We continue to work with American Ultraviolet to develop better ways to use our UV advantage to drive our business in these new directions” says Roof. “The label business has been transformed from a simple printing task into a pretty high-tech business. We do things today like holographic special effects and security labels with embedded anti-counterfeit properties. With emerging technologies like the push towards more variable data, rapid, high-quality UV curing will be an even more important competitive tool for us than ever before.”



*UV plays a vital role in the increasingly high-tech demands of Hub Labels new business segments.*