



Large sports company discovers that all labels are not created equal.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Large sports company encounters major problems with printing barcodes on labels resulting in downtime at production line and wasted employee hours trying to assess the problem. After extensive testing by an ID Technology service tech, he was able to identify the problem and replace the locally sources thermal labels that were causing the issue.

- The blank thermal and thermal transfer label industry is competitive, and it's common to think they are all the same quality
- The quality of the label can affect the print engines speed and darkness levels thus increasing the levels of errors.



Customer Challenge

The large sports company encountered problems on their production line when barcode scanners began rejecting labels. The company uses an ID Technology 350 high-speed printer applicator system to print and apply labels to products of various sizes. The customer had trouble maintaining good print quality of the barcodes and the rejection of the labels resulted in production line downtime, wasted employee hours assessing the problem, and wasted materials.

The quality of blank thermal labels can vary greatly by company. Further testing was required to understand the reasoning behind the variance in print quality and why the barcodes were rejected by the scanners.

The Solution

A local ID Technology service tech, Michael, examined the problem and took the time to understand the customer’s concern. He noticed that the customer wasn’t using ID Technology’s blank thermal labels, but instead used another local supplier of blank labels. After verifying the printer applicator was in fact in good working condition, Michael began to conduct some in-depth testing of the labels. Swapping the local suppliers labels with ID Technology’s labels, he first tested the print darkness. The print darkness is measured on a scale of 0 – 30, with 30 being the maximum darkness. Michael also needed to know the print speed typically being used to make a proper analysis which is measured in inches per second (IPS). The ID Technology 350 labeling system was using a Zebra ZE500 thermal print engine that has a maximum speed of 12 IPS. Because this was a high-speed production line, the speed setting used was always at 12 IPS. Generally, it is more difficult to get a good print quality at that setting. Michael conducted multiple test print runs, setting the printer at different levels of darkness, and taking samples of both the ID Technology labels and the local supplier of labels.



COMPANY BACKGROUND

With a wide range of products and services coupled with experienced and knowledgeable product specialists, ID Technology can satisfy all your product identification requirements.



OTHER SUPPLIER LABEL
12 IPS, 5.0 DARKNESS

ID TECHNOLOGY LABEL
12 IPS, 5.0 DARKNESS



OTHER SUPPLIER LABEL
12 IPS, 30 DARKNESS

ID TECHNOLOGY LABEL
12 IPS, 30 DARKNESS



ID Technology is a single source provider for labels, equipment, expertise, and service. They also provide a full range of labeling solutions from simple semi-automatic label applicators to high-speed label printer applicators. This wide range of labeling solutions satisfies a variety of product identification needs in primary and secondary packaging across every industry

RESULTS

Through various phases and repetitions of testing with ID Technology labels and the other local supplier's labels, the results were clear: the customer's original label needed more energy applied to generate an image. While the ID Technology's label created great results and a darkness level of 20, the other local supplier's label required a darkness level of the maximum 30. Running the printers at the maximum darkness level of 30 reduces the lifetime of the printheads and prevents future adjustments to the settings needed as the printhead wears. There were also signs of a gloss finish on the local supplier's label which causes reflections that might have affected the barcode scans.

While the thermal labels from the local supplier were an inexpensive option, they are not at the level the sports company needed to run on. ID Technology understands that it may be tempting to source products that are a "cheaper" option of what looks like the same product. With ID Technology labels you are ensured to have a high quality product that will keep your line running smoothly and at peak performance, another reason why so many companies trust ID Technology with line optimization.

"Labels that are made in any of our label converting plants are engineered to work exceptionally well on ID Technology (or any other) print-apply equipment. We use only top quality materials and have total control over the die-cutting process on our modern converting equipment."

*David Holliday
Director of Product Marketing
ID Technology*

ID Technology, a ProMach product brand, is a fast growing national manufacturer and integrator of labeling, coding and marking equipment, peripherals, supplies and service. With a wide range of products and services coupled with experienced and knowledgeable product specialists, ID Technology can satisfy all your product identification requirements. ID Technology's nationwide sales and service facilities provide responsive ongoing service tailored to our customers individual needs. Learn more about ID Technology at www.idtechnology.com and more about ProMach at www.promachbuilt.com

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