



THE LIGHTNING FLASH

Issue No. 27

Fall/Winter 2011

The quarterly newsletter from Lightning Labels, the leader in digital label printing

WWW.LIGHTNINGLABELS.COM

What message does your label send?

More than ever, facestock makes a strong impression

Before consumers drink the wine, taste the hot sauce, or apply the skin product, they typically get to know a product through its label. Labels can set a company or product apart from the competition, be a window to corporate philosophy, provoke, entertain, convey professionalism—and more.

First impressions often focus on what's printed on the label. But what about the label itself? Once upon a time, you could have any label you wanted—as long as you were willing to settle for a limited number of colors and materials. Often, the selection of a label type itself was relegated to secondary importance behind what was being printed on it.

Now, the label stocks themselves are becoming an intriguing and influential part of the

messaging process. Both the look and type of material can say volumes about company image, philosophy and culture.

For those wanting to make an ecological statement with a unique label, Lightning Labels now offers BioStone[®], a material made literally of stone. Fully biodegradable and great for composting, BioStone speaks volumes about being green while looking good and staying strong. While it cannot be laminated, BioStone is water-resistant, durable, and holds ink well.

Want to flaunt good looks, exude professionalism and perhaps be a bit provocative at the same time? Attention-getting Satin Cloth, another new Lightning Labels product, is made of woven satin

Continued on page 2

BioStone Rocks!

"When it came time to introduce a new product, we searched for the greenest label possible to be mounted on our re-useable packaging. What's more green than zero trees?... BioStone is tough and stands up to scratches well. This is good for us as we ship loose products all over the world ...The look and the feel of the BioStone is wonderful. You can instantly see that there is something unique about the product. It's not your average label stock. That's what we want with all of our products, that factor that grabs the [customer's] attention and says 'Look at me!'"

Brennan Vanorstran, Swami Distribution Co.

In this issue:

What Message Does Your Label Send?.....	1-2
From the Desk of James Lowry.....	1
Customer Focus.....	3
Learning About Labels.....	4



From the Desk of James Lowry

We are excited about adding an eco-friendly group of materials to the Lightning Labels lineup. Many have been asking us to find alternatives that would support your desire to be earth friendly as well as present your product that way. While there are many definitions of "eco friendly," we have two options for you. Some are 100% post consumer waste while one is biodegradable.

The new options include:

- **BioStone** – A biodegradable material that makes presenting a "green" label easy. If you have been looking for a biodegradable product, you now have an excellent choice—and the print quality on this material is stunning.
- **Kraft** – Is recycled from 100% post consumer waste. Packaging takes on a natural look and promotes your commitment to being earth-friendly with the use of this recycled material. One great way to make Kraft printing pop is to add white ink under your print. The highlight creates a great focus on your label but keeps the natural look everywhere else. Our sample in the sample pack shows a great example of this effect.
- **Vellum paper** – Also a 100% recycled post consumer waste material. If the natural look is not what you want, but you want to present an earth-friendly label, vellum is a good paper option.

If you would like to see examples of these materials for your application, please go to Lightninglabels.com/sampack to request samples free of charge.

What message does your label send?

Continued from page 1

acetate cloth—which gives this material a bright sheen. Ideal for wine and spirits product labels, Satin Cloth makes any packaging pop.

It also works well for bath and body product labels, food container labels, and just about any product containers where a smooth, satiny look is desired. When functionality is a top priority, Satin Cloth's strong liner is ideal for machine application. Also, this label may be removed in hot water.

Are you looking for another eco-friendly label that offers great durability? Recycled Kraft may

be just the ticket. Recycled from 100% post-consumer waste, this 55# label has an earthy look and feel, and its hearty liner makes it ideal for machine application. Like Satin Cloth, it can be removed in hot water.

While it cannot be laminated and isn't water or oil resistant, Recycled Kraft may provide the level of protection you need for certain applications.

Note about lamination: Sometimes customers reject non-laminatable labels out of hand without considering whether lamination is really needed. This is one reason why

Lightning Labels encourages customers to test labels on their product containers. Testing allows you to see how they work in real-world applications, and to make comparisons with other label material options being considered. Just request a Lightning Labels sample pack to get started testing our newest label materials on your own products

An equally resilient, eco-friendly label with a strong liner is Recycled Vellum. A great "green" choice, this 60# vellum is 100% recycled from 100% post-consumer waste.

When crinkles, wrinkles and creases rule the day, new Squeezable Film labels provide a perfect solution. This white 3 mil film is ideal for squeezable product containers. Squeezable Film is a popular choice for bath and body products, but also is suitable for everything from hot sauce to sweet mustard.

Get clear about the 'stock solution' that's best for you

Responding to customer requests for a wider variety of label materials, Lightning Labels has added five new options, with more on the way. We now carry more than a dozen label stocks, making your decision-making process a bit more expansive. Following are criteria to consider when choosing the one that's right for you:

- 1. Environment.** Most new Lightning Label stocks are eco-friendly, meaning they're made of post-consumer recycled materials or such natural elements as stone.
- 2. Strength.** Some label materials have extremely strong liners, making them ideal for machine application. Others are better-suited for hand application.
- 3. Durability.** Not all labels can be laminated. Some have better ink adhesion properties than others. If resistance to water, oil and other elements are a concern, test to see if the stock you're considering works—laminated or not. (See Learning about Labels on Page 4 of this newsletter for details on the issues surrounding lamination.)
- 4. Appearance.** The background for label printing can be just as important as the ink and design. Those looking for their graphics to really stand out may want to consider our new Satin Cloth, while those wanting a smooth background that feels good to the touch may love Biostone.
- 5. Removability.** Some label stocks can be removed more easily than others. Even if you don't foresee a need to remove labels, "expect the best but plan for the worst." For example, in the event of an application error, will you save the label for re-application or dispose of it? Obviously, the answer will help guide your choice of label stock.

- 6. Cost.** There are pricing variations to consider which may seem inconsequential when ordering 500 labels, but will become substantial when ordering 5,000. Think about quantity and associated pricing issues for an upcoming order, and do some mid-term planning as well.

For example, let's say you have two sizes of squeezable containers—one designed for only a few uses; another, much larger—one for extensive use. Is our new squeezable label the way to go? Possibly. Or, you may discover that another label stock meets your budgetary needs for the smaller container, while the larger one definitely requires the squeezable label material.

To make sure the label stock matches your specific needs, try them out by ordering our free label sample pack online at www.LightningLabels.com/sampack. It shows all the label stocks and finishing options that we offer, including our brand new ones. You may discover some surprising results—such as the ability of certain non-laminated label materials to withstand the elements.

By testing these on your own product containers in the conditions they'll be used, you'll know what to expect before putting anything on press.

If you already know which material type is right for your custom labels or stickers, get an instant online quote at LightningLabels.com/quote, or call us at 1.888.907.3004.



Customer Focus

Picky Sticky founder Tisha Linn shows 'sticktuitiveness'
Perseverance, intuition guide successful sticker company



Tisha Linn and her family

Tisha Linn exudes “sticktuitiveness”—that’s a combination of the words “stick-to-it-ive-ness” and “intuition.” She founded Picky Sticky, a manufacturer of stickers that chronicle children’s ages from prenatal stages to teen years, and mark developmental milestones along the way.

Notes Linn, “Picky Sticky started when our daughter was born. Each week I wrote her age on a piece of paper and then took her picture sitting next to it. As time passed, I got a little more creative and dressed it up a bit with designs, using all the power Microsoft Word could muster.

“As she was getting older, it was getting harder for her to sit still. That is when I saw some cute onesies with iron-on transfers that were pretty expensive. I didn’t know what size she was going to be at each stage and at that point, the idea of using a sticker popped into my head. Thus, Picky Sticky was born.”

Linn launched Picky Sticky as a web-based business in 2008 in Renton, WA. She points out that getting people to find and buy a product they had never heard of was challenging: “I started Picky Sticky on a web marketplace, I set up my site, posted my first product, went to view my finished listing and couldn’t find it. It had sold within the time I could figure out how to view it. I was so confused, then over the moon that someone wanted something I created.”

Primary marketing to date has been via bloggers and chat boards. Emphasizes Linn, “We wanted to see if our product could speak for itself and it did, built by word of mouth. We eventually started a

little viral marketing on Facebook with photo contests for our past clients.”

Once she realized that there was demand for Picky Sticky, quality control challenges surfaced. “There were many bumps in the road with the questionable product quality that was coming off my laser printer. I couldn’t handle the ink chipping off on little babies as they would chew or grab at my stickers on their tummies.

“That is when I set out to put out the best quality product that would be safe for little ones and we found that with Lightning Labels. Not long after we opened up for business, a blogger wrote about us and we had 50 orders within an hour of her post. This gave us the confirmation that we had a product that was in demand and to keep moving forward,” Linn adds.

Each sticker has a diameter of 4” and is made of transparent sticky paper. When applied, it looks like an iron-on transfer. Currently, Picky Sticky’s two full-time employees and three contractors handle sales volume that averages about 300 sets per week. The firm has a wholesale division as well.

Product offerings include both boy and girl stickers numbered from 0-13 months, a line with

just numerals so that buyers can chronicle yearly development until the teen years, and prenatal stickers that expecting mothers can wear to indicate their stage of pregnancy. Set prices range from \$10-20.

Missy Fissy is the firm’s “number one bestseller hands down,” according to Linn, with Mister Fister, Girly Girl, and Boy O Boy as the next most popular items. “Our stickers are more popular with moms of girls but boys are not far behind with Mister Fister.” New designs following the same concept are in the works. Chicky Wicky, Pinky Dinky, Fuddy Buddy, Curly Whirly, and Buggy Wuggy are some of the other colorful rhyming selections that Picky Sticky offers.

Linn takes great satisfaction from her company’s popularity, saying, “We really love the amazing feedback we get from our customers. They love the concept of our products and the superior quality.”

Then there are the “personal perks.” “Being able to work with my family is something I never thought I wanted. But now that I have it, I wouldn’t want it any other way.”

Perhaps the best personal perk has been the historical documentation of her children’s growth. She notes, “As avid fans of photography, we enjoy keeping our family history. Having a collection of photos of each milestone really puts into perspective how much our babies changed and how fast time flew by. We are so glad we have these photos to remember our growing children.”



An interior designer by trade, Linn says she never envisioned doing anything like this 10 years ago, adding, “It’s funny where the life change of starting a family takes you.”

Linn’s ownership of a web-based business naturally caused her to look to the web for printing support. She found Lightning Labels via Google back in 2009, pointing out, “Originally their great website and bidding system made me contact them for samples. From there, the great customer service keeps bringing us back.

“They have been a great company to work with. Their system from start to finish is seamless. The quality of the product stands out, and there’s peace of mind that I never have to worry about the quality of my product. That is really hard to find.”

For Tisha Linn and Picky Sticky, “sticktuitiveness” has paid off handsomely. For more information on the company, visit them online at PickySticky.com.



Picky Sticky’s “Missy Fissy” Set

Lightning Labels News

We've Lowered Our Minimum Order!

Only need 50 labels? No problem! Our minimum order is now 50 labels per version, offering you more flexibility to manage your costs and reduce waste.

Plan Ahead Now for the Holiday Season

Make plans now to order the custom labels and stickers you'll need during the holidays. Please keep in mind that our average turnaround is 2-3 business days following final approval. You should also take into consideration that we'll be closed these days:

- Friday, December 23
- Monday, December 26
- Monday, January 2

Learning About Labels

Learning About Label Laminates

Laminates are clear plastic films that enhance appearance and add an extra layer of protection when applied to labels. The process of bonding these films to the label face stock through the use of adhesive, heat and/or pressure is called lamination.

Although laminates come in different materials, the most commonly used ones in the label printing industry are polyester (PE) and polypropylene (PP). Here at Lightning Labels, we use both types of materials for lamination, with BOPP being the most popular laminate due to its versatility and affordability.

Lamination will protect your labels from light scuffs and prevent ink smudging, and enhance their resistance to moisture and oil. It is important to note, however, that lamination alone will not waterproof your labels. If your labels will be used in a wet environment, we recommend having them printed on one of our water-resistant base materials such as White BOPP. White BOPP and High Gloss Laminate has traditionally been our most popular combination of materials for bath and body product labels.

- High Gloss Laminate is our most popular laminate overall. It is the least expensive lamination option, and protects labels while giving them a shiny finish. High Gloss laminate is made of PP.

- Matte Laminate, also made of PP, gives labels a dull finish similar to that of eggshell paint. If you plan on writing information on your labels by hand, Matte Laminate is your best option.

- Thermal Transfer Laminate is a glossy laminate designed to work with most over-printing thermal transfer printers (the kind that use ink ribbons vs. direct thermal application). Thermal Transfer Laminate is made of PE.

- UV Outdoor Gloss has excellent resistance to the sun's UV rays. We recommend pairing it with our Vinyl face stock to create durable outdoor labels. Like Thermal Transfer Laminate, this material also has a glossy appearance and is made of PE.

Lamination is not appropriate for all base materials* and applications. Therefore, we recommend testing labels directly on your product

containers in the conditions they will be used before placing your final order.

It is also important to note that while lamination can enhance the finished look of labels, its greatest value lies in the added layer of protection it gives labels.

**Note: We do not laminate Vellum, Satin Cloth, or select other materials because laminates will not adhere to them satisfactorily.*

For more information about which materials can and cannot be laminated, please view the Materials List in our sample pack, which you may order free of charge online at LightningLabels.com/sampack. More information about our materials is also available by obtaining an online quote at LightningLabels.com/quote, emailing us at info@lightninglabels.com, or giving us a call at 1.888.907.3004.

p: 1.888.907.3004
w: LightningLabels.com
e: info@lightninglabels.com

Published by Lightning Labels, LLC
2369 S. Trenton Way, Denver, CO 80231
Edited by: Christy Correll e: christy@lightninglabels.com

LIGHTNING LABELS

© Copyright 2011