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# Familiarity Breeds Confidence

Art Director-Turned-Packaging Manager  
Espouses Flexo For Any Package

By Christian R. Bonawandt

**H**e presides over a network of an estimated 100 printers/converters and has been in almost every plant. As manager of packaging and graphics for Cadbury Schweppes Americas Beverages (CSAB), Barry Sanel is charged with achieving marketing's goals through packaging. At the company's Rye Brook, NY, office, this printer-turned-customer works with all manner of substrates, from paper and film, to carton, corrugated and even proprietary multilayer material.

Cadbury Schweppes is among the largest confectionery companies in the world, based out of London, UK, with roots that trace back more than 200 years. It came to be known by its current

moniker in 1969, following the merger of Schweppes Beverages and Cadbury Brothers Ltd., and has grown through more than 50 acquisitions since the 1980s. The confectionery giant is responsible for such worldwide brands as Cadbury, Schweppes, Halls, Trident, Dr Pepper, Snapple, Trebor, Dentyne, Bubblicious and Bassett.

Cadbury Schweppes acquired Dr Pepper/7-Up, Mott's and Snapple Beverage Group separately and in 2003 merged the three groups together under a single operating structure. Today, CSAB boasts more than 50 beverage brands in its portfolio of soft drinks, teas, juices, mixers and other premium beverages.

The company's science and technology center in Trumbull, CT, oversees technical accuracy for packaging and labels. Sanel's job is more geared around design and marketing. Sanel has a solid background in flexo working as an art director for printers/converters, such as CCL Label. As such, he is a strong proponent of the process. Although not part of the Procurement Department, he was able to highlight typical flexo printing.

Gesturing to an Orange Crush glass bottle, Sanel said, "This is a typical narrow-web roll-to-roll flexo/silkscreen pressure-sensitive label job which runs at Brooke & Whittle in CT. Some of the biggest flexo jobs are for products that come in 16 oz. PET bottles or anything that's applied to plastic, such as Dr Pepper. The Schweppes Ginger Ale label is flexo as well."

### MAKING DEMANDS, MEETING EXPECTATIONS

As someone who knows his way around the pressroom, Sanel was quick to identify his top challenges with running flexo, as well as some easy solutions.

"When I have a design that goes from 0 percent to 100 percent, I am concerned about dot gain, halos and moirés," he said.

"Another common challenge for flexo is opacity," he commented. Picking up a Mystic Iced Tea bottle, Sanel observed, "A lot of the labels on this product line went from combination silk screen and letterpress to combination screen and flexo. The Mystic label is nine colors on clear film. It was one of the first brands I redesigned when I got here, and I didn't think it could be done flexo. I was really shocked when we were able to get that kind of color with flexo."

To make life easier for his printer partners, Sanel admitted that he consciously minimizes the amount of colors needed for any job. "I don't want a six-color job to end up on a five-color press," he proclaimed, adding that, despite his efforts, this sometimes happens. "In that case," he continued, "We will try to combine colors, so that no one in marketing notices it. This issue is not something that happens often. Especially because I do send PDF files to printers way ahead of production so they can see what effects we want."

Using a Dr Pepper label as an example, Sanel mentioned that color matching is another major concern of his. To control this, his company uses a central prepress provider, namely Southern Graphic Systems. "Because we use so many different printers, it is important that we maintain color. We are doing a lot of ink standards and color matching up front. The majority of our flexo labels would be film applied to PET bottles. I am mostly involved

with combination silk-screen and flexo. Because I have prepress experience, we'll produce the design in phase one and phase two, then I'll collaborate to make adjustments with Southern and the printer. Usually I'll send a PDF to the printer and ask how the firm plans to print it. I have yet to come across a design we couldn't reproduce."

Sanel's personal and professional objective is to shorten the lead time without compromising quality, which he professed could best be achieved on the prepress side. "Once a job goes to prepress, I would like to turn it around in 10 business days or less." Actual lead times, he said, vary with each printer. "Most are two to four weeks. Once it's approved and I feel it looks good, we schedule the work."

Rarely, Sanel stated, does he have a problem with an existing printer/converter. "If a plant says it can't do a vignette, I'll ask what it can do to see if we can make it work, sometimes even using Hexachrome or Stochastic screening, etc."

One thing Sanel does demand is that his packaging providers come to him with new technologies and solutions. "I like printers to bring the innovation to us," he said. "I'll ask them if they have any special inks, varnishes, etc. We'll consider anything that has never been done before and makes the consumer notice our package first."

A good example of this is when one printer showed him its new automatic ink-mixing system. "That was great, because you don't have someone in the back with a pair of Dixie cups trying to match color by eye. The system prevents ink drift, where the color starts out looking one way and two years later it's completely different."

If there was something Sanel would like to see more of, it's six-color process printing. "That's not because I am looking for funky greens and oranges. Six-color process allows us to gang up labels

infinitely. You can run a pink label next to a purple label and no one will notice the difference. If done right, it works very well and saves cost."

According to Sanel, every brand undergoes a redesign at different intervals. "It depends on the brand. A stable brand design will last five years or more. Average is three years. If you are trying to get a lot of activity or buzz, such as with a brand like Snapple, you see new flavors & labels all the time. But Snapple won't often go through a major redesign, due to the complexity and costs. 'Vintage'-looking brands like Orange Crush, Stewart's or Yoo-hoo will be redesigned even less often because their look is more timeless. The redesign strategy is usually dictated by the brand team and shifts in consumer trends."

"I have walked into print shops where I would let my kids play on the floor because it was so clean. Those printers have control over what they do and it's easy to see that they take their work very seriously."

-Barry Sanel, manager of packaging and graphics, Cadbury Schweppes American Beverages



**PICK A PECK OF PRINTERS**

The Beverage Division's network of some 100 printers stretches from Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio all throughout the east coast, as well as into Illinois. The reason for the wide variety of packaging providers has to do not only with the amount of packaging and labels required, but also with the variety of packaging types. The Mott's drink boxes, produced by Tetra Pak in Denton, TX, are a unique material. "It's a flexo-printed, multilayered laminated material, which is something proprietary that we buy from them. This material contains several layers of adhesive, plastic and aluminum. Those boxes then go inside a flexo-printed shrinkwrap plastic printed by Exopack in Thomasville, NC, which in turn goes inside a flexo corrugated box printed by International Paper."

Another package, Mott's Single-Serve Apple Sauce six-pack paperboard sleeves, was not always produced flexo. It was the current printer, Shorewood Packaging in Scarborough, ON, Canada, that proposed the switch as a cost initiative. "The people at Shorewood came to us and asked us if we wanted to do it flexo. I was concerned we'd lose color. The plant printed several of our

ABOVE: Barry Sanel, manager of packaging and graphics, speaks with **FLEXO** about specific jobs at the Cadbury Schweppes American Beverages office in Rye Brook, NY.

LEFT: The trapping on this Wiggles promotion shrinkwrap is as good as any offset trap, according to Sanel.

packages as a trial. So I showed these samples to some people within the company to see if they'd notice it was printed differently. They didn't notice the differences until I pointed them out."

Sanel told **FLEXO** that the decision of which printer will get a particular job is determined by the volumes, proximity to factories and other considerations, including ability to produce the job. The procurement team ultimately makes the vendor choice. Rarely anymore does Sanel have to set foot in a print shop to prepare for a job. "I let our prepress provider do the fingerprinting and get the printer up to speed."

That doesn't mean he doesn't stop by. In fact, Sanel has some say in whether or not the company will use a particular packaging provider. He offered some insight to what influences his decisions. "When I visit a printer, I look for safety and cleanliness" he said. "There are several reasons. We are printing for food packag-



Photo courtesy of Cadbury Schweppes American Beverages.

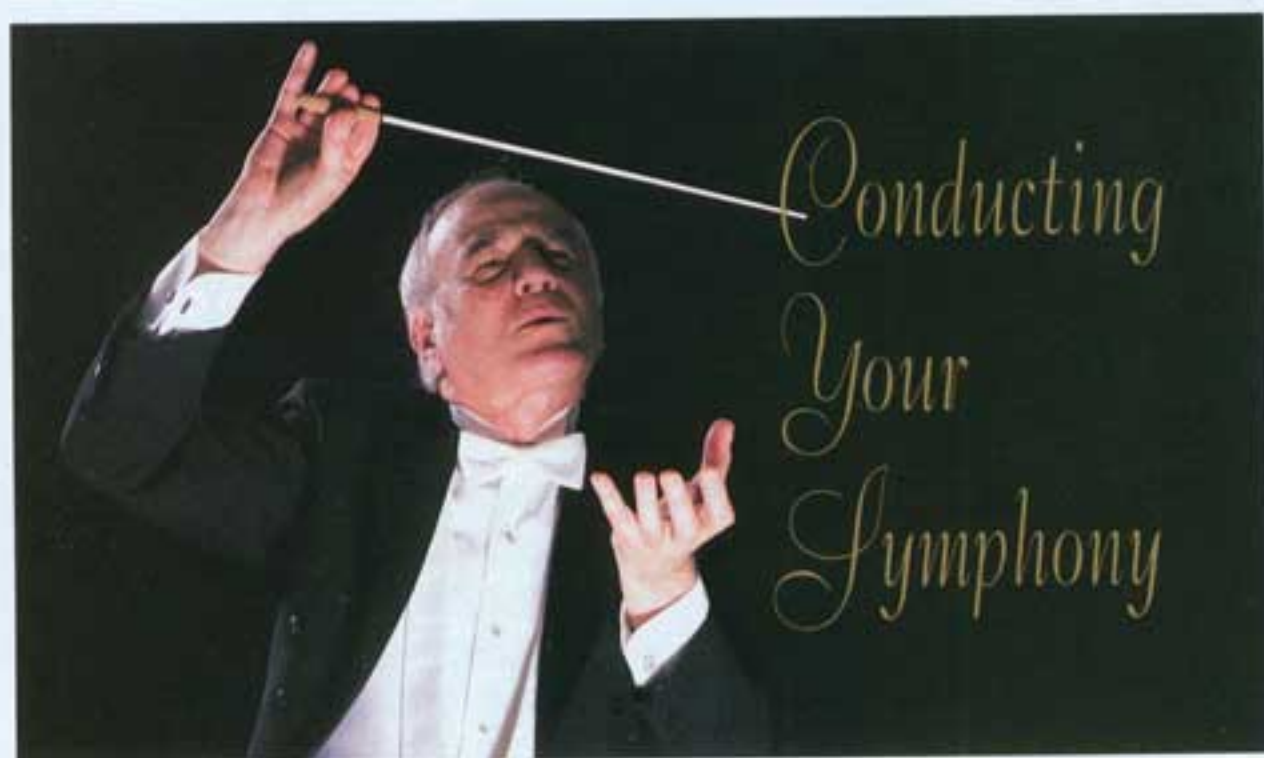
ing. For me, if you walk into a printer and there are pallets falling over, WIP everywhere, and everyone has their safety glasses on their forehead, it means the shop doesn't have control. I have walked into print shops where I would let my kids play on the floor because it was so clean. Those printers have control over what they do, and it's easy to see that they take their work very seriously. After that, we talk about what they've run in the past, press capabilities, etc."

Cooperation is another significant attribute that Sanel looks for. "I want someone who is going to work with us. If a printer says they won't work with one of our separators, it ultimately

means they won't work with us. I want printers who are flexible and do what it takes to get the job done."

**FLEXO FOR ALL**

Without speaking directly to the percentage of packaging his company produces flexographically, Sanel declared that, with the current level of the technology, there was nothing that couldn't be done flexo. "Over the years, the bar has been raised," he said. Sanel brought out a Mott's promotional shrinkwrap with a vignette that featured children's entertainers The Wiggles. "The trap on the Wiggles wrap is as good as any offset trap. If you look at some jobs, you can really see the traps. I don't like big 'old school' flexo traps. I want them to be equal to what's running in offset. I wouldn't expect that on corrugated, but I've even seen that kind



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**WHO'S WHO AT CADBURY SCHWEPPE'S AMERICAN BEVERAGES**

**PLANO, TX**

- Robin Utay, director, creative and packaging
- Janet Brookner, packaging manager: Dr Pepper, Schweppes, Squirt, Country Time
- Ricky Rozelle, packaging manager: A&W Root Beer, Sunkist, 7UP, Canada Dry, Diet Rite

**RYE BROOK:**

- Elaine Brochetto, senior packaging manager: Hawaiian Punch
- Joseph Perella, packaging manager: Snapple, Clamato, Mott's Garden Cocktail, Mr & Mrs T, Roses Cocktail Mixers, Margaritaville Mixer
- Barry Sanel, packaging manager: Crush, IBC, Mystic, Mott's, Nantucket Nectars, Stewart's, ReaLemon, Orangina, Welch's Canada, Yoo-hoo



Photos courtesy of Cadbury Schweppes American Beverages.

of printing evolve from crush-and-run to really decent printing." He offered that he had a great deal of confidence in the process. "I don't have any qualms printing anything with flexo."

The biggest advancements, in his mind, have taken place in pre-press, ink delivery systems and specifically UV inks. He also applauded the rise in process-control techniques. "The fact that companies are fingerprinting their press is a good sign. When I was working for a flexo printer in the 1990s, fingerprinting was very esoteric. No one wanted to shut the press down to do that."

Proofing systems are another area that he has seen great changes in. "It's nice to have a proof that matches the label. Usually, the proof was great, but would not indicate what could be printed. Now I get proofs and give them directly to the printer." He later stated that he would love to get into remote proofing. Sanel's familiarity with flexography has led to much confidence in the process—a confidence that continues to grow as the technology evolves. ■

### Professional Profile: Barry Sanel

Cadbury Schweppes Americas Beverages, Rye Brook, NY  
Packaging & Graphics Manager

CCL Label, Shelton, CT  
Graphic Arts/Information Systems Manager

W.E. Basset Company, Shelton, CT  
Art Director

Bovie Screen Printing Company, Bow, NH  
Sales Representative

Concord Litho Company, Concord, NH  
Quality Assurance Inspector

Education: Keene State College, Keene, NH

Hobbies: Build and race vintage motorcycles



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