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Gravure News

PaC.Space

New colour standard
for packaging gravure

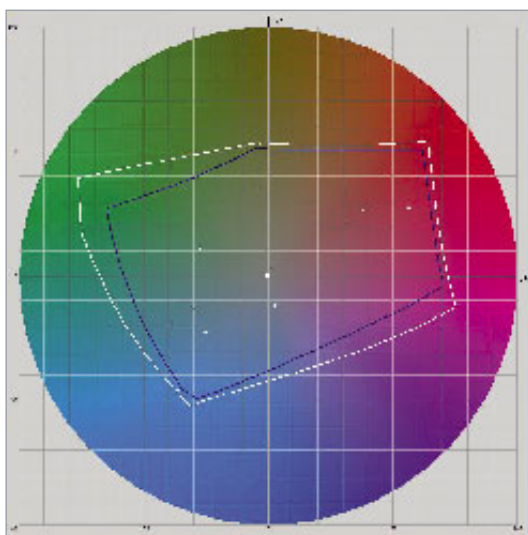


Il signor Giorgio

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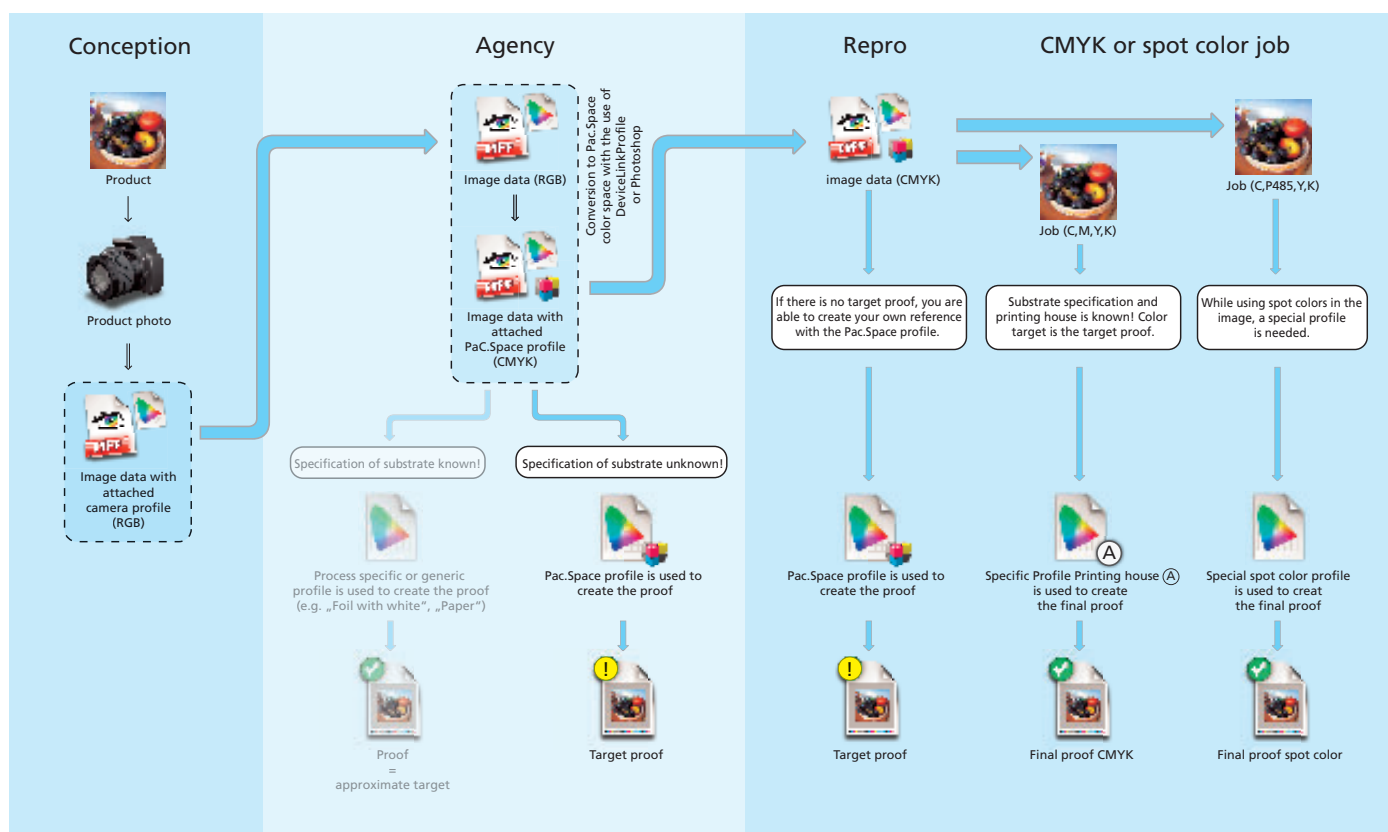
PaC.Space Less time and reliable quality

First common colour standard for packaging gravure launched



What does PaC.Space mean? It is short for "Packaging Colour Space", and stands for the first common colour standard for packaging gravure. Still not common within the industry, PaC.Space should become a huge step forward to unify the process of the preparation of prepress data for the print forme. It started some years ago as a project of the Pro Gravure working group of the ERA, steered by Europe's largest cylinder house Janoschka and software supplier GMG, and was presented to the public for the first time at the Drupa trade fair last year. The benefits which PaC.Space offers to the industry are obvious: time savings and reliable quality in the production of a gravure printed packaging product.

Above: PaC.Space (white outline) versus Fogra39 (blue outline): a significantly larger midtone gamut in the orange and green areas. Below: workflows for the introduction and use of PaC.Space. This page: from concept to proof; next page: fingerprinting a press and creating an output profile; page 6: using the profile in the PaC.Space colour-managed workflow



Lothar Roth, Managing Director of Janoschka Group and driving force behind PaC.Space, explains its purpose: “Until now packaging print forme production has not been standardized. This requires the cylinder house to cope with many variations in the supplied repro data. Producing the print forme takes a lot of time and effort to achieve the high quality level that brand owners expect as a matter of course.”

The other key partner in this project was ERA member GMG, a leading prepress software supplier. Adalbert Heckler of GMG describes the background: “Photographers and design and repro agencies of brand owners have a more creative mentality. Forme preparation and other prepress properties such as printing inks and substrates, printing presses and colour gamut are not their areas of expertise.” In many cases repro is done before it is defined where and how the specific job will be printed.

The cylinder house therefore has to rework the supplied prepress data to fit the final and individual requirements of the target process. This is the interface where PaC.Space now comes into play. PaC.Space provides a general packaging gravure colour space, which will allow a defined standard interface for the sup-

plied data. It simplifies the conversion to the process-specific and printer-specific requirements, which makes the production process easier and faster, and guarantees a reliable quality of the final print forme.

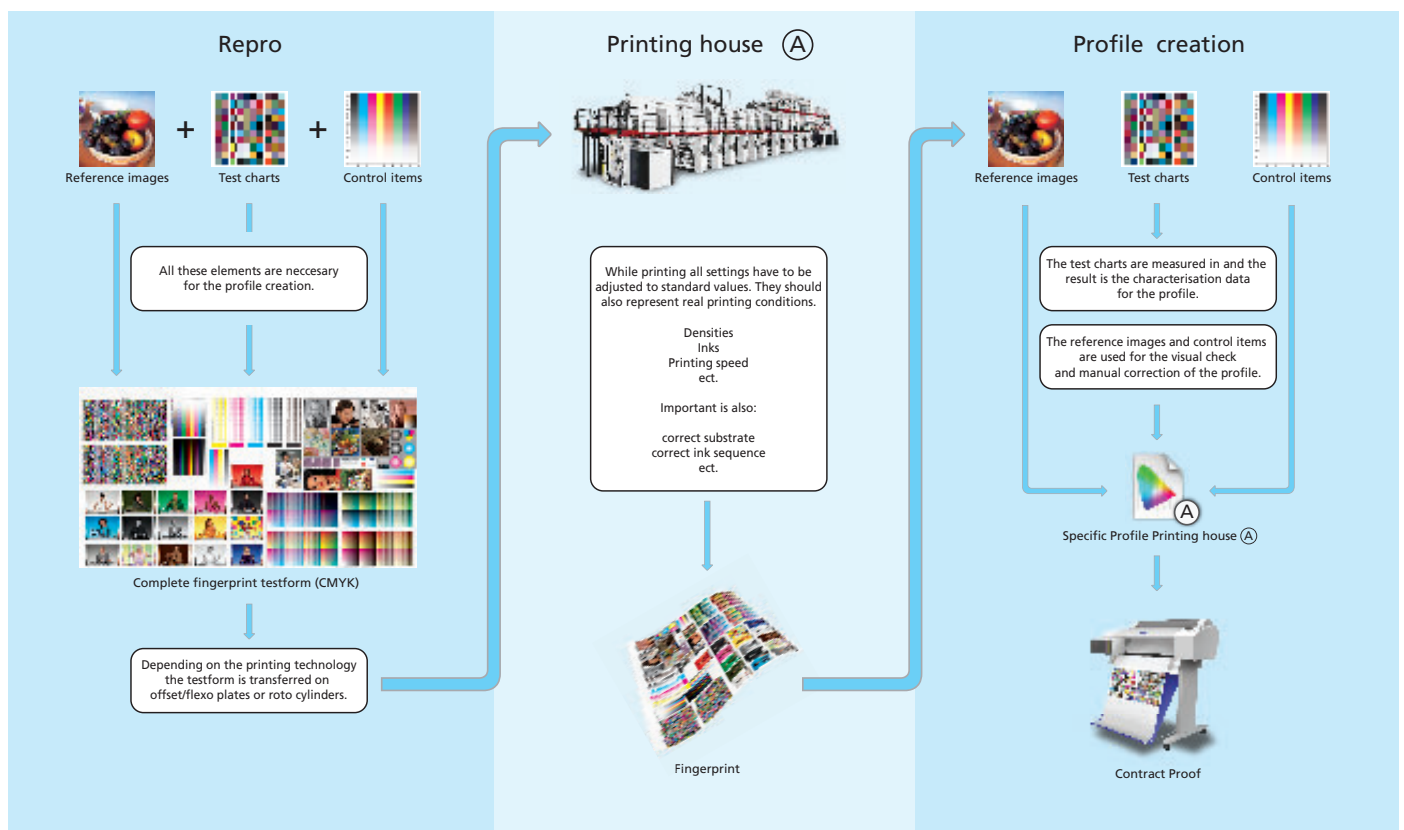
PaC.Space covers CMYK process colours and supports a colour space and workflow which, even in the very early stages of the design or production, allows a proof close to the final result of the press. This avoids any disappointment to the customer, and also any reworking of the prepress data. The handling of the data can all be done in PaC.Space, which in consequence reduces both cost and lead time. The quality and reliability of the supply chain increases.

Mr. Roth explains the development process of PaC.Space: “At the beginning of the project, packaging gravure printers were invited to make test prints using common data supplied by the cylinder houses. These test prints were measured to compare their colour gamuts.” Based on the results of these tests, the PaC.Space gamut was selected. “The gamut is larger than typical offset colour spaces, particularly in the orange and green areas, which are important for many packaging designs,” he emphasizes.

Mr. Roth concludes: “PaC.Space supplies the colorimetric description of its colour space, and also colour profiles to convert to this colour space. Both ICC profiles and GMG profiles are included. As the characterisation data of the PaC.Space is also supplied, it is possible to create individual solutions such as device link profiles.” All conversions can be done with standard tools. The conversion from PaC.Space into the printer-specific colour space is the responsibility of the printer, cylinder engraver and repro house.

Even though the results are convincing, the breakthrough among the design studios and repro agencies who should apply PaC.Space has not yet taken place. Mr. Heckler regrets this hesitation, but he is convinced of the benefits for all players in the chain: “PaC.Space provides unified communication, unified criteria and unified data. The photographer can supply images for all packaging clients in one format. The repro house can work with data in a common format and the printer receives standardised data which is immediately usable.” To sum it up, PaC.Space reduces the production overheads and increases quality and reliability in the whole chain. GB/JS ■

Interview with Lothar Roth: see next page ▶



“The benefit is that a handover of design data can be done in a clear and defined way”



Lothar Roth of Janoschka

Q: What benefits does PaC.Space offer to the different partners in the graphic chain?

A: In general: PaC.Space offers a Color space/gamut that allows an exchange of pre press data for all steps in the graphic supply chain. This starts with the input of RGB data from a photo shooting and covers all steps until the data are transferred to a printer specific gamut and final printing condition. The benefit is the defined gamut of PaC.Space, so that a handover of design data can be done in a clear and defined way. Data can be processed and digitally proofed in PaC.Space. The transfer to the (single or multiple) final printing conditions is always the last step.

Q: Do you see PaC.Space as enabling more packaging jobs to be printed using only process colours?

A: The current version of PaC.Space is supporting process colors only. Even if there are a lot of demands and requests recently to do packing printing more with process colors instead of spot colors, PaC.Space is not the driver for that. It is more cost reduction in terms of print color management and reduction of press setup time that leads to more process color work. But if the market is driving that way more and more, PaC.Space makes more sense to be used.

Q: Does it make sense to have a colour gamut that applies only to gravure?

A: PaC.Space has a gamut that covers not only Gravure, but also offset and flexo printing. Designs that have been worked out in PaC.Space can easily be converted to offset by using device link profiles which are supported from PaC.Space.

Q: How is the take up of PaC.Space in the market developing?

A: After the launch and presentation of PaC.Space at DRUPA 08 and after having some publications the interest was a little restrained. The hits on our website are ok, especially from the US we had some interesting contacts. We have the feeling that we need some practical work and demonstration to show the whole workflow. So we will build some packaging designs for different packaging substrates in the next weeks and months that show the advantage of PaC.Space. We are sure that will give people in the industry the confidence they need to use these tools.

Note: All information on PaC.Space and all data and profiles are free, and can be downloaded from www.cm-pacspace.net as well as www.era.eu.org. An Adobe PhotoShop Tutorial for PaC.Space is also available there.

