

PAPER & BOARD



The in-feed of the Brausse TA 1100-C3 II folder-gluer features eight individually-adjustable belts to facilitate set-up and smooth feeding. Also included are standard feeder gates and an assist feeder gate for wider boxes, as well as a feeder start/stop device that's controlled from all operator stations. Additionally, the left and right outward folding belts of the final fold section can be telescopically adjusted according to product specifications, removing the need to tension the belts and enabling fast job changeovers.

## Investing in automation and diversity

Atlas Printers has invested in two Brausse machines, supplied by Alliance Machinery, to bring its folding-glueing, die-cutting, stripping and hot foil stamping functions in-house and to help elevate its converting capabilities to a new level. Nici Solomon reports.

**FROM humble beginnings 64 years ago, Durban-based Atlas Printers' tenure has been an exercise in print quality and service, resulting in this family-run print shop evolving into a multifaceted level two B-BBEE print provider. Today, it offers everything from litho and digital commercial print to high-end, specialist folding cartons for local and international brands.**

In 2015, building on the bedrock of its litho printing successes, came a diversification into the point-of-sale market with an investment in a Durst UV inkjet printer and Aristo flatbed digital cutter – enabling digital printing and cutting of virtually any rigid or flexible substrates.

This was followed by expansion in the print on-demand division with the addition of a Ricoh production



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Above: Beneficial features of the die-cutting and stamping section include a pneumatic push button die-chase locking mechanism for safe and operator-friendly changing of the die; a double cam-driven gripper opener for smooth and accurate sheet register and take off; plus a 15mm insulation plate for optimising heating efficiency and maintaining a consistent temperature.

Above: Bradley Bate (right), MD of Alliance Machinery, has supplied a Brausse 1050SFi die-cutting, stripping and foil stamping machine to Atlas Printers' owners, Rajan and Vinesh Gokool.

press. According to co-owner, Vinesh Gokool, this investment has allowed the business to cope with growing demand for short-run and quick turnaround jobs across all sectors, especially for cosmetics and pharmaceutical products.

### Move to specialist high-end packaging

Decades of dedication and the pursuit of perfection has resulted in a number of awards but the owners, Rajan and Vinesh Gokool, spotlight the 2007 Sappi International Printer of the Year Elephant Trophy as a major milestone in the company's history, resulting in its leapfrogging into other printing disciplines and attracting bigger volume jobs and more prestigious customers.

In fact, it was a quip from a fellow contestant about a commercial printer taking the top award in the packaging printing and labels category that spurred them on to develop a specialised packaging service for short-run, high-end folding cartons with upmarket finishes and special effects for FMCG and banking customers.

'At the beginning of 2018, changing market dynamics motivated us to invest in a fully-automated

Brausse 1050SFi die-cutting, stripping and foil stamping machine and a TA 1100-C3 II folder-gluer – enabling us to bring these functions in-house. This, in turn, has resulted in total control from a quality, convenience and efficiency point of view so that we can commit to all our customers with certainty,' notes Vinesh.

'This is in line with my late father, Jay Gokool's, philosophy of investing in quality equipment that's fit-for-purpose and features the best technology available from acclaimed international manufacturers in order to deliver a reliable service to our customers,' he adds.

After visiting other operations to see Brausse equipment in action, the Atlas team was doubly reassured by Alliance Machinery's track record with top principals such as Eterna-Brausse, a member of the Bobst Group under this banner. 'We've bought this equipment as part of a larger plan to satisfy the changing needs of the packaging printing and converting market by offering customers a full spectrum service. For this, we needed the same level of reliability, commitment and support from our suppliers,' Vinesh reports.



ALLIANCE  
MACHINERY/  
BRAUSSE

According to Alliance Machinery's MD, Bradley Bate, the ability to provide local technical support through factory-trained and accredited mechanical and electrical engineers, as well as an African service hub with comprehensive spare parts stockholding are vital components in the reliable customer service equation

### Putting foiling first

Atlas Printers had been in the foiling business for about 40 years but was limited in terms of size capabilities. 'To propel us to the next level, we wanted to bring the power of large-scale foiling in-house,' Vinesh Gokool remarks. 'We're now able to process foiling, embossing and window cut-outs on full-size (B1) sheets with a minimum and maximum foil width of 25mm and 1 020mm respectively.'

One of the company's recent full-scale packaging printing and converting jobs, originating in Japan, required four process and ten spot colours plus hot-stamping foil and die-cutting on the new Brausse 1050Sfi and glueing on the Brausse C1100.

The former's foil feeding system consists of two 3.5kW servo motor-driven longitudinal foil advancing shafts, each individually programmable for short and long foil stepping. Additionally, its advanced foil control system (AFCS) is made up of foil advancing step combination setting and calculation, motion stepping combination simulation, and hologram stamping.

This AFCS system is responsible for efficient and accurate temperature control. It also governs the tension roller and foil advancing rollers adjustments, enabling quick set up. The system also helps keep foil tension constant by synchronising waste foil pulling with foil advancing.

Foil can be installed and the foil stamping device adjusted by pulling out the longitudinal foil roll loading bracket and applying a new type of foil stamping rubber wheel.

**Ed's note:** In addition to specialised packaging, boxes, cartons and sleeves, Atlas Printers produces brochures and catalogues; pamphlets and leaflets; magazines and annual reports; books and manuals; variable data and personalisation; promotional campaigns; scratch cards, vouchers and security coding; posters; business stationary; point-of-sale products; point-of-purchase displays; labels and header cards; large format prints and banners; as well as calendars and diaries.

## Encouraging continuous learning and high standards

**ATLAS PRINTERS' survival over the past 64 years can be attributed to its adapting to constant change and being committed to continual learning and growth, says co-owner, Vinesh Gokool.**

This entails offering staff members opportunities to develop and maintain their professional knowledge, skills and expertise through a fully-paid learnership programme at accredited and world-renowned colleges as part of the company's social responsibility programme.

In addition, each time Atlas Printers invests in new equipment its OEM partners provide intensive training. In the case of the latest Brausse installation, Alliance Machinery provided full-scale training on multiple levels as this foiling technology demands much more attention than the existing small foiling machines.

Alliance Machinery's MD, Bradley Bate, adds: 'Locally-based engineers who have been trained extensively at group international facilities and who have in excess of 35 years' die-cutting, foiling, and folding and glueing experience were keen to pass on the wealth of folding carton converting knowledge to the operators. This knowledge transfer is vital because of the educational void created by the closing of the printing college,' Bradley asserts. 'Alliance Machinery will be returning to Atlas Printers for a refresher training session in early 2019.'

Because each machine is only as good as its operator and the tooling used, Alliance Machinery follows a turnkey approach. 'This entails closing the loop by providing the correctly-specified machine;

delivering, installing and commissioning it; training operators; offering after-sales technical support plus precision tooling through our partnership with Laserpac, and conducting follow-up training where required. By taking this partnership approach, we strive to help customers improve productivity, profitability, volumes and capacity – a win-win situation,' Bradley maintains.

Jay Gokool, the MD and chairman of the company for much of its 64-year history, encouraged old-fashioned values, such as trust, honour, respect and responsibility in everyone working in the company. Although Jay passed away in 2018, this ethos is still respected and forms the bedrock of Atlas Printers' business philosophy.

Rajan and Vinesh Gokool in continuing this philosophy have fostered a culture of service, quality and reliability. It has also resulted in attracting some of the best technicians in the trade, a low staff turnover and long-standing customer relationships.

Maintaining customer loyalty and trust has also been integral to Atlas Printers' long-term success. According to Vinesh, in order to respond to customers' needs and exceed their expectations, employees subscribe to the ethos of being driven to deliver on promises made; being open to change; developing their knowledge and an eye for detail and quality; not tolerating mediocrity, negative attitudes or poor workmanship; respecting one another and working in harmony; and making the quality of their work so valuable to customers that Atlas Printers becomes their preferred supplier.

