



PRINT ON DEMAND

Sales are on a rise for Colorado hot-sauce company that uses fresh, premium product ingredients and high-quality package labels printed in-house to entice customers.

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Digital Label Printing on Primera's LX900e

A hobby turned big-time business, Danny Cash Hot Sauce, founded by Danny Cash almost 10 years ago in Engelwood, CO, combines fiery, enticing package graphics along with fresh, high-quality ingredients to keep hot-sauce lovers coming back for more.

"Most people buy hot sauce just for the labels," notes Cash. "We try to make the label match the sauce. If we have a high-quality label, then you can actually see all of the flavor ingredients in the sauce as well."

Cash is passionate about keeping a close eye on product

quality. The business occupies two locations: a manufacturing facility and a building that houses the company's Hot Shop retail store and offices. All product manufacturing is done inhouse. "Only 5 percent of the hot sauce industry makes its own sauces," says Cash. "We will not have anybody do it for us. We are very proud to say that we make our own."

This attention to detail carries over to packaging, as well, encompassing not only product filling, but also label design and printing. Early on in the business, Cash selected a digital printing system from Primera

Technology, Inc. to allow for quick in-house printing of short-run labels, directly from the desktop. Recently, the company purchased its second Primera printer -- an upgraded version -- as well as a Primera label applicator, to help meet an increased demand for labels.



MANY ALTERNATIVES RESEARCHED

Danny Cash Hot Sauce offers 28 different products, including barbecue sauces, wing sauces, salsas, and Bloody Mary mixes, as well as other items for the spicy foods world. The company produces its own-brand products, as well as private-label brands—an area that Cash says “absolutely exploded” several years after the company launched. Distribution of its products has even gone worldwide, with sauces shipped to all points of the globe. “In fact,” says Cash, “we are the top-selling hot sauce on the continent of Antarctica.”

In its early days, Danny Cash Hot Sauce found that working with a print provider for its package labels was cost-prohibitive, as well as a bottleneck for the quick-turnaround business. “So many people wanted so much money upfront,” recalls Cash. “Then you had to wait for such a long time to finally get the label product. We needed something that would be quick, cheap, and accurate.”

After evaluating a number of competing digital printing technologies, Cash purchased the company’s first Primera digital color label printer, the LX800, around seven years ago. Cash says he chose the

unit after noticing that test runs of Danny Cash Hot Sauce labels sent to him from the suppliers of other printing technologies “were never near the print quality” of the Primera-supplied labels.

This summer, the business acquired its second Primera printer, the LX900e, which is said by the supplier to use the latest high-resolution ink-jet technology. Called Primera Imaging Perfection™, the technology delivers text, graphics, and photorealistic images at up to 4800 dpi. According to Primera, the printer offers the smallest available ink droplet size of any industrial-grade color label printer: 4 picoliters for color ink and 5.5 pL for black. The top-rated speed for the LX900e is 4.5 in./sec for full color in draft mode.

Cash notes that the speed at which his company operates the machines depends upon what is being printed, with bar codes running at speeds to 200/min, and full-color labels at 20/min, “for a higher print quality.” Full-color printing is enabled through the use of four ink cartridges—Cyan, Magenta, Yellow, and Black. When empty, individual ink cartridges can be changed “within 30 seconds or less,” says Cash, noting that the cartridges last a “pretty good

length of time.” He adds, “I think Primera offers one of the best values.”

FLEXIBILITY, SPEED ASSURED

Danny Cash Hot Sauce now uses both printers to produce labels for its own brand and for private-label products. Ninety percent of the artwork for the labels is designed in-house.

Using the Primera printers allows the company to be Flexible with label size, color, and substrate. The units can accommodate labels sized from one-inch square to 6 x 4 in. on a number of Primera provided pressure-sensitive label stocks. From the beginning, Danny Cash Hot Sauce wanted to be able to use a label stock that would be water-resistant, as many of its products end up on restaurant tables. Primera’s high-gloss stock meets that requirement. “Primera offers several different options that work very well for us,” says Cash.

As for color, Cash says there is no limit. “If we can design it on a computer, we will print it off and put it on a bottle of hot sauce,” he says.

Having in-house, on-demand printing capabilities have also allowed the hot sauce business to take advantage of new sales opportunities. During

last year's holiday season, the company launched a custom label program in its Hot Shop. "Someone can actually come into our store, give us a memory card or a jump drive, and we can design a label for them on the spot," says Cash. They can then walk out the door five minutes later with a case of custom-labeled hot sauce. Typical run lengths for a label-printing job at DannyCash Hot Sauce are 48 minimum, equal to one case-although Cash reports that the company has printed as few as six labels at one time, and one limited-edition batch required unique labels for each bottle.

For longer runs the company purchased Primera's AP362e semi-automatic label applicator, which has a top-rated speed of 1,200 labels/hr. To apply the labels, the operator sets the

machine guides, places the container into the machine, and presses a footswitch. "The AP362e applies labels quickly, accurately, and without wrinkles," Cash confirms. The durability, print quality, and speed of Primera's label printing technologies has helped Danny Cash Hot Sauce ensure that what's on its bottle is as

good as what's in its bottle. "We make the best product, and we only want to work with the best companies out there to improve upon total packaging," Cash says. "Working with Primera, we have not had to worry about that facet of the business."



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