

CARRYING A NEW TUNE

HOW THE ONSET X3 IS CHANGING THE WAY SOUTHERN CARTON DOES BUSINESS

LOCATED JUST 50 MILES south of Nashville sits Lewisburg, Tennessee—a small town defined as much by its quaint backyards and front porches as it is its industries and farmland. And not unlike any town in any other part of the country, Lewisburg is changing.

Being a short drive from the country music capital of the world has its privileges. Music halls. Wineries. Craft breweries and distilleries. Each has created a number of new opportunities for companies like Southern Carton, a solutions company that specializes in packaging.

Founded in 1977 by Jim Kennedy, Southern Carton has evolved into a highly recognized company with a state-of-the-art facility. In a time when things can change on a dime, the family owned and operated, third generation business continues to find new ways to serve its community. Today, Southern Carton is led by Jim's son, Dave, CEO, and grandson, Conner.

One of the resources helping take Southern Carton in a new direction is the recently purchased Onset X3, with white ink chan-

nels, which is capable of printing in excess of 9,600 square feet per hour (180 beds/hour). The Onset X3 features 3 x CMYK ink channels, plus the choice of white or orange. "We're looking for more and more opportunities because the Onset X3 is so versatile," Dave says. "It's a great selling feature in that we can print white and our competitors cannot."

Part of the Onset X3's allure are the FUJIFILM Dimatix drop-on-demand printheads that are perfect for the production of high volume, quality images onto a wide variety of media. Jetting a 14 picoliter drop size, the printheads provide a good balance of quality and volume to meet client demands.

And to ensure maximum throughput, it is compatible with Inca's flexible auto-

mation system, which offers Southern Carton the choice to operate in manual or semi-automated handling from the same configuration.

The Onset X3's intangibles are helping Southern Carton get to where it couldn't before. "We're trying to hit the country music industry," Dave says. "We're also looking at wineries and craft breweries. We are targeting people who traditionally don't want to order 1,000 of this and 2,000 of that; they want 50 of this and 100 of that. The Onset X3 is a game changer for us."

UP TO SPEED, AND BEYOND...

One of the biggest fans of the Onset X3 is digital coordinator Eugene Peek, who Dave says eats, sleeps and breathes everything surrounding the flatbed printer. "He had to get up to speed quickly, so he ran with it," Dave says. "He needed to learn it, and he did. We picked the right man for the job."

Right now, Southern Carton is printing on glass and a lot of acrylic. And right in line with its company mantra: "We don't just want your order, we want your business," Southern Carton now can give its customers what they want.

"We can take an order today and finish it in one day, provided we have the material/substrate on-site," Peek says.

Take a recent job it completed for a client that wanted to put images on a fiberboard. The job originally was riding an eight-week production timeline with a vendor in China.

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Unfortunately, the job was continually put on backorder.

But when the client turned to Southern Carton, they stepped up. Thanks to the Onset X3, Southern Carton turned the job around in a week, and with much better

quality. "The client paid the same price it paid its vendor in China, so it was a win/win/win."

The Onset X3 also has helped Southern Carton grow from its regional base. "That has been a great selling feature for us,"

Dave says. "[For example] somebody in San Francisco could ask us to run a job that might typically be done 150 to 200 miles from its plant. With the high speed output from the Onset, we can ship to clients anywhere and everywhere."

Southern Carton recently completed a rush order—200 corrugated sheets printed in the same day. "Our customers have now come to expect quick turns," Dave says. "It's now a precedent. That's the way we built our business. Our clients know what we can deliver on the box side, so they expect us to deliver on other output, too."

Dave Kennedy alongside his Onset X3 UV flatbed press with three-quarter robotic automation, in Lewisburg, Tennessee.

