



Press release

Transcending the Shelf Using the Latest Print Technology

Flower City Group transforms from litho label specialist to a top-tier retail marketing display provider, driven by a strategic vision and cutting-edge investments.

In the heart of Rochester, New York, a remarkable transformation is underway, led by a dynamic duo with decades of experience in the printing, packaging, signage, and display industries. Meet Steve Schuld, the visionary Chief Executive Officer, and Stephanie Bieg, the President and Chief Operating Officer, who are the driving forces behind Flower City Group (FCG).

With a dedicated team of approximately 220 talented individuals, including graphic designers, ink mixologists, coordinators, and operators, FCG has evolved from its roots in litho labels and solid bleached sulphate (SBS) folding cartons to become a major player in the retail marketing display industry. This shift was not only strategic but rapid. Litho label jobs took up about 70% of FCG's work five years ago. Today, that number sits around 2%. It wasn't until 2017, when Schuld took over as president that it heavily invested in the retail marketing display segment. FCG now boasts a staggering 90-95% focus on retail signage and displays.

Now serving as FCG's CEO, Schuld says the company is in a growth stage. With over 300,000 sq. ft. of production space, its work aims to "transcend the shelf" through a variety of offerings from retail signage, point-of-sale displays, and dynamic, connected packaging to kitting and delivery. Its work even includes custom-made displays featuring lights, motors, and sound. Its capabilities run the gamut from concept design and rendering to in-house sheeting and digital, flexo, and offset printing, plus diecutting and folding.

Growth Through Investment

In this exciting journey of growth, FCG's investment in cutting-edge equipment has been pivotal. To make its retail-printing services a reality, the print service provider has invested in several pieces of equipment to push its capabilities forward. Some



standouts that have helped build the business into what it is today, include:

- 2017: The 7-color KVA 164 printer helped FCG become a make-ready shop – saving costs, material, and time.
- 2018: The HP Scitex 11000 Industrial Press and HP Indigo 30000 Digital Press allowed FCG to run some of its jobs digitally and break into the markets it currently serves.
- 2019: The Lamina FAS+ laminating/mounting machine helped FCG increase its capacity to litho mount to corrugate.
- 2019: Two Crest clamshell diecutters (63" and 108") brought cutting and laminating in-house.

Most recently, the company purchased Agfa's Onset X3 HS after seeing the press in action at the PRINTING United Expo in 2022. Bieg, Schuld, and FCG's Vice President of Operations Joe Hefner attended last year's event with a plan to check out equipment from three or four major vendors, including Agfa.

"Our time spent at the X3 was a meaningful way to visualize where, what, how this machine would help us on the floor," she explains. "Watching it change over and just actually getting to play with it a little bit with the sales reps helped us make that decision."

Bieg says the team didn't waste any time getting things moving. They saw everything they wanted in October at the Expo, and within one week, began pricing everything out with Agfa. They put in the order, and the press was installed in February 2023 with operators trained. "I mean, how quickly we got it up and running, we couldn't have asked for more with that," Schuld says.

The press boasts 24/7 printing at 15,600 sq. ft./hr. and can handle a variety of substrates with little downtime between media changes thanks to robotics and automation. While the addition of a new press is exciting, FCG was the first PSP to run the press with Agfa-made inks in North America following Agfa's acquisition of Inca Digital Printers in June 2022.

Since the installation, the Onset X3 HS has been the "workhorse" of FCG's digital press room, Bieg says. It offers quick changeover and consistent output, making it the press that takes on the majority of FCG's retail, signage-based projects.

"We've run everything from displays on corrugate to projects that are heavy with SBS," Schuld shares. "In addition, we've noticed quite an uptick in business that runs for





national brands and retailers that are localized to specific geographic areas. The Onset X3 HS has increased our ability to turn these projects around much quicker and more cost effectively.”

The In-House Advantage

With continued product investments, FCG hopes to be the one-stop shop for its client’s retail display needs. Schuld says it makes everything easier, especially when a PSP’s aim is speed to market. He says the way to offer the best price and shorter lead times is to have control over production, thus bringing everything in-house. This setup was especially helpful during the COVID-19 pandemic when there were unknowns around costs, availability, and capacity.

Asking what differentiates FCG from other PSPs, Schuld says: “I would say we’re in a unique spot; we’re in a sweet spot where we’re big enough to handle really complex programs. For one of the large retailers — for one of their back-to-school programs — we were sending out 15 truckloads a day for two straight weeks where every store was getting a skid of product.”

That sheer horsepower, to be able to deliver on a job of that size, and still be nimble enough to take on change, is FCG’s competitive advantage. He says too small, and a business can’t manage; too large, and a PSP has too much red tape to get through.

2023 Expo and Beyond

Looking ahead at what the company wants to invest in next, the team plans to attend the 2023 PRINTING United Expo. However, it has its eyes on smaller format digital equipment that’s 40" and less.

“There used to be a much bigger group of companies doing what we’re doing and now that’s shrunk, which is good and bad,” Schuld explains. “Good news — our competitive advantages, this, and that. The bad news is from the manufacturer standpoint of making equipment, there’s not as big of a market for that.”

That said, Schuld and the team have to get creative and look for equipment that’s meant for other industries and “MacGyvering” it to work for FCG’s needs in the retail space.

Looking ahead at the next five to 10 years, Schuld says while the transformation of going from a litho label and folding carton business (formerly known as Flower City Printing) to a retail marketing display company is nearly complete, the company is in its growth





phase. After making not only equipment changes but leadership and culture changes in the last five years, he says FCG can now focus on building up from a solid foundation.

Working toward that growth, FCG has some new equipment coming next year, including a new labeler in January 2024 and a 100” diecutter that can cut 3,000 sheets per hour. Additions like these allow FCG to grow in its capabilities, accelerate its speed to market, and keep up with customer needs in the fast-moving retail space.

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Notes to editors

About Agfa

The Agfa-Gevaert Group is a leading company in imaging technology and IT solutions with over 150 years of experience. The Group operates through three divisions: Radiology Solutions, Healthcare IT, and Digital Print & Chemicals. They develop, manufacture, and market analog and digital systems for the healthcare sector, for specific industrial applications, and for the printing industry. In 2024, the Group achieved a turnover of € 1,138 million.

About Agfa’s Digital Printing Solutions

Agfa’s Digital Printing Solutions aims to advance the use of inkjet printing technology across diverse industries, helping businesses become more versatile, efficient, and sustainable. By understanding the unique needs and challenges of each sector, Agfa partners with its customers to deliver innovative printing solutions.

Agfa offers a comprehensive range of high-quality inkjet printers, inks, software, and services. These products can be provided as fully integrated solutions or as customized components within larger production workflows, ensuring exceptional quality, productivity, and cost-effectiveness. With global service and support, Agfa helps businesses achieve outstanding printing results and drive growth.

To find out more please visit: www.agfa.com.

Please note that more information is also available in the Agfa Newsroom:

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