I wanna have fun!

When it comes to developing prototypes for packaging, this team has no inhibitions about experimenting.

Bräutigam:Medien GmbH, Hanau, Germany.
“I like to enjoy myself”, concedes Ulrike Börstinghaus with a forthright smile. Attentive and radiant, she is evidently successful at getting her staff on board the wagon-train of her life’s motto. For the accomplishments of this team specialised in mock-up packaging are nothing short of astounding.

It was in 2005 that Ulrike Börstinghaus managed the great leap forward. Following differences with her business partners at the time, she went straight ahead and established a new enterprise. It took her just two months to set up the company and get it off the ground. The result was a hybrid of work achieved by her grandfather, who broke into the packaging market from the artistic side, and that of her father, who advanced the technology side of the second-generation family business. A qualified engineer and art-lover herself, Börstinghaus embodies both of these aspects. The 20-strong workforce – including the boss – is creatively talented and remarkably motivated. The machinery required to realise their ideas was scrupulously selected by Ulrike Börstinghaus herself. The centre-pieces are a swissQprint large format UV printer and a Zünd G3 cutter. This duo of Swiss instruments together enables

an end-to-end print and cut process. “The only machines shortlisted were ones with whose origin I was familiar”, she states with business-like emphasis.

Unique business model

Bräutigam:Medien provides sophisticated, production-ready packaging prototypes. There is a unique character to the company’s business model. Sometimes the team starts on the basis of firm specifications, at other times it is involved in creative and concept work before moving on to implementation and bringing a project to the point where it can go into mass production. Projects may involve redesigns, or completely new products. The tricky point with these is that materials or specific surface textures are often not (yet) available on the market. It is in such situations that the team goes into high gear, using UV varnish to fabricate ribbed structures or seemingly embossed lettering. It may sound simple, yet a high degree of specialisation is called for on the part of the staff. As one example, they will employ reverse-printed films to lend the desired outer sheen to the wrapper for a bar of chocolate. Normally – insofar as there is a ‘normal’ – printing comes first, followed by finishing: milling, engraving, dry-embossing, assembly. Even gold leaf appliqués and hot sealing find uses on occasion. Lately, Bräutigam:Medien has also been supporting certain customers with innovative shop fitting concepts. “Meeting the highest demands in these projects is motivation and energy source at the same time“, says Börstinghaus.

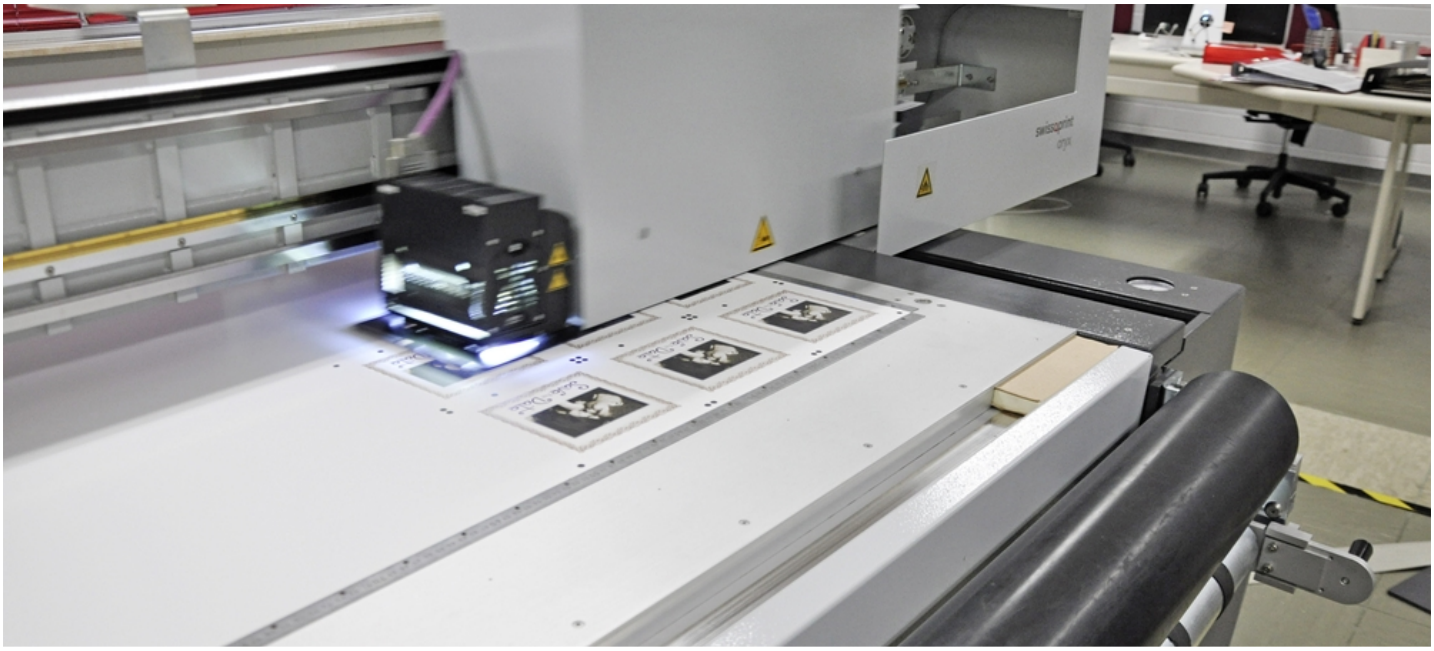
Ulrike Börstinghaus: “The packaging market is increasingly moving toward finishing and individualisation, with shorter print runs.”

Perfectionistic professionals

All-round familiarity with the industry, thorough knowledge of printing and production processes, outstanding imaginative powers, and courage to think 'outside the box' are among the qualifications that the team brings to its work. One factor not to be neglected is that things which look wonderful in an experimental setting must also be suitable for implementation in a mass production environment later on. When implementing the concept specifications, it occasionally becomes evident that they will not work in practice. This is when the Bräutigam specialists step into the breach and develop something entirely novel – even on behalf of major brands. Customers have trust in them. Ferrero, for example, has done steady business with Bräutigam for more than 45 years. Only when all parties stand firmly behind the finished prototype will Bräutigam:Medien wrap up the project and hand it over to the client for mass production. What remains is a meticulously exact log of the steps taken in development so that past accomplishments are readily reproducible with unchanging quality.

True-to-life mock-ups

The prototypes always look strikingly authentic. That authenticity is a crucial element because prototypes are frequently used in market research surveys. But a product manager, too, is more enthusiastic and feels much surer when appraising true-to-life mock-ups instead of 3-D CAD simulations or plain white samples. "Our ability to produce items that so closely match the real thing is in large part due to our Oryx", explains Ulrike Börstinghaus. The swissQprint machine's eight colour channels are populated with CMYK plus light cyan and light magenta, with additional white and varnish. "Thus equipped, we have no problem in covering any desired colour gamut", says Börstinghaus. Varnish is used to produce visual as well as tactile effects. White is very often printed as a background for the actual design. "When we ordered the white channel, we were unaware of what white handling meant in reality", she emphasises, adding: "Only now do we know that many others are struggling with the same thing." swissQprint machines keep the white ink constantly agitated, which prevents sedimentation and ensures reliable white printing. She is also glad about having decided on a pure flatbed system, with reference to the machine's high printing quality and modest space requirement. Oryx places droplets of just 9 or 14 picolitres with utmost precision and produces a visual resolution of 2160 dpi. The system is equipped with a roll to roll option for flexible media, giving total freedom in the choice of substrate.



The Oryx UV printing machine appeals with precise printing, and requires only a modest amount of space. The Bräutigam:Medien team uses it for any and all kinds of printing jobs required in developing sophisticated packaging prototypes.

Unabashedly experimental

The Bräutigam team is matter-of-fact about their ability to handle all the relevant substrates, and puts the Oryx UV printer to work on everything that might match the concept in hand: solid and corrugated board, thin aluminium foils, plastic films just 25 µm thick, vellum, cap

material for sparkling wine bottles, MDF … any conceivable material may be used for experimentation. The end results include complex packaging cartons, sleeves, distinctive identities for wine bottles, as well as POS items such as sales counters, stand-up displays and roll-ups. Ulrike Börstinghaus has a clear point to make: “We wouldn’t have made it to where we stand today without the Oryx. Already in our first six months of ownership, we have printed more than we could ever have expected.” Since acquiring the digital printer, the company can additionally simulate transparent and hollow container packaging.

Asked about what trends she observes in the marketplace, the canny business-woman answers: “The packaging market is increasingly moving toward finishing and individualisation, with shorter print runs. In addition, branded goods manufacturers are leaving less and less to chance and do more and more testing.” Against this background, it looks like a rosy future for Bräutigam:Medien. Prototypes are an indispensable part of packaging development. Yet growth at any cost is not the goal for Ulrike Börstinghaus. Continuing to enjoy herself, though, is what she wants.

Company	Bräutigam – Ihr Mediendienstleister GmbH, Germany
Website	www.braeutigam-medien.de
Segment	Media services
Established	2005
Employees	20
Printer	Oryx
References	Branded food product manufacturers (packaging development, sales promotion, exhibition/marketing samples, advertising materials, displays) Packaging and display manufacturers (prototypes)