

Turning a nightmare into a business idea

Personalisable identification bracelets. So that no child will ever get lost again.

Infoband Innovations AB, Höganäs, Sweden, once a nightmare, now a success story: a colourful wristband. Infoband. Printed digitally, labelled by hand. This high-quality identification bracelet from a small company is taking the world by storm.



A child goes missing – every mother's nightmare. Nina Story has been through it. She spent what felt like an eternity searching for her small son on a beach. Happily, she found her little boy. And she later told the story to an acquaintance, Dov Gatmon. That conversation gave rise to the idea of a wristband that could be labelled with identifying personal details. It would need to be colourful and fun to make it enjoyable for children to wear: at a holiday resort, a shopping complex or an amusement park.

One company, one product

Dov Gatmon spun the idea further. The bracelet could also be used to identify patients in hospital, or it could just as well signal a person as belonging to a tourist group. It could be a credential for visitors at a festival, and carry advertising at the same time. From this idea, a

business took shape. A business with just one product and two lines. The first: the reusable "Infoband". The second: a single-use bracelet "Once".

High-tech substrate

Gatmon was certain from the beginning: he wanted to bring a high-quality item to market. First, he found the right material: a super-soft plastic. Pleasant on the skin, and compounded ecologically. Its special feature: thousands of tiny pores. Write on it with a ball point pen, and the ink sinks into the pores. And it stays there, even when a child wearing it goes swimming in the sea. Water-resistant markers also work, of course, but are not absolutely necessary.

The printing challenge

The tallest hurdle was the printing process. The clever pores in the material posed a challenge. Although Gatmon went into production using a digital roll to roll press, he stayed on the lookout for an optimal solution. Because he was not really happy about ink adhesion or the printing quality. Buyers likewise. "We lost customers and money", is how he puts it. When swissQprint came to his attention, he lost no time in taking material samples to Switzerland. And it was in the swissQprint printing laboratory that he first beheld the result he had imagined.



Personalisable identification bracelets. Printed onto sheets, assembled by hand.

Crucial investment

Now the small company faced an important decision. Buying a premium printer meant a huge investment, but also promised long-awaited success. And so Gatmon decided on an Oryx flatbed printer. That was back in 2009, and the printer remains in use in its original configuration: the eight colour channels have double head configuration with CMYK, supplemented with light cyan, light magenta, white and effect varnish. The printer is equipped for roll to roll printing and has a board option that enables it to print oversized formats up to 2.5×4 metres. The machine's flatbed measures 2.5×1.5 metres. Gatmon liked its print quality and ease of use right from the start. He calls it the smart-machine. "It's like an iPhone", he laughs. Another thing promised him by swissQprint and its partner, NIZE equipment, also proved true over time. Namely, that the machine would be reliable and durable. Gatmon confirms it: "It simply gets on with work, there are virtually no interruptions".



An Oryx flatbed printer helped achieve the breakthrough for Dov Gatmon, founder of Infoband, and operations manager Anna Berglund.

Flatbed rather than roll to roll

It is surprising that the flexible material is printed on the flatbed in sheets, rather than from a roll. A single Infoband measures 20×2 cm and 510 of them fit on a sheet. Unlike with the previous roll to roll printing method, there is zero material waste here. Within eight minutes, the Oryx has printed colourful and intricate patterns onto the front surface, and the black reverse is done within four minutes. "Processing from a roll would take longer overall", knows Gatmon. The second surprise: the wristbands are cut out and assembled by hand. That too is faster than putting them through a machine.

Rapid response times

Anna Berglund, operations manager at Infoband, is enthusiastic about the Oryx solution: "We provide samples within one working day, which regularly stuns new customers". There is complete freedom where run length is concerned, with short runs completed in next to no time. "We deliver to private individuals and companies in various industries around the world", says Berglund. She lists retailers, zoos and well-known amusement parks.

Second machine

Meanwhile, Gatmon has established a second company: Mediagården. Since October 2014, this service provider has been producing trade show and POS displays, as well as interior decoration elements. They are printed on a Nyala (3.2 × 1.6 m flatbed), similarly configured as the Oryx with six colours plus white and primer. The Nyala also has both roll to roll and board options. "After the success with Oryx, it was crystal clear that swissQprint was the only candidate for Mediagården", says the resourceful businessman, who will doubtless soon be hatching new ideas.



Company	Infoband Innovations AB, Höganäs, Sweden
Website	www.infoband.com
Segment	Industrial printing
Established	2005
Employees	2
Printer	Oryx
References	TUI Travel, Rail and shipping companies, Tryg, IF, insurance providers, Event agencies, Theme parks (Legoland, zoos), Retailers