

Design to delivery, WIR creates digital and valuable labels

With the combination of HP Indigo digital printing and Cartes finishing technology, the young German label maker is growing its share of the premium market.

To call WIR a digital native company would be only partially appropriate. The Bavarian newco, founded in 2009 by sisters Jasmin and Saskia Reissner, hinges on the decades of experience in label production of Richard and Roswitha Reissner, parents of the two young entrepreneurs.

The 'new' WIR, which emerged from the acquisition of a branch of the family label company, now stands as a creative agency specialising in the design and just-in-time production of complex, highly customised labels.

To tradition, the company contrasts the drive for innovation imparted by a young and enthusiastic team, and the desire to proactively respond to the growing demand for premium labels, including from small and medium-sized producers in various commodity sectors. WIR, which now has a team of 15 people, has since its establishment made human and professional growth, research and development, and investment in innovative technology its pillars.

In 2022, the company decided to move away from analogue printing, divesting two Gallus offset lines to concentrate all processing on the HP Indigo 6K digital platform, which in February 2023 was joined by a Cartes GT-360 digital finishing line with Jet D-Screen.

A diverse clientele, hungry for exclusive products

WIR makes labels for wines and high-end liquors, craft beers, honey, preserves, coffee, food supplements, perfumes and personal care products. The customer base consists largely of small and medium-sized enterprises, both in Bavaria and the rest of Germany, as well as other countries of the DACH region. Thanks to its ability to design and produce limited series, starting from a few hundred pieces, the company has increased its specialisation in the turnkey production of promotional labels for events, holidays, corporate gifts, special editions and operations marketing. Each year, WIR promotes its products and services by exhibiting at local fairs and events dedicated to beekeeping and direct marketing for the agricultural sector.

WIR relies heavily on graphic design and its pre-press department, equipped with the most advanced automatic preflight and colour management technologies. The creative team, led by Jasmin Reissner, creates from scratch the client's graphic, or supports external agencies by proposing the most suitable. Thanks to the close cooperation between the graphics department and the production team, the label maker is able to produce realistic prototypes and always ensure flawless reproduction of images and spot colours.



Machine operator on CARTES GT364VHJR

Printing and finishing, integrated to respond to market changes

Over the past decade, WIR has constantly renewed its fleet of equipment, focusing firmly on systems capable of quickly embellishing, finishing and delivering jobs. To enrich its labels, the label maker performs all kinds of embossing, embossing and printing using hot stamping, applying gold foils and using silver, glossy and matte, coloured and holographic foils. Although it already employs two lines for finishing – one with flexo printing and semi-rotary die-cutting and one with flexo printing, foiling and semi-rotary die cutting – changes taking place in the market require WIR to streamline the processes downstream of printing.

'For some time now we have been seeing a growing demand for customised labels, in smaller quantities and with shorter lead times,' says Jasmine Reissner, co-owner and marketing manager of WIR. 'To meet the needs of customers, we needed a technical solution that could lower the fixed costs and bottlenecks of analogue production even in finishing and embellishment, which would adapt to digital printing and guaranteed extreme quality.'

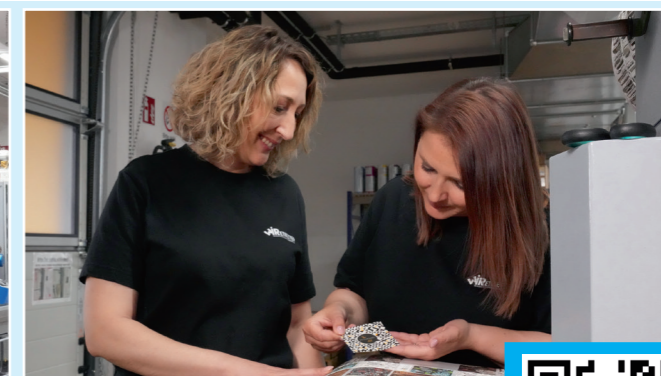
The solution became apparent when Dortschy, WIR's longtime supplier and partner, introduced the Cartes GT360 finishing line to its owners in late 2021. Capturing WIR's interest is the modularity and expandability of the Cartes architecture, and the possibility of integrating the Jet D-Screen digital embellishment and foiling module.



From left to right: Mr. Stefan Knoblich (Dortschy – CARTES' German agent), Mrs. Jasmin Reißner (WIR Co-Owner), Mr. Federico Benassi (CARTES Sales department) and Mrs. Saskia Reißner (WIR Co-Owner)



Mrs. Jasmin Reißner (WIR Co-Owner) and Mrs. Saskia Reißner (WIR Co-Owner)



Everything in line for labels

After examining some samples, with the cooperation of Dortschy, WIR's owners visited the Cartes demo centre, where they conduct tests with different types of files and papers, both coated and natural, printed with both HP Indigo and analogue technology. With the support of Cartes technicians, the two partners dispelled any doubts and fine-tuned the ideal configuration for their needs.

'With GT360, in one step we can embellish both small and medium quantities of labels without additional costs of equipment and startups,' explains Ms Reissner. 'Jet D-Screen allows for much thicker reserve coatings than silk-screen printing and any other digital system, with extraordinary detail in both coating and foil applications.'

With variable data management capabilities, Jet D-Screen will enable the German label maker to offer its customers labels with lettering, numbering, barcoding and other details painted and laminated in register. Even in the area of die-cutting, a crucial factor in delivering flawless batches of labels, WIR benefits from the unique solutions techniques designed by Cartes, including the Air Gap System (AGS) devices and Image Distortion System (IDS). The former makes it possible to adjust the distance between the die-cutting plate and the material to be cut with micrometric precision, achieving perfect cuts from the very first metre.

The second, thanks to the dedicated software and self-adjusting mechanism, allows you to lengthen or shorten the die (in the sense of length) by up to 20%, making it possible to adapt and reuse dies already in stock.

'As we were already doing with printing, we are now able to finish the labels with an almost entirely digital,' says Saskia Reissner, co-owner and finance manager at WIR. 'This gives us an advantage over our competitors, and simplifies the work of our operators.'

Towards new opportunities

With an integrated digital workflow, WIR looks to the future with optimism. Within about six months of installation, the company moved an increasing amount of orders from its pre-existing equipment to the Cartes GT360 line, achieving substantial economic and operational benefits, reducing waste and start-up time, and freeing up time and personnel from low-value-added assignments. 'Thanks to the new production capacity made possible by GT360, we want to attract new customers and address other market segments,' concludes Ms Reissner. 'Above all, we aim to meet our customers' needs even better, and to satisfy them with increasingly attractive labels.'