

# Sovemec's labels are stunning and variable thanks to the Cartes Jet D-Screen

Campania-based company increases production efficiency, expands product portfolio and wins customers with an analogue and digital finishing line, the Cartes GT360. By Lorenzo Villa

Sovemec's story began in 1984, in a garage in Somma Vesuviana on the outskirts of Naples. Here, Antonio Coppola installed a letterpress machine for printing continuous forms. The response of the market and the resourcefulness of its founder, allowed Sovemec to grow rapidly until moving to its current 4000sqm production facility.

In the early 2000s, the decline of the continuous form prompted Sovemec to diversify its offer, and to look with interest at self-adhesive labels, also web-printed but richer and more technically complex. As Mario Coppola, Antonio's son, joined the company, Sovemec purchased its first waterless offset press, followed by sister units in subsequent years.

Then, in 2010, the company installed the first Codimag 420 with Aniflo waterless technology: a hybrid solution between a flexo and a no grinding offset, which guarantees high print quality, repeatability and low operating costs. Also in 2010, the company gives birth to Etisud, and in 2013 it extends its range of wine solutions to PVC and aluminium poly laminate shrink capsules.

Compounded by the growing weight of the wine and olive oil segment, in November 2021 Sovemec introduced a Cartes GT360 finishing line with Jet D-Screen digital finishing unit, laying the foundation for growth in new high-end markets.

As of 2022, the group now has 33 employees, with sales of more than €6 million.

## New products, customers and challenges

Sovemec serves more than 6000 small and medium-sized companies in the food, cosmetics, automotive and industrial sectors, producing medium and large volumes of labels for them. Etisud, on the other hand, specialises in premium labels for wines, oils, vinegars, nuts and premium foods for export. In both divisions, the group's strength is a turnkey service, from consulting to design, pre-press, printing and finishing, to delivery of the finished product, in the fastest time and at the right price. 'Our productions have seasonal peaks, including bottling wines between January and February, and packaging detergents and lubricating oils in the summer,' explains Mario Coppola, CEO of Sovemec. 'Having a very diverse customer base, and producing over 100 million labels a year, peaks and urgencies are the order of the day.'

One of Sovemec's challenges is to make long runs coexist with just-in-time orders of a few thousand pieces. While making dozens of machine starts per day, the company has never succumbed to the temptation of digital, continuing to streamline its offset printing workflow. A decision reconfirmed again in 2021, when the label maker decided to invest in the Cartes finishing line.

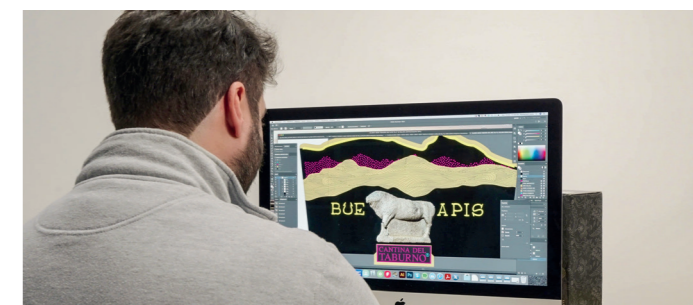


## Entry into embellishment and the (unexpected) leap into digital

While cultivating a more than decade-long relationship of mutual esteem, the technological paths of Sovemec and Cartes have only crossed in recent years, since the label maker has been receiving increasingly technically and aesthetically sophisticated orders. While attracted to the new creative possibilities, the company is frightened by the possible difficulties and inefficiencies of sometimes very complex processing. 'More and more creative agencies, from all over Italy, were asking us for special coatings, three-dimensional reliefs and micro-engraved foils, which were unheard of for us,' Mr Coppola says. 'Having a channel of dialogue with Cartes, we approached them with confidence, planning demonstrations and tests. In addition to the aesthetic result, we asked them for a solution that would be flexible, easy to use, and would not create bottlenecks and encumbrances.'

After analysing Sovemec's production needs, the manufacturer finetuned a customised configuration of its GT360 platform, equipped with semi-rotary flexo printing, three screen printing units, hot foil, and semi-rotary die-cutting. At the same time, Cartes shows the label maker the first version of its Jet D-Screen digital finishing module, arousing its interest. 'Our goal was to do everything inline, thus avoiding additional steps that would have increased production costs. GT360 turned out to be perfect,' Mr Coppola points out. 'Jet D-Screen then seemed like a bold idea, but not a risky one, so we chose to integrate it into the new line right away.'

Finally, the converter also asked Cartes to integrate the Label On Label (LOL) unit, which allows inline lamination of a pre-printed label onto another machine, eliminating additional offline steps. In November 2021, the Cartes GT360 went into production and, in a matter of weeks, adapts to Sovemec and Etisud's fast pace, enabling the label maker



to fulfil a variety of jobs in the same day, from ordering to printing to finishing and converting.

## Screen printing and foiling at the top, both traditional and digital

By choosing Cartes' flatbed screen printing, Sovemec aims to achieve extreme quality results by coating and applying foil even on very small details and embossed surfaces. With Jet D-Screen, the label maker is able to replicate in register screen printing coating even on small quantities, without making frames. Cartes' multi-pass inkjet technology also makes it possible to produce up to three different coating thicknesses on the same label in a single pass, up to a maximum of 800µm. High-thickness coating, combined with Cartes' foiling unit and special oven, also makes it possible to create a metal doming effect.

'With Jet D-Screen we can do jobs that would be impossible or uneconomical in analogue,' Mr Coppola points out. 'With fast make-readies and perfect registration, we can offset print and embellishment as few as 4-5000 labels, quickly and at competitive prices.'

In the spring of 2022, Sovemec organised an event in collaboration with Cartes, Fedrigoni and Luxoro, in which it showed more than 60 agencies and designers from all over Italy the new production possibilities. Over the course of the

day, starting with the digital file, operators created a printed, embellished and die-cut multipage label, with the addition of digital varnishing and embossed foil.

## Towards new levels of service

In addition to introducing new products, and streamlining workflows, Sovemec and Etisud have chosen to extend the operational benefits of Jet D-Screen to customers, who can now obtain a realistic prototype of their label without incurring facility costs.

In the start-up phase, moreover, the customer can make last-minute changes without significantly impacting time and costs. Product quality and increased efficiency, made possible by Cartes GT360, have enabled Sovemec and Etisud to win new customers in all parts of Italy, and beyond the national borders.

'We are receiving orders from customers in Piedmont, Lombardy and Veneto, which we could not have fulfilled before for efficiency reasons. We are studying novel products with many of them and Cartes is always with us to test materials, fine-tune processes, and introduce new features.'

By 2023, Sovemec expects to offer fully variable printed and embellished labels, taking full advantage of the potential of Jet D-Screen and introducing a hybrid printing line with inkjet technology.