

Xaar's digital inkjet technologies are transforming print processes in a wide range of markets.

Industrial markets

Ceramic Tile Decoration

The majority of the tile decoration market uses digital inkjet technology because, compared to traditional analogue techniques, it is superior in terms of image quality and is lower in cost. In addition, it offers the advantages of flexibility, inventory reduction and larger tile size capability. This is a mature market for Xaar with strong competition. However, with an average useful life of five to six years, several hundred new ceramics printers are required each year for the foreseeable future. Xaar's unrivalled 720 dpi print resolution is starting to attract the attention of tile manufacturers looking to print large slabs for kitchenware (such as table tops).

Decorative Laminates

Realistic wood finishes or creative design are the key features which sell the board/plank/finished item. The digital quality that can be produced with Xaar printheads matches the quality produced by the analogue process, thereby offering the opportunity for more economic short run work to be undertaken whilst reducing inventories and improving time-to-market.

Functional Fluid Deposition

Xaar's focus on functional fluid promotes our inkjet technology, which offers an unrivalled method of non-contact, fluid deposition with incredible precision, control and speed. Typically applications are challenging, pushing our technology to and beyond known limits in markets such as Flat Panel Display, Semiconductors, Printed Electronics and Optics.

3D Printing

3D Printing is a manufacturing methodology that encompasses a range of processes and applications, with a common theme of building parts up, usually layer-upon-layer. This additive approach ultimately enables manufacturers to eliminate the need for tooling. There are significant advantages, including superior geometric freedom, giving designers much more capability, and a substantial reduction in lead time for products. In addition 3D Printing provides the facility to tailor unique products to consumers, enable de-centralised manufacturing and shrink spare part storage.

Glass Printing

Architectural glass is increasingly used to complement ceramic tiles in modern commercial design, and is starting to be used in residential projects also. Functional glass, such as car windscreens or glass tops used in induction hob cookers, is predominantly printed using analogue screen techniques, but is increasingly moving to digital to provide production flexibility and inventory reduction. This is an emerging sector for digital inkjet and the Xaar 2002 is the leading printhead for this market due to technology advantages.

Packaging markets

Coding & Marking

Coding & Marking is an application which relates to printing product identification codes such as batch numbers, use by dates and barcodes. Xaar's technology is used to print barcodes and logos on outer case/secondary packaging of consumer goods. This is an established and stable business, and competes with alternative technologies including print and apply, and thermal inkjet.

Primary Labels

Labels are used for many different applications, including product identification, name tags, warning and hazard identification, promotions and as decals for product decoration. There is a large range of substrates and inks in this application which adds complexity to the conversion process. Xaar excels in two areas of label printing: colours (including white) and varnish based finishing effects using Xaar's High Laydown Technology.

Direct-to-Shape

Direct-to-Shape is the application where bottles and containers have the image printed directly onto their surface without the need for a label. The solution is aimed at reducing unit costs versus the application of a label. This approach can also be used as part of the identity of a brand, and provides differentiation versus other products that use paper or plastic labels. Xaar printheads are the best at printing in a vertical mode (a frequent requirement for these applications), thanks to TF Technology.

Other markets

Product Printing

Product Printing covers printing onto all kinds of industrial objects, including consumer and promotional items, packaging, medical, automotive, apparel, appliances, sports equipment and toys. Xaar's printheads are particularly suitable to these applications because the printhead design enables the use of a wide range of fluids as well as configurations options. In addition, Xaar company Engineered Printing Solutions (EPS) is a leader in this sector, providing best-fit custom printing solutions for many different applications, including promotional, packaging, medical, automotive, apparel, appliances, sports equipment and toys.

Grand- and Wide-Format Graphics

Grand- and Wide-Format Graphics includes both indoor and outdoor signage and advertising, including billboards, posters and point of sale advertising. It is the most mature industrial inkjet market, active for over 15 years. Xaar's early product range was instrumental in the growth of the digital graphics industry around the world.

New inkjet applications

Xaar's Ultra High Viscosity Technology enables jetting of fluids around 100 centipoises (cP) at jetting temperature, equating to approximately 1000cP at ambient temperature – going well beyond average jetting capabilities of 10-12cP. This opens up inkjet to a wider range of applications including printing adhesives and solder masks.