

CPCs Speak to FTA

Through Pollsters, Association Secures Package-Buyer Ratings of Flexo's Core Advantages

FLEXO®: FTA's *Flexible Packaging Market Research Study: Converter Benchmarking & End-User Perspectives in North America* is reported to have drawn more input from consumer products companies than any similar studies done in the past. How many CPCs actually participated in the survey?

FTA POLLSTERS: We spoke directly with more than 120 end users that represent every flexible-packaging sector.

FLEXO: Why do you consider CPC input to be of monumental significance?

FTA POLLSTERS: CPCs have traditionally been very proprietary when it comes to sharing any information about their existing business or future plans. It is precisely because their input has been so difficult to gather—in any quantity—that having done so for this study means that we can reveal a range of issues, both present and future. FTA's findings will definitely be of primary interest to flexible-packaging printers.

FLEXO: What questions drew the heaviest or lengthiest responses, and why do you think this was the case?

FTA POLLSTERS: When asked what a flexible-packaging converter can do to make the lives of their customers easier, end users had a lot to say. This feedback, compiled into one of the study's most extensive chapters, presents the flexible-packaging converter and industry suppliers with an invaluable resource tool for strategic planning directives.

End users expect their flexible-packaging suppliers to increasingly offer innovative solutions tailored to their own requirements and product marketing plans.

FLEXO: What did CPCs consider more important: price, delivery time or quality of printing?

FTA POLLSTERS: Price. It should, however, be said that the ranked importance of these criteria varied with different end-use categories (personal care, food, beverage, etc.). The study breaks this down further and discusses the ranked importance of these prime factors according to the different end-use sectors.

FLEXO: What did CPCs see as the most significant advantages of flexography, as compared to other print processes?

FTA POLLSTERS: Numerous end users discussed the continued closing of the flexo/gravure quality gap while stressing flexo's core advantage of flexibility. The study gives a full lead-time analysis per end-use sector (listing average lead times). End users continuously stressed that run sizes are diminishing in length, and that the flexographic printing process is at the cen-

ter of their regional and promotional marketing strategies, given the process' ability to turn high-quality product over quickly.

FLEXO: Based on their input, would you see it as likely that more and more jobs will be migrated over to flexo?

FTA POLLSTERS: Absolutely. The study contains direct quotes from end users as to why.

FLEXO: How can flexible-packaging printers utilize the CPC input contained in FTA's survey to better their business and enhance their competitive advantage?

FTA POLLSTERS: It's imperative that flexible-packaging converters and industry suppliers are cognizant of the business strategies that drive packaging decisions downstream in the supply chain.

What occurs in brand management, design and marketing meetings within end-user conference rooms has a direct impact on flexible-packaging converters and, in turn, their equipment and consumables suppliers. There is an easily-made connection between the record number of end users who took the time to participate in FTA's research endeavors and their repeated advice and recommendations. FTA research findings reveal exactly how flexible-packaging printers/converters can better organize their businesses to more effectively meet the changing requirements of today's marketplace.

CPC DEMANDS

Improvements are required in:

- Tighter color-to-color registration with four-color process.
- Print quality for metallics.
- Run-to-run consistency.
- Water-based ink adhesion characteristics.
- Holding dots; vignette quality.
- Ability to print 150 lpi+ screens.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the third in a series of synopses of the findings of FTA's *Flexible Packaging Market Study: Converter Benchmarking & End-User Perspectives in North America*. The full report is now available for purchase. **Binder or CD-ROM:** FTA Member: \$595.00 | Non-member: \$1,395. **Set (includes both binder and CD-ROM):** FTA Member: \$773.50 | Non-member: \$1,813.50
To order, contact FTA's Customer Service Department by phone: 631-737-6020.