



IMTECH
Experts In Inkjet

Engineering Excellence Fuels ImTech's Growth

The fast-growing inkjet field is an excellent opportunity for engineers to develop new technologies to help customers get the most out of their systems. For example, Hewlett-Packard is one of the key players in the digital printing market, and its systems require high-quality inks.

Ideally enough, ImTech, one of HP's licensed OEMs and ink manufacturers, is literally right across the street from HP's Corvallis, OR headquarters.

ImTech, a 10-year-old ink and systems specialist, was founded by Bill Buskirk and Charlie Gilson, two longtime HP engineers who had led the release of many HP products, including inkjet printers, ink cartridges, calculators, portable computers and peripherals. They decided to strike out on their own as an engineering firm, doing contract work with HP.

It should come as little surprise, then, that ImTech quickly began work on inkjet, finding HP's industrial printers to be an ideal opportunity.

"We were very interested in jetting technology," said Leston Faulds, ImTech's director of sales and marketing. "We started expanding into other engineering projects, and came across the concept of jetting UV curable ink through HP 45 cartridges."

In April 2006, ImTech introduced the first commercially available UV inks for HP cartridges. At Labelexpo Americas 2008, ImTech launched its high performance, UV LED curable ink for HP 45 cartridges. The UV LED curable ink cures under low heat UV LED diode arrays at speeds greater than 175 feet per minute and 200 feet per minute under conventional UV arc lamps. The ink has demonstrated superior adhesion to PVC, PET film, HDPE, foils, polyethylene label stock, vinyl labels and a variety of aqueous and UV over-coated substrates.

"The industrial markets have a variety of printing technologies embedded into their processes, and there is a need for fluids that stick to a wide range of substrates such as data cards, PVC cards, shrink sleeves, specialized foils or other direct product marking materials," Mr. Faulds said. "One problem with printing on different non-porous sub-

strates is that some are damaged with heat. Conventional UV arc lamps release a lot of heat, and if you are working with sensitive items, there are issues. Our goal was to make inks that printers will use in the HP 45 cartridge, adhere to a broad range of substrates, and that are sensitive enough so they will cure with relatively low energy.

"There is a lot of excitement about LED curing," Mr. Faulds added. "LED lamps have a smaller form factor and emit little or no heat. Packaging lines may have limited space for printing systems, so LED diodes may have an

advantage for some installations. We announced our LED curable ink at Labelexpo, and there was a lot of interest. We are also working on other projects, such as jetting metallics and adhesives. We believe that jetting metallics will be very important in areas such as covert markings and track and trace applications."

ImTech's work with OEMs is impressive. The company has more than 150 patent authorships for HP, and has developed equipment for Fuji Dimatix, among other companies. ImTech also customizes systems to use as prototypes. Today, ImTech provides specialty inks, printing systems and related consulting and engineering services for inkjet applications. Its products range from piezo and thermal inkjet development and characterization tools to HP industrial coders to bulk systems and inks.

ImTech's path has clearly been successful. ImTech was acknowledged as one of the Fastest Growing Private Companies in Oregon in 2003 and 2004. In 2006, ImTech was named the Development Stage Company of the Year by the Oregon Entrepreneurs Forum. In 2008, ImTech came in 27th in *Portland Business Journal's* 100 Fastest Growing Private Companies.

It is certain that ImTech will continue to grow, as the company thrives on looking at new projects and developing innovative solutions.

"It seems like every day we look at something that hasn't been tried yet," Mr. Faulds said. "It's exciting for our people."

— David Savastano



ImTech

2101 NE Jack London St.

Corvallis, OR 97330

Tel: +1 (541) 757-2047

Fax: +1 (541) 757-2087

www.imtech-or.com

E-mail: info@imtech-or.com

Specialties: UV- and

LED-curable inks

and industrial printers