

LENTICULAR LABELS ADD 'MOTION' TO STATIC PRODUCTS ON SHELVES

Thin, flexible lenses, sharper imaging and in-line labeling push lenticular graphics into mainstream packaging uses. BY BOB SWIENTEK

How do you grab the attention of harried shoppers as they race down store aisles?

One way is to add lenticular graphics to your packaging. Lenticular creates "motion" through various visual effects—animation, flip, morph, zoom and 3-D.

Even if shoppers are not looking directly at a lenticular package, they will notice this motion in their peripheral vision.

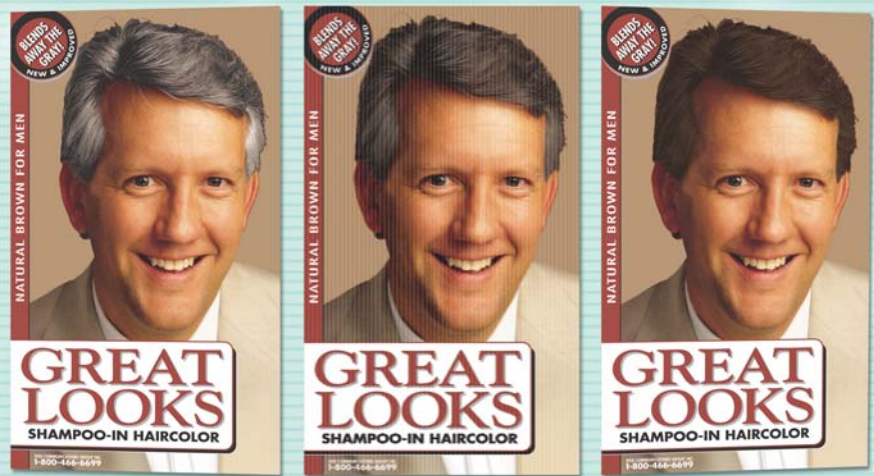
Usually reserved for in-pack and on-pack promotions, premiums and point-of-purchase (P-O-P) displays, lenticular is moving into mainstream packaging applications.

Why?

- Thinner lens structures—down to 7 mil—are flexible enough to serve as labels on bottles, jars and other cylindrical packages. These thin lenses also use less plastic, which reduces costs.

- Folding cartons and other packaging substrates can be laminated with thin lenticular materials.

- Computer-to-plate technologies



Package prototype of men's hair-coloring product uses a flip effect to change the hair color from gray to brown. Web Communications designed the package.

will capture more images on the back of the lens. This, combined with new lens designs, will result in sharper and more striking visual effects.

- Lenticular, pressure-sensitive labels can run in-line on conventional label applicators at high speed.

Thinner lenses

National Graphics, Brookfield, Wis., markets a 7-mil-thick lenticular lens with 200 lenticles per

Lenticular graphics can be applied to folding cartons. Two package prototypes from National Graphics demonstrate its use for camera film and health & beauty products.

inch (lpi). Trade named Crystal, this lens with high lpi resolution allows the use of finer serif type and small point sizes.

"Our Crystal lens allows bilingual messages on packages. Copy can flip from one language to another," says Michael Brooks, Chief Marketing Officer for National Graphics.

Using National Graphics' Crystal lens, Post Printing, West Bend, Wis., printed the lens material with images of *Jurassic Park III* and *The Mummy Returns* movies. Post Printing is a licensee of the Crystal lens technology.

CCL Label, Sioux Falls, S.D., converted the printed lens sheets into labels. Bottled Water Images, a Phoenix-based bottled water company, applied these 3-D labels to bottles of water.

Wal-Mart distributed the bottled water products during the theater run



of the two movies.

In addition to labels, CCL has developed pressure-sensitive, 3-D game pieces and coupons. These premiums can be automatically applied to packaging.

Outlook Group Inc., Neenah, Wis., is another licensee of the Crystal lens.

"Lenticular is making inroads into traditional packaging. It's becoming part of the product and brand identity. We expect labeling will make up 40 percent of our lenticular business in the next 48 months," says Tim Traub, Business Unit Manager for Lenticular Solutions, Outlook Group Corp.

Web Communications Group, Itasca, Ill., is working on lens technology to improve the sharpness of the images. "Our new design alters the shape of the lens and internal optics. Images are crisper and the motion is more fluid," explains Gary Jacobsen, President of Web Communications Group.

The patent-pending, next-generation lens will be available in 7.8, 9.8 and 11.8 mil. Web Communications plans to offer the lenses for sale to sheet-fed printers.

Arty applications

Along with labels and premiums, lenticular adds visual "excitement" to P-O-P display headers, shelf talkers,



LENTICULAR IMAGES GRAB AND HOLD CONSUMERS' ATTENTION

"Lenticular graphics have a wow factor for consumers. They notice it, stare at it and want to touch and study it," says Tim Traub, Business Unit Manager for Lenticular Solutions, Outlook Group Corp. "The longer a consumer views your package, the more likely your message is getting through."

Consumers also perceive lenticular as "cool." "It becomes a collectible. They don't want to throw away the product. They show it to their family, friends and co-workers. This results in added brand exposure beyond the purchaser of the product," Traub notes.

A study by an independent research company analyzed two versions of a four-page advertisement for Daimler-Chrysler's

PT Cruiser vehicle.

One ad contained a 3 1/2- by 2 1/2-inch lenticular image affixed to the first page of the ad. The dynamic image showed the vehicle turning on an axis, then zooming in on the trunk, which opened to demonstrate different seat configurations inside the car.

The other ad displayed a traditional photo of the vehicle exterior.

The study revealed that consumers spent more than four times more time looking at the page with the lenticular image than the ad with a photo.

Plus, they spent nearly twice as much time viewing the other three pages of the lenticular ad, even though there was no difference in those pages between the two ads.

bottle caps, in-pack and on-pack promotions, hang tags, video jackets and CD covers.

Kellogg is supporting the January 2002 national launch of its Disney-themed cereals with shelf signs that incorporate lenticular graphics. Two images flip between the Disney character and the front panel of the package.

This spring, Kraft will run an in-pack, lenticular promotion for its Lunchables line. The Outlook Group is supplying 50 million lenticular premiums for the promotion.

National Graphics and Outlook Group teamed up last year to produce 14-mil-thick lenticular inserts for a new Fisher-Price toy.

Trade named See 'n Say Kids Around the World, the educational toy contains two 3-D lenticular images. One image shows the Western Hemisphere; the other image displays the Eastern Hemisphere.

By sliding a lever and pressing

Wal-Mart merchandised Jurassic Park III and The Mummy Returns bottled water products with lenticular labels during the theater run of the movies. CCL Label supplied the lenticular labels to Bottled Water Images—the bottled water producer.

on the name of a country, children can hear foreign languages, facts about the country and international songs.

Fisher-Price distributes the product in corrugated packaging, which is die-cut on one side to reveal the 3-D globe image.

"With lenticular, you're limited only by your imagination," Traub says. "For example, we can create labels for condiments that show the product on appetizing hamburgers, hot dogs and other foods. Violators, such as 'new' or '20 percent more free,' can have added 'pop' on the shelf."

"A lenticular label might be a good way to introduce your new beverage

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Where to go for more information...

- ♦ **Lenticular graphics.** At National Graphics, contact Michael Brooks at 262.781.5888, ext. 2019, or michaelb@extremevision.com
- ♦ **Lenticular graphics.** At Outlook Group, contact Tim Traub at 262.783.7042 or ttraub@outlookgroup.com
- ♦ **Lenticular graphics.** At CCL Label, contact Gary Dillhoff at 513.899.9582 or gdillhoff@ccllabel.com
- ♦ **Lenticular graphics.** At Web Communications, contact Gary Jacobsen at 630.467.0724 or gj@webcommgroup.com

THE ABCs OF LENTICULAR EFFECTS

Lenticular delivers “movement” through several visual effects:

• 3-D

Multiple layers of different visual elements are interlaced together to create the illusion of 3-D, distance and depth.

Foreground objects appear to protrude while background objects seem to recede.

• Animation or Motion

A series of sequential photos create the illusion of animated images. This is similar to viewing a video or movie clip. Animation is effective in showing mechanical or body movement. It also can show products in use.

• Flip

Two or more images flip back and forth. The effect can show before-and-after and cause-and-effect scenarios. It also is appropriate for bilingual messages, such as flipping from English to Spanish.

• Morph

Two or more unrelated images gradually transform or morph into one another.

• Zoom

An object moves from the background into the foreground, increasing in size. It also may travel from side to side. Zoom is a form of animation.

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product, for example,” says Gary Dillhoff, Account Manager for CCL Label. “After you gain sufficient consumer awareness and shelf presence, you might want to switch to a conventional label. Bring back the lenticular label when you launch a new flavor variety.”

National Graphics has created plastic folding carton prototypes using its 7-mil, 200-lpi lenticular structure. “This type of package could be used for camera film sold at theme and adventure parks, national parks and other high-use venues,” says Brooks at National Graphics.

The image on

the package could correspond to the amusement park. For example, Sea World’s Shamu whale could be leaping out of the water in 3-D. “The film box takes on added value as a collectible,” Brooks notes.

Holography and metallized finishes have become popular in toothpaste packaging. Lenticular can add excitement to this category. It also can give a premium look to packaging for health and beauty aids.

Web Communications has created prototype packaging for a range of consumer packaged goods, including a men’s hair-coloring product. “Lenticular really shows how the product works. We use a flip to change the hair color from gray to brown, black or other color designated on the carton,” Jacobsen says.

The company has developed lenticular promotion pieces for Taco Bell and J.C. Penny.

What’s next?

Jacobsen feels that the new “Drug Facts” panel requirement on over-the-counter drug prod-

An educational toy from Fisher-Price contains two 3-D lenticular images. Fisher-Price distributes the product in corrugated packaging, which is die-cut on one side to reveal the 3-D globe image.

ucts may be a boon to lenticular.

“Packagers have to squeeze more information in a limited amount of space. With lenticular imaging, we can put double or maybe even triple the amount of information in the same surface area,” Jacobsen explains.

Lenticular graphics may appear on more plastic containers in the near future thanks to a patent-pending process from National Graphics. The company has come up with a way to in-mold lenticular labels.

“Injection molding fuses the lenticular material to the plastic,” Brooks says.

“We’ve also created a technique to modify or ‘bend’ the image to accommodate a cylindrical or truncated surface like a cup or plastic housing. This maintains the optical characteristics of a flat printed piece.”

CD cases, condiments, cosmetic compacts and other injection-molded containers can gain shelf presence from in-mold labeling and decorating.

National Graphics also is working on a software upgrade that will make a smaller, more defined dot. “This will enable us to put more information under the lens,” Brooks says. **BP**

The author, Bob Swientek, is Editor-in-Chief of **BRANDPACKAGING** magazine.

HOW LENTICULAR WORKS

Lenticular consists of two major components: the extruded, cast or embossed plastic lenticular lens and the interlaced electronic images.

The front of the lens contains dozens of lenticules, cylindrical lenses running parallel to one another. The back of the lens is flat.

The interlaced images are printed directly on the back of the lens. Printing methods include lithography, sheet-fed and web offset and flexography.

Viewing the images through the lenticules creates the illusion of motion, depth and other visual effects. Your viewing angle determines which of the images you see at any given time.

