

# Thermal Transfer Printing Converting, Packaging, Operating and Product Instructions

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## 1.0 Recommended Products

When selecting products for thermal transfer printing, it is important to understand the end-use application and durability requirements. Durability of the graphics is limited by the thermal transfer ribbon cartridge and/or the pressure-sensitive film, whichever is the less durable of the two. No overlamine is required for outdoor durability, but one can be used to increase abrasion resistance or graffiti resistance.

## 2.0 Converting/packing instructions of thermal transfer printable products

- To prevent liner dust in the packaged roll of hole-punched materials, do not strip the vinyl matrix during hole punching.
- Slitter knives and punches should be sharp. Dull knives or punches can cause excessive liner dust leading to “flaking” during thermal transfer printing. “Flaking” appears as small white spots or voids in the graphic image immediately following the printing process. Dry wiping the film with a lint-free cloth before thermal transfer printing can reduce “Flaking”.
- If possible, use a web vacuum and static control equipment during converting. This will help maintain a clean vinyl surface.
- All finished rolls should be wrapped in plastic to protect the material from moisture and dust contamination. Unwrapped rolls tend to pick up dust particles, which lead to possible contamination of the vinyl surface.

## 4.0 Key Operating Tips for Thermal Transfer Printing

- Before operating the thermal transfer printer, read and follow all instructions regarding operation and maintenance of the printer and cartridges. These directions are located in the equipment operating manual.
- The thermal transfer printer and pressure sensitive vinyl must be completely clean before printing. Cleaning can be accomplished by wiping the vinyl surface with a lint-free cloth before printing. The thermal transfer printer print head, brushes, sprockets, and web path must be cleaned as specified in the operator’s manual.
- If “flaking” (small ink voids) is noticed after printing, stop printing immediately and clean the vinyl and printer as instructed above.
- Allow print to dwell 10 to 15 minutes after printing to assure adequate ink adhesion before applying premask to the graphic.
- If printed material is to be stacked, do not allow the printed side of one print to contact the printed side of another print. Always stack the printed side in contact with the liner side of the next print or use an interleaf of plain paper between the two materials. This will prevent blocking of the sheets.
- To ensure a clean environment in the printer, always remove the film from the thermal transfer printer after printing is completed and re-package the roll to protect it from moisture and dust contamination.

*Revisions have been italicized.*

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Page 1 of 1

