

**DAVID A. PORTER**

david@atlasiscommunications.com • 347-324-7557

Skype ID porter1306 • @porter1306

**PORTFOLIO**

**Packaging**

**Material ConneXion**

**LUXEPACK NEW YORK**

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On May 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> we attended Luxepack New York (“Luxepack”), the premier creative packaging show in the USA. Luxepack exhibitors present luxury packaging ideas and solutions for companies in the beauty, fine foods, fragrance, and wine and spirits industries. The two-day event included 10 seminars featuring more than 30 speakers, all of them packaging, design, marketing and innovation experts who shared their cross-industry opinions and insights. Beyond technological advances, the big story at Luxepack New York was green packaging, and the show included a Green Awards event, which underlines an industry trend toward sustainable packaging alternatives.

**THE FAB FIVE**

The luxury packaging industry continues to benefit from advances in technology, and we continue to see new products setting new standards for the industry. This includes packaging driven by design, technology, user-experience and custom-personalized solutions. The biggest story at Luxepack, however, was NFC, or Near Field Communication, which uses magnetic field induction chips or tags to enable communication between devices when they touch or come within a few centimeters of each other: in a retail setting, NFC enables interactive and connected packaging. We were most impressed by five products at Luxepack: unbreakable glass bottles and ultra-clear 100 percent PCR glass, both from [Verescence](#); printing ANYWHERE on a molded tube, a new technology from [Teijin](#); the world’s **first** direct-to-shape digital printing technology, from [Velox Digital](#), and NFC **everything**, without the need to connect to an app, from [Seram International](#).

**NFC EVERYTHING**

The CNECT™ Software Portal empowers consumer brands to implement turnkey IoT solutions: integrating NFC tags with items or their packaging creates digital identities for products and establishes a direct link to consumers via their Smartphones – each product becomes its own media channel. This cloud-based platform integrates with ThinFilm’s NFC SpeedTap™ and OpenSense™ tags for remote tag management, custom content delivery and consumer activity tracking. We like this new portal because it gives consumer brands a simple, secure way to store, manage and track their products while simultaneously engaging with customers and authenticating these products.

By pairing NFC tags with decorative ornaments, Seram International has made digital a vector of communication, differentiation and proximity. Each element of the primary and secondary

packaging and promotional item can feature a decoration or ornament which includes a [Selinko](#) NFC tag: once scanned, each tag connects to an app for unique product authentication, store locator assistance and information and content about the product. We've never seen NFC chips used this way, as they're usually hidden within the packaging or within the product itself – here it's the accent feature of the decoration and a way to connect customers with content they can share via social media.

### **VELOX'S NEW DIRECT-TO-SHAPE DIGITAL PACKAGING DECORATION TECHNOLOGY**

Velox is a new company whose direct-to-shape digital packaging decoration technology was a big hit at Luxepack – it replaces conventional analog technologies and, for the first time, allows digital printing on cylindrical containers for mass production. It's cost-competitive, highly customizable and remarkably fast (250 containers per minute). The process doesn't require pre-press print accessories (plates, blankets or screens), thus eliminating production setup waste, an additional environmental benefit. What's most exciting is the technology can print on tapered container necks. It was nominated for a Luxepack In Green Award.

### **WE'RE BIG FANS OF Duofold® COMBINATION PACKAGING**

[Duofold® Combination Packaging](#) is great hybrid packaging – it combines increased visibility with uncompromised integrity and strength. A blend of the best attributes of box-grade plastic and paperboard, Duofold® Combination Packaging produces a distinctive visual package with unique structural designs and effects and offers two distinct visual, textural and tactile impressions in a single package. The company's proprietary Soft Crease® scored rigid film creates multiple plastic carton panels or windows that wrap around multiple score lines. The result? Outstanding shelf impact.

### **AIRLESS POUCH TECHNOLOGY**

We found formula packaging that eclipses atmospheric pumping. Airless Pouch Technology from [Lumson](#) is currently the number one technology-packaging innovation on the market: it's efficient, minimizes residual formula within the package and preserves sensitive products by eliminating air contamination, which ultimately reduces the need for preservatives in the final formula – it also eliminates overfilling. A collapsible pouch within the bottle guarantees a dispense rate of more than 95 percent for almost any type of cosmetic formula.

### **A HIGH NOTE FOR GLASS PACKAGING**

We love [Estal's DobleAlto®](#), a new glass technique that enhances the product image by allowing its color to filter through the product; it also adds value to the content by presenting it on a "podium" (a double base). DobleAlto® makes a brand's shelf presence more noticeable and alluring without increasing the amount of glass used in manufacturing.

### **UNBREAKABLE? INFINITE?**

We're cheering for Verescence, which is developing sustainable products incorporating recycled materials and reducing – even eliminating – secondary packaging: 90 percent of its Infinite Glass is composed of recycled materials, 25 percent of it post-consumer recycled glass. The company is using a new technology that wraps the glass, doubling its resistance to breakage while

maintaining its intrinsic and aesthetic properties. Infinite Glass can be dropped from a height of 1.8 meters without shattering and is compatible with all perfumes and complex make-up.

### **THE FUTURE OF COATING SOLUTIONS**

[KURZ](#) has an array of future-oriented coating solutions: Digital Metal<sup>®</sup> combines digital printing with a coating- and metal-transfer process to create “metalized” surfaces; Spatial FX is a unique optical effect that attracts attention with a specially-developed diffractive structure that makes objects appear to rise off the page, similar to 3D embossing, though the design actually remains flat on the surface; CAP-tivate Luxury is a stamping foil solution for custom closures and/or caps with bicolor looks, finishes and designs, all more cost-effective, quicker to produce and eco-friendlier than vacuum metalizing or electroplating; Trustcode<sup>®</sup> combines visual brand enhancement with mobile information access – its visual element is an image produced by hot stamping technology that’s an authenticity feature, a decorative element and a way to track the product throughout the entire supply chain. We like this holistic approach comprising foils, machines and software – it’s easy to implement, efficient and cost-effective, large and small scale, and it creates a unique experience.

### **VERSATILE, FUNCTIONAL PACKAGING DESIGNS**

Another interesting trend is limited edition launch and/or influencer kits, albeit for larger budgets. The kits are designed with removable content for secondary use or as collectibles. Some of these kits feature rigid paperboard (which mimics the feel and look of wood), touch-activated LED mirrors, pop-up books that reveal a bottle inside the kit in a removable mirror, a magnetized revolving door for a big reveal and renewable and sustainable materials like cork veneer. [MW Luxury Packaging](#) and [IPL Packaging](#) are the vanguard.

### **3D (WITHOUT THE GLASSES)**

[James Cropper](#) is using renewable wood fiber from sustainably-managed forests to product its bespoke, custom-colored, design-engineered molded packaging – the company also had its molded fiber paper packaging on display at Luxepack. Molded inserts are usually limited to two colors, but James Cropper’s cure-in-the-mold technology enables custom colors without high minimums, so you don’t have to compromise on color choice and consistency if you use the company’s sustainable packaging.

### **PRINT ANYWHERE ON A MOLDED TUBE**

It’s possible. Teijin’s Tube Neck Printing and Marble Masterbatch uses PP and special masterbatch additives for a marble-like effect for cosmetics packaging that renders each piece unique. Teijin’s technology also makes it possible to print on the neck of a mascara applicator, an industry first.

### **MOTIONCOAT**

If you’re looking for the closest thing yet to video-on-packaging, [MotionCoat](#) is a UV coating system that “creates motion” on numerous substrates. The MotionCoat printing system is used in conjunction with vector-based artwork, which creates a “moving” image on the package. It is 100 percent recyclable and can be used with flexographic and lithographic print applications.

## **OUR CONCLUSION(S)**

Luxepack remains the preeminent US luxury packaging show, and this year's event featured innovations that largely added to or improved existing technologies. The industry is still trying to find a way to combine sustainability with the need for packaging that catches the consumer's eye. It seems to us that packaging is still about "more," rather than "better," and this slows the industry's acceleration, particularly as the increasing effect of Amazon and other online retailers reduces the need for alluring, captivating packaging.