

SMAG to market Aquaflex in Europe

After its “velvet divorce” from GIDUE, and having installed 26 of the Italian manufacturer’s presses in France, SMAG has announced a new partnership with Aquaflex, a manufacturer of flexographic presses for labels and flexible packaging.

In 2004, Aquaflex was acquired by F.L. Smithe, the world’s leading manufacturer of envelope-making machinery. Aquaflex today employs 250, split between its plant in Duncansville, PA, USA, and an engineering office in Montreal, QC, Canada. The US plant is fully integrated with in-house metal-working, sheeting, electricals, paint shop and assembly.

Commenting on the new partnership, Stuart Roberts, VP of F.L. Smithe, says, “After acquiring Aquaflex, we concentrated our marketing on North and South America. We didn’t want to take on the European market without having a competent partner able to operate Europe-wide.

When we learned that SMAG was ending its agreement with GIDUE, it was a golden opportunity and we jumped at it. SMAG has good European coverage, but for a start we will be concentrating on France and Italy. We plan to launch this operation in a big way with a stock

of parts and a demo press installed at SMAG’s plant by October 2008. A wide product range well established and highly competitive on the American market, plus a favorable dollar/euro exchange rate, will mean we can move into this market quickly.”

Stéphane Rateau, CEO of SRAM-AG-SMAG, comments, "This is really an exceptional opportunity. With Aquaflex we have an experienced partner making fully servo driven machinery for both label and flexible packaging sectors, with web widths from 250mm to 1,047mm (10" to 42"). SMAG will concentrate its marketing on the ELS series, for flexo printing/converting labels and flexible packaging in web widths from 200mm to 420mm (8" to 16"), and the FPC series for flexo printing/converting flexible packaging in widths from 500mm to 1,067 mm (20" to 42")." .