

Kyodo Creation use the HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press to personalise Sapporo's Waku Waku Beer



At a glance

Industry: Labels & Packaging

Business name: Kyodo Creation

Headquarters: Tokyo, Japan

Website: kyodo-pro.co.jp

株式会社 協同クリエーション

Business name: Sapporo Beer

Headquarters: Tokyo, Japan

Website: sapporobeer.jp



Challenge

- Sapporo Beer wanted to jumpstart a declining market by offering personalised beer bottles online.
- Kyodo Creation wanted to introduce a web-to-print capability to expand its business into the consumer sector.

Solution

- Kyodo Creation invested in the HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press as a flexible, fast digital print solution that could produce high-quality prints in small numbers within tight timeframes.

Results

- The Indigo press enables Kyodo to offer customised printing for customers such as Sapporo who offer personalised beer bottles.
- Print quality is unsurpassed and matched by speed and efficiency.
- The HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press provides the foundation for a new web-to-print service and has opened up new markets for the company.
- Sapporo received double the orders it was expecting for its new range of personalised bottles.

“According to the performance results of Waku Waku Brewery products last year, we received double the orders we had planned for.”

– Yuta Suzuki, Digital Marketing Manager, Sapporo Breweries

Established in 1876, Sapporo Beer is one of Japan's premier brewing companies. To differentiate its brands and increase sales, Sapporo developed a marketing campaign to encourage those who do not usually drink beer to connect with the beverage on a personal level.

Via a web storefront known as the Waku Waku Brewery Project, Sapporo Beer offered consumers personalised beer bottles, including the flavour of beer, the colour of the bottle and label design with photographs and personal messages. However, the brewer faced a major challenge in delivering these high-quality customised labels in small quantities at low cost.

“We were faced with the issue of having a print run of as few as six labels. At that time, we could hardly find printers with that capability so it was a major concern,” says Yuta Suzuki, Digital Marketing Manager, Sapporo Breweries.

Since 1968, Kyodo has provided converting services to the Japanese market. More recently, it established Kyodo Creation, a digital print house that specialises in labels and shrink-wrapped film. “We started up Kyodo Creation, specialising in digital printing, as part of the Kyodo Production Group,” explains Masanori Tateishi, President, Kyodo Creation. “Kyodo Production Group's primary market is the beverage industry and we create packaging samples for vending machines along with sales promotions.”

“Kyodo introduced Sapporo to the HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press and we thought this could work,” says Suzuki. “When we actually carried out a check on the quality of the printing, it was exceptionally high.”

Speed, performance and customisation

In 2011, Kyodo Creation invested in a HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press in order to create better quality prints faster. The HP Indigo digital press enabled it to provide a web-to-print service, making the print process more customisable and flexible.

“We are in the digital print business and have seen many digital presses; we chose the HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press because it is of the highest quality,” adds Tateishi. “With the introduction of the HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press, we are now able to fully meet the expectations customers have for quality and speed, which will open up marketing opportunities for us.”

From personalised beer bottles to versioning

The Waku Waku Brewery Project is one example of how the HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press has opened up new and exciting avenues of growth for Kyodo Creations.

“The Waku Waku Brewery Project offered consumers the opportunity to create their own original labels via the web by uploading their own photographs, messages and stamps. The data would then be sent to us with just one click of the order button,” explains Toshinori Sato, Sales Manager, Kyodo Creation. “The greatest strength of the Indigo WS6000 Digital Press is its uncompromising print quality. Also, although production levels may be one of the challenges we have to deal with, the HP Indigo WS6000 is comparable to conventional printers in terms of productivity and speed so it will enable us to respond efficiently to future demand.”



Sapporo was delighted with the flexibility offered by the HP Indigo WS6000 and has created numerous themed products to fully exploit its capabilities.

“Using the variable data printing technology of the HP Indigo press for a product with 12 bottles in a box, allows us to actually produce bottles with 12 different labels,” adds Suzuki. “In fact, we have a product called ‘Sakura of Tohoku – 12 Scenic Views.’ These feature well-known places for Sakura cherry blossom viewing in Tohoku; 12 different labels representing 12 different places in the spring. We are thinking of producing more and more of these kinds of products.”

“The Waku Waku Brewery products are ideal as gifts. In fact, they are given very often as presents for birthdays, weddings, baby showers and more. According to the performance results last year, we received double the orders we had planned for. With regards to this year, we are currently challenging ourselves to intensifying the pace through various strategies. These are the plans that will drive our sales,” concludes Suzuki.

Broader market opportunities

Kyodo is now looking to extend its business beyond the beverage industry and target more consumer-orientated markets. The HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press will play a key role in fulfilling that vision.

“With the introduction of the HP Indigo WS6000 Digital Press, we have been able to take on many new challenges, including the creation of our own web-to-print application. We are also starting to see expansion into the consumer market, which we have not been able to target before,” explains Tateishi.

“One of the reasons we introduced web-to-print was to seamlessly integrate the analogue world and the digital world to offer new products and services. We believe that the innovation of web-to-print caters to the needs and likes of each individual customer,” comments Kei Ishibashi, Technical Manager, Kyodo Creation. “The capabilities of the HP Indigo WS6600 Digital Press have allowed the introduction of web-to-print and the current operation of the print system.”

“Today we are only catering to the beverage industry. In the future, we will grow our offering and expand to other areas,” concludes Tateishi.



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