

NEW STANDARD *improves predictability of printing*

Text: Vesa Puoskari Photos: Viljak, UPM

The aim of the Paperdam working group, set up by Europe's leading paper manufacturers, is to promote high quality printing. Revision of the international ISO standard is part of this process.

Good print quality requires skilful prepress work, colour management and comprehensive knowledge and use of the properties of paper.

"Today's printers must be more familiar with paper grades than before, as the number of papers and quality has improved significantly. Our goal is to develop the existing ISO standard so that it covers at least 80% of the products on the market," says **Gerd Carl**, Technical Sales Manager at UPM.

The ISO 12647 certification for papers was created in the 1990s to facilitate printing. Five paper grades, mainly sheet-fed offset, were selected for inclusion in the standard. The classification has changed relatively little, even though the system was revised in 2004 and 2007. The existing standard does not cover the numerous paper grades used in heatset printing, for example.

Paper grades have thus been selected as the starting point in the revision of the ISO standard. In Carl's view, the paper profiles used as assistance in printing must correspond to the paper's properties better than before.

"For sheet-fed offset printers the change will not be significant, but heatset printers will obtain more detailed information about the products they use. From the standpoint of customers, this means that the colours of print products can be adjusted more precisely in the prepress stage, which means that print quality will be more predictable," he says.

PAPER MANUFACTURERS COOPERATE

Revision of the ISO standard has brought together all the major European paper manufacturers. Technical cooperation takes place in the Paperdam Group, which came

into being at a conference of paper manufacturers at the IGT Institute in Amsterdam in April 2008.

"Previously, there was not a great deal of consensus among paper manufacturers, and therefore other parties in the printing chain found it was difficult to understand what we aspired to. Now we want to ensure that we have a shared vision regarding the revision of the printing standard, which will increase the value of our work."

The results of the cooperation, which focuses on technical issues, will also be useful commercially too. "Customers will obtain more detailed information about our products and can therefore work with them more effectively," adds Carl.

He estimates that the standard revision will be ready by the end of 2012.

In addition to revising the ISO 12647-2 standard, paper manufacturers are developing a new standard for communication of paper properties (ISO/WD 15397) within the framework of Paperdam.

"Paper manufacturers are joining the national standardisation committees to support the new communication standard. From the standpoint of printers, it will be easier to compare papers. We are therefore also redesigning the UPM online paper catalogue to comply with the future standard," says Carl. For more information, please visit the website www.paperdam.org



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