



tesa®

HOW TO AVOID PLATE DAMAGE

Choosing the right platemounting tape

Reduce costs caused by plate damage during demounting through effective selection of platemounting tape

“Even if a plate looks perfectly clean, invisible nitrocellulose residues can cause hard demounting and plate damage. The right adhesive tape and cleaning method play a crucial role.”

STEFFEN KOSLOWSKI Product Developer at tesa

Plate damage creates frustration and unnecessary costs

Damage to a printing plate due to excessive force needed to demount can be frustrating and costly. Pre-press operators have to deal with time-consuming plate removals and management face extra costs – plus a plate going to waste is environmentally unsustainable. So, everyone can agree that plate damage should be avoided whenever possible, but how can a plate mounting tape help?

What causes plate damage?

Firstly, it's probably helpful to look at what can lead to difficulty in removing a printing plate. Generally it is the residues of solvent-based inks on the reverse side of the printing plate which are the source of the problem where the chemical binders in the inks affect the bond between the plate and tape increasing its strength. Additionally, a tape with a very aggressive adhesive bonded to a thin plate (e.g. 45 thou) with area cut-outs often results in plates tearing. To resolve this either the residues need to be eliminated through thorough cleaning or a different plate mounting tape needs to be chosen.

Issues faced with plate cleaning

When it comes to plate cleaning even automatic plate cleaning machines can unfortunately help ink residues to find their way onto the reverse side of the plate and even the thinnest layer of ink residue can cause unwanted plate damage. Laboratory tests show that the thinner the layer, the harder it gets to demount plates: this means that even plates which look perfectly clean can feature chemical binder residues, but these will not be noticed until an increase in the demounting force results in plate damage.

How to select the best platemounting tape adhesive

Regardless of your plate cleaning process (manual or automatic), tesa® can offer you a solution. A service tesa provides is the tesa Tape Performance audit. This service is designed to evaluate the pre-press and print departments in order to recommend the correct platemounting tape together with preparation to optimise the performance and reduce downtime in production.

For example, tesa® Softprint TP is an ideal product for use with automatic plate cleaning due to its special ink-resistant adhesive which prevents the build-up of the invisible nitrocellulose ink residues. The benefits are clear: less time spent on plate cleaning, less downtime in production, and increased lifespan of plates, all leading to overall cost reductions.

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