



## **CASE STUDY: INVESTING IN BRAND COLOUR. MEASURE, CONTROL, ACHIEVE.**



**STEVE WARDLE,  
KELLOGG'S**



**THE MELLOW COLOUR  
TEAM LIVE AND BREATHE  
COLOUR.**

**IT'S WHAT THEY DO.**

**THEY ARE COLOUR  
EXPERTS.**

### **THE CHALLENGE**

When I joined Kellogg's European Marketing team as Packaging Artwork Manager in 2014, print colour management for Kellogg's brands fell into a gap between our Procurement, Packaging Technologists and Marketing teams.

Each of these groups were accountable in part to deliver print colour excellence, but nobody truly owned it, or had enough resources to dedicate to a sustained level for the attention that it needed.

Consequently, we didn't have a print colour management program. We ran entirely on trust. Despite the provision of a profiled calibrated Epson target proof to every new print run, the trust model let us down on several high-profile occasions.

Kellogg's European brands appearance was being damaged by constant print colour variation. We weren't acting as leaders. We weren't owning our brand colours. We needed a new approach.

### **TURNING POINT**

I remember getting a phone call from one of my colleagues in 2015 asking if I would be interested in talking to Alan Dresch at Mellow Colour. At the time, I didn't know anything about Alan or Mellow Colour, but I knew that we needed to start discussing our challenges with external experts to see how we could bring print colour management under control.

After meeting with Alan for the first time, I knew very quickly that we were on to something. The concept presented by Alan was technical, but not overly complicated, and the estimated costs for implementation seemed reasonable, given the potential benefits.

### **MELLOW COLOUR PHILOSOPHY**

To put the Mellow philosophy simply - to manage print colour consistently, you must control the end to end process and stage of creating that colour. This involves creating a print quality management program with all stakeholders invested in a clear and achievable objective.

For us as brand owners, everything made sense. We would need to set our standard, aligned closely to ISO 12647, and then our procured printers of cartons and flexibles would be trained and certified to ensure that they can print consistently to that level. This would naturally lead to a reduction in wasted time and materials, not just for Kellogg's, but for any or all of their customers.

The pay back would justify any investment very quickly.

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## RESULTS

Over the last 5 years, at Kellogg's Europe, we have created our own colour program, and integrated Mellow quality procedures and standards into our day to day thinking. Almost every piece of packaging that we produce in Kellogg's Europe now carries a Mellow Colour strip, so that we can measure and control throughout our packaging production process.

We work closely with our procured print partners to support them in gaining Mellow Colour certification to Proficient printer and Impression Proof levels.

We do meet some resistance from printers to embark on the Mellow Colour program. They say that they can provide us with various reports of print colour accuracy, but none of these other systems include an audited end to end quality management system, and none can provide the level of information contained within a Mellow Colour report.

Put another way... What good alone is a press side colour report? It doesn't tell you if the printing plates are over exposed, if the dot gain curves aren't effective for the press behaviour, the press is poorly maintained, the viewing conditions are sub-standard, the press minders are frustrated, demotivated or poorly trained? It doesn't address any of the root cause problems. That's why you need an end to end quality management program in place. Mellow Colour offers all of this.

Additionally, brand owners need and want one cloud based consistent reporting format, so that we can compare "apples with apples" without too much effort required. It's not that brands are lazy, we just don't have dedicated resources to manage this type of thing, so it's got to be quick and simple to pull reports.

We now have printers uploading Mellow Print-spec reports for each print run into the Mellow Cloud, which not only allows us to report on performance, but also presents us as the brand owner with an opportunity to approve print remotely at any time of day (or night!) in real time, without the need or expense of a press side approval, and this helps to move work in progress through the printer's facility quickly.

Rather than just being reliant upon perceptions of performance, and "no news is good news", now we can base everything around factual information, and this isn't just good news for the brand owner, it's a great tool for the printers to use to unlock new doors.

With measurement and monitoring, naturally human behaviour improves. At printers who have invested in Mellow, we've seen rapid improvements in the quality and consistency of their work. In turn, they have seen their teams motivated and striving to achieve the highest possible scores for their work, whilst at the same time reducing make ready time times and material waste.

## WOULD YOU RECOMMEND MELLOW COLOUR TO OTHERS?

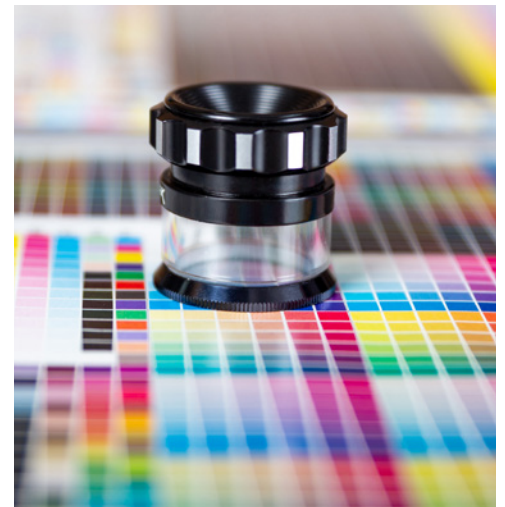
Without hesitation. There are many other systems on the market offering print colour management, but never forget, without a robust end to end quality process to support print colour, you may achieve it, maybe even consistently for a while, but you'll always be chasing it, and that can be a real battle that can eat up vast amounts of valuable resources and cost.

The Mellow Colour team live and breathe colour. It's what they do. They are colour experts. The Mellow team are a joy to deal with, and their training programs are extremely thorough and enjoyable.

What are you waiting for?

**Mellow Colour. The colour management experts.**

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