

# REVOLUTIONIZING

## PAPER CARD MANUFACTURING

*for Merchant and the Environment*

As several paper substrates began to be marketed to gift card manufacturers and brands began to understand a need for greener alternatives to traditional PVC, card manufacturers responded by testing and printing cards in the only way they knew how: on their existing equipment designed specifically to produce traditional plastic cards.

Every 200,000 cards printed on paper saves over one TON of non-biodegradable plastic from ending up in a landfill.

“We think the industry is producing paper cards the wrong way by using traditional PVC card equipment and processes,” said Rich Olson, Director of Sales at Optimum Card Solutions. “But why wouldn’t you, given all the capital already expended to produce the traditional product.”

In response to customer demand, Optimum Card Solutions decided to take a holistic look at the “greening” of gift cards, with a mission to provide an affordable, high quality solution for its customers. “We take the ‘solutions’ part of our name seriously,” said Olson. “We learn from our customers and try to solve their problems.” It quickly became clear that paper cards needed their own unique manufacturing process.

While paper providers were offering a base product that was similar to traditional PVC sheets, the manufacturing process added additional costs to the finished product. Rather than have the paper manufacturer sheet and collate the paper, Optimum Card Solutions’ answer was to build their production lines to produce and finish paper cards all in one operation. This new way of producing paper cards directly lowers the final product’s cost as well as saves energy and man hours compared to the way most manufacturers are making paper cards. “By cutting out the laminating, sheeting and collating steps and taking the paper straight from the supplier,

we save our customers time, money, and energy, producing a green, recyclable alternative to PVC,” stated Olson.

Optimum Card Solutions’ paper card process allows for being able to print, punch, encode and number, emboss, deboss and apply special effects foils and inks all in-line. Not only did Optimum accomplish this, they can even run carriers at the same time, producing a perfect match of cards to carriers. Able to produce more than 30,000 completely finished units per hour, Optimum turned paper cards into a great, high quality and lower-cost alternative to traditional plastic. One of their customers discovered that making the move to paper cards would not only be better for the environment, but would save them more than \$300,000 annually; extra money that they now plan to invest in enhancing their overall gift card program. Olson continued, “There is a perception out there that paper cards are more expensive and of a lower quality than that of PVC, and we can truthfully say that these are incorrect perceptions.”

Customers are converting to paper cards at an impressive pace, and with industry giants like Apple and Google successfully leading the charge, it is hard not to follow suit. One large retailer, after learning about Optimum Card Solutions’ paper cards and touring their facility said, “You don’t want to be the last one left still using PVC.”

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