



EFI Colorproof XF is the key component of flexibility and quality for Axalto's Virtual Factory



Paris based Axalto is the world leading provider of microprocessor card solutions with a global market share of 23%. Since developing the first microprocessor card in 1979, Axalto has sold over one billion of such cards. They have been transforming business efficiencies around the world – from reducing fraud and opening up on-line transactions in banking or personalizing services for mobile communications users, to securing access to corporate networks, protecting privacy and identification across public sector e-services, and speeding transportation via electronic ticketing.

Axalto's global reach stretches to over 100 countries through 11 production facilities – 4 in Asia, 4 in Europe, and 3 in the Americas. Axalto's revenue for the year 2004 was approximately US\$960 million and close to half of it was derived from outside Europe.

Building on a culture of excellence, Axalto covers the entire chip card value chain up to the highest value-added applications. The production of cards has two key aspects: technology and visual impact. High quality is the supporting pillar of Axalto's corporate success.

As well-known customers like Vodafone or Barclays have clearly defined visual identity, it's essential that the images on the cards are of high quality and colour fidelity. This is why Axalto backs up a strict QA implementation with digital proofing.



“Thanks to its intuitive interface and to its great automation capabilities, EFI Colorproof XF does not require specialists’ skills.”

— Christine Burgevin – World Wide Technical Support for the Virtual Factory, Axalto

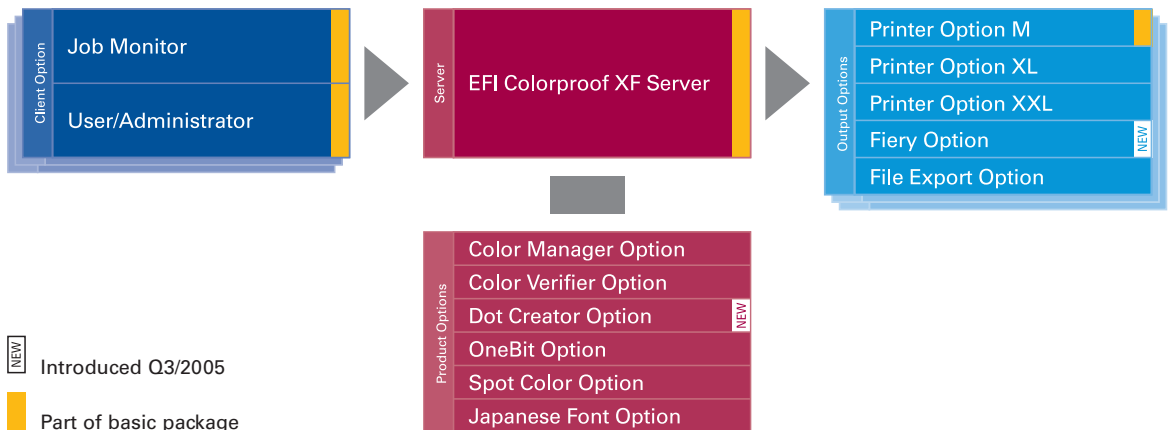
After pioneering 1996 with DCP and thermic printers, Axalto rapidly moved to EFI solutions with Best technology by adopting the association of Colorproof 4.2 and Epson 5000. A standard Chromalin profile was created and applied with a density tuning to match the gamuts of the presses on different production sites. This new process brought benefits in terms of precision, speed, cost reduction, and the production managers quickly adapted to continuous tone proofing.

With the launch of the Epson 4000, Axalto scanned the proofing software market once more. After the evaluation of different systems, the decision was made in favour of EFI Colorproof XF which had been launched at the end of 2004. The leading digital proofing solution was chosen not only for legacy and for EFI world wide technical support, but also for highest flexibility and ease of use.

“Thanks to its intuitive interface and to its great automation capabilities, EFI Colorproof XF does not require specialists’ skills, still we do appreciate the access to fine personalized tuning for more experienced users” says Christine Burgevin who is responsible for World Wide Technical Support for the Virtual Factory.

“The modular concept of Colorproof XF allows us to test and implement options, as we grow in a cost effective manner.”

“The modular structure of Colorproof XF is also a great benefit, as we do not have the same requirements on all of our 12 production sites. For instance a site might move from single to multiple printers configuration, and another one will start creating its own profiles with Color Manager. In the future, we intend to implement the Color Editor module site by site. The modular approach allows us to test and implement according to our specific needs, as we grow in a cost effective manner,” adds Christine. “Furthermore, the decision for XF was based upon our observation that competitive products were much more complex and difficult to use – being up to 8 times more expensive!” concludes Christine.





Colorproof XF supports Axalto's Virtual Factory flexible organization across the world.

A multi-site international organization implies flexibility within a strong structured quality control. This is why Axalto's Check and Print Department created the Virtual Factory concept with the objective of seamless production and consistent quality – no matter where the design is created, proofed and approved, and where the final production takes place.

To ensure consistent output not only for production sites but also for subcontractors, the Virtual Factory works with a strict colour control based on data measurements. While the first step consisted of creating a profile for each press and each production site, these profiles are now computed into one general profile managed by EFI Colorproof XF. The delta between proof and output is strictly defined and centrally managed.

“We ensure consistency without bearing the costs and delay of courier, this is a great improvement for us.”

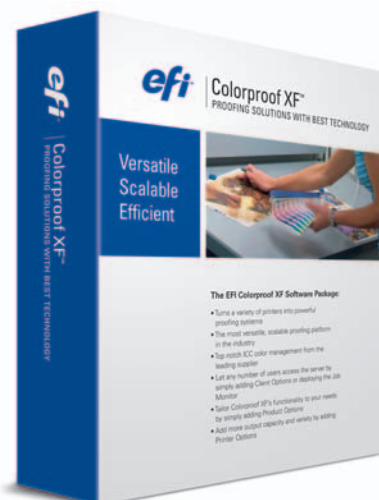
– Laura Canciullo, Virtual Factory Director, Axalto

“A design can be created, proofed and approved by a customer in Asia. If we decide to print in Spain, the proof will be produced again in our Barcelona site to ensure consistency without bearing the costs and delay of courier, this is a great improvement for us” says Laura Canciullo, Virtual Factory Director for the Check and Print Department.

“Our goal is to get as close as possible to local needs with a consistent quality across the world. The virtual factory allows us to speed up time to market and Colorproof XF is a key component to support this organization” adds Laura.

Not only has Colorproof XF eliminated courier delays but the precision of the tool has reduced the delta between the output and the proof.

From Montrouge, in the surroundings of Paris, Annie Carta ensures coordination for the 12 sites and for the subcontractors. The quality process requires that each site sends a reference file each time a component changes within the production process. Sending the printed file by courier used to delay the production by 3 to 5 days. Now, with Colorproof XF, measurements are sent by e-mail – no waiting time any longer.





Annie Carta, World Wide Coordination Virtual Factory, Axalto

With great ease of use, affordable price and a modular approach, the main benefit of EFI Colorproof XF to Axalto's strict QA implementation is that the production sites are now completely equivalent in terms of product quality. Accordingly, Axalto can flexibly switch between production plants and control production following true business criteria like proximity to the customer, cost optimization, and shorter delays. Time and costs savings are tremendous.

“Not only Colorproof XF has eliminated courier delays, but the precision of the tool has reduced the delta between the output and the proof from an initial target of 1,5 to an average of 0,8 and even 0,6 on certain sites!” says Annie. “We include our subcontractors in our quality process: they implement Colorproof XF with great benefits to them and to their other customers.”



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