



## Latin American visitors make strong impact at Labelexpo

THE TREND OF INCREASING IMPACT OF LATIN AMERICAN VISITORS TO LABELEXPO EVENTS – BOTH IN BRUSSELS AND CHICAGO – CONTINUES APACE, WRITES JAMES QUIRK

Last year, Labelexpo Americas saw a 25 percent rise in visitors from the region. Though too early, as your correspondent writes this on the final day of the show, to quantify their exact numbers at Labelexpo Europe 2013 in Brussels (see next issue of L&L for full analysis), Latin American label and packaging converters have unquestionably made their presence felt. Visitors from Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Peru, Colombia et al have appeared in droves, while a number of machine purchases have been made on the show floor.

Brazilian converting powerhouse Baumgarten was announced as the first customer of Nilpeter's new MO-5 offset press, and also ordered two Gallus ECS presses during the show. Peru-based Logotex finalized an order for the first Nilpeter FB-3 press in the Andean region. At the Cartes booth, two of the modular finishing machines on display will head to customers in Argentina and El Salvador after the event. By lunchtime on day three, HP had received five orders from Latin American converters for new 20000 and 30000 packaging presses, while also selling 10 digital label presses to companies in the region.

'There has been a continued increase in the strength of Latin American presence at Labelexpo Europe,' said Nilpeter's global sales director, Jesper Jorgensen. 'It has become an increasingly dominating market segment – one that is now on a par with the US in terms of the number and quality of machines being installed.'

Cristian Gentile, a technician for Cartes based in Brazil, who supports the Italian company's local agents in the region, said that the high numbers of digital press sales in Latin America have resulted in increasing interest in the company's finishing systems. Cartes has sold a number of laser die-cutting machines, for example, into markets such as Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Chile and Venezuela in the last two years.

John Cavey, Latin America sales manager for Mark Andy, pointed out that Latin American converters turn out in high numbers at both Labelexpo shows, in Brussels and Chicago.

He reported that last year Venezuela was a particularly strong market, while in Argentina – thanks to a government initiative which means banks have to lend to small businesses at low interest rates – sales have jumped this year.

As of this year, Mark Andy is now selling directly in Mexico, with newly appointed John Vigna handling sales in that country and in Central America and the Caribbean. Within a short time of joining the press manufacturer, he sold two machines in Mexico. During Labelexpo Europe, Vigna was finalizing a P5 press sale to another Mexican customer, as well as a 2200 to a Colombian company.

Francisco Soto, Latin American sales manager for Rotoflex, believes that the region has turned a corner in recent years with regards to the quality of machines being purchased.

'The demand for the latest technology has become very strong in the last two or three years,' he revealed. 'There is no comparison from what we sold five years ago, in terms of specifications of the systems, to what we are selling now. This year and last year have seen record sales for Rotoflex in the region.'

Soto reported having seen all the company's major customers from the region at Labelexpo Europe. 'There's a consistent trend of good visitor numbers from Latin America at this show. I've particularly noticed large numbers of companies from Mexico, Colombia and Peru.'

Ricardo Rodriguez, segment manager for labels and packaging for HP Indigo in Mexico, said that he'd seen at the show many Latin American packaging and carton converters who might not normally attend, interested in the company's new 20000 and 30000 presses. 'We've had a good flow of visitors from Latin America at our booth,' he commented. 'In terms of orders compared to market size, Latin America is punching above its weight and compares very favorably with other regions. We are sustaining our growth in the region in terms of digital press sales.'