

# Tropic invests

**DURBAN's Tropic Plastic & Packaging has ordered South Africa's first Comexi FPLUS flexo press. This will be the ninth printing machine in the company's impressive fleet.**

Family-owned Tropic Plastic & Packaging, established in 1963 by the late Ebrahim Bhabha, is today managed by MD, Fazel Bhabha, who emphasises the company's position as a market leader in flexible packaging with one of the largest flexo printing capacities in South Africa under one roof. 'We're also one of the largest and most efficient manufactures of wicketed bread bags; and we're highly focused on all aspects of flexible packaging, including extrusion, printing, laminating, slitting and bag making,' he adds.

'We aim to be a leading flexible packaging company in South Africa and are dedicated to providing the highest level of quality and zero-defect products in the most efficient manner using leading-edge technology, and that includes Comexi,' he remarks.

Mohamed Timol, Tropic's operations director, has clearly identified market opportunities: 'Our focus is on high-quality performance films. Our latest film Tropistar Plus has exceptional properties – excellent clarity, gloss and mechanical properties. Aesthetically it's very appealing, either plain or printed; and also demonstrates exceptional strength. This allows us to offer our customers downgauging and economic benefits,' says Mohamed.

## Why Comexi?

Tropic continually invests in the latest technology to gain a competitive edge in the local market; and the search for a new flexo press led to Comexi.

'We analysed various companies but felt that Comexi possessed excellent technological capabilities and treated us in a most preferential manner,' explains Mohamed Timol, who recently visited Comexi's headquarters in Spain.

Tropic's past experience with Comexi's agent, Advanced Packaging Technology, was another key factor. 'Advanced has supplied us with numerous Hudson Sharp bag making machines; and after-



sales service and technical support has always been excellent,' Mohamed adds.

'We already have eight flexo presses and now we're committed to the Comexi FPLUS ten-colour press. It's a very efficient and easy-to-use machine; and we're convinced that we'll get really good output and excellent print quality.'

Aleix Mas, Comexi's MEA & India area manager, takes up the story: 'Tropic is the best customer to help us re-enter the South African market. The FPLUS is Comexi's first gearless sleeved press in South Africa; and if it's successful at Tropic, we'll be back in South Africa with an outstanding competitive position.'

In the past ten years, Tropic has experienced sustained growth, even during the global economic downturn. 'We have a promising future and we're convinced our investments are on the right track. The new Comexi FPLUS will be installed in a new building within our plant, along with a Reifenhauer Kiefel three-layer coextruder. We call this new facility the "Customer Experience Centre" to emphasise the quality of our extrusion and printing facilities. We're convinced that the partnership with Comexi will lead us to next level of printing quality,' concludes Fazel Bhabha.

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◀ Recently pictured at Comexi's Spanish headquarters were Aleix Mas (Comexi), Mohamed Timol (Tropic Plastic & Packaging, Durban) and Gary Kieswetter (Advanced Packaging Technology). The occasion was acceptance trials for the new Comexi FPLUS ten-colour flexo press soon to be installed at Tropic Plastic & Packaging in Durban.