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Technical Bulletin

Loading Metal-Backed Plates on ThermoFlex Wide I Devices

Background

Steel-backed and aluminum-backed plates exhibit higher stiffness than regular digital flexography plates and require modified loading procedures to ensure good contact with the drum. The procedures vary slightly depending on the type of metal-backed plate being loaded.

Steel-backed plates: Use this procedure for metal-backed letterpress plates, such as XSYS Nyloprint.

Aluminum-backed plates: Use this procedure for aluminum-backed coating plates, such as XSYS Gold.

Ensure that you are working with metal-backed plate types that have been qualified for use on Kodak® ThermoFlex® devices. Untested metal-backed plate types may require modifications to the loading procedure to avoid plate lift-off or damage.

Loading and Unloading Steel-Backed Plates

Required Tools and Materials

- Heavy roller with width greater than plate's subscan dimension

  Roller must have a soft surface and weight of approximately 10lb./ft.
  approximately 2 in. solid rod or 3.5 in.+ Sch. 40 or 3 in.+ Sch. 80 pipe with soft coating [sticky-backed flexo plate]
- Media tape: 37.5 mm (1.5 in.) width 3M™ Vinyl Tape 471 or tesa 60760

Note: Loading steel-backed plates requires *two people*.

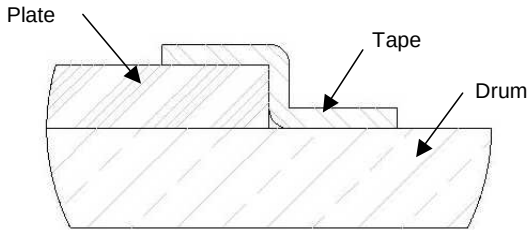
Loading Procedure

1. Submit a job in the normal way to start the load sequence.
2. Open the flash cover.
3. Press **Start/Continue** to start the drum vacuum.
4. Pull the plate to the leading-edge registration bar on the drum—*do not* remove the cover sheet.

5. Line the plate up with the left edge of the home side clear tape (already on the drum) rather than putting the plate on top of the clear tape.

   This will prevent any focus-learn problems that could result from the difference in elevation from the tape to the drum surface.

6. Lift up the first 50 mm (2 in.) of the cover sheet at the leading edge to access the plate surface.
7. Using 37.5-mm (1.5-in.) tape, tape down the leading edge of the plate to the drum:
   - Ensure that 12.5 mm (0.5 in.) of tape is on the plate surface.
   - Ensure that the tape profile conforms closely at the ledge from the plate surface to the drum surface as shown in the following drawing.



   Note: You can use your fingernail to get the tape into the tight corners but make sure that the tape is not broken or torn.

8. Using a soft but heavy roller, apply pressure onto the cover sheet on the plate and hold the end of the cover sheet above the flash cover.
9. Position the roller on the drum towards the flash cover. The roller should be 10 to 20 mm (.39 to .79 in.) from the highest point of the drum.
10. Press **Start/Continue.**
    The device will load the media completely onto the drum, but the stiffness of the metal-backed plate will cause approximately 50 mm (2 in.) of the trailing edge end to stick up from the roller contact point. One person should peel off the cover sheet as the media is rolled onto the drum.

    Note: Ensure that the trailing edge of the plate is in contact with the table surface, to ensure accurate plate length measurements.

11. While still holding the roller, have the second person lift the remaining 50 mm (2 in.) of the cover sheet ahead of the roller to the trailing edge to expose the plate surface.
12. The second person should apply tape to the trailing 12.5 mm (0.5 in.) of the trailing edge of the plate only.
13. Continue to roll the remainder of the plate and tape onto the drum.

    Ensure that the tape profile conforms closely at the ledge from the plate surface to the drum surface as shown in the previous drawing.

14. Remove the roller.
15. Remove the cover sheet and place it on a clean surface for use during unloading.

16. Apply 37.5 mm (1.5 in.) tape to the home and away sides of the plate using the inspection foot controls or the **Inspect/Clean** button to turn the drum.
    - Start the tape about 50 mm (2 in.) beyond the plate edge to allow an overlap of about 12.5 mm (0.5 in.) onto the plate.
    - Holding the tape roll with tension as the turning drum pulls the tape onto the drum.
    - Ensure proper application of the tape as noted in the previous drawing.
17. Close the flash cover and press **Start/Continue** to end the loading sequence and begin imaging.

Unloading Procedure:

To unload, reverse the loading procedure except that you should use the cover sheet on the plate to prevent the roller from damaging the plate's imaged surface.

Loading and Unloading Aluminum-Backed Plates

Required Tools and Materials

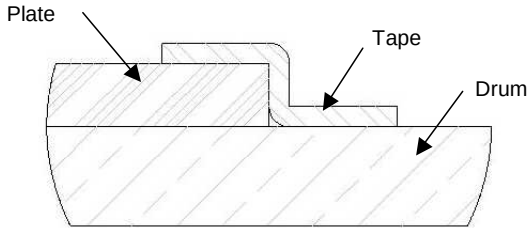
- Media tape: 56-3322 TAPE, ADHESIVE, VINYL, 1", BLUE (3M #471 1 in. width)

Note: It is easier to have two people load an aluminum-backed plate but one person can do it if necessary.

Loading Procedure

1. Submit a job in the normal way to start the load sequence.
2. Open the flash cover.
3. Press **Start/Continue** to start the drum vacuum.
4. Pull the plate to the leading-edge registration bar on the drum and remove the cover sheet.
5. Line the plate up with the left edge of the home side clear tape (already on the drum) rather than putting the plate on top of the clear tape.
   This will prevent any focus-learn problems that could result from the difference in elevation from the tape to the drum surface.

6. Tape down the leading edge of the plate to the drum:
   - Ensure that 12.5 mm (0.5 in.) of tape is on the plate surface
   - Ensure that the tape profile conforms closely at the ledge from the plate surface to the drum surface as shown in the following drawing.



   Note: You can use your fingernail to get the tape into the tight corners but make sure that the tape is not broken or torn.

7. Stand on the home side of the device and keep one hand on the trailing edge of the plate.
8. Press **Start/Continue** and lightly hold down the trailing edge of the plate as it is rolled onto the drum:
   - Ensure that the trailing edge of the plate remains in contact with the table surface during loading to achieve an accurate plate length measurement.
   - If two people are available, one person should hold down the trailing edge of the plate on the drum while the other person tapes the plate down.
   - If only one person is loading the plate, you can use a piece of tape that is a minimum of 152 mm (6 in.) long, running from the centre of the trailing edge of the plate onto the loading table, to temporarily hold down the trailing edge. Quickly tape down the whole length of the trailing edge to ensure it does not lift off the drum and scrape against the flash cover.
9. Using the **Inspect/Clean** button to rotate the drum, ensure that:
   - The tape conforms to the plate/drum profile as shown in the previous drawing.
   - The plate is in good contact with the drum.
10. Apply tape to the home and away sides of the plate using the **Inspect/Clean** button:
    - Start the tape about 50 mm (2 in.) before the leading edge of the plate and allow an overlap of about 12.5 mm (0.5 in.) onto the plate.
    - Hold the tape roll with tension as the turning drum pulls the tape onto the drum.
    - Ensure proper application of the tape as noted previously in the taping drawing.
11. Close the flash cover and press **Start/Continue** to end the loading sequence and begin imaging.
12. To unload the plate, open the flash cover when prompted.
13. Remove the side tape using the inspection foot controls or the **Inspect/Clean** button to turn the drum.
14. Peel up the trailing edge of the plate and hold onto it.
15. Push the flash cover slightly to start the unload sequence.
16. Push the plate edge down onto the load table so it covers the plate sensor.
17. Press **Start/Continue** to complete the unload sequence while guiding the trailing edge of the plate with one hand.

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The leading provider of graphic communications solutions worldwide, Kodak's Graphic Communications Group (GCG) offers image capture systems; professional color, copydot, and high-speed document scanning systems; inkjet printing and proofing systems; workflow and color management software; thermal imaging devices for film, plates, and proofs; high-quality proofing media, printing plates, and recording film; on-demand color and black-and-white printing systems; data storage products; and professional services. With corporate headquarters located in Rochester, N.Y., Kodak (NYSE: EK) has the largest global sales force and is committed to a digitally oriented growth strategy.

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