

Forletter S.A.'s Bold Shift Toward High-End and Specialized Markets

Spain, Forletter S.A. | Lithrone G40 advance [GL-640A]



David Martínez López, Managing Director of Forletter S.A., represents the second generation of this family-run business in Madrid, Spain. Founded in 1968 by David's parents under the name Gráficas Fanny, the company started as a small commercial printing business equipped with typographic printing equipment and a single-unit offset press. When the business transitioned to the next generation, its name was changed to Forletter S.A.

David Martínez López, Managing Director of Forletter S.A.

David recalls, "Initially, with two presses -- one 70 x 100 mm and the other 50 x 70 mm -- the company was heavily focused on commercial printing, particularly magazines, producing up to 17 titles a week, along with extensive marketing campaign materials. However, the 2008-2009 financial crisis significantly impacted the publishing sector, causing a sharp decline in long print runs.

A strategic turnaround with Komori

"After several challenging years, we made a major turnaround in 2014 by investing in new opportunities," David explains. "When we connected with Komori in Spain, OMC's director, Enrique Rodríguez, arranged for us to visit print shops using their machines. That's when I first saw H-UV printing -- a technology that was still new to the market at the time."

"H-UV technology resolved many of the challenges we faced with commercial printing, as it eliminates issues like mottling and scratches caused by drying," David continues.

Forletter's first Komori press, the five-color Lithrone G40, became operational in September 2015. It was at this point that David made a bold decision: although the press was a hybrid model capable of printing with both oil-based and H-UV inks, the company committed to exclusively using H-UV. This choice simplified press maintenance and cleaning significantly.

Shifting focus to high-end products

This technological shift initially led to a substantial loss of business -- nearly all remaining magazine contracts disappeared. "However, we chose to persevere, redirecting our focus toward high-end products, including graphic arts and, eventually, luxury packaging," David explains. "By concentrating on high-quality prints, shorter print runs, and higher margins, we gained more time to properly prepare the press for each job."

For nearly six years, the first Komori H-UV press served Forletter well. In 2023, it was replaced with the H-UV equipped six-color Lithrone G40 advance with coater press. This upgrade allowed the company to print most jobs in a single pass. The impact was clear -- despite maintaining the same sales volume in 2023 as in 2022, Forletter produced nearly 40 percent fewer impressions.

"With our previous press, many jobs required two or three passes through the machine. Now, two-pass jobs are rare, resulting in lower costs, reduced maintenance, and more available production hours for new projects."

A laser focus on luxury packaging

"In the folding carton sector, we primarily serve luxury brands in Spain and France. The H-UV press delivers a level of print quality that is ideal for highly demanding color jobs. Since we don't handle large-volume orders, we have the time needed for rigorous testing and precise adjustments." In another bold strategic move, Forletter decided this year to eliminate all peripherals -- including die-cutting and folding machines -- choosing instead to focus solely on printing. "We now specialize exclusively in highly complex, high-value printing projects," David states. "Nothing in our factory is waiting to be processed after printing -- we just print."

A leader's vision for the future

"What I enjoy most about my role is the absolute freedom to make decisions," David shares. "That's the greatest reward for any business owner or director -- the ability to choose a direction, develop an idea, and have the final say. It's incredibly fulfilling to shape projects, create value, and seize opportunities without restrictions."

Looking ahead, Forletter's future plans remain deeply rooted in family leadership. "Our focus for the coming years will be on ensuring business continuity through family governance, operating sustainably and profitably." As a final note, David offers his congratulations to Komori on its centennial milestone: "I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Komori and Mr. Mochida on Komori's 100th anniversary. Sustaining a successful industrial enterprise with a long-term vision is something we deeply admire and strive for. I express my sincere respect and hope that this anniversary marks just one step in a long and prosperous journey ahead."



The Forletter Team