SIEGWERK

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Siegwerk joins HolyGrail 2.0 initiative to improve sorting and recycling rates for packaging in the EU

Initiative investigates digital watermarks for smart packaging recycling to drive a truly circular economy

Siegwerk, one of the leading global providers of printing inks for packaging applications and labels, has joined the HolyGrail 2.0 initiative. Under the auspices of AIM, the European Brands Association, the initiative investigates a pioneering digital watermarks technology for packaging in the European Union. This smart technology could revolutionize the sorting of packaging waste and the quality of recycling. Siegwerk is one of more than 85 companies and organizations from the

complete packaging value chain which are part of HolyGrail 2.0. The ultimate goal is to achieve a truly Circular Economy.

The new technology works like a digital passport for packaging. Digital watermarks the size of a postage stamp are integrated multiple times into the surface of labels or paper-based packaging. These little codes are imperceptible to the human eye, but can be read by cameras, and can carry a wide range of information, such as manufacturer, Stock Keeping Unit (SKU), type of plastics used and composition for multilayer objects, food vs. non-food usage, etc. This information can be used along the entire packaging value chain – from producer to recycler. It can improve consumer engagement, supply chain visibility and retail operations. In the end, the digital watermark can be detected on the sorting line of a waste sorting facility. This will then enable an improved and more accurate sorting process This in turn results in higher-quality recyclates, which can be re-used in even more new products and thus support a Circular Economy.

Siegwerk will contribute its expertise on packaging circularity as well as on sustainable inks and varnishes and the printing process to HolyGrail 2.0.

“We are very proud to be a member of this ambitious initiative, joining renowned companies such as The Coca-Cola Company, Kelloggs, Rewe Group and Tetra Pak. It perfectly fits with a key element of our Circular Economy objectives: targeting collection and recycling of all packaging. We are convinced that we need to transform the industry away from a linear economy towards a Circular Economy model. It’s critical to embrace digital and smart ways to achieve this,” says Alina Marm, Head of Circular Economy Hub at Siegwerk.

HolyGrail 2.0 is the next phase of the HolyGrail initiative, which was started by the consumer goods manufacturer Procter & Gamble and was completed under the Ellen MacArthur Foundation between 2016 and 2019. It will launch an industrial pilot in order to prove the viability of digital watermarks technologies

for more accurate sorting of packaging and higher-quality recycling. In addition, it will establish specifications for embedding watermarking codes into plastic molds as well as specifications for sorting equipment.

To learn more about Siegwerk's solution offering for packaging circularity visit Siegwerk's circular solutions.

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