

AN OVERVIEW OF THE SUCCESSFUL IC3D SUITE
WORKFLOW AT BEMIS COMPANY | NEENAH, WI

» IC3D SUITE CASE STUDY «



Packaging by Design

Bemis uses IC3D Suite to strengthen its worldwide position in packaging design and production.

For consumer product companies, packaging is the last, and perhaps most important way to reach a prospective customer. On a crowded store shelf or in a custom display, well-designed packaging attracts attention and influences the purchase decision.

Packaging also must serve many practical functions. It keeps all the bits of the product in one place. It informs us about things like ingredients, weight or measurements. It gives directions for use, and provides special barcodes for inventory and point-of-sale control. In other words, product packaging is the original multi-purpose print medium.

Although packaging is a printed product, creating the ideal package is rapidly becoming a digital process. Designers and service providers are replacing physical prototypes with virtual 3D modeling systems. However, 3D systems have not met the quality and control needs of package designers—that is, until now.

State of the Art

To address growing needs of graphic coordination and prepress services, Neenah, Wisconsin-based packaging company Bemis (www.bemis.com) built a 25,000 square foot graphics facility in 2004. The 100-person department not only provided services to Bemis' manufacturing and printing divisions, it also focused on emerging technologies, and worked with consumer product companies to achieve an important flexible packaging need: improving speed to market.

Even a seemingly simple flexible packaging project requires many steps by many decision makers. Virtual, 3D prototypes and proofs could facilitate and shorten that process and drive down costs—but only if it could simulate the many textures and effects that make packaging an effective medium.

The new Bemis facility was already using several 3D packaging solutions, but needed to expand its capabilities. In particular, they needed to match the actual physical capabilities their plants could produce. These included many special print characteristics including surface finishes, hot and cold foils, opaque white and metallic inks. They also



needed to provide package content simulation and lighting effects, to more accurately visualize the final product.

In June of 2013, Bemis began testing just such a product: **IC3D Suite** from developer Creative Edge Software (www.creativeedgesoftware.com). After a three month test, the company has fully implemented the software in their graphics facility.

Now in 3D!

IC3D Suite is something new—a complete, real-time packaging simulation and design system. Other 3D systems rely on slow UVW mapping to simulate various effects, which in turn slows down the design and approval process. IC3D Suite has a unique Auto Mesh Mapping function, allowing labels and artwork to be accurately placed onto complex models and rendered immediately. It features a large, customizable library of packaging types, shapes, textures and effects, and works together with both CAD software (for the structure of a package) and with Adobe Creative Suite. IC3D Suite includes a plugin for Adobe Illustrator, allowing 2D artwork to be directly mapped onto 3D models as base artwork or as labels.

The initial Bemis experience with IC3D Suite exceeded expectations. “The decision was fairly short since we were able to utilize the initial software during the trial period to confirm that it would meet our needs,” according to Bemis’ Creative Services Manager, Brenda Abraham. “IC3D is a great complement to our existing group of tools. Its compatibility with some of our existing applications is a benefit.”

During testing, Bemis staff members were impressed with IC3D Suite’s variety of surface finish options, such as metallic or matte/gloss, as well as lighting effects, transparency options and available textures. In addition, “the user interface is very intuitive and logical within our workflow,” Abraham noted.

Bemis now uses IC3D Suite to provide 2D and 3D virtual packages for presentation to their internal and external customers—to evaluate consumer experience and provide technical specifications of the final production package. “We will continually look at the utilization of this capability and build upon these formats,” Abraham noted. The company will also be expanding their IC3D Suite model templates to address new, constantly evolving package formats. “This segment of our business is definitely a growth area for us,” she said.

For Bemis, IC3D Suite represents significant time and money savings, and the means to satisfy current customers and win new business.

The Bottom Line

For Bemis, IC3D Suite represents significant time and money savings, and the means to satisfy current customers and win new business. By simulating packages in real time, designers and decision makers can reduce the number of design iterations, decrease error rates, and significantly reduce overall time to market—without compromising on the quality and effectiveness of each package.

For more information on using IC3D Suite for packaging simulation and design, email CGS at sales@cgsusa.com, or call the CGS main office at (612) 870-0061.
