

# COMMON SENSE FLEXO

## From Joe Flexo: How to keep your anilox rolls *rolling* for years to come

By David J. Lanska, "The Anilox Guy"

**Pop Quiz:** What is the primary reason most anilox rolls are sent in for resurfacing? (A) wear, (B) cell plugging, (C) damage, or (D) you have more money in your budget than you know what to do with.

Before I tell you the correct answer, if you answered "D," please put down this magazine, and give me a call. We need to talk...

The correct answer is "C." More often than not, anilox rolls get resurfaced because they are damaged in one form or another. Here are several Bright Ideas and Technical Tips to keep your anilox rolls rolling for years to come.

**Use protective covers on rolls being installed/removed from the press.** Not all presses allow enough clearance for covers, but the potential for impact damage can be greatly reduced by covering the face of the rolls. This is particularly true of solid-core anilox rolls which can weigh 90 lbs (40 kg) or more.

**When rolls are stored, keep them covered to prevent incidental damage.** Roll covers are an inexpensive investment that can save you literally thousands of dollars in damages.

**Keep the inside of roll covers clean.** When ink particles are left on the covers, they can be a source of damage if they are dragged across the roll face. They also can become embedded in a freshly cleaned cell structure. Using warm water and detergent with a brush should remove these particles without a great deal of time or expense. If done on a Friday afternoon, the covers could thoroughly dry over the weekend before being mounted on the rolls.

**Clearly mark forklift aisles and insure that anilox carts are a safe distance away.** Accidents—highly expensive ones—can happen.

**Keep the area clear around anilox storage areas.** Ink buckets, debris, rolls of paper or film stock, rolls of finished labels, and a variety of other materials

are often inadvertently left on the floor near the press and the roll racks and carts. By keeping these areas clear, there is less likelihood of a roll being dropped or banged into something. In addition, productivity typically increases because it's easier and quicker to get a roll or put it back where it goes after use.

**Install good lighting above your storage area.** Most of the damage noted during audits is clearly

**It's not true that "the guy on the other shift" is primarily responsible for damaged aniloxes.**



visible to the eye without magnification. Broken-down cell walls and plugged cells appear as dull areas on an otherwise shiny, superfinished roll surface. Careful visual inspection of the anilox can identify and avert potential printing problems. Supplemental lighting would help to facilitate the inspection. For the most part, if you can see it on the roll, chances are you will see it in the print.

**Rolls that have become damaged should be tagged.** Without lifting a roll, operators should be able to determine if the roll has a problem which precludes it from being used for a particular job. If a roll has a damaged area a few inches from one of the journals, the operator could determine based on web width if the problem would interfere with the print area. A tag indicating "Damage 2 in. from journal" would tell an operator immediately whether or not they could use the roll for that job.

**Store 650 and 750 Webtron rolls in cardboard tubes.** Banded together, they make a simple, inexpensive storage system for these small rolls. (Source: Ron Baker, Arizona Label)

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