



PRESS RELEASE

Acimga launches the Flexo Development Group

Italy holds the world's second place in the production of flexographic printing machines with an export value of more than 160 million euros.

MILAN, DECEMBER 1st, 2022 – The **Flexo Development Group by Acimga** has been officially created in November, as the third specialization group within the association that represents Italian manufacturers of machines for the graphic, paper and converting industries.

A first founding group represented by 20 Acimga member companies - BFT Flexo, BOBST, Brofind, BST Eltromat, Camozzi Automation, Color Consulting, DEC Impianti, ETS International, Ferrarini & Benelli, HuberGroup, Gama, Inciflex, Koenig & Bauer, OMET, Prades, RE, Rossini, Simec Group, Tresu and Uteco - which aims to **promote flexo technology and analyse its implementation and trends in the various markets in which this technology is used.**

The name of the Group expressly underlines the choice to privilege the concept of development, declining it on different enabling factors: firstly, market development, but also the development of skills; the development of applications; the development of analysis, data, and functional mapping for optimal monitoring; the development of inter-associative dialogue to establish relationships with the associative and flexographic world that already exists; the development of the Made by Italy.

Simone Bonaria, Chief Operation Officer of BFT Group, has been appointed **Group Coordinator** and will work as a link between the Group and Acimga's General Council. «*The Flexo Development Group was born with the idea of expanding the dialogue within the flexographic printing world, taking an active part in it*». Says Bonaria, adding that «*the 20 companies that took part in the project's kick-off brought many ideas for the future activities of the group, and this is a sign that this segment is lively and still has a lot of room for innovation*».

The "Flexo" market: some data

In 2022, the world trade in flexographic printing machines amounted to approximately 1 billion euros¹. Despite constituting a niche market, Acimga's desire to start a specialisation group must be seen in the current and

¹ Fonte: ExportPlanning.com su base Banca Dati Ulisse, sviluppata a partire da dati ONU (db Comtrade), Eurostat (db Comext) e US Census Bureau (db UsaTrade)



ITALIAN MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION OF MACHINERY FOR THE GRAPHIC, CONVERTING AND PAPER INDUSTRY

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expected growth of the specific segment. In 2022, "flexo" international trade experienced a real boom, marking a + 17%, with a positive trend of moderate growth that is estimated to continue until 2026, with a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of + 3.9%.

Italy is the second country in the world (after Germany) in exports of flexographic printing machines, with 161 million euros, (for a market share of 13.3%), a leadership on which to focus in the next three years. Among the countries that import the largest quantities of flexo machines are the United States, with an estimated export of 175 million euros in 2026 (from 152 in 2022) and Turkey (77 million euros expected in 2026, from 54 in 2022).

Analysis: flexographic printing

Flexo printing is the second oldest printing technology, in which quick-drying inks are transferred from flexible printing plates to a substrate. This type of printing is mainly used for large-scale printing of texts and images on a wide variety of materials such as plastics, metal films, paper, and nonwovens.

Flexography was created as a stamp printing method and the first flexo printing press was built in Liverpool, England, in 1890, by Bibby, Baron & Sons. This method became known as aniline printing, as aniline oil-based ink was used in the early 1900s. Throughout the early twentieth century, flexographic printing was used for food packaging in the United States, until the FDA declared that the ink used was not safe for this type of product; safe food-contact inks were developed only in the mid-'900. In 1951 this process was officially called flexographic printing. Over the decades, print quality has improved dramatically thanks to better inks, clichés, and machines. It is an environmentally friendly printing technology when water-based inks are used, as they do not release any Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) into the environment.

About us - Acimga is the Confindustria association representing all printing, packaging, and converting technologies, which gathers around 75 associated companies for a sector which is worth around 3 billion in turnover, 60% of which from exports. Italy is among the top 3 world leading manufacturers for these machines (together with Germany and China), constantly strengthened by its highly specialized mechanical knowledge, combined with the most modern electronic technologies (www.acimga.it/en/).

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