



Objectives & Goals

The European Rotogravure Association, founded in 1956, has developed into the leading international organisation of the gravure industry. It is a non-profit organisation dedicated to supporting users of the gravure printing process. ERA's mission is to promote gravure wherever it is applied and to contribute to the healthy continuity of the gravure industry.

ERA

- is the representative body for the European publication, packaging and decorative gravure industry
- is the industry representative body in all political and legislative matters concerning gravure
- is a discussion forum for socio-economic issues concerning the gravure industry
- is a forum to exchange technical information, to promote technical developments, to support scientific projects and to promote the development of gravure in emerging markets
- maintains constant vigilance in environment, health and safety matters, working with relevant bodies at the EU and national levels
- participates in international standard committees.

Gravure in daily life

- Major magazines and catalogues in Europe and overseas are printed in gravure.
- All types of packaging, particularly the flexible packaging material for consumer brand articles are printed in gravure.
- Decorative paper for furniture, flooring and wallpaper are produced with gravure printing.
- Gravure is also applied in security printing and for technical applications (e.g. printed electronics).

The process

Once an art form and a craft skill, gravure today is a computer controlled manufacturing process, offering outstanding print quality, output consistency, highest versatility and speed.

How it works

The image carrier in the gravure process is generally a steel cylinder with a copper-plated surface in which small recesses, called 'cells', are made which carry the ink. The surface is normally then plated with hard chromium to improve its wearing properties.

In the press, there is a printing unit for each cylinder. The surface of the rotating cylinder dips into an ink pan which fills the cells with ink (the inks for gravure printing are very fluid, whereas offset litho ink is paste-like). Surplus ink is then wiped off the cylinder surface by the squeegee action of the doctor blade, leaving ink only in the cells. The impression roller then presses the paper web onto the cylinder, and the ink transfers onto the paper.

Gravure applies the ink in controlled doses from different sizes of cell. The larger the volume of the printing cells, the more ink is transferred and the stronger the tone which is reproduced by them.