

PROFILE

NAME: High Desert Pure

LOCATION: Bend, Ore. and Sacramento, Calif.

FOUNDED: 2015

WEBSITE: www.highdesertpure.com

CHALLENGE

Create high-quality, color labels with batch-specific information for a market with demanding and exacting labeling compliance requirements.

SOLUTION

Integrate Epson ColorWorks® label printers into workflow for on-demand labeling with high-quality, full-color results.

Colorful and Compliant Cannabis Packaging

High Desert Pure Delivers Premium Topical THC and CBD Products in Oregon and California with the Help of Epson Label Printers

When Jack Robson ruptured a disk in his back in 2014, it was around the same time Oregon was starting its medical marijuana program, so he turned to cannabis as an alternative to the harsh drugs with side effects his doctors were prescribing. He was pleasantly surprised to find the cannabis helped with his back more than the medication, and this began a new journey for Robson that would open business opportunities for him and his family in Bend, Ore. and eventually Sacramento, Calif.

Named after the high desert area of Oregon in which he lived and the desire to use pure, all-natural ingredients with full-spectrum extracts, Robson started [High Desert Pure](http://www.highdesertpure.com) in 2015.

“Our main focus has always been providing relief,” said Robson, president of High Desert Pure. “We sell a variety of topicals, bath products and tinctures – all of which have a generally healthful theme. Products containing THC are sold in Oregon and California through recreational marijuana programs and dispensaries; CBD-only products are also available online.”

Finding a Superior Printing Solution

When Robson started High Desert Pure, he needed a solution for printing in-house, given the required regulations and elements needed for cannabis label printing. “We initially used a color laser printer to create labels,” said Robson. “While it was fairly straightforward and easy, the quality wasn’t what I wanted to represent my company, and it didn’t allow us to scale up as business grew.”

“We needed some way to label our products such that we could edit the batch details in-house and generate an attractive and resilient label, meaning one that would not



easily be ruined by water or oil,” he noted. “Imagine labeling a sunscreen bottle for example, you will likely get sunscreen on your fingers. If that caused a label to smudge, that would obviously be unacceptable.”

While visiting cannabis tradeshow on the west coast, Robson met Guy Mikel from [Color Label Solutions](http://www.colorlabelsolutions.com), a value-added reseller specializing in print-on-demand color label systems. “He was showcasing an Epson ColorWorks on-demand label printer, and the demo was just amazing. The quality he was producing was far superior to anything else we had ever seen,” said Robson. “In addition, with the labels on rolls, it would allow us to automate the application of the labels.”

“When we started developing our packaging and labeling requirements, we realized our labels have a significant amount of batch-specific regulated text and content to facilitate tracking and tracing. “This is one of the reasons it’s so compelling for us to print in-house with the Epson label printer – because of all the required elements that need to appear on the label.”

- JACK ROBSON, PRESIDENT, HIGH DESERT PURE

“We have been working with cannabis and CBD manufacturers for quite a while now, so we have a good understanding of the label requirements and needs in this market,” said Mikel. “We are always grateful when we have the opportunity to meet and work with wonderful customers like Jack at High Desert Pure. They have created some very interesting products and really pride themselves on the quality of the products and labeling.”

High Desert Pure started with the [ColorWorks C7500G](#) on-demand color label printer in Oregon, and after opening offices in Sacramento to help serve the growing California market, invested in the newest [ColorWorks CW-C6000A](#).

“We were already having such great success with the ColorWorks C7500G in Oregon, that when we needed an in-house solution in California, the CW-C6000A was a no brainer, in part because it was so darn affordable,” said Robson.

“We were already having such great success with the ColorWorks C7500G in Oregon, that when we needed an in-house solution in California, the CW-C6000A was a no brainer, in part because it was so darn affordable.”

- JACK ROBSON, PRESIDENT, HIGH DESERT PURE

Labeling in a Compliance Driven Market

High Desert Pure offers about 30 different SKUs and prints on a variety of different labels and sizes. “When we started developing our packaging and labeling requirements, we realized our labels have a significant amount of batch-specific regulated text and content to facilitate tracking and tracing,” explained Robson. “This is one of the reasons it’s so compelling for us to print in-house with the Epson label printer – because of all the required elements that need to appear on the label.”

There are different regulations put in place by each state, so label requirements differ by region, and there are a number of specific rules about what needs to be included. “First of all, we have to have our product identity, and the universal cannabis warning symbol which differs by state and carries a lot of requirements – the dimensions or aspect ratio can’t be changed, it has a minimum size, and if a product is constituted entirely from hemp and doesn’t have cannabis derived content – no THC – then it has a different color,” explained Robson.

“Additionally, you must include various potency amounts and manufacturing dates, as well as a unique ID, which allows the product to be tracked and traced through its entire lifespan – from the point of manufacturer, through a potential distributor, to dispensary, to the end consumer,” continued Robson. “This unique ID is to prevent diversions, so people aren’t making and manufacturing products that contain THC and then selling them in other states, which would be illegal.”



Given all the custom elements on these labels, this requires High Desert Pure to make a new label every time it makes a batch of products. And as laws change and regulations are updated, it becomes important to have the flexibility to change the information on the labels.

“While in theory it might be nice to say, ‘I’m going to buy labels in bulk,’ that really doesn’t work for us,” stated Robson. “The customization is why we tried Epson’s label solution to begin with, and why we’re wedded to it indefinitely.”

With an Eye Toward the Environment

High Desert Pure is working hard to make products as environmentally sustainable as possible, while still making the product look and feel as good as possible. For instance, finding recycled and recyclable child-resistant packaging is a big challenge, but it’s something High Desert Pure is interested in tackling.

“There are some things that just don’t lend themselves to being child-resistant like a lotion pump – a child-resistant lotion pump just doesn’t exist,” said Robson.

While finding packaging that helps High Desert Pure stay true to its environmental commitment is a challenge, being able to print only the labels needed means they don’t waste unused labels. “Labels are printed and applied after the product is filled and tested, because only then do we have the test results that can be put on the label,” continued Robson.

Looking Ahead

The cannabis market continues to grow and evolve and as it does, the complexities for manufacturers and distributors will likely increase. Labeling requirements will become more challenging as markets expand and product portfolios diversify. As companies like High Desert Pure expand, Epson will be there to help solve new business challenges.

“The last few years have certainly been exciting for us as we’ve seen this market grow and mature,” said Robson. “We’ve grown to be the largest topical manufacturer in Oregon. And we’re looking forward to seeing where the next few years take us.”

“While in theory it might be nice to say, ‘I’m going to buy labels in bulk,’ that really doesn’t work for us. The customization is why we tried Epson’s label solution to begin with, and why we’re wedded to it indefinitely.”

- JACK ROBSON, PRESIDENT, HIGH DESERT PURE



The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the individual. Individuals were not compensated for this article.



RMS Omega Technologies
9635 Philadelphia Road
Baltimore, MD 21237
info@rmsomega.com | 888-857-8402