Mixing business and politics may not be everyone’s idea of ideal work and life balance. While Doug Ford has followed his political aspirations, brother Randy has focused on making Deco a leader in innovation in the labels and flexible packaging industry. But for Doug the fine line between public service and business prominence has always been a “passion,” says Doug, the self-described ‘workaholic’.

As co-owners of their family-owned Deco Labels & Flexible Packaging business—founded in west-end Toronto by their late father Doug Ford Sr. back in 1962—the two elder Ford brothers strive to ensure that Deco leads the pack in technology and service, a vision their late father never lost sight of.

If anything, the tragic loss of their brother, Rob Ford, to cancer about a year ago has given them a renewed sense of drive, passion and purpose to make the family business—already one leading pressure-sensitive label manufacturers in Canada—even stronger.

Operating a busy 70,000-square-foot production complex a short drive east of the Toronto’s Pearson International Airport in the city’s west end—along with another 45,000-square-foot label and flexible packaging plant in Chicago—the company employs about 200 people in total while operating a busy seven-day weekly schedule.

“We are extremely busy with the amount of work we generate throughout the year, producing product for customers in the food, beverage, produce, health and beauty, household, confection and the promo-
Designed for maximum available production time and operating convenience, the new modular belt conveyor in stainless steel is robust, safe and easy to clean.

The standardized design and modularity make changes of the production line easy. It’s the smart, long-term investment in your bottom line and your operators!

For more information, please contact us at 610-973-8200 or by email at info.us@flexlink.com.

FLEXLINK®

a coesia company

FlexLink is part of Coesia, a group of innovation-based industrial solutions companies operating globally headquartered in Bologna, Italy.

www.coesia.com

Randy Ford stands beside Deco Label’s VLI-500 rewinder from Mark Andy company Rotoflex, that uses a Unilux LED 2000 lighting strobe to help the operator check the rewind.

Deco Labels co-owner Randy Ford holding a roll of specially-designed resealable labels converted by the company’s Mark Andy P7 LED narrow web press.

Randy Ford told *Canadian Packaging* magazine during a recent visit to the Toronto plant.

Set up as a full-service shop capable of looking after all their customers’ print needs and related requirements, the Toronto facility provides a broad range of printing options, finishing options and unique die cutting.

“We work with our suppliers to achieve the most effective way of delivering our products, to our customers, on a consistent basis without sacrificing quality and service. We remain at the forefront of technology in the labels flexible packaging markets and pride ourselves on an easy to do business philosophy and our speed to market attitude,” says Randy Ford, explaining the company’s growing focus on producing more flexible packaging products.

Deco is currently producing various types of flexible packaging employing high definition printing. Specializing in resealable structures, pouches, lidding film, compostable film, printed flow wrap, citrus bag film and roll fed can wrap.

“We are a proven leader in OnSerts and on-pack pieces and by offering pre-application of these pieces to the actual product label, we have raised the in-
novation bar,” says Randy Ford. “It is the same philosophy we have applied to our entering into the flexible packaging market. We saw a void in the industry; no one was servicing the small and mid-size flexible packaging users.

“We are having overwhelming success,” continues Randy Ford. “We offer superior service and outstanding print and just to complete the picture we truly are an innovator and partner with our clients on development projects.”

Discussing the continued growth and market demand for flexible packaging, particularly resealable packaging, Randy explains. “We have developed a process to marry a pressure sensitive structure to a film, usually heat sealable. Film structures include barrier films for deli, produce lidding film, cookie packages to wipes and more.

“It essentially enables us to kill two birds with one stone by providing customers with the resealability feature that they want and utilizing the ever increasing capabilities that we have,” he states.

In fact, Deco’s capabilities allow their clients to have printed base film, a printed pressure sensitive component or a combination of both.

The Deco resealable flexible package is a consumer friendly package that can be peeled opened and resealed simply by pressing it back down into place.

The company has even developed a proprietary tamper evident system that can be built into the structure, a point that Randy Ford says help make Deco a leader in the resealable product category.

“While we have been involved in producing flexible packaging for a long time, we actually made a concerted effort to become more involved in that market segment about four years ago,” says Randy Ford.

“By acquiring some new press technology, we have made great strides within the market,” he says, explaining the Deco plant’s recent purchase of a new 10-color, 20-inch-wide P7 LED-curing press from flexographic printing technologies supplier Mark Andy Inc. of Chesterfield, Mo.

“We really like the ProLED UV LED drying option, which provides us with high-quality labels and new flexible packaging opportunities to explore,” he says.

While the commercial printing industry has some reservations about LED printing technology, mainly related to operating speeds, Mark Andy says that LED print head offers many advantages in creating smaller dot sizes to facilitate higher-quality finished
An LED printing press is also able to provide a superb print clarity with multi-level shading, according to Mark Andy, and the absence of any moving parts makes the operation more reliable and less prone to machine downtime due to mechanical issues.

Because the LED aspect of the press does not have any moving parts, the technology is considered to be more reliable, and not as prone to costly downtime concerns.

Before purchasing the P7 LED UV press 18 months ago, Deco had already sampled the benefits of LED technology by switching over its factory lighting system to the LED lights.

“When the time came to get a new press, we wanted to be on the leading edge of technology,” says Randy Ford, noting this is the tenth Mark Andy press installed at the Deco plant over the years.

“We bought the Mark Andy P7 specifically because we wanted to increase our high-quality, narrow-web flexible packaging output,” explains Randy Ford.

While Deco initially and successfully produced its new flexible packaging solution on the plant’s existing equipment, he recalls, “The final output simply wasn’t at the level where we were happy with the quality.

“The biggest issues we had with the non-P7 equipment when we took on this flexible packaging task was an excessive amount of film waste during the initial production set-up, along with the amount of set-up time it required.

“It simply wasn’t as efficient a production process as we would have liked,” he continues, “and with the growing demand for more flexible packaging from our existing customers, we decided it would be prudent of us to make the investment into the press.”

Randy and Doug Ford both agree that they enjoy the simple design of the P7’s prints stations, allowing operators quick and easy access to execute fast changeover between the production runs.

Once the printed film comes off the 10-color Mark Andy P7 LED press, it passes through an AVT (Advanced Vision Technology LTD) Helios II 100 percent inspection system for quality assurances, and then through a slitting machine equipped with an easy-to-use Mitsubishi GOT (Graphics Operational Terminal) 1000 HMI (human-machine interface) terminal.

Designed specifically for label and narrow-web printing, the AVT Helios II is widely acclaimed in the industry a top-flight inspection system for spotting even the tiniest defects in print quality.

After printing, the run is transferred onto a VLI-500 rewinder built by Rotoflex, also a Mark Andy company, featuring a built-in Unilux LED 2000 lighting strobe that makes it easier for the operator to see the film as it rewinds.

According to Mark Andy, the VLI-500 is ideal for tension-sensitive materials like labels and flexible film packaging, but it also works as well with foil, light cartons and other types of packaging.

Like the P7 LED press, the VLI-500’s LED lighting has a longer shelf-life than other standard bulbs.

“We’ve always been loyal to Mark Andy, always their big supporters,” says Randy Ford, “and using their Mark Andy P7 LED UV press has really allowed us to grow our flexible packaging market segment faster.”

“There is no question that the addition of the Mark Andy P7, the Rotoflex VLI-500 and what options we equipped them with have helped us greatly increase our product offering,” he adds.

All of the efforts Deco has made has now garnered them some accolades with some impressive...
PROFITS (RE)SEALED!

THE RESEALABLE PACKAGING

YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!

- UNIQUE PULL-BACK AND RECLOSABLE SEAL THAT OFFERS THE STRONGEST RESEAL IN THE MARKET.
- YOU HAVE TO TRY THIS AWARD-WINNING PACKAGE TO SEE HOW GOOD IT IS.
- OUR NARROW WEB CONVERTING OFFERS MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY.
- IDEAL FOR A COMPLETE RANGE OF FOOD PRODUCTS THAT REQUIRE FRESHNESS AND PRODUCT PROTECTION.
- HELP YOUR CLIENTS TO MEET THEIR BEST PORTIONING REQUIREMENTS.

Visit our facility to see how we make this great new resealable flexible package. Or have us come out to see you with samples to show you how great they will work with your products.
Because the Mark Andy P7 press utilizes LED (light-emitting diode) technology, it avoids heat malleability issues that could cause substrate stretch during a print run, ensuring Deco Labels & Flexible Packaging that its end-product will have a consistent strength and quality.

The Ford brothers agree that keeping the company’s growth on the right track is an important part of keeping alive their father’s legacy of continuous innovation, superior customer service and giving back to the local community.

“We run the full gamut of programs, from the sponsoring of local youth soccer and baseball teams to supporting charitable organizations, breakfast programs, women’s shelters, and helping out kids in high-priority (disadvantaged) neighborhoods,” says Randy Ford.

Doug Ford concurs: “Giving back to the community is something our dad instilled in all of us early on.”

Uline supplies two- and four-inch splicing tapes used by Deco Labels to conjoin two rolls of printed film.

A pair of First Place narrow web film awards from Labelexpo 2016 presented to Deco Labels for its quality production of UV Flexo LED shrink-sleeve products, and for its superb work in producing UV flexible LED promotional materials.

Uline supplies two- and four-inch splicing tapes used by Deco Labels to conjoin two rolls of printed film.

Because the Mark Andy P7 press utilizes LED (light-emitting diode) technology, it avoids heat malleability issues that could cause substrate stretch during a print run, ensuring Deco Labels & Flexible Packaging that its end-product will have a consistent strength and quality.

The Ford brothers agree that keeping the company’s growth on the right track is an important part of keeping alive their father’s legacy of continuous innovation, superior customer service and giving back to the local community.

“We run the full gamut of programs, from the sponsoring of local youth soccer and baseball teams to supporting charitable organizations, breakfast programs, women’s shelters, and helping out kids in high-priority (disadvantaged) neighborhoods,” says Randy Ford.

Doug Ford concurs: “Giving back to the community is something our dad instilled in all of us early on.”

Uline supplies two- and four-inch splicing tapes used by Deco Labels to conjoin two rolls of printed film.

The Ford brothers agree that keeping the company’s growth on the right track is an important part of keeping alive their father’s legacy of continuous innovation, superior customer service and giving back to the local community.

“We run the full gamut of programs, from the sponsoring of local youth soccer and baseball teams to supporting charitable organizations, breakfast programs, women’s shelters, and helping out kids in high-priority (disadvantaged) neighborhoods,” says Randy Ford.

Doug Ford concurs: “Giving back to the community is something our dad instilled in all of us early on.”

Uline supplies two- and four-inch splicing tapes used by Deco Labels to conjoin two rolls of printed film.

The Ford brothers agree that keeping the company’s growth on the right track is an important part of keeping alive their father’s legacy of continuous innovation, superior customer service and giving back to the local community.

“We run the full gamut of programs, from the sponsoring of local youth soccer and baseball teams to supporting charitable organizations, breakfast programs, women’s shelters, and helping out kids in high-priority (disadvantaged) neighborhoods,” says Randy Ford.

Doug Ford concurs: “Giving back to the community is something our dad instilled in all of us early on.”