



Have you lost control of your Artwork Management?

Ensuring optimal control and compliance over your packaging artwork process

White Paper



Managing control of content used in packaging artwork is critical to meeting deadlines, ensuring compliance and enforcing brand consistency. Unfortunately, without an efficient, standardized process that enables users to leverage a source of truth and ensure consistent content and data, there is lack of control and the omnipresent risk of error.

There's no room for error in today's business environment

A modern, cloud-based artwork management platform to drive continuous improvement

Packaging artwork plays an important role in ensuring that companies meet deadlines, increase speed to market, ensure compliance and enforce brand consistency. Without a standardized, efficient approach, organizations cannot maintain good control and compliance over this mission-critical process.



At the same time, regulatory bodies are dictating the need for greater compliance across many industries. And, the increased number of stakeholders is pushing companies to gain better control of processes and provide role-based access for specific users.

With a unified Artwork Management platform in place, however, the same companies can gain control over their packaging artwork—from change request right through to the approval process.

This white paper explores the key challenges that companies face when using manual processes to manage the end-to-end packaging artwork development process from content brief to printing and tells how a user-friendly, cloud-based Artwork Management platform can streamline the packaging lifecycle process, make it more efficient and ensure optimal control and compliance.

Managing the Critical Path

Providing Visibility and Accountability

Ideally, Artwork Management should automatically maintain a permanent record of the entire process, including all approval points, status, dates and users associated with any critical path.

Companies also have to monitor performance and streamline processes across internal departments and partners. When you try to manage the control of content and meet deadlines without a standardized process, it can become a real mess.

In most cases, organizations that struggle with control and compliance manage the process using four or five different pieces of software. As data is shuttled between those systems, none of which are integrated with one another, the chance that a mistake is made, a key data point overlooked, or a user comment ignored only continues to escalate.

By the time the packaging artwork has made its way through the lengthy revision and approval process, backtracking through the various steps that it took to get there is virtually impossible. This can not only create product release delays, but it also hampers effective compliance with government regulations, customer requirements or other rules.

When you're using manual processes and disconnected systems to manage packaging artwork, there's always a risk that something gets missed or a stakeholder is unaware of a change that was made. With no single source of data where everyone is held accountable, there's no accurate audit trail or answer to the question, How did we get to this point?"

With a configurable and digital Artwork Management platform in place, the same operation can infuse accountability and structure into the process. For example, a unified platform helps companies manage packaging artwork and the end-to-end (content brief to printing) business processes; mitigate risk; improve control, compliance and traceability; and drive the complexities out of the Artwork Management process.



For example, the individual in charge of compliance would be listed as a stakeholder on the project and would be incorporated into the workflow. Using a dashboard that includes data about all such projects, he or she can then ensure that no steps are skipped, or corners cut during the packaging artwork development process. This not only supports a more accountable and traceable process, but it also speeds up that process and reduces errors.

Using role-based collaboration tools, a unified Artwork Management platform also ensures that only the right people see the right project at the right time, and that they can fulfill their responsibilities, mark it off of a checklist, sign it electronically (versus requiring an actual, physical signature), and then automatically pass the project along to the next stakeholder.

All of the controls are in place to ensure that everyone works on the projects that they're responsible for, finishes those tasks and then signs off on the projects. This, in turn, ensures high levels of compliance and controls that can't be achieved using manual systems, email and multiple different software programs.

Avoiding Fines and Recalls

Operating in a Highly Regulated Environment

Compliance with global regulations is also a moving target in that regulations are constantly expanding and evolving. These realities put unique pressures on labeling and packaging operations, which must quickly adapt to new requirements like EU FMD, DSCSA, EU MDR and IVDR, FDA UDI and 21 CFR Part 11.

The operation that's not in compliance may result with serious issues and fines or other sanctions. There are also potential safety risks that can negatively impact a brand's reputation when artwork and labeling are mishandled. Companies must also validate that the systems used to create and print labels and packaging work are as designed. The time and cost required to validate and revalidate can be significant. The Artwork Management platforms provide content-rich templates that serve as a blueprint for the validation process; validation plans and summary report templates; a 21 CFR 11 assessment template; and a traceability matrix.

Here are more label compliance pain points that companies face when they try to manage the process manually or using multiple different systems:

- **Time consuming, error-prone translation management.** This is a product labeling activity that's prone to errors. For example, the company that's using an Excel spreadsheet to manage its product label translations may require 26 rows of copy plus a "sub spreadsheet" for each individual country where its products are sold. Every single box has to be translated properly into the target language—an extremely time-intensive and error-prone approach.
- **Inefficient Artwork Management processes.** As companies bring new products to market before their competitors do, efficiency becomes table stakes. New competitors that are unencumbered by legacy processes stand as emerging threats for established players in a landscape



marked by a constant flow of new or changing regulatory compliance requirements, packaging materials, brand globalization, and packaging and artwork requirements. Multiplied across dozens or even hundreds of projects, Artwork Management inefficiencies can translate into serious money and time losses.

- **Missed compliance deadlines.** There's also a time component to compliance, which must be addressed, factored in and adhered to as packaging changes make their way through the various stakeholders in an organization. Without complete control of the packaging artwork process, companies can seriously jeopardize their ability to maintain compliance. You're at risk for missing compliance deadlines or details if you don't have an efficient and standardized process. Without an easily accessible, up-to-date source of truth for your content, you won't have the control you need to reduce the risk of error and non-compliance.

A configurable, automated Artwork Management solution helps companies overcome these and other control and compliance issues by tracking printed artwork and packaging materials from conception to completion. It also prompts companies to conduct post-launch product reviews, which are often overlooked, while driving continuous improvement and proactively anticipating delays and issues. All stakeholders benefit—from product managers and marketing teams to legal and compliance specialists.

Staying Compliant, Accurate and Efficient

A Modern Platform that Helps you Gain Control

Sometimes overlooked, Artwork Management plays a vital role in ensuring the right physical presentation of a product is delivered on time effectively and efficiently. It can also play a pivotal role in ensuring packages are compliant for heavily regulated industries. Digitally transforming Artwork Management and leveraging automation also decreases complexity, improves control, and ultimately reduces costs and time to market.

A fully automated Artwork Management solution tracks all workflows and maintains a permanent record of all approval points, statuses, dates, and users associated with the critical path. For additional security, the platform provides a time and date stamp and offers role-based access. Stakeholders know when and where content has been accessed from digital asset management and the phrase library, and they can use eSignature capabilities to ensure compliance with the FDA 21 CFR 11 standards.

Robust and reliable validation services can be implemented quickly and efficiently in the pharmaceutical and medical device industries, and with powerful control and compliance capabilities, automated solutions help organizations in regulated industries meet all compliance requirements and guidelines through full version control.



It also provides a complete audit trail and allows anyone tasked with compliance to monitor performance across all internal departments (plus supply chain partners). Once a piece of packaging artwork is approved and compliant, reusing it at a future date is much easier.

An automated and centralized Artwork Management system lets users view detailed information about each task they own, helping to speed time to completion. Improved visibility also empowers stakeholders to more easily manage and track packaging artwork development and approvals faster in one program.

“Our old method of managing copy development was quite complex and unwieldy with a constant underlying risk of failure. On a good day, the process was only cumbersome – on a bad day it was utterly impossible to manage and had the potential to bring our development processes to a standstill,” said one Lofware Smartflow user.

“Implementing Datasheets for all our copy management streamlined the process and eliminated the concern of inaccurate, out-of-date content or missing files,” she continued. “All of our data is in one place, visible to anyone, and gives us one reliable source of the truth.

About Lofware Smartflow

The industry’s most powerful Artwork Management solution Lofware’s configurable and automated Artwork Management software, Smartflow, lowers costs, reduces mistakes, improves collaboration, and reduces time to market. Smartflow transforms project management, streamlining the packaging concept to shelf process by bringing accountability and structure to the process. Lofware’s comprehensive Smartflow platform enables you to manage packaging artwork and the end-to-end business processes, mitigating risk, improving control, compliance, traceability and reducing the overall complexity of the artwork management process.

Lofware developed Smartflow from the ground up in the Cloud in 2007. The solution is used by over 65,000 users in over 80 countries and is used for brands of all sizes and needs across Consumer Goods, Life Sciences, and private label and retail. Lofware is the global market leader in Enterprise Labeling and Artwork Management Solutions with more than 5,000 customers in over 100 countries. Offering the industry’s most comprehensive digital platform, with SaaS, cloudbased and on-premise solutions, Lofware redefines how enterprises create, manage and print complex labeling and packaging artwork and scale across their operations.



Loftware is the world's largest cloud-based Enterprise Labeling and Artwork Management provider, offering an end-to-end labeling solution platform for companies of all sizes. Maintaining a global presence with offices in US, UK, Germany, Slovenia, China, and Singapore, Loftware boasts over 35 years of expertise in solving labeling challenges. We help companies improve accuracy, traceability and compliance while improving the quality, speed, and efficiency of their labeling. As the leading global provider of Enterprise Labeling and Artwork Management, along with Clinical Trials Labeling and Regulated Content Management, Loftware enables supply chain agility, supports evolving regulations, and optimizes business operations for a wide range of industries. Those include automotive, chemicals, consumer products, electronics, food & beverage, manufacturing, medical device, pharmaceuticals, retail and apparel.