

# Leaving its Mark on the Industry



ENGAGE technologies corporation

*Engage Technologies Corporation has distinguished itself as a leading manufacturer of printing and packaging solutions. Through its offerings, which encompass ink to packaging systems, it supports customers large and small in the food and beverage, electronics, medical, pharmaceutical, personal care, building products, consumer goods and contract packaging sectors.*

Written by Jessica Ferlaino

Founded in 1991, Engage Technologies has evolved greatly since its inception, consistently growing at a rate of 15 to 20 percent a year, through both organic growth and acquisitions. Today, its brands include Squid Ink, Eastey, American Film and Machinery (AFM), and Cogent Technologies.

Engage Technologies has a team of 125 employees that span its five locations in Minnesota, Shanghai, China and its newly established facility in The Hague, Netherlands. David Mylrea joined the company in 1997 and assumed the role of CEO in 2017. He is continuing the legacy that the company's founder, Bill Hoagland, left behind when he sadly passed away in December of 2016.



David Mylrea  
CEO of Engage Technologies

Mr. Mylrea discussed Engage Technologies' history, including the modest beginnings of Mr. Hoagland. He described it as a classic entrepreneurial company that started in a garage and quickly grew to be a market leader that revolutionized what was possible in the printing and packaging industry.

"Bill started by mixing a five-gallon pail of ink in his garage. He went into a manufacturing facility and put that pail of ink on the floor in front of a plant manager and said, 'You're paying \$300 per pail to the folks who are currently supplying you with that ink. This is a higher quality ink and I can provide it for less than \$100 per pail,'" Mylrea shared.

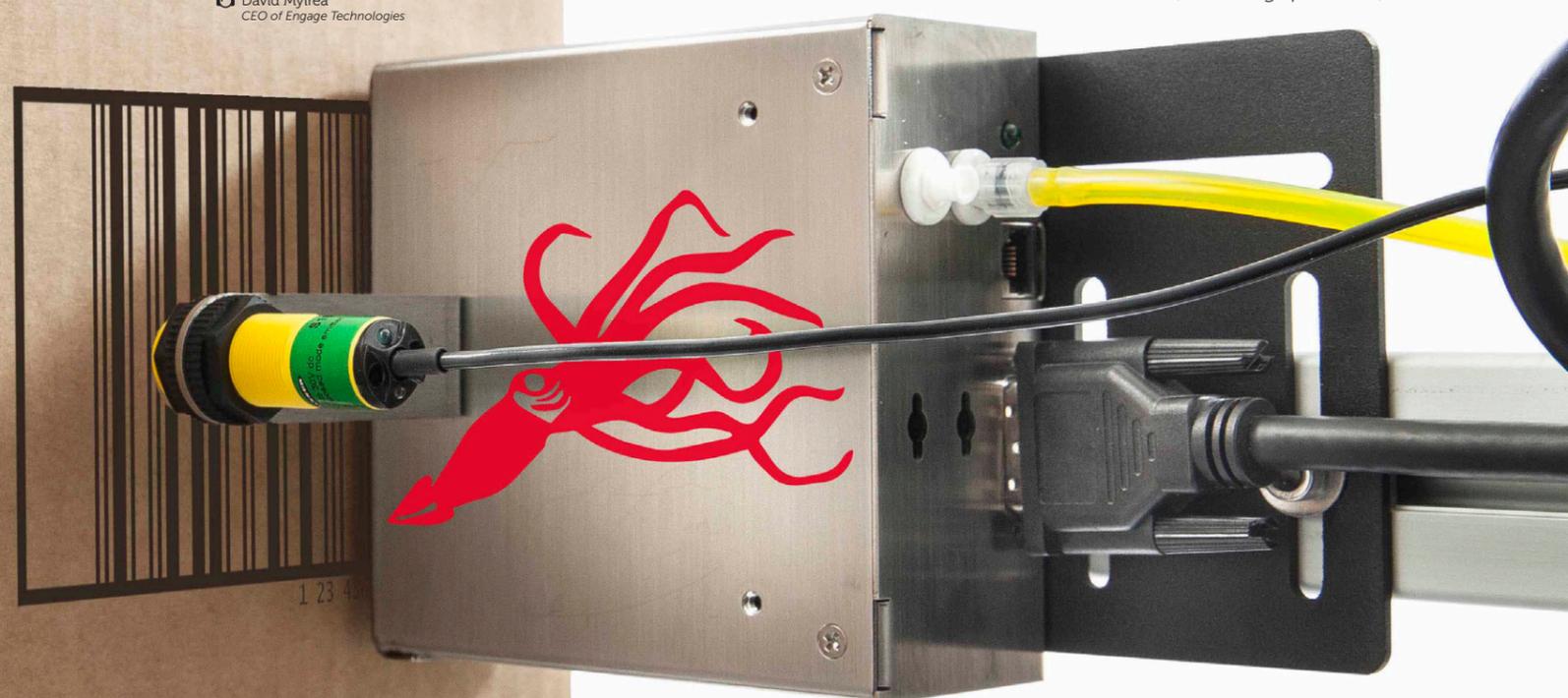
Mr. Hoagland left the pail of ink and his business card for the plant manager – and the rest is history. Not only did the plant manager call him to replenish the ink supply, the move laid the foundation for Squid Ink and what later became Engage Technologies. In no time, Mr. Hoagland outgrew his garage and by 1996, Squid Ink was not only making replacement inks, it introduced the first of many printing systems.

As the parent company of four distinct brands, Engage Technologies offers a comprehensive line of printing systems, including coding and marking solutions, case sealing and shrink packaging equipment, shrink sleeve labeling solutions, and infrared ink drying for mailing and packaging.

Squid Ink is regarded as a leading manufacturer of coding and marking systems and promotes simplified product identification and traceability through its quality inks and low maintenance printing equipment including a complete line of high-resolution printing systems, large character dot matrix printing systems, small character continuous ink jet (CIJ) printing systems, thermal transfer overprint, and an expansive selection of inks and ribbons that can be used in various applications. Mylrea explained, "Virtually any product that you need to code or mark, we have a solution for you."

Eastey manufactures and supplies heavy-duty shrink packaging equipment, case tapers, tape and other packaging equipment. It services food and beverage, medical and pharmaceutical, electronics, building products, and ▶

CO Pilot 500  
by SQUID INK  
Expiration Date 05/10/2019





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**We manufacture turnkey conveyor systems** which can be integrated to your specific needs, and specializing in creative concepts for practical conveying solutions for nearly all industries. USA Conveyor excels in all aspects of production: from design layout to installation and start up! With over 30 years of experience specializing in solving the toughest of problems USA CONVEYOR MANUFACTURING, we've got you and all of your needs covered.

**Over the years** we've had the opportunity to complete meaningful projects for a wide array of companies. We take great pride knowing that we helped build, move and/or install the equipment needed to create many of the products in not only many family run businesses but fortune 500 companies as well.

## Process Integration

- Planning
- Fabrication
- Installation
- Implementation

## Fabrication

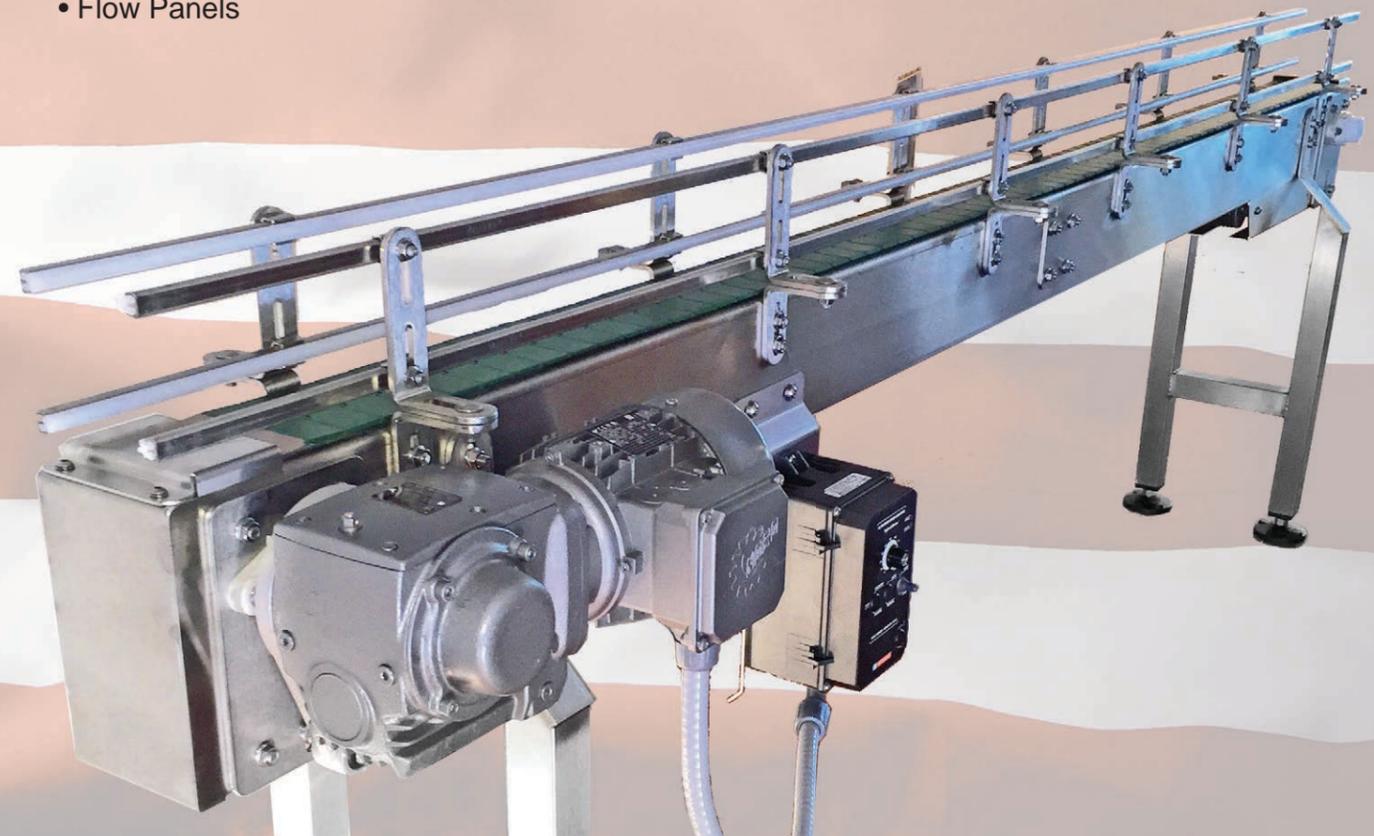
- Custom fabrication
- Conveyors and material handling systems

## Process Piping

- Process piping fabrication and installation
- Modular and skidded systems
- Flow Panels

## Industrial Services

- Industrial equipment and conveyor installation
- Conveyors and material handling systems
- Heavy machinery rigging, dismantling and moving
- Plant and line relocations
- Plant shutdowns/ turnarounds



▶ other manufactured goods. Eastey has over 25 years of experience in operation and has installed more than 14,000 systems for customers.

AFM's product portfolio complements the other Engage products, offering heavy-duty shrink sleeve labeling equipment, shrink tunnels, and shrink sleeve consumables. Its shrink sleeve labeling equipment is extensive and can meet any and all shrink label needs, including tamper-evident banding equipment. AFM's range of equipment is capable of processing 50 to 600 products per minute.

Lastly, Cogent Technologies has asserted itself as the leader in the manufacture of infrared-based ink drying systems for mailing and packaging. Its infrared drying systems provide solutions that improve speed and efficiency in production and round out Engage Technologies' comprehensive printing and packaging solutions.

True to its entrepreneurial roots, Engage Technologies is deeply committed to innovation and new product development. Over the last 15 months alone, it has introduced five new products that are certain to leave their mark on the industry. Mylrea highlighted Squid Ink's new products with the Streamline 5 continuous inkjet (CIJ) printing system and CoPilot 500 high-resolution inkjet printer.

"The Streamline 5 CIJ printing system prints date codes, lot codes and other product information on primary products and we have absolutely been experiencing tremendous growth and success with our CIJ printing system," Mylrea explained.

"We also have our CoPilot 500 large format high-resolution printer for printing barcodes and logos and marking directly on corrugated cases. That system replaces pre-printed cases or labels at about one-tenth the cost of print-and-apply labels and is a very popular product for us now."

On the packaging side, AFM offers a new "all-in-one steam" tunnel that simplifies the process of installation for shrink sleeve users, which has become extremely popular. The WSN GEN-S All-In-One Steam Tunnel incorporates a built-in steam generator with the shrink tunnel, offering a

degree of flexibility and adaptability that its customers, craft brewers for instance, require.

Mr. Mylrea also discussed Eastey's new EB25 bundling system, which provides automated shrink wrapping of trays, cans, bottles and cartons. This mid-range system has become another beacon of success for Engage Technologies.

When asked where Engage Technologies' commitment to innovation originated, Mylrea explained that while innovation has always been important, the process of innovation has been a major focus of the company over the last few years. By engaging the various departments across its operations, the company has worked to formalize the processes for innovation and new product development.

"New product development comes from feedback we receive from our customers. Our product team develops a written product specification based on what we call voice of the customer information," said Mylrea. "That specification goes through a series of approval gates from initial concept, to design, to beta, to release. And then finally, the project is handed off to production. Our whole team is involved in new product development, every step of the way."

Having the ability to manufacture specialty and replacement inks that are designed to run in both its own printing systems, as well as printers made by other manufacturers, Engage Technologies' full suite of product and system offerings has clearly differentiated it in the market. No other company offers a complete and total solution that is comparable.



Squid Ink's Streamline 5 Continuous Inkjet (CIJ) Printer



An example of its strength in this regard is the company's ability to design ink and printing systems for unique applications. Mylrea explained, "We make an ink for the PVC pipe industry that is designed to migrate into the pipe and form a permanent mark," which is unique in the market. Another one of the company's strengths is the relationships it has built with its distributors. The company's distribution channel enables its products to reach end users around the world.

"We have distribution into more than 50 countries worldwide and many of the relationships we've developed are long-term. In a lot of cases, our distributors have had bad experiences with OEMs who have built a sales channel through distributors and then taken the business direct, essentially cutting off their distributor overnight," explained Mylrea. "We've shown and continue to show a commitment to our distributors and we partner with them to introduce the products and expand the business in their territories, so there is integrity in how we operate our business."

Because Engage Technologies relies so heavily on its relationships with distributors, training has become a key part of its success. Sales and service training is conducted at its corporate headquarters, as well as on-site, to ensure sales and service personnel are at the top of their game. "The more they know, the more they sell and the better they can support our mutual customers," Mylrea said.

Currently, Engage Technologies is working to solidify its place in the European and Middle Eastern markets. Acknowledging the challenges associated with establishing a business in new markets, Mylrea noted, "We're having some early success and we believe this will be a great opportunity for our company," making it a priority focus of the company in the short-term. To remain the premier provider of inks and packaging systems

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in its established and new markets, Engage Technologies will continue to showcase its innovative lines of inks and printing systems while developing new products and equipment that will meet the ever-changing needs of its end users.

"We want to have success with our current new product introductions that have been released in the past 15 months. Our goal is to continue to drive growth by continuing to introduce new products for our distribution channel to sell," said Mylrea. "These new products will come about through internal development, private labeling of products, strategic partnerships and acquisitions," he explained.

"From reception to shipping, production to sales and support, our culture is focused on providing our customers with the best customer experience possible," which is only possible through the continued development of its internal capacities and external relationships with its distributors to bring its innovative inks and printing systems to new and existing markets.

The objective is to provide customers with products of the highest quality that are offered at a fair price. By staying true to its founding principles of innovation, diversity, inclusion, employee development and respect, Engage Technologies will continue to increase its presence in, and its impact on the market, offering customers the advantage of fully integrated packaging solutions. ■