

# A SUSTAINABLE U.S. MADE SOLUTION

**Fox River is 'sold on corrugated,' thanks to Hawkeye's enterprising and creative strategies.**

It's not often that we hear about jobs originally outsourced to Asia return to the U.S., but that's exactly what happened with this particular display for Fox River Mills, Inc. Previously, the displays were manufactured in China and were made of metal, a practice that proved contrary to the image the customer wanted to project.

Based in Osage, Iowa, Fox River is a leading outdoor, athletic, and lifestyle sock manufacturer. The 107-year-old company touts "Born & Raised in the USA" on its web site and embraced sustainability long before it became a household word, even offering a line of environmentally-friendly socks.

"It's tough to have an authentic eco story when there's one portion of your business that doesn't make a lot of sense," says Joel Anderson, President of Fox River's branded division. "We have socks that are made from corn and from recycled pop bottles and yet we're bringing in a metal fixture from China."

Thanks to a cold call from Matt Highland, Vice President and Sales Manager of Hawkeye Corrugated Box Co., a sheet plant in Cedar Falls, Iowa, Anderson was introduced to corrugated.

He admits that he was skeptical. "I didn't know Matt or Hawkeye or anything that they did. When you hear the word 'corrugated,' you assume shipping boxes."

## Cost Saving Alternative

Hawkeye presented a variety of alternatives to the metal display and in the process discovered that many of its existing processes were actually the best options environmentally. "An example of that is soy inks," says Scott Bittner, Hawkeye President. "Soy inks would require less environmentally-friendly compounds for



## technical

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| NUMBER OF COLORS | Four                                     |
| SUBSTRATE        | Mottled white<br>Menasha                 |
| BOARD GRADE      | 51# B/C                                  |
| EQUIPMENT        | McKinley two-color rotary diecutter      |
| PRINTING PLATES  | Plateworks Inc.                          |
| ANILOX ROLLS     | Pamarco                                  |
| INK              | INX International Ink Co.                |
| PREPRESS         | ArtiosCAD<br>Kongsberg XL44 sample table |

cleanup than just pure water. The total environmental footprint of the display was better with flexo ink."

In the end, Hawkeye designed a display that cost 30% less than the metal display, cut shipping costs in half, decreased damage from overseas shipping, and reduced Fox River's lead time.

The four-color structure was printed and diecut on a two-color 66- x 130-inch McKinley rotary diecutter. The diecutter has 20 and 200 cells per inch anilox rolls from Pamarco. The smaller more intricate interlocking pieces are run on a flatbed diecutter.

Fox River wanted the ability to customize the display, changing out the header. "We are getting orders from five to 25 for headers so we've outsourced locally to a printer that has a digital process," Highland says.

The 15-piece display is constructed of B/C doublewall diecuts and laminated together with white glue. It can hold more than 192 pairs of socks. Assembly takes about four minutes.

The two-sided display was designed intentionally with a big footprint, explains Josh Pacyga, design engineer. "We wanted to have a stable base in case they wanted to use it as an end cap so only one side would have product."

There are no metal clips or plastic fasteners. "Josh was able to incorporate almost a slot and peg locking assembly that added to the stability and give it a visual of durability," says Galen Diercks, the sales representative involved in the project.

"The hardest thing was making sure that we could make it structurally sound as well as environmentally-friendly and a good marketing piece," adds Jennifer Lindaman, Hawkeye Vice President and Controller.

## Success Story

Highland says the display has presented several marketing opportunities. "Other retailers have inquired about it and Fox River put them in contact with us so we've had opportunities outside our marketplace nationwide."

The project is a true success story, Bittner



**The 15-piece display is sturdy enough to hold more than 192 pairs of socks.**

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says. "One of our greatest challenges became one of our greatest successes. We found a way to integrate a lot of different resources. Just because we didn't have a special resource or digital printer in-house, we still found a successful way to market what our customers were asking for."

Anderson says Hawkeye "exceeded" his expectations. "This is one of those classic cases where it started out as a cold call. I was very reluctant, but they're a nice bunch of people who solved my problems, cut my costs and made [the display] eco friendly, sturdy, and rugged. I could not be happier with a vendor of ours than I am with Hawkeye Corrugated. You've got one more guy who's on the corrugated bandwagon now. I'm sold on corrugated."



**Fox River can customize the display with different headers, which are digitally printed by a local printer.**