



Soft Feel Tips

Soft Feel/Touch has become an extremely exciting and popular option for many printers. Both the AQ and UV versions are being looked at in more applications than ever before. We are passing along this information sheet as a guide to handling such a unique product.

What makes it different?

NOT recommended for printing on plastics, films, foils or metallic inks because it needs to penetrate into substrate to dry.

The final dried AQ soft feel film will be relatively soft and as a result will have less rub resistance relative to conventional AQ coatings.

Since penetration takes longer to happen, they tend to have a “post cure period” where the final cured film will toughen up over time after the sheet is coated.

The desire to print AQ Soft Feel on both sides of the sheet comes with its own set of challenges. Due to the very “grippy” nature of the dried soft feel, when one sheet comes in contact with another soft feel coated sheet and is put under pressure, there is a “Velcro effect” that can occur. Some will mistake this for blocking. This “Velcro Effect” typically occurs when the print job goes to the bindery for cutting. The sheets can be separated with no adverse effect on the look of the sheets but they are capable of interlocking again and again. Blocking can occur if the sheets are put under too much pressure. This should be avoided.

AQ Soft Feel Coatings

Many are unaware that AQ soft feel products are NOT the same as normal AQ coatings that run everyday. In order to make soft feel application a success, we recommend the following:

- 1) Apply using 12 – 14 BCM anilox coater
 - a. A smaller celled anilox can be used but a double bump might be necessary to achieve desired feel and lay of the soft touch.
 - b. If using a blanket coater, try using the higher viscosity version of the product. This will allow for a smoother lay.
- 2) Using a higher holdout paper will help you to achieve a better feel on the sheet.
- 3) Shorter lifts is recommended to help drying.

One side or spot application is recommended to reduce the “Velcro Effect”. If this product is to be worked and turned, extended periods of time MUST be used before putting sheets back through the press for a second pass.



UV Soft Feel Coatings

All of the attributes of AQ soft feel mentioned above are also present in the UV soft feel coatings with a few additional considerations:

- 1) There is an extended “post cure period” where the UV cured film goes from very delicate to fully cured. This period is a function of lamp dosage, stack temperature and the height of the lifts (small lifts are recommended).
 - a) It can take a few hours for the final cured film to be formed for proper handling.
- 2) The chemical nature of UV soft feel is very different from standard epoxy acrylate coatings and is NOT compatible with most epoxy acrylate based coatings. UV soft feel coatings are not generally compatible with standard UV press washes (that include IPA) to clean up epoxy acrylate coatings. NEVER blend standard UV coatings and UV soft touch coatings as they may not be compatible with each other.

Press cleanup

We ask that you pay extremely close attention to the flushing and cleaning instructions on the technical data sheets and use a UV press wash that is compatible with the UV soft touch coating. We recommend using KS-718, UV wash, as it has been designed to work well for both set up and post printing of the UV soft touch products.

MOST IMPORTANTLY, IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THE USE OF THESE MATERIALS, PLEASE CONTACT THE KUSTOM GROUP FOR ANSWERS BEFORE GOING TO PRESS. THIS WILL HELP GIVE YOU THE BEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A SUCCESSFULLY PRINTED JOB.