

**Press Release**

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Release: Ref.: www.koenig-bauer.com

Photographs: Pages: 3

**KBA-Iberica Optima 106 K Die Cutter Provides “Staggering Improvements” To Productivity at Ellis Paper Box**

**Canada’s largest privately held manufacturer of folding cartons serves international clientele**

* **63% increase in throughput; 32% increase in run speed**
* **Push button automation, 8,000 sph run speeds**
* **Improved uptime and quality has resulted in improved bottom line**
* **KBA North America along with KBA-Iberica team improves long term commitment to Ellis**

In today’s competitive folding carton industry, manufacturers are continually challenged by demanding customers who request unique value-added features. That’s become even truer when those customers are leading international pharmaceutical firms. Canadian packaging specialist Ellis Paper Box, a member of the Ellis Group, the country’s largest privately-held manufacturer of folding cartons, has made it its mandate---and ultimately its successful reputation as one of the most valued manufacturers in the industry---to understand and respect the demanding standards required by the pharmaceutical industry.

“We’re successful due in part to our commitment to the industry, commitment to our employees, and our relentless pursuit to remain the most progressive carton company in Canada,” says Dave Ellis. “We offer a total in-house capability to control all aspects of structural design, electronic proofing, and die making. Our three phase electronic verification is critical to our assurance of full responsibility for product quality and compliance to Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP).”

That thought-process was critical in the purchase and installation of another new Optima 106 K die cutter from KBA-Iberica last summer. The purchase is part of the Ellis Group’s investment in new automated high-speed die cutters across its three facilities with another new die cutter purchased from KBA North America being installed at a sister facility, Ellis Packaging, later this year.

Over the past several years, Ellis Paper Box has detected a number of important trends that are colliding with its 60,000 sq ft Mississauga, Ontario facility’s production throughput. Being squarely focused on pharmaceutical work is never simple but Ellis has maintained a consistent and growing client base due to its well-honed quality process and expertly-trained employees. By regularly adding new equipment, the firm has become a one-stop shop producing as little as 500 cartons with spot colors to five million eight-color specialty work with inline inspection. With its international clientele, a variety of languages imprinted on the boxes is no problem due to the firm’s 100% inline carton inspection systems.

Recently, new legislation enacted in Canada has deemed that all pharmaceutical boxes must be redesigned to include additional compliance information for plain English text. Ellis has been instrumental in working with its clients to increase the size of the folding carton or add a fifth panel to existing styles to accommodate this legislation. In addition, its over-the-counter packaging is being designed with more value-added properties, such as inline cold and hot foil, embossing, inline Braille, and specialty coatings such as matte and high gloss.

“The KBA-Iberica Optima 106 K die cutter has become our workhorse in the die cutting department,” says Ellis. “It is capable of handling production of paper, cardboard, plastic and corrugated boards up to 1.5mm. It is running at 8,000 sheets per hour. We currently operate it two to three shifts per day, five days a week. Our preference is to schedule all jobs containing detailed embossing and critical print to cut registration on this new machine.”

Not only is Ellis receiving these benefits but it has also recorded the machine’s efficiency and savings. For example, the firm has witnessed a 63% increase in throughput and a 32% increase in run speed compared to the last six running months over the previous machine. This allows Ellis to provide faster speed-to-market and get its product to its customers in two weeks or less. It has also recorded a 20% to 40% reduction in makeready due to the Optima 106 die cutter. Ellis is also blanking more difficult jobs thereby reducing its stripping costs by $35,000 per year.

 “The improvements to our die cutting department have been staggering,” says Ellis. “Due to the Optima 106 K’s increased automation, there are less tools involved and our employees are pleased with its push button automation. Our quality has improved due to this new die cutter and we have no downtime because the machine is so dependable. Improvements to uptime and quality have resulted in improved bottom line. The new die cutter from KBA-Iberica has had a fantastic impact on our company.”

Prior to signing the order, Ellis looked very closely at its other options and conducted extensive research into four other die cutting manufacturers and then narrowed the decision to two. The team considered price, the manufacturer’s commitment to service and quality, and last but not least the return on investment. Ultimately KBA-Iberica and its Optima 106 K machines prevailed. Ellis believed that KBA-Iberica were the leaders in the industry in all three areas of concern. He noted that the Barcelona, Spain-manufactured machines are strong and well built by dedicated employees. “We felt that KBA-Iberica was moving in the right direction,” says Ellis. “We were sold on their commitment to producing a quality product. As our machine was being installed, the training for our crew was fantastic and if we had any questions or issues, they were responded to immediately.”

The entire three facilities that make up the Ellis Group organization are centered amid the Toronto, Ontario region. Ellis Packaging is headquartered in Pickering, along the shores of Lake Ontario while Ellis Packaging West is in Guelph, further south and inland of Toronto. The Ellis Paper Box facility in Mississauga, south of Toronto along the shoreline of Lake Ontario, can’t be missed. It’s located in a gleaming modern two-story glass building.

“The sales staff at KBA-Iberica have done an excellent job communicating with our team every step of the way,” says Ellis. “From the day the machine was ordered through transportation and installation, KBA-Iberica has continued to stay in contact and visit our plant regularly. We have developed a trusted partnership with them. We are very grateful and will continue to work closely with KBA-Iberica as they have proven to show a genuine commitment to Ellis.”

Ellis and his management team have set high business goals for his firm’s future. “Five years from now The Ellis Group will be the largest manufacturer of folding cartons in Canada,” he says. “It’s due in part because we listen carefully to our clients to understand what drives their business. We have learned a lot about the challenges they face, from considerations in package engineering through to distribution issues. We recognized that to be truly different from our competitors, we needed to provide services that not only meet but actually anticipate and solve these challenges. When a customer describes our firm, they use words such as quality, service, and value.”

Founded in 1946 in Ontario, Canada, The Ellis Group is comprised of over 250 employees at Ellis Packaging, Ellis Paper Box and Ellis Packaging West servicing and specializing in the food, confectionary, pharmaceutical, neutraceutical and beverage industries. It has earned a superior reputation for the design, production and distribution of paperboard packaging. Its customers are comprised of North America's largest brand name companies due to its expert handling of projects from initial consultation, design and pre-press through to production and distribution.

KBA North America is located in Dallas, Texas and a member of the Koenig & Bauer Group, which was established 200 years ago in Würzburg, Germany. Koenig & Bauer’s claim, “We’re on it.” gets to the heart of Koenig & Bauer’s values and competencies for all target groups. The group's product range is the broadest in the industry; its portfolio includes sheetfed offset presses in all format classes, post press die-cutters, inkjet presses and systems, flexographic presses, commercial and newspaper web presses, corrugated presses, special presses for banknotes, securities, metal-decorating, smart cards, glass and plastic decorating. For more information visit the company's web site at [www.koenig-bauer.com](http://www.koenig-bauer.com).

### Related websites:

[www.kba.com](http://www.kba.com)

[www.ellispkg.com](http://www.ellispkg.com)

Captions:

Photo 1: Left to right: Tom Fitzgerald, KBA-Iberica manager; Mike Gibson, Ellis Paper Box plant manager; and Dave Ellis, Ellis Paper Box president; are in constant contact and have developed a trusted partnership with the recent installation of the KBA-Iberica Optima K die cutter.