

Marking 50 years



Back in the pre-digital world of the 1970's before emails, Facebook or Instagram, RK PrintCoat Instruments was spotted for a news article in the Times by the founders of Matsuo Sangyo, Japan. Interested in the piece on RK's K Hand Coater equipment, Matsuo Sangyo made contact by handwritten letter.

That basic initial contact has formed a valuable relationship between the two companies, and this year sees 50 years' of collaboration promoting RK PrintCoat Instruments in Japan.

Founded in the early 1960's RK Print now has over 60 years' experience in the surface coating industry. Designed and manufactured in the UK, RK equipment has one common theme, the production of repeatable samples; to be used for the purposes of research and development, quality control.

Speaking of their relationship, current CEO Naoki Matsuo of Matsuo Sangyo said "*Matsuo Sangyo Co., Ltd is a Japanese trading company founded in 1938. In 1970, my grandfather, who is the second founder of Matsuo Sangyo, was trying to expand its business internationally.*

Then he found a newspaper article saying about RK Print Coat Instruments Ltd. For the past 50 years, there has been various changes in printing methods and applications for printing test equipment.

RK Print Coat Instruments and Matsuo Sangyo have built a firm relationship through our daily operations. This year, which is the 50th anniversary of our business, I took over the position as the 4th president from my father. Based on mutual respect from the past, we will expand sales field to new industries according to the world's drastic changes. I would like to contribute to the further prosperity for both companies."

Matsuo Sangyo have recently set up a TECHNO Division to enable research and development into new areas associated with energy efficient products and materials. This includes but is not limited to: solar cells, fuel cells, optical films for flat panel displays and nano-technology.

Tom Kerchiss, MD of RK PrintCoat Instruments adds "*It has been a pleasure to work with Matsuo Sangyo over the last 50 years, and we look forward to continuing to develop our relationship further.*

RK have supplied many hundreds of machines for the gravure industry in Japan as it is famous for its use of gravure as the highest quality print process. In more recent years RK have installed over 500 units worldwide of our award winning FlexiProof 100 machine to the developing flexo industry.

Building on their developed knowledge and experience of web handling, gained from the supply of the now redundant, ROKO machine, and with ongoing advances in application techniques, RK have more recently shipped and installed over 20 VCML pilot coating units for research & development into specialised coatings.

In recent years the printed electronic market has been attracting attention. RK PrintCoat Instruments are active in the aforementioned markets having supplied bespoke high-tech VCM pilot and production systems for latent imaging, solar reflective films, fuel cells, batteries and much more. The market for printable electronics that RK are also involved with increasingly makes use of print processes such as flexography, gravure and digital/digital/flexo hybrid and other technologies. Printable electronics is viewed as a high growth achieving market that provides enormous opportunities. So, it is therefore fitting and appropriate that RK Print Coat Instruments space saving colour communication or proofing devices such as the FlexiProof, the K Printing Proofer, the K Control Coater and other quality control and product development tools are on site at the Tokyo branch of Matsuo Sangyo, enabling customers to view and trial materials on.

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