

It's an industry that's hardly glamorous, yet print is a medium which touches us in some way almost every day. Just look around you – boardings, magazine covers, scratchcard sales in newsgates, promotional handbills and the like from communications companies. Much of it is supremely easy to ignore but a percentage – the materials which are the result of a top-notch agency coming together with specialist ink and print companies – can be breathtakingly effective...

One such is B&H Colour Change, a company at the forefront of research and usage of specialist ink techniques since 1985 and a world leader in the production of thermochromic and liquid crystal products (that's temperature-reactive colour-changing inks to you and me).

"Although the printing industry is awash with innovation, the innovations we use tend to be usually of our own making – ink technology that we create ourselves," says Marketing Manager, Gilly Beaumont. "Because recipients will interact with print which has a 'smart' ink on it, the results from these innovations is much higher. A direct mail piece bearing a panel of colour-changing ink which the recipient has to bring to a certain store to discover what they've won, usually gets a far higher number of people into that store than a piece of conventional print."

Beaumont suggests that by sticking to what it knows best, the company is able to maximise the efficiency of the results: "There will always be innovation, but at B&H we don't get involved with the development of the equipment technology. We work on creating inks and effects that can be used on that equipment."

"With any new specialist ink we create, we have to ensure that the resulting printed item complies with various directives, such as EN71 Part 3 for heavy metals compliance. Depending on how the item is to be used we will check other safety issues – for example if we are producing a game card that reveals a win message dipped into food or drink we would test for taint and migration."

She points to success such as the Chill + Win games cards: "...which are particularly suited to beverage and chilled food promotions; or overprinting work such as a Touch + Reveal" as examples of an ongoing research programme which is



Temperature-sensitive inks such as these from B&H Colour Change bring panache to a promotion

## Make an impression

Innovations in the specialist print industry are helping to ensure the security of prize-winning promotions as well as giving general campaigns an eye-catching edge...

extending the boundaries of specialist printing – "There are also always several R&D projects being worked on in our labs!"

Beaumont explains that B&H "...ensures the success of campaigns by working closely with the client to ascertain exactly what they're hoping to achieve, by proofing the item to check that the effect is what they are expecting, and by closely watching the production process itself."

"Adding colour-changing inks to conventional print is increasingly a brief that printers are being asked for. Nowadays there is an emphasis on print creating greater value and

impact for the client and using colour-changing inks is an extremely effective solution.

Knowing where to get the inks and how to print them is where B&H Colour Change comes in. Having specialised in temperature-sensitive printing for 20 years we feel we are able to offer a complete package to printers."