



# SUCCESS STORY

Springfield Brewing Company's secret recipe:  
Converting to pressure sensitive labels to expand  
craft beer production

Springfield Brewing Company, based in Springfield, Missouri, is a pioneer in the craft beer industry. The company opened its doors in 1997 as part of the revitalization of downtown Springfield. In 2011, Ashton Lewis, Master Brewer; Bryan Bevel, Operations Manager; and several others purchased the brewery from The Paul Mueller Company, and the business took off!

Bryan Bevel now oversees an operation that has grown to encompass 94 employees and a product portfolio of seven beers.



Inside this success story –

## THE BIG SWITCH

Switching to pressure sensitive film labels from cut-and-stack, glue-applied paper labels enabled Springfield Brewing Company to:

- Improve the branding appeal of its craft beer
- Increase the wet strength of the labels
- Allow for immediate chilling of bottles, thereby increasing speed-to-market
- Decrease bottling staff from three to two operators
- Run a cleaner filling and labeling operation
- Decrease label waste from hundreds of labels to five labels per run
- Increase operational speeds and reliability



**UPM RAFLATAC**





### Springfield Brewing Company: on the rise

While Springfield Brewing Company has been extremely successful, Lewis and Bevel knew they could expand even further. Consumers are tipping their glass to craft beer: The industry produced 24M barrels last year<sup>1</sup>, and year-over-year sales growth is in the double-digits. To boost sales and capture more market share, however, Springfield Brewing Company would need to streamline operations.

### Cut-and-stack labels no longer make the grade

Springfield Brewing Company was large enough to have its own bottling and application equipment on-site. The company was using paper cut-and-stack labels and wet glue to affix labels to bottles on an older-model applicator. While the equipment got the job done, it created operational headaches.

“Our old labeling system was a mess!” says Bevel. “We spent a ton of money on glue, and it was hard to work with. The glue went everywhere, and it would change consistency during a production run. After eight hours, it was almost impossible to use.”

### Pressure sensitive labeling solves a sticky situation

Bevel and Lewis knew they needed new options. Fortunately, they had a strong partnership with Label Solutions, a full-service labeling company based in Marshfield, Missouri. **David Pryor**, Business Development Manager, urged the duo to consider pressure sensitive labeling for operational and cost advantages.

“We help craft beer manufacturers like Springfield Brewing Company evaluate different technologies against their business and production goals,” says Pryor. “We have a value chain of partners who provide exceptional labeling and packaging solutions that help craft breweries build brand and gain production efficiencies.”

Pryor suggested that Springfield Brewing Company migrate from cut-and-stack paper labels to pressure sensitive film labels, and he had one in mind: UPM Raflatac’s SY298S, a 2.6 mil PP Hi-Opacity White TC film stock paired with RP37 adhesive and a 1.2 mil PET liner. The film would be perfect for the brewery’s product portfolio, as it provided a blank canvas for branding, strong performance across its production and usage life cycle and a total applied cost that was lower than the company’s current label solution. **Jeff Finnegan**, Territory Sales Manager, UPM Raflatac, was instrumental in helping develop the joint partnership. Finnegan identified a market opportunity and successfully advocated that Label Solutions use UPM Raflatac products to build its craft beer labeling business.

### UPM Raflatac film showcases brewery’s illustrated labels

Springfield Brewing Company is rolling out another product with SY298S: Greene Ghost India Pale Ale. The label, which is designed by **Catherine Wellever**, Art Director and Brand Manager, features a charming woodblock illustration of a firefly. The tail is varnished to make it glow. “We can produce artwork and graphics on UPM Raflatac’s pressure sensitive film that wasn’t possible with our cut-and-stack paper labels,” says Wellever.

To make the switch to pressure sensitive labeling, Springfield Brewing Company also purchased a state-of-the-art label applicator from Pack Leader USA. The PL-501 provides fully automated variable speed labeling for round containers in harsh environments. “The PL-501 is durable and handles both cans and bottles, which is ideal for craft beer labeling,” says Pryor.

<sup>1</sup>National Beer Sales and Production Data, Brewers Association Webpage, undated, <https://www.brewersassociation.org/statistics/national-beer-sales-production-data/>

### Pack Leader USA applicator is a fast operator

With new equipment, Springfield Brewing Company can run a faster, more efficient filling and labeling operation. After bottles are filled with beer, they undergo a heavy rinse cycle. UPM Raflatac's RP37 adhesive provides tenacious adhesion, while the PP film label has better wet strength than its prior paper counterpart. Bevel says, "We used to have an operator dedicated to running our old labeler. The PL-501 is so easy to use that anyone can run it – so we've been able to eliminate that position."

Since the film labels apply cleanly, Springfield Brewing Company has significantly decreased its label waste. "Previously, we would waste hundreds of labels during set up and as products were switched out. Now we waste just five pressure sensitive labels per run – and if I had a leader on the line, there wouldn't be any waste," says Bevel. The PL-501 is also highly reliable – important for a high-volume operation like Springfield Brewing Company.



### Iced! A costly delay

Bottles that come off the applicator can be immediately chilled. "With pressure sensitive labels, we can put the bottles in a 38-degree cooler overnight. The cold glue-applied labels couldn't hold up to chill and moisture the way the UPM Raflatac film labels do," says Lewis. "The pressure sensitive labels don't wrinkle, float, rip or peel. They lay better on glass than our paper labels did."

Lewis and Bevel are so pleased with the appearance, efficiency and productivity gains they've achieved with the value chain solution proposed by Label Solutions that they've decided to transition over their entire product portfolio to UPM Raflatac's pressure sensitive film label. Brands are being rolled over as the company uses up its cut-and-stack paper label inventory.

"You have one shot to make a good impression with your consumers," says Lewis. "Pressure sensitive labels help you convey quality. We know our beer is good, and we want our labels to convey that image as well."

"Craft breweries are looking for an antidote to preprinted cans, which limit companies with difficult business decisions between higher order quantities and lead times," says **Jean Willson**, Market Development Manager, UPM Raflatac. "Pressure sensitive labels enable craft breweries to create exceptional branding with a cleaner, cost-effective packaging model."



## About Springfield Brewing Company

A staple of the downtown community, Springfield Brewing Company has been in the business of brewing one of a kind, supremely drinkable beers since 1997. Our story really started when the Paul Mueller Company purchased the building, creating a beautiful showcase for their one of a kind stainless steel brewery tanks and changing the landscape of downtown. Their goal was to provide our community with a one of a kind brewpub experience combining local craft beer with great food. When Ashton Lewis and Bryan Bevel got together along with a group of close friends and purchased the Brew Co. in 2011, it was their mission to continue creating award winning craft brews and working to perfect the menu.

Our brewery focuses on true to tradition English, German and American style ales and lagers. Over the years we've been the proud recipients of Great American Beer Festival awards for many of our beers and most recently took home World Beer Cup gold for our Mayhem Marzen. Our aim is to continue working toward a harmonious balance between food and beer and we think we're doing a darn good job! [www.springfieldbrewingco.com](http://www.springfieldbrewingco.com)

## About Label Solutions, Inc.

Label Solutions is proud to be a company that is owned and operated by Rick Jones, Karen Stephens and Jim Fox. A diverse label manufacturer in southwest Missouri, we offer full-service print and design capabilities for our growing list of customers across the United States. We have developed proprietary stocks, inks and adhesives along with cutting edge technologies, resources and tools.

It is our privilege to service all of your label needs with a creative and innovative process that helps you brand your message and keep your labels in compliance with regulatory and industry requirements. We stick to high-quality work and will always go the distance to provide exactly what you need, when you need it. [www.easylabeling.com](http://www.easylabeling.com)

## About Pack Leader USA

Pack Leader USA was established in 2010 to support the North and Central American markets. Pack Leader USA realized the potential for high quality modular labeling equipment in an ever-expanding market. Existing equipment in the industry was overpriced, over-complicated and difficult to set up. It was a prime opportunity to manufacture labeling equipment that was simple and easy to use without the expensive price tag.

Pack Leader USA was born to provide cost-effective labeling solutions while keeping high levels of equipment on our floor to ensure a fast turnaround for our clients and distributors. Realizing the importance of fast lead times on equipment and parts, Pack Leader USA is committed to getting the customer what they need when they need it. Support is critical to our customers and that is why we are committed to the best service in the industry. Whether the customer needs an installation, service call, training class, or over the phone technical support, Pack Leader USA is the answer to your needs. [www.packleaderusa.com](http://www.packleaderusa.com)

## About UPM Raflatac

UPM Raflatac is one of the world's leading producers of self-adhesive label materials. We supply high-quality paper and film label stock for consumer product and industrial labeling through a global network of factories, distribution terminals and sales offices. We employ around 2,900 people and made sales of USD 1.5 billion (EUR 1.4 billion) in 2015. UPM Raflatac is part of UPM – The Biofore Company. Find out more at [www.upmraflatac.com](http://www.upmraflatac.com).

