

The pressure is on: Finding the right label adhesive

Have you ever not noticed something that's right there in front of you? We all have. Some of the most common items that go unnoticed are **labels** and **stickers**. They are EVERYWHERE — on our televisions, inside our refrigerators and our washers and dryers. As consumers, we typically only pay attention to them when we need them, especially when we place service calls or look for instruction. As a manufacturer, your label responsibility is broader. You not only have to be mindful of what is printed on the label, but also what is stuck to its back as the wrong **adhesive** can impair your graphic's visual aspect, rendering your label useless.

So how do you know what type of adhesive you need for your product or **equipment** part label? Here are various factors involved when making a choice...

Consider the surface that the label must adhere to. Is it oily? How thick or thin is it? What is its shape (e.g., flat or round)? Is its texture smooth or textured? Does the surface come with a "WARNING!" label? You'll need an adhesive that is developed specifically for your application. For example, oil and typical adhesives are natural enemies, posing yet another challenge for the **transportation** industry as they develop their **engine** parts and **hydraulics**). The bottom line is that your label adhesives must accommodate your product surface area.

Focus on regulation(s). Your label's performance must be compliant on your various products and equipment parts. For example, it needs to adhere enough to not fall off yet must be **removable**. (We respectfully advise television manufacturers to add label **adhesion** to your list of industry **compliance** challenges.)

Think about your label's multiple environments. Will your labels be exposed to chemicals and multi-user handling (e.g., graphic **overlays**, **keypads** and **faceplates** on **medical** equipment and **electronics**, etc.)? Do they need to withstand water and heat conditions (e.g., **safety** and **instruction** labels for **marine** and **auto** equipment)? Provide your graphic solutions provider with all of the environmental concerns you have for your products and equipment parts, as they can negatively affect your label adhesive's performance over time.

Build label adhesion timing into your product development schedule. Will your labels bond immediately after applied? Or does your graphic solutions provider advise a 24-hour wait time? Time is money so plan it wisely (or simply work with a label vendor who is considerate of your time).

There are other adhesive considerations, including those used for high **security** applications. When you develop equipment or parts, especially for **military** or **government** use, your labels' adhesives should indicate if they have been tampered with to alert your customer of potential security breaches. Serial numbers and barcodes are prime targets when it comes to security risk.

Labels ranging from **permanent** to removable to those that can withstand **extreme** environments need to be planned in conjunction with your product and equipment development. In many industries they are heavily regulated because they are considered critical components of product safety. **Be sure to disclose all information about your product and**

equipment features and performance requirements when you work with your graphic solutions provider.

Some adhesive requirements may be easily identified, such as permanent and **repositionable**, but when it comes to specific adhesion needs, work with a graphic solutions vendor that is flexible with adhesion options, including those that can be developed specifically for your application. Rely on their expertise in various industries. An experienced label provider will most likely have your **adhesion** challenge(s) already resolved.

Working with the right vendor can save you time and money, help you keep on track with manufacturing uptime and compliance. Remember that your product and equipment labels need to perform far past your production doors, because their good performance adds great value to your brand.

*NFI Corp (Nameplates for Industry) is a leading graphics solutions provider with over 40 years of experience in label and sticker development for a broad range of industries. NFI Corp's D-to-D (Design to Delivery) system includes adhesive testing prior to final **production**, and graphic **design** and **prototyping** services. We use proven, top-quality adhesives from trusted brands such as **3M** and **Tesa®**. Just as we collaborate with our customers, we do the same with all industry experts that play a role in our customers' graphic **solutions** needs. For more information about our prototyping and broad range of graphic solutions, contact us at **800-999-8900**.*