



▲ In Framingham, visitors can enjoy a fresh sample in Exhibit A's brewery taproom



Exhibit 'A'

A partnership with a personal touch

Microbreweries are flourishing, as the taste for craft beers grows in the United States and Europe. While these brewers are small, they are very serious about what they produce. It is this passion for quality that led Exhibit 'A' Brewing Company to choose Markem-Imaje for its printing needs.



Framingham, Massachusetts / **UNITED STATES**

Founded in **2016**

17 employees

Annual production:
4,000 barrels (the equivalent of 40,000 cases)

Winner of 2017 'Best New Brewer' (RateBeer.com)

2017 Manufacturer of the Year (Massachusetts Legislature)



Exhibit 'A':

a taste the freshness



“From day one, we’ve had nothing but great experiences with Markem-Imaje. We’re pleased with the quality of the printer, and it will be able to keep up with our needs as we grow.”

◀ **Matthew Steinberg**, Exhibit 'A' cofounder and head brewer



▲ Exhibit 'A' produces four core beers and limited releases virtually every week

The craft beer industry is booming in the United States, with more than 6,000 microbreweries now operating across the country. Exhibit 'A', a relative newcomer on the scene, opened in 2016 and in the last year has seen its growth more than double. The brewery has four core beers (kölsch, porter, IPA and double IPA), with new limited releases coming out virtually every week. At any given time, a range of about 13 different

beers are produced and distributed to bars, restaurants and speciality stores, mainly in Massachusetts and nearby states. “We could grow faster,” says Matthew Steinberg, cofounder and head brewer, “but we’ve chosen a conservative plan to prioritize quality.”

The care the company takes in its beer extends from the brewing to the packaging, with state-of-the-art equipment employed

in its production process. This includes a Markem-Imaje 9450 inkjet printer on the canning line, which prints a date on the bottom collar of every can. “We do this for a variety of reasons,” explains Matthew. “The most important is so our consumers can see the beer is fresh when they buy it, and also so that we know when it was produced and can make sure that customers

are getting it as we intend it to taste.” There is no legal requirement to include this date – it is the company’s choice: “Beer doesn’t get dangerous if it gets old, it just doesn’t taste very good!” jokes Matthew. “We preach freshness in our beer and our ingredients, and having the date on the can is vital in that quest.”





Markem-Imaje 9450: the best fit to communicate with customers

Exhibit 'A' chose Markem-Imaje on the recommendation of other microbreweries and SKA Fabricating. Exhibit 'A' had heard of other breweries nightmare situations and was not going to let anyone other than SKA develop their conveyor line and depalletizer solutions. So when SKA suggested Markem-Imaje, Exhibit 'A' was immediately convinced. While the 9450 is a sophisticated printer typically deployed for larger-scale beverage manufacturers, it was the best fit for the specific printing challenges of the brewery. It can print on cans or bottles, is highly reliable, uses advanced durable inks, and has high line speeds. "The printer is much faster than we need it to be. We usually run at 80 cans a minute, while it could probably go 10 times faster, but this will allow us to scale up in the future."

For more case studies:
www.markem-imaje.com

◀ The 9450 prints the date
and a personalized message
on each can

Another key feature is the ability to print a personalized message along with the date via the easy-to-use color user interface. Connection with its community is very important to the brewery. "We can customize any message on the fly, to thank retailers, give birthday wishes, mark events – for example, on the day Aretha Franklin died, we put 'Queen of Soul' on the can. It's a way of communicating with customers and telling our story."

For small craft brewers, an experienced partner that guides them in how to make the most of the equipment and resolves problems quickly is critical so they can focus on other priorities. "We've found the support to be great," concludes Matthew. "We've had very few issues, but when they do come up, the rep comes the same day to help us fix them or to teach us how to use the machine to avoid them." A partnership with a personal touch.

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Photos: Al Karevy, 10/2018

Exhibit 'A' Brewing Company chose a Markem-Imaje date coding solution to indicate product freshness. The 9450 can handle upside-down printing in wet environments and hot or cold conditions, at speeds that can scale up with the company. It also allows a personalized message to be added to each can.

Drink responsibly

