

Building a stainless reputation for color consistency.

Achieving accuracy with metallic colors is always a challenge. When it came to doing a direct-mail program for a high-end kitchen appliance manufacturer, Specialty was definitely up to the task.

The appliance manufacturer wanted to target the campaign to consumers who were in the process of moving – people who would be in the market for new appliances. With stainless steel being much in demand, the client wanted to feature a close-up of the stainless finish on the front of the mailer. This posed color consistency issues because the tonal values are so small that any movement can cause wild swings in color. As all process colors contribute to the grey color, shades can move from green to red and from blue to yellow quite easily.

Rather than trust closed-loop color system and best-in-class Heidelberg technology, Specialty took things to the next level by altering the composition of the stainless color. Instead of building it out of four-color process, Specialty created a duotone using PMS 431 and 433. PMS 431 was used as the lighter shade of grey. The choice to utilize PMS 433 instead of black for the darker component of the duotone was made due to the reflex blue component in the color. The reflex blue provided a metallic feel, while the saturation replicated black.

In the end, Specialty struck gold by using a creative solution. The consistency of the duotone was excellent, as two colors proved much easier to monitor and control on press. In addition, the lack of process made red, green, blue and yellow color swings impossible.

