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Labels & Overlays with Grained Metal Surfaces

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Problem:

When grained metal surfaces, such as #4 stainless or anodized aluminum, have silk-screening as a method of labeling and signage, it is subject to damage through repeated cleaning and abrasion. Changes in the catalysts and inks for silk-screening to meet environmental pressures have caused a decline in the ability of silk-screening to resist both cleaning materials and abrasion.

Solution:

In order to achieve a grained metallic look to blend with the grained metal surfaces and to overcome the cleaning and abrasion issues, Lustre-Cal bonded a grained polycarbonate laminate material to its proprietary anodized aluminum. The graphics are subsurface printed on the polycarbonate layer or etched on the aluminum, protecting the graphics from any surface wear and tear. The aluminum substrate, when affixed with an adhesive to the grained polycarbonate, creates a metallic grained finish with the incorporated subsurface printed graphics.

The designer has a myriad of opportunities for cost effective printing on the polycarbonate with multiple colors over the cost of silk-screening directly on the metal surface with multiple screens. The Lustre-Cal printing processes for multi-colors allows for cost-effective printing and highly detailed text and design. The grained, printed finished product was developed by our Product Development Group and is known as Lustre-grain.