AGFA

Agfa has struggled as a substantial contributor in the platesetter market. While Agfa's Accusets and Avantras were arguably among the most popular imagesetters ever made, Agfa has not had comparable success with any of their platesetter models. The Galileo seems to have sold well, and there was moderate market acceptance of the Xcalibur, but Agfa has certainly not had the success of their main competitors - Creo/Kodak and Screen.

In fact, in January 2008, Agfa surprised the industry with the announcement of the closure of their manufacturing plant in Wilmington, MA. Suffering from sagging profits and share prices, Agfa was forced to abandon unprofitable elements within the company. The commercial CTP production facility was clearly one of these elements.

To fill the void in their product line created by the plant closure, Agfa expanded its OEM agreement with Screen. Agfa already sold Screen 4-up devices with their Acento and Palladio labels. Agfa and Screen expanded this OEM agreement to cover 8-up and VLF PlateRites. This allows Agfa to offer a complete product line, while focusing its resources on doing what it does best - i.e., to provide service, training, peripherals and consumables to maximize the efficiency and quality of these systems.

Galileo

The Galileo, introduced in 1997, was Agfa's original entry into the platesetter market. The original Galileo used a green laser diode, with a thermal 1064 nm version of the machine being introduced several years later. In 2000, Agfa converted the Galileo to violet laser technology. The Galileo is based on internal drum technology and was offered in manual, semi-automatic, or fully automatic configurations. Without the autoloader (PlateManager) option, the green and violet laser Galileos require a "safelight" environment. Early models utilized a straight-through conveyor to a 59" wide LP 150 online processor. This processor was huge, with enormous chemistry tanks. To eliminate the space and chemistry demands of the LP150, Agfa later introduced the "L" conveyor, which repositions the plate after it exits the Galileo, allowing it to be fed at a 90° angle to a much smaller 32" online processor, the LP82. This innovation substantially reduced chemical consumption and related costs. Of the Galileo models, only the violet laser machines with LP82 processors remain viable in the pre-owned market. Galileo production was discontinued in 2005.

Xcalibur

In August 1999, Agfa purchased the division of Misomex (known for its step and repeat equipment) that had developed and produced the Omnisetter, an external drum CTP device. Following the purchase, Agfa discontinued the production and marketing of the Omnisetter but promptly employed it's engineering staff, who worked with Agfa engineers to redesign the platesetter. The redesigned machine was introduced at Drupa in the fall of 2000 as the Xcalibur VLF. This device represented a marriage of the Omnisetter mechanics with newly developed optics utilizing fiber-coupled diode array technology. The initial offering was a very basic platesetter available as a standard speed machine with 48 laser diodes, or a high-speed model with 96 diodes, which was twice as fast.

At Ipex 2000, Agfa prematurely introduced the re-engineered Xcalibur, which was converted from fiber-coupled diode array to GLV laser technology. We say "prematurely" because it was not until spring 2003 that the GLV models actually became available. This timing was in concert with Screen's introduction of the Ultima, which was also equipped with a GLV laser. In an effort to simplify their service responsibility for Xcaliburs, Agfa offered a special upgrade price to those customers with diode array Xcalibur VLF models to encourage their conversion to GLV technology. Agfa also came out with a new product - the Xcalibur 45. The Xcalibur 45 is an 8-up version of the GLV Xcalibur.

Avalon

In 2005, Agfa introduced the Avalon. The Avalon, although staged as a new product, is a re-engineered version of the Xcalibur. The most significant improvement found in the Avalon over its predecessor is the introduction of the GLV II laser head. The original GLV laser had just 240 imaging channels (340 for VLF heads) as compared to 512 channels for the GLV II. This new head allows for increased speed. Further, Agfa states that the GLV II allows for tighter tolerance and better control of the laser beams. With the introduction of the GLV II laser, Agfa increased the throughput on the XT version of their 8-up platesetter, and added a super-high speed model, the XXT. All the VLF model

platesetters featured increased speed, and Agfa made other enhancements to the VLF product line, adding models and options.

The Avalon further offers increased compatibility with processless plates. None of the Xcaliburs could image processless plates except the Xcalibur 45 with "Thermofuse" option. The Avalon LF and VLF can image processless plates, but not all models. Per Agfa's literature, the "Standard" Avalons cannot image their Azura or Amigo processless plates. In order to image processless plates, the "Universal" model is required. Unfortunately, Agfa does not indicate what is different in the engineering of the Universal versus the Standard model.

In 2006, Agfa followed up the 2005 release of the Avalon LF and VLF models with the Avalon SF 4-up/6-up model and the Avalon LF Violet, an innovative external drum violet laser model These engineering developments established a complete product line built upon one core architecture with GLV technology. The lineup appeared adequate to accommodate the needs of a broad spectrum of the printing industry and position Agfa to again become a major contender in this very competitive market. However, that turned out not to be the case, as evidenced by Agfa's plant closure in 2008.

Below is a chronology of platesetters engineered by Agfa.

Internal Drum Technology

Model	Year	Max. & Min. Plate Size		Laser
Galileo	1997	8-up		green 532 nm YAG
Galileo Thermal	1999	8-up		thermal 1064 nm YAG
Galileo S	2000	8-up		green 532 nm YAG
Galileo Thermal S	2000	8-up		thermal 1064 nm YAG
Galileo Talant	2000	8-up	Ablative (Mistral) Plate	1064 nm YAG
Galileo VS4	2000	29.33 x 26.61	17.72 x 14.5	violet 400 nm 5 mW
Galileo VS	2000	44.5 x 32.29	17.72 x 14.5	violet 400 nm 5 mW
Galileo VXT	2000	44.5 x 32.29	17.72 x 14.5	violet 400 nm 5 mW
Galileo VS4	2003	29.33 x 26.61	17.72 x 14.5	violet 410 nm 60 mW
Galileo VS & VXT	2003	44.5 x 32.9	17.72 x 14.5	violet 410 nm 60 mW
Galileo VE	2003	44.5 x 32.29	17.72 x 14.5	violet 410 nm 60 mW

External Drum Technology

Fiber Coupled Diode Array: Thermal Laser - 830 nm:

		Max. & Min. Plate Size		Laser
Xcalibur VLF 50-60-70-80	2000	50-80 x 45-58	28 x 22	48 diodes
Xcalibur VLF HS 50-60-70-80	2000	50-80 x 45-58	28 x 22	96 diodes

GLV Technology: Thermal Laser - 830 nm:				**Laser - Single**
Xcalibur 45	2002	45.66 x 32.3	17.7 x 9.8	240 channel
Xcalibur 45 E/S/XT	2003	45.66 x 32.3	17.7 x 9.8	240 channel
Xcalibur VLF 50-60-70-80:				
E entry level	2003	50-80 x 45-58	22.2 x 17.7	360 channel
S standard speed	2003	50-80 x 45-58	22.2 x 17.7	360 channel
XT high speed	2003	50-80 x 45-58	22.2 x 17.7	360 channel
XXT extra high speed	2003	50-80 x 45-58	22.2 x 17.7	360 channel
Avalon LF (large format)	2005	45.7 x 32.2	12.2 x 12.2	512 channel
Avalon VLF 50, 55, 60, 65, 70, 75, 80, 83:				
E/S/X/XT (same as Xcalibur)	2005	50-80 x 45-58	22.2 x 17.7	512 channel
Avalon SF (small format)	2006	38.6 x 27.2	9.8 x 12.2	512 channel

Violet:		Max. & Min. Plate Size		Laser
Avalon LF Violet	2006	45.7 x 32.2	12.2 x 12.2	violet 400 nm

Follows a listing of platesetters offered by Agfa under OEM agreements, including the introduction date and model name assigned by the original manufacturer. Also follows more detailed information, including plate sizes and laser type, for the external drum Screen PT-Rs offered by Agfa.

Agfa Model Name	Year	Manufacturer Model Name
Internal Drum Model:		
Antares 1000	1/1998	Cymbolic Science Platejet 4
Antares 1600	1/1998	Cymbolic Science Platejet 8
External Drum Model:		
Acento E	2004	Screen PT-R 4100
Acento S	2004	Screen PT-R 4300
Acento IIE	2006	Screen PT-R 4300E
Acento IIS	2006	Screen PT-R 4300S
Acento LF	2007	Screen PT-R Niagra
Avalon N8 10E	2008	Screen 8300 E
Avalon N8 10S	2008	Screen 8300 S
Avalon N8 20E	2008	Screen 8600 E
Avalon N8 20 S/Sr	2008	Screen 8600 S/Z
Avalon N8 50E	2008	Screen 8800 E
Avalon N8 50S	2008	Screen 8800 S
Avalon N8 50XT	2008	Screen 8800 Z
Avalon N8 70XT	2008	Screen 8800
Avalon N16 Series	2008	Screen Ultima 16000 Series
Avalon N24 Series	2008	Screen Ultima 24000 Series
Avalon N36 Series	2008	Screen Ultima 36000 Series
Avalon N40 Series	2008	Screen Ultima 40000 Series
Avalon N48 Series	2008	Screen Ultima 48000 Series
Flatbed Model:		
Palladio	9/2001	Screen PT-R 2055Vi 5 mW laser diode with autoload
Palladio 30	7/2004	Screen PT-R 2055Vi 30 mW laser diode with autoload
Palladio 30M	5/2004	Screen PT-R 2055Vi without autoload
Palladio II	2006	Screen PT-R 2055Vi slightly larger image area, no 3000 dpi
Palladio IIM	2006	Screen PT-R 2055Vi w/o autoload, slightly larger image area, no 3000 dpi

External Drum Models

Screen Diode Array Models: Thermal Laser - 830nm:

Model	Max. & Min. Plate Size		Laser
Acento E	32.7 x 26	14.5 x 12.8	16 diodes
Acento S	32.7 x 26	14.5 x 12.8	32 diodes
Acento II	32.7 x 26	14.5 x 12.8	16 diodes
Acento IIS	32.7 x 26	14.5 x 12.8	32 diodes
Avalon N8 10E/S	45.6 x 37	17.8 x 14.6	16 / 32 diodes
Avalon N8 20E/S/Sr	45.6 x 37	17.8 x 14.6	32 / 64 diodes

Screen GLV Models: Thermal Laser - 830nm:

			Laser- Single
Avalon N8 50E/S/XT	45.6 x 37	17.8 x 14.6	512 channel
Avalon N16 E/S/XT	57.8 x 45.4	25.6 x 21.7	512 channel
Avalon N24 50S/SD	68.8 x 55.1	25.6 x 21.7	512 channel
Avalon N36 50S/SD	82.6 x 62.9	25.6 x 21.7	512 channel
Avalon N40	89.7 x 62.9	25.6 x 21.7	512 channel - dual
Avalon N48	114.1 x 53.1	25.6 x 21.7	512 channel - dual
			Laser - Dual
Avalon N24 50XT	68.8 x 55.1	25.6 x 21.7	512 channel - dual
Avalon N36 50XT	82.6 x 62.9	25.6 x 21.7	512 channel - dual
			Laser - Single
Avalon N8 70XT	45.6 x 37	17.8 x 14.6	1024 channel
Avalon N24 70SD	68.8 x 55.1	25.6 x 21.7	1024 channel
Avalon N36 70SD	82.6 x 62.9	25.6 x 21.7	1024 channel
Avalon N40XT	89.7 x 62.9	25.6 x 21.7	1024 channel
Avalon N48XT	114.1 x 53.1	25.6 x 21.7	1024 channel
			Laser - Dual 1024
Avalon N24 70XT	68.8 x 55.1	25.6 x 21.7	1024 channel - dual
Avalon N36 70XT	82.6 x 62.9	25.6 x 21.7	1024 channel - dual

See pages 33 and 40 for productivity specs.