

## OKI Success Story: Silat Labels

Industry: Self-adhesive labels | Products: Pro1050 Label Printer | Location: Midrand, Gauteng, South Africa



## SMALL COMPANY TACKLES BIG JOB FOR GLOBAL RUGBY TOURNAMENT

### The Challenge

Silat Labels partnered with NSI 4 Africa which placed them in an ideal position to take advantage of an opportunity to work with the Dutch brewing company Heineken. An important label project for them came up a month before a key rugby tournament was due to kick off in September 2019 in Japan. “A customer who was very pleased with our service recommended us for the Heineken project and our quick turnaround time and print quality sealed the deal for us” explains Paul Stretton, Owner & Founder of Silat Labels. Heineken, a key sponsor of the rugby tournament, initially commissioned 600 labels for a limited-edition beer bottle to mark the event. The challenge Silat Labels faced was the ability to print a stunning transparent label that displayed well on the dark bottle. To do this Silat Labels needed to research a new label printing solution that could deliver on this requirement, within the deadline.



### About Silat Labels

Founded in March 2019, Silat Labels is a small family run business with five employees, including the Owner & Founder, Paul Stretton. After retiring from the construction industry, Paul was looking for a new business opportunity against the backdrop of a struggling economy with high unemployment and low growth. He opted to start up a specialist short-run digital label supply company – Silat Labels – to service a variety of industries in niche markets.

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Paul Stretton, Founder & Owner, Silat Labels



Specialised Heineken labels, featuring a combined background of CMYK and Spot White, printed with OKI's Pro1050

Silat Labels looked for an end-to-end label printing solution which was different from other CMYK only options that it had previously seen or used. It also wanted a printer with a small footprint to fit in the space available, so ideally a desktop printer rather than floor standing. The printer needed to be easy for all the team to use, and good for on-demand small run printing.

### The Solution

Paul Stretton, Owner & Founder of Silat Labels, chose OKI's Pro1050 Label Printer as it is a fully customisable digital label production solution. Paul purchased this from NSI 4 Africa, OKI's assigned value-added partner for the Northern, Central and Southern African territories. Paul recalls, "We initially saw OKI's Pro1050 at a trade exhibition where we spoke to Shawn at NSI 4 Africa. We immediately saw the opportunity for a cost efficient short-run digital labelling solution." Silat also purchased a DPR Virgo Die-cutter to support its requirements. Space was a huge factor for the company so the compact aspect of the printing and cutting station was ideal: taking up no more than a desk space in an office environment, it makes production extremely efficient and keeps overhead costs low with no need to rent extra production facilities.

About half-a-dozen samples were printed early in week one and were sent to the client for approval. Some minor artwork changes and colour adjustments were then made, which would have been an extremely costly endeavour with an analogue printing system, but it was a breeze with OKI's Pro1050. Week two saw the 600 label order fulfilled.

Upon receiving delivery of the initial order of 600 labels, the client was extremely pleased and promptly ordered a further 20,000 which were produced and delivered over the following two weeks, all in time for the tournament kick-off. "OKI's Pro1050 made it possible to grow the order from an initial small quantity into a much larger volume. Other technologies wouldn't have allowed us to adapt to the client's needs as effectively as we could with our OKI device," says Paul.

**"...The Pro1050 represents great cost savings over other, less versatile label printing solutions and it definitely was a successful brand boosting promotion for Heineken..."**

Paul Stretton, Founder & Owner, Silat Labels



## The Partner

Paul explains “NSI 4 Africa was a great supplier to partner with. We were initially convinced by their knowledge and immense 20-year experience in the labelling industry. However, once we bought OKI’s Pro1050 Label Printer from them they really started to shine. They stood with us every step of the way and were always available to assist and support us. Many suppliers say they’ll stand by you, but Shawn from NSI 4 Africa and his tech team really live it. They were reliable and it was a great boost to our confidence in an industry we were initially completely unfamiliar with, to have a supplier we could rely on 100% to stand by us through the process.”

“Having a partner, we could trust on our team as well as a machine of the calibre of OKI’s Pro1050 is what gave us the confidence to take on the Heineken job. Our ability to print a transparent label with a white under-layer to support the image, our attention to detail and adaptability to our clients’ evolving requirements is what helped us grow our business solely by word of mouth, as well as securing the Heineken job and we believe there will be more like these jobs in the future.”

## The Benefits

Thanks to the Pro1050’s CMYK+White Toner capability, it was possible to print transparent ‘no-show’ label that displayed well on the dark green bottle. The ease of operation and digital nature of OKI’s technology meant that Silat Labels was able to accommodate the client’s changes efficiently, easily and cost effectively. The label design could be easily changed, quickly printed onto the clear label media and adhered to sample bottles to achieve the desired result.



Bottle labels printed on OKI’s Pro1050 ready for the event.

The DPR Virgo that NSI 4 Africa paired with OKI’s Pro1050, enabled us to contour-cut the labels to the client’s spec for an overall stunning and unique label effect.

“OKI’s Pro1050 doesn’t require coated media – including media compliant with legislation in regulated industries like food, cosmetics and chemicals – bringing production costs down and we anticipated that this, coupled with the ability to offer labels in any shape without the need for expensive dies would give us a competitive edge with our clients,” Paul says. “We were able to offer our client a unique promotion for the tournament that really allowed them to stand apart and be noticed with a limited-edition bottle adding immeasurable value to the brand.”

## The Future

Paul Stretton sees a bright future for Silat Labels, as he explains “Potentially with other great sporting events coming up, other big brand sponsors will see the value in offering customised, promotional packaging. The more competitive markets become, the more important differentiation like this will become in brands’ marketing strategies. Especially for brands that sponsor events where it makes sense to have event-specific packaging.”

He continues, “OKI’s Pro1050 and DPR Virgo definitely exceeded expectations. Through the Heineken job we have certainly acquired a new customer who will recommend us to others in turn. The Pro1050 represents great cost savings over other, less versatile label printing solutions and it definitely was a successful brand boosting promotion for Heineken... Very few projects like this are being done around the world as advertising agencies and brands simply don’t know this technology is available. The Heineken project set the benchmark.”



“It is great to have a partner in the business we can rely on. The NSI 4 Africa maintenance guys have truly become part of the Silat Labels team and we wouldn’t have been where we are now without them. They made sure we experienced minimal down-time in critical situations and we were always able to deliver on our promises with their help, even outside of office hours. Teamwork got the Heineken project done on time and allowed us to shine in the eyes of our customer.”

Together with OKI and NSI 4 Africa, Silat is evaluating other label media options for suitability for a wider range of end-customer projects. OKI’s Pro Series Label Printer is very versatile for printing on textured paper and synthetics.

“We would like to see the business continue to grow and more corporations to see the value in bespoke short-run marketing promotions. The Heineken job has given us the confidence to take on more of these big projects because we know that with NSI 4 Africa and OKI in our corner, we’ll be able to deliver on whatever our clients demand from us.”

“We certainly intend to work with OKI and NSI 4 Africa on all our projects going forward and when the time comes for business expansion, we will do it with NSI 4 Africa again.”

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