

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:05.0] DC: It takes the right skills and the right innovation to design and manage meaningful print marketing solutions. Welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse, where we explore all facets of print and marketing that create stellar communications and sales opportunities for business success. I'm your host Deborah Corn, the Intergalactic Ambassador to the Printerverse. Thanks for tuning in. Listen long and prosper.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:31.0] DC: Hey everybody, welcome to Podcasts From the Printerverse, this is Deborah Corn, your Intergalactic Ambassador, and today, we are speaking with Remy Janco. He is the vice president at Janco Press, located in Bohemia New York, which is on the south shore of Long Island. I have to look that up, sir. They were established in 1967, they are a family owned and operated printing company, in its fourth generation.

Janco provides superior label and packaging solutions, extended content labels, hot and cold stamping, embossing, printed and unprinted shrink sleeves, and more, and they are committed to providing unrivaled customer service, competitive pricing, and fast turnarounds. Most importantly, if you choose to work with the Janco team, you are treated as family. Welcome, Remy.

[0:01:22.7] RJ: Thanks Deborah, I appreciate it, that was a very nice introduction. So, you did – you did my whole job for me but that was pretty, thank you, yeah. That was awesome.

[0:01:31.8] DC: I was thinking about it before, I was like, “Huh, treated like family with Thanksgiving coming up, maybe we should skip that part.” Because Thanksgiving is so – why is it always such a testy holiday with people?

[0:01:41.2] RJ: I don't know, it's perfect timing though, right on brand, so.

[0:01:44.0] DC: Totally.

[0:01:45.8] RJ: Yeah-yeah.

[0:01:45.9] DC: But yeah, tell us more about the company. I'm assuming you're a part of the fourth generation and what do you do there?

[0:01:53.2] RJ: Yeah, great. So, you did a pretty good job yourself but my family has been in printing for four generations. So, I am the fourth generation in printing. My great-grandfather immigrated from Romania, and he was a printer in Manhattan and in the early days, in the Lower East Side, and then my grandfather actually started the business in 1967. So, we're a third-generation business but fourth-generation in printing.

So, it definitely runs in the blood and we love what we do, been doing it for a long time. Initially, we started serving you know, high-end luxury cosmetic and personal care brands, and then the business has transitioned, and we've invested in new tech and really just trying to stay up with the times and we serve a number of different markets now, nutraceuticals, food bev, what else? We do cosmetics and personal care as I had mentioned.

It's still, you know, a large part of our business, and we really try to provide a lot of value adds for our customers. So, like you were saying, the hot stamping, cold foil, embossing, debossing, tactile varnishes, you know, digital embellishment, spot varnishes, all across the board. We really try to make ourselves a one-stop shop for our customers and provide them from you know, design to you know, end, shipping out of the product, everything that they need.

So, yeah, that's that and I've been doing it now for about seven years but you know, grew up around the facility, running around like a little kid with my grandfather and my dad. I still work with my father, which is awesome.

[0:03:34.0] DC: For any of the marketing designers who listen to this podcast, can you share what an extended content label is?

[0:03:42.3] RJ: Yeah, great question. So, an extended content label is a label where you have the ability to peel multiple layers of the label. So, a lot in cases like you may see when you go to a CVS and you have an Advil bottle and it says on the label "peel here" so you can peel back

and there's more, either in nutritional facts or directions about the product itself. A lot of times, you see that for pharmaceutical, nutraceutical, or a big push.

More commonly nowadays is anyone that sells both domestically and internationally, the EU has a lot of regulations in regards to placing, you know, so many, I think, it's 12 different languages on a label. So, there's a lot of copy that needs to fit into small places sometimes. So, having the ability to print on multiple pages is really helpful for customers.

[0:04:40.2] DC: I've also seen some really creative uses, like, on wine labels, where they fold out almost like a mini brochure to tell the story of the wine company, the winemaker, without requiring a QR code to go to a digital bridge.

[0:04:58.1] RJ: Right, exactly. That's the perfect example of it. So, plenty of that, you know, there are different constructions even. You know, like a booklet construction like you were saying, or something a little more simple, where it's a hinge where you know, only one peel, it depends, you know? A lot of different constructions and used cases but exactly.

[0:05:18.6] DC: Yeah, and also, I mean, this is weird but the other night, I was making something in the microwave and to get the directions on how to do it, I had to peel off the first part of the label, which had the nutritional information on it, and then when they peeled it off, it gave you the – you know, how long to microwave it or –

[0:05:36.3] RJ: Exactly. A lot of people don't even realize that's there but a lot of it is driven by, you know, regulatory needs and laws just surrounding the need to have that information on the packaging.

[0:05:47.8] DC: Yeah. I would say, anybody listening to this, like, just get in touch with Remy and his contact information is in the show notes but getting some samples of these extended content labels, they're really cool, and it really is a completely different communication and design opportunity out there, and who says it has to be a label? It could just be a mini brochure that's shaped like a label, you know?

So, there's, you know, it's a new ingredient for people to use, although it might not be new in your world. I think, you know it would be new to a designer. I think, most people think they have their – just flat things. Although, sometimes, they have printing on the back so you could read other things through the label sometimes.

[0:06:30.7] RJ: Right, exactly, yeah. There are also use cases where you can print on the adhesive side, which is cool, something that we do. So, you always can make it work. I think that's one thing about being in business for so long, the technical knowledge that we have and just our ability to solve problems for our customers, you know, through things like this, helping you think about the engineering aspect of it, especially your more marketing-minded, just being able to help with the technical aspect of creating a label or something that works for the brand, you know, it's where we really add value for our customers.

[0:07:04.8] DC: So, we met at Labelexpo America, as I was sitting there, minding my own business and you walked over and we ended up talking for quite some time because you're very knowledgeable about all of these, obviously, and I am not, and I was learning so much the label situation, you know, coming from the commercial print world, mostly. But there are so many considerations you have to – at least, what I thought, upfront.

What is a substrate? You mentioned adhesive, as soon as you said adhesive, I was like, "Oh my God, people don't realize, like, how much goes into those adhesives." You know, why do labels stay on bottles in coolers? Like, in water, like, there's science behind all of that. So, we ended up just having an amazing conversation and it turned to RFID, which is for anybody who is not aware, it stands for radio frequency identification, RFID.

And it is a wireless technology that uses radio waves to identify objects, people, and even animals, by encoding digital data into tags, and reading it with a device called – guess what it's called? A reader.

[0:08:24.0] RJ: Yeah.

[0:08:24.6] DC: The technology itself has been commercially available since the 1970s, but its origins can actually be traced back to the 1930s, where the British used RFID to differentiate between allied and enemy aircraft radar, which I thought was really cool.

[0:08:42.4] RJ: Wow, that's – yeah, I did not know.

[0:08:46.1] DC: The Internet is a lovely source of –

[0:08:48.1] RJ: It's been like a hundred years then, that's crazy.

[0:08:50.5] DC: Yeah, it is, it's – I mean, QR codes, Toyota was using them for inventory, which is how those all came about, right?

[0:08:56.9] RJ: Yup-yup.

[0:08:58.8] DC: So, in that full circle moment, at Labelexpo, RFID was, I would say, one of the main topics going on throughout the show, and they had RFID stations, like education stations, set up all over the place and I went to one of the presentations. Actually, I went three times, I don't know if I told you, I went back two other times and the first time I went, I honestly had no idea what I was looking at.

I didn't understand how there was a, you know, with my advertising marketing brain, I'm like, "I don't understand, this doesn't sound very advertising and marketing, why aren't we just using QR codes?" And luckily, I was sitting next to a printer at that time and he's like, "Girl, no." He's like, "This is not what its going on here." And there was a reason why this was so topical at the show and I want to turn it over to you to tell everybody what that was.

[0:09:58.8] RJ: Yeah. So, I think, it's very topical because there are a lot of people investing money in it, right? So, you have some of the largest material and you know, businesses in the world like Fast On, which is Avery Dennison, which I'm sure you visited their booth but there are a number of businesses that are heavily investing in this from the packaging world, mainly driven by Walmart.

So, they say, it's the Walmart initiative but I've spoken to another – a number of other printers as well as people that I know in the industry and they like to say, it's a mandate, right? So, not so much an initiative but a mandate, and when a 650-billion-dollar company says, "You got to do things this way," I think that people are going to fall in line but Walmart started beginning their RFID journey, I think in the early 2000s.

And then, towards like, maybe 2005, I think they started implementing this RFID tech with a hundred of their top suppliers. So, really what's driving this initiative for them is they're trying to create a lot more transparency throughout their supply chain. So, in doing so, you know, they think that by having these tags on every single product in their store, they're going to improve their inventory accuracy, increase their supply chain efficiency, create a better customer experience, and ultimately, for them, reduce costs.

So, you know, the more products on the shelves that have tags on them, the less people that need to be stocking the shelves and watching inventory, which is unfortunately sad, you know? But that's kind of the way the world's going, right? So, the main thing is really supply chain efficiency though. You know, Walmart is really trying to understand what they have going on in their huge warehouses.

And having the ability to just have a reader and someone stand in a room with these ultra-high frequency radio waves and just pull all of that data by standing in a room and having an understanding of how many products they have for this item, how many products they have for this item, what's the temperature of this item? When is this item going to expire? Think about how many items there are.

[0:12:26.6] DC: Do we have this item in duplicate 20 times because nobody knew we had it in the store room?

[0:12:33.5] RJ: Exactly.

[0:12:34.4] DC: Or, do we have none because somebody missed it and now, it's not in supply at all?

[0:12:38.8] RJ: Exactly. So, that's the type of thing that I was saying with cost reduction. That's, you know, efficiency for you know, are we out of stock? But also, you know, like, do we have too much stock on the shelf? So, I think it's a lot of that, just transparency throughout the entire process for their business, and then the reason getting back to the show, and I think why it was such a, you know, integral part and focused on so much at the show is because Walmart has these different timelines for product categories.

So, depending on what product category you're in, for example, apparel, it's already rolled out in apparel. So, every single piece of apparel that you see in a Walmart store will be tagged with RFID inlay. So, you know, they're going through each product category and there are dates associated with those categories that the suppliers to Walmart will need to abide by in order to keep their items on the shelf. So, think about how many people sell in Walmart and you know, you want to continue selling in Walmart as a brand, you've got to abide by this initiative, right?

[0:13:52.3] DC: The dude abides.

[0:13:54.0] RJ: Exactly, exactly. So – and that's why, at the show, you see these large packaging manufacturers, or the people that are vendors of large packaging manufacturers at least, they're focusing heavily on being able to service that need down the line and help manufacturers, and in our world, printers, be able to service the brands that they work with.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:15:19.6] DC: And that is the point, everybody doesn't work for Walmart but if you have anything that goes on a shelf at Walmart, or hangs at Walmart, or is going to be inventoried or scanned in Walmart, they're not going to take it unless it has RFID, which is what they've told everybody, and you're right. For them, it's not an initiative, it's a mandate, that you're absolutely right but the thing is that, "Okay, so, Target's not going to do it next and Macy's is not going to."

I mean, the trickle-down effect from the efficiencies and the case studies coming out of Walmart are going to completely transform the market. I agree with you. Just going back to Avery Dennison for a moment, I did spend a lot of time with him at the show, and they told me that jeans, like blue jeans, are one of the most counterfeited objects on the planet, and that if I actually looked in my jeans, I would see that there are already RFID tags in them.

So, I didn't really believe this person, because I'm like, "I've never seen them before." Guess what? They're in there.

[0:16:27.6] RJ: Oh yeah.

[0:16:28.6] DC: It just looks like a little bar code that you just can't peel off of anything.

[0:16:33.2] RJ: Exactly.

[0:16:34.1] DC: And that's what I realized what it was. Then I also asked them, "Is it for security?" And they're like, "No, this is not a security. Right now, it's not to figure out if someone's trying to take these jeans out of Walmart, they just want to know are they actually Levi's, did they actually come from where they said they came from and how many do we have on the floor, and how many might we need next quarter based upon what's left?"

So, I thought, that was interesting because I always thought that RFID was like, part of a security thing, but they were like, “That’s what those magnetometers are at the ends of the stores.” Like, there didn’t seem like to be a focus on that, would you agree with that, or are they just not up to it yet?

[0:17:21.9] RJ: Yeah, I think what you're saying is exactly right. I think, the main purpose of the tech currently is more suited for like we're saying, you know, inventory management, logistics, supply chain but also, taking that further, it does, I think, go into you know, asset tracking, for example, maybe like, luxury products. While it may not serve technically as a security purpose, you are also able to understand where this high-value item is at all times.

So, I think, it serves multiple purposes but the main purpose that they're currently tracking all the data for is for supply chain, that's fair.

[0:18:01.5] DC: Yeah, but I actually think that that is a great point and I can make a security, you know, tie into that, for example, Coach bags, things like that, or FENDI bags, Hermes bags, I mean, these things of – Birkin bags, they are faked everywhere because they're a lot, a lot, a lot of money. I mean, house money, some of these things. So, imagine you get a shipment of these to your store, you want to make sure that that box actually came from Milan or that box actually came from Paris or wherever it might be coming from, and not from the Lower East Side in New York, right?

[0:18:44.7] RJ: Right, and exactly, like, you'll have that RFID inlay even on the pallet itself for how it was shipped. So, you know how many are on that pallet when it leaves the location if one of them was taken up by maybe someone operating it when you know when they weren't supposed to.

[0:19:01.3] DC: It fell off the truck as we say?

[0:19:03.5] RJ: Exactly. So, you know, just – and I think that that speaks to another thing, just in regards to like, why Walmart is probably pushing this, or even anyone for that matter but I know the buzzword nowadays, especially, I'm sure, you saw at the show at Labelexpo, outside of RFID being a focus, sustainability is huge, you know? So –

[0:19:24.0] DC: And automation.

[0:19:24.3] RJ: Exactly. Sustainability and automation and just how those interact with RFID and the RFIDs, the ability to really improve, like demand forecasting, reduce overstocking, it can really contribute to like, just more efficiency across the board, and that cuts waste, right? And less waste is more sustainable. So, I think, it's all really tied together.

[0:19:47.7] DC: Yeah.

[0:19:48.1] RJ: For sure.

[0:19:48.3] DC: Less – I don't need as many trucks for deliveries of things that I have, you know, in multiple sets in my warehouse, it's really incredible. So, now we understand, you know, where this opportunity is but it was a bit complicated for me to understand what was actually required on the printer's end to get into this business, and we were at Labelexpo so they were specifically speaking about labels there.

So, that's where we'll keep our conversation as well. There was – it seems like you need a special device to print – and what are you printing? Are you printing the actual tags? Can you just share everything you know about what a printer would need to start getting involved in this?

[0:20:41.4] RJ: Yeah, great question. So, I'm doing a lot of learning with you here, right? So, I wouldn't call myself a complete expert yet but I learned a lot and we started instituting some of this in our business. So, I can tell you what I know and if anyone has any questions, you know I'm still trying to learn myself. So, there are a number of different types of tags, right? So, they're active tags, they're passive tags, they're on metal tags, they're high-temperature tags, there are tear-proof tags.

So, you know, a lot of different types of tags but most importantly I think if you're a printer, the first thing you have to do is try and understand the technology, right? If you understand the technology, there are a lot of businesses out there, like Avery Dennison for example, and they have full teams that are dedicated to doing things like this. So, you know, try to understand the

tech and evaluate your business and like the processes in your business, and how they interact, and maybe, how you can get involved in this.

I think it's important that people get involved in this because I think that's the way that the world's going because I think, UPCs will be gone, QR Codes will be gone, this is the way that everything's going to be tracked but I'm getting ahead of myself, so.

[0:21:57.6] DC: Let's just clarify, QR codes will be gone for inventory and supply chain, logistics, and management.

[0:22:02.9] RJ: Right.

[0:22:03.7] DC: Not in marketing, in the market world.

[0:22:04.9] RJ: Yeah, yeah. I'm sorry, thank you, yeah.

[0:22:07.1] DC: Because we – one thing we did learn is that there's really not a marketing application for this because of the – you have to have – like you said, the reader is like, you have to have an environment that is reading these things, like putting beams out in your space, right?

[0:22:24.9] RJ: Yeah, the radio, it's exactly. So, and then, you know, as a printer, the first thing that you can do is it can be really integrated into your current converting equipment, you know, with the addition of an insertion module, sorry. So, that's what they would call it. Depending, of course, you know every printer's equipment, depending on how you have it set up is different.

But if we're talking about a standard, you know, conventional, flexographic press, for example, you may be able just to insert an insertion module. So, you do have companies that are building these inlays themselves, like, I keep saying, Avery Dennison but they're one of them, for example.

[0:23:08.5] DC: They're leading the charge.

[0:23:10.6] RJ: There are a lot of other players in the market as well but they're building these inlays, and then you can purchase the inlays from these places and they're, you know, wet inlays and dry inlays. So, that, you know, want some wet adhesive, being wet and then dry without adhesive. The same way you and I were discussing adhesives earlier, when you build a label, whether it's for something that needs to go in a freezer and you need a very strong adhesive, you need to think about the product the same way when you're integrating RFID.

So, you need to say, "Hey." Like, "What type of product is this? What is the packaging going on? What is it going in?" Because you have to say, you know, like metalized material for example, you can't use it the same way that you would have otherwise because it counteracts the radio waves. So, you have to think about things like that and how you're doing and building this packaging, which changes a lot of aspects for the design process.

[0:24:16.7] DC: So, does the actual, like, material, like, a difference between like a cotton shirt and a flannel shirt is –

[0:24:22.9] RJ: Exactly.

[0:24:23.6] DC: It has to have a different power of – because the radio frequency has to go deeper through or work harder to find it through the clothes.

[0:24:32.7] RJ: Exactly. You have low-frequency waves that are going through materials like water or metal, that you know, a high frequency wouldn't. So, these are all things, as a label converter that you have to think about with your customers when you're trying to do creative package but essentially, and there's a really good visual of this on Avery Dennison's website. So, we can link that in the podcast as well, for the listeners.

But it goes through the process of the converting piece of equipment through our printer and how an insertion module would visually integrate. Of course, it's not going to be for your specific equipment but integrated into an existing piece of equipment and then it shows you the process of how you know, a piece of material substrate is going through the press, how the face layer of the material is being delaminated off the liner, how the inlay or the RFID is being placed onto

you know, the correct area of that face material or in between, it's sandwiched, and then if it needs adhesive, you're putting on adhesive.

If it's a dry inlay or if it's wet, you don't, and then how it continues throughout that process. It's dye cut and then taken off and then the last thing that needs to be done is after the converted is finished, you have to program and encode the RFID to make sure that it works, right? You need the QC throughout the process to check and verify that the inlays are working and reading correctly before the final product is shipped out.

Because, of course, you never want to put one that's faulty in there but then also you have to encode them and then you can send them out on their way, and then Walmart separately you know is expecting people to track that data and be able to share that data with them and it's part of their compliance initiative. So, it's you know, it's a ton of information and that's why I was saying I am still learning a lot myself.

But from a converting perspective for label printers, it's not going to really break the mold I think in terms of what you need. There is of course a capital expenditure that needs for these insertion modules as well as other things like encoders but you know, printing is still – it's still printing. It's just adding one new caveat into the process.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:27:39.6] DC: Okay, I have some questions.

[0:27:41.6] RJ: Please.

[0:27:42.4] DC: So, the tag itself looks like a little metal circuit if anyone wants to look at it, it looks like a metal circuit, and that circuit can be different sizes. We learn from Avery Dennison that the bigger it is, the further range it has. Like for example, in Walmart if I just want to be in a warehouse, they're going to have really big circuits so that they could be read from 50 feet away versus a smaller one that is just going to be scanned you know, very, very close up and things of that nature.

Where I'm confused is that is a printer printing those metallic things or those come and somehow, the printer has to get them secured to the label and then they program that? Like, that's where I'm confused because Avery Dennison does offer the service where they will program the tags. I mean, the tags, right?

[0:28:47.3] RJ: Right.

[0:28:47.9] DC: And then send them to a converter but then somehow those tags have to go through a press, get married perfectly, they were very specific about perfectly.

[0:28:59.2] RJ: Yes.

[0:29:00.0] DC: To the label or it won't work, so I know that was a lot of stuff I just said but I know you understand what I mean.

[0:29:08.1] RJ: Yeah.

[0:29:08.9] DC: So, if you can verify for everybody this –

[0:29:10.3] RJ: It's a great question and I think it's fair, yes. So, let's start with the inlay itself. So, the –

[0:29:18.2] DC: No, the circuit.

[0:29:19.3] RJ: You said that looks like a metal insertion, right?

[0:29:22.3] DC: Yeah, it does.

[0:29:23.6] RJ: The inlay, it has the inlay. So, there's a construction of it but it has the inlay carrier and then it has the antenna and the chip in the strap, so those are the things that go into it and then it might have adhesive or not, you know?

[0:29:38.6] DC: Okay, but, but –

[0:29:39.3] RJ: But it looks – yeah.

[0:29:40.3] DC: Let's just stop with right there. So, is that printed like printed electronics? It's not silver ink, it's really piece of –

[0:29:47.6] RJ: Right, yeah. So, that's electronic. So, that I wouldn't do as a printer myself or at least I don't have the capability of doing that. I think that there are some printers that have teams in-house that are building the inlays as well.

[0:29:47.6] DC: Oh, wow.

[0:30:03.1] RJ: Yeah, so you know, that's like a one-stop RFID shop.

[0:30:07.5] DC: Okay, but otherwise, you just need that piece and then you essentially program it and get it on the label somehow, is that correct?

[0:30:14.2] RJ: Right, exactly.

[0:30:15.7] DC: Okay.

[0:30:16.0] RJ: So, the second half of where you said, you know, Avery Dennison can give you this inlay, they can program it for you, ship it out to you, and then it's on you to make sure it's perfectly inserted in the registration into that label, right? And then you said there are different

sizes, different shapes, and of course, it depends on the frequency of the radio waves that you need but also the shape can be used for how you want it, where you want it to fit in the label depending on the design.

So, the design also needs to take this you know, shape into account when you're building the label.

[0:30:53.9] DC: And the substrate which becomes like –

[0:30:56.1] RJ: Yes.

[0:30:56.6] DC: And the glue. I mean, both of those two – substrate glue, that's what I learned like I mentioned in the beginning two most important considerations in label printing as far as I could tell, where in like commercial printing sometimes we think of finishing as the most thing because that's how we're going to end but with labels, it's no. You have to know it, when you have to know how you got to start, for a start.

[0:31:19.5] RJ: Yep, without a doubt.

[0:31:20.8] DC: So, how does substrates – can any substrate be used for this, or as we said before, it has to be married to the application and the product?

[0:31:30.7] RJ: Exactly. So, definitely the latter and then also like I said in regards to metallic substrates for example that you have to steer clear of those because the way that they counteract the technology themselves, there isn't currently a used case where you – or at least they haven't created one of those inlays where you can do both at the same time.

[0:31:55.0] DC: It sounds really complicated. For your investigation, for your company, are you going to put resources towards being able to program tags yourself or will you look for partners to handle that part and you stick with what you know the best for now, which is the printing into it? I'm not saying you can't get up to speed on the other part but –

[0:32:21.8] RJ: Yeah. No, that's a great question. I mean, my philosophy and we as just like the business model that we go by is more specifically towards the latter again. You know, it's like I'm going to stick to what I'm good at for right now and pull on the partners that I know can help me in order to continue to service my customers efficiently. It's of course like my hope that I can grow enough with this technology that maybe it's something that we can do on our own.

But for now, you know there are companies out there that you can partner with that you know, are specifically dedicated to helping printers like me pick up that part of the process and not have to worry about it right now, which is really nice because you know, my family has been doing this for almost 60 years now but there are also other people you said are – they started right like what almost a hundred years ago.

But there are people that have been doing this also for 50 years. So, there are companies out there that I've chosen to partner with in this process and understanding how to best service my customers and make sure we can, you know, continue to service applications like this without completely like, you know, having to invest a ton of capital into a little bit of an unknown space. You said it, it sounds confusing but I'm not a tech wizard, you know? So, there's a lot of it that goes into it as well.

[0:33:47.3] DC: Yeah, I mean, everybody has their lanes. When people say, "You know, I'm not this, I'm not that." I'm like, "You know what? I don't know how to change a tire." I don't know if that's such a –

[0:33:55.5] RJ: You don't have to do it, right?

[0:33:56.8] DC: I know, I'm just saying but that's not my thing, and there are other people that are just like, "How could you not know how to change a tire, right?" Okay, well you change tires and I'll call people to change tires, you know? That's fine. I agree with you that first of all, you have to have the right customers for this, which we'll get to in one second because this is not a, "Hey, let's go knocking on doors and see if we can sell some RFID here."

But let them handle it. It is, to your point, it's got to scan correctly or you know, you don't want to be the person who typed the wrong number, the wrong one, or zero to a code, right?

[0:34:32.6] RJ: It's not cheap right now either. It's not cheap, you know? It's not cheap, so you want to make sure that it's going to function correctly and of course, as this whole thing scales, I'm sure like the economies of scale will bring the cost of these tags down eventually but it's something that –

[0:34:47.5] DC: Walmart will when everybody just by driving –

[0:34:48.6] RJ: Yeah, people will pay a good amount for these nowadays, you know? So, I –

[0:34:54.1] DC: If they have something of Walmart, they don't have a choice like you said.

[0:34:57.4] RJ: Exactly, exactly.

[0:34:58.2] DC: It's like, it's a great time to be in the business, and the other reason I would say, find a partner so you could do this tomorrow if, if you can figure out the marrying part because quite frankly, they were very, very adamant that this is not – it's not just a, "Oh, you're kind of gluing two pieces of paper together." It's like, no. So, that label printers really should focus on how to make sure that they can get that end of it working.

[0:35:32.6] RJ: Exactly.

[0:35:33.9] DC: Because that's – it's the tag is not going to work unless this – it's on the label properly, to your point before, is it on a box of frozen peas in a freezer case or is it on a shirt basking in the sun outside of you know, sometimes they put things outside if there's –

[0:35:54.0] RJ: Or is it in a hospital where someone's life is on the line or something like that? You know, you need these things to work, there are a lot of different applications for it.

[0:36:03.0] DC: Absolutely. We were only speaking about it in the retail space but you're right and let's move on to that right now. So, I looked it up, and according to a report by MarketsandMarkets, the RFID market size is expected to reach 40.9 billion with a B dollars by 2032, which is not as far away as people might think and it will grow year over year 11% or higher and that's being measured from 2022 to 2032.

So, that is a significant market that it's developing into, and more specifically, the demand for RFID can be found in three specific areas that are going to be almost your lowest-hanging fruit if you're looking to enter this application. That's not even a market, it's more of like getting into the application I guess. Retail, which we've been discussing, manufacturing, which makes total sense as well if you're thinking about inventory and parts and where's the steering wheel for the cars, you know?

Even assembly lines and things like that but the other really interesting application was for healthcare and I did a secondary look up after that because I was like, "What did they, you know, what would they need to know in healthcare?" There's a lot of stuff they need to know in healthcare. I mean, just starting with like blood samples in the refrigerator or something like that, which patients are on there. How long has it been in there? Is it at the right temperature in there?

[0:37:46.2] RJ: Think about like heart transplants, think about putting something in an ambulance or that needs to be transported, where is it? How many of them are there? What's the temperature? How long is it going to be good for? All of these things, there's a lot of applications. Even people, you know? Like they can track patients, which I don't know how everyone feels about that but you know it's something that –

[0:38:11.5] DC: Well, patients get lost in the hospital building.

[0:38:13.4] RJ: Yeah.

[0:38:13.5] DC: If you're, you know, if you're getting wheeled in a wheelchair, it's almost like going through like the toll booths now. They just know that you – they just read you as you go through, right?

[0:38:21.8] RJ: Exactly.

[0:38:22.6] DC: It's like you would just – there is a little radio frequency thing in this, you know, just like next to the camera that they're watching everybody and as you're moving around, it knows where you are. No one is sitting there going, "Where is patient three," you know? But if

for some reason they do want to know if they're not in their hospital bed for some reason, and then they could say, "Oh, I didn't realize they went down for a test, or they were released. Who knew?" But there is also medication, making sure that the right medicine is going to the right patient and you're not you know –

[0:38:56.2] RJ: That's how I think about that, yeah.

[0:38:56.3] DC: Doing anything crazy. There is equipment tracking, where is the defibrillator, you know? We can't find it. There was medical records, where is the chart of the patient, and things of that nature. Infection control, this is more about monitoring like how many times people are washing their hands, I'm not really sure how they –

[0:39:18.8] RJ: But it's also, it's real-time data, right? And I think that that's a huge advantage of RFID getting you know, real-time data, you know, numbers that are going to help you make decisions. In this case, obviously, possibly life or death situations, so.

[0:39:36.1] DC: A hundred percent.

[0:39:36.7] RJ: Yeah.

[0:39:37.4] DC: And even if for clinical trials and research, I thought this was really interesting because they can use it to instead of humans like writing stuff down, which you know, which is fine but there is human error, there's a reason that that's a phrase, right? And so, it can track things like the distribution and usage of trial medications and monitoring the patients that are in the studies and are they doing what they're supposed to be doing and things of that nature, which would actually make research better in the future.

If it's more – you're just able to extrapolate more data. So, you don't have to know if that person really, did they really eat their jello? They're telling us they did, you know? But you might be able to know that they did from somehow by whatever is tagged in that hospital room, so –

[0:40:33.9] RJ: I mean, we live, right? We live in a data-driven world nowadays. So the more that you can pull from any type of aspect of this like supply chain, healthcare, retail, whatever it is, it helps people make decisions.

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[INTERVIEW CONTINUED]

[0:41:25.3] DC: So, we've been speaking about the tags this whole time but the other end of it is the reader, which I'm kind of thinking in my little world, it's like a WiFi router, right? It's just somewhere in the room and it has to be in a place, I'm assuming, where it's unobstructed and it can shoot out and receive radio signals.

[0:41:47.4] RJ: Right.

[0:41:48.2] DC: But in my research, that can be an obstacle too because Walmart is going to have to invest in these things however many they need in all the aisles and the inventory in the rooms or the warehouses and there could be multiple ones. So, that's just – so, I guess I'm mentioning this because just because you might work with a hospital, just because you might work with a retail store, or just because you might work for somebody who might need inventory supply in some manufacturing environment, you cannot just talk to them about producing the labels.

You have to also have that other conversation. Do you know anything about how do you get those readers involved in?

[0:42:32.9] RJ: That's a great question. I actually haven't gotten that far yet maybe because it doesn't really impact me so much.

[0:42:39.7] DC: Well, you can't print labels if nobody – well, I mean, I guess you could print all the labels you want but it's not going to be read by anybody, right?

[0:42:46.5] RJ: Well, right, right. Well, I could print them and encode them and check that the encoding is correct with that type of QC equipment but down the line, you know, where the person is going to be having this in their warehouse we're checking it in, they'll need that reader. I mean, no matter what the type of tag it is, to pull the data, you need the reader, so.

[0:43:08.4] DC: Yeah, so I guess what I'm saying is if somebody comes to you asking for RFID labels, you might want to just say, "I assume you have the readers set up," right?

[0:43:18.8] RJ: Yes, exactly.

[0:43:19.7] DC: So, that would be the first question. If you don't – unless or you know, whatever would be a reasonable question without saying like, "Hey, I don't mean to ask you a stupid question but just making sure you have a reader in there."

[0:43:30.8] RJ: Yeah.

[0:43:31.5] DC: And if you're going to pitch this idea, I'm just saying that you can't unless you're – you also have the conversation about the reader end of it.

[0:43:42.8] RJ: Absolutely.

[0:43:43.8] DC: And that's probably – there are probably partners out there that do that aspect of it. Avery Dennison is not talking about the readers, they were only talking about the tags.

[0:43:54.4] RJ: Yeah, I agree with you. I will get back to you on that one for sure. I think I have a little more research to do myself but if I find anything in particular, maybe we can post a link in the show notes.

[0:44:06.4] DC: Yeah, you know, I think that we should do a part two, and maybe I could find someone from Avery Dennison to come in and join us and we could ask them really good questions.

[0:44:13.9] RJ: That would be awesome, yeah.

[0:44:14.7] DC: Yeah, but until then, I just want to thank you so much for your time. Do you have anything you want to say to wrap it up talking to the fellow printers out there about?

[0:44:25.3] RJ: Sure, yeah. So, I think that one that is just top of mind for this stuff is I think just try and learn if you're another printer. I think that you know, maybe you're not ready to invest in this for your business yet but I don't know, like you were mentioning earlier about the potential growth year over year about being 11% and forget how many billions of dollars you said.

[0:44:50.6] DC: It's 40.9 by 2032.

[0:44:53.3] RJ: Exactly.

[0:44:54.0] DC: And currently, it's 15.8.

[0:44:56.4] RJ: Exactly, which is crazy, and also like I said before, you know, we live in a data-driven world. So, if it's me, you know, I'm kind of seeing the writing on the wall that this is the way that you know, the world is moving. So, if you're a fellow printer, if you have questions, if I can help you if Deborah could help you, I'm happy to connect you with whoever I can, you know?

But I think it's something that you really need to educate yourself about because whether or not, you know, you implement it now I think it might be something that you have to at least understand or implement at one time. You know, the philosophy of our business and our family is always trying to stay up with technology. You never, you know, I never want to be the last generation of the Janco business, you know?

So, you got to stay up with everything going on in the world and I think this is something that does impact the printing space significantly. So, learn, for sure, and yeah, that's all I got. Thank you so much, this is actually the first podcast I have ever been a part of, which is so cool for me and I really enjoyed it, and you're a pleasure to speak to. So, it's cool, thanks.

[0:46:05.7] DC: Thank you, sir. I've been so many firsts for printers out there, really I feel very honored when I hear that. So, thank you so much for joining me, and honestly, just for – we just had such a great conversation at Labelexpo that I really just wanted to barnacle myself to you because we were both learning at the same time. Now obviously, you had a lot more information than I did because you're a printer and you were trying to explain it to me.

But as a print customer, I do see things in a little bit of a different way, and I was really trying to force some sort of marketing application and everyone just finally talked me off the ledge and said, "Not yet. This is not for that now." That moment kind of passed. The pandemic blew any of that. I mean, they can't really even get people to use NFC now and it's everywhere. It's just so much easier to just scan a QR code at this point, maybe it will evolve.

But to your most excellent point, you don't want to be the last person who learns about something like this when all of a sudden, all of your label customers are asking you for RFID. That is not the time to start learning about it. That is when you want to say either you're doing it or you have a partner, or maybe, eventually – well, I guess, Avery is sort of asking like a trade tag –

[0:47:23.6] RJ: They are, yeah.

[0:47:24.5] DC: Creator but they're not doing the marrying part. So, hopefully, somebody will start speaking about that, I don't know if they were showing the – like a press with like, some pretty serious cameras in there that we're making sure the registration stayed –

[0:47:40.1] RJ: Exactly.

[0:47:41.7] DC: Intact but this is only going to start getting more prevalent, even though it's behind the scenes, even though it's not the sexiest print because it's essentially a really high-powered barcode, would you agree with that?

[0:48:00.2] RJ: Yeah.

[0:48:00.3] DC: If you know –

[0:48:01.1] RJ: Yeah.

[0:48:01.0] DC: It's just multifunctional, it does more things.

[0:48:03.7] RJ: It's the software or like, technology-driven barcode. You know, it's a QR code times a hundred, you know?

[0:48:12.6] DC: Yeah.

[0:48:13.0] RJ: Yeah.

[0:48:15.3] DC: And it really is going to change the way businesses of – right now, of significant size are handling their supply chain and their inventory management and any sort of logistics, shipping logistics and things like that. Will it trickle down to a small store? It might, when it becomes more accessible. Right now, it's still in the, "You know, I heard about this thing called AI that's making art, let me go investigate it," right? A couple of you know.

[0:48:47.0] RJ: Yeah, exactly, yeah.

[0:48:49.3] DC: And now, everybody's on platforms. So, again, I just want to thank you so much for taking this learning journey with me. Everything you need to connect with Remy and his company, and things we mentioned are in the show notes. Until next time, everybody, RFID Long, and Prosper.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:49:09.4] DC: Thanks for listening to Podcasts From the Printerverse. Please subscribe, click some stars, and leave us a review. Connect with us through printmediacentr.com, we'd love to hear your feedback on our shows and topics that are of interest for future broadcasts. Until next time, thanks for joining us. Print long and prosper.

[END]

Mentioned in This Episode:

Remy Janco: <https://linkedin.com/in/remyjanco/>

Janco Press: <https://jancopress.com/>

Avery Dennison RFID Solutions: <https://label.averydennison.com/na/en/home/products/RFID-Solutions.html#walmart-rfid>

Labelexpo Americas 2024: <https://labelexpo-americas.com/>

MarketsandMarkets: <https://marketsandmarkets.com/>

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