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1 PRINTING ON TRANSPARENT FILM

2 FIELD OF THE INVENTION

3 The present invention relates to an improved
4 electrostatic processes for printing or coating on polymer
5 films and surfaces with toner and toner inks. The invention
6 specifically relates to a method of achieving high quality
7 high contrast colored or multi-colored images in continuous
8 roll printing on transparent, flexible packaging films.

9 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

10 The coating of plastic films or surfaces e.g.
11 polyethylene, polypropylene, etc. for aesthetic or
12 functional purposes is of great utility and importance. A
13 major use of such films is in food packaging.

14 Electrostatic printing has inherent advantages which
15 would appear to make it particularly desirable for printing
16 on plastic films. The inherent advantages include
17 adaptability to short runs economically, high resolution, on
18 demand printing and good visibility. However, at present,
19 printing on transparent films, especially multi-color
20 printing is commercially performed in multi-head presses,
21 and only in long runs.

22 SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

23 It is an object of certain aspects of the present
24 invention to produce improved quality color images
25 electrostatically on transparent plastic films and
26 substrates.

27 Color integrity of multi-color images is improved by
28 optimizing the image forming and transfer stages of the
29 printing process.

30 In order to improve the visibility of color images
31 printed on the inner surface of transparent flexible
32 packaging, according to a preferred embodiment of the
33 invention, the color image is overcoated with a
34 substantially opaque toner layer at least in those portions
35 of the packaging which are printed with color toners. Thus
36 on the packaging material, at least one color toner layer is

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1 situated closest to the material, and a white or other
2 opaque layer is situated behind the colored layer or layers,
3 i.e., further away from the material. Such images are viewed
4 from the unprinted side of the substrate.

5 Alternatively, the complete multi-layer image is
6 printed with the opaque layer uppermost on the intermediate
7 transfer member so that, when the image is transferred to
8 the substrate, the opaque layer is closest to the substrate.
9 Such images are viewed from the printed side of the
10 substrate.

11 Additionally, the white toner layer may also extend
12 past the edges of the colored layers and directly contact
13 the packaging material.

14 In order to avoid unnecessary alignment and
15 registration steps, the different color images involved are
16 sequentially transferred from an image forming surface onto
17 an intermediate transfer member, each in alignment with
18 previous images. The intermediate transfer member is heated
19 so that each color image coalesces into a cohesive film, in
20 which the respective color pigments are held so that they do
21 not diffuse into other layers. Mixing of colors, especially
22 with the opaque pigment is detrimental to image quality.

23 Each complete multi-color image is subsequently
24 transferred from the intermediate transfer member to the
25 substrate.

26 Another object of certain aspects of the present
27 invention is to provide a process for printing toner polymer
28 images on ionomer (high or low molecular weight) or ethylene
29 vinyl acetate coatings on polymer surfaces, thereby
30 achieving improved qualities. The toner polymer images may
31 be based on high molecular weight ionomers, e.g. Surlyn,
32 low molecular weight ionomers, e.g. Aclon, ionomers having
33 an intermediate molecular weight, ethylene vinyl acetate
34 polymers and ethylene copolymers or terpolymers e.g., Bynel
35 and Nuclel, to achieve improved qualities, such as
36 sealability, adhesiveness, food compatibility, and others.

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1 In other aspects of the invention special toners,
2 including opaque white, silver, gold and fluorescent toners
3 have been prepared by adding pigments to a hot ionomer
4 solution, preferably of low molecular weight ionomers, and
5 stirring the mixture as it cools. This procedure has been
6 used to prepare gold, silver, white opaque TiO_2 based,
7 magnetic and fluorescent inks, respectively.

8 There is thus provided, in accordance with a preferred
9 embodiment of the invention, a printing process for forming
10 high contrast color images on polymer surfaces, comprising:

11 (a) forming a layer of substantially opaque liquid
12 toner comprising polymer based toner particles and a carrier
13 liquid, on an imaging surface;

14 (b) transferring the layer to an intermediate transfer
15 member;

16 (c) heating the layer on the intermediate transfer
17 member to a temperature at which the toner particles at
18 least partially coalesce;

19 (d) repeating (a) to (c) sequentially for at least one
20 subsequent layer in at least one color, said at least one
21 subsequent layer being transferred to the intermediate
22 transfer member onto the opaque layer to form multiple
23 layers on the intermediate transfer member; and

24 (e) transferring the multiple layers to a polymer
25 surface.

26 There is further provided, in accordance with a
27 preferred embodiment of the invention, a printing process
28 for forming high contrast color images on polymer surfaces,
29 comprising:

30 (a) forming a colored layer of liquid toner comprising
31 polymer based toner particles and a carrier liquid, on an
32 imaging surface;

33 (b) transferring the layer to an intermediate transfer
34 member;

35 (c) heating the layer on the intermediate transfer
36 member to a temperature at which the toner particles at

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1 least partially coalesce;

2 (d) repeating (a) to (c) sequentially for at least a
3 substantially opaque liquid toner layer , said substantially
4 opaque layer being transferred to the intermediate transfer
5 member onto the colored layer to a plurality of layers on
6 the intermediate transfer member; and

7 (e) transferring the plurality of layers to a polymer
8 surface.

9 Preferably, forming a layer comprises:

10 (i) charging a photoreceptor surface;

11 (ii) selectively discharging portions of the charged
12 photoreceptor surface to form a predefined electrostatic
13 image; and

14 (iii) developing a layer of charged opaque white toner
15 particles onto the selectively discharged portions of the
16 photoreceptor surface thereby providing a developed image
17 corresponding to the latent image.

18 There is further provided, in accordance with a
19 preferred embodiment of the invention, a printing process
20 comprising:

21 (a) forming a liquid toner image comprising toner
22 particles based on a first polymer and a carrier liquid, on
23 an imaging surface;

24 (b) transferring the image to a surface coated with a
25 second polymer; and

26 (c) fusing and fixing the image to the surface coating,
27 wherein the second polymer is either an ionomer or an
28 ethylene vinyl acetate polymer.

29 Preferably, the second polymer is either an ionomer or
30 an ethylene vinyl acetate polymer high molecular weight
31 ionomers, e.g. Surlyns, low molecular weight ionomers, e.g.
32 Aclyns, ionomers having an intermediate molecular weight,
33 ethylene vinyl acetate polymers and ethelene copolymers or
34 terpolymers e.g., Bynels and Nucrels.

35 There is further provided, in accordance with a
36 preferred embodiment of the invention, a printing process

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1 comprising:

2 (a) forming a liquid toner image comprising toner
3 particles based on a first polymer and a carrier liquid, on
4 an imaging surface;

5 (b) transferring the image to a surface coated with a
6 second polymer; and

7 (c) fusing and fixing the image to the surface coating,
8 wherein the first and second polymer is an ionomer.

9 Preferably, the first polymer is comprises an ionomer,
10 more preferably the same ionomer as the second polymer.

11 There is further provided, in accordance with a
12 preferred embodiment of the invention, a toner particle
13 comprising:

14 a polymer; and

15 flakes of metal.

16 Preferably, the flakes which may be of gold or silver,
17 have a dimension greater than about 4 micrometers, more
18 preferably than 6 micrometers.

19 There is further provided, in accordance with a
20 preferred embodiment of the invention, a toner particle
21 comprising:

22 a polymer; and

23 a fluorescent material, preferably in the form of
24 particles having a size greater than 2 micrometers.

25 Preferably, the polymer in the above toner particles is
26 a low molecular weight ionomer.

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1 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

2 The invention will be more clearly understood from the
3 following description of preferred embodiments thereof in
4 conjunction with the following drawings which:

5 Fig. 1 is a simplified sectional illustration of
6 electrostatic imaging apparatus constructed and operative in
7 accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present
8 invention; and

9 Fig. 2 is a simplified enlarged sectional illustration
10 of the apparatus of Fig. 1.

11 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

12 Reference is now made to Figs. 1 and 2 which illustrate
13 a multi color electrostatic imaging system constructed and
14 operative in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the
15 present invention. As seen in Figs. 1 and 2 there is
16 provided an imaging sheet, preferably an organic
17 photoreceptor 12, typically mounted on a rotating drum 10.
18 Drum 10 is rotated about its axis by a motor or the like
19 (not shown), in the direction of arrow 18, past charging
20 apparatus 14, preferably a corotron, scorotron or roller
21 charger or other suitable charging apparatus as are known in
22 the art and which is adapted to charge the surface of sheet
23 photoreceptor 12. The image to be reproduced is focused by
24 an imager 16 upon the charged surface 12 at least partially
25 discharging the photoconductor in the areas struck by light,
26 thereby forming an electrostatic latent image. Thus, the
27 latent image normally includes image areas at a first
28 electrical potential and background areas at another
29 electrical potential.

30 A preferred photoreceptor sheet and preferred methods
31 of mounting it on drum 10 are described in a co-pending
32 application of Belinkov et al., IMAGING APPARATUS AND
33 PHOTORECEPTOR THEREFOR, filed September 7, 1994 assigned
34 serial number 08/301,775 and in corresponding applications in
35 other countries, the disclosures of which are incorporated
36 herein by reference. Alternatively, photoreceptor 12 may be

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1 deposited on the drum 10 and may form a continuous surface.
2 Furthermore, photoreceptor 12 may be a non-organic type
3 photoconductor based, for example, on a compound of
4 selenium.

5 Also associated with drum 10 and photoreceptor sheet
6 12, in a preferred embodiment of the invention, are a
7 multicolor liquid developer spray assembly 20, a developing
8 assembly 22, color specific cleaning blade assemblies 34, a
9 background cleaning station 24, an electrified squeegee 26,
10 a background discharge device 28, an intermediate transfer
11 member 30, cleaning apparatus 32, and, optionally, a
12 neutralizing lamp assembly 36. Developing assembly 22
13 preferably includes a development roller 38. Development
14 roller 38 is preferably spaced from photoreceptor 12
15 thereby forming a gap therebetween of typically 40 to 150
16 micrometers and is charged to an electrical potential
17 intermediate that of the image and background areas of the
18 image. Development roller 38 is thus operative, when
19 maintained at a suitable voltage, to apply an electric field
20 to aid development of the latent electrostatic image.

21 Development roller 38 typically rotates in the same
22 sense as drum 10 as indicated by arrow 40. This rotation
23 provides for the surface of sheet 12 and development roller
24 38 to have opposite velocities at the gap between them.

25 In accordance with a preferred embodiment of the
26 invention, an opaque white background image is initially
27 developed on the photoreceptor surface and transferred to an
28 intermediate transfer member 30. The background image is
29 heated to a temperature that causes the white toner
30 particles in the presence of carrier liquid to at least
31 partially coalesce, preferably into a cohesive film, i.e.,
32 the toner pigment is fixed in the layer in which it was
33 deposited so that mixing of different color pigments in
34 various layers is prevented. This is essential for the
35 achievement of good color quality and contrast in the final
36 composite image. Subsequent images in different colors are

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1 individually developed and sequentially transferred in
2 alignment with the previous image onto intermediate transfer
3 member 30, which is heated as before so that each color
4 forms a cohesive non-diffusive layer.

5 It should be noted that each of the layers is a viscous
6 liquid and that while heating does cause the layers to
7 coalesce, the balance between viscosity and surface tension
8 of the layers is apparently such that the individual layers
9 have only minimal mixing.

10 When all of the desired images have been transferred to
11 intermediate transfer member 30, the complete multi-color
12 image is transferred therefrom to substrate 72. Impression
13 roller 71 only produces operative engagement between
14 intermediate transfer member 30 and substrate 72 when
15 transfer of the composite image to substrate 72 takes place,
16 preferably with heat and pressure. Substrate 72 which is
17 preferably a transparent flexible polymer film is fed from a
18 feeder roller 77 and is taken up by take up roller 78. The
19 printing process when carried out as described produces a
20 high contrast high colored quality image.

21 Preferably, the motion of the polymer film is halted
22 during the accumulation of the layers on the intermediate
23 transfer member. Just prior to the transfer, the film is
24 accelerated to a velocity substantially equal to the surface
25 velocity of the intermediate transfer member, such that
26 there is substantially zero relative motion between them at
27 the time of contact. Furthermore, between transfers, the
28 film is preferably partially rewound so that, after the
29 acceleration, only a minimal blank space is left unprinted.

30 Multicolor liquid developer spray assembly 20, whose
31 operation and structure is described in detail in U.S.
32 Patent 5,117,263, the disclosure of which is incorporated
33 herein by reference, may be mounted on axis 42 to allow
34 assembly 20 to be pivoted in such a manner that a spray of
35 liquid toner containing electrically charged pigmented toner
36 particles can be directed either onto a portion of the

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1 development roller 38, a portion of the photoreceptor 12
2 or directly into a development region 44 between
3 photoreceptor 12 and development roller 38. Alternatively,
4 assembly 20 may be fixed. Preferably, the spray is directed
5 onto a portion of the development roller 38.

6 Color specific cleaning blade assemblies 34 are
7 operatively associated with developer roller 38 for separate
8 removal of residual amounts of each colored toner remaining
9 thereon after development. Each of blade assemblies 34 is
10 selectably brought into operative association with developer
11 roller 38 only when toner of a color corresponding thereto
12 is supplied to development region 44 by spray assembly 20.
13 The construction and operation of cleaning blade assemblies
14 is described in PCT Publication WO 90/14619 and in US patent
15 5,289,238, the disclosures of which are incorporated herein
16 by reference.

17 Each cleaning blade assembly 34 includes a toner
18 directing member 52 which serves to direct the toner
19 removed by the cleaning blade assemblies 34 from the
20 developer roller 38 to separate collection containers 54,
21 56, 58, 60, and 68 and for each color to prevent
22 contamination of the various developers by mixing of the
23 colors. The toner collected by the collection containers is
24 recycled to a corresponding toner reservoir (55, 57, 59, 61
25 and 63). And a final toner directing member 62 always
26 engages the developer roller 38 and the toner collected
27 thereat is supplied into collection container 64 and
28 thereafter to reservoir 65 via separator 66 which is
29 operative to separate relatively clean carrier liquid from
30 the various colored toner particles. The separator 66 may be
31 typically of the type described in U.S. Patent 4,985,732,
32 the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference.

33 In a preferred embodiment of the invention, as
34 described in PCT Publication WO 92/13297, the disclosure of
35 which is incorporated herein by reference, where the imaging
36 speed is very high, a background cleaning station 24

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1 typically including a reverse roller 46 and a wetting roller
2 48 is provided. Reverse roller 46 which rotates in a
3 direction indicated by arrow 50 is preferably electrically
4 biased to a potential intermediate that of the image and
5 background areas of photoconductive drum 10, but different
6 from that of the development roller. Reverse roller 46 is
7 preferably spaced apart from photoreceptor sheet 12 thereby
8 forming a gap therebetween which is typically 40 to 150
9 micrometers.

10 Wetting roller 48 is preferably partly immersed in a
11 fluid bath 47, which preferably contains carrier liquid
12 received from carrier liquid reservoir 65 via conduit 88.
13 Wetting roller 48, which preferably rotates in the same
14 sense as that of drum 10 and reverse roller 46, operates to
15 wet photoreceptor sheet 12 with non-pigmented carrier liquid
16 upstream of reverse roller 46. The liquid supplied by
17 wetting roller 48 replaces the liquid removed from drum 10
18 by development assembly 22, thus allowing the reverse
19 roller 46 to remove charged pigmented toner particles by
20 electrophoresis from the background areas of the latent
21 image. Excess fluid is removed from reverse roller 46 by a
22 liquid directing member 70 which continuously engages
23 reverse roller 46 to collect excess liquid containing toner
24 particles of various colors which is in turn supplied to
25 reservoir 65 via collection container 64 and separator 66.

26 Wetting roller 48 is preferably electrically biased to
27 a potential intermediate that of the image and background
28 areas of photoconductive drum 10, but different from that of
29 the development roller. This biasing of wetting roller 48
30 assists in removing toner particles from the background
31 areas of photoreceptor sheet 12. Wetting roller 48 is
32 preferably spaced apart from photoreceptor sheet 12 thereby
33 forming a gap therebetween which is typically 40 to 200
34 micrometers.

35 The apparatus embodied in reference numerals 46, 47, 48
36 and 70 is generally not required for low speed systems, but

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1 is preferably included in high speed systems.

2 Preferably, an electrically biased squeegee roller 26
3 is urged against the surface of sheet 12 and is operative to
4 remove liquid carrier from the background regions and to
5 compact the image and remove liquid carrier therefrom in the
6 image regions. Squeegee roller 26 is preferably formed of
7 resilient slightly conductive polymeric material as is well
8 known in the art, and is preferably charged to a potential
9 of several hundred to a few thousand volts with the same
10 polarity as the polarity of the charge on the toner
11 particles.

12 Discharge device 28 is operative to flood sheet 12 with
13 light which discharges the voltage remaining on sheet 12,
14 mainly to reduce electrical breakdown and improve transfer
15 of the image to intermediate transfer member 30. Operation
16 of such a device in a write black system is described in
17 U.S. Patent 5,280,326, the disclosure of which is
18 incorporated herein by reference.

19 Figs. 1 and 2 further show that multicolor toner spray
20 assembly 20 receives separate supplies of colored toner
21 typically from five different reservoirs 55, 57, 59, 61 and
22 63. Figure 1 shows five different colored toner reservoirs
23 55, 57, 59, 61 and 63, typically containing the colors
24 Yellow, Magenta, Cyan, black and white, respectively. In
25 addition, reservoir 65 contains relatively clean carrier
26 liquid whose operation was described. Pumps 90, 92, 94, 96
27 and 108, may be provided along respective supply conduits
28 98, 101, 103, 105, and 107, for providing a desired amount
29 of pressure to feed the colored toner to multicolor spray
30 assembly 20. Alternatively, multicolor toner spray assembly
31 20, which is preferably a three level spray assembly,
32 receives supplies of colored toner from up to six different
33 reservoirs (a sixth reservoir marked S is shown) which
34 allows for custom colored toners in addition to the standard
35 process colors, black and white.

36 Toners that can be used with the present invention are

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1 described in Example 1 of U.S. Patent 4,794,651, the
2 disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference or
3 variants thereof as are well known in the art. For colored
4 liquid developers, carbon black is replaced by color
5 pigments as is well known in the art. Other toners may
6 alternatively be employed, including liquid toners and, as
7 indicated above, including powder toners.

8 Other toners for use in the invention can be prepared
9 using the following method:

10 1) Solubilizing 1400 grams of Nucrel 925 (ethylene
11 copolymer by Dupont) and 1400 g of Isopar L (Exxon) are
12 thoroughly mixed in an oil heated Ross Double Planetary
13 Mixer at least 24 RPM for 1.5 hours, with the oil
14 temperature at 130° C. 1200 g of preheated Isopar L is added
15 and mixing is continued for an additional hour. The mixture
16 is cooled to 45° C, while stirring is continued over a
17 period of several hours, to form a viscous material.

18 2) Milling and Grinding 762 grams of the result of the
19 Solubilizing step are ground in a 1S attritor (Union Process
20 Inc. Akron Ohio), charged with 3/16" carbon steel balls at
21 250 RPM, together with 66.7 grams of Mogul L carbon black
22 (Cabot), 6.7 grams of BT 583D (blue pigment produced by
23 Cookson), 5 grams of aluminum stearate (Riedel Dehaen) and
24 an additional 1459.6 grams of Isopar L for eight hours at
25 30° C.

26 3) Continuation of Grinding 34.5 grams of ACumist A-12
27 (a micronised polyethylene wax produced by Allied Signal) is
28 added and grinding is continued for an additional 4 hours.
29 The resulting particles are fibrous particles have a
30 measured diameter in the range of 1-3 micrometers.

31 The resulting material is diluted with additional
32 Isopar L and Marcol 82 to give a working developer in which
33 the dry solids portion is about 1.7% and in which the
34 overall ratio of Isopar L to Marcol is between about 50:1
35 and 500:1, more preferably between about 100:1 and 200:1.
36 Charge director as described in US patent application

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1 07/915,291 (utilizing lecithin, BBP and ICIG3300B) and in WO
2 94/02887, in an amount approximately equal to 40 mg/gm of
3 solids in the final dispersion, is added to charge the toner
4 particles. Other charge directors and additional additives
5 as are known in the art may also be used.

6 The above described process produces a black toner.
7 Cyan, magenta and yellow toners can be produced by using a
8 different mix of materials for step 2). For Cyan toner, 822g
9 of the solubilized material, 21.33 grams each of BT 583D and
10 BT 788D pigments (Cookson), 1.73 grams of D1355DD pigment
11 (BASF), 7.59 grams of aluminum stearate and 1426 grams of
12 Isopar L are used in step 2. For Magenta toner, 810 grams of
13 solubilized material, 48.3 grams of Finess Red F2B, 6.81
14 grams of aluminum stearate and 1434.2 grams of Isopar L are
15 used in step 2. For yellow toner 810 grams of solubilized
16 material, 49.1 grams of D1355DD pigment, 6.9 grams of
17 aluminum stearate and 1423 grams of Isopar L are used in
18 step 2.

19 Other preferred liquid toners for use in the present
20 invention are prepared as follows: 300 grams of a
21 chargeable low molecular weight ionomer Aclyn 293A (made by
22 Allied Signal) were solubilized in 1500 grams of Isopar - L
23 with heating to 110°- 120°C while stirring. To form inks,
24 dispersed pigments or color particles are added to and mixed
25 with the hot solubilized polymer. The composition is
26 allowed to cool while stirring.

27 The following liquid toner inks were prepared in this
28 way: ,

29 TiO₂ BASED OPAQUE WHITE TONER INK

30 A preferred opaque white ink in accordance with the
31 present invention is prepared by adding 200 grams of finely
32 divided TiO₂ pigment, having an average diameter of about
33 0.5 micrometers to the solubilized polymer while stirring.
34 The mixture is allowed to cool and settle with continuous
35 stirring. Charge director, as described above or other
36 charged directors as known in the art, and additional Isopar

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1 L and MARCOL 82 carrier liquid are added to form a liquid
2 toner. The opaque white liquid toner so obtained is used,
3 as previously mentioned, to enhance the quality of color
4 images when it serves as a back layer for color contrast.
5 The median pigmented toner particle size in the toner is
6 4.81 micrometers.

7 An alternative preferred method for producing white
8 toner ink concentrate, in accordance with a preferred
9 embodiment of the invention comprises the steps of (1)
10 plasticizing 35% Nucrel 699 (ethylene-metacrylic acid
11 copolymer by DuPont) in Isopar L (EXXON) by heating the
12 materials in a Ross double planetary mixer to 150°C while
13 mixing the materials and allowing the mixture to cool while
14 mixing continues until the mixture is fully mixed and
15 homogeneous; (2) mixing 3071 grams of the mixture produced
16 by step (1) with 1075 grams of KRONOS 2310 titanium dioxide
17 (NL Chemicals) and 4454 grams of Isopar L in a Ross type LAB
18 ME high shear mixer until the new mixture is completely
19 homogeneous; and (3) grinding the mixture at about 56°C (the
20 temperature of the mixture without cooling) for 16 hours in
21 a SEECO M18 Vibratory Mill charged with 3/8" zirconia media.
22 The resultant toner has a median diameter of about 3
23 microns.

24 The material is charged and diluted as described above
25 and 3 micrometer micron particles of TEFLON M1200 are
26 optionally added to act as protective spacers against
27 abrasion for the final image.

28 Other inks are prepared in a manner similar to the
29 first method for producing white toner ink and provided the
30 following results:

31 GOLD TONER INK

32 Aclyn293A, (made by Allied Signal) 150 grams, and
33 Isopar-L, 800 grams, are heated with mixing in a glass
34 beaker, at a temperature of 110° - 120° C. 100 grams of 6-
35 10 micrometer gold flakes (made by SCHLENK) are slowly added
36 and mixing is continued for 5 minutes. The temperature is

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1 allowed to fall to 90° C.

2 The composition is mixed at high shear (ROSS HIGH
3 SHEAR MIXER) for 1 minute and cooled, while mixing, to room
4 temperature while mixing is continued at 250 RPM.

5 Final ink median particle size as measured by a
6 SCHIMADZU PARTICLE SIZE ANALYZER is 18.6 micrometers.

7 The ink was tested in an E-PRINT 1000 (using the single
8 final transfer mode described above and separate transfer of
9 individual colors to the final substrates) printer (INDIGO,
10 N.V.) giving metallic gold prints which are free of
11 background contamination. It should be noted that this
12 method of preparing gold ink (and the other inks described
13 below), without grinding, results in large reflective gold
14 particles being laid onto the substrate. While the flakes
15 are unaligned in the toner, when the toner is formed into a
16 thin layer during heating and fixing to the substrate, the
17 flakes selectively align themselves to give good specular
18 reflection.

19 SILVER INK

20 The materials used in the preparation are 300 grams
21 Aclyn293A (made by Allied Signal), 1500 grams Isopar-L and
22 100 Grams silver flakes 6-10 micrometers (made by SCHLENK).
23 The same procedure as for gold ink is used to obtain ink
24 with a median particle size of 8.2 micrometers.

25 The ink was tested in both printing modes, in the
26 printer giving metallic silver prints without background
27 contamination.

28 MAGNETIC INK

29 The materials used in the preparation are 20 grams
30 Aclyn293A (made by Allied Signal), 37 grams MO 4431 magnetic
31 oxide (made by ISK MAGNETICS) with a particle size of 8-10
32 micrometers and 180 grams Isopar-L. The same procedure as
33 for gold ink is used to obtain magnetic ink with a median
34 particle size of 9.08 micrometers as measured by SCHIMADZU
35 Particle Size Analyzer.

36 When the magnetic ink is deposited at a mass/area of

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1 0.26mg./sq.cm., the resultant layer has a magnetic signal
2 of 82% of standard as measured by a NMI apparatus marketed
3 by Checkmate Electronics, and an optical density of 1.5
4 (transmittance).

5 FLUORESCENT INK

6 The materials used in the preparation are 500 grams
7 Aclyn293A (made by Allied Signal), 333.3 grams fluorescent
8 pigment RC15 (made by RADIANT COLOR) having a median
9 particle size of 2.5 - 4.5 micrometers and 1500 grams
10 Isopar-L.

11 The resin is solubilized by the ISOPAR L in a ROSS
12 DOUBLE PLANETARY MIXER heated at 110° C.

13 The pigment is predispersed and wetted by using a warm
14 solution of Aclyn293A, then adding the predispersed pigment
15 gradually into the double planetary mixer. The material is
16 mixed for about 10 minutes, while heating is maintained, to
17 obtain a homogeneous composition. Heating is stopped and
18 mixing is continued for an additional 1.5 hours to obtain
19 toner concentrate with a particle size of 3.82 micrometers.
20 Working dispersions are prepared using a high shear mixer.

21 Intermediate transfer member 30 may be any suitable
22 intermediate transfer member having a multilayered transfer
23 portion such as those described below or in US Patents
24 5,089,856 or 5,047,808 or in U.S. Patent application
25 08/371,117, filed January 11, 1995 and entitled IMAGING
26 APPARATUS AND INTERMEDIATE TRANSFER BLANKET THEREFOR (and in
27 corresponding applications in other countries), the
28 disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference.
29 Member 30 is maintained at a suitable voltage and
30 temperature for electrostatic transfer of the image thereto
31 from the image bearing surface. Intermediate transfer member
32 30 is preferably associated with a pressure roller 71 for
33 transfer of the image onto a final substrate 72, preferably
34 by heat and pressure. Additionally, pressure roller 71 may
35 be electrified to overcome the voltage on the intermediate
36 transfer member or to provide an additional electric field

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1 to aid transfer of the electrified toner to the substrate.

2 Cleaning apparatus 32 is operative to scrub clean the
3 surface of photoreceptor 12 and preferably includes a
4 cleaning roller 74, a sprayer 76 to spray a non- polar
5 cleaning liquid to assist in the scrubbing process and a
6 wiper blade 78 to complete the cleaning of the
7 photoconductive surface. Cleaning roller 74, which may be
8 formed of any synthetic resin known in the art, for this
9 purpose is driven in the same sense as drum 10 as indicated
10 by arrow 80, such that the surface of the roller scrubs the
11 surface of the photoreceptor. Any residual charge left on
12 the surface of photoreceptor sheet 12 may be removed by
13 flooding the photoconductive surface with light from
14 optional neutralizing lamp assembly 36, which may not be
15 required in practice.

16 While the invention has been described with respect to
17 printing on the inside of clear wrapping material (i.e.,
18 with the opaque layer furthest from the substrate), in an
19 alternative preferred embodiment of the invention, the layer
20 closest to the substrate is opaque. Such images are designed
21 to be viewed from the side of the substrate on which the
22 image is printed. For this embodiment of the invention, the
23 white layer will be formed on the imaging surface and
24 transferred to the intermediate transfer member after the
25 other, colored layers.

26 In addition to the details of the printing processes
27 given above, additional details of printing processes and
28 operates are given in the patents and publications
29 incorporated herein by reference.

30 It has been found that the above mentioned toners and
31 other toners based on similar materials and high molecular
32 weight ionomers such as surllyns adhere well to the
33 substrates used in food packaging. This adhesion is found to
34 be especially good when the toner is based on an ionomer or
35 ethylene polymer or copolymer and the polymer film is
36 coated by a similar material. Such coatings, particularly

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1 Surlyn 1601 ionomer, EVA (particularly low molecular weight
2 EVA) and ethylene acrylic acid are often provided on the
3 inner surface of food wrappings to give improved properties
4 such as sealability, adhesiveness and food compatibility.

5 It should be understood that the invention is not
6 limited to the specific type of image forming system used
7 and the present invention is also useful with any suitable
8 imaging system which forms a liquid toner image on an image
9 forming surface and, the specific details given above for
10 the image forming system are included as part of a best mode
11 of carrying out the invention, however, many aspects of the
12 invention are applicable to a wide range of systems as known
13 in the art for electrostatic printing and copying.

14 It will be appreciated by persons skilled in the art
15 that the present invention is not limited by the description
16 and example provided hereinabove. Rather, the scope of this
17 invention is defined only by the claims which follow:

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CLAIMS

1. A printing process comprising:
 - (a) forming a liquid toner image comprising toner particles based on a first polymer and a carrier liquid, on an imaging surface;
 - (b) transferring the image to a surface coated with a second polymer; and
 - (c) fusing and fixing the image to the surface coating, wherein the second polymer is either an ionomer or an ethylene vinyl acetate polymer.
2. A process according to claim 1 wherein the first polymer is an ionomer.
3. A process according to claim 2 wherein the first polymer is a high molecular weight ionomer.
4. A process according to claim 2 wherein the first polymer is a low molecular weight ionomer.
5. A process according to claim 1 wherein the first polymer is ethylene vinyl acetate.
6. A process according to claim 1 wherein the polymer is a ethylene copolymer.
7. A process according to claim 1 wherein the polymer is a ethylene terpolymer.
8. A process according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the second polymer is an ionomer.
9. A process according to claim 8, wherein the second polymer is a high molecular weight ionomer.
10. A process according to claim 8, wherein the second polymer is a low molecular weight ionomer.
11. A process according to claim 8 wherein the second polymer is ethylene vinyl acetate.
12. A process according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the surface is the surface of a polypropylene film.
13. A process according to any of claims 1-11, wherein the surface is the surface of a polyethylene film.

14. A printing process comprising:
 - (a) forming a liquid toner image comprising toner particles based on a first polymer and a carrier liquid, on an imaging surface;
 - (b) transferring the image to a surface coated with a second polymer; and
 - (c) fusing and fixing the image to the surface coating, wherein the first polymer and the second polymer are both ionomers.
15. A process according to claim 14 wherein the first ionomer is of a low molecular weight.
16. A process according to claim 14 wherein the first ionomer is of a high molecular weight.
17. A process according to any of claims 14-16, wherein the second ionomer is of a low molecular weight.
18. A process according to any of claims 14-16 wherein the second ionomer is of a high molecular weight.
19. A process according to any of claims 14-18 wherein the second surface is a polypropylene film.
20. A process according to any of claims 14-18 wherein the second surface is a polyethylene film.
21. A process according to any of the preceding claims wherein the imaging surface is the surface of a photoreceptor.