Claims:

1. Apparatus comprising:

a can body conveying mechanism for conveying can bodies to a printing zone;

a blanket wheel comprising a plurality of blanket segments and, removably affixed to each blanket segment, a flexible blanket having a printing surface, the blanket wheel being configured to bring blanket printing surfaces into contact with can bodies within said printing zone; and

a plurality of ink stations each comprising a printing plate configured to contact the printing surfaces of passing blankets in order to impart a primary ink image to the printing surfaces, such that a composite ink image is formed on each blanket printing surface and is printed onto a can body upon contact of the blanket printing surface and the can body within the printing zone,

wherein, each blanket comprises a secondary image within a surrounding area of lower or reduced height allowing the secondary image to be printed on a can body as a positive image, and wherein the printing plates are configured such that said surrounding area lies wholly within a region of the primary ink image that is unprinted onto the blanket.

2. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein:

each blanket has a surface height variation across its printing surface representing the secondary image to be transferred to can bodies with which the blanket comes into contact;

said blankets or at least a layer of said blankets presenting the printing surface are removably attached to respective blanket segments and each blanket and/or blanket segment is provided with alignment features in order to allow the blankets and blanket segments to be correctly aligned such that, for each blanket printing surface, a composite ink image is correctly aligned with the secondary image; and

said alignment features comprising printed or scored features on the printing surface of each blanket.

3. An apparatus according to claim 2 further comprising an alignment device, the alignment device being removably attachable to a blanket segment of the plurality of blanket segments, the alignment device further comprising an alignment surface against which a blanket can be positioned in order to allow the blankets and blanket

segments to be correctly aligned such that, for each blanket printing surface, a composite ink image is correctly aligned with a secondary image.

4. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said alignment surface is single edged such that the blanket is supported at its trailing edge and a machine side of the blanket segment, flush fit to the trailing edge and with its lateral position determined by a profiled bar of the alignment device.

5. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said alignment surface is double edged such that the blanket is supported at its trailing edge and the machine side of the segment, flush fit to both edges.

6. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said alignment device is "zero edge" and the blanket is supported away from its trailing edge and the machine side of the segment, with both timing and lateral position of the blanket being determined by profiled “bars/stops” of the alignment device.

7. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said alignment device comprises scribe lines provided on both the blanket and the blanket segment so as to indicate the correct position.

8. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said alignment device comprises location pins in low relief, with corresponding punch holes in an adhesive and webbing layer of the blanket.

9. An apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said alignment device comprises a non-contact alignment device.

10. An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the blankets each comprise a section of a continuous blanket belt that is secured around the periphery of the blanket wheel, on top of the blanket segments.

11. A method of operating the apparatus of any one of the preceding claims and comprising applying ink to the printing plates and imparting the primary ink images to the blanket printing surfaces and ink to the secondary image, such that, for each

blanket, said surrounding area lies wholly within an unprinted region of the primary ink image.