inspiring stories #2

Interview with
Eleonora Delia

PRINTING A BETTER FUTURE

Where performance meets purpose

A career shaped by curiosity

In this interview with **Eleonora Delia Product Manager Digital Inks**, what emerges first is not a job title, but a mindset. A scientist by training, with a background in industrial biotechnology, she has grown within Lamberti across roles and disciplines, moving from microbiology to digital inks and, more recently, into product management. "*I've been with Lamberti for 14 years. I moved from microbiology to biotechnology, then into digital inks, and this year I also became a product manager.*"

What drives her is not linear progression, but multiplicity. "*I don't get bored, I like being active on many fronts and seeing how all these things intersect.*"

This ability to connect domains, people and perspectives becomes a recurring thread. Sustainability, in her work, is not a separate function. It is something that emerges precisely from this intersection.

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Sustainability starts with how you work

For Eleonora, sustainability is not just about what is produced, but how. *“The way we work is already sustainable”*, she says. Her focus is on water-based pigment inks for digital printing, a technology that represents a significant shift from traditional textile printing methods. Compared to analogue processes, digital printing reduces energy use, requires less space, and most importantly, dramatically cuts water consumption.

But the real breakthrough lies in pigment technology versus reactive or acid dyes. Pigment printing eliminates the need for post-print washing, a step that traditionally consumes large quantities of water and generates wastewater requiring treatment. “*In printing, there is very little that is more sustainable than that. It has been estimated that pigment printing can lead to water savings of around 90%*” she notes. The difference is not marginal, it is structural. This shift alone redefines the environmental footprint of an entire industry. And yet, it is only part of the story.

The chemistry behind performance

At the heart of this transformation lies a deceptively simple idea: making particles stick. Pigments, unlike other dyes, do not chemically bond to fibres. They require a binder, a polymer that anchors them to the textile. “*The binder is the core of the process. We study resins that can create this bond and make the product perform*”, says Eleonora.

Here, sustainability meets a fundamental constraint. Customers demand performance first: “*We need to work much harder to make something that is both sustainable and performs well.*” Bio-based and biodegradable solutions exist, but the market is still evolving. “*We do receive requests, and they are increasing, but the market is still a bit immature. For now, the customer is still focused on performance.*”

From formulation to real-world impact

This balance becomes particularly evident in product development. Eleonora shares one particular example: “*The original formulation of a textile pre-treatment product delivered strong performance but included a raw material subject to ADR transport restrictions. This made logistics more complex, requiring specialised handling and increasing costs. We didn’t stop at replacing one raw material, we decided to modify the entire formulation, essentially creating a new product,*” Eleonora explains.

The result, **Lamberti Jet P 70**, maintains performance while eliminating those constraints, simplifying transport and making the product easier to manage across the supply chain. Sustainability, here, is not only about environmental impact, but also about safety, efficiency and usability.