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[Taking designs to infinity, and beyond](#)

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by *Vivian Cohen-Leisorek*

Last summer, the Extraordinary Campaign for Diet Coca-Cola put two million different bottles, each with a unique design, on supermarket shelves and restaurants. It was remarkable to witness the integration of digital processes into a very tight supply chain, but particularly, to experience how we're pushing the boundaries in the design of massive quantities of consumer products.



The Diet Coke Extraordinary Collection - two million unique bottles

The new HP SmartStream Mosaic feature enables thousands, hundreds of thousands, even millions of designs to be created from a surprisingly limited number of original designs. This might sound like an exaggeration, but believe me, it's anything but.

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If you think only the huge brands can achieve design variation on a truly massive scale, it's time to think again. . Dozens of HP Indigo customers around the world are using Mosaic to create a unique user experience, from [unique Labeks & Labeling Magazine covers](#) to cookies, coffee tins, promotional items, and more.

And so can you.



Unique covers for February issue of Labels & Labeling Magazine created with Mosaic technology

So, what do you need to be able to create your own endless variety of designs? Let's start with the basics: What, Who, Why and How.

What is Mosaic?

HP SmartStream Mosaic is a patent-pending dynamic personalization application that's available free of charge as a new feature in [HP SmartStream Designer](#). It helps users automatically generate a high number (as I said – hundreds, thousands, millions) of unique graphics for embedding into a variable data job, all from a fixed number of base patterns.

Who is it for?

Pretty much anyone. Well, any company that uses HP SmartStream creation and submission solutions and an HP Indigo digital press. If that's you, or you're a brand or agency that works with a print service provider who fits the bill, then infinite designs are in your reach.

No need for an army of designers. You don't even need a lot of time, because once you've got your base patterns, the software handles all the processing and automatically turns those base patterns into an exponential variety of unique designs.

Why use it?

Mosaic enables one-of-a-kind products, in turn creating a memorable customer experience. Consider the "wow!" factor of customers each getting their own, unique product.

How does it work?

Mosaic uses a vector PDF file as input. It then generates a large number of variations by randomly transforming the file, using scaling, transposition, and rotation. The results can then be used as the variable image assets in the graphic design of VDP jobs.

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Output files from HP Mosaic can be in PDF format (ideal for hundreds of unique designs) or as template for [HP SmartStream Composer](#) (if you want to generate many thousands of records).



*A branded seed design (PDF source file)
and the HP SmartStream Mosaic output*

How to get HP Mosaic

HP Mosaic is included free in the following software versions for Windows, so all you have to do is upgrade or purchase one of these:

- HP SmartStream Designer 6.3 for Adobe InDesign CS6
- HP SmartStream Designer 10.1 for Adobe InDesign CC 2014 and later

How to get started

Working with HP Mosaic is very simple, but you do need to be familiar with HP SmartStream Designer software. If you've got even a little experience, you're good to go.

Start by creating a vector PDF file with square dimensions using Adobe Illustrator or similar software that can output a vector PDF. The How-To Guide provided with the HP Mosaic application provides step-by-step instructions, so you'll find everything you need to know right there.

Bonus tip: The file's design should be complex, with a lot of detail and color. The more complex and colorful the original file, the better the results.

Ready. Set. Go to infinite designs

Seeing the amazing designs that the first few HP Mosaic users have generated has made me curious to see more.

So, here's my challenge to you: Start playing with HP Mosaic, and then, when you're ready, send me some images of your creations. Periodically, I'll highlight some designs here on this blog.

If you don't yet have a compatible version of HP SmartStream Designer, start by learning about it, [here](#).

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