

SES-imagotag

Props Global Growth of
Smart Electronic Shelf Labels

Jabil's Product Innovation and Manufacturing
Excellence Drive Worldwide Momentum



ses imagotag VUSION CASE STUDY

- **Company:** SES-imagotag
- **Industry:** Electronic Shelf Labels
- **Country:** France
- **Employees:** 350+
- **Websites:** ses-imagotag.com



CHALLENGES

- Mission-critical ESL technology necessitated the highest levels of product reliability and quality.
- Flexible production was required to meet rapid product ramps and tight timetables.
- Global manufacturing footprint needed to keep pace with worldwide momentum.

SOLUTIONS

- Jabil's retail experience brought deep and broad domain expertise to improve efficiencies and economics.
- Jabil's workcell model provided a dedicated team and process configured to SES-imagotag's exacting specifications.
- Jabil's supply chain orchestration delivered much needed relief to supply constraints through alternative sourcing and expedited component delivery.
- Jabil's investments in automation support accelerated production and testing needs.

BENEFITS

- Shared commitment to quality enabled the team to achieve shared zero defect goals.
- Expedited component deliveries cut lead times in half.
- Collaboration on quality testing and manufacturing automation fuel significant momentum in Asian and U.S. markets.



For more than 25 years as a pioneer in Electronic Shelf Labels (ESL), SES-imagotag has been pushing the boundaries of in-store digitalization around the globe and leading the way in dynamic pricing technologies with its latest VUSION retail IoT cloud platform.

Brick and mortar retailers face unprecedented competitive pressures from online channels, so it's critical they accelerate their digitalization to deliver customers with an unparalleled omnichannel experience. SES-imagotag's industry-leading solution encompasses the most advanced ESL technology, including ultra-low power IoT communication infrastructure, active Near-Field Communications (NFC), ultra-highspeed data transfer and LED-flashing computer vision.

According to Thierry Gadou, Group Chairman and CEO of SES-imagotag, the company's retail roots are firmly planted in building better bridges to the digital world. "ESL is the backbone technology for in-store digitization," he explains. "It automates pricing and product information displays while enabling other critical functions, including replenishment, planogram management and marketing at the shelf level."

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INNOVATION DNA

As the ESL inventor and market leader, SES-imagotag has deployed hundreds of millions of electronic labels for 200+ customers in nearly 20,000 retail outlets in more than 60 countries. The company continually pushes the technology envelope to power breakthroughs in functionality, quality and economics. The consistent results enable retailers to become more automated and data driven, as well as better connected to suppliers and consumers.

"Innovation is in our DNA, which is what keeps us at the top of the retail sector," adds Gadou. A constant drumbeat of innovation fuels the company's Offline to Online (O2O) strategy to empower true omnichannel convergence for retailers around the world. An overarching global perspective drives growth and collaboration.

To that end, SES-imagotag seeks partners who share its world view, backed by expertise that spans the globe. "We work with some of the biggest retailers in the world, so it's critical to find partners with a global footprint," says Christian Weissensteiner, SVP, Operations/Manufacturing Services for SES-imagotag. "This ensures we keep pace with future growth while also meeting customer demands for regional production."



SETTING QUALITY STANDARDS

SES-imagotag is also known throughout the industry for setting the highest quality standards, not only in product design but also across the entire production process. "Electronic shelf labels must work flawlessly over the full product lifetime, as a stoppage or failure could have disastrous consequences for a customer," says Erich Rohrhofer, Head of Production and Quality for SES-imagotag. "Continual improvement in production quality processes are mandatory for everyone to be successful."

Rapid product development and delivery are essential success factors as retailers grapple with constant competitive and cost pressures. As a result, SES-imagotag often accelerates product ramps, even when high levels of customization are required. "Usually we only have a very small time slot between the introduction of new products and rollout on the customer side," Rohrhofer adds. "When you're operating on a very tight schedule, you must depend on a highly skilled and powerful team to carry out the right steps and solve problems quickly and effectively."

To assist with growing demand for its innovative ESL solutions, SES-imagotag sought a technologically advanced manufacturer with a global footprint and a proven track record of retail industry success. "Our mission-critical product is quite sophisticated to manufacture," Gadou says. "Only a few companies could really meet our rigorous demands for reliability, quality and cost."

SES-imagotag was impressed by Jabil's global footprint, stringent quality processes and ability to accommodate large-volume quantities in tight timeframes. Additionally, the Jabil Engineered Solutions Group retail team brought deep domain expertise, bolstered by a strong understanding of ESL use cases, to help drive more cost-effective and efficient solutions for SES-imagotag and its customers. "We needed a flexible production environment that supports rapid scaling in reaction to short-notice production peaks or changes," says Weissensteiner.

Another major differentiator for Jabil is its workcell model, which dedicates a cohesive team of engineering, technology, manufacturing, supply chain and quality experts to a single customer's business. For SES-imagotag, the team ensured the most flexible configuration to scale fast while shifting the supply chain as needed to accommodate increasingly tight schedules.

Ramping up in less than four weeks, Jabil quickly came up-to-speed to support SES-imagotag's VUSION product line, the first ESL solution built upon a cloud-based IoT platform that leverages data from digital labels and computer vision to give retailers a quantum leap in operational improvements. "Jabil has a very strict and stable process, and the team constantly analyzes and modifies manufacturing processes to produce even better results," says Rohrhofer. "That's a huge strength of Jabil."

The Jabil team garners high marks from SES-imagotag as the latest test equipment is used to confirm product reliability and quality. "The Jabil testing team supports in the best way possible," Rohrhofer adds.

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SUPPLY CHAIN ORCHESTRATION

To help SES-imagotag fully realize its product innovation vision, Jabil optimized production in Vietnam with an option to scale manufacturing anywhere in the world. Expedited access to a vast supply chain ensured that materials could be moved on time and delivered where needed, even under extremely tight timeframes and production peaks.

A major benefit of working with Jabil has been the ability to keep production lines running smoothly, especially when the entire electronics industry has been hampered by severe supply constraints. "A year ago, we faced some major component shortages," Weissensteiner recalls. "We relied on Jabil to find alternative sources based on good working relationships with other suppliers and distributors. We bridged some very tight situations without impacting production."

Jabil's ability to navigate turbulent supply chain conditions continues to ensure rapid access to the best possible components at the lowest possible prices. Expedited component delivery is essential for meeting ever-shrinking production timelines. "Standard lead times can change dramatically, and we've had lots of success stories where Jabil cut lead times in half," notes Weissensteiner.

In some cases, alternative suppliers were brought in to expedite production. In other cases, Jabil supply chain and production teams worked long hours to reduce the schedule and meet customer demands. "Jabil is a business partner on every level," Weissensteiner adds. "We appreciate their proactive approach in supporting our cost commitments, quality improvements and surge of alternative sourcing demands."

FUTURE FORECAST

Poised for significant business growth, SES-imagotag is looking for Jabil to assist as the company makes major inroads with retailers throughout Asia and the United States. A major focus on manufacturing automation across production and testing environments will enable SES-imagotag to meet a steady stream of high-volume demands.

According to Gadou, many of the world's largest retailers rank ESL as one of their top three investment priorities for the next five years. "What's so exciting about our partnership with Jabil is how well it supports our growth story," he says. "Even though we have 25 years behind us, it's actually only the beginning of this major retail transformation—and we love that."

A concerted team effort to ensure unparalleled product quality will be reinforced with Jabil spearheading product reliability testing using the latest climatic chamber testing. The result will be full assurance of long-term product reliability and quality across different retail environments. A shared culture of innovation and commitment to quality underpins this manufacturing partnership.

As a testament to their close relationship, SES-imagotag recently recognized Jabil with an award commemorating a major production milestone. "It's really amazing what we've achieved together as a team," concludes Weissensteiner. "In the last 16 months, we've produced 10 million products with zero defects. I'm really looking forward to the next 10 million pieces in even less time, which reinforces our continued success with Jabil."

Jabil (NYSE: JBL) is a manufacturing solutions provider that delivers comprehensive design, manufacturing, supply chain and product management services. Leveraging the power of over 200,000 people across 100 sites strategically located around the world, Jabil simplifies complexity and delivers value in a broad range of industries, enabling innovation, growth and customer success. For more information, visit jabil.com.