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## Saddle Stitcher Market Slowly Recovering

**Following a lean stretch, the market is again making increased investments in saddle stitchers. What is the story behind this development?**

The economy in most countries is now more or less humming along. In Japan, one of the first countries to slide into the crisis, the economy did grow for eight quarters in a row. An especially large number of new saddle stitchers were sold there throughout the last two years. By the way, this success has been verified at the IGAS (International Graphic Arts Show) that took place [in July in Tokyo](#). During the six days lasting event, Muller Martini Japan was able to triple the number of its Primera MC projects – a trend that can also be seen on other continents. I think it's a very positive sign that we saw sales not only in individual countries but around the world and in a wide variety of countries.

### **Investment Backlog**

The investment backlog that has persisted among our saddle stitcher customers for years finally seems to be slowly loosening up. This was due to the sharp price pressure that our customers faced – and they continue to feel this pressure. They made calculations based on the 1,000-unit price they could charge for their end products. And in some countries, this is less than EUR 10. So it is difficult to justify investments and customers have held off making them. Many have skipped several investment cycles. For example, there are more than 1,000 saddle stitchers on the market in Germany with an average age of an incredible 25 years.



»The Primera MC is a valuable investment for our business.«

Marcus Partridge, Group Bindery Manager at UK firm Stephens & George Print Group

### New Technology Is Required

On the one hand, this demonstrates the top-quality and robust design of the Muller Martini machines. But customers are now beginning to see that their old machines no longer offer the same level of performance and they do not have the requisite automation for, among other things, quick changeover times for smaller print runs or a reduction in staff costs.

“For us, the user-friendly servo technology was the decisive factor behind our investment in a Primera MC saddle stitcher,” explains Markus Partridge, Group Bindery Manager at UK firm Stephens & George Print Group “Since the initial purchase, we have boosted our saddle stitching productivity by 20%.”



### More output from the printing presses

Another aspect is the increased output of modern printing presses. Older saddle stitchers are simply no longer able to handle the amount of paper efficiently. Hannes Sandler, Managing Director of Sandler Print & Packaging, who has seen this trend at his company, says “It’s difficult today to set prices profitably for stitching alone. And without high-performance saddle stitchers, it isn’t possible to exploit the capacity of modern print presses. If the production chain as a whole isn’t precisely coordinated, then you have problems.”

And with respect to technology, workflows and networking are of course becoming increasingly important. For example, in Italy our customers receive government support if their new investments meet Industry 4.0 criteria. We are well positioned here with our trailblazing saddle stitchers.

### To what extent is the use of these machines an issue for digital printing?

The idea that saddle stitchers can be used for digital applications too is now well known throughout the world, but it is only slowly being reflected in investment figures in individual countries. For example, they have long been used for this purpose in the US. This is a good reason for our customers to invest in a new Muller Martini saddle stitcher. Because the machine can also process digital products at any time, customers will be prepared for future developments, ensuring a high level of investment protection.



Learn more about digital saddle stitchers!



### Fit for the market

It is widely known that we offer a broad product range and our customers rate this as very positive. However, depending on the customer's needs, this may mean a higher or lower level of investment. For this reason, we added the Primera MC Standard to our product portfolio, as it represents a cost-effective basic machine.



### The Primera MC Standard configuration

The Primera MC Standard saddle stitcher has six flat pile feeders and a single folder feeder. In today's market, with the number of short runs increasing, being able to quickly set up new jobs is crucial. The saddle stitcher also displays its strengths when it comes to product diversity (thicknesses up to 13 mm/size ranges from well below A6 to well over A3), making it a very flexible machine. In a highly competitive market environment, the Primera MC Standard helps graphics arts businesses to strengthen their position.

Which [saddle stitchers](#) are a good fit for your business? Contact us for a non-binding advisory consultation or to learn more about our offering.

Your  
Dragan Volic  
Product Manager Saddle Stitching  
Müller Martini AG

