

High-Volume Printing Company Commits to Expansion of Print Finishing



In order to optimize end-to-end quality assurance and timely delivery, Fr. Ant. Niedermayr GmbH & Co KG in the Bavarian city of Regensburg is now using a Primera 160 saddle stitcher from Muller Martini for inserts and catalogs printed in long runs.

► There can be no firmer commitment to print than when a company head like Johannes Helmberger, the sixth generation of the family to lead the business which was established in 1801, says proudly: "Over the past eight years, we've invested more than EUR 50 million here in Regensburg in the expansion of our production site and in new machines, and we'll continue to invest in our company in the coming years. Our investment decisions are always

based on our expectations for the future, or we wouldn't be where we are today!"

400 Tons of Paper Per Day

While Helmberger continues to believe in the print medium and is convinced that inserts and catalogs will secure their position in the communications mix, the Managing Partner is also aware that the path to success in the future will involve an even greater degree of automation of the various pro-

duction steps from pre-press to delivery. He backs up his theory with further impressive figures.

"We print up to 400 tons of paper on peak days using three web printing presses and a sheet-fed printing press. Our output per employee has increased 40-fold in the course of a quarter of a century, and 30-fold over the past eight years alone. In the same period, the turnover per employee only increased ten-fold, however, which goes to show how fierce competition has become. That's why we're pursuing a clear strategy of relying on highly automated processes in order to remain competitive."

All Production Brought In House

The fact that state-of-the-art print finishing systems today are highly automated is one of the reasons why Fr. Ant. Niedermayr invested in a Muller Martin Primera 160 saddle stitcher with a folder feeder, six flat

pile feeders, a card gluer, a stream feeder, a Robusto compensating stacker and a palletizer, explains Helmberger.

The second reason why the company chose the new Primera 160 to replace a saddle stitcher 300 last summer is that “the print finishing service providers to which we previously outsourced saddle stitching are continuing to undergo a consolidation process,” says Helmberger. “That’s why we now stitch all products that we print in house, to optimize end-to-end quality assurance and timely delivery.”

Runs of Millions

Up-to-date inserts in A4 and A5 format for brick-and-mortar commerce and brochures, some with runs of millions, are produced using the new Primera 160. Fr. Ant. Niedermayr, which employs 100 people in two shifts for printing and print finishing and 65 people in the non-print segment, also produces catalogs for various industries with runs ranging from 100,000 to 600,000 copies. Catalogs with up to 160 pages are saddle stitched, while products which may have up to 1,600 pages are perfect bound and, like hardcover books, pro-

duced at partner companies. Owing to the large runs, Fr. Ant. Niedermayr regularly runs the saddle stitcher at its limit of 16,000 cycles per hour. “We’re very satisfied with the high performance of the Primera 160,” says Helmberger, taking stock of the first months of operation. The company head also speaks highly positively of the operation of the machine (“simply sensational – our machine operators quickly got the hang of it at a high level”) and the quality of end products (“after all it’s a machine from Muller Martini”).

Important Interconnection

Fr. Ant. Niedermayr attaches just as much importance to the “new media” segment, for which it has its own agency (with 40 creative employees for ideas and concepts), photo studio, Internet and film as to print finishing. Helmberger explains that this business segment, which is gaining in importance, has many positive effects on the print sector. “A high degree of linkage between the different media will become more and more important. That means we can serve our customers, who are mainly based in south Germany and the surround-

ing area, as a general contractor in fields ranging from video productions to store fittings through to various sales channels.”

Since pre-press is in house, Fr. Ant. Niedermayr can react quickly just ahead of printing. A typical case of that being necessary are the prices in brochures, which are often adjusted at short notice by wholesale chains. “That’s why the inserts printed by us are the most up to date,” underlines Helmberger. ◀

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1 Johannes Helmberger (left), Managing Partner of Fr. Ant. Niedermayr in Regensburg: “We’re pursuing a clear strategy of relying on highly automated processes in order to remain competitive.” Center: Michael Kretschmann (Head of Print Finishing). Right: Frank Skorna (Area Sales Manager at Muller Martini Germany).

2 The new Primera 160 saddle stitcher regularly produces at its limit of 16,000 cycles per hour at Fr. Ant. Niedermayr.

3 In order to achieve high production speeds, the signatures are fed to the Primera 160 using a stream feeder.

4 The high-performance Robusto compensating stacker, which ensures flawless cross-stacked or layered bundles, contributes significantly to the high productivity of the new Primera 160 line.