

Press release

Le Figaro grows its business thanks to waterless printing and Toray MX10 plates

The French daily newspaper Le Figaro looks back at a strategy implemented seven years ago: converting its production facilities to waterless printing with Toray plates. The move improved the newspaper print quality and opened up new business opportunities in commercial printing.

Prostějov/Czech Republic, July 14, 2016 - Toray Industries Inc., a leading manufacturer of waterless offset plate technology today reported that Le Figaro, one of France's leading national daily newspapers has grown its printing business substantially, despite a challenging market environment, thanks to a forward thinking investment strategy involving Toray waterless plates.

In 2009, the Group made a €80 million investment in a new printing facility in Tremblay, near Paris. Adequately named L'Imprimerie (the print room), the new plant serves a double purpose: producing the newspaper for the northern half of the country, as well as developing new business in commercial printing. "Investing in equipment that would only run for four hours a day just didn't make financial sense, says Gilles Déchamps, operations director at L'Imprimerie. We wanted to be in a position to use our facility to widen our scope and diversify into magazine printing".

Implementing waterless offset

To implement its strategy, Le Figaro required equipment that offers the high level of quality required for commercial printing, with no tradeoff on the level of productivity needed for newspaper printing. In March 2009, two KBA Cortina triple width units (74 inches / 1890 mm) were installed. L'imprimerie originally selected Toray MX7 plates and later became one of France's early adopters of MX10 plates in 2014.

"Our waterless printing configuration allows us to produce 80.000 copies per hour of the newspaper, or to double our production rate on lower pagination jobs at 160.000

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copies per hour, explains Gilles Déchamps. So we have all the throughput we need for our newspaper activities”.

Clear benefits

At the same time, waterless printing with Toray MX10 plates offers a larger colour space, as well as higher screen resolutions, useful for commercial printing. "With conventional coldset web offset printing, we could typically print a maximum line screen of 100 lpi, said Gilles Déchamps. Today, we print line screens of up to 177 lpi. This is a major benefit, particularly in the commercial segment, where we can now reliably compete with commercial heatset offset printers". This has also proven to be a benefit for newspaper printing, as higher print quality, with finer and sharper color images, was precisely what Le Figaro's advertisers were asking for.

Other benefits include shorter makeready times (getting ready to run takes approximately 3 minutes), reduced paper tear and limited environmental impact. "Both our prepress and print room specialists enjoyed a very fast learning curve, thanks to the MX10's easy and problem free handling, said Gilles Déchamps. Waterless printing with Toray plates has turned out to be a winning combination for us and has met our expectations fully”.

A successful strategy

Seven years later, Le Figaro's strategy has clearly proven its case. L'Imprimerie prints Le Figaro (200.000 to 300.000 daily copies), as well as Le Monde (200.000 to 300.000 daily copies), Les Echos (80.000 to 120.000 daily copies) and Le Midi Olympique (28.000 weekly copies). "We have grown our newspaper printing activities by a factor of 2.5 since 2009” underscores Gilles Déchamps.

As for commercial printing, L'Imprimerie attracted new customers, generating additional business in the weekly and monthly market segments, with an average of 80.000 magazine copies printed every day. "Overall, we are highly satisfied with our investment, says Gilles Déchamps. In particular, the Toray MX10 plate improved its lifespan on the press by 30% over the MX7 generation. Another confirmation that we made the right move to go waterless with Toray”.

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Image captions

Image 1

"By switching from MX7 to MX10 plates, we saw our print runs grow from 70.000 copies to 100.000 copies with one same plate" says Gilles Déchamps, operations director at L'Imprimerie.

Image 2

Implementing the MX10 plates was quick and hassle free. Calibrating the CTP units and in-line developers took no more than half a day. There was no learning curve for the print room operators.

Image 3

Le Figaro's strategy produced very positive results. L'Imprimerie saw its newspaper production volume more than double since 2009.

Image 4

L'imprimerie produces Le Figaro, as well as two other daily newspapers and a number of weekly or monthly magazines and supplements on newspaper stock (regular and premium).

For more information about the Toray products and the value of waterless printing, visit www.waterless-print.com/en.

About Toray

Toray Industries Inc., the leading manufacturer of waterless printing plates worldwide, was founded in 1926 and has a global presence with factories and sales offices in Asia, Europe and North America. The main businesses of Toray are synthetic fibers, carbon fibers, plastics, films and chemicals. Many of the products are developed from its proprietary polymer technology base and are commonly used by the electronics, packaging, textile, automotive and aviation industries. Recent annual sales approached € 10 billion.

Toray Textiles Central Europe (TTCE), is based in the Czech Republic and features a state-of-the-art manufacturing line for waterless printing plates. Located in Prostějov, in the heart of Europe, the facility consolidates all business operations, including sales, customer service, marketing, production and R&D, for faster, more efficient support of Toray's independent network of dealers and distributors in the European market.

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