

Mittelland Zeitungsdruck AG, Aarau (Switzerland)

New markets opened up thanks to the wealth of technical possibilities on offer

Located in Aarau in Northwestern Switzerland, Mittelland Zeitungsdruck AG operates one of Switzerland's most efficient coldset printing sites. As the portfolio not only includes daily and weekly newspapers but also high-circulation customer magazines for trade and industry, the technical possibilities in postpress processing were significantly expanded in 2018. With the help of Ferag, the company also wants to make the individualization of insert collections possible in future.

Mittelland Zeitungsdruck is one of the printing plants of CH Media, the publishers of newspapers such as the *az Aargauer Zeitung*, *Grenchner Tagblatt*, *Oltner Tagblatt*, *bz Basellandschaftliche Zeitung*, *bz Basel*, *Luzerner Zeitung* and *St. Galler Tagblatt*. CH Media was founded in 2018 as a joint venture between the NZZ Mediengruppe and AZ Medien (Aarau).

In 2014 the joint venture partner AZ Medien invested in the expansion of the newspaper printing centre in Aarau. The goal of the replacement investment of over 20 million Swiss francs was to secure the strategic independence of the company's own printing centre and to strengthen its market position. Production will take place on a Commander CT press from the manufacturer Koenig & Bauer. Along with the purchase of the new printing press, investments were also made in the plate line, process control and, above all, in the mailroom equipment.

Experiences gained with “selected commercial” orders

After receiving a major order – a customer magazine for a Swiss business enterprise – the Ferag technology taken over from another printing plant was equipped with an additional trimming drum in Aarau. This allowed the company to gain experiences with selected commercial orders. The print quality on the new press and the possibility of also printing on thicker paper on the blanket-to-blanket machine resulted in thought been given to expanding the portfolio in Aarau.

Urs Binkert, who headed up Mittelland Zeitungsdruck AG until the end of 2018 and is still project manager for the restructuring of CH Media's newspaper printing sites, recalls: “For example, we tested the production of complete, inline stitched magazines by running together a 60-g web for the pages and a quarter web on 120-g paper for the cover.”

As a mailroom line had to be replaced in any case due to its age, the Aarau-based company opted for new Ferag technology with a range of additional equipment that enables a variety of processing possibilities. Urs Binkert: “Above all, we opted for Ferag due to the high speeds that we could achieve. We also wanted to be able to trim at capacities of 50,000 copies per hour – and for tabloids of up to 160 pages.”

The new mailroom was installed in parallel to the old technology on the existing floor space in summer 2018. During one weekend, the “transfer station was then simply changed,” explains Urs Binkert.

Trimming, stitching and quarterfold

The newly commissioned mailroom conveyor consists of a RollSertDrum (RSD-M) inserting drum, a FlyStream precollecting line with four JetFeeder hoppers, and a MultiDisc configuration for winding and unwinding the preprint and main product.

Meanwhile, the “extra equipment for extra benefits” includes the StreamStitch stitching drum, SNT-50 trimming drum and the StreamFold quarterfold system. The finished products are then fed via UTR conveyor lines to three MultiStack

compensating stackers with topsheet production, before being laminated and secured with cross strapping. Both the new and former postpress processing lines supply a joint PKT bundle dispatch line from Ferag.

In the meantime, word has now spread across Switzerland and neighbouring countries about the produced quality and variety of processing possibilities. Mittelland Zeitungsdruck currently completes 700 to 800 individual orders per month. Around one million newspaper copies are produced every single day on two printing presses, of which over half are for external customers. Among others, the quarterfold line can be used to implement the so-called “Swiss post fold”, which results in cost benefits for customers in Switzerland when it comes to delivery.

A customized insert collection for every recipient

Contact with external customers has led to a project that Mittelland Zeitungsdruck is currently implementing together with Ferag: personalized insertion via FlyStream and RSD. Here, the goal is to produce completely customized insert collections for every newspaper recipient. Mittelland Zeitungsdruck already has the required technology at its disposal. In Aarau, Ferag has completely equipped a mailroom with its “reference clamp technology” for the first time, which can be used to address and track each individual newspaper copy with its insert collection. As soon as Mittelland Zeitungsdruck gets the green light from a suitable customer, Ferag can then implement the software requirements for the specific project within 18 months. With this pilot project, Ferag is building on developments that were presented at the last drupa trade fair in Düsseldorf.

Photo captions

DSC_0935_1.jpg (exterior shot of CH Media)

Mittelland Zeitungsdruck in Aarau is one of the printing plants of CH Media. A new mailroom “with added benefits” was put into operation in the newspaper printing centre in 2018.

DSC_0699_1.jpg (SNT-50 trimming drum)

An SNT-50 trimming drum is used for three-sided trimming of newspaper stacks and allows for the manufacture of selected commercial products.

DSC_0825_1.jpg (RSD-M inserting drum)

DSC_0788_1.jpg (FlyStream with four JetFeeders)

A FlyStream precollecting line with four JetFeeders and a RSD-M inserting drum with two preprint feeders allows inserts and preprinted products to be added to the newspapers.

DSC_0791_1.jpg (hopper and MultiDisc winding/unwinding station)

Thanks to a MultiDisc configuration for winding and unwinding, the preprinted products can be buffered and the mailroom at Mittelland Zeitungsdruck AG in Aarau can be operated offline.

Please send proof copies to:

- Ferag AG, Kommunikation, Zürichstrasse 74, CH-8340 Hinwil, Switzerland

About Ferag AG:

Ferag AG, with its headquarters at Hinwil in Switzerland, has for over 60 years been known and respected in the printing industry for high quality, absolute dependability and perfect customer support. The traditional, family-owned company is seen as the undisputed market and technological leader in the development, manufacture and marketing of postpress processing and direct mailing systems. Ferag is also a specialist in innovative conveyor and processing technology for the most varied industrial applications and goods distribution systems. Through its worldwide sales organization, the company is active in more than 20 countries with its own sales and service companies or agencies.

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