

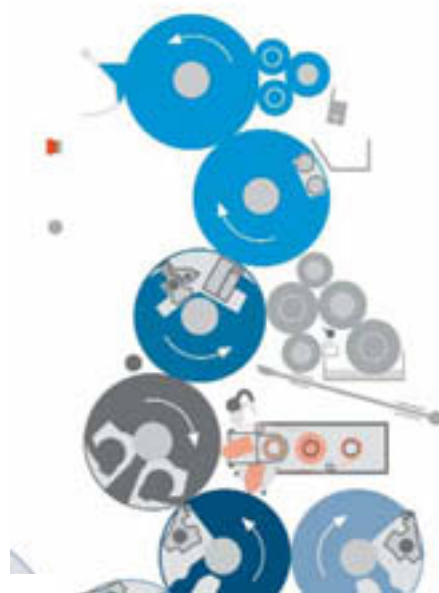
ANICOLOR

# Time for Revolution

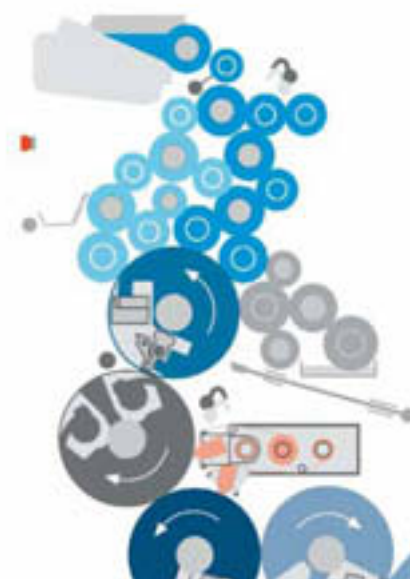
With Anicolor, Heidelberg is making offset printing on smaller runs even more profitable. Its short inking system, which is simply revolutionary, is now available as an option for the Speedmaster SM 52 four-color press. It's not just that it reduces setup times and paper waste to a minimum; it is also straightforward and easy to use and only requires standard consumables.

**T**ime is money. Order processing is expected to be done faster and faster, without, of course, allowing quality to slip. Digital printing itself has caused a fundamental change in customer expectations for time. At the end of the day, customers just don't care whether long or short runs are being asked for. "With the new Anicolor inking system, in comparison to our present systems, there can be up to a 90 percent reduction in paper waste, depending on the item being printed. In many cases, the 20<sup>th</sup>, sometimes even the 50<sup>th</sup> sheet is just as good in regards to the coloring as the 200<sup>th</sup> one, without me having to set the ink zones. If I'm quick with the register, too – and this is no problem with true-to-register plate stamping and Autoplate – then that provides savings in time and reduction in paper waste that nobody would have thought possible on a printing press that in all respects operates like any other. If I don't actually want to print variable data, something which clearly is pretty rare, then the offset printing press is what I would prefer for production," explains Stephan Schück, Product Manager for Anicolor at Heidelberger Druckmaschinen. Not having to perform ink zone settings on the zoneless Anicolor inking system reduces setup times by about 40 percent. This in turn results in increased printing press availability of around 25 percent.

**Revolution:** Anicolor represents a pioneering achievement from the Research and Development Department at Heidelberg. "The real revolution in this technology is that everybody up until now has been claiming that it is impossible for an anilox inking unit and dampening system to deliver high quality. And now our developers, with their know-how and experience, have managed it after all! Now we have an inking unit that gives outstanding coloring and at the same time is so quick that we really have to get a move on during order changeover. And all this is using standard offset ink," says Schück with some conviction, adding: "Interest in this technology is



Construction of an Anicolor ink unit...



... compared to the construction of a traditional ink unit.



The ink chamber blade system, made with an ink chamber and a doctor blade, fills the screen roller with ink.



The Alcolor film dampening unit for use with conventional consumable supplies.

huge, and although we were clearly confident of success, even we have been rather surprised. Even those who were very skeptical admit we have an outstanding engineering achievement and predict that the technology has massive potential. It has been no surprise to see the Speedmaster SM 52 and Anicolor short inking unit drawing the crowds at the most recent Ipex in Birmingham, where we presented the press for the first time."

**Working more profitably.** Why do you need to improve a press that is already the best in its class? The answer is actually quite simple – modern printing plants have to work at ever increasing levels of profitability. "This is why we started production of Anicolor presses in December of 2006 using four offset units ideal in all types of four-color printing. It's quite a long time now since the first presses were all sold to customers throughout the world. For spot colors, we would like to gain a bit more experience with field testing before we throw the switch for general production," comments Schück.

Another great advantage of the press is that, with the screen roller, it always transfers consistent ink layer thickness across the full sheet and from sheet to sheet. This makes it the ideal press for standardized processes. "In the past, Heidelberg has made many advances in terms of prepress standardization. Now there is additional standardization in terms of the press itself. If you also have an ink supplier who you can rely on when it comes to standardization of inks, then your workflow is perfect," says Stephan Schück. But he also makes it clear that "some things just can't be standardized. Suppose, for instance, that you want to print a gang form with two motifs. If motif one comes from customer A who wants cyan to be brought out in the printing, and motif two comes from customer B who wants cyan to be a bit fainter, then this has nothing to do with print standards. You can either print this on a conventional press and try to control it using the ink zone regulator, or you just have to work without non-standardized gang forms like this. But since working without them is not something that can be done everywhere and on an ad hoc basis, you won't suddenly be finding Anicolor in every printing plant. Even so, the future potential of the technology is huge." If the Anicolor press is to be used, then all ink settings should have already been accurately defined in the pre-press stage and the proof should be true color in all respects. A modern CtP system ensuring high quality imaging is also recommended.

**A new core.** The inking system is so short that it can manage with only two rollers which are extremely quick in applying the ink to the plate. These are an Anilox roller and an inking form roller, both of which have the same diameter as the plate cylinder ▶

and should therefore also be referred to as “cylinders.” On each rotation, the inking form roller applies ink to the plate one time. And as on any inking system, it is important that enough ink is applied. This is what determines the quality of an inking system. On Anicolor, this is dealt with by the Anilox roller. Due to its fine-lined surface, it can transfer a lot more ink than a roller with a smooth surface. In addition, the ink chamber is always in contact with the rollers, so there is no ink fountain roller. There is always an adequate amount of ink fed through. Excess ink is wiped off directly on the lower edge of the ink chamber with a wiper blade. Here, of course, the fact that the inking form roller is resupplied with ink during each rotation should be mentioned. And because it is just as large as the plate cylinder, it prevents any ghosting.

**Cost effective, even on very short runs.** Anicolor allows the user to achieve cost-effective printing of both long and very short runs in the course of normal operations – but at a much reduced cost. “Obviously, Anicolor also allows the use of standard trade inks and printing plates since there is an integrated direct continuous dampening system. And use of existing CtP systems for producing the printing plates is of course also possible,” reports Schück.

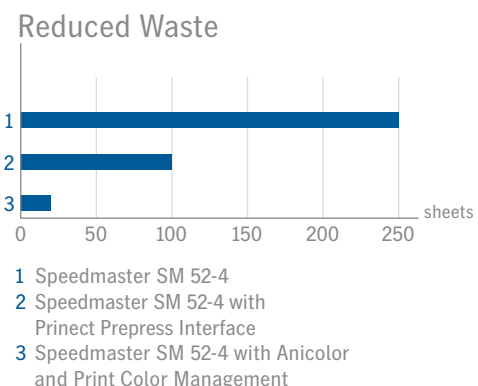
Ink supply, ink change and cleaning are also straightforward and user friendly. The ink chambers can be filled with the push of a button using the semi-automatic Handyfill system. During ink change, you just change the wiper system over. All-roller cleaning is also fully automatic – controlled via the Prinect CP2000 center.

“With Anicolor, we are focusing mainly on firms that have a high percentage of standardized jobs,” explains Schück. An ideal business model, for instance, is a printing operation that deals with a lot of its jobs via a web-to-print service. Here, everything is agreed with the customer in prepress, and, at the same time, the customer can be certain that they will always get the same quality on repeat orders. And the printing operation will find it both easy and, above all, profitable to deal with smaller follow-up orders such as business cards or business papers. But the SM 52 with Anicolor is also a good choice for complementing other presses. “In this way, my printing operation can provide both finished products, giving us good margins and standard print items that have lower margins, and these are at competitive prices even on short runs,” is how Schück summarizes the benefits. He is convinced that “the more standardization advances, the more presses are going to be equipped with an Anicolor inking system in the future. This is because the technology is making offset printing more profitable overall – and not just when it comes to short runs!” ■

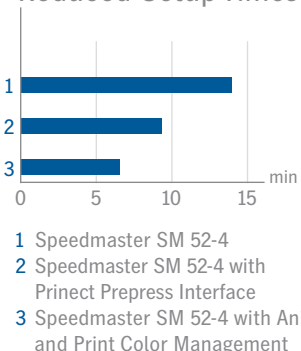
**Facts & Figures**

[www.heidelberg.com/hd/Anicolor](http://www.heidelberg.com/hd/Anicolor)

**Customer Uses of Anicolor**



**Reduced Setup Times**



View of the Anicolor technology on the Speedmaster SM 52.

# Anicolor For Everything!



Karl-Heinz Benatzky (63), Managing Director of Druckhaus Benatzky based in Hanover, Germany, talks exclusively to the Heidelberg News about his experiences with the Speedmaster SM 52 four-color press with Anicolor.

*When did you begin using the Speedmaster SM 52 four-color press with Anicolor at your firm?*

**KARL-HEINZ BENATZKY:** The press was installed in August of last year, and since then more than a million sheets have been printed on it. Learning to use the press was no problem at all since we already had a conventional Speedmaster SM 52 in operation and our printers more or less knew the technology already. After all, when it comes down to it, both presses share the same platform.

*Why is the Anicolor press the right one for you?*

**KARL-HEINZ BENATZKY:** We are a medium-sized company with around 60 employees. Our customers are based all over Germany and include some very well known companies from the business sector, banks and other service providers and agencies, as well as publishers. We are growing because we have a good reputation for quality, prompt delivery and good service. And this is why we must not lose our technical advantage. This is extremely important for us.

*Please describe day-to-day work with the Anicolor press?*

**KARL-HEINZ BENATZKY:** All 4c jobs with coated papers are printed on the Anicolor press. So far, every job has run on the press according to plan, even with data provided from outside. But we did do our homework; we manage our workflow well and can rely on everything being perfect in prepress. These are two important prerequisites for making Anicolor technology work in our company.

We are continuing to use the cost-effective standard printing plates, we prevent a great deal of sheet paper waste and we have in the meantime also become competitive in short run segments that we could not previously service. We have customers who, for instance, do not just order proofs and short runs but larger runs as well. We can now cover the whole product range, and where a customer would have left us at one time for a digital printer, they can now have everything done by a single provider – us. It’s not just easier for them; they also get the consistency of quality made available by offset printing. It is, in other words, a classic win-win situation. And since we want to expand the web-to-print segment, the Anicolor press with all its capabilities is very important for us. The short setup times and small amount of paper waste are perfect in this respect.

*If you had one wish relating to this topic, what would it be?*

**KARL-HEINZ BENATZKY:** Anicolor for everything! We want Anicolor for all format categories and all press configurations. Of course, I know that this won’t happen overnight, but you did ask me to make a wish! This technology has just impressed us so much that I’m convinced that it’s going to be the technology of the future. Why not develop presses up to a Speedmaster XL 105? I could also imagine more automation components for order changeovers. You see, the ratio of print time – including setting up – to additional time allowed for plate setup, plate changeover, blanket washing and paper changeover has changed because of Anicolor. Previously, we spent 70 percent of the time on the print process and 30 percent making up additional time. Nowadays, due to the shortened printing time thanks to Anicolor, the ratio has shifted, giving more added time. That’s why I’d like to see the kind of equipment on the Anicolor press that would reduce these additional times as well. The ideal for us would actually be an Anicolor five-color press with coating unit; a perfecter would be another useful option. This doesn’t mean you stop at a five color press; rather, this would form the basis for further developments. If we could eventually refit our full press plant to Anicolor, I’d bet that, as far as my company is concerned, we would then have 80 percent of jobs running via Anicolor. Still, I suppose Heidelberg is going to need a bit more time before our two Speedmasters, the SM 102-8 and the XL 105-6, are available with Anicolor. But there again, sometimes wishes come true sooner rather than later! ■

**Facts & Figures**

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