



HEIDELBERG shines at drupa: a new era in print technology

The energy at drupa 2024 was electrifying and among the industry giants showcasing groundbreaking innovations, **HEIDELBERG** stood out with a powerful presence. *PPM* had the privilege of sitting down with **Marc Lotter**, MD of HEIDELBERG Graphic Systems Southern Africa, to delve into the remarkable advancements that HEIDELBERG brought to the show.

'AT HEIDELBERG, we are committed to addressing the key challenges facing the printing industry – sustainability, digitalisation and skilled labour shortages,' Marc shared passionately.

This commitment is embodied in HEIDELBERG's latest marvel, the new-generation Speedmaster XL 106. This cutting-edge machine boasts a new generation drying system that reduces energy consumption by 30% and automated maintenance tasks and job changeovers in the coating unit, reducing makeready time by 30%. 'Print service providers understand that they need to continually invest in new technology to enhance their competitiveness and the Speedmaster XL 106 is at the forefront of this movement,' Marc emphasised.

The HEIDELBERG booth was a hive of activity, with a dedicated bus service ferrying visitors to its factory in Wiesloch to witness its full range of equipment in action at its demo and print media centre. The Speedmaster XL 106, with its impressive increased production speed of 21 000 sheets per hour was a star attraction. The machine boasts a high level of automation and AI-supported assistance systems which save printers time, reduce costs and make industrial offset printing more competitive than ever before. This machine, coupled with HEIDELBERG's highly automated packaging workflow, showcases how robotics and automation in postpress can revolutionise industrial packaging production.

HEIDELBERG's innovation doesn't stop there. Its partnership with **MK Masterwork Machinery (MK)** was prominently displayed, celebrating 10 years of collaboration. 'Our collaboration with MK has yielded some of the most advanced technologies in high-speed die cutting and automated folder gluing production lines,' Marc noted. The Mastermatrix



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106CSB die cutter, with its high level of automation and quick-lock tooling, significantly shortens production preparation times, while the Duopress Power 106FCSB die cutting and stamping machine wowed attendees with its one-pass productivity.

The Diana Eye, HEIDELBERG's answer to offline packaging inspection, was also on display. 'We have experienced significant interest in the Diana Eye system from our local customers with confirmed orders for three units to drupa. This speaks to the continued demand for high-quality packaging products in the South African market,' Marc proclaimed.

The Diana Smart automated folder gluing production line, featuring MK Robotics for feeding and palletising, operates at a staggering 600m/min, exemplifying the high productivity brought by automation.



The Speedmaster XL 106 has an increased production speed of 21 000 sheets per hour.

'The response from the industry has been phenomenal, with a significant uptick in global orders and a continuous stream of visitors at our booth,' Marc added.

HEIDELBERG also used drupa to demonstrate its continued focus on inkjet printing, with the game-changing Gallus One digital inkjet label press taking centre stage. 'We are breaking barriers in total cost of ownership and delivering unmatched reliability and productivity with the Gallus One,' Marc remarked. The brand new Jetfire range of inkjet presses, developed in collaboration with Canon, was announced at drupa. The Jetfire is aimed at the industrial digital commercial printing market. 'Our Jetfire offering meets the requirements of our customer for a flexible and productive solution aimed at short-run colour printing, with mass customisation options. The Jetfire 50 integrates seamlessly into the HEIDELBERG ecosystem via our Prinect workflow, ensuring great flexibility for customers that already possess offset and/or toner-based digital printing capabilities in their operations,' Marc commented.

The unveiling of the Jetfire 50, a high-performance inkjet digital printing system in B3 format, marked a significant milestone for HEIDELBERG. The first Jetfire 50 went to Switzerland, demonstrating the global appeal and cutting-edge capabilities of HEIDELBERG's inkjet technology. A larger B2 format offering – the Jetfire 75 – is currently under development. Watch this space!

Marc's vision for the future of printing was clear: 'At HEIDELBERG, we're defining the future of the printing industry. Our innovations in sustainability, automation and digitalisation are setting new standards and we are excited to lead the way. It was highly encouraging to see and engage with so many Southern African customers at drupa, clearly focused and preparing for the future of print in our market.'

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