New Heidelberg Versafire digital printing generation successfully launched

- Customers from Europe, Asia, and the USA excited by new possibilities
- Heidelberg China Commercial Day generates a lot of interest in Asia
- Rindt print shop tapping creative potential for its customers with Versafire EV and rounding off its service portfolio

The full-service print shop operates in three shifts, with 80 percent of its deliveries going to German customers, as well as to Austria and Switzerland. Three quarters of the printed products are traditional commercial jobs, however, the company also produces packagings, which is where it is experiencing the strongest growth. The discerning customers come from industry, banks, insurance companies, publishing houses, and advertising agencies. “We regard ourselves as a partner to our customers. For example, a few years ago we repositioned our print shop by relaunching our brand – moving away from the standard print shop and towards a problem solver, and are therefore less replaceable,” explains Jerabeck. The services for customers are constantly being expanded and now include warehousing and logistics as well as private web stores for major customers. From business cards to advertising material, they can order everything directly online there.

Rindt print shop also wants to extend its portfolio with the Versafire EV. It uses an unusual mailing showing the creative possibilities of the press with opaque white, coating, and neon pink to inform both its regular customers and new customers. “We want to give our customers the best service, and are therefore investing again in the latest technology,” confirms Jerabeck. “We were impressed by the overall offering with innovative technology and the best service of Heidelberg.”

https://www.rindt-druck.de

A mailing showing the creative possibilities of Versafire EV with opaque white, coating and neon pink is sent to Rindt’s customers.

Rindt print shop in Fulda has been using the new Versafire EV from Heidelberg for a number of months. Sören Plur, PrePress Team Leader at Rindt and Heinz Höfler from Heidelberg Sales Germany deliver a positive summary.

Creative potential through very good print quality and finishing options

One of the first production Versafire EV presses has been in use at Druckerei Rindt GmbH & Co.KG in Fulda (Hesse) since April 2018. Managing Director Sebastian Jerabeck had spent years looking for a suitable digital printing system to round off the offset printing offering and provide extended services to customers. His initial experiences with digital printing systems from other manufacturers were less than satisfactory. “We regard digital printing as an important part of our offering, we want to use it to round off our portfolio downwards and print short runs,” says Jerabeck in summing up his requirements. “The Versafire EV was the only press to hit the mark for us: the print quality is so good that there is very little difference between the digital and offset prints. A good color management system means that products combining both methods can also be produced,” confirms Sören Plur, PrePress Team Leader.

Digital printing system rounds off offset printing offering and extends the range of services

Rindt print shop regards itself as a problem solver and relies on individual consulting services, especially for complex printed products. This philosophy is paying off, with the company growing since its establishment in 1931. It invests in the latest printing technology every two to three years, and is planning another production expansion in the offset printing sector for this year. “We have a broad-based market presence and can rely on our more than 70 employees, who are among our most important assets,” says Jerabeck in explaining his recipe for success.
“Open for Innovation” – Heidelberg drives printing industry’s digital transformation with new Innovation Center, the industry’s most state-of-the-art development center

The new Heidelberg Innovation Center (IVC) at the Wiesloch-Walldorf site is the industry’s most state-of-the-art development center. The office area in the former production hall comprises 13 sections whose transparency creates a new working environment with a creative atmosphere.

The new Innovation Center (IVC) of Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG (Heidelberg) for the graphic arts industry is now “Open for Innovation” at the Wiesloch-Walldorf site. A former production hall has been converted to create the industry’s most state-of-the-art development center. By opening the new Innovation Center, Heidelberg is looking to accelerate the digital transformation at print shops and its own company. "The digitization of the graphic arts industry is progressing at top speed and we are actively driving this process with our “Heidelberg goes Digital” strategy, so our new Innovation Center plays a key role in safeguarding the future of Heidelberg and the entire industry in a number of ways. Our technology leadership is continuing to grow thanks to the unrivaled expertise of the center’s highly skilled workforce of around 1,000. What’s more, we are increasing the speed of the entire industry’s digital transformation. The IVC’s proximity to our production operations also encourages an agile, multidisciplinary development process," explains Stephan Plenz, member of the Heidelberg Management Board responsible for Digital Technology. "The Innovation Center is the new hub of our company and the future high-tech campus we are gradually creating at our Wiesloch-Walldorf site," he adds.

Development projects drive the industry’s digital transformation

The newly opened IVC is the number one competence center in the printing industry, which has a global annual turnover of over 400 billion Euros. “Innovations for the future are now being developed where highly skilled staff used to produce medium-format presses,” continues Plenz. Heidelberg spends some five percent of sales – currently around 135 million euros – on development activities. The numerous development projects focus on expanding the industrial digital printing portfolio and, in the area of offset printing, on further developing the Push to Stop technology for autonomous printing that only requires human intervention in processes if the system is unable to deal with these itself.

In addition, various teams of developers are working on the Smart Print Shop – where all print shop processes are digitized – and on the further expansion of digital business models – such as Heidelberg Subscription – under which customers are increasingly paying for the benefits a system offers them. This development is supported by the largest collection of data in the industry, which Heidelberg has been generating for over a decade from the customer systems networked with the company.

“Our customers are channeling all their energy into digitization, including the possibilities for producing customized digital printing applications in the three traditional areas of commercial, packaging, and label printing on an industrial scale that optimizes costs,” says Frank Kropp, Head of Research & Development at Heidelberg. “The digitization of all value-adding processes also opens the way for new business models and enhanced overall efficiency to maintain and improve competitiveness. Our Innovation Center produces the ideal solutions to the challenges of digitization, true to its “Open for Innovation” motto,” he adds.

It is important to keep up with the dynamic pace of change in an increasingly digitized world. “So Heidelberg is making increasing use of agile working methods such as Scrum. This enables development teams to respond quickly and flexibly to the increasing, changing demands of the digital world and incorporate new market findings into the development process at an early stage. Products reach market maturity faster and can then be further optimized for specific market segments in collaboration with customers,” continues Kropp.

Heidelberg has also designed its development process to ensure openness. This means customers, suppliers, partner companies, and employees can be integrated into the process as and when required. It also helps with cost efficiency and effectiveness in the customer benefits context.

European development network gives Heidelberg unrivaled industry expertise

The new IVC is the headquarters of a European development network operated by Heidelberg that also includes sites in Kiel, Ludwigsburg, Weiden (all in Germany), and St. Gallen (in Switzerland). The network as a whole pools the talents of close to 1,000 developers working in the fields of printing technology (including prepress and postpress), control and drive systems, software (including operator interfaces), and consumables (with the focus on developing inks for digital printing). Well over two thirds of these employees have a degree or doctorate. They combine traditional mechanical engineering expertise with key skills relating to digitization, image processing, electronics and software development, process engineering, and chemistry.

"It’s the knowledge and commitment of our employees that ultimately make all the difference and ensure Heidelberg is successful," underlines Plenz. "The new Innovation Center provides them with an environment and atmosphere they enjoy working in, enables creativity to thrive, and serves as a model for future work practices at Heidelberg as a whole," he concludes.
Heidelberg Assistant turns one - rapid progress with digitizing customer support: user numbers are increasing daily

- One year on from launch, Heidelberg Assistant customer portal in operation at over 400 print shops with over 700 users
- Platform also being rolled out in Japan, Poland, and Austria
- Heidelberg Assistant wins U.S. 2019 Digital Edge 50 Award

One year ago, Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG (Heidelberg) entered a new era of digital customer communication by launching the Heidelberg Assistant digital platform in the pilot markets of Germany, Switzerland, the United States, and Canada. The digitization solution is now operating successfully at no fewer than 400 print shops in these countries, with over 700 users – a number that is increasing rapidly. The rollout in Japan, Poland, and Austria has also started.

“Digitization is becoming increasingly important at a great many print shops, and our customers appreciate the digital service portfolio we offer them 24/7 with the Heidelberg Assistant,” says Professor Ulrich Hermann, Member of the Management Board and Chief Digital Officer at Heidelberg. “Designed as an open digital platform, it is used by customers of all sizes and from all segments with their own personal Heidelberg ID,” he adds.

The user feedback is equally positive. Jürgen Herr, Head of Printing at August Faller GmbH & Co. KG in Waldkirch, has the following to say: “The Heidelberg Assistant represents a major step into the digital world, enabling far better analyses of press performance than simple service reports. The option of logging into the Heidelberg Assistant to arrange service callouts will also without doubt improve our customer satisfaction.”

Jeff Taylor, Senior Vice President Manufacturing at Hemlock Printers Ltd. in Vancouver, sums it up: “This is exactly the data and information we need to manage production efficiently.”

Heidelberg Assistant wins 2019 Digital Edge 50 Award in United States

To coincide with the first anniversary of its market launch, the Heidelberg Assistant has won a 2019 Digital Edge 50 Award from the U.S.-based International Data Group (IDG), a world-leading supplier of technology media and data/marketing services. This award is a prestigious accolade that goes to 50 organizations each year for digital innovations that improve business success, modernize operations, and enhance the customer experience.

“Winning a 2019 Digital Edge 50 Award underlines that we have our finger on the pulse with the Heidelberg Assistant and have assumed a leading industry role in digitizing customer communication,” says Hermann.

Digital customer collaboration during entire lifecycle

The Heidelberg Assistant digitization solution is a key technology in the digital transformation process at Heidelberg. It paves the way for creating and ensuring the smooth operation of the company’s new digital business models. Customers using the Heidelberg Assistant benefit from a transparent process workflow together with smart and efficient print shop operation. Each and every user has personal access to the customer portal and obtains an overview of the print shop’s service and maintenance status, including data-driven failure prediction.

Users also benefit from access to the sector’s largest knowledge database. In addition, they can access big data performance analyses, which creates further potential for boosting productivity. Heidelberg is using the assistant for further market scaling of its existing big data applications, such as Predictive Monitoring and Performance Consulting.

A brief introduction to the program is available on YouTube

The multi-talent. Speedmaster CX 75.

The Speedmaster CX 75 can be perfectly integrated into almost every pressroom thanks to its small footprint. The ergonomic operating concept permits quick and easy operation of the press. Its energy efficiency and resource-efficient use of materials have a positive impact in terms of both the environment and your costs. It lets you produce exactly what your customers want, cost-effectively and sustainably.

heidelberg.com/Speedmaster CX 75
First Gallus Labelfire in Canada

St. Gallen / Kennesaw, December 2018. – Data Communications Management (DCM) of Brampton, Ontario installed the first Labelfire 340 in Canada from Heidelberg-Gallus to enhance their performance in running short-run, on-demand labels.

The Holistic Approach
A market leader in Canada for print on-demand, DCM has spent the past 50 years focusing on traditional flexographic labels. As one of the largest label manufacturers in Canada, DCM expects that their new Labelfire 340 will take the company to another level with variable printing. According to Alan Roberts, Senior Vice President at DCM, “our clients are looking for shorter runs and more customization on their labels. If we’re going to be a leader in short-run prime label business, we need the best piece of hybrid technology, and I believe we are going to receive it with the Heidelberg-Gallus Labelfire 340.”

Raising the bar in the label market, the Labelfire 340 combines the latest digital printing technology with the benefits of conventional printing and further processing technology. The Labelfire prints at 50 m/min, which will help meet DCM’s growing customers’ demands for short runs. The flexo-digital press is a complete in-line solution that handles digital flexo, cold foil, rotary screen, and die-cutting from start to finish.

“We believe that a hybrid press versus a pure digital press is the right solution that gives us the flexibility to meet customer demands, especially since we are now able to do everything in-line in one pass,” said Roberts. “With other pure digital technology, you have to take everything off the press and bring it to another piece of equipment, which takes a lot more time and labor. The Labelfire is a more holistic approach that I believe will make us stand out in the marketplace.”

Another impressive factor for DCM was the Labelfire’s additional features that enhance the labels’ quality and color. Printing at 1200x1200 dpi, the Labelfire features the latest inkjet technology with 7 colors plus white and three flexo conventional print units on the digital side. Based on the needs of the customer, DCM is also able to print flexo white or digital white without slowing down the press speeds. The Labelfire is run by Heidelberg’s Prinect Digital Front End, which includes spot color matching, the PDF Toolbox, and Prepress Manager.

Service — The Competitive Advantage
Due to the Heidelberg-Gallus integration, DCM has access to the largest service coverage in the industry to ensure that they are getting the most from their equipment and that a close-by technician is always readily available.

“One of the main reasons we went with the Labelfire is having service coverage available to us 24/7 – it’s a huge competitive advantage,” said Roberts. “Other companies we’ve worked with in the past would have to send us service from the U.S., but Heidelberg has service technicians right in Canada that can get to us quickly and efficiently — it’s a huge plus.”

Worldwide launch of Gallus Smartfire the new digital label entry level press

St. Gallen, January 2019 – What the Gallus Smartfire definitely does is to show that getting started in professional digital label printing is possible with affordable investment amounts. The inkjet label printing machine, equipped with a 4c printing head (CMYK) makes printing of ultra-short runs starting from one single unit possible, whilst printing with water based inks and a native resolution of 1600 dpi. The integrated inline converting module includes lamination, a cutting plotter for individual die cutting contours and a semi rotary die cutter. With this equipment, the Gallus philosophy “from print file to finished die cut label in a single pass” also applies to the Gallus Smartfire.

After the world premiere of the first Gallus Smartfire at Gallus Innovation Days this past year in June and the recent North American introduction at Labelexpo Americas, the worldwide rollout of this entry-level press continues. Because of the excellent resolution the Smartfire is positioned to compete against far more expensive presses that offer a similar print quality. “The Memjet technology allows us to offer an inkjet printing press that produces labels with a quality of 1600x1600 dpi while still keeping the investment costs at a low level,” explains Michael Ring, Head of Digital Solutions at Gallus. “With the Gallus Smartfire, we are also focussing on new target groups who are looking for a smart entry into digital label printing.”

The Gallus Smartfire is powered by Memjet, which is a well-proven print head that uses water-based inks, which means that these labels are eco-sensitive and leaves a minimal ecological footprint. The Smartfire uses an ordinary power outlet, needs no exhaust equipment, is extremely compact, and emits no VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds), thus making it the perfect press for any work environment.

“The name says it all, the Smartfire is absolutely easy to operate via a self-explanatory user interface panel,” says Michael Ring. With this digital press, only a few prepress skills are required to create professional CMYK 4-color inkjet labels. Just as easy are the replacements of the ink-containers and the exchange of the print head. Furthermore, this machine also delivers finished die cut labels, all produced in one pass and ready for shipping on the reel, just like Gallus customers know it from the other presses. For this purpose, a finishing unit is attached, on which the labels are laminated and cut. This can be either done individually by the integrated cutting plotter or by fast and cost-effective punching with the semi-rotary die cutter at the end of the inline finishing unit.

Italian customers now have the chance to watch this press live again at Heidelberg’s Digital Days which will take place Jan 31st and Feb 1st 2019 at Heidelberg subsidiary in Milan. For more information please look at: www.heidelberg.com/it
Heidelberg steps up activities in packaging market and gains potential strategic anchor shareholder

- Masterwork Group Co., Ltd. from China aiming to use capital increase to obtain a stake in Heidelberg
- Increase in equity ratio set to improve Heidelberg balance sheet
- Sales partnership dating from 2013 being taken to next level in growing packaging printing segment
- Closer production collaboration set to boost efficiency

Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG (Heidelberg) is looking to further improve its market position in the growing packaging printing segment by taking its long-standing sales partnership with Masterwork Group Co., Ltd. (Masterwork), China’s largest manufacturer of die-cutters and hot-foil embossing machines, to a whole new level. Based in the Chinese city of Tianjin, Masterwork is to obtain around 8.5 percent of the Heidelberg share capital under a cash capital increase from authorized capital excluding shareholder subscription rights. The implementation of such capital measure is subject to approval by Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG’s supervisory board. The proposed capital increase provides the opportunity for Heidelberg to acquire a further strategic anchor shareholder with a long-term investment horizon as well as to strengthen its equity. Subject to approval by the relevant bodies on both sides and the Chinese authorities, the capital measure should provisionally take place by the end of the first calendar quarter of 2019. The issue price of the new shares is set to be EUR 2.68. If the market price significantly outstrips the envisaged issue price, this will be renegotiated in line with statutory requirements. The funds Heidelberg generates with the capital increase are to be used to accelerate its digital agenda (digitizing products, processes, and business models, for example) and for general business financing. Masterwork supports the Heidelberg strategy and is demonstrating its clear commitment to long-term collaboration. Heidelberg is currently considering and discussing whether it will seek to obtain a shareholding in Masterwork.

“The Heidelberg Management Board and Supervisory Board are delighted that our long-standing, successful collaboration with Masterwork is to become much closer. This opens up further potential in the growing packaging printing segment, especially in China – the world’s largest individual market. We are expecting better capacity utilization at our plants across the globe to make us far more efficient, but I would like to stress that this will not weaken our sites in Germany. We are delighted that in Masterwork we are obtaining another long-term investor that firmly believes in the company’s innovative prowess, strategy, and potential for the future,” comments Heidelberg CEO Rainer Hundsdörfer.

“Heidelberg is our ideal partner for jointly leveraging growth potential in the packaging printing market. The stake we are obtaining in this long-established company and world market leader underlines that we are in it for the long haul and are confident Heidelberg has adopted the right strategy,” says Masterwork President Li Li.

Building on leading market position in growing packaging printing segment
Heidelberg and Masterwork, which is listed on China’s Shenzhen stock exchange, have operated a close postpress partnership for a number of years, turning print products into folding cartons for the packaging market. They also benefit from a long-standing, successful sales collaboration. Masterwork specializes in postpress equipment for the folding carton industry. Back in 2014, it acquired the postpress packaging technologies of Heidelberg, which retains responsibility for global sales and digital customer relations. The possibility of linking Masterwork’s postpress machines to the Heidelberg cloud is a big advantage when it comes to realizing the value proposition of using production data to boost customers’ productivity. Packaging printing is expected to enjoy above-average growth in the coming years. Heidelberg already holds a leading position in this segment in Europe and the Americas, while Masterwork is one of China’s leading postpress suppliers for packaging. The closer ties are set to significantly strengthen this position in China – the world’s largest packaging market – and in other regions, too.

Creating shared value and stepping up sales of Heidelberg products in China
What’s more, there are plans for closer collaboration focusing on the two companies’ value chains. Heidelberg will continue to supply the dynamic markets in China and the rest of Asia from the site in Qingpu, near Shanghai, that it established back in 2006. As a result of the closer working relationship with Masterwork, it will also benefit from joint component manufacturing operations at the Masterwork site in Tianjin in the future. This will provide both companies with a whole host of possibilities for improving their efficiency.

About Masterwork Group:
https://mkmasterwork.com/en/

Next important date:
Heidelberg will be publishing its report on the third quarter of financial year 2018/2019 on February 7.
All American Label Enters Packaging Market with Three Heidelberg Machines

Originally known as “All American Label,” the Dublin, California company recently installed three Heidelberg machines to add packaging services to their list of product offerings – inspiring their new name: All American Label and Packaging. The new equipment includes a Suprasetter A 106 CTP, Speedmaster CD 102-6+L, and Easymatrix 106 CS (produced by MK Masterwork and distributed by Heidelberg). “We want to be like a local convenience store for our customers — an one-stop shop for everything they need. Our customers can purchase their labels, sheetfed, offset-web, foiled embossed, inkjet, wide-format inkjet, grand format inkjet, all the way to simple signs, banners, and commercial print,” said Brad Brown, CEO of All American Label and Packaging. “This is what made us go with this large Heidelberg suite of products — we wanted to offer everything to our customers, and we wanted to offer the best.”

“More Than Just Labels”
With customer requests for packaging and the company’s own desire to be “More Than Just Labels,” All American Label and Packaging looked to Heidelberg to expand their product portfolio. First stop was installing the Easymatrix 106 CS. Running at speeds up to 7,700 sheets per hour, the Easymatrix allows All American Label and Packaging to keep all diecutting work in-house, which is important for projects on a tight timeline. With a full 41” format and non-stop functionality in the feeder and delivery, longer runs can be cut and stripped efficiently. All American Label and Packaging will now have shorter make-ready times thanks to the intuitive touchscreen interface, along with the motorized cutting pressure adjustment and quick-lock technology for dies and stripping tools. “For customers wanting to differentiate their packaging, we are now able to diecut, deboss, emboss, and strip in-line,” said Brown. “Thanks to the diecutter, labor is reduced, which will help us save money.”

Speedmaster CD 102: Differentiating Our Customers’ Packages
In order to start offering high quality packaging print jobs, All American Label and Packaging chose the best-selling Speedmaster CD 102-6+L, which provides flexible processing of a large variety of jobs and materials. “We keep ourselves in the market by giving our customers short lead times; however, when we wanted to run a good carton with all the bells and whistles, we just couldn’t do it to the standard that our customers were expecting. With the CD 102, we are able to give our customers a high quality product that we could set up and run quickly. The machine is opening a whole new avenue for us to increase revenue,” said Brown.

Running at speeds up to 15,000 sheets an hour, the Speedmaster CD 102 is the world’s most popular range of machines in the 70x100 cm format. Delivering up to 40 million impressions per year, the easy-to-use CD 102 offers short make-ready times and at an attractive price/performance ratio — maximizing the profit potential of its output.

“In a really competitive market like the printing industry, it’s crucial to differentiate yourself. How do you do that? You purchase the industry-leading technology, and then you offer your customers something that is going to differentiate their packaging on the shelf. And that’s what the CD 102 is going to help us do,” said Brown.

Perfect Partner to Highly Productive Press
To partner alongside All American Label and Packaging’s highly productive press, the company installed a Suprasetter A 106 CTP. Holding 110 plates of each press size, the Suprasetter A 106 fully automates the loading of plates direct from the Dual Cassette Loader with slip sheet removal, imaging, punching, and plate stacking. The Suprasetter offers an extremely accurate internal punching system for maximum register accuracy.

Why Choose Heidelberg?
Along with their three new pieces of Heidelberg equipment, All American Label and Packaging has Prinect Pressroom Manager and a high-speed POLAR 137 cutter. All machines are fully equipped with Saphira consumables, which include plates, inks, coatings, and chemistry. However, when it comes to why they chose Heidelberg with their equipment, technology and consumables, the answer was always service. “I could go on about how the quality from Heidelberg is next to none, but what really sets Heidelberg apart is their service,” said Brown. “Heidelberg has so many highly trained technicians and such a quick response rate. We have presses from everywhere, and honestly, the technology and service from Heidelberg is always top of the line.”

About All American Label and Packaging
All American Label and Packaging was born in 1995 out of a need for excellence in a premier full-service label company. Offering digital, flexo, and offset capability, All American Label and Packaging is unmatched. The company provides unrivaled lead times while also producing superior quality products with a personal touch. All American Label and Packaging has developed a highly experienced team to guide customers through the label making process, consistently exceeding customers’ expectations in quality, delivery and service.