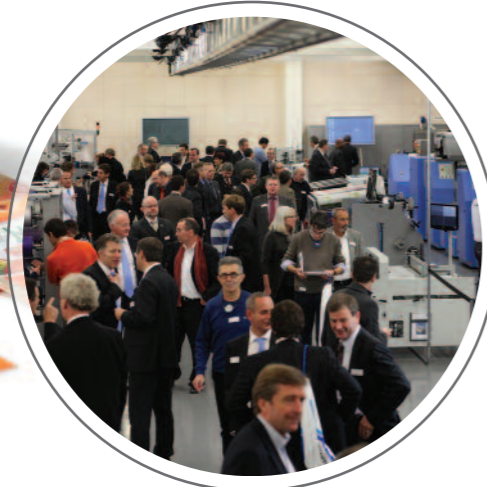


A SWISS AND GERMAN SUCCESS STORY

Müller Martini Druckmaschinen GmbH is part of the Müller Martini Group, a Switzerland-based printing and print finishing machinery company. It was founded over 60 years ago and is going from strength to strength. Elisabeth Skoda spoke to Bernd Schopferer, product and marketing manager printing machines, to find out more.



Müller Martini Druckmaschinen GmbH is part of the Swiss Müller Martini Group and is situated in the South of Germany, near the Swiss border. Müller Martini Group was founded on 1 April 1946. The company has over 3000 employees in total, 230 of which work for the printing machines division. At the site in Maulburg in Germany it manufactures printing machines for packaging print, label print, advertising and direct mailing, security prints and forms.

“Müller Martin Druckmaschinen GmbH was founded in 1964, and we have been building print machines since 1969,” Mr Schopferer explains. “Despite its size, the company is still family-owned, an asset for us and something we are proud of.”

Three core machines

Mr Schopferer continues to explain the company’s product range: “We build three different machine types. Our Concepta is available in 520mm width, and it is mainly used for direct mail, business forms, security printing, pharmaceutical inserts, labels as well as commercial work. The Alprinta type is available in a classic technology with steel cylinders, or in its Alprinta V variation using carbon fibre cylinders. The Alprinta V is

a continuously format-variable web offset press, and is exceptionally well suited to the production of flexible packaging and labels.”

The Alprinta V has the advantage that it can produce virtually any print length. In order to adjust printing size, it is no longer necessary to change the complete printing insert. In the case of the shaftless printing press it is sufficient to change the handy carbon fibre cylinders. The Alprinta V is available for web width 520mm and 740mm.

Last but not least, there is the VSOP (Variable Sleeve Offset Printing) printing machine. The acquisition of the rights and patents for the VSOP machine was a major investment in the company’s future, as Mr Schopferer explains.

“The VSOP web offset press has been taken over from our former competitor Drent Goebel. It offers a smart and fast format change for the offset printing process. Using its patented sleeve technology, it’s very easy to change the printing length without changing the complete offset insert. The biggest advantage of this fast and uncomplicated changeover is that it is very cost effective, especially when many different printing repeat lengths are required. It is available in web widths of 520mm and 850mm.” ▸





Growing in packaging and labels

The company has been enjoying a well-balanced turnover from its different branches.

“Our turnover has been distributed roughly 50/50 between our long established markets (advertising, security print, pharma print) and packaging and labels in the last few years”, says Mr Schopferer.

He is keen to point out the importance of the VSOP machine to the company.

“The packaging and label market is a growth market for us, especially thanks to the VSOP. This machine is ideal in order for us to grow in the area of offset print.”

Müller Martini held an Open House at the end of October at its site in Maulburg.

Held under the umbrella theme ‘Labels and Flexible Package Printing – The Process’, the three-day Muller Martini open house event attracted more than 300 visitors and had a diverse program of events. These included demonstrations of the Alprinta V and VSOP printing presses, numerous talks on industry topics as well as presentations by suppliers and partners. The live demonstration of the new VSOP machine, with its focus on UV inertisation and electron-beam curing, attracted particular

interest. This technology is of significance to the packaging industry, since it features low migration and low odours.

Several of Müller Martini’s partners were also involved with the Open House, says Mr Schopferer.

“Together with our partner Schober, we showed processing in the area of in-mould labels, and with Karlville and DCM we demonstrated the processing of shrink sleeves over the entire product chain.

“The Open House was a big success. We received plenty of positive feedback, especially on our presentation, product demonstrations and background information and talks on various related subjects.”

Working through the crisis

Müller Martini Druckmaschinen GmbH has been surviving the current economic situation well. The company’s advantage is that it serves a wide range of markets. In 2008/2009, the market for security print machines and pharmaceutical inserts compensated for any difficulties in other sectors. In 2010, the situation has been very balanced.

“Packaging and label printing as well as our ‘traditional’ markets advertising, security and pharma print have been doing well. The situation has been positive for us, since we have a broad base and don’t

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just serve one specific area. We actually managed to grow over the past year," Mr Schopferer is proud to point out.

Müller Martini Druckmaschinen GmbH will be exhibiting at several trade fairs in the near and distant future, says Mr Schopferer. "We will be exhibiting at Emballage 2010 in Paris this year; next year we will be at Labelexpo Europe in Brussels; and in 2012 we will concentrate on Drupa in Düsseldorf."

Müller Martini Druckmaschinen GmbH hopes to continue with its success in the future and expand on the VSOP printing machine's potential and it looks as though the company is well equipped for whatever the future may bring. □

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