

## autoprint in Osnabrück, Germany

Practical experiences with the robotic plate changing system presented at the manroland Business Forum

**The newspaper needs to be permanently maintained, developed, and enhanced in value. It is necessary to reduce cost per copy which is the most important lever in the competition with other media forms. It is now time to open the way for the approach "Print at the Forefront". This was manroland's CEO Gerd Finkbeiner's credo by to get the guests into the right mood for a stimulating Newspaper Business Forum.**

Newspaper experts from different countries attended the two-day event held at the end of September in the completely re-equipped Osnabrück Printing Center. In his welcoming address Hermann Elstermann, publisher of the Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung, said that this long-established media concern has invested around Euro 20 million in its printing systems, its mailroom, and environmental technology to enable it to meet the requirements of today and tomorrow. By installing a COLORMAN autoprint including the high-speed Automatic Plate Loading (APL) system, the printing center was able to shut down one of the three presses earlier needed and still start print runs later, gain new contract printing jobs, and reduce manning. The first 32 pages 4c section of the press with printing towers only 5.70 meters high was delivered in September 2008 and the second section has been printing since April 2009.

### APL is extremely reliable

"It was already evident after four to six weeks that APL is extremely reliable", reported Jens Masur, Works Manager of the Osnabrück Printing Center, on the start of the pioneer project. For current production with meanwhile four nine-satellite towers he rates reliability at 99.85 percent. Initially the press crew had to become accustomed to the error-free loading of the printing plate cassettes. In Osnabrück the plates are sorted into the cassettes manually and transported to the printing couples on trolleys.

### All towers made ready in only 5 minutes

Sorting the printing plates for a full-color 32- or 48-page production takes around 10 minutes. According to Masur, the time needed for fully automatic plate changing with the robotic arms is only 3.5 minutes, and the entire makeready process without changing the circumference takes 5 minutes. With 13 titles in run lengths between 4,200 and 36,000 copies every night, this adds up to very significant time savings. Between 850 and 900 plates are processed each day and in the last six months since both sections have been in full production this amounted to some 180,000 plates.

manroland AG is the world's second largest printing systems manufacturer and the world's market leader in web offset. manroland employs almost 8,700 people and has annual sales of some Euro 1.7 billion with an export share of 80%. Web fed and sheetfed presses provide solutions for publishing, commercial, and packaging printing.

### manroland AG

Corporate Marketing & Communications  
86219 Augsburg

### Thomas Hauser

Phone: +49 (0) 821 424-26 82  
Fax: +49 (0) 821 424-12 00  
E-mail: thomas.hauser@manroland.com

### Eva Doppler

Phone: +49 (0) 821 424-38 95  
Fax: +49 (0) 821 424-12 00  
E-mail: eva.doppler@manroland.com

### Andrea Bleesen

Phone: +49 (0) 69 83 05-34 10  
Fax: +49 (0) 69 83 05-69 34 10  
E-mail: andrea.bleesen@manroland.com

Photos can be downloaded from [www.manroland.com](http://www.manroland.com) in the category **Press**.

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Jens Masur summarized by saying that: "All in all, cooperating with manroland in this project was a great experience", he also emphasized the fact that it took less than two years from the time the contract was signed for the very first COLORMAN autoprnt until it was in full production.

### **Further steps in the One Touch direction**

Peter Kuisle, Executive Vice President for Webfed Printing System Sales at manroland, spoke about the One Touch concept and the next automation steps to be taken soon. A number of COLORMAN autoprnt installations in Germany and abroad are in the preparation phase and some of them go a step further than Osnabrück. The first fully-automated system with APL logistics is to start up in Magdeburg before the end of this year. There the plate cassettes will be automatically transported to the printing couples on conveyor rails supported by appropriate software modules in the workflow system. The first beta tests for inline density measuring are also about to start. As Kuisle emphasized: "One Touch lives from the development of further modules."

### **APL only for the COLORMAN?**

The speeches triggered a lively discussion among the newspaper printing experts. It was asked whether APL will also be provided for other manroland models and whether it could be retrofitted, to which Peter Kuisle replied: "We will also be offering the GEOMAN or REGIOMAN in autoprnt versions." Retrofits are conceivable in individual cases because APL is based on PPL. The Business Forum concluded with an extensive tour of the printing center where the guests had the opportunity to see the COLORMAN autoprnt in action. Fully automated plate changing at the press of a button was demonstrated with a 48-page offprint that appeared in April to celebrate the start-up of the world's first COLORMAN autoprnt.

### **Captions:**

It's a pleasure to read: the Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung printed on a COLORMAN autoprnt.

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Standing in front of the world's first COLORMAN autoprnt which is installed in Osnabrück (from the left): Peter Kuisle, Executive Vice President for Webfed Printing System Sales at manroland AG; Hermann Elstermann, publisher of the Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung; Jens Masur, Works Manager of the Osnabrück Printing Center; Gerd Finkbeiner, CEO of manroland AG; and Friedrich Torneden, Managing Director of manroland Nord. | © manroland.

Live demonstration of the COLORMAN autoprnt. In the foreground are the printing plate cassettes that at Druckhaus Osnabrück are loaded manually and transported to the press on trolleys. | © manroland.

The COLORMAN printing towers are only 5.70 meters high which is considerably lower than those of the newspaper presses earlier used in Osnabrück. | © manroland.