



Peter Wolfram

## Two of the Best Investments You Can Make: Equipment Inspections and Operator Training

**You might have run your Muller Martini saddle stitcher or perfect binding line for many years. You probably produced millions of brochures, books or magazines with it. Many of your operators and maintenance staff worked on the equipment over the years. Perhaps you even moved it when your facilities expanded. The Muller Martini machines are heavy-duty industrial manufacturing tools and they are still performing for you. But do you really know whether they are actually exploiting the machine's potential in terms of quality and performance?**

It's only human nature to continue on when things seem to go OK. However, the best performing organizations constantly push the limits and explore every opportunity to maximize performance and reduce process waste.

Here are two key <sup>MM</sup>Services tools that can help you get out of a stagnant performance level and help your team reach a higher level of performance and stick with it.

### **First good investment: equipment inspections**

Muller Martini offers comprehensive [equipment inspections](#) that provide a full, detailed assessment of your complete production line. The <sup>MM</sup>Inspect inspection packages are great, inexpensive tools for getting a full assessment of where the machine stands, what it might need and what might be holding it back when it comes to higher output and uptime and

maybe better quality. They are available for most Muller Martini machines and are offered at attractive flat rates, with all expenses included.

A Muller Martini technician will be onsite and perform the inspection using a specific software application that uses checklists, factory records, machine upgrade information and other data, that is only available to Muller Martini. The technician will focus on performing the inspection, however it offers a valuable learning opportunity by having your staff watch the Muller Martini specialist perform the inspection and also get some questions answered.

The <sup>MM</sup>Inspect report will provide a detailed technical evaluation of the machine and also include full listings and prioritization of recommended parts, and show any potential upgrades that might be available for your machine. These reports are so detailed and well-illustrated that many Muller Martini users get these inspections done every year and use the report as guidance for their in-house maintenance teams.

The first step towards better performance is knowing exactly where your equipment stands.

### **Second good investment: operator training**

Even experienced operators greatly benefit from high-performance training. It is very common to encounter skilled and longstanding employees who managed and ran bindery equipment for years, but never had official equipment manufacturer training. They often learned from a colleague who retired or moved on. Knowledge, as well as good and bad habits, were passed on informally and without any records. This “learning by doing” or „handing down training” creates a base-skill that enables organizations to produce at a minimum level, leaving substantial productivity and quality potential simply on the table.

In a period of significant shortage of skilled personnel and aging industry demographics, a lot of effort is made to provide a work environment that is welcoming and rewarding, particularly when trying to attract a new, talented and young workforce. Investing in [operator training](#) can be one of the most important and most rewarding tools for retaining and attracting employees.

When it comes to working with complex, powerful and essential bindery production equipment, operator training is absolutely critical. Imagine a new employee that finds her- or himself being asked to operate a sophisticated piece of machinery with only minimal instruction or training. Standing in front of a machine that you barely know and being expected to produce safely at high rates, with highest quality, creates undue stress and a very difficult work environment. As a result, new, promising employees often simply leave or struggle through the day, minimizing speed and output, just to limit the risk of something going wrong.

It is best practice to qualify new operators on-site and at the equipment with formal manufacturer training, then to follow up with additional shorter training sessions at regular intervals, effectively building and improving employee skills for years.

Training for equipment operators as well as maintenance staff is one of the best investments you can make. It goes for all manufacturing industries, ensuring that employees, no matter if new to the job or with years of experience, are effectively trained is critical to gaining operational efficiency, flexibility, as well as safety. Benefits are immediate and plentiful. Higher performance and customer satisfaction, more satisfied staff and better retention rates for valuable employees.

By the way: Muller Martini offers you many other valuable services. You can read information

about <sup>MM</sup>Remote or our Life Cycle Management in this interesting [blog](#) by my colleague Jules Dietz. Or simply visit our [website](#).

Yours,  
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