

## Finishing 4.0 – Networking

Company level  
Production planning  
and control (PPS)



### Connex LineControl

- Submission of electronic job tickets
- Integrated prepress
- Queue management

### Connex. Info 4.0

- Production status data acquisition
- Detailed analysis
- Reports and notifications

Manufacturing  
level



Produktionsmittel  
 ▶ Digital Solutions  
 ▶ Softcover  
 ▶ Hardcover  
 ▶ Saddle Stitching  
 ▶ Mailroom

Partner



Material Staff Logistics



Your strong partner.

MÜLLER MARTINI



Adrian Mayr

# Drupa Has Not Outlived Its Usefulness, But it Must Reinvent Itself

**The four-day [virtual.drupa 2021](#) is history. „I think it’s good that this experiment has been dared. Because it is important that our industry marks its presence and is not forgotten,“ says Adrian Mayr. In the following blog, the Head of Product Management & Corporate Marketing at Muller Martini reveals his thoughts on drupa 2024.**

Of course, virtual.drupa 2021 doesn’t have anywhere near the significance of a real drupa. You can already see that in the number of participating manufacturers. Five years ago, more than 1800 companies were represented in Düsseldorf, but just over 200 took part in the virtual trade show.

And yet, I think it’s good that the virtual.drupa 2021 experiment has been dared – both from the point of view of drupa and from the point of view of a machine manufacturer. Because it is important that our industry marks its presence and is not forgotten. That’s why it was clear to us from the very beginning that we wanted to be represented at this virtual trade show. For one thing, drupa has always been important for Muller Martini. And for another, we wanted to highlight the importance of print finishing, which is still often underestimated.

It is not only becoming increasingly important in the complex production chain of digital printing, but also plays to its strengths – key words haptics and finishing – in classic book production. Incidentally, we are also seeing this in our markets, with many of our customers recording high growth rates in the production of hardcover books in particular.

### **For me, the virtual.drupa had a special significance**

Since the outbreak of the corona pandemic just over a year ago, there have been countless online events. Rolf Steiner, Managing Director of our customer Vogt-Schild Druck AG spoke in his interesting [blog](#) from last week somewhat exaggeratedly of an „overkill“. And I'm sure you feel the same way I do: hardly a day goes by when I can't attend an industry webinar. Nevertheless, virtual.drupa had a special significance for me. And for three reasons.

First, the drupa brand acts as a magnet and radiates internationality, whereas many webinar offerings tend to have a regional character – if only for linguistic reasons. Secondly, virtual.drupa 2021 covered the entire spectrum of the graphic arts industry, whereas online webinars are usually limited to a specific range of topics. And thirdly, virtual.drupa 2021 gave us the opportunity to present a large part of our machine portfolio directly on the virtual.drupa 2021 website on the one hand and, as a supplement, in our [online showroom](#) on the other.

### **Promising start**

I naturally hope that as many (potential) customers as possible have taken the opportunity to visit Muller Martini at virtual.drupa 2021. Although I do not yet have the detailed traffic figures or the visitor leads, the start was promising. On the opening day, the number of clicks on our [website](#), through which many people accessed our site, was higher than it had been for a month. And I already received a few concrete inquiries on the first two days of the trade show. However, our web session „Muller Martini: Your strong partner – driving the digital transformation in print finishing“ by Volker Leonhardt, Group Management and Head of Global Sales, and Georg Riva, Head of Sales, would have deserved a bit more participants, if I'm honest.

As soon as we have received the leads from the drupa organization, we will be in direct contact with the customers – and those who will hopefully become customers soon. I'm particularly curious to see how many people we haven't met yet are among them. Frankly, however, my expectations in this regard – unlike at a real drupa – are not too high. Because at virtual.drupa 2021, unfortunately, some well-known manufacturers of digital presses were not present. I think that's a shame, because Muller Martini is the market leader in this segment with its Finishing 4.0 solutions.

### **Showing solutions and business models**

In this respect, I hope to be able to attend a proper drupa again in 2024. It would be my fourth after 2008, 2012 and 2016. We sometimes hear that such large trade shows are no longer in keeping with the times – especially in an industry like ours that is no longer booming. They are too expensive for the suppliers and for the visitors, some of whom travel from far away. However, I don't believe that drupa has outlived its usefulness. But it has to reinvent itself – and that's where the exhibitors undoubtedly also play an important role.

After all, the huge expense is no longer manageable for many machine manufacturers. That's why, in the future, what's needed is no longer large stand areas with impressive machinery, but top innovations, the demonstration of solutions for attractive end products, and new business models with which we address not only print shops and bookbinders, but also other segments such as publishers or agencies. In short, we want to achieve a comparable effect with less resources.

### **The social components as a drupa success factor**

One thing is clear, however: our stand will continue to offer added value in the future. But I can't yet tell you what our drupa format will look like in 2024 and whether we will also have virtual elements on the stand, for example, such as live links to our training centers. One thing I do know for sure, however, is that I'm already looking forward to direct contact with you.

After all, the social component, all the formal and informal conversations on the stand and over dinner, are a key success factor of drupa as a marketplace for our industry in general and for strengthening our corporate brand.

Webinars are a one-dimensional affair, but trade shows enable bidirectional communication. Or as Rolf Steiner put it in his blog, „I prefer to see people live, because people are analog – and the graphic arts industry is like a big family in a small world.“ I see it the same way and in this sense I am already looking forward to seeing you again in Düsseldorf in spring 2024!

Yours

Adrian Mayr

Head of Product Management & Corporate Marketing Muller Martini