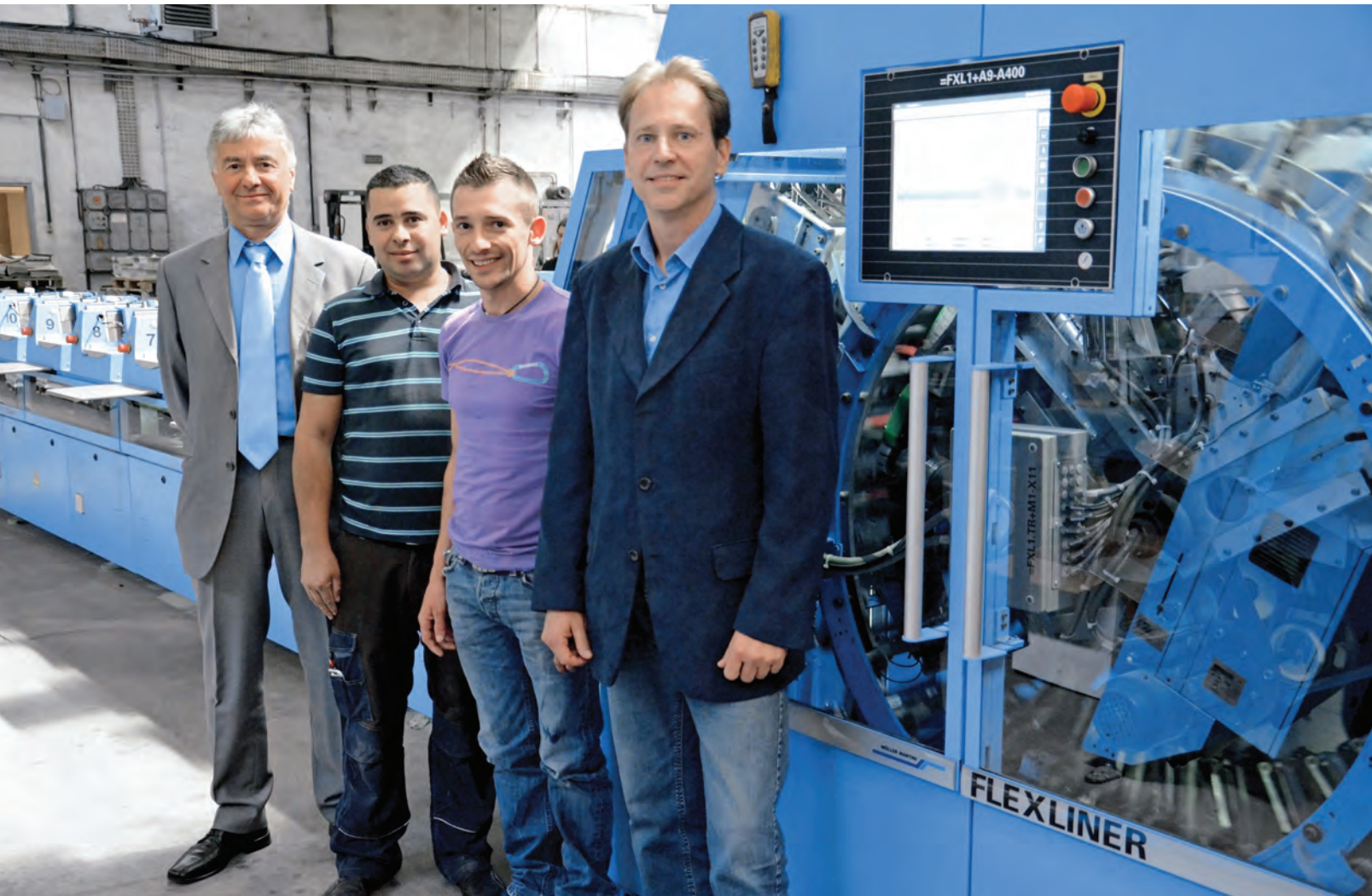


“The FlexLiner Is the Optimal Solution for Inserts in Inserts”



Since insert numbers at Prospekt Versand Service GmbH (P.V.S.) continue to grow apace, the company has commissioned a new FlexLiner to join its ten existing inserting systems from Muller Martini, and will commission two more at the end of this year. “Muller Martin has managed to create a masterpiece in this machine,” says Erich Romano, speaking about his latest investment, which handles the increased volumes, while also having the benefit of saving the company electricity.



Double the Output, Half the Electricity

P.V.S. Managing Director Erich Romano was amazed when he checked the electricity counter of the new inserting system a few weeks after commissioning. Since it has smaller drives, which are activated if required, the FlexLiner only consumes half as much electricity as a Biliner with a large central drive, at double the output. "That saves us a good EUR 1,000 in electricity costs a month," says Romano.

"Muller Martini's FlexLiner is a masterpiece. First, I like the combination of the linear and rotational principles, which means that all inserts are first gathered, fed without grippers and then inserted, which is a big advantage especially if there are a large number of inserts. Second, the FlexLiner is the optimal solution for inserts in inserts, which is precisely the business model that we're successful with." >

Erich Romano (right), P.V.S. Managing Director: "Our customers know that they can rely on us, since we've never missed a deadline in all the years." Beside Erich Romano are Horge Ciprian (Production Manager), Mihai Tătaru (Deputy Production Manager) and Gerhard Urban (Product Manager at Muller Martini Austria).

► "Each December, when I take a closer look at our figures, I think that they'll be difficult to beat in the coming year, but each time we manage to exceed the results of the prior year."

P.V.S. Managing Director Romano is sometimes taken aback himself by the rapid growth of the plant that was established in 2007 and is located in Sopron, seven kilometers from the border with Austria. "We don't even have a team of sales representatives..."

190 Tons of Paper – a Day!

The figures are impressive indeed. Between 2011 and 2014, P.V.S. processed 44 percent more softcover books – an increase from 1.03 to 1.49 billion copies. Over the same period, the number of inserting processes rose by 57 percent, from 307 to 483 million. Some 190 tons of paper

are finished in Sopron each day (see also charts). "Softcover books are increasingly popular today because they address consumers directly, are delivered to their homes free of charge and are typically read by several people."

Products with one to two inserts account for around half the volume. Since 2011, P.V.S. has been the first graphic arts company worldwide to use a high-performance Muller Martini Integro 300 inserting system with stream feeders, double production functionality and a Robusto Compensating stacker. The Integro joined P.V.S.'s existing two AlphaLiners and seven Biliners. "The Integro is the optimal solution for one to two inserts, because we can run it in double production," says Romano.

"A Masterpiece"

For products with three or more inserts, P.V.S. has relied for a few months now on a FlexLiner (the eleventh inserting system from Muller Martini at the Sopron plant), featuring a main jacket feeder, eight insert feeders and a Robusto compensating stacker, Romano has been a fan of the new technology since his first glimpse of the FlexLiner at the Muller Martini booth at drupa '12, which is why he has ordered two additional inserting systems of the same type for the end of this year.

From a Simple Idea to Europe's Leading Insert Specialist

In 1991, Erich Romano and his business partner Johann Ungerböck came up with a simple idea: to save advertisers delivery costs, they bundled softcover books for their customers, sorted and ordered them, and delivered them, affixed to a cover, to households. Twenty-four years later, the business model has been refined somewhat, but the basic principle at Europe's leading insert specialist remains the same.

P.V.S., which is headed up by Erich Romano and has its head office in Steinbrunn (Austria), today produces advertising brochures featuring inserts in the Hungarian

town of Sopron, where 70 employees work in three shifts. Numerous well-known retail chains such as XXXLutz, Kika and Leiner have softcover books produced in runs of between 100,000 and 10 million copies for households in Austria, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Croatia. The products are inserted into newspapers or delivered via the postal service's distribution channels.

The retail chains draw attention to special offers by means of up to eight inserts (with page counts of 8 to 96) and inserted cards, thereby increasing the attractive-

ness of their advertising brochures. The main jacket can range from a thinly folded A4 sheet to 96 pages. "The FlexLiner simply gobbles up everything," says Romano with a grin.

To ensure that not only the inserting process, but also delivery runs smoothly, Österreichische Post AG (Austrian Post) has operated its first general post office outside Austria in Sopron since 2008. "It's a win-win situation for the postal service and for us," says Romano.

If the paper specification permits, the new FlexLiner regularly runs at the maximum speed of 30,000 cycles per hour, which is why the successful company has ordered two more of these machines.



Never Missed a Deadline

Since being commissioned in March, the FlexLiner has been running almost around the clock, and has taken care of the increasing volumes at P.V.S. almost single-handedly. That is all the more necessary given that the lead times for production are increasingly tight, in part because of the tough price war among retail chains, says Romano. In addition, P.V.S. receives an increasing number of jobs directly from printing plants rather than retail chains, because the printing plants cannot perform inserting in such large quantities themselves.

A typical example is the following: a request for a long run is received by telephone on Thursday. Three million softcover books are supplied on Friday, and on Monday they leave by truck. “Our customers know that they can rely on us, since we’ve never missed a deadline in all the years,” says Romano.

Fast and Quiet

P.V.S. has benefited from the FlexLiner having a high output almost right after commissioning. When “Panorama” paid a visit to Sopron, it had been running for a week

non-stop at 30,000 cycles per hour. “If the paper specification permits, we always run the machine at maximum speed,” says Romano. “But the speed is never lower than 23,000 cycles per hour, even for complex or thin products.”

The Managing Director freely admits: “I would never have thought that we would achieve such high output so quickly, since the FlexLiner is designed as a newspaper inserting system, whereas we solely produce softcover books. However, the FlexLiner has proved itself to be optimal for our type of production too.”

What is more, the FlexLiner is extremely quiet, says Romano. “Even when it’s running at maximum speed, I can speak with our operators at normal volume right beside the machine.”

Familiarization During Assembly

One reason that the machine operators have achieved high output within such a short time is that they were present when the FlexLiner was being installed. “That enabled them to familiarize themselves with the new machine from scratch,” says Romano.

In addition, P.V.S. employs an in-house technician with extensive experience of Muller Martini systems. He also takes care of the regular maintenance of the older machines, with the result that “they’re in excellent condition”, says Romano. ◀

www.pvs-austria.at

P.V.S. Enjoys Impressive Growth: 57 Percent More Inserting Processes in Three Years

