

Coldset Printing Partners, Paal-Beringen (Belgium)

Large-scale Belgian printing plant opens up new opportunities beyond newspaper printing

One of the most extensive investment projects in the European newspaper industry is currently heading into its final phase. Since 2017, Belgium's biggest newspaper printing plant, Coldset Printing Partners (CPP), has been renovating the printing section at its Paal-Beringen site. In future, there will be five production lines instead of four. CPP, a customer of Ferag for many years, has invested in equipment such as the tried-and-tested MultiSertDrum, MultiStack and StreamFold components.

In 2010, Coldset Printing Partners's newspaper printing plant in Paal-Beringen was set up as a joint production facility for media companies Corelio and Concentra. Today, newspapers such as *De Standaard*, *Het Nieuwsblad*, *De Gentenaar*, *L'Avenir*, *Gazet van Antwerpen*, *Het Belang van Limburg*, *De Limburger* and *Metro* are printed here, approximately 80 km to the east of the capital Brussels. CPP is the biggest coldset printing company in the country with an output of almost 600,000 newspapers per night. Following a merger in 2017, it is now part of the Mediahuis media group.

Under the direction of CEO Paul Huybrechts, optimizing production has become an ongoing focus for CPP. Between 2010 and 2013, for example, insertion technology which had been used for 20 years was replaced with three much more efficiently designed Ferag MSD inserting drums. This was also when the company invested in a StreamFold quarterfold line for the first time.

A wider variety of formats

In 2017, CPP set to work on another three-year renovation of its production technology. This would enable the printing plant to focus more on semi-commercial products and therefore offer more newspaper formats, a higher print quality and more postpress processing services in future.

The four KBA Commander printing lines in use up to that point, each of which featured three towers and a folder (for 96-page tabloids), were retrofitted and re-configured over the six phases of this project. Now only seven of the previous twelve towers remain, with two 64-page machines and one 96-page one. However, the Commander machines are being supplemented with two new KBA Cortina waterless offset newspaper rotation presses (each with two towers and a folder for 64-page tabloids). In future, CPP will boast five production lines with five folder deliveries and will therefore need an additional postpress processing line in the mailroom.

A second quarterfold line

Expanding opportunities in postpress processing is particularly important for enabling CPP to focus more on high-quality newspaper products. For this reason, a second Ferag StreamFold quarterfold line has been installed. Together with the variable web width of the Cortinas – from 1200 to 1620 mm, thus covering page heights in Nordisch, Rhenish and Berliner formats – this allows for a variety of product types right down to magazine format.

While one of the Commander machines has now been fitted with the pre-existing but refurbished ETR inserting drum (since it is mainly used for products which rarely have anything inserted), CPP is installing a newly acquired MultiSertDrum inserting drum behind the Cortinas. This is the fourth of its kind to be set up in the CPP mailroom. Besides this, the DiscPool for both Cortina production lines is being enhanced using state-of-the-art Ferag technology. More capacity has also been created in the bundling area, with two further MultiStack compensating stackers added to give the CPP postpress processing lines ten bundling lines in total.

Fifth mailroom line already in operation

CPP has traditionally tended to work offline (using Ferag MultiDisc winding machinery) in order to reach full printing press speed in the insertion area despite numerous changes of product. All the new Ferag components are therefore also in operation, along with all five postpress processing lines, although the second new newspaper printing press will not start production until early 2019. The entire project is being carried out while operations are ongoing and is scheduled to finish in June 2019.

Paul Huybrechts is completely satisfied with Ferag's project planning and management: "Since 2007, we have worked step-by-step with Ferag to update our postpress processing and to make it more efficient. This has always been very effective and the latest project has also gone very well."

Impressions of the renewed postpress processing technology at the CPP mailroom:



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Ferag AG, with its headquarters at Hinwil in Switzerland, has for 60 years been known and respected in the printing industry for high quality, absolute dependability and perfect customer support. The traditional, family-owned company is seen as the undisputed market and technological leader in the development, manufacture and marketing of postpress processing systems. Ferag is also a specialist in innovative conveyor and processing technology for the most varied industrial applications and goods distribution systems. For example, with its innovative Skyfall system, the company has in recent years become very successful in sectors like e-commerce and intralogistic materials flow. Like its affiliate companies Denipro AG, WRH Global AG with its 20 subsidiaries, and PMC Print Media Corporation, Ferag is part of the Walter Reist Holding AG corporate group, which employs a staff of more than 800 worldwide.

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