

Newsprinters (Knowsley) Ltd., Great Britain

Environmentally friendly and efficient: Newsprinters transitions to inserting process

British media group News UK has pledged to remove all single-use plastic in its newspaper products by mid-2020. This was the reason for Ferag bringing in an additional EasySert inserting drum for the Newsprinters production site at Knowsley, near Liverpool. The high-circulation *Sun TV Magazine* with inserts is now being packaged as a supplement to The *Sun* daily newspaper, rather than shipping separately in polywrapped bundles.

Newsprinters is the UK's largest newspaper printing service provider and as part of News Group, operates three newspaper printing plants respectively situated in the metropolitan regions of London, Liverpool and Edinburgh. Newsprinters Knowsley, located east of Liverpool, produces some of the UK's most popular newspaper titles, including The Sun tabloid. At the printing plant, each of five triple-width printing presses discharges to separate Ferag mailroom lines consisting of three MultiStack compensating stackers capable of processing up to 30 bundles per minute. Of the 250 or so staff at Knowsley, 50 work in the mailroom. The site prints and processes over ten million newspapers and supplements per week.

A separate postpress area has been set up for processing supplements and other magazine-type publications, with two 12-hour shifts working around the clock on weekdays. There are two Ferag lines installed here, both able to trim main products on three sides with an SNT trimming drum and feed up to nine inserts via a FlyStream system. While line 1 was already equipped for bundling, polywrapping and inserting, line 2 has until now lacked inserting capability.

In light of News UK's commitment to cease polywrapping its newspapers and supplements by mid-2020 on environmental grounds (the "plastics pledge"), production managers at Newsprinters Knowsley sat down with Ferag and examined technology alternatives. After a live demonstration of the EasySert inserting drum in Hinwil, Newsprinters decided to retrofit this Ferag technology.

Opening by air blast

Of the products processed weekly in the Knowsley PFD postpress area, the most important by far is the *Sun TV Magazine*, which comes to readers enclosed in Saturday editions of The Sun. The tabloid product with a standard size of 76 pages (68 pages for the Republic of Ireland edition) is buffered on MultiDisc after printing, to optimize print as well as postpress processing speeds. In the first step of the finishing process, *Sun TV Magazine* is trimmed on three sides to the final format of 265 x 333 mm. For this reason, the magazine must be opened with an air blast for subsequent inserting of supplements with EasySert.

The EasySert is engineered for speeds of up to 30,000 copies per hour. To ensure that the present production window – Sunday morning to Wednesday morning for 1.8 million weekly copies – stays practicable using the two current processing lines, Newsprinters wanted certainty that net output approaching this upper ceiling could be reliably achieved with air blast opening as well.

Ben Peet is Assistant Operations Manager at Newsprinters Knowsley, and he notes how Ferag's live demonstration in early April 2019 was "very successful" and convincing. In July 2019, Newsprinters placed an order to modify line 2 and adapt the UTR lines in the PFD area. Installation began in the fourth week of September with the time window specified as seven weeks, so full capacity would be on stream again at the latest before pre-Christmas business.

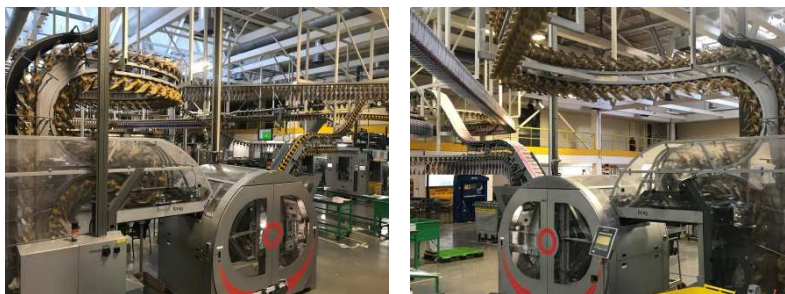
Challenging task

During those seven weeks, Newsprinters had only one of the processing lines available and hence that line needed to process 1.8 rather than 0.9 million copies. So

in a joint effort by the publishing operation and the printing plant, the production window was extended by an extra two days at the start. This was a challenging task, as the programme schedules for countless television stations had to be available earlier.

A well thought-out modification schedule from Ferag and smooth cooperation between News UK, Newsprinters and Ferag ensured that the project stayed right on schedule. For the publisher and printing plant alike, it has been a positive transition in several respects: not only can News UK deliver on its promise to cut back the use of plastic film, but with that element out of the equation, inserting into supplements also sheds complexity, which in turn adds its own advantages and efficiencies. Starting on 15 November 2019, Newsprinters was again able to insert at full capacity on both lines.

Bilder



The high-circulation *Sun TV Magazine* with inserts is now being packaged as a supplement to *The Sun* daily newspaper, rather than shipping separately in polywrapped bundles.



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Please send proof copies to:

- Ferag AG, Kommunikation, Zürichstrasse 74, CH-8340 Hinwil, Switzerland

About Ferag AG:

Ferag AG, with its headquarters at Hinwil in Switzerland, has for over 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 and direct mailing systems. Ferag is also a specialist in innovative conveyor and processing technology for the most varied industrial applications and goods distribution systems. Through its worldwide sales organization, the company is active in more than 20 countries with its own sales and service companies or agencies.

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