



CHARLESWORTH adds 'digital' bindery

Horizon Automation and Quality Deliver Short-Runs at Hammonds

The Charlesworth Group, one of the UK's foremost producers of scientific, technical and medical journals, has just installed a Horizon SB-07 7-clamp perfect binder from G.A.E at its award-winning Hammonds Bindery division in Wakefield. The new system was spotted at IpeX and was ordered together with a Horizon HT-30 near-line robotic three-side trimmer; it replaces a single clamp Horizon BQ-270 which represented the company's first step into the short run binding market, as Production Director David Boothman explains:

"We have a range of finishing options from gather-stitch lines to perfect and case binding, but our original Horizon perfect binder was our first dedicated short run machine. It opened up a new way of working which can be compared to the difference between litho and digital print, in fact the Horizons are so well suited to finish the work produced on our digital press that they are often referred to as 'digital binders' by our staff," says Mr Boothman.



The Charlesworth Group's Production Director David Boothman with the new Horizon systems

"Run lengths of the type of document we produce have fallen, partly due to the use of the internet as an alternative to print," he continues. "Typically we will use the Horizon binder at run lengths of under 500, they are ideal for this because their automation means set-ups measured in minutes compared to half an hour on our other machines. They are also easy to run, requiring only one operator, and we find that whatever we want to produce, Horizon have included a pre-set button for it."

"The BQ-270 was a beginning, but the SB-07 is a more serious and substantial piece of kit altogether, offering increased speed, capacity and a level of quality which is comparable to any other binding method at our disposal."

The addition of the HT-30 three-side trimmer has completed a binding system which offers great productivity benefits according to Mr Boothman. "If you have a short run binder, it makes sense to have a short run trimmer. It's possible to trim and bind simultaneously, making a very versatile standalone short run production line."





Horizon Delivers Short-Runs at Hammonds ... continued



A significant factor in the investment programme was provided by research undertaken with Vision in Print earlier this year. In applying the principles of lean manufacturing it was revealed that a very high percentage of time in Charlesworth's production processes was taken up with making ready and, therefore, a key area for cost saving and creating efficiencies.

Mr Boothman explains: "Through our work with Vision in Print, we identified that we needed to invest in new plant to provide the most cost effective solution for producing shorter runs, while utilising our B1 presses more efficiently on longer run lengths. With much lower set up times for both, the combination of our new HP Indigo 5000 digital press with the Horizon binding line is vital to enable us to achieve our aims and be much more competitive on runs of up to 400 books."

The Horizon was selected over rival machines because of its compliance with Charlesworth's quality standards, essential following recent ISO 9000 accreditation. Capacity for shorter run perfect binding will also be increased for trade work through Hammonds, the binding arm of the Group - important as more printers opt for digital presses and run lengths subsequently reduce.

The Charlesworth Group has around 250 staff worldwide, with facilities in the UK, China and USA. The company unified its UK operation in 2004 with the completion of a purpose built extension to its Wakefield factory, bringing a total floorspace of 40,000sq ft. Founded in 1928, the company has comprehensive pre-press facilities, B1 and B2 multicolour offset and digital presses as well as a finishing department which takes on local trade work in addition to the core finishing workload.



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