Printa controls one of the world’s most versatile printing presses.
PcM Uitgevers installs Printa to control its new printing plant in Amsterdam

PcM Uitgevers, with two printing plants based in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, is one of the leading newspaper publishers and printers in the Netherlands. The printing plant in Amsterdam has a total printing volume of up to 6 million printed copies or 4.5 million newspapers per week. De Volkskrant, Trouw, Het Parool, NRC Handelsblad are the papers the company produces in its Amsterdam plant. In addition, 15 editions of free sheets are included in the plant’s weekly production program.

In 1999 and 2000, PcM built a completely new ‘greenfield’ printing plant in Amsterdam. The new plant replaces the company’s previous Amsterdam plant in Wibautstraat and is commissioned during the autumn 2000.

New printing press for flexible and versatile production

PcM’s new printing plant, called Amstel, is provided with a printing press that is considered the most flexible and versatile in the world. The MAN Roland’s Colorman 40 press line with four folders and twelve stacked 10-cylinder satellite towers allows a vast number of different web leads and impositions, and thus can be used to produce the most diversified newspapers. The press is equipped with Baumüller’s shaftless drives enabling flexible usage of the entire press line.

Based on highly positive experiences from its Rotterdam plant, PcM Uitgevers decided to install Honeywell’s Printa automation system to control the new press line, and to manage the production planning and monitoring of the new plant.

Printa total solution to control the entire printing plant

The versatile production and comprehensive production planning and monitoring functions at PcM’s printing plant formed the basis for ordering Honeywell’s TotalPlant Printa automation system. The total solution to manage the high requirements of the printing press consists of the Printa Press Control System (PCS) and Printa Production Management System (PMS).

According to Ed Kessels, Production Director of the Amsterdam plant, the decision was based on Printa system features such as flexibility; the NT-based user interface; and system reliability.
“Additionally, our press automation evaluation convinced us that Printa can offer us the versatile production management functions which are required to run the new production line in an optimal way and utilize all features it offers for production”, continues Ed.

The Printa system delivery consists of 12 NT-based control desks, 16 Process Modules to control the units/folders, a PMS database server of a cluster type (NT/SQLServer) and three PMS workstations (NT).

All controls integrated into the Printa system

Printa covers all the printing press controls, including the shaftless Baumüller drive integration at PcM’s printing plant.

The Printa Press Control system is integrated to the MAN Colorman press using the open fieldbus technology. The INTERBUS fieldbus connects Printa’s Process Modules to the standard MAN I/O modules that are distributed close to the printing press devices and actuators. Printa controls the Baumüller’s drives system through the SERCOS links (Serial Real-time Communication System). The cut-off control system (MAN Cutcon) and the blanket washers (Oxy Dry) are also integrat ed into the Printa Press Control.

All the controls of the press line are thus implemented by means of a single control system and they can be operated, managed and maintained through a common user interface. The Printa control desks with their open user interfaces provide the operators with the necessary information on all systems and on all levels.

Printa for comprehensive production management

The Printa Production Management System (PMS) installed in the PcM plant covers complete pre-setting of the press, pre-press system integration, entire press room production management (including, for example, the imposition generator, scheduling and totalizer), reel consumption management, entire maintenance management and report generator.

The tool for optimizing product runs (Totalizer) ensures that the defined production level will be reached in all situations. For example, if one of the four folders were to drop out of production, the optimization program would automatically increase the production target on the three other folders.

The Printa Production Management System connects to the other information systems of the printing plant, for example to the pre-press system (Foyer), to the reel-handling system (Aurosys), and to the building automation system (ATH). This ensures an unobstructed information flow throughout the entire plant and the availability of required information for production planning.

Project stages

The new printing plant was commissioned in stages. The first part of the printing plant started in May 2000; the second in July. The old printing plant will be closed in October, and the capacity of 5.5 million copies per week should be achieved at Amstel by January 2001.