

Bringing Binding IN HOUSE

Adding new postpress equipment helps two printers maintain more complete control over jobs.

At Cooper Printing, Thomas D. Cooper (left) is vice president and Leyden South is bindery manager.

To save time and maintain complete control over jobs, many commercial printers have found it beneficial to add to their own production workflows in-house postpress processes rather than send the work to an outside trade bindery.

“When we sent out our stitching work, we lost control over our jobs,” says Thomas Cooper,

president of Cooper Printing, a 30-employee printing firm based in Fairfield, N.J. “The solution was to install our own equipment.”

“We were subcontracting out our saddle-stitching and folding jobs,” relates Chuck Fraelich, vice president of sales for John F. Turner and Company, a 105-employee printer headquartered in Modesto, Calif. “We wanted to get better control over our production and quality.”

To accomplish this end, both privately owned and family-run companies installed products from Vijuk Equipment, Inc. to increase their quality and turnaround time. Cooper Printing installed a VIJUK 321-T stitcher with a portable in-line punch in

October 2001, while Turner installed an identical system as well as two Vijuk-G&K T-74 folders in March 2002.

UPDATING BINDING CAPACITY

Cooper explains that the impetus behind installing the new VIJUK 321-T at his firm which produces an array of printed products including books, brochures, pocket folders,

posters, and box wraps—was company growth.

“We were looking for a machine that would handle future business growth as well as the variety of work we now do,” he explains. “We wanted faster production and more pocket capacity. We went from an old machine with only four pockets to a new unit with six pockets and a cover folder feeder.”

Impressed with the heavy-duty construction of his new Vijuk stitching unit, Cooper says, “One of the first things I noticed was that there is no vibration in the equipment. It ran smoothly throughout the complete speed range, all the way up to 10,000 books per hour.”

The stitching unit is equipped with four Hohner flying stitching heads, while the trimmer has fourth and fifth knives, often doubling productivity, Cooper states.

Because the 321-T accommodates a larger format than the company's former stitcher, jobs that it used to run one-up can now be run two-up. The unit can handle formats as large as 12x17¹/₄" or as small as 3¹/₂x4¹/₂" (the firm's previous stitcher accommodated jobs only as large as 12x14¹/₄" or as small as 3x5¹/₂").

RANGE OF FUNCTIONALITY

Cooper says he also favored the VIJUK 321-T because it has three vacuum/blower units that provide air blasts or suction to aid



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the feeding and placement of signatures on the saddles in all of the pockets. Each pocket also had double-sheet detector and a photo-optic missing-signature detector.

The portable in-line punch also is a step up from the three-hole punch that was incorporated in the trimming process of the old saddle stitcher, Cooper relates. "It used to take two hours to set up the punch," he recalls, "so we would wind up hand-punching the jobs, and it never looked as good. Our new machine's portable in-line punch has a high die that takes only 10 minutes to maneuver into place. It's a nice finishing touch to our jobs."

"The addition of the 321-T stitcher has made a tremendous difference in our productivity, and the value for dollar is terrific," adds Cooper. "Vijuk has designed this machine with the operator in mind, allowing our bindery manager and his crew to produce quality work virtually the week our machine was installed. We are now producing 100% of our saddle stitch work in house."

ADDING A NEW CAPABILITY

In 1991, John F. Turner and Company established its sports calendar division. Today, the company holds licenses to print wall calendars, box calendars, notepad and pen sets, desk blotters, paper cubes, and posters for the National Football League (NFL), National Basketball Association (NBA), National Hockey League (NHL), Major League Baseball (MLB), and college and university sports teams.

Additionally, the firm holds licenses to print calendars for high-profile sports and entertain-

ment personalities such as tennis pro Anna Kournikova and television actress Pamela Anderson.

Turner's pressroom contains a six- and an eight-color 40" MAN Roland sheetfed press, five single-color 17x22" Solnas, and a two-color Solna press.

The company had outsourced its folding and saddle stitching work, but to improve its calendar production time the firm decided to bring the binding process in house. "By installing the equipment under our own roof, we have better control over the production and quality," says bindery foreman Paul Edwards.

"We purchased the Vijuk equipment specifically to give us the ability to finish our calendars, which make up 80% of our business," explains Fraelich. "The bulk of our calendars are 12x12", and in the two months that we've owned the equipment, production continues to run smoothly."

He says the T-74 folders readily accept the full 25x38" press sheets, folding them into signatures at a steady rate of 7,000 to 9,000 per hour. The signatures feed into the stitcher consistently, and Turner is producing 7,000 to 8,000 calendars per hour. The in-line punch finishes with a hole for wall hanging.

NO PROBLEMS

Fraelich adds, "Occasionally, we produce 6x6" or 11x14" calendars, and our operators have made the changeovers with no problems. We are very satisfied with the performance of our new equipment."

Turner's VIJUK 321-T stitcher comes with six horizontal feeder pockets as standard, but was modified to five pockets to suit the company's specific needs. In



addition to the stitcher's aforementioned features, the pockets each have a status light tower and signature rack to indicate the proper signature to load.

EASY SET-UP, OPERATION

"Our operators have found both the stitcher and the folders easy to set up and operate," Fraelich states. "In fact, we have not had to increase our staff as much as we had estimated when we analyzed the cost of bringing the binding operation in house. It is too soon to quantify, but we believe we will realize substantial savings when our fiscal year ends."

"Our company's belief is to control all aspects of production, from design and prepress to press and postpress and fulfillment," says Turner plant manager Bob Jones. "We have to be ready to print jobs whenever they're needed. Sports teams only get hot toward the end of the season when they get into the playoffs, and you never know which team it will be. By having reliable equipment in house, we can control our workflow and provide clients with the turn around they demand." □

Turner bindery foremen Carlos Rodriguez (left) and Johnson Odisho flank Vijuk consultant Neal Anderson.