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DirectDrive: Licence to Reduce Makeready Time

First live demonstration of MAN Roland's DirectDrive system

In September the Gutenberg city of Mainz was the venue for the launch of future-oriented technology. The Universitätsdruckerei H. Schmidt (*The H. Schmidt University printing press*) invited the Prime Minister of Rhineland-Palatinate, customers and the press to the world's first live demonstration of the DirectDrive technology developed by MAN Roland.

Boosting the efficiency of print production was the aim of Gutenberg a long time ago, and is now also the driving force behind the efforts of the Universitätsdruckerei H. Schmidt, one of several MAN Roland field test partners, to help the DirectDrive technology achieve market maturity. All six printing units of the new six-colour ROLAND 700 have directly driven plate cylinders which reduces makeready time for plate changing, wash-ups of the blanket and impression cylinders, and inking-up by as much as 60%. While printing a six-colour poster with photos of the guests, the Universitätsdruckerei H. Schmidt demonstrated full plate changing, blanket and impression cylinder wash-ups, and printing the first proof sheet in 4 minutes and 30 seconds, followed by another plate change without wash-ups in less than 3 minutes. Dr. Markus Rall, member of the MAN Roland Executive Board and responsible for the Sheetfed Press Business Unit: "The idea behind DirectDrive breaks the shackles". This could result in a great increase in production time because less makeready time is needed.

A pioneer in quality and technology

Bertram Schmidt-Friderichs, owner and CEO of the printing and publishing group renowned for its high level of quality, had earlier explained in the company's own museum why they as a field test partner are now also a "technology pioneer", saying that: "This has a lot to do with our trust in MAN Roland". And referring to the experience they have had with DirectDrive so far, he stated: "The system is stable". Kurt Beck, Prime Minister of the state of Rhineland-Palatinate, rated the development as a "great step forward", praising it by saying "This joint project is a wonderful symbiosis between a medium-sized company and a Global Player".

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A poster with photos of the guests was printed for the DirectDrive demonstration. Kurt Beck, Prime Minister of Rhineland-Palatinate can be seen in the middle of the photo to the right of MAN Roland board member Dr. Markus Rall.

Ref. MAN Roland Druckmaschinen AG