



## TecnaU cutting line eases the path from printed rolls to finished photo calendars

CEWE, Europe's leading photo printer and provider of innovative online services, is on course for further growth with customized photo books, calendars, canvas prints, and numerous other photo products and digital items, which consumers can order using the company's Internet platforms and apps. Early in October 2018, an automatic TecnaU cutting line for processing products printed digitally on rolls went into operation in the production shop at the head offices of CEWE Stiftung & Co. KGaA in Oldenburg, Germany. The TecnaU line consists of an Unwinder 550 and a Cutter TC 7000 TS1 as well as a Stacker TC 1220 and a conveyor. Designed for web widths of up to 320 mm, this new cutting line is used to produce photo calendars. Calendar pages in A3 portrait, A4 portrait or A4 landscape format are cut to size with a precise full bleed, assembled into calendars, offset-stacked and finally delivered.

Achim Schwartz, Operations Manager with responsibility for digital printing, explains in an interview why CEWE with responsibility for digital printing, explains in an interview why CEWE invested in finishing equipment from TecnaU and outlines the operational and quality benefits offered by the cutting line for high-performance, multi-shift production.

### What lay behind your decision to purchase a new cutting line for roll-to-stack processing?

The decision was sparked by a desire to supplement our calendar production, which mostly takes place on a digital sheetfed press, with a web-fed processing line. We use an existing HP Indigo Digital Press WS6000 to print the calendars on rolls, and we needed a suitable near-line cutting solution to go with it.



The attraction of web-fed processing is that we no longer have to send stacks of sheets from the press via the guillotine and then separate the 13 or 14 calendar pages the hard way. Instead, we get a fluid, highly automated process with no manual intermediate steps, from the printed roll to the cut-to-size and offset-stacked calendars.

### **What requirements did you specify for the new cutting line?**

The calendar business is subject to strong seasonal variations and limited to the period from late October until just before Christmas. During those two months our presses run seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Robust and resilient technology is therefore essential. The cutting line should also have a higher maximum speed than the press, which achieves 30 m/min for applications in process color. The Tecna line is rated for up to 120 m/min, so that requirement is easily fulfilled.



Achim Schwartz, Operations  
Manager at Cewe

We use a uniform paper type for calendars – a 250 g/m<sup>2</sup> digital paper. Optimal cutting quality is paramount when it comes to finishing. In the 2017 season we tried to do it all with a rotary cutting system we already had. However, we found that it produces an oblique cut edge in the paper which is rather unsightly, especially if the calendar has a dark border or background. That's why we were on the lookout for a better alternative, which we found in Tecna. The Tecna cutter ensures exactly perpendicular cross cutting similar to a guillotine thanks to the cartridges with their vertical blades; side trimming, likewise perpendicular, is executed by lateral circular blades. Offset stacking was also important because it makes it easier to transfer the individual calendars to the downstream punching and twin-loop binding steps.

### **What first drew your attention to Tecna as a supplier of digital finishing solutions?**

We'd already had some contact with Tecna before. Robert Gubo, the Area Manager, paid us a visit early last year to show us a sheetfed system. I happened to mention our web-fed processing problem to him during a tour of our premises. Tecna had exactly the solution we were looking for.

### **How does the Tecna cutting line help you improve your services to your customers?**

Our customers want to be sent the calendars they've created as soon as possible in high print and finishing quality. It's ultra-efficient to have trimming immediately downstream of the press and to achieve high cutting quality in a continuous process. We can get the job done for our customers much faster and more fluidly that way – virtually in-line with finishing and with temporary storage restricted to a minimum.

### **Do the rolls which you process on the Tecna line contain homogeneous calendar types, for instance always A3 portrait or A4 landscape?**

The formats on each roll are not homogeneous, but there aren't normally many different types either. There are several batches per roll, each of which can contain calendars in A3 portrait, A4 landscape or A4 portrait in order to minimize the job change times. If we want to switch to another format, we just exchange the trimming cartridges for cross cutting and adapt the side trimming.



## **What business benefits do you get from the TecnaU cutting line?**

We can manage with fewer personnel because the line does away with several manual process steps. The press and the TecnaU line can be operated together by a single person. That also reduces our reliance on seasonal workers: we employ 1100 people at our facility, about half of them in production, plus another 400 or so temporary staff in the high season – which is a lot to have to find all at once.

To sum up, the entire line enables highly streamlined and efficient production because we print from roll to roll, cut the printed roll near-line on the TecnaU system and then proceed directly to finishing and mailing.

## **How would you rate the TecnaU line's ease of use and maintenance?**

Our operators had to get accustomed to the new line in the beginning, of course, but it was a short learning curve. We signed a service agreement with TecnaU with a 24/7 on-call service, just like we do with all critical production equipment. However, we didn't have to contact a service technician once throughout the calendar season, even though we produced more than 9000 calendars a day through the cutting line in the run-up to Christmas.



## **Would you consider using the TecnaU cutting line for products other than calendars in the future?**

We're very happy with the cutting line and we're now thinking about what use we could put it to for the rest of the year. One possibility might be to modify the line slightly at the conveyor end, so that it can also handle photo book covers. We produce about 5000 books a day with that kind of cover in the course of the year, and it would make a good backup solution for another system on our premises.

## **Do you have any plans to expand the cutting line further or to increase the degree of integration or automation?**

We don't really believe in continuous in-line production because if one link in the chain fails, the entire production process comes to a halt. That's why near-line processing makes sense downstream of web-fed printing. As far as the TecnaU line is concerned, we still see plenty of potential for integrating a hole punch option, for which TecnaU has an in-line solution, or for attaching twin-loop binding.

## **How satisfied are you with your cooperation with TecnaU?**

Our experience of TecnaU has been excellent. The purchase and installation both went ahead without any problems. It was a first, of course. What we particularly like about the system is that it works reliably and we've had no need to contact customer service so far. (End)



For further information, visit [www.tecnau.com](http://www.tecnau.com) or contact:

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## About CEWE

Boasting twelve high-tech production sites and approximately 3,800 employees in 25 European countries, the innovative photo and online print service-provider is a market and technology leader. In 2018, CEWE produced approximately 2.23 billion photos, 6.18 million copies of the CEWE PHOTOBOOK and numerous photo gifts, achieving group sales of €653.3 million. The company continues to set new trends in the photo industry by creating innovations based on enjoying photography. CEWE places a great deal of value on establishing a sustainable basis for business management in all areas. In particular, CEWE is a leading company in the area of climate protection. All brand products from CEWE are manufactured through completely climate-neutral methods. In the business field of "Commercial online printing," business print products are being marketed over the sales platforms CEWE-PRINT.de, Laserline, SAXOPRINT and viaprinto. Founded in 1961 by Senator h. c. Heinz Neumüller, CEWE has been listed on the stock exchange since 1993 and is an SDAX member.

## About TecnaU

TecnaU offers a complete product portfolio dedicated to paper handling, monitoring, processing and finishing for the digital printing industry. We are devoted to providing integrated solutions to support the broadest array of applications for Transactional Printing, TransPromo, Direct Mail, Publishing, Graphic Arts, Book on Demand and Short Run. Global service and around-the-clock support help ensure our reputation as the industry's reliability leader. Our products increase productivity, cut labor and paper costs, and even make new applications possible - TecnaU solutions truly empower digital print to help you do more with less.