

Volkswagen's print department doubles output in the space of two years.

Volkswagen

Manufacturing
Corporate Reprographic Department



Volkswagen – Case Study

Company	Volkswagen AG
Founded Location	1937 Wolfsburg, Germany
Services	Fulfilment of all printing and document needs for nine Volkswagen sites in Germany, including customer documentation, promotional collateral, business documents, and corporate stationery
Website	www.volkswagen.de

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Overview

Volkswagen's manufacturing headquarters – the so-called 'Autostadt' in Wolfsburg, north-west Germany – is one of the largest and most advanced car factories in the world, covering five square kilometres, with a workforce of 5,160.

State-of-the-art production is not confined to its cars, however. The site also houses an impressive in-house print department with a market-leading mix of digital and offset print and finishing firepower. Six conventional offset presses are in use, including one five-colour and two four-colour, two with varnishing units, and three two-colour machines.

The department's monochrome digital needs are met by three Océ machines – two VarioPrint 6250 Ultra instant duplex printers and one VarioPrint 2110 mid-volume printer. Three production colour presses complete the digital line-up.

Printroom Manager Helmuth Oschmann presides over a team of 42 highly trained operators and 10 trainees in the 2,500m² printing facility. Together this team produces the majority of the printing requirements of Volkswagen's seven German production and sales locations. The department's output ranges from owners' manuals, to Volkswagen promotional collateral such as brochures and flyers, to business documents and corporate stationery.

A choice between remote submission of print files or a staffed Printroom Customer Service Desk make it easy for Volkswagen employees across all seven German locations to make full use of the print department for the fulfilment of all their document needs, and to seek expert advice on how to optimise their print materials. The department caters for every conceivable finishing requirement, from guillotining to collating, stapling, spiral and perfect binding.

Challenge

Digital technology has been an integral part of the production mix within Volkswagen's print department for many years, as you would expect from a manufacturing innovator. The company's relationship with Océ dates back several years to the installation of the black and white systems. In addition, 20 Océ large format printers – both colour and black and white – are in use in various departments for the output of technical and design drawings, while four Océ continuous feed black and white systems are deployed in the finance department for the production of transactional documents.

Oschmann called Océ's professional print team in again in July 2011 to solve a serious production headache. Two existing digital print colour devices were struggling to cope with colour production volumes which had increased by 50% in the space of a year. “While the machines met our needs when we first installed them, the growth

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Helmuth Oschmann, Printroom Manager.

in demand for colour from across our internal customer base had been extreme”, he recalls. “The increased throughput was causing us more and more problems with reliability, consistency and machine downtime. There was absolutely no question that we needed to urgently replace those two machines with more robust and productive alternatives.”

The team at Océ was able to offer a ready solution to Oschmann’s brief, in the shape of two Canon imagePRESS C6010 colour production presses (including one VP model), capable of 61 impressions per minute on media up to 135gsm, with the scope to handle heavier or coated substrates up to 325gsm. The presses also offered inline finishing capabilities including saddle finishing and perfect binding, which Oschmann saw could be used on certain digital jobs to further boost the department’s productivity.

Achievements

Oschmann is unequivocal that the introduction of the Canon imagePRESS duo was the right move. “Quality is very visibly improved compared with the two previous colour machines, and the Canon imagePRESS C6010VP is a lot more robust, perfectly suited to the demands of its payload, which is a constant stream of short run jobs for customers with high quality expectations and ultra tight deadlines.”

The quality delivered by the Canon digital presses has also placed them in high demand for the last-minute documentation requirements including press and presentation materials. “It’s not unusual for us to be given a job that needs to be turned around within the hour – with the Canon machines that’s now quite feasible.”

This business-critical work means that Océ service and support is on standby 24/7, 365 days a year, with a technician on site in Wolfsburg within an hour of receiving a support call if necessary. Oschmann sums this service up with one word: “Outstanding [Hervorragend]”



Almost a year since the press upgrade, the department’s digital colour throughput is up at 350,000 A4 pages a month, within annual print volumes close to 16 million pages across all its presses in 2011. Oschmann has seen his department’s output more than double in the space of two years, with the same standard shift pattern.

“The two Canon imagePRESS devices have proved to be the ideal complement to the existing offset and digital mix”, says Oschmann. “They offer a balance of productivity and quality that is perfect for a large proportion of our work, and as the demand for rapid turnaround of short run jobs escalates among our customers, I have no doubt that we’ll be expanding our digital capabilities again before long.”

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