

*Constantia Asas*

**“OSC understands us”**



**Raise production while maintaining print capacity: The people at Constantia Asas in Ankara/Turkey have the experts of Siegwerk On-Site-Consulting to thank for this development. Higher print rates and shorter machine downtimes are two contributory factors which help the largest gravure printing organization in Turkey to produce more today. An earlier ink-transfer project helped set the foundations for improved processes. The conclusion of those responsible at Constantia Asas: „An outside look has helped us raise the quality of our work to a world-class level.“**

For Cigdem Basara, one key performance indicator is absolutely crucial: „We can raise our production year for year.“ Most recently, the production output of Constantia Asas in Ankara was up 8 percent year-on-year. A figure achieved despite Turkish’s leading gravure printing specialist (330 employees) not actually increasing its theoretical capacity of currently 300 million m<sup>2</sup> per annum. „We’re achieving these gains because we are continually optimizing production,“ says the R&D manager. The ideas stem from an OSC project finalized in March 2011. The outcome of the consultation has gone far beyond the anticipated targets. Savings of more than 5,000 machine hours, the equivalent of almost Euro 500,000 in lower costs are the projects balance sheet

highlights, „and those are realistic figures“, emphasizes Cigdem Basara. The important thing for the manager is that the joint project with the OSC experts from Siegburg not only delivered the results, but the project also helped the Turkish producer to pinpoint its position. „We knew previously that we were already top performers in some areas, and that we could perhaps improve in others,“ says Cigdem Basara. Based on the OSC benchmark analysis following the project, we now know that in core areas of the production process work is „at world-class level“. Basara: „Above and beyond the actual project results, that is key knowledge for us.“ OSC prepared the benchmark based on its own unique database of the European package printing industry.



Asas was established in 1978 by Vural Baylan and has since developed into one of Europe's leading gravure printing companies. It currently achieves EUR 72 million annual sales. In 2011, the Austrian packaging group Constantia Flexibles took over 93% of Asas shares.

In 2009, then Asas company changed ink suppliers, switching to products from Siegwirk Turkey. The OSC specialists from Siegburg took on responsibility at Asas for

the ink-transfer process. The change-over to the new ink supplier brought its own challenges: one being a short two-month preparatory period for the full ink changeover process in just one single weekend.

The ink-transfer

established by OSC and the responsible Application Technologists created the foundation stones for an improved recipe quality at Asas. The introduction of a colorimetry aided process based on the Siegwirk ink database together with a uniquely defined proof referring to standard enabled recipes to be optimized from the word Go. The change of suppliers at Asas was extremely well prepared, such that the changeover was ultimately smooth: production stopped on a Saturday morning and restarted early on the next Monday. „The ink-transfer left us with a good impression and we realized they could manage complex projects very well,“ reports Cigdem Basara.

The handling of the ink-transfer process drew the attention of the Siegwirk customer in Turkey to other OSC services. The Asas

managers liked the idea of an audit of Asas production processes. „We all work within our own cosmos, and can't always see our mistakes, which means it is only sensible to have someone from the outside come and look at our business and point out any possible gaps to us,“ says Assistant General Manager Tayfun Terzioglu. Even if one always uses state-of-the-art technologies, one cannot always be certain that one is using them in the most effective way, says Tayfun Terzioglu. „We saw that as a chance to get even better.“

The OSC audit at Asas was an intensive job. Two OSC consultants, Frank Dauth and Karsten Mix, spent three days assessing the processes on all six print machines in the Ankara plant. The audit was ultimately able to build on the good existing database to present valid figures and spell out concrete and realistic savings options to Asas. After the audit it was already clear to those responsible at Asas that the OSC experts should be given the chance to put their findings into a process optimization project.

#### Savings potential identified

The four fields identified by the On-Site consultants as having savings potential were:

- Increasing printing speed
- Improved processes in the ink laboratory
- Improved processes in pre-print
- Reduction of machine downtimes

The machine speed target was evident:

Asas should print faster in the future - obviously while maintaining quality. In a test series on several machines, the OSC consultants were able to demonstrate to production staff on site that higher speeds are possible e.g. without exceeding the limits for residual solvents in the print product. „The OSC people simply had the experi-





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ence to do it”, reports Cigdem Basara, “and our people soon saw that it worked and had genuine advantages. They were absolutely convinced.” And here again - which is typical for the entire project - friction amongst the Asas-people was avoided. The consultants from Siegburg demonstrated good communication skills, so that suggestions were eagerly accepted, says Cigdem Basara. After the first test runs, the printers in Ankara then started the second test series themselves, under their own responsibility. Since that time a control sheet logs for each order which targets and tolerances are planned for the printing speed or sets out reasons why it cannot be applied. The results of the higher speeds convinced everyone at Asas. On some machines, the speed was raised by up to 15% without any loss of quality. „That is cash in hand,“ says Cigdem Basara. It was not so much monetary savings, but rather process improvements which were the focus of the OSC activities in the ink laboratory. With the newly introduced lab proofer, new and more precise, reproducible proofs are possible for the first time.

Asas is now in the position of being able to make better use of previously implemented ink recipe software and transmit the recipes electronically, free of error, to the dosing system. Since then, each recipe is specific for the respective ink of a design. A fact evidenced by the high number of ink recipes. One year after the end of the project, Asas now counts almost 3,000 individual recipes in its database.

OSC introduced the standardization of return inks at Asas: this allows return inks to be used more efficiently while keeping stocks of returns at reasonable levels. Orders are documented in job folders:

each folder contains everything needed to reproduce the order. The ink preparation laboratory has also been optimized in terms of space, with staff now having a place of work which is nothing less than state-of-the-art. Cigdem Basara sees the results very positively. One can be sure that now exactly the right ink is delivered to the machine; basically, “everything happens much more professionally.”

The OSC consultants also introduced ink preparation in the pre-press stage. „We have much better collaboration between pre-press and ink preparation, so that the quality of the recipes is significantly higher,“ says Cigdem Basara. In terms of the machines, OSC consultants in Ankara initially took a closer look at reasons for downtimes. A series of small individual measures was defined. Measures which when taken together add up to respectable results including downtimes reduced by 30% - and considerable annual savings. With respect to the downtimes, the OSC people again demonstrated not only their ink-knowhow, but their knowledge of all aspects of the print business. Cigdem Basara has nothing but praise: „That is the big difference to our other suppliers – with OSC we are working with experts who have all worked where we are today. OSC understands us.” Cigdem Basaras’ succinct sum up: “The forecasts from the audit were surpassed in some areas“

Since the end of the project, Asas has been looking to maintain that achieved. Sometimes communication is necessary to keep things moving, but many processes triggered by the project are still being lived. Project leader: „We now know that we are good, and that’s something we’re not simply going to give up again.“





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