

Flexible output for Lower Saxony

Inserting technology at LSKN in Hannover - state of the art thanks to Müller.

The Lower Saxony regional government authority needs to send a lot of mail. The government workers have to receive personal information on a regular basis, especially with regard to income and compensation invoices. Many documents are sent to the schools and other educational institutions. The various types of education funding such as student and masters BaFöG (German student loans) involve all kinds of notifications and other correspondence, and the many different institutions also require a large volume of educational documentation and correspondence. The modern printing and output centre for the general administration of the State of Lower Saxony is in the far south of Hannover on Göttinger Chaussee, and is part of the Landesbetriebs für Statistik und Kommunikationstechnologie Niedersachsen (LSKN) (State of Lower Saxony statistics and communications technology office), the central IT and statistics service provider which was established on March 1, 2008. The LSKN is managed by a management board; accounting and billing are done according to business rules. In addition to the state administration agencies, its customers also include public federal and municipal administration offices.

Many tasks - many forms

18 million pages of print on 10 million sheets, 3 million mailings with a total postage amount of 2.3 million Euro - these numbers show that the



Affidavit of service mailings: Court summons in a distinctive yellow cover



The variable modules from Müller Apparatebau can be switched over to the desired system quickly.

LSKN deals with a large industrial volume of outgoing mail every day. The multitude of customers and tasks result in very different jobs for the varied forms and papers. Almost 200 preprinted forms - some on continuous and some on individual sheet stock - are constantly stocked at Göttinger Chaussee for this purpose.

This competency of handling extremely heterogeneous correspondence and mail material is a strength when it comes to gaining new partners, one which the manager of the Mainframe and Output (MOC) department, Günter Wollenhaupt, intends to expand. This was a key consideration when it came time to replace the aging inserting technology. Now three dual-channel type 8006 inserting lines from Müller Apparatebau work away in the second equipment room. With their variables and components which can be switched over quickly, they are optimally prepared for the heterogeneous output. Each of these systems is also equipped with an enclosure station, two of which are controlled electronically. "We are directly prepared for 22 different jobs with these three systems", say the team leaders Detlef Oppermann and Gerald Wölke. One of the most demanding processing tasks at the LSKN is the production of affidavit of service mailings

with summons or court orders in Lower Saxony. Here the summons is inserted into a distinctive yellow cover, which is in turn integrated into a special, also yellow envelope together with the delivery document. In Hannover, these mailings are implemented on the Müller systems in two subsequent steps - smoothly and also to the great satisfaction of the operators.

Printing - continuously and cut sheet

When it comes to printing technology, the state facility also has a versatile setup to meet the requirements. It is equipped with an Océ VarioStream 7400 Pinless for continuous printing, and with two VarioStream 7200 Pinfeed and two InfoPrint 62 Pinfeed for duplex printing. The printing stock comes from a continuous stack instead of a roll, because this is once again the economically optimal solution for the many medium-sized jobs. These systems are supplemented by the single-sheet monochrome system Xerox DP 100 EPS and the smaller full colour printer HP LaserJet 5550dn for jobs which are smaller or tied to individual forms. There are also numerous folding and separating modules. The print volumes exceed the mail processing volume by quite a bit.

This is because many customers only have their documents printed, taking care of mailing or distribution themselves. This is why packaging into packets and shipping bags and preparation for pickup and courier services is also part of the output manager's responsibilities. This is also illustrated by a sorting wall with no less than 300 active compartments. In cases where many forms and pre-printing play a role in the output process, consideration is already often given today to white paper production with full colour digital printing, in order to implement all documents in a continuous work-flow on white (roll) paper. This option was also reviewed already at the LSKN in order to create future compatible structures. However, there are many challenges when it comes to creating official documents, especially legal notifications: Firstly, very unconventional formats are used here; court summons for example use a sheet which is a bit smaller than DIN A3. Government and legal seals are also frequently imprinted as well. Wollenhaupt explains: "If we wanted to print these parts of the documents on white paper as well, then this would mean that an official from the responsible court would technically have to be present in the Output Centre at all times." Therefore working with individual document pre-prints will continue to be the solution of choice for the meantime.

Security as a quality criterion

Almost everything in the way of documents exchanged between the state, agencies, and citizens is not only important, but also critical with regard to time. The preparation, mailing, and delivery deadlines are particularly important for court summons, since deadlines are always relevant here. And the flow of documents and mailings is certainly not always smooth, but rather depends on specific dates and stages during the calendar year. The salary and pay invoices in Lower Saxony, for example, are only prepared and mailed if the numbers deviate from those of the previous



Günter Wollenhaupt (2.f.l.) and his team at LSKN Hannover

month. While this does occur every month for individual cases, a mailing with a volume of over 500 000 is due starting in October, for example due to the annual special payment. Final statements, assessments, and notifications also create production peaks before and after the turn of the year. In addition, large mailings to all citizens, students, or government employees can take place at any time. For this reason, redundancy and reserve capacity are a quality criterion for work at the LSKN Output Centre.

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They provide the security of having all capabilities available at any time, in order to ensure that schedules are met even in case of a technical fault and to provide output which corresponds to the current order volume. With the three dual-channel inserting lines by Müller, Hannover now has the required potential for mail processing as well.

A business based on flexibility and security

There is at least as much movement in the "industry" of public data processing centres as there is among their private counterparts: modern, more powerful printing and processing technology creates new opportunities, but also provides an impetus for centralization and outsourcing. Here at the LSKN, the step beyond the State of Lower Saxony has already been taken successfully with BaFöG document

processing. Expanding the customer base also seems quite reasonable when it comes to processing of court summons. At the same time, the volume of records and documents in paper form is also not necessarily growing in the public domain either. "There are already a lot of things being processed electronically which were previously prepared and sent in paper form", says Günter Wollenhaupt. Therefore the question of competitiveness and future-capability also arises at the LSKN. Detlef Oppermann is sure of one thing: "If we have modern and versatile equipment, then we are

well prepared to tackle new tasks with particular ease. We already have the right prerequisites with the three new Müller systems."

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