

Muller Martini first unveiled its new Vareo perfect binder, whose clamps are individually driven, at Hunkeler Innovationdays



A Secondhand Machine – as Good as New

With more and more foreign hardcover customers knocking on the door of Denona in Zagreb following Croatia's accession to the EU, the full-service graphic arts company has replaced its old bookline with a four-year-old secondhand Diamant MC 35. It was upgraded and installed by Muller Martini and is now "as good as new", according to Denona Sales Manager Željko Valpotić.

► For over three decades, Denona produced hardcover books using a BL 200 from Stahl that was commissioned in 1983. "That bookline was in good condition, but it had two major drawbacks," explains Valpotić. "First, the size range was limited. Second, changeovers were time-consuming."

Policy Stands Denona in Good Stead

Those disadvantages posed a greater problem for the company, which was established 32 years ago by Marko Denona and today employs 90 people under his management, after it acquired increasing num-

bers of customers from the European Union since Croatia's accession in summer 2013. "In order to offer such customers impeccable quality and the shortest possible lead times, we needed to invest in more contemporary technology," says Valpotić.

While Denona would install new machines every time ideally, that "is naturally not always possible for cost reasons," acknowledges the Sales Manager frankly. "That's why we always take a look around in the secondhand market too. However, we never purchase equipment that's older than four years and that policy of ours has stood us in very good stead to date."

MC Is Ideal for Short Runs

The Diamant MC 35, which was previously used by a French Muller Martini customer and was found by Denona online, fits that description. The machine, which was manufactured in 2009, was just what Denona had been looking for, and not only because of its age. "The bookline also appealed to us because Motion Control Technology is ideal for our short runs," explains Department Process Manager Andrea Ćorić Vukovac. Denona produces 2,000 copies per title on average. Their shortest runs have just 300 copies, while the longest consist of some 25,000 copies.





1 Designer Iva Denona Vusić, daughter of company founder Marko Denona, and Sales Manager Željko Valpotic check the rounding of a hardcover book produced using the Diamant MC 35.

3 Within a week of commissioning, Diamant machine operator Zlatko Sedinc was using the machine to produce books of optimal quality.

2 From right: Iva Denona Vusić (designer), Andrea Ćorić Vukovac (Department Process Manager), Željko Valpotic (Sales Manager) and Željko Pokupeć (Managing Director of Muller Martini Zagreb) in front of the Diamant MC 35, the only bookline of its kind in Croatia, at Denona.

4 As the ideal addition to the Diamant MC 35, the BLSD 650 stacks books and book blocks in a wide range of combinations at Denona (pictured is machine operator Nikola Mikšić).



Up To Date and Training

The Diamant MC35 had just one “flaw”: it lacked an option for rounded spines. Denona therefore turned to Muller Martini, which offers its extensive MMServices program. After being decommissioned in France, the bookline was reconditioned at the Hardcover Forum in the German town of Bad Mergentheim. It now not only ensures perfect rounding, but also features double cover monitoring and a BLSD 650 book stacker. “It’s as good as new now,” underlines Valpotic.

After bringing the bookline up to date, Muller Martini installed it professionally last September and trained three of Denona’s machine operators in Zagreb. “Within a week they were so familiar with the Diamant that we could provide our customers with optimal quality from the time of commissioning onwards,” recalls Ćorić Vukovac.

Great Size Variability

She gives the Diamant MC 35 a glowing review after its first six months in operation.

“The Diamant MC 35 has a lot of advantages. Setup via the servo motor is easy. We can make fine adjustments while the machine is running. And we no longer have any production waste. We also have great size variability with lengths of 100 to 380 mm, widths of 70 to 300 mm and book thicknesses of 2 to 80 mm.”

Art books, cookery books, textbooks, religious books and illustrated books account for 70 percent of the turnover generated by Denona, which also relies on a secondhand Presto saddle stitcher from Muller Martini. The majority of the signatures are printed in house. Since Denona owns the only Diamant bookline in Croatia, Croatian printing plants without their own bookbindery are increasingly having their hardcover books produced by Denona.

Export Rate: From 1.5 to 20 Percent

The company’s main focus, however, is on further increasing its export rate. Until two years ago the family-owned business, which Marko Denona’s adult daughters Iva (designer), Marina (accountant) and An-

tonia (Account Manager) have joined, delivered just 1.5 percent of its products abroad. The export rate has now risen to 20 percent already thanks to the new Diamant MC 35. “Our firm goal is to substantially increase that percentage still further,” says Valpotic. ◀

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