

High-tech from Swiss countryside to the global market

The homes of Grünig and SignTronic are no fancy big city manufacturing sites but medium-sized production and company offices in small villages near Niesen mountain (Grünig) in the western part and the Säntis (SignTronic) in the eastern part of Switzerland. Focused on suitable production premises to cover the needs of its internal departments, as well as to highly educated and professional employees, both companies sign also for modesty in their appearance, says Andreas Ferndriger. Many customers are astonished to find the production of such high-tech products in small villages. International companies supplying clients in more than 40 countries around the world with high-tech products are – normally – not to be found up in this countryside.

Grünig and SignTronic are dedicated to the screen manufacture and preparation processes in the screen printing industry. Their core competences are based on Swiss professionalism and quality. 'Made in Switzerland' is not employed simply as an empty phrase but as a commitment that is implemented wholeheartedly by the organisations and workforces.

Screen making is one of the elementary factors in the screen printing process, as this is the crucial point that determines printing quality, printing output and – essentially – costs. Under the slogan 'ONE VISION - the perfect screen', Grünig and SignTronic offer solutions that can be summarised by the term 'technology and automation'.

CtS direct exposure technology

SignTronic has offered CtS direct exposure technology for almost 20 years. This advanced technology eliminates various screen preparation processes and based on the artwork data, exposes the screens directly and without any deterioration of quality, without film, montage, vacuum frame etc. This results in considerably improved printing quality with smooth transitions/continuous tones, sharp details and lines up to photo-realistic prints that look digital but have actually been achieved by screen printing, substantially lower screen costs, due to shorter set-up times and increased flexibility.

With an extensive third and fourth generation product range, SignTronic offers HR technology with a resolution up to 3040 dpi. For decal applications, an option is provided for photorealistic prints and the finest half tones. For textile applications – mainly direct, transfer and sublimation printers – the modular STM-TEX and STM-D-Series are the optimal solutions. In the industrial sector with its wide field of applications, screen printing demonstrates its full potential



The Grünig-Interscreen site in Schwarzenburg.

and strengths. This is regardless of whether the articles to be printed are glass, porcelain, labels etc. For these highest standards, model STM-1010HRC is recommended by SignTronic.

Automating the screen making procedure

Grünig offers equipment and machines for automating the screen making procedure. The product range covers stretching, gluing, coating, drying, washing, developing, preparation and water treatment. Automation is setting standards in the field of almost operator-less screen preparation involving various processes.

In the coating sector, a growing number of customers are standardising their screen sizes, which considerably facilitates the implementation of in-line coating processes. The same is true where the use of coating emulsion

is concerned. The shorter the list of required parameters to be taken into account, the simpler automation will be.

When talking about print quality, the most important part to achieve is increased mesh stretching precision and fastening. When working with smaller screens, often larger quantities in top quality and within the shortest possible time are needed. Grünig offers the G-STRETCH 275 UV BOND LED solution that sets benchmarks in the combination of stretching and gluing processes.

Last but not least to be mentioned in screen making is the washing process. Whether single compact plug and wash machines (handling small XS up to extremely large XXL formats) or fully in-line automation solutions are required, Grünig offers tailored quotes to match customer requirements. The G-WASH 170XM series p e is a modular installation concept for



SignTronic recently moved to purpose-designed premises in Rüthi.

all washing processes, providing automatic degreasing, washing, decoating and developing of printing screens of any size.

Strategic partnership

Both companies' engineers work systematically towards the objective of combining technology and automation in state-of-the-art in-line solutions for screen making. This LAB concept, whose key factor consists of positioning screen manufacture as an essential link between the artwork/ RIP and printing departments is well accepted in the market.

Sizes and quantity of such worldwide projects are increasing and proof of the growing need for this combination in all important market segments, such as industrial, textile and graphic. The STM-TEX-Pro-10 IN-LINE solution is a typical example of the perfect screen project.

Although both headquarters are maintained in Schwarzenburg and Rütli (SignTronic recently moved to a bigger site, also located in the Rhine valley, a short distance from its former home in Widnau) and despite the close working relationship that exists



STM-TEX is an example of the Grünig/SignTronic one vision.

between these two companies, they remain legally independent entities. Marcel Grünig is the CEO of Grünig-Interscreen AG and Andreas Ferndrager is the CEO of SignTronic and Marketing Director for both companies. Since 2019, André Kreuter has been Sales Director at Grünig-Interscreen.

Marcel Grünig and Andreas Ferndrager strongly believe in highly qualified, motivated and flexible staff members as the basis for their companies' success. ●

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