Gietz - 125 Years and Counting

As part of a general theme on anniversaries this issue, another company that is celebrating a milestone - this time its 125th anniversary - is the Swiss company Gietz, the pioneer for the application of holograms to banknotes and leading manufacturer of hot foil stamping equipment. To mark the occasion, it held a special celebration last month followed by a dinner cruise on Lake Constance for 120 guests from 22 countries.

Gietz is a 100% family-owned company, and was founded in 1892 by the great great grandfather of the current owners. He was a native of Germany who visited Zurich to fix a machine and ended up staying there to set up a machine repair shop.

By the 1917, the second generation - Johann and Bernhard – had joined the company. As the supply of machines had become unreliable due to the effects of the 1st World War, they went into machinery manufacturing themselves with their own book platen presses, under the name Presto.

In 1942, the third generation of the family - Werner and another Johann - joined the company. The latter’s son Hanspeter, marking the fourth generation, joined in 1957, the same year the company launched the world’s first automated hot foil stamping machine.

1964 saw the company’s production site move from Zurich to its current premises in Gossau and in 1972 it launched its first platen press in sheet format (the FSA 660, the forerunner of the current FSA 870 and 1060 series).

It was in 1986 that the door opened to the banknote market, with Gietz machines used to apply the first holograms to banknotes - the Australian commemorative $10 and the Austrian 500 shilling, both of which were issued in 1988. The machine in question was the FSA 720 with electronic foil feeds and special equipment designed specifically for the then sheet size of banknotes. This was replaced, in 1989, with the FSA 790 with a larger stamping area.

The company continued to expand, celebrating its centennial in 1992. In 1998, Claudia Gietz Viehweger joined the company as the first of the fifth generation, and in the same year the first roll-to-roll foil application system - ROFO 870 - was launched. In 2003, Hansjörg Gietz joined the company too. Both are now managing Gietz AG together.

The next year the FSA 1060 Foil Commander was launched. In 2008, this was enhanced with the addition of new electronic register system – SMART. In 2010, the first FSA 1060 Foil Commander NOTA was supplied to a banknote printer, with the capability to cover larger banknote sheet sizes.

The company is now organised into three divisions - Gietz AG, which develops and manufactures hot foil stamping machines; Gietz & Co AG, Dietlikon, which provides a distribution and service in Switzerland for offset printing and finishing machines from leading foreign manufacturers; and Gietz Immobilien, which manages the sites in Gossau and Dietlikon. The group employs around 80 people, most of them in the hot foil stamping machine business.

Gietz now offers two principle models for the application of hot foil to banknotes - the FSA 1060 and the FSA 870. The first can apply holograms (stripes and patches) to sheets up to 1060mm x 760mm, at speeds of up to 8,000 sheets per hour. It can run up to six foil feeds and comes with automated waste destruction. It is equipped with the patented VACUFOIL foil transportation system.

The FSA 870 is a more compact system, for sheets up 870mm x 560mm in size and five foil feeds.

Both systems, claim the company, provide easy access to the foils and stamping dies, which can be quickly replaced and positioned, thereby reducing changeover times. And both can result in up to 100% productivity improvements compared with other systems on the market.

To date, Gietz has supplied its hot stamping foil equipment to 18 countries for the application of holograms to banknotes. According to Managing Director Hansjörg Gietz, 1892 - the year of the company’s foundation - was the same year that first ski jump took place (in Norway), with a distance of 21.5m jumped. That distance has increased by 650% in the intervening 125 years. ‘You get the same improvement’, he quipped, ‘by moving to a Gietz machine!’

Sargent and Greenleaf (continued)

It has a built-in USB port that allows real time downloads of up to 1,000 events from multiple locks, a faster data transfer rate and an optional one-time code app enables faster access without using a phone to call dispatch.

There is also audit trail email capability that allows you to view, print, or email audit information without mailing keys and without additional software.

Like the original A-Series, it has three modes of operation – bank, service mode and bank + service mode, but it is the interface with all its advantages that differentiates this new model.

The digital revolution has been, and still is, a double-edged sword for the currency industry. On the one hand, it has enabled new forms of payments to threaten cash as means of settlement. One the other hand it has enabled great progress in the manufacture and security of currency, particularly banknotes, and in its secure and efficient distribution.

It was inevitable that digital technology would find its way into locks, and S&G’s latest development of incorporating a digital display into their ATM lock simply raises the bar.