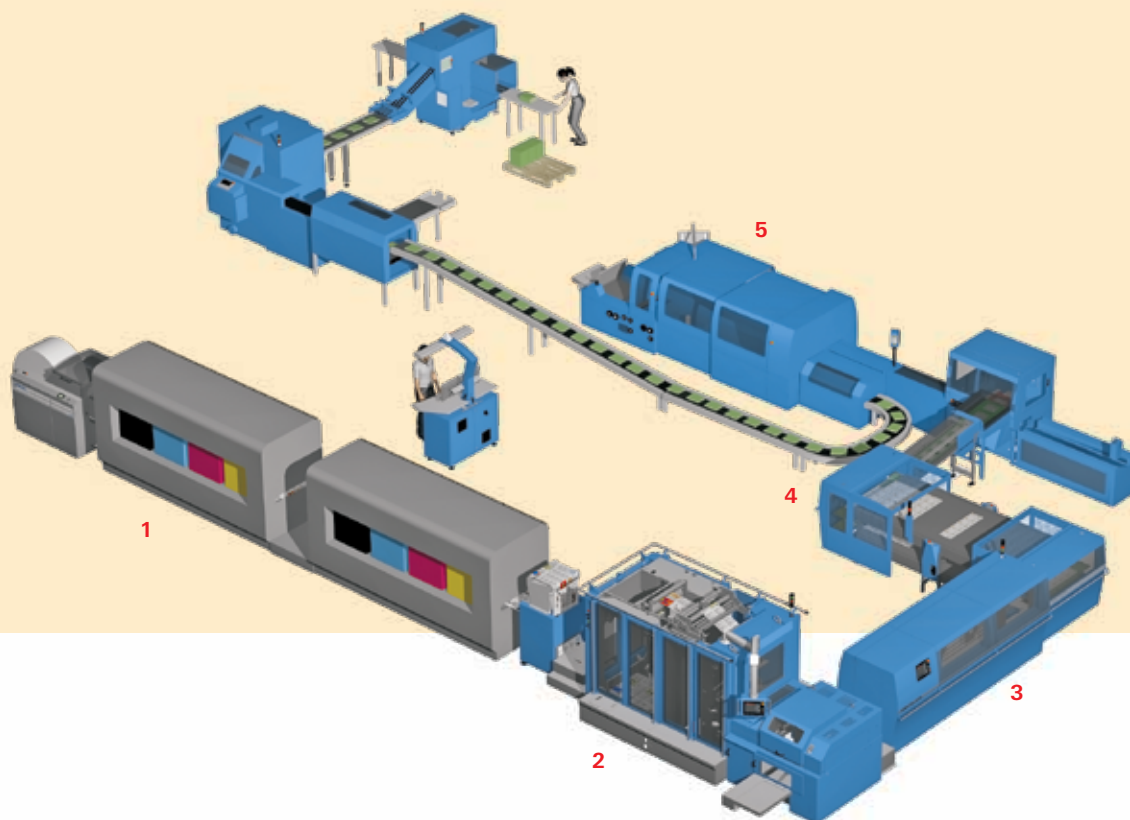


The SigmaLine digital complete system harnesses the impressive performance of inkjet printing presses by integrating the Pantera perfect binder for softcover production.



Digital Solutions from Muller Martini Yield New Growth Opportunities for Graphic Arts Industry

The more efficient digital printing systems become, the more challenging the finishing process will be. Muller Martini, the leading specialist in the field of in-line finishing, develops innovative digital printing solutions that yield new growth opportunities for the graphic arts industry – for perfect binding as well as hardcover production and saddle stitching.

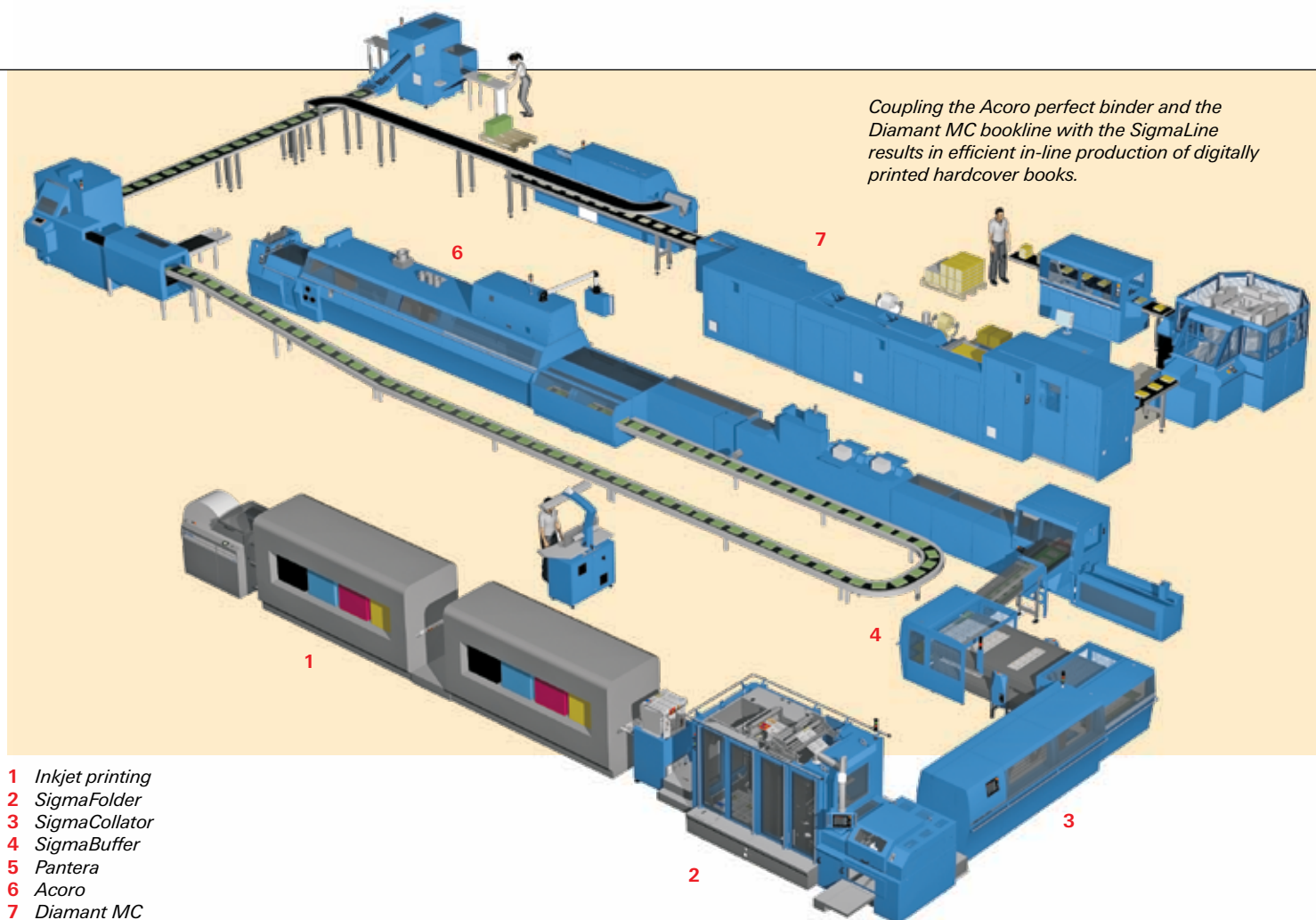
► Despite increasing diversity and a rise in the number of titles being produced, sales of printed products are declining. This situation is resulting in shorter runs, for hardcover and softcover books as well as stitched products. The increasingly tough market environment is piling on the pressure for publishers, who must minimize risk and improve stock management in order to survive in this highly competitive market. One step that publishers are taking

is to limit runs for their printed products in order to avoid overproduction. The situation represents both a major challenge for the graphic design industry and a fantastic opportunity for it to position itself in the digital printing sector using new business models.

An Ideal Platform for Digital Printing

The growing market for shorter runs offers the ideal platform for digital printing, in par-

ticular for integrated inkjet printing systems. Inkjet technology has been used in office printers for some time now. The impressive reliability, performance and quality results achieved with this technology, plus the ongoing reduction in costs per printed page, have seen it find its way into heavy-duty industrial production systems. It supports greater web widths and higher speeds, even in four-color printing, making it an attractive proposition to a growing vol-



ume of customers within the graphic design industry.

Muller Martini has a close eye on market trends and enjoys successful partnerships with the leading manufacturers of digital printing systems, such as HP, Kodak and Océ. Thanks to the experience gained in recent years with the SigmaLine digital book production system, and Muller Martini's comprehensive product range, ideal solutions for new applications can be achieved.

Muller Martini Solves a Knotty Problem

Digital printing is just the first step on the path to the finished printed product. The second is efficient and cost-effective finishing processes. It has been clear for a long time that digital printing is the future, but up to now the sticking point was always the finishing. After all, it's not a digital printing machine that will win you the race, but what comes afterwards.

Muller Martini has solved this knotty problem with the SigmaLine, a unique complete system for the fully automated production of a diverse range of printed products. The SigmaLine paves the way for

industrial digital book production by networking all processes, from prepress data through to digital printing and finishing, in one complete system. One of the core elements of the system is the unparalleled SigmaFolder. The world's only web-based, variable-size signature folder forms an important link between the printing press and the finishing process.

Efficient In-line System

As the Muller Martini system can process signatures, the graphic design industry is able to take advantage of the full range of finishing processes for digital printing for the first time. Thanks to the efficient in-line system, just one machine operator is needed and the fully automated production process can be completed in a single operation without interruption. The whole process, from the PDF stage to the finished printed product, takes just a few minutes. This consistent linking of all subprocesses makes it possible to produce jobs extremely quickly and efficiently.

Customized Solutions

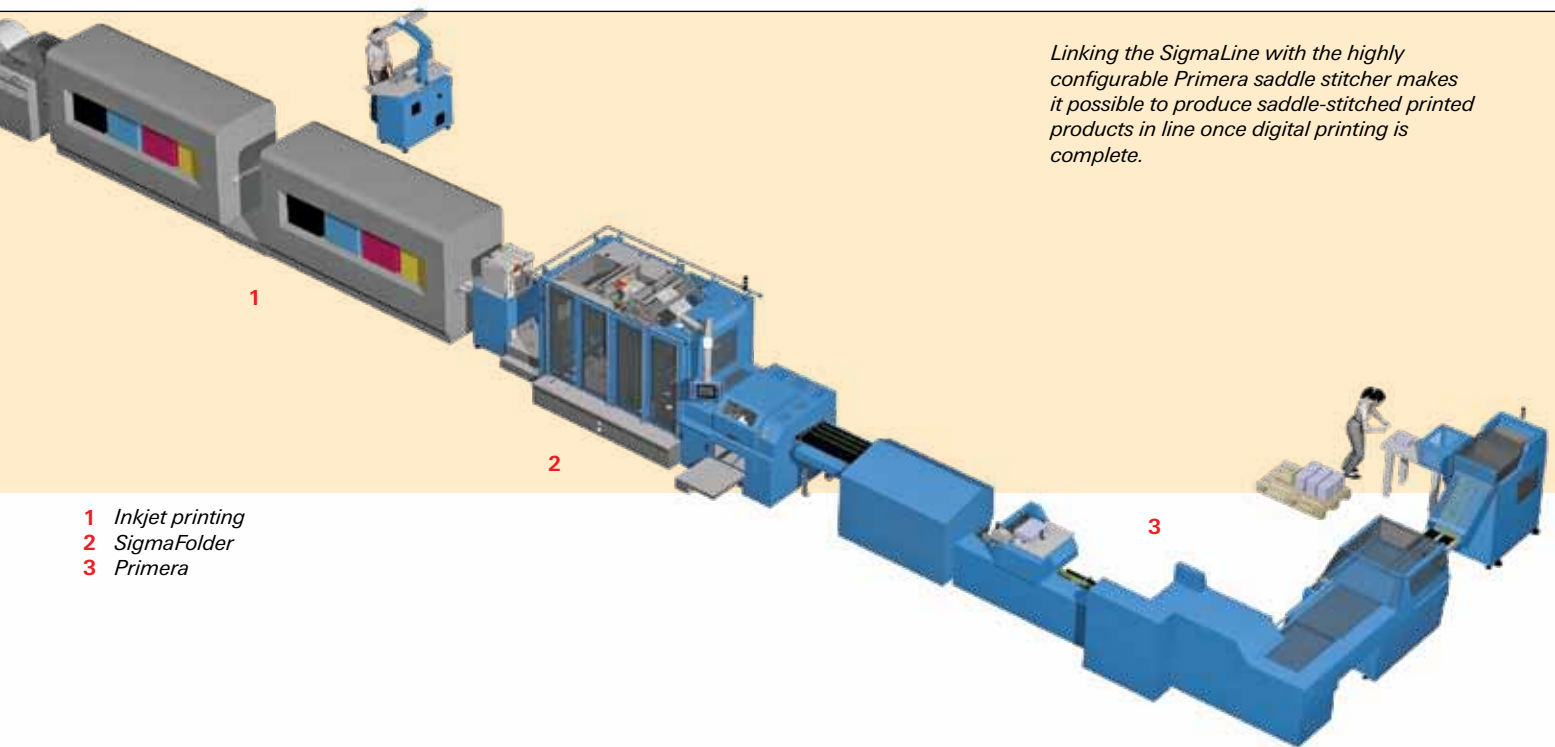
Muller Martini's decades of experience and considerable expertise in the areas of web

offset printing and finishing really come in to their own in the development and implementation of fully integrated solutions. "We recognize the needs of our customers and develop appropriate solutions," says Muller Martini CEO Bruno Müller. "We are expanding on the possibilities offered by traditional finishing to ensure that the industry can take full advantage of everything digital printing has to offer."

Muller Martini adapts the complex processes involved in traditional finishing to suit digital printing – from web-handling through to cutting, folding, gathering and, finally, finishing. With in-line configurations, the efficiency and productivity of the SigmaLine system can be further increased by means of targeted developments. For instance: A new, modular buffer system (SigmaBuffer) intelligently separates the printing, folding and gathering process from the binding process but ensures that all the processes still remain connected to each other in line.

High Investment Protection Thanks to Modular Design

Muller Martini's new range of digital solutions also extends to the increasingly pow-



Linking the SigmaLine with the highly configurable Primera saddle stitcher makes it possible to produce saddle-stitched printed products in line once digital printing is complete.

- 1 Inkjet printing
- 2 SigmaFolder
- 3 Primera

erful digital printing systems. Powerful perfect binders such as the Pantera and the Acoro are integrated into the complete system, really bringing to bear Muller Martini's impressive expertise with binding techniques and gluing methods.

The possibilities of the complete system are not limited to fully integrated in-line systems. The modular design (e.g. entry-level models available) supports stand-alone offline solutions that can simply be extended at a later date if the order volume changes.

The extension options are one of the key performance characteristics of Muller Martini's digital solutions. The modular design provides elegant extension options and guarantees good investment security for customers, allowing them to fulfill digital printing requirements both now and in the

future. The line has new functions such as pre-gluing book blocks, which can be temporarily stacked and fed offline to a perfect binder or another finishing process.

New Options for Hardcover, Thread Sewing and Saddle Stitchers

Muller Martini's digital solutions open up new dimensions for innovative printed products not only in perfect binding but also in the hardcover, thread sewing and saddle stitcher segments. As signatures can be processed on the Muller Martini digital complete system, it is predestined for high-quality soft cover and hard cover production as well as saddle stitching. This means the complete system can be coupled with a Diamant MC bookline just as well as it can with a Primera saddle stitcher.

Integrating functions for hardcover production and saddle stitching leaves graphic design companies even better equipped to fulfill the future demands of their customers. What's more, extended system functionality is making efficient production of even ultra-short runs an attractive option – for personalized photo books for example, which are becoming increasingly popular thanks to ongoing advancements in the field of digital color printing (see editorial on page 2 and the report on page 28).

www.mullermartini.com

Complete Digital Networking Using the Connex Workflow System

CONNEX
Workflow System



Whether it's softcover production with the Acoro and Pantera perfect binder lines, hardcover production with the Diamant MC in-line bookline or saddle stitching with the highly automated, powerful and extremely configurable Primera family, the digital Connex workflow system developed by Muller Martini and used on a company-wide basis ensures seamless interplay and optimum control of all assemblies in all finishing pro-

cesses. Connex forms the basis for the seamless integration of softcover, hardcover and saddle stitching systems into the SigmaLine digital complete system.

Connex communicates with all the machines involved: it ensures high levels of safety and transparency during production, generates job data for all systems and facilitates sorting, grouping and planning of orders. These are indispensable assets, particularly given the trend toward increasingly short runs.

Another major benefit of Connex, upon which all Muller Martini's new and future developments are based, is the close cooperation between Muller Martini and the world's leading manufacturers of digital printing systems. This cooperation forms the basis for seamless integration of printing presses into the entire production systems workflow.