

capacity stands at 70.000 pages an hour in black and white and 8.000 pages an hour in colour.

The machines switch on at 6.00 o'clock in the morning and run for 12 hours every day. Proxess offers a full range of in-house services. Off-line finishing is tended to by a third party, whose equipment and staff are housed by Proxess. Peter Vanhove:

“Insourcing such specialist finishing and shipping know-how proved to be the best solution for both ourselves and our partner. We also maintain a direct connection with courier services such as DHL. We can link our software up to DHL’s, allowing our customers to monitor the exact location of their order via track & trace.”

Blister pack as a niche market

Proxess primarily focuses on large, document-intensive customers. But other businesses also know where to find the company for special assignments. Peter Vanhove: “For example, we are currently printing packaging for welding electrodes. These are printed in limited editions on the iGen3 on a special paper. They are out-sized oblongs, which serve as a background for blister

packs. Besides the commercial message, the packs also need to list the necessary product information. As this information is subject to frequent changes and the editions are limited, this job is ideally suited to the iGen3.” Proxess also maintains ties with several other manufacturers struggling with hundreds of different types of packaging.



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“State of the art printing technology in combination with software solutions like Polo offer a glimpse of where our industry is going.”



THE DOCUMENT COMPANY
XEROX

“Above all, we are integrators”

Proxess extends digital platform

“We make dreams come true,” says Peter Vanhove, managing-director with Proxess in the Belgian town of Zaventem. He leads a highly successful business, which does not focus on clicks alone, but offers a comprehensive document services package.

“We do not project ourselves as a printing company. We prefer to present ourselves as ‘integrators’. We help customers solve their document problems, using data bases, state of the art software and clever logistics,” Vanhove says.

Peter Vanhove and his staff of eighteen mainly cater to large-scale enterprises. Vanhove: “Such as publishers and companies producing capital goods. Two names everyone will recognize are Agfa and ABB.” Professional services providers also know their way to Zaventem. KPMG audit, tax and financial advisory services, for example, is an important customer. “We also work with several large training institutes.”

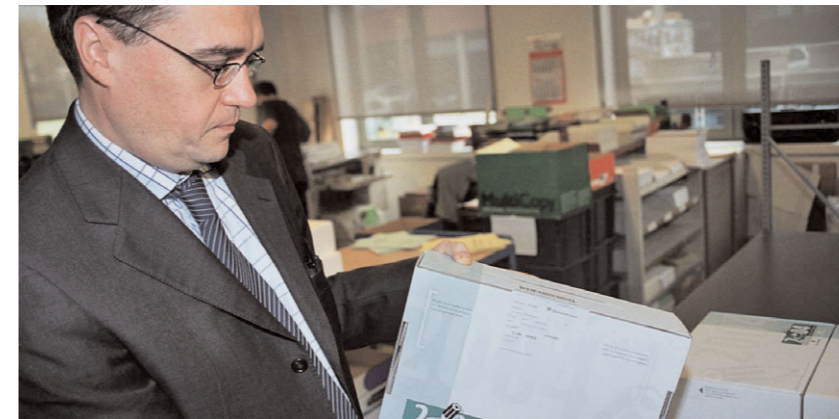
Less click-dependent

Things at Proxess do not revolve around the classic graphic production process workflow, entailing the pre-press trajectory, printing and finishing. Vanhove: “As integrators, we focus on our customers’ administrative workflow. On on-line document ordering, computerizing cost calculations, order tracking and – last, but not least – extensive or even full integration with customer ERP systems.”

Proxess is state of the art, thanks to the pre-press know-how the



“As integrators, we concentrate on our customers’ administrative workflow.”



company built up over the last ten years. “We scan up to 120 pages per minute, and we are not only well acquainted with SGML and XML, but we also take care of content management and data entry. And we cater to customers’ crossmedia publishing needs. We generate CD-Roms, PDF files or HTML pages from a single database.”

Printing even seems to have become a matter of secondary importance. “I wouldn’t go quite that far,” says Vanhove. “But it is true that Proxess aims to reduce its dependence on printer clicks.”

Financial lever

“We have brilliant equipment at our disposal. We are highly satisfied with the iGen3 we acquired in August. The 52 by 36 cm format offers excellent opportunities, as we found when printing personalised course files. We used heavy, linen-finished paper to great effect. From the first print to the last, the print quality remained constant. This machine is exemplary for the new digital generation. And what makes our investment truly worthwhile is the enormous financial lever which comes into effect above and beyond a certain print volume. I suspect

many iGen3 users do not yet fully realise the amazing financial scope this printer has to offer.” Peter Vanhove named each of his printers after a European city. Amsterdam is humming away happily next to Madrid, while Paris is rubbing shoulders with Brussels. Signals warning that things like toner or paper are low, are routed directly to the display screens. The screen saver shows the stages of the production process at a glance. “When all signals are go, we are running at full capacity.”

Linking up to ERP systems

Proxess daily processes approximately 45 orders. “Multiplied by 220 workdays this would entail an almost insurmountable administrative workload for our staff.” To handle this volume, Proxess opted for Polo to fully automatise its document flow. Peter Vanhove: “Polo stands for ‘Proxess On Line Ordering’. This data base-controlled software is our ticket to large customers. It allows us to fully monitor the entire production process in real time, from the initial order placement to shipping. And without the need to install software at the customer’s. Polo can be used by anyone with access to world-wide web.”



“Document stream integration is brought up to a previously inconceivable level.”

The software runs on a SQL data base and is comprised of several modules. “Customers can view the products in the data base on the web. They can monitor order status, and authorised users may also monitor job history, including invoices. Thus, a full survey of all current orders is always available. The error margin is minimal, as there is no need to re-enter data. Polo may be linked up to ERP systems, including Baan’s or Sap’s, which brings document stream integration up to a previously inconceivable level. This can be complex. For example, Agfa alone has 35 branches world-wide, which may all place orders with us.”

Not just its customers, but Proxess too benefits from the advantages Polo has to offer. Vanhove: “We can monitor the work load per site and it allows us to accurately plan proofs and delivery data. All communications – including shipping confirmation – take place by e-mail. This keeps customers fully abreast of what is happening. When DHL ships an order to anywhere in the world, that process too can be monitored directly.”

Fully digital platform

The iGen3 and Polo are both part of the fully digital platform Proxess

seeks to offer its customers. Peter Vanhove: “We relieve customers of the day-to-day worries regarding document management and printing, from the creation of a document to billing. This naturally entails much print work, but the iGen3 takes care of it all. I am convinced that state of the art printing technology in combination with software solutions like Polo offer a glimpse of where our industry is going, even while they are earning us our daily bread and butter.”

Insourcing off line finishing

Proxess Document Management has two branches. One in Zaventem, a stone’s throw from Brussels, and one in Ghent. A staff of eighteen operators generates an annual turnover of approximately 3.3 million euros.

Ghent focuses on pre-press and pre-publishing activities. All printing capacity is centred in Zaventem. In state of the art offices, five Xerox 6180’s, a DocuTech 135, and a Doc 12 are continuously processing mostly proofs. Since August their ranks have been swelled by an iGen3. The offices are also equipped with four CP Bourg high-capacity stackers, facilitating in-line stapling, folding and cutting. Production