

INTERVIEW

“It’s always advisable to choose German-made printing machines”

– Afrifa Darko, General Manager of the KNUST Printing Press, Kumasi, Ghana



Hans Bertram of Bertram Grafische Maschinen (left) and Afrifa Darko, General Manager of the KNUST Printing Press, displaying a test printout of one of the machines that the German company successfully installed in Kumasi

It was yet another example of the successful co-operation between printers in West Africa and printing equipment merchants in Germany when the Berlin-based firm Bertram Grafische Maschinen recently installed modern machines for the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) Printing Press in Kumasi, Ghana.

In an exclusive interview with our Ghana correspondent Nathaniel Kuffour, General Manager of the KNUST Printing Press, Afrifa Darko, gives advice to African printers.

TAC: Why did KNUST Printing Press choose Bertram Grafische Maschinen to supply the machines?

Darko: After a series of investigations, we found out that Bertram has been supplying printing machines to Ghana and other West African countries, including Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Nigeria.

Which machines did you purchase from Bertram?

Four key machines: a 2-colour printer, a 1-colour printer, an image setter and a

cutting machine

What impact will the machines have on your operations?

Because we didn't have some of these machines, when we had jobs that required their services we used to sub-contract the work to other printing companies. The machines will now enable us to finish our work within a short space of time, and we are now even planning to take more external jobs.

In fact, the machines and equipment will lead to an increase of approximately 50 per cent in the productivity of our printing press.

What advisory service was offered by Bertram in the process of buying and installing the machines?

To determine that the machines are suitable for our environment; that the machines could easily be serviced by local engineers; and that the machines could perform the work for which they were acquired.

Could you please describe the proc-

ess of determining the machines to buy, and the ordering, installing and commissioning of the machines?

- One must determine the volume of work and the type/kind of job.
- Determination of financial commitment and deciding on the alternative equipment that could provide a similar result.
- Option of a supplier who has a proven track record.
- Installation and trial by the supplier.
- Machines must be manned and serviced by local technicians and engineers.

From your experience in this transaction, what advice would you offer a printing company that is planning to buy machines from Europe?

- Purchase from a recognised machine dealer.
- Installation must be done by the suppliers.
- Supplier should provide a warranty and after-sales advice.
- It is always advisable to choose Heidelberg machines or German-made printing machines.

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