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FACILITY PLANNING BY DARIO DIMARE

# Press room planning key to future success

So you want to build a press room? Where do you start? Figure out how big the press is and then make the press room a little bigger, right? Wrong!

A press room is the most sophisticated area in a newspaper facility. There are so many opportunities to save money, increase safety, increase efficiency, reduce maintenance, reduce manning, reduce operating costs, and plan for the future. Likewise, there are as many opportunities to spend money foolishly, put employees in harm's way, and have financial and operational nightmares if the press room is not planned properly. Some of the areas and issues to consider include the following:

- press size and configuration for both now and the future
- acoustics
- press foundation size and details
- press room materials and finishes
- material handling
- roll handling issues
- lighting
- air conditioning flow, pressure and component locations
- paper dust and ink mist filtration systems
- ink systems
- maintenance rails vs. rigging rails
- quiet room design
- tour accommodations
- communications with packaging and distribution
- electrical capacity, redundancy and expandability
- proper electrical and electronics design
- HVAC systems and humidity control
- fire suppression systems
- motor cooling and air preparation
- location, size, diversity and acoustical separation of compressors
- press delivery, check copy configuration
- provisions to add units, RTPs, former boards, etc.
- waste handling
- size, shape, location and detail of press support areas
- basic architectural detailing
- insurance company requirements

Each of the 26 subjects listed above can be expanded into pages and pages of details, calculations, and financial and operational analyses. For example, if we were to take waste handling and expand upon the sub-issues, it would include such things as the following:

- expended plates: staging, storing, handling, recycling
- ink: filtered, recycled, disposed of, manifested
- cleaning solvents: MSDS, disposed of, filtered, manifested, recycled, personnel education, special storage and handling requirements
- white waste: recycled, automated handling, carts, disposed of, rewinders, baled
- printed waste: recycled, accounted for, automated handling, baled, used internally
- chemicals: MSDS, recycled, manifested, filtered, personnel education, special storage and handling requirements
- rags: self-washed, drained in barrels, manifested, sent out to cleaners, storage issues with respect to VOCs
- uniforms: self-washed, drained in barrels, manifested, sent out to cleaners, storage issues with respect to VOCs
- newsprint heads, roll ends or cookies: recycled, baled, handling procedures
- newsprint sleeves or brown wrap: recycled, baled, handling procedures
- pallets: recycled, shredder, set outside and given to public, disposed of, burned in furnace
- blankets: recycled, disposed of, manifested
- corrugated cardboard: disposed of, recycled, handling
- general building waste: disposed of, handling

Finally, if we were to take a single line item from the sub-list above, it also could be expanded upon in greater detail, requiring much study and investigation. Printed waste is an example.

Printed waste can be handled in a simple manual manner by dumping the waste into a cart until good copies come off the press. It can be disposed of off a stacker, at a clean-out station, or through a chute into the reel room or mail room. It can be dumped onto a waste conveyor and automatically moved into the waste area or into a baler.

A totalizing system can be installed so that when a press operator finds the first good copy in the stream, copies that would otherwise be wasted while the check copy is examined, can be used.

In other words, when a press operator picks a copy for final inspection, the press is running (generating waste) at a slow speed. He examines the check copy for 20 to 30 seconds. Then he hits the button indicating that the copies are good enough to send out.

This process results in 140 copies of waste (25,000 copies per hour at 20 seconds) between when he first picks the check copy, to when he indicates it is good. This is true for each press run, advance run and edition, 365 days a year.

Consideration also should be given to where the printed waste is dumped. Assuming you do not want a waste conveyor, how would you determine whether to dump the printed waste on the reel room side of a wall or on the mail room side? What about press conveyor length and distance traveled by waste handlers? Does it even matter?

If the wall is only 8 inches thick, then the length of the conveyor is not an issue. Usually the distance is not significant enough to make a difference if it is dumped in or near the same area. However, it does matter in many production facilities.

Also, have you considered the cost of the manning? Review the salaries of the press operators and the mailers, then let the most economical pay scale process the waste. If a press operator is being paid $20 an hour and a mailer is being paid $10 an hour, the difference is over $20,000 a year per employee.

An issue such as the length of a shift also should be investigated. If the press operator is paid for an eight-hour shift and works only

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five or six hours a night, then the press operator should handle the waste at no additional cost to the newspaper. This could also eliminate paying a mailer by the hour, for overtime work, or for a whole new shift.

As you can see, by properly planning a press room, you can increase safety, save money and simplify your operations.

We will expand on many of the other issues listed above in future issues. But as you can see now, it is not as simple as figuring out how big the press is and making the press room just a little bit bigger.▲

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