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### **Media General catches Comet in Va.**

Media General Inc. last week said it would buy a Koenig & Bauer AG press to anchor a new production facility planned for its Bristol (Va.) Herald-Courier. The KBA Comet single-wide press will go on-edition in October 2005 after completion of the 50,000-square-foot production building, said Bob Rogers, vice president of operations for Media General's publishing division.

"The Comet will replace our 40-year-old obsolete press," he said. "In the new operation, we will gain multicolor capabilities and many other technology efficiencies in a modern newspaper plant." The 75,000-copy-per-hour (straight production) press will be the first 3-by-2 Comet to be installed in the United States by KBA, said Gary Owen, the vendor's North American director of marketing and newspaper sales. That design will enable the Herald-Courier (daily, 41,735; Sunday, 43,870) to print three broadsheet pages across one web as opposed to traditional two-wide printing. To support that production,

KBA tailored the press with specially designed turner bar and ribbon decks, with folders positioned at right angles to the presslines.

The Herald-Courier's Comet will be configured in two presslines, with five eight-couple towers and a future position for an additional tower. It will include seven reelstands with infeed systems, two 2:3:3 jaw folders and a quarter-folder.

The press will be equipped with a cutoff of 21 inches and a variable web width of between 22 inches and 39 inches. EAE is providing the four-console press control system. Dario Designs Inc. will design and plan the building, which will house the press and packaging. The building will be located in an industrial park about four miles from the paper's current production facility. Equipment installation will begin next summer. A Media General spokesman said the publisher has yet to select vendors it will use to provide new postpress and associated equipment.