

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

New 'Janesville Gazette' production plant goes live

By Meg Campbell
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The Janesville (Wis.) Gazette began printing at its new production facility on October 22. The 54,000 square foot plant, in an industrial park about five miles outside of Janesville, houses a new KBA Comet press and Muller-Martini mailroom system.

The Gazette built the facility because it had outgrown its plant in downtown Janesville, says Bliss Communications Inc. President and CEO Skip Bliss. Inserting operations in particular had grown to where they could not be handled in the plant, and there was no other space available downtown, Bliss explains. His team worked with Dario Designs, Marlborough, Mass., to configure the new installation.

Pages are sent over a wireless network to the plant's twin Kodak thermal platesetters. The paper's technical team built the wireless network, taking advantage of one of the local radio stations the group owns. "We don't have a direct line of sight, so we bounce the signal to our AM radio tower, and then use a microwave link to the new plant," says Bliss. The network moves the files at much higher speeds than T1 lines, he adds.

The paper is then printed on the plant's centerpiece, a singlewide, double-circumference, floor-mounted KBA Comet. Configured as four eight-couple towers, the press has five 90-degree KBA PastoStar reelstands and a double KBA KF 3 (2:3:3) jaw folder. "The special four-former-board arrangement [gives the Gazette] the combination of running as a narrow-web press with variable web width capabilities, while also performing up to four sections into either of the folders, or running as two simultaneous but independent presses," KBA North America Vice President, Sales and Communications, Gary Owens said in a statement.

The new plant's mailroom is equipped with a Muller



Martini SLS 3000 1 6-into-2 inserter and Quipp Systems conveyors and stackers. Two of the four stackers are Quipp's multifunction Packman models.

The new plant is built on a 13-acre greenfield lot, with room for future expansion. "The main facility is a 54,000-square-foot plant, and there are five acres set aside...to build a twin facility," if needed, Bliss explains.

The new facility is being used to print daily editions of the Janesville Gazette, its weekly supplements, and a large Bliss Communications weekly distributed in an adjacent county.

"The intent is to begin printing the small daily we own in March," and then bring in several shoppers that are currently outsourced, Bliss says, noting that several of the group's publications in northern Wisconsin won't be printed at the new facility because of their distance. "Then, once we get to a point where we're confident of quality, we'll pursue commercial printing as well," he adds.

Established in 1845, the Janesville Gazette circulates in all of Rock and Walworth counties, as well as portions of Green, Dane and Jefferson counties, with an evening circulation of 20,772 and 24,201 on Sunday.