



WEPRINT
IMPRIMERIE WATGEN S.A.R.L.

WEPRINT
www.weprint.lu

How an innovator's mindset & advanced technology keep WEPRINT ahead of the curve

WEPRINT was founded in 1960 as Watgen Printing by Jean-Marie Watgen in Hamm, Luxembourg and offered letterpress printing.

Today WEPRINT is one of the largest printers in Luxembourg, offering customers a range of services including digital, wide format and offset printing of magazines, books, brochures, leaflets, flyers, and business cards, among other things.

In 1980 the business was taken over by Jean-Marie's son, Mike Watgen, who grew the team of 5 to the 30 strong team employed today. In 1990 the business introduced an offset printing press, and Adobe® PostScript® making them one of the first printers ever to migrate to PostScript®, and it was that which enabled them to produce films for every print shop in Luxembourg.

Mike invested profits in the business - acquiring new technologies and taking opportunities to better service their existing customers as well as attracting new ones.

In 1996, WEPRINT introduced their first digital printing press, a Heidelberg DI 46 - 4 color machine, and it was that investment which, by 1998, had generated additional revenue growth making expansion into new premises necessary to meet growing customer demands. The business moved to its current facility in Luxembourg and Mike took the opportunity to introduce a Screen CTP and, shortly afterward, in 2000, purchased a 4 color offset printing press. These investments were rewarded with growth, which required, new, bigger, and more efficient machines every two years or so, to fulfill the exacting demands of their customer's needs.

In 2014, WEPRINT was the first printer in Europe to install a Ryobi 928 8-color press with LED UV. The installation had been challenging, but Mike's vision and the dedicated team made it possible.

The plant currently consists of one 8-color offset press, three digital presses - Ricoh and Canon, and two large format printers.



Mike comments on why he thinks WEPRINT are where they are in the market: "I consider myself to be an innovator, I look to technology to help us now, and to 'future-proof' our business. We service our existing customers and attract new customers by collaborating with other print shops and help them all to win new business. Our ethos and standards prevent us ever from poaching another's clients, and this is one reason why collaboration works both for them and for us."

"The future looks very good for WEPRINT, I will retire in two years, but the business is financially strong, there is an excellent collaboration with other print shops, and the team working here are very efficient and committed to delivering excellence in all that we print."

Why Auraia DMS?

In 2013, Mike attended a meeting of printers in Stuttgart, at which the German Printing Association were testing a new screen for offset printing – Auraia Digitally Modulated Screening (DMS).

"It was something extraordinary – something which was of the future. Offset technology had shown small improvements, but the new screening technology was a step change, and it was very exciting" commented Mike.

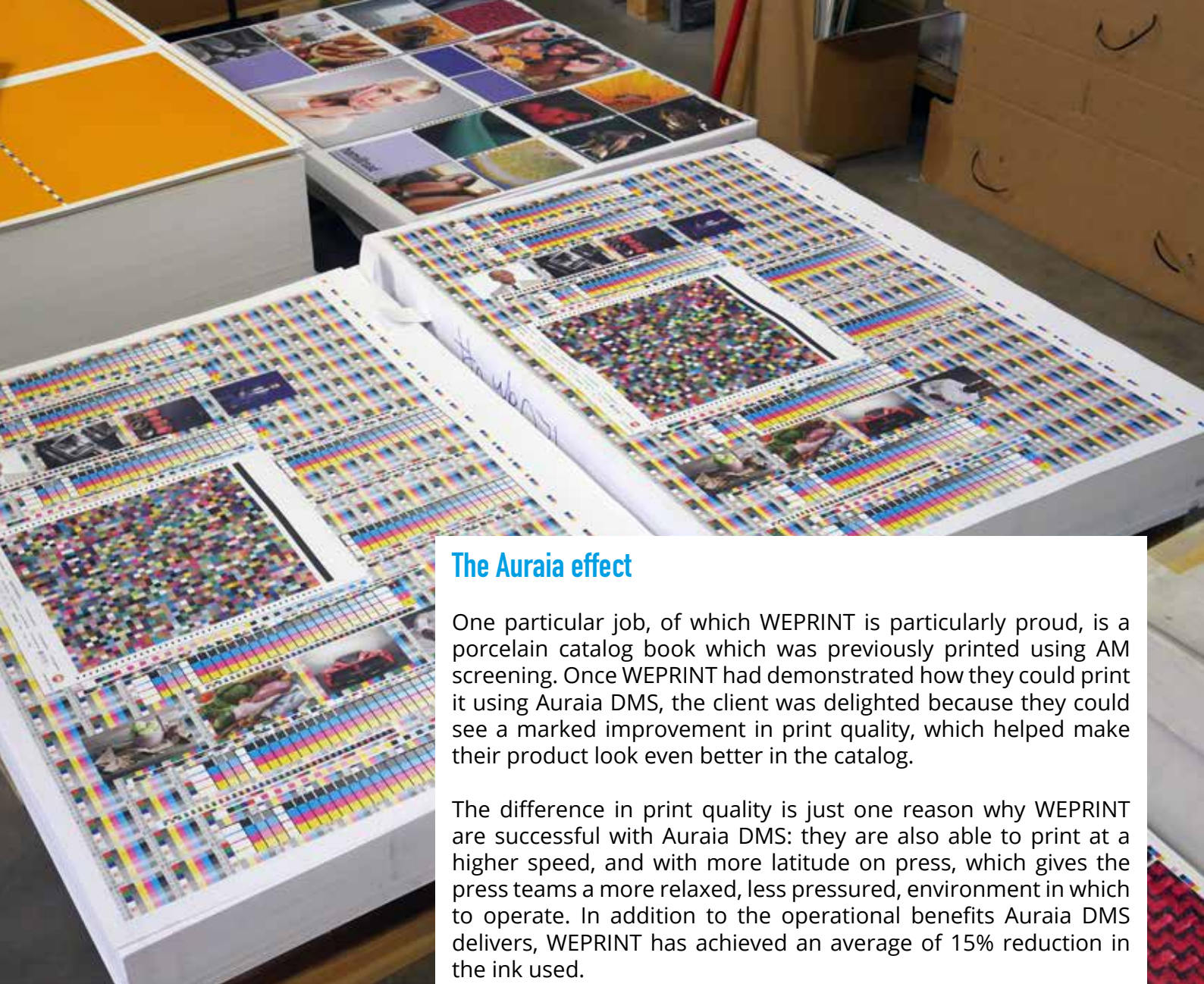
Mike left the meeting wanting to know more. By browsing the internet, searching for 'Auraia DMS' he found Hamillroad Software who introduced Alfred Schmitz of Schmitz at Work, a color management consultant who is Hamillroad Software's representative for Auraia DMS in Germany.

Alfred arranged to test Auraia DMS at WEPRINT; the initial tests were to check if it would be compatible with the systems in-house. The test results showed some problems with banding while using his existing CTP and so Mike's press team said that the tests should stop. But Mike suggested that they should look at a new CTP, and he invested in a Kodak Trendsetter. With the new Trendsetter, the results were excellent, the banding problems were resolved, and the press team's attitude to Auraia began to change as they witnessed what had become possible.

"With three shift crews per day, you get different characters working on the presses, and each has a different attitude to new technology. There was still a reluctance to change, and any faults were immediately blamed on the new screening technology," comments Mike.

The same reluctance to change was true for the prepress team. Three years ago, a new prepress expert joined; his objective was to control the print process from beginning to end to enable the team to achieve consistent print; by using Auraia DMS on 100% of offset jobs, his objective has been achieved.





The Auraia effect

One particular job, of which WEPRINT is particularly proud, is a porcelain catalog book which was previously printed using AM screening. Once WEPRINT had demonstrated how they could print it using Auraia DMS, the client was delighted because they could see a marked improvement in print quality, which helped make their product look even better in the catalog.

The difference in print quality is just one reason why WEPRINT are successful with Auraia DMS: they are also able to print at a higher speed, and with more latitude on press, which gives the press teams a more relaxed, less pressured, environment in which to operate. In addition to the operational benefits Auraia DMS delivers, WEPRINT has achieved an average of 15% reduction in the ink used.

In 2018, WEPRINT began an ink savings project. It involved a design made up of 8 identical graphics; each graphic had a different ink coverage applied, covering a range between 180 – 280 total area coverage.

Using Auraia DMS, and applying the maximum level of ink savings across CMY, WEPRINT were able to demonstrate that there was no loss of detail between the design using the 180 total area coverage vs. the 280 total area coverage.

Commenting on the project, Alfred Schmitz said: "The eye doesn't see ink savings it sees detail. This had been a very successful project, and when translated to a commercial print run, I know that WEPRINT print 280,000 copies of an agricultural publication, and save 1,000 Euros of ink, without any loss of visual quality, and that's all thanks to Auraia DMS."

John Janson, COO at WEPRINT, comments: "It's amazing the level of detail which we can achieve using Auraia."

John, who has more than 18 years' experience of offset printing, joined WEPRINT in 2016 and is responsible for production concentrating on solving problems whether they be with technology, machines or customers.

"The smoothness of the flat tints is exceptional, it's as if you are looking at a spot color. It gives us a unique selling point and the difference between us and the other printers in Luxembourg is Auraia."



He continues: "The smoothness of the flat tints is exceptional, it's as if you are looking at a spot color. It gives us a unique selling point, and the difference between us and the other printers in Luxembourg is Auraia. What we say we will do, we do. We show the results you'll get, and we deliver. It's important for us to develop and maintain strong customer relationships built on trust."

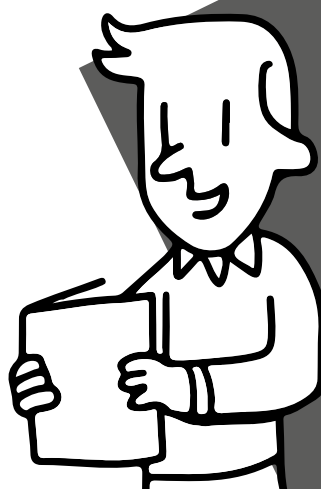
Mike and John are keen to explore the benefits of Auraia DMS further and are about to start work on an Extended Color Gamut (ECG) project to demonstrate the smooth, rosette free, flat tints which can be achieved using CMYK + OGV and Auraia DMS. The project aims to reproduce 90% of Pantone colors within a defined Delta E target.

"No one in Luxembourg can compete with our print quality. Our clients talk about our quality and recommend us."

Mike remarks on the key benefits of Auraia DMS: "We achieve better quality – the results prove it. No one in Luxembourg can compete with our print quality. Our clients talk about our quality and recommend us – we haven't needed aggressive marketing campaigns because new business comes in via word of mouth referrals. Auraia has given us the opportunity to pick and choose the customers with whom we work. We don't engage in price battles, and that's an excellent position to be in." Mike concludes.



Watch our video
'Getting Dotty about Spots' at
www.hamillroad.com



Hamillroad Software Limited,
Compass House,
Vision Park, Chivers Way,
Histon, Cambridge,
CB24 9AD, UK

T: +44 (0)1223 257950
E: sales@hamillroad.com

www.hamillroad.com

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