SIEGWERK

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How is Siegwerk tackling its digital transformation?

Digitization – today's most widely discussed topic: Last year, Siegwerk has committed itself to drive its digital transformation. We've talked to Christoph Barniske, Head of Digital Business at Siegwerk, about the company's digital approach, first achievements and digitized solutions.



Q: Everyone is talking about the need of digitization. How does Siegwerk handle this topic?

A: We want to create future value for our business, and new business models with digital services will shape our way going forward – whether we like it or not. We need to take account of inevitable changes in good time and that's why we now invest in our own digital transformation. As key driver for this transformation we have established a digital business unit last year that focuses on the development of digital projects in collaboration with other business units and our customers. It's always our goal to help our customers address upcoming trends and to meet their specific needs with cutting-edge ink solutions. That's why we have started different forward-looking initiatives to gain even more efficiency,

achieve faster reaction times to future trends and further shape the printing and packaging market.

Q: What is the goal of the digital business unit? What are the team's main tasks & functions?

A: Our goal is to determine the relevant pain points that customers face and analyze whether digital processes could help to improve and simplify their day-to-day work and thus enhance the overall customer journey. We are working on the digitization of our customer interfaces and the development of digital business opportunities for our company. Currently, we are concentrating on strategic collaborations with relevant start-ups, concretely looking for technologies and innovations that might initiate innovative ink developments to address upcoming trends in the ink and packaging industry. Our customers are clearly in the center of all our efforts.

Q: How are you and your team approaching these tasks?

A: As said the customer is our focus. That's why we integrate customers in the development of our digital products. By doing this, we already receive feedback early in the development process and can adjust or stop ideas. In large projects you always have to deal with the risk that requirements change during implementation phase, and that's why we aim to keep development projects as small and fast as possible. We always start by involving customers to discuss needs and develop new ideas for potential digital services. We are not developing anything bypassing our customers' needs, otherwise the idea is just not worth the time and the money.

Q: What progress have you already reached? Are there first projects that you could talk about?

A: Yes, we have already developed a couple of digital products or services that are in the testing phase at selected pilot customers right now. We for example

developed a new Vendor Managed Inventory System called MyInkroom and a customer portal that is currently rolled out for first sites. We also have started a pilot online shop together with our Sheetfed business unit located in Backnang, Germany, which already gained positive feedback from several test customers. Another example is the new troubleshooting guide that is already available on our website. We are constantly exchanging with customers and already received valuable feedback for developing further digital services and products enabling us in the end to enhance the overall customer journey.

Q: Where do you see the status of digitization in the printing and packaging industry?

A: In the packaging industry there are areas in the value chain that are still analog, and others are already more digitally advanced like for example the pre-press phase. I strongly believe that the different players acting at the converter's shop-floor need to collaborate on digitization and be more open for each other's system. In my opinion, we need a targeted collaboration between ink suppliers, printing machine manufacturers and converters to create best and sustainable results for everyone.

Q: What's your vision of the future printing and packaging market?

A: Going forward, I believe that brand owners will begin to allocate more budget to services they already know from digital marketing. Engagement will be possible, and packaging will interact with digital devices. The future of packaging is about connecting product and consumer by adding unique features to the packaging. This will open up new markets and new business opportunities. For us as one of the leading global providers of printing inks for packaging applications and labels, this means the need for the development of innovative ink solutions but also being able to react as fast as possible to changing requirements and new upcoming trends. With strategic partnerships with relevant start-ups and first digitized processes we have already laid down the tracks for a successful future.

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