

05/15/2020 Einblicke Insight

Interview with Ralf Thümmler, Global Head of Process Management & Consulting (PMC)



Q: Ralf - could you describe in a few sentences what PMC at Siegwerk means?

A: PMC stands for Process Management and Consulting. Our goal is to increase transparency, improve productivity and thereby contribute to the sustainable company development of our customers. Together with them, we analyze and optimize the production process, determine potential savings and motivate and train staff. We also support color and ink management as well as the print set-up and finishing processes. Within our PMC department we handle three pillars of our customer service solutions:

- a. Colorwerk - our Color Management Program
- b. On-Site Consulting – our service where we support customers on site to improve processes in their value chain

c. InHouse – our service where we manage the ink room of our customers

Q: We all know that our customers are professionals in their daily work but how can we support our customers? What can we achieve by joining forces?

A: Sure our customers are experts in their areas. They know what they are doing. However, they are often fully occupied in their day-to-day business responsibilities focusing on getting customer orders done right on time and with highest quality. It is exactly this daily operation where untapped potential for improvement lies. Here, our On-Site Consulting experts can deliver an outside view and objective input helping customers to overcome any subjective viewpoints and identify valuable improvement potentials. Therefore, the mutual exchange with customers' experts is key for us to successfully realize any kind of improvement project. When looking at ink rooms you will also find high potential for improvements: There are ways to further increase efficiency in almost every ink room. Here, our consultants can either advice customers how to exploit untapped potential and improve the efficiency of their ink rooms or our InHouse teams can support and assist in ink room management to ensure the ink room is well-managed and therefore effectively organized.

Q: What would you say are the biggest challenges facing the printing and ink industries in the coming years?

A: The industry is changing rapidly, print runs are getting shorter, complexity of packaging is getting higher, more marketing initiatives need shorter lead times. Consequently, the improvement of set up times and downtimes are already key efficiency drivers since years and will even get more relevant in the future.

Furthermore, post-consumer plastic waste is already and will be a big challenge in our society. For the public this is e.g. highly visible in ocean littering. But there are also other places where this problem becomes noticeable, less visible for the public but noticeable. My wife and I love to travel and explore the world with our mountain bikes, whereby deserts have always been attracting us in particular. We

have seen it with our own eyes: You also find plastic waste e.g. in the Namib, in the deserts of Mongolia as well as in the high mountains of the Altiplano in Argentina. So, our society really needs to change the way how to deal with plastic. However, I also think there is no world without packaging. It plays a major role by creating access to safe water and safe food in the world. For me it is obvious that we cannot feed 8 billion people without packaging. I'm truly convinced that the circularity of packaging material is the key to overcome this packaging dilemma. We need to think about how we can reduce, reuse or recycle packaging. With the same principle we need to look on the production environment itself. Only highly effective and efficient processes lead to the saving of resources in the production of packaging material.

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