

Located in 's-Hertogenbosch, a city in the south of the Netherlands that is close to the borders with both Belgium and Germany, Brausse Europe's new facility is well positioned for an Open House designed to attract European cartonmakers and converters. Over three days in the middle of March, the event presented an opportunity for converters to see the Brausse Forza 110 folder gluer, first introduced in 2014, as well as the European debut of a new die-cutting, stripping and blanking machine — the Brausse 1060ER.

The move to new, larger premises was needed for a number of reasons, says Vincent van der Heijden, Managing Director of both Brausse Europe and its sister company Vinfoil,

which designs and manufactures cold foiling units for packaging printing presses. "With new machines like the Brausse 1060ER coming on-stream, we wanted to have a better space to promote and demonstrate it while also having space to show machines like the Forza and the Signa 1050 hot-foil stamping press. We also wanted to have more space for spare parts and to bring the assembly of our Vinfoil cold-foiling lines in-house."

BRAUSSE OPEN HOUSE



OPEN HOUSE



The result was a move to a bright, modern facility, which has been named the Brausse Innovation Centre (BIC), reflecting Brausse Europe's role as head agent for Brausse products in Europe. Spread over 1200 square metres, the facility has room for several Brausse demonstration machines, spare parts stores and an assembly area for Vinfoil units, as well as offices and an R&D suite. The site is only 90km from Amsterdam's Schiphol airport and has direct access to the European motorway network. So, as well as being easily accessible to customers, it's location means that service technicians and spare parts can reach every part of Europe quickly and easily. "Service is really important to us," says Van der Heijden, "because it is important to our customers. We have 140 machines spread across Europe and our customers say they are very pleased with both our products and our service. It's confirmed by the fact that we have many customers who have more than one machine. But we have to be able to support them."

Brausse is the carton equipment brand of Shanghai Eternal Machinery Company, in which Bobst Group has owned a majority stake since 2010. Brausse Europe has been the European agent for Brausse for over ten years and Van der Heijden says that he and

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his team have been very excited by the arrival of the new Brausse 1060 ER "We are long-time collaborators with them and we have seen this machine throughout its development cycle."

It's a view echoed by John Hall, Managing Director of ipack solutions, the UK & Ireland agents for Brausse folding carton machinery. "The Brausse blanker represents a step change in technology for us, and puts us on a different level. It will appeal to small-to-medium sized cartonmakers who have dismissed blanking as too expensive, and even to larger companies who perhaps need a flexible machine for shorter-run work to supplement their high volume die-cutters."

The Brausse 1060ER, first introduced at All-in Print 2014 in Shanghai, is a fully automated die-cutting press that converts printed sheets into stacks of blanks, ready for folding and gluing. This removes the need for breaking out of the cartons by hand, making production more efficient. Van der Heijden says that two Brausse blankers have already been sold to clients in the US and three to cartonmakers in Europe. "Our customers are looking for low open hour costs. You get that with this machine because of its competitive pricing and its low maintenance costs. Banks will lend a



L-R: Vincent van der Heijden and John Hall

cartonmaker the half a million Euros they need when they can see how quick the return on investment is.”

Neither Van der Heijden nor Hall see the new Brausse blanker as a replacement for high volume, 24/7 production, but Hall says that most Brausse users find that the price/performance ratio of the equipment suits them. “We have one UK customer who calls it their ‘Ronseal’ machine,” he says, referring to a famous TV advertisement in the UK by paint manufacturer Ronseal who said their products ‘do what they say on the tin.’ “The Brausse is like that. It’s fit for purpose and does what we say it can do.” Van der Heijden agrees. “It gives cartonmakers automated productivity at a low hourly rate. This machine will make them money.”

Fully Loaded

The 1060 ER follows the Brausse philosophy of providing as standard many options for which other manufacturers charge extra. “For example, quick locking micro-adjusting chases, quick locking stripping and blanking sections and remote diagnostics all come as standard, as do push and pull lays and ultrasonic double-sheet detection.”

Also standard equipment is a non-stop feeder capable of handling materials ranging from 90gsm paper up to 4mm corrugated board. “It’s a highly adjustable and very forgiving feeder, even on lightweight and recycled substrates,” says Hall. The machine’s electronic control system runs on Mitsubishi PLC’s, which control functions such as cutting force and binder sheet insertion, while the indexing drive system offers up 260 degrees of motion. The resulting smooth transport of the sheet means fewer, smaller, nicks are required, even when running at the machine’s full operating speed of 6,500 sheets per hour. Speed, however, is not the key factor for the 1060ER, says Van der Heijden. “For the sort of customers attracted to this machine, their runs are short to medium-length, and so the speed of the make-ready is much more important than production speed.”

The Brausse blanker is supplied with a quick tooling set-up system that aids fast job changeover in both the stripping and blanking stations, while an optional frame allows for the delivery of full sheets where the user does not require the job to be blanked. Hall says that the 1060ER is as easy to run as a conventional non-blanking machine. “And when you run it in ‘non-blanking mode’, using the full sheet delivery device, it only takes a little longer to make ready than a conventional stripping-only machine.”

Forza Gluer

Just as the Brausse 1060ER represents a step change in the brand’s die-cutting technology, so the Forza 110 is the first of a new generation of folder-gluer from the company. Capable of handling straight-line, crash-lock cartons and 4/6 corner cartons, the machine features a side alignment unit for faster make-readies and higher quality of folding and gluing. “This new generation of machines has been designed for high flexibility and productivity,” says Hall. “The Forza can handle cartonboard up to 800gsm and corrugated up to E-flute, so it’s suited for most carton making applications. Machines like this and the 1060ER further enhance the Brausse position as the best value proposition in the market.”

Also on show at the open house was a pre-owned Brausse Signa 1050 hot-foil stamper, which is currently being refurbished and upgraded prior to delivery to a UK carton plant. Van der Heijden says that the ability of Brausse Europe to give equipment the features and systems that European converters want, and need, is an important part of the company’s value as an agent. “For the established ranges of Brausse equipment we add in systems such as quick locking stripping frames, because that’s what European converters want.” Brausse Europe also put such machines through VinTechMa CE certification. “It means our customers can be confident that their machine meets all the relevant legal standards,” he adds.

The attention to detail of such work is reflected in the company’s attitude to everything it does, from design to service, says Van der Heijden. “Yes, you need good products, but you also have to provide first class service — and that’s about attitude. We have a small but highly motivated team working here, who are also very flexible. Our customers like that.”

After the open house event the Brausse 1060ER and Forza 110 on show were shipped to Germany as part of a four machine order by packaging printer Noblepac. ■

