



Some of the many kinds of books which Edubook prints on the inkjet web press and finishes on the TecnaU Libra 800 book production line.

## **TecnaU Libra 800 helps Edubook AG handle new business challenges in book production**

**Thanks to the TecnaU solution, Edubook AG is moving to efficient on-demand book-of-one production**

Established in 2004 as a digital-only print shop, Edubook AG of Merenschwand (Switzerland) has a long tradition of commitment to on-demand book production and is a staunch advocate of highly networked machinery and production processes. Edubook is a company of the Kalidos Education Group, Switzerland's biggest group of private schools, which was acquired by the German Klett Group at the beginning of 2019.

Textbooks and schoolbooks are where the main emphasis of production lies, of course, but Edubook also generates around 55% of its total sales volume with orders from customers outside the Education Group. These external contracts relate to catalogues, price lists and fiction. The content parts of the products are printed by Edubook on a Canon inkjet web press in runs of up to 1500 copies, or very occasionally 1800. In connection with the finishing options for the output from the inkjet press, it was announced at drupa 2016 that Edubook had ordered a fully integrated Libra 800 book production line from TecnaU for roll-to-finished book processing.

The fully automated Libra 800 went into operation at the company early in 2017. The system makes perfect bound books (glued with PUR technology in Edubook's case) in different sizes and with a different number of pages from one copy to the next – with productivity of up to 800 books per hour.

Edubook Managing Director Sergio Nobile explains here in an interview what role books of one (books printed in a run of one copy) play at his firm today and describes how this production process is realized with the TecnaU Libra 800.

### **What fundamental considerations lay behind your decision to invest in the Libra 800?**

We'd already been wondering since 2015 what sort of demand there'd be for books-of-one production in future. Our biggest client had been pressing us to deliver ever shorter runs and that was what triggered it all off. It started with orders for 300 copies, which were then reduced to 150, 100 and 50 until finally we were down to classroom or group size.



Sergio Nobile, who has been on the management team ever since Edubook was founded and was appointed Managing Director in early 2019, believes the digital print provider is excellently placed for the future with its highly flexible book-of-one concept.

We were searching for a suitable book production line for this purpose. A system with the shortest possible make-ready time was important to us. We also wanted it to offer throughput equivalent to, if not better than, our existing production process with two perfect binders and of course the ability to continue using the same paper grades as before was a must.

### **What arguments ultimately tipped the scales for the Libra 800?**

We were looking for a system that doesn't fold sheets but instead lets us produce single sheets. We were aiming to offer our customers the same flexibility as they'd had in the past, namely the option of specifying the page count for their products in steps of two without having to insert "Notes" or empty pages at the end. That's why we turned to TecnaU, because they were also willing to accommodate our special needs. For example, one of our requirements was that the books be trimmed using a three-knife trimmer with the cover face up, in other words the opposite of the TecnaU standard. TecnaU made that technically possible.

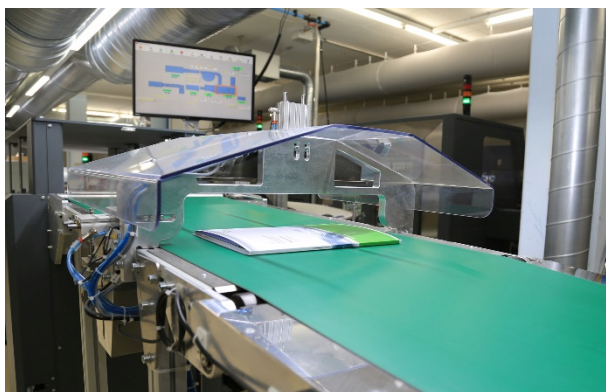
Another decisive aspect was our desire to purchase the complete system from one source, which is how it was with TecnaU. All the other systems we were quoted involved at least two different players, which was not what we wanted.

### **What new production processes have you been able to offer your customer with the Libra 800?**

Runs of one, obviously, and also books where the size and thickness are constantly changing. That represents significant added value compared to the traditional production process with numerous manual intermediate steps and a lot of waste.

### **What kind of products do you process on the Libra 800?**

We use the Libra 800 to process schoolbooks, novels, catalogues and price lists. The schoolbooks are generally in A4 format with anything from 40 to 480 pages. The novels can have all manner of formats



Edubook produces digitally printed schoolbooks and textbooks along with sundry other books, catalogues, price lists and manuals, typically in runs of up to 1500 copies.

– A5, 170 x 240 mm and so on, typically with between 80 and 300 pages. Our catalogues and price lists are mainly A4 or A5, either portrait or landscape and from 32 to 520 pages.

As far as the paper quality is concerned, we were able to continue using the same standard grades of paper we had done previously. Those are standard offset or lightly coated papers from 90 to 160 gsm.

**Do the rolls which you process on the TecnaU line always contain homogeneous book formats or is there sometimes a mixture on each roll?**

That varies according to the production process. Everything our production planning department sends to the press is standardized. We naturally try to combine similar formats on one roll.

However, we also have our online shop, which is still restricted to B2C for the moment. Jobs from that channel are transferred to the press automatically after going through our digital workflow. We have no control here over what formats, page counts or run lengths come in what order. When we then take these mixed rolls to the Libra 800 for processing, that's never a problem.

### **How many people do you need to operate the Libra 800?**

That depends on seasonal requirements. Our busiest period is from June until August. We print around 300,000 books during those three months alone – half of our annual production. We have one and a half people working on the system during the peak season and one the rest of the year.

### **How satisfied are you with your company's cooperation with TecnaU?**

I'd describe our cooperation with TecnaU as good to very good and our communication with one another is open and honest.

Since the Libra 800 can also be serviced remotely, TecnaU's specialists can access the system at any time and provide help and support whenever we need it.



A whole series of steps are executed fully automatically on the TecnaU Libra 800 book production line: unwinding, side trimming with slit merge and cross cutting, stacking, perfect binding, cover feeding, drying and cooling, aligning, three-knife trimming and delivery.



**How would you sum up your experience with the Libra 800 to date and how has the investment benefited you?**

We definitely made the right decision in buying the Libra 800 and we'd have no hesitation in doing the same again. It was largely due to the system's enormous flexibility and efficiency that we were able to increase the volume of jobs produced by 40% between January 2017 and April 2020 – without having to take on extra people.

**What are your expectations regarding Edubook's development over the next four years?**

We're confident that we're on the right track with our "book-of-one" concept. Learning is set to become even more individual and even greater account will need to be taken of students' individual abilities and needs in future. That's why we expect to see a growing trend towards individualization. There's clear evidence that books of one are on the advance and the Libra 800 is the ideal finishing solution here.

Automation is another factor. Our workflows are about 75% automated at present. We're aiming to achieve between 98 and 100% automation three to four years from now. Today, our production department receives orders from clients in industry, publishing and the financial sector via the sales office. In future, what we'd like in the event of reprints or repeat orders is for those B2B customers to go directly to the job concerned online and order again without being obliged to interact with one of our administrative staff. Those jobs can then be printed without delay.

We're also planning to introduce a "next-day delivery" option in the foreseeable future, where our TecnaU book production line will likewise play a major role. Then, for instance, if a student or lecturer places an online order with us today, their made-to-order book will be delivered to them tomorrow.

(End)



The automated TecnaU Libra 800 makes perfect bound books and brochures, often in different sizes and with a different number of pages from one copy to the next. This is where products pass through the cooling tower before being fed to the Libra VT variable three-knife trimmer (right).

**For further information, visit [www.tecnau.com](http://www.tecnau.com) or contact:**

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## About Tecna

Tecna offers a complete product portfolio dedicated to paper handling, monitoring, processing and finishing for the digital printing industry. We are devoted to providing integrated solutions to support the broadest array of applications for Transactional Printing, TransPromo, Direct Mail, Publishing, Graphic Arts, Book on Demand and Short Run. Global service and around-the-clock support help ensure our reputation as the industry's reliability leader. Our products increase productivity, cut labor and paper costs, and even make new applications possible - Tecna solutions truly empower digital print to help you do more with less.