

Pushing the Envelope(s)

Foresight and early warnings keep Encore Envelopes in the game

With advances in modern technology reducing demand for envelopes, manufacturers are finding it increasingly hard to justify investment.

Matters became more complicated for Encore Envelopes when they were notified that their production line was at risk due to spares becoming obsolete. It was imperative that a strategy be put in place that would minimize machinery downtime and potential lost earnings.

Encore Envelopes is the largest independent manufacturer of printed envelopes in the UK, operating 15 production lines printing up to 85 million envelopes per week. With 12 months remaining on the ten year service support guarantee of its Diax03 drives, Bosch Rexroth contacted the company to advise that with spares becoming obsolete, the maintenance and service of its drives could not be fully supported and production would be at risk.

“We are fully aware that investment in maintenance repair and overhaul (MRO) services for any production line can become very costly if unex-



Control panel after IndraDrive retrofit

pected,” says Andrew Smith, service consultant at Bosch Rexroth. “This is why we make it a priority to notify manufacturers as soon as a risk is identified, so that we can help them upgrade machinery over time and avoid a sharp and unexpected impact on production.”

To minimize machinery downtime, a strategy was put in place to allow Encore Envelopes to retrofit a significant number of their envelope production lines with new drive technology. Encore chose the Rexroth IndraDrive for its versatility, compactness and multi-protocol support offering.

Commenting on the process, David English, electrical engineering manager at Encore Envelopes, said: “Taking Andrew’s advice on board, I took one of the units out of production and, upon receipt of the IndraDrive system, upgraded the machine. Not only did this give me a machine with better operating capabilities, it also freed up spare parts for the remaining units, boosting our stock levels which were at a critical level.



First fully refurbished and retrofitted envelope printing machine

“In addition, it was vitally important that the motion controller of the IndraDrive system be fully integrated with our current operational interface. Following consultation with Bosch Rexroth, we decided that the best course of action would be to install a Programmable Process Controller (PPC) as it utilized the same operating software as the Diax03. This ensured communications and protocols were easier and quicker to implement whilst keeping the time the machine was out of production down to a minimum.”

David concludes: “Through the help of Bosch Rexroth, we knew 12 months ahead of anyone else in the industry that our envelope machines needed to be upgraded, which allowed us the necessary time to form a strategy to refurbish our equipment whilst maintaining full operational levels. Due to the success of the initial refurbishment, we have now finished the upgrade of our second machine and plans are in place to refurbish the remaining fleet over the coming months.” **PTE**