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**Safe Production thanks to NewsGrip Retrofit**

With the retrofit of a NewsGrip conveyor at the Kettwig site, Axel Springer benefits from a high level of production reliability and the future availability of spare parts.

Although the NewsGrip conveyors in the Kettwig printing plant, which had already been commissioned in 1999, were still running smoothly, it became apparent that the discontinued controls would jeopardize the maintenance and operation of the system. So those responsible at Axel Springer, as a pilot customer, decided to retrofit a NewsGrip conveyor. "Looking at the overall situation in newspaper printing, it is clear that we can only make new investments in exceptional cases. That's why retrofits, which can be carried out at significantly lower cost, are increasingly coming into focus," is how Jörg Löffler, Head of Operating Technology at the Kettwig site, describes the initial situation. "With the retrofit carried out, we now have up-to-date components in use in the reworked plant for which replacements are available and which can be repaired."



*Jörg Löffler (Head of Operating Technology Axel Springer): "We have gained production reliability with the control system retrofit on the NewsGrip conveyor."*

For the installation of the control system retrofit, the plant was taken out of production for a few days. Thanks to detailed planning, it was possible to distribute newspaper production to other plants during this time. "The German project management and the service technician on site were particularly flexible," says a pleased Jörg Löffler. "We were always actively supported with any problems that arose and are very satisfied with the way the project went."

In addition to daily newspapers such as BILD (seven editions), DIE WELT, Süddeutsche Zeitung and Handelsblatt, Axel Springer also produces weekly titles such as BILD am SONNTAG and WELT AM SONNTAG. Circulation amounts to around three million copies per week - and that's without any additional pre-products. With such large-volume productions, production reliability is a top priority. In addition to a lower risk of downtime, the extension of the life cycle also speaks in favor of carrying out a retrofit. Often the mechanical components of the machines still run perfectly, but discontinued or no longer available control components and new software generations eventually become a problem. Axel Springer has already been carrying out retrofits on its systems since 2013, focusing on the Flexiroll buffers and the CN80 stackers. "The control retrofit of the conveyors was the next step," Jörg Löffler explains the planning. "We have gained production reliability as a result and are also planning to retrofit another Newsgrip conveyor."