Did you Know?
Other Times

Explanation

The Other time is defined as the time span starting with the last printed sheet of a job until the plate change of the following job. It includes washing processes, maintenance work, organization of printing material and consumables but also waiting times.
Together with the make ready time, the other time is a time span that should be kept as low as possible as it has a high impact on the overall productivity of the press.

The other time can be split into two parts, the *effective* other time and *standstill* time during the other time.

The **effective** part of the other time is defined by all the actions were the press is not standing still. This time slot includes things like washing down the machine, cleaning the blankets or simply a running press without printing.

The **standstill** part of the other time includes things like organizing printing material or consumables. Also, all the maintenance work, change of blankets, ink changes, waiting for plates or just having a break are part of this time slot. Anything that is done while the press is standing still counts into the standstill part of the other time and extends the time slot the press is simply not productive.

The print process can be split into 3 main time slots: make-ready time, production time and other time

Causes and Influencing Parameters

In order to find areas for improvement it is important to understand if there are issues with the effective or the standstill part of the other time. To get an overview about where you lose time, you can for example use performance charts in the Heidelberg Assistant.

In general, maintaining an interruption log always helps to identify possible interruptions or areas of improvement. Use the interruption log to write down all the process interruptions you notice during the other time and define areas of improvement.

Effective Other Time

A major factor in the process that increases the other time are long washing times. Especially if you have a lot of short runs and you have to wash the blankets a lot, it is very important to be most

efficient in this washing process. Shortening the time by just half a minute can sum up to a few hours per month and many more per year.

In order to reduce the time for blanket wash, check your current washing program and try to adjust it as good as possible. A good balance of washing solution and water as well as the overall time are key for a good washing result. Also, ensure to use only high-quality washing solution. This not only speeds up the process but also ensures better washing results.

Another function you should consider using is *deinking*. With deinking, the press stops transferring ink into the inking unit for a defined number of sheets, while the machine is still printing. With deinking the last printed sheets take away a big amount of ink from the blankets without loosing quality. With less ink on the blanket, you can then further decrease the washing time or, in case you are printing jobs with a very low ink coverage, it might be even possible to move to the next job without any blanket wash.

In case you don't know how to use the deinking function, check our training online training modules or get in touch with our Heidelberg experts.

Another crucial thing that can lead to interruptions are ink changes. Any time you have an ink change, you need to clean the ink fountain and wash down the inking unit. Especially if you change from a darker to a lighter ink, you might even have to wash the inking unit twice. In total, any ink change extends the other time.
If you have a lot of ink changes, ensure to organize your jobs the correct way. Try to use the same ink order for as many print jobs as possible. Also, avoid ink changes from dark to light inks as this extends washing times. Try to arrange your print jobs the way you always change from a lighter to a darker ink, that way your washing results don't have to be 100% perfect and you can start the next print job much faster.

Standstill Other Time

The standstill part of the other time is mostly related to organizational or maintenance topics. While you cannot influence maintenance or repair work, you can have a closer look to the organizational part.

One thing could be waiting for printing plates or material. Check if your plates are on the press in time and your printing material is there and ready to use in time. Avoid unnecessary long delays and try to organize your printshop so that everything is available very quick. Also, think about all the things that can already be done while the machine is still printing the previous job.
Other things that extend this part of the other time are change of the blankets or preparing the coating (if you have any). You should change the blanket after the production and prepare the coating unit already before the next job comes up.

In case you have a lot of work and turn jobs, don't wait for the sheets to dry before processing them again. The time you loose here is much more important than the costs you might have when starting another job during this time period.

Standstill times are mostly related to an inefficient logistic or organization. In case you have long standstill time, no matter in which part of the process, have a closer look at them and find out what leads to these interruptions. After you found it, you will most likely be able to find a solution and be more efficient.

Summary

Depending on your current job structure and business model, the other time can be a very time-consuming part of the process that reduces your time for production. Other times have a lot to do with internal logistics, washing times and many more.

If you want to find out what extends the other time you have to watch the process closely. An interruption log helps a lot to do that. Always try to look for time consuming interruptions, identify them and try to avoid or decrease the time necessary to a minimum.

In case you need help to improve this process, get in touch with our Heidelberg experts.