Did you Know?
Other Times

Explanation

In printing there are several times which we can use to measure the performance of our print production and define areas of improvement.

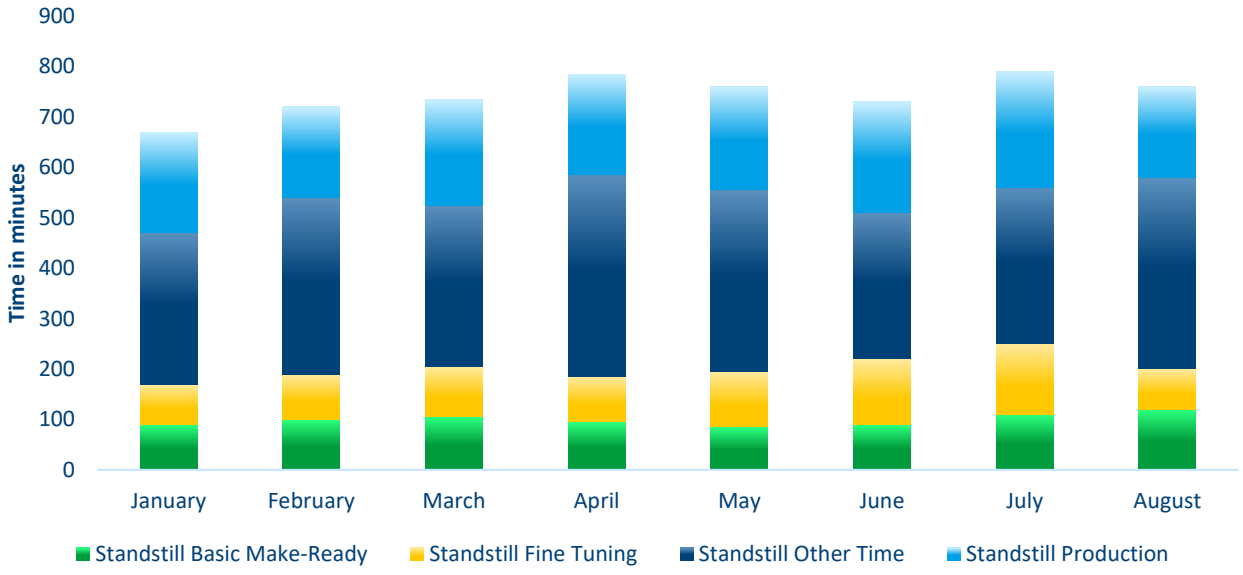
Beside the make ready and printing time there are times such as standstill or other times which describe a time slot where the machine is not productive. Understanding these time slots helps you to decrease unnecessary interruptions and enables you to be more efficient. In the following, these time slots shall be explained in detail.

Standstill time

As stand still time we define the time the machine is standing still. This time shows you the total amount of hours your machine is simply not in production mode. It also doesn't include processes like plate change, washing, etc. That means, stand still time is wasted time for your print production and should be reduced to an absolute minimum.

The causes for standstill time could be things like waiting for printing substrates or plates, color changes, change of the blankets etc. Another high influencer can also simply be the break of your operators. All these parameters lead to a standstill of your press and reduces the time for effective print production. As there are a various amount of reason that can cause a standstill, we separate the standstill time into four main areas:

- Standstill Basic Make Ready Time
- Standstill Fine Tuning Time
- Standstill Production Time
- Standstill Other Time



Standstill Basic Make Ready Time

Standstill time that occurs during the basic make-ready process is most likely related to logistical / organizational issues. Within the basic make-ready of the press the press will be prepared for the next print job. It starts with the first plate mounted and ends with the first printed sheet.
Interruptions could be issues with the plate change, missing plates, missing paper, change of ink, etc.

Standstill Fine Tuning Time

The fine tuning Time starts with the first printed sheet and ends with the activation of the good sheet counter. It includes mainly the adjustment of the ink or register.

Things that interrupt this process and lead to a standstill could be issues with reaching the correct Lab value or register. Especially machines which are not equipped with an Inpress Control or were you have issues with reaching a good delta E in time, tend to longer stand still times. With every pull were you also stop the production means additional standstill time of the press. Manual measuring of the sheets and adjusting ink profiles and register take additional time that gets lost.

Another reason for longer standstill times during the fine tuning time could be waiting for customer approval.

Standstill Production Time

The production time is defined as the time starting with the first good sheet to the last printed sheet of a job. It includes the pure printing time but also washing times, process interruptions, etc.

Standstill times during the production time can be process interruptions such as issues with the paper run but also logistic topics like changing the pile at the feeder or delivery or simply operator breaks.

Standstill Other Time

The other time is defined as the time span between the last printed sheet and the following plate change. It includes all actions which are done while machine is not in make-ready or production mode. Things that usually are done in this phase are supply of printing material such as paper, ink or plates but also repair work or simply the change of blankets, etc.

Influencing Parameters

In order to reduce the standstill times, there are several things you can do.

First, identify the actions that lead to a standstill of your press. Find out what is really interrupting your production. Is it your internal logistics? Is the paper and all the other printing material available in time? Or is there always material missing and has to be organized after each job?
Do you have enough print supporters that help your printers to organize all the necessary things for print production or is this something that has to be managed by your printer?
Also, how about the break of your printers? When are they having their break and what happens to the production? Etc.

Then, find solutions. After you have identified areas of improvement try to find solutions in order to optimize your processes. Try to improve your internal logistic processes and don't waste time by waiting for print materials or consumables. What things can be done while the machine is still running? Who can support and how can you just make better?
Also, during operator breaks try to keep the machine up and running. In case you have some long runs, that's the perfect possibility for your operator to take a break. Would it also be possible that someone takes over print production while the printer is having a break?

Try to find solutions on how to decrease the standstill time to an absolute minimum. Keep in mind, every minute your machine is not producing, you might lose money.

Summary

Standstill times are times your press is not productive. Always try to find out which causes lead to standstill during the different parts of the print process. In order to find interruptions its always helpful to have a kind of interruption log where you write down all the interruptions that happen during production. This helps to identify interruption fast.
Keep in mind, the less standstill time, the more time you have for print production, more print jobs, and thus more money.