

Hornbach



Home improvement stores are a wonderland for every home handyman. Even people who otherwise avoid shopping, and don't want to spend any more time than necessary on details like clothing sizes or napkin colors, suddenly are totally absorbed by a display of nuts and bolts or the options for cleaning a chainsaw. Hornbach home improvement stores are no exception to this rule. At 131 locations, Hornbach has everything a builder or handyman's heart desires. It scores high not only with its product variety and consistently low prices, but also with its exceptional service and knowledgeable sales staff. Comprehensive information and advertising materials keep customers up to date at all times.

To produce these enormous print volumes in high quality and efficient workflows, the prepress team in Hornbach's Marketing department relies on DALIM SOFTWARE.

There's always something to do in the Central Advertising Coordination/Marketing department at Hornbach's headquarters in Bornheim, near Landau, Germany. It is responsible for all print data management and print product quality assurance. All information relating to the planned production of print media for current and upcoming business years flows together here: The department coordinates schedules with printers and agencies; its employees serve as contacts for changing page volumes or postponing deadlines, and they coordinate all content corrections. In view of all the different brochures, flyers and direct mailers printed in their millions each year, one thing above all must never happen: the team must never lose track of projects.

As one of the pioneers in Germany and Europe, Hornbach opened its first combined home improvement/gardening store in 1968. The company then set new standards in the 1980s with its concept for large-scale stores. Hornbach is a family-run business, which may contribute to the friendly relationship among its employees, who identify strongly with their employer. But it undoubtedly is a pillar of the company's philosophy, which is visibly demonstrated throughout the organization. People who shop at Hornbach are not merely paying customers; their needs and what they want to achieve are also acknowledged and taken seriously. Their projects are





the focus, and all sales support is geared towards them. Has the customer thought of everything? Does he need tips on using the materials, or even basic instructions on the best way to proceed? This kind of service requires professionally qualified personnel and project-based thinking.

Five years ago, Hornbach started handling as many prepress activities as possible in-house. Outsourcing had proven to be both costly and very inflexible. The constant communication back-and-forth between agencies and headquarters extended the lead time to the printing date, which was just as disadvantageous as the fact that changes had to be finalized long before going to press. Bringing the process in house as it was did not seem to be an effective solution. However, a way to do just that was found together with GAFICON GmbH, a DALIM SOFTWARE distributor.

Qualification plays a key role in the Hornbach concept. Extensive training programs ensure that employees know everything about both products and sales techniques. Only in this way can the unusual solution-orientated style of sales meet the customer's real needs. How does the structure of a thermal insulation system function? What consecutive steps are involved in installing a garden pond? How do you turn a tangled role of wire into a nice-looking fence around the yard? At Hornbach, customers looking for help with a building or renovating project get a full explanation of the entire procedure.

In the PrePressDigital department, establishing transparent workflows likewise was at the top of the

agenda. To optimize print data production, a PDF of all print objects is created for the printer and the internet, and then modified for the respective print media and process. Proofing was enhanced by a color management server (GMG) that makes sure all images have the same color appearance in print – a major step towards quality assurance. However, on account of rising volumes, this workflow was frequently reaching the limits of its capacity. It was here that DALIM SOFTWARE'S TWIST turned out to be a big help.

Hornbach advertises its products in highly unique campaigns, broadcasted by the use of mass media, such as television, radio and the internet. Even though the online Hornbach community is growing, print media in volumes over ten million, including advertising circulars and jumbo-size advertising for new store openings, still make up a large percentage of advertising and marketing.

With TWIST, a fully automated prepress workflow optimizes the generation of a variety of different file types and, what's more, even internal workflows can be further automated as needed to increase efficiency and quality. Thanks to its modular structure, TWIST can link all hardware and software systems already in use that are critical to PrePressDigital's production environment. Among the greatest advantages of working with the DALIM SOFTWARE application: all data now comes together at a single interface, and only a single input is required to create all the desired outputs, from the print data to the PDF for the internet.

To make sure home improvers find everything they need for their projects in no more than one trip to the store, Hornbach keeps an extraordinarily wide range of products on hand, with some 50,000 articles on shelves and another 50,000 for order. An average of 11,000 square meters of sales area are available for this purpose in Hornbach stores and as of early 2010, the company was operating a total of 39 home improvement and gardening stores in eight countries outside Germany.

Since launch, all those involved in print production can view the current status of a job via the MISTRAL platform, because it is extremely critical, for example, to be able to make last-minute changes in price or product range right before going to print. The Digital Virtual Library (DVL) from DALIM SOFTWARE also proved to be extremely helpful in this connection.

Hornbach stands for user-friendly products with a consistently high level of quality. In courses taught by professionals, customers can learn the most efficient way to carry out a project. Anyone who wants to learn how to operate a chainsaw, install a shower stall or enhance a wall with roll-on plaster, can just visit the Hornbach website to find out which courses are being held at a local store. That strengthens customer loyalty and guarantees personalized customer support.

The close cooperation with DALIM SOFTWARE is another advantage the Marketing department would not want to do without. The GMG ColorServer was recently integrated in TWIST through the GMG Flow-Connect system. Over 170,000 PDFs already run through this workflow today, including all correction phases during page composition. Including PDFs not delivered to the printer's, but rather compiled for the internet, the archives or special advertising purposes, this figure swells to an impressive 680,000. A readiness to tackle Hornbach's very specific needs, an understanding of the workflows, and a willingness to always go a step farther: that's the advantage of DALIM SOFTWARE and its distributor GAFICON GmbH. Or perhaps it's simply the perfect interplay between the company philosophies, which claim there is a solution for everything, in line with the slogan of a recent Hornbach advertising campaign: „If you can imagine it, you can built it!“ ■



Company:	HORNBACK-Baumarkt-AG
Location:	Bornheim / Germany
Type of company:	DIY-store
Number of employees:	18
DALIM SOFTWARE products:	DIALOGUE, MISTRAL, TWIST