

Needing to reduce your web width?

Newspapers are reducing their web widths at an increased rate in an effort to decrease operating costs. Here are some tips to consider if you are reducing yours.

Fortunately, at least for singlewide press users, cutting web widths on such presses as the Goss Community, Goss Urbanite, Harris V15 and Harris 845 is a fairly straightforward project.

What steps need to be taken whenever the web width is reduced? Anything that controls the travel of the paper needs to be considered. Let's look at the reduction from where the newsprint roll is loaded into the tension system.

Tension system preparation:

- The margin controls should be centered before starting the reduction. Centering will allow an equal amount of web travel in both directions from the center.
- The chucks on the roll shafts have to be repositioned to ensure that the web is centered through the printing units.

Unit preparation:

- The plate cylinder side-lay adjustment should be centered to ensure that it has an equal amount of travel in each direction. This process assures maximum lateral print registration control since the web will be in the center of the unit with the plate cylinder centered.
- Some presses have a register block on the side of each plate cylinder that will have to be relocated. If the register pins are in the center of the plate cylinder no further adjustment is necessary.
- The ink rollers, dampener roller and blankets can be reduced as well to reduce ink slinging, ink misting and excessive water on the edges of the web.
- If the press is equipped with bustle wheels, the wheels will have to be repositioned.

Folder preparation:

- The outside former trolleys will have to be repositioned so that they track on the edges of the web. This is also a good time to replace any worn trolley wheels.
- Whenever the tension system is centered and the units are centered, the web should pass over the former nose so that there is an even amount of paper on each side of the nose. Repeat the previous steps until it does.
- The nips will have to be brought closer together to accommodate the new web width. In some cases this is not possible because the center spacers (barrels) are too long. This means shorter barrels will have to be purchased and installed. The barrels are specially made so that the nips can be mounted to their edges. Older style barrels are one piece, which means that the entire barrel – nip shaft as well as bearings, nips and gears – will have to be removed to install shorter nip barrels. It is always best to replace the solid nip barrels and nips with split nips and barrels to reduce the cost of replacing these components in the future due to worn parts or additional web modifications.
- The pins in the folding cylinder can be another problem. Whenever the web width is reduced there is a chance that the newspaper will lose the outside folder pin. There should be a pin within 1 inch of the open edge of the folded product. When the pin is further away, the paper will in some cases “dog ear.” This condition can be corrected by machining the folding cylinder so that an additional pin is added close to the edge of the paper.

- The delivery fly can also be a problem since the outside edge of the product might miss the end fly. If this happens then readjust the outside fly so that it supports the paper.

The trend toward 11-inch pages is also giving some newspapers the option of adding a third page to their two-page-width singlewide presses. While doing this increases page capacity, it also creates some enormous challenges.

If you have any questions concerning web-width reduction projects, please feel free to contact me
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