



Press statement – for immediate release

PrintersLounge - inauguration of new on-line network for global printing and media industry

PrintersLounge starts public beta version

Dillingen/Saar, July 20 2009 – For a few days now, in the form of the PrintersLounge, a new, comprehensive, globally oriented on-line portal for the printing and media sector has been under way. The PrintersLounge was developed by D&S – Dort und Schmitt – of Dillingen in the Federal German state of Saarland. Alexander Dort of D&S on the PrintersLounge: "The idea of providing a portal of this kind for the entire printing and media industry was conceived as far back as three years ago. At that time, there were only a few minor portals worldwide which were oriented towards this particular branch of industry, and it had been clear for a long time that the printing industry, the mother of mass communication, was not managing to stay a step ahead of the other communication media going into the twenty-first century. As we see it, the reasons for this were that the companies in the sector had been focusing much too much on their own medium and were much too afraid of – and to some extent perhaps lacked interest in – the new media which were, in the meantime, fully fledged." He goes on: "Instead of taking advantage of these tremendous possibilities and adapting their enormous wealth of experience in communication to these media channels, many companies chose to ignore the rapid advance of these technologies and have, as a result, almost been overrun by them. And so it is that these companies are now faced – since the success of the new media can no longer be ignored – with the task of making up this lost ground, putting aside their shyness of these new giants of communication which have become so enormously powerful, and learning to use them to their own ends, i.e. to market themselves."

This is exactly what the PrintersLounge has been developed for. The PrintersLounge has been conceived as a portal which is intended to cater to all the needs of all the companies in the printing and media sector. The PrintersLounge is oriented towards practically all the companies in the value-added chain, starting with print buyers, agencies, consultants and creative professionals,



and going on to cover printing works, those involved in further processing, finishers and other similar service providers, all the way up to the representatives of large-scale industry such as machine and technology providers, paper, ink and coating manufacturers and others. And it goes without saying that representatives of the media and those of research and education establishments have not been forgotten either.

Alexander Dort continues: "Catering to all these target groups and their special demands has certainly not been an easy task. That's why we've spent time during the last three years holding exhaustive talks with our network partners of many years' standing from the printing industry, with the aim of satisfying their needs by providing intelligent tools and applications, while keeping operation and user navigation as simple and intuitive as possible. The result is a fantastically comprehensive portal which is tuned exactly to this branch of industry and comprises almost all areas of corporate communication".

For example, the PrintersLounge gives its members the possibility of placing press statements and news items which are then passed on to all the well known news portals and publishing whitepapers in order to document the technological status of their own company on the market; it also offers them a market-place of their own where they can advertise their products, technologies and services. The PrintersLounge also offers a job portal and an event management scheme via which events, seminars, trade fairs and other appointments can be advertised. It has also implemented a knowledge database in the Wiki style, which can be filled with expertise from the printing and media industry and organised by all the members collectively. For print buyers and printing firms the PrintersLounge has its own web-to-print platform for invitations to tender, which is organised independently of any one particular provider and can thus administer highly complex orders and orders which involve value-added finishing. A register of companies, specially geared to the market, gives members the possibility of advertising their own company within the network and also beyond it, via search engines, in a way which is freely accessible to all visitors. As a special service all entries are automatically geo-coded and processed through the PrintersLounge



KML network link for free use via Google Maps, Google Earth or the Google PDA and Smart Phone applications. These company data can then be used via these facilities inclusive of all communication data, for example for precise localisation or GPS navigation.

Some of the most recent trends on the market have already been embedded in the programming of the PrintersLounge too. For example, up-to-date VoIP and instant messengers such as Skype and ICQ are supported, bookmarking services such as del.icio.us, Mister Wong and others are provided, and the successful new service Twitter is also integrated via API.

In future, a special PrintersLounge toolbox will make work easier for service providers in the printing sector with small helper applications, comprising for example computing tools for the determination of *block thicknesses for specified materials and numbers of pages* or the *calculation of the optimum image resolution for a defined image size depending on screen resolution*, and other similar applications.

The PrintersLounge's own on-line shop for all members is currently in the programming phase. This shop will give all members the possibility of marketing their own articles, dissertations, PhD theses and similar documents on-line so that they can make some profit out of their own knowledge.

However, the PrintersLounge has not been conceived merely as a sector-related *content management service*, but also as a *professional network*. There are, for example, many tools on the platform which make it easier for PrintersLounge members to administer and extend their own network, thus maintaining customer relations and soliciting for new customers via the portal. To this end a wide-ranging forum area has also been set up, which covers almost all areas of the printing industry and is intended to make communication and the transfer of knowledge within the network easier.



Summing up, Alexander Dort says: "In programming the PrintersLounge we have really pulled out as many stops as are possible in today's communication technology and created a veritable monster of functionality. The intention is to make it possible for our members to organise press and marketing work, sales and corporate communication in a profitable way within a network which is one hundred per cent tuned to the needs of the printing sector. We hope our idea will be accepted by the market, and that in the long term membership of the PrintersLounge will become standard for all the companies in the printing industry. We are, of course, still right at the beginning and have only been on-line with our public beta version for a few days. As everyone knows, particularly at the beginning of a launch like this, it's difficult to get members to enthuse about a portal that is so new and persuade them to contribute. Having said that, many people forget that the start-up of a new portal is a time when the few contributions it contains are read very often by new interested parties and members, which actually makes it a clever move to get in there with a contribution of one's own. So we hope we can get our vision across to our members, and that they will understand that the success of the PrintersLounge will also be a success for each and every member company. It is our declared aim to establish the most comprehensive on-line portal worldwide for the printing industry on the market. We're working hard to achieve that aim!"

Registration is free for all members. Above and beyond these free memberships, which already offer a very high degree of functionality, extended membership levels can still be booked at very reasonable prices, which can be used for press work, marketing and advertising purposes via placements in the network. Special sponsor memberships continue to be provided for companies which also wish to support the presence and extension of the PrintersLounge by making a financial contribution. As a token of our gratitude and appreciation, these sponsors will be listed in a special sponsor register and highlighted in the PrintersLounge's own PR activities.

The first thousand members currently receive a *discount of 50%* on all extended memberships. As well as that, all members who participate actively in the marketing of the PrintersLounge and use the wide-ranging functions of the platform to invite friends, business partners, customers and others



to take part and are able to chalk up at least ten successful invitations in their personal recommendation list will receive *premium membership completely free for a whole year*, which means that they will have free and unlimited access to everything the PrintersLounge has to offer.

All extended memberships run for 12 months and are not automatically renewed beyond that. So there is no need for companies to worry about hidden costs, long-term contracts, subscriptions or having to give notice of termination by a certain date. At the end of the twelve-month period werden these extended accounts are simply reset to free membership and can be renewed if you so wish.

Current sponsors of the PrintersLounge include Steinemann Technology AG, the PrintCity Alliance and WEILBURGER Graphics GmbH.

For further information go to www.printerslounge.com



PRINTER'S LOUNGE

PROFESSIONAL NETWORK FOR THE PRINTING INDUSTRY

www.printerslounge.com

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PRINTER'S LOUNGE

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www.printerslounge.com



Caption: PrintersLounge – professional network for the printing industry



PRINTER'S LOUNGE

PROFESSIONAL NETWORK FOR THE PRINTING INDUSTRY

Caption: The PrintersLounge logo



Caption: Alexander Dort – co-proprietor of Dort und Schmitt



About Dort und Schmitt

Dort und Schmitt is a professional partnership between Alexander Dort and Jörg Peter Schmitt and was founded in 2008.

Alexander Dort is responsible for advertising, marketing, PR, design and programming. He has a thorough knowledge of printing technology, print, photo, video, sound and web design and computer illustration and animation, is in command of various different programming languages and feels at home in all areas of corporate communication.

Alexander Dort has twenty-one years of professional experience to look back on and has received several awards for his work during that time.

Jörg Schmitt trained as an offset printer. He graduated as a D. Eng. in printing technology and also has an MBA in marketing / communication. He can look back over fifteen years of experience in practical printing technology and has during that time held posts at management level with various different companies in the printing industry.

Jörg Schmitt has been independent since 2005, and is responsible for process optimisation, technological consultancy, quality management and sales organisation / marketing.

Both Alexander Dort and Jörg Schmitt continue to be active as authors and external consultants in various different media sectors.

The clients of Dort und Schmitt come mainly from the printing industry, but also include service providers and craftsmen.