

*The
New*

Library Scene





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LIBRARY BINDING INDUSTRY ALIVE AND WELL IN 2005

by John Salistean

Vice President of Operations, Houchen Bindery, LTD.
President, Library Binding Institute



Mark Twain once said that reports of his death were an exaggeration.

Similarly, concern that the need for library binding is reaching obsolescence is also a great

exaggeration.

While the rumors surrounding Twain were obviously unfounded, the challenges

facing our industry may seem daunting, but they also provide us with tremendous opportunities. By continuously evaluating our service offerings and processes, and by reinforcing the relationships between library binders and our clients, we will work together to ensure the long-term viability of the library binding industry.

As in most industries, technology and the economy have had an impact on library binding, and the market for some services has declined. There is little debate that shrinking library

budgets and the availability of information online have reduced demand for binding. While I am sure we can agree that the preservation of monograph collections and the

binding of periodicals are critically important, they are often the casualties of budget cuts and reduced spending. Just as our libraries have adapted in this changing world, so

have library binders. They continue to offer the best preservation techniques ever devised for the preservation of the printed word.

A LITTLE HISTORY

For a little perspective, consider that before World War II, there was very little library binding being done in the United States, and the industry was comprised of small, family run binderies scattered throughout the country. It was the returning military personnel and the GI Bill that drove college libraries to find methods to

more efficiently operate their libraries. The proliferation of technical periodical

titles, the huge increase in college populations, and the burst in library budgets meant that libraries could not operate as they had in the past. In an effort to meet the growing demand, binders invested in more efficient machinery and quickly expanded their capacity to provide services.

In the decades following WWII, semi-automation helped to streamline the production process. The hydraulic rounder and backers, the single wing casing in machines, and hydraulic presses with integrated joint building were the primary pre-computer driven inventions. These innovations enabled the binders to more efficiently get the work through their production lines, thus keeping up with the needs of their clients.

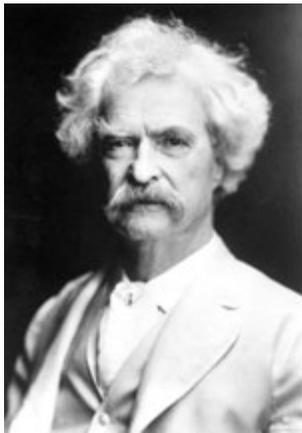
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THE DIGITAL AGE —

Early advances in technology were quickly followed by the harnessing of the computer chip. The introduction of both semi-automated case making and semi-automated double Fan Adhesive Bind machines enhanced productivity in the binding industry. And the advent of automated book measuring, integrated with computer driven hot foil stamp lettering machines were by far the greatest advancement in productivity in our industry. The current generation of these machines produces the spine lettering with much less labor than was required before.

Advances in technology meant cost savings for both binders and libraries, as streamlined processes reduced labor and production costs and expedited delivery to clients. Soon, however, library binders began to see changes similar to what had happened on family farms. As more productive but expensive machines were introduced, it caused a consolidation into fewer operations. And much like on the farm, succeeding generations did not want to stay in the family binding business,



Courtesy of The Mark Twain House & Museum, Hartford CT

“James Ross Clemens, a cousin of mine was seriously ill two or three weeks ago in London, but is well now. The report of my illness grew out of his illness, the report of my death was an exaggeration.” Mark Twain, 1897

a challenge still facing the industry today. As a result, there are fewer and larger regional and national binderies, serving a library community that is the beneficiary of the hard development work by the binders and their suppliers. In fact, the libraries are receiving an arguably superior product for less money, with faster turnaround times than ever.

Just as society has enjoyed the benefits of the technological and digital age, so have binders and libraries. And while the demand for immediate information is an enticing reason for libraries to embrace the digital revolution, many arguments can be made that would temper the rush to the new digital periodical. The two primary arguments are ownership and reformatting. Without a doubt, some libraries in the future will be burned by a reputable publisher that is supplying them with digital access to however many years of some periodical titles, and they will go bankrupt or otherwise lose the data. And as with all technologies, reformatting is always an issue. Do

you want the data in binary, Reel to Reel, Microfilm, phonograph, 8Track, Cassette, CD, DVD, DOS, or Windows?

One might also contend that even paper has a shelf life, and that the move to digitize print is just another step in the reformatting revolution. Print, although not permanent, is arguably the least expensive for the length of time it lasts, and it is not dependent on electricity or Internet connections, operating systems or IT departments. Once purchased, it is yours, and can no longer be altered by the publisher. In my opinion, these relationships are more important than often thought. The quick demise of the E-book might have been because its release was premature and the technology was not up to the users' expectations. But it occurs to some that the publishers are not pushing this technological development, perhaps because they do not wish to see E-book files become the ubiquitous, swappable, non-revenue producers that music files have become for that industry.

WHERE WE GO FROM HERE —

The key issue here is not the shrinking demand for library binding, but rather the tactics binderies are using to combat obsolescence while continuing to meet the needs of their clients. In every industry, business cycles require companies to monitor and respond to change—changes in processes and technology, changes in customer needs and demands, and changes in society. Proactive binderies deal with these changes in different ways. Some have expanded their edition binding to complement their library binding business, while others have shifted resources into the ever growing pre-

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Mining Information Gold in the Blogosphere

How to use Web logs as reliable research tools

by Paul J. Moorman • *reprinted with permission of AALL Spectrum*

In many ways, the Internet has become both a blessing and curse, especially for librarians. While we benefit from the ease of having an incredible amount of information readily available at our fingertips, we also have seen a dramatic increase in the questionable quality of that same information. Our goal of providing reliable, trustworthy, and relevant information for our patrons has become much more difficult because of this vast increase in the amount and quality of information available and produced—infoglut.

One of the main reasons behind both the increased availability of information on the Web and the attendant information explosion has been the ubiquitous Web log, or blog. These chronologically ordered online journals have made it possible for everyone who wishes to publish his or her thoughts, observations, analyses, and links for the world to see. And while blogs have the potential to be information gold mines, wading through the blogosphere (the world of blogs) to find nuggets of information gold can be as time-consuming and unsuccessful as panning for gold at the end of the California Gold Rush. However, all is not lost. With some guidance, you can find information gold in the blogosphere and learn to manage infoglut.

Blogs as Information Sources

When it comes to blogs, not too many people are neutral: you're either a blog detractor or a blog supporter. Blog detractors point to the sheer number of blogs and claim that navigating this ocean of information is simply not worth the effort. To make matters worse, much of the information created in the blogosphere disappears almost as fast as it appears. All this seems to support blog-detractors' assertions that anyone looking for information in blogs is living in a fool's paradise and

is bound to waste time and energy with little to show for the effort.

Blog supporters, on the other hand, point to the prestige and the consistently high-quality writing on some blogs. They see bloggers at the top of their various professions, using their blogs—read on a daily basis by thousands of people in their fields—to discuss weighty issues of the day and undoubtedly influence policymakers and the public. Blog-supporters can't understand how anyone can dismiss this veritable information gold mine simply because the presentation is unorganized and time-consuming to follow.

But if you take a closer look at the arguments for both blog-detractors and blog-supporters, you will find that they really aren't that far apart. Blogs can be both trivial and profound, and these traits are evident even in the best blogs. Blogs written by lawyers, law professors, and law librarians are of particular interest to law librarians. These law-oriented blogs (often called blawgs) are taking the legal world by storm. Some of the most highly respected law professors, attorneys, and law librarians have turned to the blog format to present their opinions, observations, and analysis to an ever-increasing audience of readers. One well-regarded blog filled with information, including analysis of legal issues, opinions, and links to

Tips to Navigate the Blogosphere

Finding Blogs

- Use search engines like www.google.com (search term: "~blog inurl:archives"), www.yahoo.com (search term: "blog inurl:archives"), or www.teoma.com (search term: "blog archives").
- Use blog-specific search engines like www.feedster.com or www.bloglines.com.
- Check out Ari Paparo's Big List of Blog Search Engines at www.aripaparo.com/archive/000632.html.
- Use a blog related directory like www.blawg.org or www.Kinja.com.
- Ask for recommendations from friends and colleagues familiar with the subjects you are interested in following.
- Check out the blogrolls of blogs you trust and follow.

Following Blogs

- Review the blogger's biographical information.
- Evaluate the blogs you follow on a regular basis and weed out any unnecessary blogs.
- Use an RSS reader to give you the headlines of your favorite blogs in one location. Download a free reader (www.Feedreader.com) or sign up through online blog services.
- Check out "RSS for Non-Techie Librarians" by Steven Cohen at www.llrx.com/features/rssforlibrarians.htm.

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various sources, is the Volokh Conspiracy (www.volokh.com) by UCLA Law Professor Eugene Volokh. Volokh uses his blog to “articulate ideas to scholars, other lawyers, and the general population,” according to Susan Davis in the June 2004 issue of *California Lawyer Magazine*. But for every Volokh Conspiracy there are thousands of blogs that can end up being nothing more than attractive nuisances that eat up valuable research time while offering nothing of substance for the effort. However, just because blogs are so diverse and the information difficult to find, we librarians, as information experts, do our patrons a disservice if we fail to make an effort at tapping into some of the information that may only be found in the blogosphere.

Current Information is Blogs' Strength

The variety of useful information in blogs is as varied as the blogs themselves, but for librarians they are particularly useful in finding current information. Since bloggers are often “in the trenches” of the fields they discuss, they can provide unique and valuable information, especially when looking for new developments and changes in a particular field. Genie Tyburski, Web manager of the popular legal research site The Virtual Chase (www.virtualchase.com), agrees that blogs are a great source of current information when found on trustworthy sources.

How do you find those information nuggets in blogs? The best way is to use either a general or blog-specific search engine. While most general search engines, like Google, Yahoo, or Teoma, have changed their algorithms so that blogs are no longer some of the most highly ranked sites, blogs still appear in many search results. With these tools you can also limit your search to blogs by using specific search



commands in addition to your keywords. For example, with Google, you can search information in blogs by adding “~blog inurl:archives” to your search command. Similarly, for Yahoo, simply add “blog inurl:archives” to your search terms, and for Teoma add “blog archives,” according to Christina K. Pikas in the March/April 2004 issue of *B/ITe*. By combining the terms blog and archives, you get great precision in your search results because almost all blogs have an archive, she adds.

Another way to search for information in blogs is to use blog-specific search engines like Feedster or Bloglines. These engines work much like general search engines but limit their searching to blogs. For a more comprehensive list of these tools, check out Ari Paparo’s Big List of Blog Search Engines at www.aripaparo.com/archive/000632.html.

Blogs Worth Following

One of the most useful ways to use the blogosphere for information gold is to develop a list of trustworthy blogs in subject areas of interest to you and your patrons and follow them regularly. However, finding the right blogs to follow can be a time-consuming and difficult task. One of the best ways to start is to ask for recommendations from friends and colleagues familiar with the subjects you are interested in following. You can also check out the “blogrolls” of blogs you trust and

follow. Blogrolls are lists of blogs that a blogger recommends and/or follows and are found on almost every blog. Paying attention to blogrolls is a great way to evaluate the relevancy, usefulness, and potential bias of the blog. However, the most valuable aspect of blogrolls is to help cherry-pick the best blogs in a particular subject. This will also allow you to let the bloggers you trust do much of the deeper searching of the blogosphere while you reap the rewards.

Another way of finding blogs is to use a blog-related directory like www.blawg.org or www.Kinja.com. Blawg.org has a great selection of legal blawgs organized by subject and popularity and is a particularly valuable tool for a law librarian. Once you’ve located a blog in your or your patrons’ subject interest, the first thing to do is to review the blogger’s biographical information. If this information isn’t provided, its value as an information source is limited and probably is not worth the time and effort to follow. Also, it’s important to remember to evaluate the blogs you follow regularly to verify that they provide information of use to you and/or your patrons, much like a library makes a regular effort to evaluate its collection and weed out materials it no longer needs.

RSS: The Smart Way to Follow Blogs

Once you’ve developed a blog list, your work is just beginning. You can, of course, follow them the old fashioned way and read each blog directly. But a far more time-effective and efficient way to read a large number of blogs is to follow your selected blogs through an RSS reader. RSS readers give you the headlines of your favorite blogs in one location that’s easy to skim and search. Using an RSS reader is quite simple once you’ve learned the basics. First, you can either download an RSS

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*Celebrating
70 years*

Our Mission

To maintain and encourage support for the highest quality standards for Certified Library Binders and to promote their benefits to libraries.

Our Purpose

To develop a spirit of mutual collaboration and cooperation among those engaged in library binding by encouraging and directing activities leading to constructive cooperation between our members, our customers, our suppliers and others related to our industry.

To champion our standards representing the best craftsmanship, quality and service for prolonging the useful life of printed library materials.

To improve the methods of the industry through research and testing, the exchange of experience among members and through educational programming.

To cooperate with and support libraries' efforts to promote preservation of library materials.

To engage in any other activity which the LBI Board of Directors decides would benefit the industry.

LIBRARY BINDING INDUSTRY ALIVE AND WELL IN 2005

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bind market. When a publisher wants to offer library customers a good quality hard bound book, but cannot afford to invest in the huge runs required by the regular edition binding facilities, there is no better place for them to turn than to library binders, where the process of producing a sturdy binding can transform their paperback into a durable hardcover book that will be enjoyed for years to come.

In an effort to sustain their viability, other library binders have invested in the equipment to scan and reprint embrittled materials possessed by libraries. These materials need to be reformatted and require binding after the printing. While the market for traditional library binding may be shrinking, the growth of short run, on-demand printing and binding has only just begun. The abilities of our binderies, who can bind one copy of one book, or thousands of copies of a single title, have positioned them to succeed in this changing marketplace, and make them better prepared to respond to, and benefit from the inevitable developments and advances of the future.

At any given time in history, predictions for industry-wide or even society-wide change have been made, only to be proven wrong. Micro film was going to eliminate the need for print. Radio was to make movies obsolete, and then television was going to cause radio to become a thing of the past. It wasn't so long ago we were told we would be living in a cashless society, a checkless society, operating out of paperless offices. Yet every year, more coins and paper money are produced, more checks are processed, nothing even needs to be said about the laughable paperless office. More serial titles and monographs go into print every year, too. Like many of the predictions before, we are confident that while digitization will have its place in our society and in our industry, it will never eradicate the need for binding.

In May of 1897, Mark Twain wrote a note that said "James Ross Clemens, a cousin of mine was seriously ill two or three weeks ago in London, but is well now. The report of my illness grew out of his illness, the report of my death was an exaggeration. Mark Twain". Like Twain, I am pleased to dispel yet another myth and tell you that the library binding industry is indeed, alive and well.

John Salistean is the Vice President of Operations for Houchen Bindery, LTD in Utica, Nebraska and is the President of the Library Binding Institute. He has worked in the library binding industry for 27 years. John can be reached at jcs@houchenbindery.com.

Blogs

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reader (www.Feedreader.com has a great free, open-source version) or sign up through online blog services like Kinja.com and Bloglines.com to read the RSS feeds of the blogs online. Once you've done this, you can scan the headlines and highlights of a blog without getting bogged down in the details of each posting. For more information about RSS and how it can be useful for librarians, check out "RSS for Non-Techie Librarians" by Steven Cohen at www.llrx.com/features/rssforlibrarians.htm.

Finding reliable blogs in fields of value to you and your patrons and using them to find current information may help you find information gold in the blogosphere without drowning in infoglut.

Paul J. Moorman is reference/electronic services librarian at Pepperdine University Law Library in Malibu, California. He can be reached at paul.moorman@pepperdine.edu

The Ten Second On-Demand Hard Cover Binding

by Werner Rebsamen

Professor Emeritus, Rochester Institute of Technology
Technical Consultant, Library Binding Institute

“Never stand still” is an old saying teachers frequently use to encourage learning processes. How right they were! Learning is an on-going process that never stops in virtually every area. A library collection, new publishing endeavors or in our case, bookbinding, technologies are no exceptions. Just a few months ago, the September issue of *The New Library Scene* featured “On-Demand Printing and Binding.” It covered book manufacturing, a fast changing industry and, in addition, described an all new in-line printing and soft cover binding line. It also stated a missing link – hard cover bindings. (The article is now being translated into several languages and distributed around the world by the manufacturer of the Sigma line.)

During a January visit to Switzerland, this writer had an opportunity to see all-new bookbinding technology at work, a world’s first. Since my apprentice years in Zurich, Switzerland, Mr. Albert Burkhardt has always been an

outstanding example. Not only was he the owner, at that time, of a small bookbinding establishment, he also worked hard to enhance our education at the Academy of Fine Arts with 8mm movies on the topics of bookbinding. Later, in 1985, in cooperation with his son Hans, they moved into a spacious building outside Zurich– an architectonic masterpiece, equipped with modern edition binding equipment. Not only did Burkhardt concentrate on edition binding, he established a hand and library binding department where facsimile bindings like the book of Kells were produced. An article in *The New York Times*, January 29, 1990 issue featured a picture of Hans Burkhardt sewing a book of Kells by hand onto double cords in the same fashion as was done 1,000 years ago. (More information can be found on this by doing a Google search.)

New Bookbinding Technology at Work

The new “Baby” at the Burkhardt bindery is the Bookmaster 360, a fully automated hard cover binding line, capable of binding a hard cover book every 10 seconds. The remarkable achievement of this new binding system is, each book can be different in its dimensions. The only critical task necessary is to feed a pre-made case in the right sequence into the in-feed conveyor. Best of all, the quality is exceptional. The text block is double fanned with a specified cold emulsion adhesive, trimmed smooth on three sides. The spine is lined twice, once after adhesive binding, the strong lining material extending onto the end papers, thereafter again just over the spine, including headbands. (95% of on-demand publishers request head bands.) After casing-in, the round is formed. Europeans are very fuzzy about the shape of a hardcover binding and insist that the round equals 1/3 of a circle. This new binding system delivers that kind of a quality! Now, our reader may wonder, what are the reasons behind building such a complex, automated binding system? After all, the new Bookmaster 360 requires a considerable investment. If a bookbindery is willing to shell out so much money, they must do their home work very carefully. Hans Burkhardt, being the exceptional industry leader that he is, did just that. In his studies, he found that the biggest challenge in manufacturing hard cover books is not so much reducing manufacturing costs – it is as every publisher will tell you, reducing the cost of inventory. This is why we now see a trend toward on-demand publishing. Publishers no longer

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Top: LBI member discusses aspects of on-demand hard cover bindings with Markus Bruderer of BuBu. Each book and cover are scanned to assure appropriate sequence.

Bottom: The Bookmaster requires special lining materials with heat activated coatings. Hard covers are fed into the system on a special conveyor.

want to take financial chances and now opt for more frequent, but shorter runs. In the past, it was estimated that 40 percent of all hard cover books never sold. According to a 2001 *New York Times* article, Harper Collins lost more than \$ 250 million dollars in a single year just on book returns! This is a tough item to swallow and justify. No doubt that such unfortunate cost items must be absorbed with ever higher prices for books.

As we reported, digital printing technologies have greatly increased in speed, quality and economy. This allows, unlike as with offset print technologies, very short-run printing, down to one, ten or several hundreds. With the exception of soft cover binding, and as covered in the September 2004 issue of *The New Library Scene*, there remains one problem. No matter how fast or economically a book block can be printed, existing binding techniques suffer from relative slow set-up times and expensive labor related tasks like material handling.

Library binders have been on the forefront with computerized binding systems which have enhanced communication between a library and library binder, perfected book measuring devices, and fully automated hotstamping. Nevertheless, despite all such individual tasks, there still is no integrated workflow which could reduce the cost of labor even further. To be honest, for library bindings which must meet or exceed the NISO/LBI Standard, this is an almost impossible task, although industry engineers are working on such concepts. On-Demand binding endeavors are more flexible in this regard. And that is where the Bookmaster 360 binding system will find its place. This fully-automated hardcover binding system is “a dream come true” as it allows a book manufacturer to go from an order receipt to a finished hardcover bound book in a matter of minutes.

From Loose sheets to a finished Hardcover Book

Now our readers may be curious as to how a complete book can be bound in a mere 10 seconds? Preferably, a binding

establishment that invests in the Bookmaster 360 system needs to do it own digital printing, for example, DochuTech/DochuColor and many others. Reason being, nobody will allow just a few days to go by until a product is produced and mailed to its final destination. Fully linked networks for printing and binding are almost mandatory. Using a bar code system, the covers are produced separately and the text block, being a pile of loose sheets, are scanned and then fed into the Bookmaster system one by one in the right sequence. The system, reading the bar code, will recognize the dimensions like thickness and trim size. That particular information is then forwarded to the individual stations. Once a specific job is programmed, it can be recalled anytime.

The operator first places specially prepared, heat-activated end papers and the text block into a channel. A chain transports the text block to the first station, jogging all sheets uniformly on the head and on the binding edge. The next step is trimming, an elaborate system which trims the loose text block on all three sides. No spine preparation takes place. The next station is a double fan unit which fans the entire text block on both sides in the same fashion as a library binding. Moving on, the text block then receives a high quality back lining material. The system, knowing what the text block



The Bookmaster 360

Overview of entire binding machine showing cover infeed on the right and delivery of finished books on the left.

dimensions are, will first cut a piece of the material as required in the width and in the length. The backlining material being specially prepared with a heat seal coating on both sides is pressed onto the spine, covering the fresh, water-based PVA adhesive. In the next station, headbands are mounted onto the sides of a specially prepared (brown) back lining paper.

Now, as each text block is of a different dimension, the system again will cut the width and thereafter calculates the height. The strip then is cut in the center and pushed together. For example, if the width of the roll is 11 inches, but the book is only 9 inches in height, 2 inches are cut out of the strip. After mounting, the text block, which still has a square back, is now ready to be joined with its designated cover, a process called casing-in. The pre-made hard covers are fed into the system on a separate conveyor and are aligned into the exact position with the text block. Vacuum rollers roll down the outer end sheet from the text block. The later adhesive, heated plates then seal the endpapers to the cover boards and backlining materials onto the book spine. Unlike conventional

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casing-in procedure which uses a water based adhesive, this process does not require drying time. No excess glue will squeeze out. With the cover securely wrapped around the still square text block, each book is pushed into a rounding mold, producing a spine with a beautifully rounded shape, a quality we seldom see on North American bindings. At the next station, heated irons press the joints. Finally, each book is banded tightly from head to tail. Bear in mind, the text block was double fanned just seconds ago with a slow drying, but high quality PVA adhesive. Such banding allows the text block to properly cure undisturbed. Thereafter, a gentle cycle ejects the hard cover bound book, one every ten seconds! Now the books need to dry for at least 20 hours. Just as with a fine wine or, in our case, an adhesive bound case binding, it takes time to cure and achieve the ultimate in fine quality hard cover binding.

The Bookmaster 360 coming to North America

At this time, world-wide, **there are two** Bookmaster systems in operation, the first one as described being at Burkhardt in Switzerland, and another in Germany. The good news is that a certified library binder East of the Mississippi has invested in this sophisticated system and intends for it to be operational by May. This was a trend in the making, this writer predicted two decades ago. With traditional library binding on a decline, the binders increasingly must invest into on-demand endeavors, working closely with publishers and others to produce more titles than ever but in smaller

quantities (164,000 in the US alone in 2003).

Using a system like the Bookmaster 360 results in dramatic savings in time, labor and most of all in shortened delivery times— all important factors to succeed in today’s publishing endeavor. Just imagine, you as a librarian would like to obtain an out of print copy of a particular title. If that title is digitally stored, a library binder can print and bind it within a day! Some librarians now question if such a binding produced on the Bookmaster 360 meets or exceeds the specifications of the NISO/LBI Standard. This will have to be investigated. The new Standard is based on performance, in other words, it does not matter how materials are bonded together. Will such bindings cost less? We will see. As stated earlier, it is a substantial investment that should give those that invest in it a competitive edge in the on-demand markets. Yes, libraries will benefit. Just go back to the high costs of book returns. In the near future, on-demand printed and bound books will no doubt cost less.

At Burkhardt’s bindery, the Bookmaster was operated by two women who told me “that they are not trade certified Bookbinders!” But,

they did know a lot about their machine, electronics, bar coding and scanning! When we toured the facility, they produced digital photo books. Burkhardt’s clients download special software from www.bookfactory.ch and create their own photo pages on the computer. Thereafter, they send the CD to BuBu, Burkhardt’s bindery. The pages were printed four-color DIN A4 onto coated paper and sent to the Bookmaster 360. Covers were made with laminated coated papers, using digital images each customer specified. Each book being different, although similar in size, was fed into the system. It took only two people to produce a finished hardcover bound book every 10 seconds, an amazing achievement!

It took Hans Burkhardt several hours to sew a single book of Kells onto double cords, creating a most expensive book and binding only a few collectors can afford. Next door in his creative bindery, digitally printed books are now produced one at a time every 10 seconds. One can say this is a great mixture of the old and the new, an excellent example of what his father used to teach us – “Never Stand Still – always move with the times and with it you will succeed.”



Werner Rebsamen is a Professor Emeritus at the Rochester Institute of Technology and the Technical Consultant to the Library Binding Institute. He can be reached at wtrebs@localnet.com.

Each book is being made for a different customer - their digital photos preserved forever into hardcover binding.

Bookmaster 360 Delivery

PRSRT STD
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Library Binding Institute
14 Bay Tree Lane
Tequesta, FL 33469
(561) 745-6821
Fax (561) 745-6813
info@lbibinders.org
<http://www.lbibinders.org>