

“One-woman show in process engineering: Astrid Lemcke.”

When it comes to future technology at Jagenberg Converting Solutions GmbH (JCS), there's no getting around Astrid Lemcke. Born in Saxony-Anhalt, she not only drives innovative solutions, but also imparts knowledge to future generations of the printing industry.

Ms. Lemcke, thank you for taking the time to talk to us. Please be so kind and give us a brief insight into your everyday life.

Professionally, as a process engineer in the Process Engineering department, I am busy finding optimal solutions for our customers' printing systems, advising them on site or solving problems in their processes. However, when I'm analyzing problems on site and travelling to do so, I have to take my hobby into account: Horses. I've been riding since I was five years old and have two horses, Sitar and Klaus, who play an important role in my life.

This means that you are very close to nature. Has this had an influence on your professional career – “process engineering” doesn't really sound close to nature?

That's true. I grew up in a small village near Magdeburg and was actually always outside and with the horses as a child. That's why I dedicated myself to nature during my studies and initially studied forestry at the TU Dresden. That was a bit of a rebellion against my family – because everyone in our family is an engineer. (laughs) However, the path to the printing industry first became apparent during my subsequent studies in “Process Engineering Wood Technology”.

That's because the course covered machines for pulp production and the coating of web materials as well as aluminum, copper and plastic, which are also chemically involved in my work.

In the end, I became an engineer and returned home to the family – I live out my love of nature more privately.



„Safety for our employees is a matter close to my heart [...]“

Astrid Lemcke

How did you come to Jagenberg Converting Solutions?

I originally started as a process engineer at Lebbing in 2020. Following the relocation of the Ostwestfalen-Lippe business unit to Schloß Holte-Stukenbrock, I moved to the newly founded Jagenberg Converting Solutions in 2021. My skills simply fit better here. As I mentioned at the beginning, I hold the position of Process Engineer in the Process Engineering department. I work alone in this role, without any employees – and I'm really happy about that. (laughs)

What tasks does your position involve?

My area of responsibility is extremely varied. Essentially, I am responsible for designing new systems in close consultation with the customer. This includes the layout of special systems that are not part of the standard repertoire, but also detailed planning. I support projects from the initial idea through to commissioning on site. Examples of this include gravure printing systems that can also print on plastic film or the use of alternative energy sources in the drying of webs, such as in the form of electric air heaters.

As our machines are located in Germany, Spain and even the USA, traveling is part of my job. I really enjoy it, even if it requires a bit of coordination because of the horses. I think we are very successful for the fact that JCS has only existed for a very short time. After all, we started from scratch – and developed everything ourselves, right from the smallest screw.

Another area that I am responsible for at JCS is production optimization and problem analysis. This is extremely exciting – I get to know production processes from different perspectives: from the point of view of the system manufacturer and the user. I can often think outside the box at JCS and learn a lot about different systems, processes and how they are used in practice. What's more, solving a problem is enormously satisfying.



What kind of problems are these, can you give us an example?

These are very different things. Sometimes it's details within the processes, such as drying temperatures or the speed at which the system is operated, and often, of course, individual operating errors. When you go to the customer, you naturally don't know what to expect. But getting to know different systems and transferring your knowledge to a machine when investigating the cause makes the job very appealing.

I still remember a call just before Christmas: A customer had been looking for the cause of streaks on a coated surface for a year and simply couldn't find the fault. On the first visit, I immediately suspected the drying lamp. In the end, after just two hours, we identified a grille in front of the lamp as the cause. It was preventing the lamp from shining evenly on the surface. That was the best Christmas present for both of us! (laughs)

Are there any other tasks that you are responsible for?

Yes, a fairly new area is the topic of “occupational safety”, which I am responsible for together with Heinrich Thorwesten. Safety for our employees is a matter close to my heart, as I have unfortunately also had to experience accidents. That’s why it’s very important to me that all colleagues can work safely – from dismantling existing systems, to packing and shipping our systems, to setting up and commissioning a system.

How do you guarantee this?

On the one hand, I carry out risk assessments together with Mr. Thorwesten based on the German Social Accident Insurance’s safety management guidelines and ensure that the findings are implemented.

On the other hand, knowledge of the topic of occupational safety within our teams is also fundamental. That’s why I make sure that all construction site managers have the “Safety Certificate Contractors” qualification in addition to up-to-date first aid courses. While this is primarily about the safety of the people in the company, it also gives us legal certainty as a company. This is of course a positive side effect.

An important task! Thank you very much for your commitment and the nice conversation. All the best for you.

Read more about Astrid Lemcke and the future projects of Jagenberg Converting Solutions in the second part of our interview.