Press release

**90% OF THE WORLD'S BANKNOTES ARE "SWISS"**

Koenig & Bauer Banknote Solutions creates their production solutions

* Specialised high security printing machines, banknote design software, pre-press solutions, security features, all are developed in Lausanne by Koenig & Bauer Banknote Solutions for the banknote industry worldwide
* The number of banknotes in circulation is increasing every year around the world thanks to its unique characteristics - security, privacy, accessibility for all and free of charge for the user
* In order to fight counterfeiting, the combination of security features and the creation of new and unique processes are crucial, such as the SPARK® technology made possible by SICPA inks and the unique Screen printing machine of Koenig & Bauer Banknote Solutions
* Banknote technology is evolving and adapting to the needs of users. Koenig & Bauer Banknote Solutions provides the first answers to this change

Lausanne, 23.06.2022:

The vast majority of the world's banknotes is produced using Swiss technology. Just like the special inks produced by SICPA, the sophisticated presses and all the related solutions (printing plate production, design, quality control, etc.) are developed in Lausanne by Koenig & Bauer Banknote Solutions (K&B Banknote Solutions) and then made available to Central Banks and private printers for the production of their banknotes. This year, the company is celebrating 70 years of existence and presence in Lausanne.

The production of a banknote requires at least four printing processes, eight for the most secure denominations. The aim is obviously to make the banknote counterfeit-proof or very complicated to reproduce, while at the same time being easy to print thanks to these machines.

**8 steps and much more**

For a banknote such as the Swiss franc, eight printing stages punctuate the production process. A first Offset print gives the colour thanks to the only machine in the world capable of printing simultaneously on the front and the back (Simultan Offset). This is followed by Screen printing of the desired motifs, then the application of foil and a micro-perforation process, all adding security. The fifth step is to produce the relief of the banknote, which is also a security feature (Intaglio), the sixth step numbers the banknotes while the seventh step aims to apply a varnish. Finally, the last stage cuts and packages the finished bundles.

However, before all these processes, the design of the banknote must be worked out and the plates without which the presses could not print anything must be produced. In addition, during or after each process, the sheets are inspected to ensure the highest quality at the end of the line.

**Security first**

It is obvious that the security of a banknote depends on the elements, visible or not, that it contains. From the watermark to the security thread, from the quality of the paper to the quality of the ink, from hidden elements to those that can only be seen from a certain angle, the many possibilities combined offer an almost infinite range of ways to personalise the currency. In cooperation with SICPA, K&B Banknote Solutions has even developed a printing process and magnetic inks, known as SPARK®, which are now widely used throughout the world and which fight counterfeiting with unique processes and consumables.

Security is also achieved through software developed specifically for the company by AGFA and K&B Banknote Solutions. It manages the engraving, the origination, i.e. the design of the banknotes is composed of lines only, and prepares the files for the production of the printing plates.

**Everything is done in Europe**

Lausanne is at the heart of K&B Banknote Solutions' business. The company building houses, among other things, sales, product development and management, banknote design and printing plate production as well as logistics and marketing. In Germany, the buildings in Würzburg and Bielefeld are responsible for engineering and services. Machine assembly is carried out in Mödling, Austria.

Not all countries in the world have their own machines and some outsource to private partners. But all the presses in the world today require training, maintenance and possible upgrades by the specialists at K&B Banknote Solutions.

**The banknote is alive and well**

To the surprise of many and despite the digitalisation of bank accounts and other internet transactions, the banknote is still alive and well in the world. Every year, production increases by 2 to 3%. There are many reasons for this. Banknotes offer the greatest independence and freedom to their users. 1.6 billion people in the world do not have bank accounts. Cash also offers unparalleled security in terms of the protection of data collected by digital actors, and their sometimes questionable use. Moreover, the banknote does not involve any charges. Worldwide, 75% of person-to-person payments are made in cash. <https://www.cashmatters.org/blog?types=key-facts>

**But also**

K&B Banknote Solutions is the world's leading banknote printer, but the company belongs to the Koenig & Bauer Group, the leading packaging printer, which has the most diverse product range, including special printing. Printing on glass or metal, encoding of identification such as expiry dates are an integral part of the Group's solutions.

In addition to the manufacture of machines, the Lausanne-based company is also developing new security and even entertainment applications. One of them allows you to check the authenticity of a banknote with your smartphone in less than a second, while another allows you to read a digital message on a banknote by the person holding it. K&B Banknote Solutions is thus a driving force in the evolution of the banknote, adding new functionalities to it and meeting the new needs of users.

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**A little bit of history**

Founded in 1817, the Koenig & Bauer Group is the oldest printing press manufacturer in the world. In 1814, Friedrich Koenig printed the first edition of the Times in London. The banknote adventure began exactly 70 years ago, in 1952, when the Italian printer and security specialist Gualtiero Giori set up his company in Lausanne. De La Rue Giori conquered the world with its innovative products before being acquired by K&B in 2001. The group has more than 5,000 employees worldwide, 620 of whom are dedicated to banknotes at 4 sites, including 140 at the Lausanne headquarters.

More information is available at [banknote-solutions.koenig-bauer.com](http://banknote-solutions.koenig-bauer.com) and [www.koenig-bauer.com](http://www.koenig-bauer.com)