

With more work onboard, postpress humming along in Houston

► BY TARA MCMEEKIN CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The **Houston Chronicle** took on the postpress production of the Austin (Texas) American-Statesman in July and in August, the Chronicle took possession of one of the dual-delivery Goss Magnapak inserting lines previously located in Austin. Newspaper Solutions, LLC managed the project.

"We had a very short timeline as we began switching over the work from the Statesman," Dave Preisser, vice president of production for the Chronicle, told *News & Tech*. "We brought a lot of their work over, but we couldn't do it all without adding another Magnapak."

The Chronicle took on the final elements of the Statesman's postpress operations on Sept. 15.

The additional Magnapak, which went live the last week of August, augments an existing unit the Chronicle purchased in 2013 when it, along with other Hearst properties, began bolstering press and postpress infrastructure and capacity to position the publisher for more regional commercial work.

Both dual-delivery Magnapaks are capable of handling up to 30,000 copies per hour.

The Chronicle's own postpress workload also includes sister Hearst properties the San Antonio Express-News, Laredo Morning Times and the Beaumont Enterprise.

Besides the two Magnapaks, the Chronicle operates three additional

inserters — a Goss NP630, NP632 and NP2299. The Chronicle purchased its first Magnapak during Print '13 in Chicago and at that time also contracted with Goss to enhance the NP model machines. That project consisted of upgrading controls on both legacy machines to Goss' Omnicon platform for compatibility and integration with the Magnapak.

"We have a very sturdy postpress infrastructure," Preisser said.

Preisser said working with NSI was appealing because the company, headed up by former Goss exec Doug Gibson, was able to deliver all facets of the project.

"The draw was that NSI knows all the players that do this type of work and they were able to coordinate the mechanical, electrical — all the different folks that needed to be involved in coordinated a move like this," Preisser said.

Furthermore, NSI was able to deliver the necessary modifications to the additional Magnapak, which included disabling the direct-to-pocket features on the unit, since the Chronicle does not offer that, nor does its facility have the space to accommodate that feature presently.

"It had to be removed, brought over, modified, installed and running within six weeks," Preisser added.

Although postpress was transferred to the Chronicle, Cox's Statesman Media unit maintains the transportation and distribution of the paper and associated print products. ▲