

# 24 HOUR PHOTOBOOKS

## TRAILBLAZES THE WAY INTO DIGITAL HISTORY

Don't think anyone was more surprised than the owner of 24 Hour Photobooks to hear that the company had scooped two major awards in the first digital contest in the Sappi African Printer of the Year Awards! He shouldn't have been, though. Anyone who knows Gunther Grumtmann, knows that he is synonymous with excellence!



Gunther Grumtmann MD of The Bureau and sister company 24 Hour Photobooks with the Bureau's "right hand man" and co-director of 24 Hour Photobooks, Peshigan Naidu.



I first interviewed Gunther Grumtman, Managing Director of The Bureau and sister company 24 hour Photobooks way back in February 2006. A lot has happened to the industry since then, but there have been some constants, and Gunther's intrinsic sound business sense and trailblazing ethos has indeed been one of them.

At that time, the first 6-colour HP Indigo 5000 in South Africa had just been installed and Gunther was a very excited and proud man. This time, Gunther remains excited and proud, and also, again, with good reason.

His company 24 hour Photobooks won the gold and silver prizes in the digital category in the Sappi African Printers of the Year Awards, with photo albums printed on that very first trailblazer machine, the Indigo 5000!

He also, incidentally, scored another first in that this was the year that Sappi introduced a digital category in the awards portfolio, something that had been a long time coming. And to score two major awards in this category first time out is a major coup!

When Gunther initially became aware of the great interest in digitally-produced photo albums which could be personalised, he took a trip to Germany to investigate what was happening in this regard abroad.

"What I saw was truly amazing," he says. "There was really a buzz about photo albums. It was, and is, a huge business abroad."

He cites the case of a manufacturer who held a launch of a product, and then afterwards gave each of the 150 guests a personalised photo album with their picture in it and a "thank you for coming" note. That's the kind of service you can offer digitally with quick turnaround times – and a bit of pizzazz in the marketing agenda!

Gunther found a printer in Germany that had eight HP Indigo presses just producing photo albums for clients all over Europe! Sadly, the same scenario has not occurred in South Africa as yet – although there is greater awareness of what kind of amazing work can be produced, especially among photographers, and especially with weddings!



There was enough interest, though, for Gunther to start the 24 Photo Books business last year, and now greater incentive to keep on producing the awesome quality of photobooks that come out of this shop. The examples I've seen, covering wildlife, holidays and weddings among other topics, are truly magnificent – items that anyone would be proud to have as a coffee table book!

Also, the quality that is generated on the Indigo is absolutely superb – especially the prize winners, bearing testimony to the fact that the Indigo is capable of offset quality, and sometimes even better than that. "The quality remains constant," says Gunther. "That is the joy of using this machine and when its full 6-colour capabilities are put to the test, it always comes up trumps."

Gunther has always been known to be a stickler for quality work and fast turnaround times, something that has just gotten better and better through the years. "I control more of the finishing aspects now than I did before, and that helps to really provide quick turnarounds."

He also recently installed a Muller Martini 8-station Valore, as well as investing in a new Kodak CTP unit from Antalis. Speaking of which, he is still in awe of the Antalis team, who had the unit installed in just over 3 hours. "They are true profession-

als, and have finely honed the art of installing CTP units. Like Kemtek, I would rate their service as being truly spectacular and in no small way have contributed greatly to my success."

But there is absolutely no doubt that it's one thing having the right equipment, and totally another having the kind of inherent abilities to formulate turning vision into reality and passion into creativity.

There may now be many Indigos in South Africa but my guess is that there are just a few Gunthers. That's the difference between an award winner, and just a printer! **BIG**

**For more info on 24 Hour Photobooks call  
Gunther on 011 262 9500.**

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Printers  
of the Year*