



## *BREAKING NEWS*

Sinapse Press Officer wrote:

### **Beyond Press Training: - Press Simulation Shows Wide Variety of Uses at Transcontinental Mexico**

How do production sites use press simulators? From press training to skills testing for new hires to selecting the right operators for a new capital investment, press simulators find more uses than most customers expect.

Press simulators, available from **Sinapse Print Simulators**, recreate the experience of running a press much as a flight simulator recreates the experience of flying a plane. They allow press operators and trainees to experience a wider range of press conditions than they see on a daily basis on a live press. They are also able to make adjustments on “press” and see the results without incurring actual production costs.

But the benefits don’t stop there.

**Transcontinental**, headquartered in Montreal, Canada has both web (**WebSim-Heatset**) and sheetfed (**SheetSim-SHOTS**) simulators. It purchased its first simulator when it expanded into the Mexican market. Almost five years later, it has used it and additional simulators to train everyone from press operators to CSRs to salespeople to clients. It has even used them as a critical skill-evaluation tool in hiring and pay scale evaluations.

### **Transcontinental Mexico**

Transcontinental, headquartered in Montreal, Canada, is the largest commercial printer in Canada. Between 1998–2002, Transcontinental expanded into Mexico through acquisition and new construction in Azcapotzalco, Toluca, and Xochimilco. Transcontinental Mexico now has 850 employees and specializes in commercial print related to retail, newspapers, books, magazines, and catalogs.

Because there are few education programs that offer in-depth graphic arts training in Mexico, Francois Ouellet, director de manufactura (vice president of manufacturing and operations) for Transcontinental Mexico, felt that press simulation would be a valuable addition to the company’s training.

“In Canada, our plants are highly specialized, but in Mexico, every plant is running a wide range of commercial work,” says Ouellet. “We run three shifts, and we go through a lot of paper, ink, and fold changes in every shift. With that level of variation, it is very hard for press operators to develop experience at any depth. The WebSim-Heatset and SheetSim-SHOTS simulators expose employees to situations it might take years before they experience on press.”

In addition to boosting the skills of existing press operators, the simulators have also been a powerful tool for bringing “first register” employees (the equivalent of press helpers) to a level

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at which they can run the press. When Transcontinental Mexico made a major capital investment in a new Goss Sunday 2000 press — the first of its kind in Mexico — it used the WebSim-Heatset as a screening tool to determine which of its current press operators would be the most successful. “One year later, we know we made the right choices,” says Ouellet.



To train its employees on the press simulators, Transcontinental Mexico used the “train the trainer” model. Initially, it sent seven employees from production, prepress, and human resources, to Montreal for a week with the Institute of Graphic Communications Canada (ICGC), which distributes Sinapse print simulators.

During ICGC’s training, pressmen also learned to create their own press simulator exercises. Once they returned to their home plants, they used that knowledge to add to Sinapse’s standard library by developing exercises particularly suited to their local markets.

### **Training Beyond the Pressroom**

Transcontinental Mexico employees spend between 10-15 hours per month training in simulators, depending on the plant. In total, according to Ouellet, between 50-60 people have been through the training over the past four and a half years.

Transcontinental Mexico has also put many of its customer service, prepress, and salespeople through the training. This has increased their knowledge and sensitivity to press issues when talking with clients. Supervisors, who may come from other areas of the company and therefore may not have in-depth print production knowledge, train on the simulator, as well.

Even clients are encouraged to go through a session on the simulator. “They quickly develop greater respect for the printing process and the requirements on press,” Ouellet says. “It often changes their relationship with us because they better understand the impact their files have on the process.”

Transcontinental’s experience with press simulation has been so positive, in fact, that the company is expanding its number of simulators to be able to train even more people at the same time.

Sinapse Print Simulators manufactures press simulators for heatset (**WebSim-Heatset**), coldest (**WebSim-News**), sheetfed (**SheetSim-SHOTS**), gravure (**PackSim-Gravure**), and flexo (**PackSim-Flexo**) printing.

For more information on the Sinapse **WebSim-Heatset** Training simulator product, contact [diane.delorme@sinapseprint.com](mailto:diane.delorme@sinapseprint.com) <<mailto:diane.delorme@sinapseprint.com>> or visit [www.sinapseprint.com](http://www.sinapseprint.com) <<http://www.sinapseprint.com>> for additional news, case studies, product documentation and a list of distributors.

For a more complete description of the new Heatset simulator, see <http://www.sinapseprint.com/-Latest-versions->

**High resolution illustrations of the images attached are available from Sinapse:**

- Pressroom Goss M600
- Print faults caused by a plate badly bent