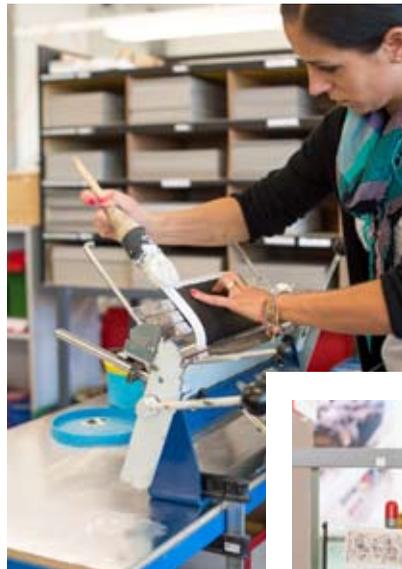




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- 01 Books bound by Bubu
- 02 Sina Giovanoli, head of handcrafted bookmaking
- 03 Gathering machine, used to collate the folded sheets of a book
- 04 Hans Burkhardt (left) and son Christian, who is now CEO
- 05 Book with an 'open back'
- 06 Quality check by Daniela Rodrigues at the hardcover assembly line



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Bubu
Mönchaltorf,
Switzerland

Just outside Zürich is Bubu, the bookbinding company that for three generations has been a leader in high-quality traditional craft. It is now pressing ahead with innovative business models such as an online create-your-own shop. The company's CEO, Christian Burkhardt, oversees 149 employees at its Mönchaltorf headquarters.

How has Bubu benefited from being a family firm?

My grandfather founded the company in 1941. He believed in quality and interesting new books; my father very much continued and lifted this spirit when he took over in the early 1970s. This dedication has led to us being known as 'the book architects'.

How healthy is the Swiss bookbinding industry?

About 20 or 30 years ago there were around 30 comparable bookbinders here. Now there are only three left and we are proud of being one of them. Labour costs in Switzerland are much higher than in neighbouring countries. We are only able to survive by doing perfect-quality work in a short time.



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How are your processes changing?

There are two ways to bind books: the industrial way, which is based in analogue technology, and the digital way, which has revolutionised the industry. We do both. With Bookfactory, our online platform, the public can order small runs, whereas industrial orders could be anything up to 100,000. Production for those orders involves folding, cutting, stitch sewing and then putting the block and cover together.

But the craft element is still being maintained?

We have artists who request extra-large books that we can only do by hand. We

still have a big atelier of around 15 bookbinders who know the traditional way of binding books.

How can a good working environment encourage good business?

In 1984 my father commissioned an architect to construct our office building who at that time was not so famous: Theo Hotz. He has since become much celebrated and the building is something of a landmark, so it's very nice to work in and many employees have been here since then. We have a good relationship with the local community and people know we are a stable employer in a non-stable environment. — TH



06



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The Hankyoreh
Seoul

A newspaper is more than just a daily when it becomes the voice of a generation. Independent, risk-taking journalism is perhaps the greatest accomplishment that a media outlet can strive towards; no other South Korean publication is embedded with those ethics nor carries the same brand value as *The Hankyoreh*.

The media company's nine-storey office building, located in Seoul's riverside Mapo district, is a hub of activity with a stream of reporters going out on assignment. By nightfall, the ground floor's production centre will be alive with that unmistakable hum of industrial printers and the smell of freshly inked paper will fill the room.

The Hankyoreh was baptised with the tear gas lobbed against pro-democracy demonstrators of the 1980s. Some of the reporters who founded the paper had left their jobs at government-aligned newspaper companies because they no longer wanted to toe the official line. That same spirit of freedom of speech and activism continues to underlie reporting here, which for 26 years has exposed corruption at all levels of society and provides a progressive alternative to the conservative discourse that still dominates the nation's politics.

The Hankyoreh's ownership structure sets it apart, too. Bronze tablets etched with the names of more than 60,000 private shareholders who provided the initial funding for the newspaper adorn the company's lobby. It's a number that's still growing. But the paper's outspokenness hasn't won it many friends among those who wield power in Seoul and many groups and companies have pulled their advertising.

How to keep people interested in picking up a newspaper in a city and country where almost everyone has a smartphone is the top challenge for *The Hankyoreh*. That's according to chief of staff Ha Soojeong, who says the company is reaching out to younger generations with apps, podcasts and an online video service called Hankyoreh TV. "We have to think about broadening our spectrum of readers," she says. The company hopes to finally monetise their digital content with the *Hankyoreh Digest*, which launched this spring. — JWS

- 01 'The Hankyoreh' magazines
- 02 Exterior of the nine-storey office
- 03 Ha Soojeong, chief of staff
- 04 Im Intack, an investigative reporter
- 05 Lee Kyungjoo, digital-media producer
- 06 Rooftop terrace
- 07 'The Hankyoreh' magazines celebrating the newspaper's 26th anniversary

PHOTOGRAPHERS: OLIVER OEFFLI, JULIE MAYPENG