

Faithful to the Task

Markus Hänssler, of Hänssler Publishing House in Holzgerlinger, Germany, describes his organization's substantial commitment to Bible production.

The Hänssler Publishing House, one of the most important Christian publishing houses in the German-speaking world, was founded in 1919 by Friedrich Hänssler senior and is still directed by his descendants. It employs over 130 people, and includes Edition Trobisch, Christliche Medien Cooperation, and Lau-date Direct Mail.

Taking advantage of the most modern technology, Hänssler has its own internet bookstore and offers 20,000 publications from more than 180 Christian publishing houses from around the world. The products range from books to CDs to videos and other items. However, one product comes up again and again: the Bible, in all kinds of editions and translations. Why? Because Hänssler Publishing's main objective is the transmission of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The two poles which define the activity of Hänssler Publishing are serving the Body of Christ and reaching unbelievers.

Bibles

Both investment and risk are higher for Bible production than for other Christian publications. Also, the time necessary for editorial work and to obtain an adequate return from sales, are much longer



Hänssler Publishing House has impressive facilities and modern warehouse equipment.

for the Bible than for other books. Nevertheless, Hänssler Publishing has repeatedly chosen to publish Bibles. These include different versions, various languages, Bibles for children, for home-groups, for study, for evangelistic use—a Book that is 2000 years old, published in a time of short-lived projects and changeable interests.

One Hänssler Bible is the German translation of the *Serendipity Bible*. A recent publication is the *New Geneva Study Bible*, published in German and Russian, a translation that is faithful to the original languages and includes notes and cross-references. Hänssler's *Sports Bible* has been translated into six languages. Written in a contemporary style, it has comments from famous Christian sports figures.

Hänssler Publishing's customers are of all ages and from many back-

grounds: Christian families, church members and leaders, scholars, theologians and scientists. Its products are not for limited groups but for all Christians. This variety appeals to a large, loyal clientele. Quality, variety and consistency are critical in Hänssler's efforts in maintaining its market share.

Market research

Before planning a new Bible edition, Hänssler Publishing conducts a thorough market analysis. This includes research of the potential customer base. It means checking the present offers on the Christian market, and identifying existing gaps. It includes contacting key persons in the Christian world to find out specific demands. What kind of Bible is required? Should it be a Bible designed for home-groups, should it explain difficult passages,