



# Spindrift

News Focus • Opinion • Reviews  
Techno-Babble • Attitude

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18th November, 2004

...Surviving The Graphic Arts Industry Since April 2003

**Size** • **n.** a thing's overall dimensions or magnitude. **v.** alter or sort in terms of size or according to size.

From the Concise Oxford English Dictionary

## Dear Reader,

Last week we attended an interesting debate organised by that singular organisation The Worshipful Company of Stationers and Newspaper Makers. The subject of the discussion was "Does Size Matter?" As in: will the change in format from broadsheet to tabloid of some British newspapers be enough to sustain interest and attract readers to this embattled medium? Four editors took part; Robert Thomson of The Times, Simon Kelner of The Independent, Alan Rusbridger of The Guardian and Kenny Campbell of Metro. Only a week before the debate The Times had followed competitor The Independent in discontinuing its broadsheet version entirely. As a result, two of Britain's four (five if you count FT) broadsheets are now tabloids. But when is a tabloid a tabloid? Market research done by The Independent immediately after the initial launch last autumn of what the newspaper referred to as its "tabloid version", showed that readers very much liked the new size, however they did not like the idea of being "tabloid readers". The marketing departments of both newspapers have since established the term "compact". Mr Rusbridger of The Guardian, which has announced a move to the smaller-than-broadsheet but larger-than-tabloid Berliner format, pointed out it is not just the size of his two competitors that has changed, they have also embarked on a more tabloidesque style of front page, particularly in the case of The Independent, which now frequently editorialises on its front page. Simon Kelner defended his corner: "The front page must be an alliance between journalism and marketing."

The format change has boosted the circulation of both The Times and The Independent. However, we think there will be bigger issues to contend with if newspapers are to survive. Laurel thinks that although size matters, it's all about stimulation and response. She discusses some of the issues in our second post-Ifra feature, on page 9.

Cheers from the Spindrift crew,

**Laurel, Cecilia, Paul and Todd**



## In This Issue

### *Newspapers on new track*

Consider this quote from Robert Thomson of the Times in London: 'I don't do revenue. It's fair to say I'm more on the cost side.' This is a man responsible for the editorial content of one of the world's greatest newspapers, and yet the concept of revenue responsibility or even concern, has no place in his head. He's an editor, and his skill is highly refined and atuned to what his readers want. Any commercial requirement would distract this intense focus. So it is with editors." Laurel Brunner delves into how the latest developments in news management technology may help Mr Thomson et al to be even better at what they do best; gather, create and deliver news...

see page 9

### *As the Digital Print World Turns*

In the global scheme of things, the recent Digital Print World in London may not have been as significant as the organisers would like you to believe. But Laurel Brunner noticed at least one trend: "Digital printing is making up for lost time. After a slow start and after years of market investment and support from the supplier community, the market is finally getting it. More interesting than this, which was after all an inevitability, suppliers traditionally concerned with office equipment are staking out their claims to the market."

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## News Focus

### *Acrobat 7.0 in Flight*

When Acrobat 6 came out it was a major upgrade, but this latest version is nearer the spit and sawdust than the high wire. Performance is improved and “anyone who uses free Adobe Reader 7.0 software [can] participate in reviews” ho hum. The Pro version includes the LiveCycle design tool for creating forms, and a list of recently opened PDFs can be viewed as thumbnails which is mildly more interesting.

Rather more interesting, possibly exciting even is the possibility to attach collateral files to a PDF, which has wonderful ramifications for graphic arts workflows, as do the new versions improved support for CMYK workflows, PDF/X standards and JDF.

We look forward to taking a closer look.

### *Agfa on the Up*

Agfa's seeing improved returns from its graphic systems division, returns it attributes to less hostile trading conditions in the market. Graphic systems sales were up 5.2 percent over the same period last year, at €406 million. Even without the Lastra numbers the division was up by 3.4 percent. Significantly, newspapers have played a key role in the improvements particularly the recent signing of an order with the Corriere della Sera in Italy.

### **Spindrift**

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This order is worth over €5 million, excluding the value of a five year contract for plates. Nice going Agfa.

### *Press-Dick Thrusting Forwards*

Press-Dick? Let's hope that Presstek, developers of the imaging technology used in most direct imaging presses, doesn't choose that name once it completes its acquisition of AB Dick, which is now approved. Presstek also announced financial results for the third quarter ended October 2, 2004. It was a good one, with consolidated revenues of \$29.8 million, a 51% jump over the same period last year, and up 31% from the second quarter of 2004.

Consumables revenue contributed \$17.1 million and equipment including related royalties was \$12.2 million. Not bad at all, especially since the latter strengthens the market for the former. Net income was \$2.7 million, which is a perfectly respectable 9 percent on turnover, and solid gross margins of 34%. Presstek's cash balance is down a tad at \$16.8 million reflecting the company's recent acquisition of PLC (Precision Lithograining Corporation, a manufacturer of digital and conventional printing plate products) and loans advanced to AB Dick under the debtor-in-possession financing.

### *Artworker Systems Pockets the Eight*

Version 8.0 of Artworker Systems' Artpro and Nexus workflow management and RIP systems supports PDF 1.5, including layer support, with editing tools for transparencies and blend modes and Certified PDF support built in. There is also a new module for trapping PDF 1.4 objects and a flattening tool for handling transparencies and blends on older RIPs that can't cope with PDF 1.5.

The company has also launched version 2.0 of Odystar, its digital workflow system, with a new RIP technology currently in beta testing. This latest version runs under OSX and is based on Artworker and subsidiary Enfocus technologies. This new modular system is designed for easy integration with RIPs and workflow systems, to provide existing output systems with PDF 1.4 and 1.5 compatibility. We will have further information on these announcements next month.

### *New Versions of OneVision's Sicuriq & Sicuriq Pro*

Version 1.5 of OneVision's raster to vector conversion technologies, extend the range of supported data formats. The new versions can now convert incoming PDF 1.4 and 1.5 files as well as EPS and Postscript into rasterised bitmaps. They allow processing of JPEG 2000 compressed images and transparencies within 1.5, and can split large image files into up to 6000 tiles. ▶

▼ This may sound weird but it is a means of simplifying the RIPping and production of mammoth files such as maps and complex large format output. It is also now possible to transform colour spaces of such files using ICC colour management, plus profiling. Import and export options are improved with support for Brisque version 5.

### ***Scitex Vision & Esko-Graphics Boxed Up***

Scitex Vision and Esko-Graphics are cooperating on a combined Scope, Kongsberg converting and Corjet offering. The idea is to provide customers with advanced tools for graphics and structural design, plus output for short run packaging, point of sale displays and test marketing projects.

### ***New Designjet Series Launched***

The new HP Designjet 4000 will be available in February with doubled output speed. This large format printer incorporates HP's double swathe technology to improve output speeds for line drawings, graphics and so on. This printer isn't a high end proofing device but we can probably expect to see this new technology find its way into other HP engines. This printer images an A1D sheet in around 25 seconds and can print 100 A1D sheets in an hour, according to HP.

The new technology doubles the number of printheads, by placing them in a staggered arrangement, which is what Agfa Dotrix does with its SPICE inkjet printing technology. The idea is to overlap the printing paths for faster printing. The HP printer also includes quality control and colour management software, with closed loop colour controls, HP CMYK+ and ICC profiles. Price depends on where you buy it.

### ***Copyright Violators Trowned***

Heidelberg has shown remarkable and highly commendable tenacity in its pursuit of a brace of lowlife English people. Two sleazeballs from West Yorkshire in the UK offered copies of Heidelberg software for sale on E-Bay! The criminals failed to comply with the court to allow their premises to be searched, so it seems warrants were issued and the individuals subsequently arrested, brought to trial and fined, escaping prison by a binary digit. According to Heidelberg UK's finance director, Gerald Heanue "Copyright is infringed by both the seller of, and the buyers who use, illegal copies of our data. We cannot, and will not, tolerate the theft of our intellectual property." Way to go Heidelberg!

### ***Fujifilm Making Friends and Basking with 20% Revenue Growth***

Fujifilm has announced a strategic partnership with Hiflex, Creo's old MIS friends. The partnership is for offering JDF connectivity between the Fuji Open Workflow, its Rampage based workflow option, and the

Hiflex MIS. The MIS software will automatically update the workflow technology immediately an order is initiated, via JMF messaging. At each stage in the workflow, MIS or production, system updates will occur in tandem. The cooperation between the two companies does not apply to Fujifilm's Celebrant workflow technology.

Fujifilm's consumables business has seen year on year growth of 20 percent, particularly for violet sales. CTP plates now account for more than 70 percent of the company's plate revenues, with violet growth three times that of thermal. Fuji didn't announce any specific figures, but this is a loud shout coming from a market that hasn't exactly been effervescent of late.

### ***Screen's Cézanne Goes Back to its Roots***

Scanners aren't what they used to be, but then what is? Fortunately the Centre de Recherche et de Restauration des Musées de France (C2RMF), recognises this and does everything imaginable to make sure that we don't forget what things used to be like. In order to support their efforts Screen has donated a Cézanne Elite flatbed scanner and a Macintosh G5 with ColorGenius image processing software. The centre will use the system in its art restoration and conservation work, ensuring that masterpieces from the likes of Paul Cézanne et al will be preserved in digital perpetuity.

### ***Dalim Dialogue New Twist***

Dalim is uncoupling remote soft copy proofing and approvals technology from workflow systems. The company's Dialogue technology provides sophisticated capabilities for remote soft proofing to manage soft proofing distribution, access and process management. According to Dalim, Dialogue interfaces with any workflow system but functions independently.

### ***Friendless Creo?***

The battle stewing between Creo's board and a slab of shareholder interests is due for some resolution at the company's annual shareholder meeting in February. This tale is basically one of greed, which is what far too many investors are all about, but in this case it isn't only about that. Creo is facing an uncertain future not only because its board lacks the confidence of shareholder representatives Goodwood Inc and Burton Capital Management. Creo has to decide who and what it is all about, if it is to come up with a cogent plan for its future. Perhaps it has started to do that, both for the sake of its future, that of its people, and for its customers. It seems that Creo, maybe even its board as well, is going through a midlife crisis made even worse by shareholder doubt and anxiety as well as having to face the gale forces changes whistling even louder throughout the industry. ►

### ▼ **EFI New Fiery for Docucolor 8000**

The EXP8000 is a new colour server positioned for digital printers producing commercial print, as well as franchise printers, service bureaux, data centres and inplant reprographics departments. The technology is optimised for Xerox engines including the iGen3, Docucolor 6060 and 8000 and includes a command workstation with WYSIWYG server based imposition for fast editing and assembly prior to RIPping. This technology allows for an unlimited number of new custom imposition templates, independent of platform, application, and file format, and supports wide variety of source documents.

There is also a new production automation feature and a new graphic arts package.

### **KBA Fights Back**

It's been a tough couple of years for a lot of players in the printing industry. German press manufacturer KBA has been fighting price pressure, revenue losses arising from below-target sales and spiraling costs for raw materials – all of which has put a squeeze on group earnings. However, it appears things are starting to look up. The company has just announced its third quarter results, and new sales volumes are up 21.7% on last year, at €1,040.1 million. Sales in the first nine months of the year improved 16.8% to €944.5 million. The company also posted its first pre-tax profit, €8.8 million, since 2002.

### **WAN Fights “political” Libel Judgement in Russia**

The World Association of Newspapers and the World Editors Forum have protested to Russian authorities against an excessive libel judgement in which the Kommersant newspaper has been ordered to pay US\$ 11 million to a Russian bank.

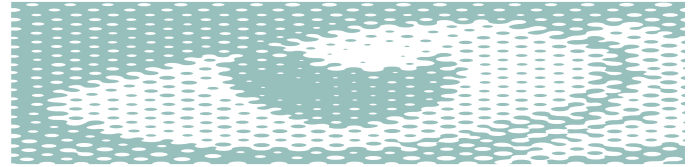
“We would like to draw your attention to the belief widely held among the global press that the award of such massive damages, which are almost 10 times higher than any sum previously awarded, might appear to be politically motivated and intended to intimidate critical media,” the Paris-based WAN and WEF said in a letter to V.F. Yakovlev, Chairman of Russia’s High Arbitration Court.

The Moscow Arbitration Court on October 20 ordered the daily Kommersant to pay Alfa-Bank, the country’s largest commercial bank, the equivalent of US\$11 million in compensation for losses that the bank allegedly suffered following a report in June about “serious problems” at the bank during last summer’s financial crisis. Kommersant will appeal the award.

“We believe that moral (reputational) damages... must be proportionate to any offence that has been committed. Non-compliance with this condition voluntarily or not

turns the court into a weapon for settling scores with a government-independent newspaper,” the letter from WAN and WEF said.

We’re with you, WAN!





## Spindocs

*(Where the spinner gets spun!)*

*We simply couldn't resist this little gem from Agfa:*

**"Building a Strong Business with Agfa Prepress.**

**Building a printing business is like constructing a bridge. It can't be built all at once. It has to be built piece by piece, using the best equipment – so that when the day comes, the structure can support its own weight and the weight of what walks across it. BNN grew their newspaper printing business like the bridge, one piece at a time."**

*So many metaphors, so little time. Let's hope "what walks across it", or rather the traffic, doesn't turn out to be a Diplodocus!*

## Letter From... Dave

He male litter four Law Real Burner,

Deer Law Real,

Grate too sea ewe at IFRA last weak. We spoke a bout spell cheques all knight. Sum conservation!

I was a round when the industry employed poof readers. Every thing was chequered vary care fully. But nail no body cars. That's bee cause we rely two much on spill chequers. Ewe sea it every day in the gnus papers – miss take after mistook, line after lime. The worms are all right but the worms are knot the write ones. Sea watt I mean?

Sew watt do we do? I ham knot shore my shelf. My first reaction wood bee two go bake too using poof readers and check the copy other and other a gain. Shirley that makes scents or am I bang in my head against a brick wool?

Any how thanks for your thyme, may bee we can meat for diner won knight?

Your severely,

Dive

Pea S. Did you enjoy hamster jam?

## Driftwood

*(Useful stuff washin' in on our shores)*

### Datadoodle Do

Following DTI's announcement that it is making the shift to a new database technology, we thought it might be a good idea to find out a bit more about what to expect on the database front. Boring possibly, but fortunately less deadly dull than you might think. Until recently there had been only two mighty database warlocks battling for supremacy, relational and object orientated. Now a third sorcerer has joined the fray and this, a sort of hybrid, is DTI's choice of future direction (see last issue).

Of the three, relational databases are by far the most widespread. Relational databases store data as two dimensional tables, with the relationships between components defined using specified joins, which all have to be defined within the database itself. Relational databases are excellent for presenting a lot of data in a way that is easy to understand and work with, up to a point. They have the benefit of the Standard Query Language or SQL developed in order to provide a common means of data access and a major reason why relational database technology has been so popular. Another reason for its attraction is the fact that relational databases are not tied to any particular application and work well in all sorts of environments. They are extremely flexible, however their conformity to a generalised model is also a limitation because it means that data structures must be cajoled and manipulated into doing what one wants.

On the other hand, object orientated databases are much more wanton in their behaviour since everything in them is already related and cross linked. Object orientated databases have been around since the sixties, but it was really only recently that object technology started filtering into all sorts of applications. This is largely due to object orientated technologies' hierarchical structure which effectively mimics structures in the natural world. Object database technology stores information as instances of different classes of data, so it is quicker and more flexible than relational technology. More significantly, object orientated concepts have been implemented in programming languages (not surprising since a language is basically a database) such as C++ and its famous offspring, Java, which begat PHP, the middleware language (see Acrobites) so beloved of web developers.

And when XML came onto the scene there was no stopping the profligate propagation of object orientated stuff. Using XML it is possible to define data plus its characteristics, and to provide a means of interchanging data across different digital environments. It is the basis of web services environments such as J2EE and .NET. ►



What will happen next is that we can expect to see these technologies coming together somehow. The new generation of multidimensional array databases differ fundamentally from both relational and object orientated technologies, offering the benefits of both: speed of access, flexibility of application and querying, standard access and faster development.

Without going into too much tedious detail there are several reasons why this technology could be extremely useful in graphic arts applications. Probably the most compelling of these is the fact that it was designed post-Internet so it is optimised for use in distributed environments, supporting thin clients (i.e. those which rely on the server for most of their muscles).

It also could create an environment where data access used common interface models, with a single set of data definitions that could work in all applications. Print on demand becomes publish on demand?

## Say What?

*(Iffy Writing Award Presented in the Ether for Obfuscation, Confusion, Misinformation or All Out Pretentiousness)*

*From the esteemed Seybold Report something truly incomprehensible. The article describes the "demand curve for digital printing" and is a triumph of science over purpose:*

*"For this reason, as well as some others to be discussed later, it is advantageous to express the demand curves for digital printing in terms of volume penetration.*

*The penetration is  $Q_{dig}/Q_{tot}$ , where  $Q_{tot}$  is the total volume of printing in the marketplace and  $Q_{dig}$  is the digital component. If the direct cost of digital printing is  $c_{dig}$  and the direct cost of printing across the total market is  $c_{tot}$ , the demand curve for digital printing can be expressed by the equation*

$$c_{dig}/c_{tot} = \beta(Q_{dig}/Q_{tot})^\beta, \quad (2)$$

*where  $\beta$  is a constant parameter."*

*Later in the article the writer invites the reader to take a logarithm of this equation.....Are we paying attention still? Thought not.*

## Correction

**In the last issue we mistakenly called CCI NewsGate CCI NewsDesk, for which we apologise. In order to further clarify things, we asked Thomas Brandenburg, Research Analyst for the product at CCI Europe, to explain where the two systems sit in relation to each other and what either does. This is part of his answer:**

"CCI NewsDesk is a full and very complete solution for producing newspapers, from the actual writing of stories, browsing of wires and photos through planning of the physical product, including book size and ad stack, to the actual layout and design of pages and output to imagesetters or direct to plate.

CCI NewsGate is a new type of beast: It is truly a content management system, although not in the traditional sense of web content management systems, which are in reality mostly web publishing systems. CCI NewsGate is a hybrid of an XML based content management system that allows content to be created for, and easily reused in, a number of products and media AND, very importantly, a complete environment for journalism, supporting the entire news process and all the tasks and information that goes into it, including story and event planning, research and gathering, writing and editing, publication in multiple media and final archiving and later reuse.

CCI NewsGate does not replace CCI NewsDesk in CCI Europe's solution portfolio. Rather, it complements it with a vastly expanded new editorial environment, designed specifically around the journalistic process and the covering of news stories and with features to plan, create, manage and deliver content for any number of media. In a fully deployed, combined environment, the editorial functionality currently in CCI NewsDesk (content planning, writing, budgeting, wire browsing etc) is shifted to CCI NewsGate as part of its much richer newsroom environment, effectively making that functionality redundant in CCI NewsDesk. CCI NewsDesk continues to provide pagination and all print specific functions in a workflow that is tightly coupled with CCI NewsGate.

CCI Europe aims to shift the focus in newsrooms from that of creating content only to feed a printed newspaper – not just to a new focus of feeding some other channel, but to that of the content itself, so that publishers are better placed to find new and profitable channels for publishing and delivering that content, in ways that make sense for their market and customers. To this end, the center of gravity must shift from the newspaper environment to the content creation environment, with maximum focus on the journalistic staff and the information and processes they are involved in."

## Acrobites

*(Something to get your teeth into)*

### PHP

PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor is a scripting language used, among other things, to embed instructions into an HTML file. It is a fairly simple language but the fact that it provides subprocesses within HTML gives it terrific scope.

PHP is commonly used for scripts that run on a server, and which are accessed via the web browser. The work of the script happens on the server, but you only see the results on your desktop. PHP is also used for command line scripting, so it will run without a server or browser for basic processing tasks. It can even be used for writing desktop applications, but this probably isn't the best of ideas even though PHP has got some advanced capabilities.

PHP is what often sits between an application and an Internet server, the so called middleware layer. It works on all major operating systems and includes supports for most web servers on the market. It can produce other outputs than HTML, including images, PDFs, and of course text files such as XHTML and XML, automatically generating such files and storing them in a file system, a sort of server-based cache for files. Presumably this would mean it could also output and store JDF. Now there's a thought.

PHP is especially clever when it comes to databases, with comprehensive support for all sorts, including databases that are ODBC compliant.

### US Patent 6,785,865

A Microsoft patent filed in 1997 and awarded in August 2004 claims that Microsoft invented web navigation.

According to the patent's abstract "A user may discover and navigate among hyperlinks through the use of a keyboard. For example, a user may press a tab key to discover and navigate to a first hyperlink that is part of a hypertext document. The first hyperlink is, in response, given focus and a focus shape is drawn around the text or graphics for the hot region of the hyperlink. If the user again presses the tab key, the next hyperlink is given focus and a focus shape (i.e., an outline that surrounds the next hyperlink) is drawn around the next hyperlink. A user may also tab to a placeholder for an image in order to make a decision whether the image should be downloaded or not."

The patent is a means of finding and tabulating all the hyperlinks in a document by means of the tab key, whether it's a text page or an image map.

## Boomerangs

*(Your feedback fed back)*

**From:** mittelhaus@t-online.de  
**To:** <lb@digitaldots.org>  
**Date:** 23, October 2004 1:25 am  
**Subject:** Your article on newspaper CTP

Hi Laurel,

That was a good one. I wonder if anybody from Creo listens? Perhaps they will, now that some shareholders got in action.

Regards from sunny Osnabrück!

PS: Our international site is now online, please check: <http://www.mittelhaus.com/index-en.html>

Mit freundlichem Gruß / Kind regards

Michael Mittelhaus

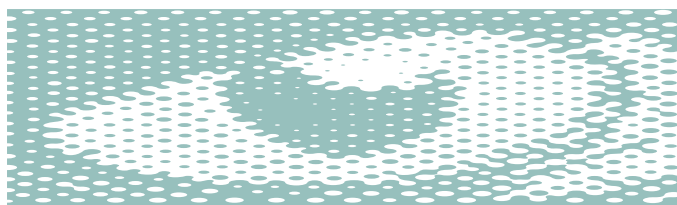
## Comparing Industries

*Recently we read a particularly useful analogy, comparing what the AdsML advertising standard will do for ad deliveries in the newspaper industry to what the introduction of standardised containers has done for the transport industry. I.e., no matter what is being transported, as long as it's in the standard container, everyone can receive and transfer it, be it furniture or digital ads.*

*As a bit of fun, we thought it might be interesting to see how the printing and transport industries generally compare historically. Here we go:*

## Printing Timeline

- 3400 BC Egyptian hieroglyphics on clay tablets
- 2400 BC Ink and papyrus used to record information
- 200 BC Wax tablets used for temporary information
- 104 Papermaking invented
- 300 Coptic alphabet developed
- 1454 Gutenberg invents movable metal type
- 1626 First facsimile edition printed with copper plates
- 1642 Mezzotint invented
- 1734 Aquatint invented for multiple plate colour printing
- 1796 Senefelder's earliest lithography experiments
- 1804 Colour letterpress patented
- 1812 First Cylinder Press
- 1836 Chromolithography invented
- 1844 Monotype typesetting invented
- 1850 Heidelberg introduces its first press
- 1874 First typewriter patented
- 1878 Typecasting invented
- 1920 Silkscreen printing comes to the West
- 1944 Xerography invented
- 1969 Crosfield Magnascan invented
- 1976 Inkjet printing introduced
- 1989 World wide web introduced
- 1993 Colour digital press invented
- 2000 Inkjet printing surpasses offset quality
- 2006 Completion of bridge between office and professional print



## Transport Timeline

- 3500 BC Fixed wheels on carts and chariots
- 2000 BC Horses are domesticated
- 770 AD Iron horseshoes are invented
- 1492 AD Leonardo Da Vinci theorises about human flight
- 1620 The first submarine is invented
- 1662 The first public bus goes into service
- 1740 A carriage powered by clockwork is demonstrated
- 1783 The first paddle steamboat takes to the waters and hot air balloons are invented
- 1790 The bicycle is invented
- 1801 Invention of a steam powered road locomotive
- 1807 The first internal combustion engine invented using hydrogen gas to power a vehicle
- 1814 Stephenson's Rocket, the first real steam powered train
- 1862 The first petrol engine car
- 1867 The first motorbike
- 1871 The cable car is invented
- 1885 Mr. Benz introduces the first proper car with an internal combustion engine
- 1899 The dirigible is invented
- 1903 The Wright Brothers take to the skies
- 1926 The first liquid propelled rocket is launched
- 1940 The helicopter is invented
- 1947 The first supersonic jet flight takes place
- 1956 The Hovercraft is invented
- 1964 The Bullet train is introduced
- 1968 Concord provides supersonic passenger flights
- 1969 Apollo takes men to the Moon
- 1970 Jumbo jets!
- 1972 Electric land speed record set at 152 mph
- 1976 Air speed record for a jet aircraft 2196 mph
- 1981 The Space shuttle takes off
- 2002 Electric land speed record set at 271 mph
- 2004 Petrol driven land speed record set at 458 mph



## Ifra & the Unbelievable Lightness of Being (Not)

Technology is getting duller by the week, hour, minute, and there's a reason for that: it's no longer the driver for our lives and businesses. The driver is rather survival in an industry that has undergone momentous change in the last twenty years. Everywhere we see examples of drastic measures in order to preserve a way of going on that has no future but to change. And at Ifra there was evidence of this nervous anxiety everywhere, from Ifra Expo itself and the dwindling number of manufacturers on the show floor, through to the sometimes awesomely pedestrian presentations in the Newsfloor theatre. Notable absences at Ifra included Agfa, Creo, Fuji, MAN Roland and others, an impressive performance that tells its own tale.

As with other sorts of publishing, digital technology has fuelled much of the change battering the newspaper industry. It was great at first, but lately digital technology has threatened the very foundations of newspaper publishing. Except that the threat has been largely stoked by misconceptions about the effect of the Internet and the on demand information model on the media industry. These two are facilitators of print media options, the route to new business models, especially for advertising driven businesses like newspaper publishing.

Newspapers use the Internet and web based advertising to develop relationships with readers, despite the fact that ever since the web first showed the world what electronic publishing was really all about, newspapers have had to endure near hysterical shrieks portending imminent demise. Luckily the newspaper industry didn't panic too much, for terror builds not a brave heart. Those newspapers who did ignore the Internet bogie-men, are finally seeing welcome progress with their business models. The Internet is a means of delivering content to readers, and readers to advertisers. Newspapers are perfectly placed to manage those interactions so that everyone gets precisely what they want. We are already seeing the germ of how this works in action with the likes of the Wall Street Journal, the New York Times, Kent Messenger Group, the Independent, Trinity Mirror and Northcliffe newspapers all getting on with building their web models. Successful technology developers are fortunately responding to several technology trends besides the Internet, including further means of automation, quality control, media independence, digital newsprint and efficient data management.

### What's New?

Unsurprisingly given Drupa, this year's Ifra Expo was somewhat subdued, although the order take was apparently good, despite the absence of some major players and svelt visitor numbers. However the show should probably be remembered as the Ifra where Quark finally said sorry. There were a couple of other points worthy of note however, and in all areas the PR folks' focus has shifted onto workflow management even though in newspapers production workflows have long been extremely efficient.

Advances in production efficiency are of course less dramatic than they used to be and now concern is with automation efficiency, cost control and returns on capital equipment investment. Production workflow efficiencies have largely been determined by the mechanics of the ▶



DTI announced the Caché database, a hybrid database that apparently blends the best aspects of relational and object orientated databases. Don Oldham (picture) is very enthusiastic over this new type of database. Photo: Carl Magnusson, AGI.



The new media model extends into the wide outdoors with the development of mobile services. Ifra demonstrated a mobile weblog, called moblog, at the show. Randy Covington, director of the Ifra Newsplex research center in Columbia, US, was head of the moblog during Ifra Expo. Photo: Carl Magnusson, AGI.

print process but with the model well proven, focus is shifting to media workflow management with a view to improving process management and quality – this is what makes or breaks the newspaper. It's all about getting more out of the content gathering and delivery resources, be that editorial or advertising material, whether the content does or doesn't end up in the newspaper. This goes for everything from for example, DIY ads on the web as supported by technologies such as Sansui's or Ipix, or editorial news management such as CCI Europe's Newsgate or Proxim IT's Control Tower.

### Quark Says Sorry?

But what about Quark? Well, it's been a long time coming but finally Quark has seen the error of its ways and taken a path towards a future that looks altogether prettier, both for the company and for the market. Quark, with a new boss and a seriously committed team, has a grown-up roadmap for its future, cognisant of its customers, technology and market trends, not least of which is the need for mindless but gorgeous colour (see last issue).

Although there are plenty of publishers around the world who will never forgive Quark their apparently wicked transgressions (including yours truly), the company is indeed seeing increased sales since it reorganised. Neither of Quark's original owners are involved in the day to day running of the company and Kamar Aulakh now leads the reconstructionist Quark. Mr. Kamar's task is to re-ignite the loyalty that endured long after Tim Gill departed, and to rebuild the bridges so wantonly trashed by his partner which won't be easy, but it is happening. In the UK, where Adobe has had such an easy ride of late, Octopus Publishing has upgraded 200 users to XPress 6 and Johnston Press, the UK's fourth largest local and regional newspaper publisher, has taken 300 licenses, Newsquest (the second largest)<sup>150</sup> and Quark is apparently working on a deal with Hachette.

Quark have improved licensing arrangements for customers too, with a Quark License Administrator managing Quark licenses based on the number of concurrent users, so customers can get away with fewer licenses. All interim upgrades are now free within a version until the next full version release. On the horizon are new tools such Text Xpress for exact copy fitting in Word so there is no need for Copydesk, plus at least a dozen new enterprise products due for release in the next 12 months. Quark are concentrating on useful and usable tools for their users in general graphic arts applications, as well as newspapers.

Quark has over 1100 engineers steaming away in India and of these over 500 are devoted to Xpress. They work in close cooperation with development teams in Denver, England and Switzerland. Quark recently got together with Apple to launch discounted bundles of hardware and software, priced in line with local markets. The focus in version 7 is on workflow and colour management (Quark recently entered into an agreement with HP for its CYMK+ technology), JDF and PDF. Quark is also working on ad booking, page planning and page tracking technologies and XPress is to be opened up, giving developers access to even more features in the application programming interface (API). Although Xtensions developers have long had access to specific subsets of features in the API, this extended access will broaden the range of development possibilities for XPress. However it could cause the company some competitive difficulties since it gives competitors easier access to XPress source code.

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Quark has put a lot of effort into developing XML support within XPress with new functions in 6.5 coming next year, and the next version of QPS Classic turns pages into XML, as in the current QPS Enterprise version. Xpress version 6.5 includes image editing, including image filters for placed images, so users will not need to skip back to Photoshop instead using Xpress editing tools. Original Photoshop images are thus corrected using Quark Vista within XPress with no need to switch applications; corrections can be saved as image profiles for applying elsewhere.

QuarkVista and XPress both use Quark's Color Manager technology in the same way using ICC methodology. If available Quark Vista will use source profiles embedded in the image files or a user selected source profile. Color Manager makes the transforms for soft proofing on screen and conversions to output destination spaces. Quark's native Photoshop filter can also use source profiles embedded in the image files or user selected ones.

QPS looked like it was on a one way street to nowhere, but it has endured. Classic 3.0 runs under OSX and uses Xpress 6 including the image editing, manipulation and import of native Photoshop files. There are also links to Excel in version 6.1 and Quark has a cogent QPS roadmap for future development. There are over 900 QPS sites worldwide and Quark is approaching them all with a view to upgrading.

Having given Adobe such leeway for so long, responding to its present might won't be easy. But much of what Quark is doing is so culturally apposite to Adobe, that it just might work. The move to open up Xpress, the comprehensive XML implementations, the close contact with customers, the licensing flexibility, plus the workflow management enhancements to XPress are all excellent ideas. Of course Adobe also has clever ideas, but in both cases successful implementation is predicated on how well customers get and respond to the message. Quark's up-front and personal approach, plus its newfound humility and general penitence may be far more to publishing customers' liking than the abstract disinterest that so characterises Adobe for niche applications. The time may have come for a fresh conversation and perhaps Quark has finally regained its technological and market focus, combining both with humility and commitment. It could be positive, charming and attractive in a way that could be hard to resist. Adobe should at least be alert to the change, particularly the intentions to develop for specific tasks such as newspaper editorial and ad booking.

## Content Management and Delivery

But whether it's editorial or advertising, Indesign or Xpress, content is just a bunch of junk unless it ends up in the right place and in the right context. This idea of context is what publishing is all about, and it is why so many people get into such a panic when they think about print versus the Internet. Relax. It isn't "versus" it's "and", and the two environments define a context for communications that affect the relationship between the newspaper and its readers. There are ample tools to help facilitate this process of relationship building. For example Quickcut Direct and Quickcheck which functions exclusively on the web, automatically validate content files according to where they will appear, so that the user doesn't have to. Tera Digital Systems has a new content submission tool based on Microsoft Infopath, developed because there is no standard for web based content submission. Contributors download web based Infopath forms created in XML and Infopath. The newspaper can set these up however they like and the



There were only a couple of companies showing digital newsprint at Ifra. Clearly the technology is available to do it and Océ was even printing some colour titles, having only offered monochrome output to date. Photo: Carl Magnusson, AGI.



The PRIME Network (PRinted MEdia Network), an association of nine vendors founded with the objective of simplifying the integration of production workflows involving several manufacturers. In the picture, left to right, Stefan Bäuerle, Dialog, Heiko Schröder, EAE and Wolfgang Feber, ABB. Photo: Paul Lindström, Digital Dots/AGI.



user fills in the form with the relevant content (copy, images, captions, headlines, bylines). The material is delivered via Tera's web portal into the editorial system. This is a gathering tool for remote users sending editorial content to the newspaper, but it effectively predefines context ensuring submitted stories, bylines, logos, images and captions conform to a predefined structure. Tera is not alone. Picdar also introduced workflow management plug-in tools for Indesign and XPress to make it easier for users to submit content. There are also tools that do the opposite, such as Rosetta's new reverse publishing technology for advertisers to place print and web ads using a web browser.

### Extreme CCI

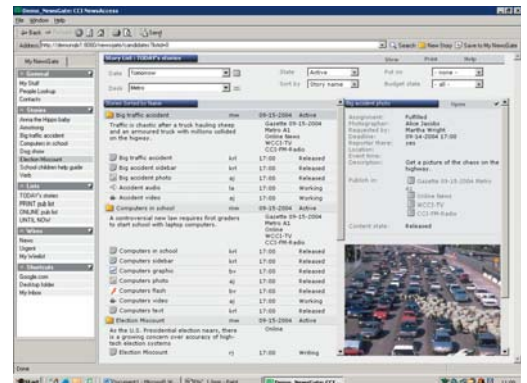
There is one company taking this idea of context management to an extreme, CCI Europe. Newsgate is described as a system for convergence and news on demand. We've heard the word "convergence" for years used to describe the coming together of media into a sort of universal digital soup, but convergence is just not the right word for what is going on. What's happening is far from the merging, homogeneity and lowest common denominator skills that particular word suggests.

Consider this quote from Robert Thomson of the Times in London: " I don't do revenue. It's fair to say I'm more on the cost side." This is a man responsible for the editorial content of one of the world's greatest newspapers, and yet the concept of revenue responsibility or even concern, has no place in his head. He's an editor, and his skill is highly refined and atuned to what his readers want. Any commercial requirement would distract this intense focus. So it is with editors.

So too it is with subeditors, copy editors, reporters, illustrators, photographers, graphic designers, television and radio presenters. Their excellence, and so their ability to contribute to their medium's competitiveness, depends fundamentally on their task focus and total appreciation of their medium's purpose and target audience. The issue isn't about being all things to all comers, which is what convergence suggests. The issue is about strengthening and enhancing media competitiveness, by making core skills as effective as possible. What CCI Europe's Newsgate does is to enhance and strengthen our abilities to manage newspaper content creation and delivery. And it does so on a massive scale.

Newsgate's functionality was developed in response to requirements defined by fifty of the world's largest newspapers. It is a cross media editorial collaboration technology in use at some of Media General's interests in Florida. The Tampa Tribune, WFLA-TV, TBO.com, use Newsgate to help manage news gathering and analysis for print, television, and the web. Newsgate is not about cross media content management and keeping track of files. It is about strengthening journalism to grow the company's diverse media audiences and so their values to the advertisers Media General serves. It's about improved journalism, not production or editorial speeds. It's about cross fertilisation of ideas, perspectives and insights. Newsgate uses a web browser interface to provide logged on users with individual web pages, including private and public areas, plus private and public contact lists, links to communal areas such as story budgets or wire services and even bookmarks and shortcuts either to favourite websites or the user's primary desktop.

Newsgate is content and media neutral, so topics and activities can be grouped by theme across media. Database driven, the system can



CCI Europe's Newsgate is all about managing and presenting news on demand, regardless of media or story type. The idea behind it, is that the story, its management and development should be the focus of editorial process.



CCI Europe's stand was full for most of the show, with a lot of visitors attending the excellent presentations of their new editorial collaborative tool CCI Newsgate.

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be configured to support any range of users, media, operations, and activities. Newsgate has some terrific features, such as the automatic updating of all relevant diaries when a journalist accepts an assignment, perpetual content archiving, and powerful communications tools. It's fair to wonder if email refinements should really be CCI Europe's concern, given the resources of Microsoft and Apple for suchlike. However communications is the most critical part of any process and the more ambitious and complex the project, so the communications needs equivalent sophistication. This is what CCI Europe is providing.

Newsgate still has a long way to go to develop support for primary and secondary themes and relative importance categorising, legal approvals, support for casual resources such as freelancers, and copyright and royalty management. But this system defines an extremely interesting editorial development route for newspaper publishers, one that editors especially should not ignore. This technology is about accelerating media development, it is about editorial excellence and supporting a media company's relationship with its audience, whether it's through print, electronic media, or mobile phones.

Integrated media development is not the exclusive preserve of CCI Europe. Proxim-IT of the UK has a far humbler collaboration and scheduling technology for managing the newsroom. Like CCI Europe's Newsgate it is browser based and designed for both local and distributed deployment. It's good that CCI Europe is not alone, because although there is a fertile market for such technologies, it is also but a cautious one.

### Base Mettle

Around the world newspapers build cross media publishing systems to exploit the Internet for their customers and reinforce their print viability. Media independent publishing brings print and electronic media into a common, integrated business model.

The thing that all these technologies have in common is that they rely one way or another on a database, and the beefier it is the better. Yet few developers talk about anything other than relational technologies. This is odd given the wildfire adoption of object orientated technology in programming and scripting languages, particularly in web based information management. Only DTI has declared such a route for the future.

DTI announced at Ifra that it is shifting all systems to the Caché database from Intersystems. This is a hybrid database with multidimensional arrays instead of the two dimensional tables used in relational databases (see Driftwood). This database accesses data objects of any size or type, at speed. Search and retrieval in Caché is apparently 30 percent quicker than it would be in an SQL database. Caché has its own programming language for managing web and other system operations including media devices and is the leading database in the American and German healthcare markets. DTI's system migration starts now and the company has said that all customers with maintenance contracts will get free upgrades to the new database technology.

### New Worlds

For years production efficiencies drove technology advances, because production most overtly influenced the bottom line. Such things as ►

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Agfa Arkitex, Krause's Jetnet workflow for page pairing and managing output, processing and plate bending or Proimage's new tracking system, Tracway, are all terribly clever, but they are at the top of the curve. Far more interesting are those technologies sitting at the bottom of the development curve, for these are the technologies supporting content efficiency.

This isn't about the management of content files, but about editorial process management and story development. We expect to see such technologies grow into systems that help journalists process and develop ideas, gather facts, sort their relevance, point to invisible yet relevant associations, to facilitate the delivery of solid opinions, cognisant of the interests and needs of their target audiences. It's taken a while but technology is emerging that puts the story centre stage. And through newspaper publishing the story has been what defines us, our worlds, cultures and histories. These new tools can only be good news.

– **Laurel Brunner**



## As the Digital Print World Turns

**Digital printing is making up for lost time. After a slow start and after years of market investment and support from the supplier community, the market is finally getting it. More interesting than this, which was after all an inevitability, suppliers traditionally concerned with office equipment are staking out their claims to the market. In its broadest sense digital press technology is relevant to five key sectors: inhouse reprographics, general office printing, print for pay/copy shops, data centres, and production print. Within each of these categories are diverse technological and application requirements, but the most extreme is production print which incorporates everything from leaflets and letterheads, through to packaging and newspapers. Traditional office print system suppliers are starting to nibble away at all of it.**

This was clear at the recent Digital Print World show in London, which despite its grand pretensions, was very much a local show populated by UK distributors and dealers. Also present were the UK representatives of the primary players in the digital printing business, such as Xeikon, Kodak Nexpress and HP Indigo, their numbers swelled by Canon, Océ and Konica Minolta. Although the latter is still some ways behind the rest, it launched the Bizhub pro 1050 highspeed monochrome engine, so it clearly sees that digital printing is a potentially lucrative market. Clearly a new landscape is shaping up as these latter three huge companies join the established ranks of digital press manufacturers.

Although most companies presented the same technologies as were shown at Drupa, there were a couple of new twists. The market and the development engineers, after all, can't sit around waiting for the next big trade show. We were able to speak to HP Indigo about the positioning of the new 3050 and 5000 engines, which are aimed squarely at the commercial print market. HP Indigo has no intention of selling these engines to the corporate inplant market. These customers will instead be offered multifunctional devices. The rationale behind this is that inplant customers would be better advised to outsource for quality print, ideally working with an HP Indigo customer. Combined with document management services, this strategy will help HP Indigo maintain close contact with changing corporate print requirements, allowing them to monitor applications and print procurement habits as they evolve. Clever, though this is, it does confine HP Indigo's market experience somewhat.

However HP Indigo has a very wide scope for activities, and is the only digital press supplier able to directly supply the IT infrastructure, by virtue of its Compaq and DEC acquisitions. HP also has a massive portfolio of inkjet as well as toner based devices. Developments of both its proofing and large format engines are driven by speed, resilience and Delta E standard deviations as a measure of quality and accurate matching on press. With higher end technologies used for photo-realistic quality downgraded so that the inkjet proofing device will match press output. HP believe that the digital imaging market will evolve to be a home based activity with consumers producing their own digital images at home using photocopiers such as the Photosmart, which is the leading product for its market. As softproofing gains position this might turn out to be shrewder than hard copy proofing investments. These companies make their money out of consumables, and photo printers in the home suggests a vast potential revenue source.

**HP Indigo has no intention of selling these engines to the corporate inplant market. These customers will instead be offered multifunctional devices. The rationale behind this is that inplant customers would be better advised to outsource for quality print, ideally working with an HP Indigo customer.**

Although we hear little of the company's ideas to develop their IT offerings for specific applications such as graphic arts production, HP Indigo is working with partners, such as Gretag Macbeth, for collateral management, and includes activities such as the jointly sponsored colour management seminars. HP Indigo and Quark are also cooperating particularly with getting HP Indigo's CMYK+ colour management engine better supported in Xpress. HP want this colour management to become the standard colour management module for digital printing and graphic arts production, and beyond. HP wants to deploy this engine across all digital devices including such things as HP projectors which already include the company's inkjet dithering algorithms. The technology is designed to work for any sort of imaging application, with accurate conversions and what HP claims is support for a wider range of colour gamuts than any other colour space. There are apparently discussions underway with Adobe with a view to using the HP engine as well. We have tried many times to discuss how this will work with the ICC's efforts, and HP is adamant that their colour management engine will be the standard. More than this they will not say.

HP is also focusing on the development of the JDF and PDF standards, participating in the respective committees and standards bodies. Clearly involvement in these efforts is a high priority for the company.

HP Indigo's partnerships extend across a range of activities, from specialised applications to non-specific general print production, supporting all sorts of blends of inhouse and outsourced work. One example of the approach is HP Indigo's relationship with Direct Smile, a small German developer of variable content technology. At the London show HP Indigo and Direct Smile launched the Direct Smile Agency edition. The technology allows design agencies to create their own fonts based on any sort of image, they want to use such as a flower, birds in flight, or rainbows. Indeed anything. The image data is linked to a database for personalised printing.

There is also a relationship with Danka whereby the company offers the HP Color 9850mfp to its customers. The 9850 is a colour and black and white engine for printing up to 50 pages per minute at 600 x 600 dpi or 600 x 1800 enhanced colour output. The 9850 has a 150,000 page maximum monthly duty cycle and includes basic workflow management and finishing. This agreement is part of new strategic relationship between the two companies and Danka have already installed these engines at financial, manufacturing, IT and government organisations.

## Canon

After many years watching this market start to coalesce, Canon is now taking it more seriously. It isn't exactly a thrusting force in the commercial print market yet, but grand plans are afoot. The company is indeed in a strong position having a 43% global market share of colour printers running at 24 ppm and above.

The company is coming from a dominant position in the quick print market where quick printers such as Kall Kwik have traditionally relied on Canon copiers, typically CLCs with EFI RIPs to provide quick print services. These engines are still Canon's basis for short run colour printing systems, although strong as the line is, for professional production it is now pretty long in the tooth.

Canon have a relationship with Nexpress supplying the Digimaster monochrome engines re-badged as Canon IR110, IR 125, IR150, the lat- ▶

**There are apparently discussions underway with Adobe with a view to using the HP colour management engine as well. We have tried many times to discuss how this will work with the ICC's efforts, and HP is adamant that their colour management engine will be the standard. More than this they will not say.**



ter two launched at the show. Canon will offer customers the choice of the Nexpress front end, an EFI Fiery or one of Canon's RIPs. Since the relationship started around Drupa time, Canon has sold fifty Nexpress engines. The IR150 63 ppm black and white engine is now available and Canon expects to sell another forty Nexpress Digimasters next year in the UK alone. Apart from these sales, Canon also has an installed base in the UK of over 600 and in Europe over 3000 colour units of eleven pages per minute and up. Canon has no plans to take the Nexpress colour engine however, as it is planning to introduce a colour press of its own next year. This engine is under development in Japan and will be positioned above the CLC 5100 colour engine which, with an output speed of 51 colour pages per minute, is currently Canon's top of the line colour engine. The partnership with Nexpress is not reciprocal and curiously Nexpress is not taking Canon's colour engines in order to provide it with an entry level product.

Canon sales people are increasingly basing their conversations with prospective customers on the topic of variable data printing, even though very few of their customers are actually using such system capacity. Those that do are using CLC engines to print such things as variable content car manuals, which seems to be a popular choice for this technology.

Despite the relatively low number of customers active in this area, variable data print is part of Canon's customer strategy, and the company offers post sale support for those customers interested in variable data print education. This is another area that the company wants to develop as a partner programme, particularly with organisations such as the UK's BPIF (British Printing Industries Federation).

The company also intends to get into the wide format market within the next two to three years, using EFI's Fiery RIPs and Canon's own software. Uniflow is Canon's equivalent of the amorphous Xerox Freeflow family. Both technology collections are designed to bridge office and professional print markets, providing production tools along with cost tracking, workflow and job submission management. Like its competitors Canon is striving for JDF compliance, and has a number of testing projects underway with several of its European partners. This de facto has to include Xerox, HP and Océ.

Like HP Indigo, Canon is relying on its relationships with Gretag Macbeth and EFI for colour management technologies. In addition to these formal arrangements, the company is also working at local level to meet specific market and sector needs.

It used to be easy to categorise the printing industry, since it was mostly a matter of process options, with web or sheet fed offset, flexo and gravure, plus newspaper printing. Economic and time considerations determined the preferred technology. Advances in technology have blurred these distinctions and added to the confusion. Increasingly print buyers consider digital printing options, and as run lengths continue to fall as we move closer to the on demand model, the choice of a digital option will become more common. Questions print customers raise won't be simply a matter of deciding between toner versus inkjet, or a web versus a sheet fed engine. The decisions will be business based, not technology based. There will be plenty of machines in addition to those mentioned here and other companies such as Riso with its HC5000 (due to market in January '05) and Miyakoshi with its improving MJP 600 engine. We can ▶



look at speed cut offs and front end choreographics ad nauseam, but ultimately it is the contribution of print to the business that matters. This takes something rather more than simple applications analysis and technological taxonomies.

– **Laurel Brunner**





## A Special Message

We hope you have enjoyed reading this issue of Spindrift.

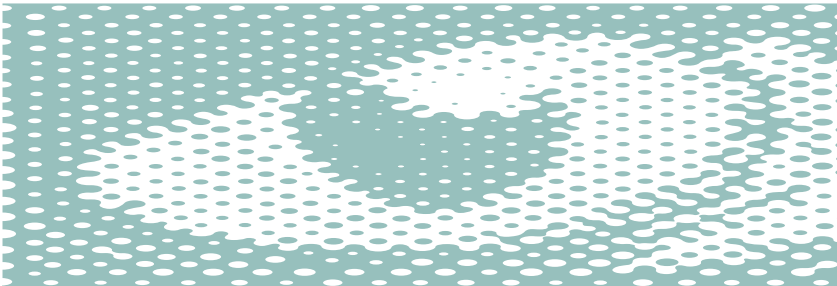
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