



Digital Dots

Spindrift

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News Focus • Opinion
Reviews • Technology
Interviews • Ranting
Psychotherapy • Fun

...Bamboozling The Graphic Arts Industry Since April 2003

Government, even in its best state is but a necessary evil; in its worst state, an intolerable one. Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence.

– Tom Paine, 1776

Dear Reader,

Welcome one and all after what we hope has been a wonderful holiday break for all of you. The tax season is upon us and it's clear that as each year passes, more forms need completing and more rules following.

The rapid growth of government and the public sector should be an opportunity for printers. But how do printers exploit the sheer volume of communications, regulations, compliance rules, and documentation requirements that governments around the world are demanding?

Ironically the answer may lie with the very medium most governments, local or otherwise, encourage citizens to use. The Internet is the basis of virtually all forms of communication in the developed world. Everything from lodging applications to building a new house, to paying taxes and finding out if the local schools are any good, it can all happen on the Internet.

Printers who have embraced digital media and provide multi-channel support for their customers are well placed to benefit from the growth in government. As for the rest of us, all we can hope for is that our badge of lost innocence doesn't become too much of a burden for us to wear!

Enjoy!

Laurel, Nessian, Paul and Todd

In This Issue

E-cek books

With the launch of the Apple iPad we thought it was time to look at the growing market for e-books. Laurel Brunner surveys the various e-readers and examines the different technologies in use, along with the potential for growth in this market and the threat to traditional book printers.

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Editorial Processing

Some publishers struggle to put together a cost-effective editorial workflow that really works. Paul Lindström talks with Spanish magazine publishers G+J who carefully analysed every part of the workflow before working with newspaper specialists Protecmedia to come up with a new system, In4Magazine, developed specifically for magazine publishing.

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King of the hill

British distributor ROI was one of the first companies to sell a Web2Print system but found it necessary to develop additional software, and set up a bureaux service to help customers get the most out of the solution.

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News Focus

KlearVision Digital has released the Kolor-D intelligent colour server, which uses fuzzy logic, and artificial intelligence algorithms to emulate the decision-making expertise of a traditional colour expert to analyse, correct and produce high quality image and PDF files. Engineered by KlearVision CEO Moshe Keydar, former chief colour scientist at Scitex, Kolor-D works with both Mac and Windows platforms.

Mimaki has launched a new desktop LED UV printer, the UJF 3042. It prints on media up to A3 in size and 50mm wide, with a resolution of 1440 x 1200 dpi. It will produce raised, textured effects, including braille lettering, and is suitable for labels, cards and packaging applications.

Fujifilm has announced a new roll-to-roll printer, the Uvistar, developed in conjunction with Matan. This uses Fujifilm Sericol's specially developed Uvijet QK inks and can print on rolls up to five metres wide, altering the way that material for both billboard and POP applications will be prepared in the future. There are four versions, with a maximum speed of 300sqm/hr, up to five metres wide.

Fespa has conducted its second economy survey and found that 70.2 % of respondents had used new products or processes in their operations to help them through

the economic downturn, with 61.5 % adding products to their portfolio, and 60.6 % entering new markets. More than a fifth of the respondents questioned at the end of 2009 thought the market was already recovering, and more than half expect recovery to previous levels by the end of 2010. Of the 217 respondents 56.4 % viewed 2009 as the worst year they have ever seen.

EFI has launched a number of new Vutek wide format printers. This includes the QS220, a direct-to-substrate, two-metre UV-curing flatbed printer. There's a choice of four or six colours, with a seventh channel for white ink.

There's also the **Vutek** QS3250r, a 3.2-metre UV roll-to-roll printer. This boasts several features, including automated laser-aligned double-sided printing and platen temperature control. It handles flexible media up to 3.2mm thick at speeds up to 172 sqm/hour and resolution up to 1080 dpi.

On Demand books has announced the Espresso Book Machine, powered by a Xerox 4112 copier/printer, which will be capable of printing, binding and trimming books with full colour covers on demand in retail locations and libraries. The Espresso Book Machine can produce paperbacks in variable combinations of trim sizes between 4.5 x 5.0ins and 8.25 x 10.5ins for a production cost less than one US cent per page.

Agfa has created a new business venture, Agfa Graphics Asia, in partnership with Shenzhen Brothers. This is aimed at the Greater China and ASEAN area and is expected to achieve sales of €200 million in its first full year of operations, starting from Q3 of this year. Agfa Graphics will be the majority shareholder with a stake of 51%. Shenzhen Brothers will own 49% of the company. Chairman of the board will be Stefaan Vanhooren, president of Agfa Graphics, while Mr Huang, CEO of Shenzhen Brothers, will become the CEO of the new company.

Manroland GB is to supply customers with Bodoni's market leading pressSign, proofSign and viewSign software solutions, for compliance with colour control standard ISO 12647. Manroland will also support this through its service-level agreements.

Spindrift

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Digital Dots Ltd

The Clock Tower • Southover • Spring Lane
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Publisher – Laurel Brunner – lb@digitaldots.org
Editor-In-Chief – Nessian Cleary – nc@digitaldots.org
Technical Editor – Paul Lindström – pl@digitaldots.org
Production/Websites – Todd Brunner – tb@digitaldots.org
Subscriptions – Helen Moderski – subs@digitaldots.org

▶ MIS specialist **Dims** has completed testing for seven grey boxes - the JDF equivalent of placeholders which help, for example, to improve the workflow and make production more economical. Dims has now gained certification for Imposition-Proofing, Imposition-Soft-Proofing, PageProofing, PageSoftProofing, ProofAndPlateMaking, ImpositionRIPing, and PlateSetting.

Sun Chemical is to start selling the Korean Dyss range of Apollo print and cut machines, which are mainly aimed at the packaging market.

Enfocus has released its Switch 09 family of workflow tools. This includes a completely updated SwitchClient, focused on easier integration. There's also better workflow editing, support for event-driven email notifications and a new workflow element to split multi-page PDF files into single pages or ranges of pages, as well as a tool to merge separate PDF files into one consolidated file.

Quark is offering a year's free membership of its QuarkAlliance programme, both to existing members and to members of the rival Adobe Service Network. Membership benefits can include priority technical support, a free copy of QuarkXPress 8, increased market visibility, and potential revenue opportunities.

Ricoh has launched a new version of the C900 digital press, with the C900 C80. This features a Creo advanced external Color Controller, which should lead to increased productivity. It also features JDF connectivity, professional colour abilities, and will work with existing inline finishing devices.

Goss has introduced new Sunday web press models featuring variable repeat capabilities for the packaging industry, and appointed PacSys to market these in the US. The new models are available in narrow and wide web widths from 510mm to 1905 mm and feature quick-change sleeve technology to allow variable repeat settings.

EFI has released a new Fiery application that it claims will replace the need for standalone print drivers for office MFP devices. The Fiery Vue lets users move pages within a document, decide how many Powerpoint slides to print per page, and can package several files together into a

single document, as well as selecting the right finishing option. It has a snazzy 3D interface, but only works with Microsoft Office applications and Acrobat.

Fujifilm has opened a new European support centre for its XMF cross-media workflow. Similar facilities have also been set up in North America and Asia, with all regional teams working closely with a newly formed Fujifilm support centre in Tokyo which was created as an extension to the R&D software development division.

Agfa Graphics has successfully completed its acquisition of the Gandi Innovations wide format printer business. This includes most of the assets of Gandi Innovations' North American operations and the shares of its principal foreign subsidiaries. Meanwhile, Agfa's Healthcare business group also bought Insight Agents, a European developer and producer of contrast media.

Xerox has bought Irish Business Systems, for an all-cash transaction of approximately \$31 million. This expands its reach into the small and mid-sized business market in Ireland. IBS, with eight offices located throughout Ireland, is a managed print services provider and the largest independent supplier of digital imaging and printing solutions in Ireland.

Fujifilm Europe has appointed Ryuta Masui as senior vice-president, Graphic Systems Business Domain. Mr Matsui has spent the last two years at Fujifilm Sericol in Kent, UK. He replaces the previous senior vice-president of the Graphic Systems Business Domain, Naohiro Fujitani, who has succeeded Hiroaki Tada as president of Fujifilm Medical Systems in Connecticut, USA.

Screen has started the ball rolling on IpeX announcements, confirming that the show will be the commercial launch for the Truepress JetSX, first shown at the last drupa. The JetSX is a B2 colour inkjet sheetfed press which now has the ability to print single-pass duplex. Screen will also launch two new versions of its original Jet520 inkjet press, and there should also be a chance for a better look at the Equiosnet workflow at IpeX.

EskoArtwork is inviting packaging professionals and students to design the packaging for EskoArtwork's



► Suite 10. The winner will receive €2,000 – or a €4,000 EskoArtwork Software Voucher – at the EskoWorld User Conference to be held April 18-21 in Tampa, Florida. Closing date is 1st March – further details from www.esko.com/contest



News Analysis

After a great deal of hype, Apple has finally launched its long awaited tablet, the iPad. Tablet computers have been around for a while, so, leaving aside all the marketing spiel about how Apple is going to revolutionise various markets, what is so special about the iPad?

It looks a lot like an oversized iPhone, and runs a version of the iPhone OS. That means that it doesn't support multi-tasking, a minor issue on a small device like an iPhone, but a major headache for anyone thinking of using the iPad as a lightweight laptop. Then again, there are rumours that multitasking will come shortly with the release of iPhone OS 4.0. And Apple does want people to use it for work, having also launched a new version of the office suite, iWork, designed to work with the iPad's multi-touch gestures.

It runs on a 1GHz A4 processor, developed by Apple's subsidiary PA Semi. This should give up to 10 hours battery life. Apple says the built-in battery should be good for up to 1,000 charge cycles over a typical five-year lifespan. Physically, it is just 0.5ins thick and weighs 1.5 pounds.

It has a 9.7ins backlit LCD screen, complete with multi-touch. This includes a full-size soft keyboard. However, first reports indicate that the screen will not cope with

bright sunlight as well as other e-readers, or for that matter, books printed on paper. Then again, it is colour and will run video.

It's clearly aimed at the ebook and newspaper market, and comes complete with a new store – iBooks – which runs from within the iTunes store. It will run most of the Apps on the App store, though some of these, designed for



If Apple can work its magic with the iPad it could transform the market for electronic books and newspapers and offer an alternative to netbooks.

the smaller iPhone, may look a little strange on the iPad. It uses the established ePub format for books, and Apple has done deals with a number of publishers to develop content. Apple has also been talking with newspaper groups, notably the New York Times. Many newspaper and magazine publishers hope that the large format of the iPad, coupled with its portability may enable them to design content that users will want to pay to read online so that they can start to move away from the 'media for free' concept of the Internet.

There are some things missing from the iPad. For starters, it uses an iPod dock connector rather than USB which rules out using portable USB drives and a whole bunch of other non-Apple accessories. Nor is there an SD card slot, which would have been handy for showing photos from a digital camera. For that matter, there's no digital camera either, which seems a strange omission for a device touted as being all about consuming media.

There's a choice of 16GB, 32GB and 64GB, priced at \$499, \$599, and \$699 respectively. They'll start to ship worldwide

in March, though Apple has yet to release prices outside of the US.

It comes in two versions—one with Wi-Fi and the other with both Wi-Fi and 3G, which will cost \$130 more and be available from April. The Wi-Fi is 802.11n, while the 3G versions support speeds up to 7.2 Mbps on HSDPA networks. In the US, Apple has announced relatively low prepaid data plans in conjunction with AT&T, but other markets will have to wait to find out what deals Apple strikes with local service providers.



Green Shoots

Yoyopaper.com, set up by Paperlinx, which owns 57 different paper merchants around the world, has a paper and collection service for waste. The service is based on various factors such as a company's paper use, document management and security and its environmental policy. Yoyopaper works out a package of products and recycling services to match the company's needs.

The Brussels-based *Confederation of European Paper Industries (CEPI)* has published guidelines to assess the carbon footprint of transport for the European pulp and paper industry. The idea is to come up with a common way for pulp and paper businesses to measure their products' carbon footprints.

In the UK the *Guardian News & Media (GNM)* expects to cut the carbon footprint of the paper supply for the Guardian newspaper by 10% or more in 2010. Paper generally

accounts for around 65% of CO₂-e emissions for media. The group is supporting the 10:10 campaign, which wants every sector of British society to cut by 10% the country's carbon emissions in 2010. Rather than using paper from a UK recycled mill, parent company Guardian Media Group is sourcing some newsprint from a low carbon Norwegian mill with 56% recycled and 44% certified virgin content. The new supplier emits 9.45 kilogram's of CO₂-e per tonne of paper instead of the 976 kilogram's per tonne produced by the UK recycled paper mill.

Isabella Commins is a student in Stonnington near Melbourne in Australia. As part of her commerce course at school she has worked out a way to recycle printing blankets. She is turning print waste into simple slip-on shoes. Printing blankets are made of canvas and rubber and the shoes are intended for people in developing countries. The idea has gained Commins state-wide recognition, winning her the School Entrepreneur of the Year Award.

Digital Dots is carrying out a survey of attitudes from within the graphic arts to the environment. We welcome any feedback from our readers so please do help by filling out the Verdigris Environmental Survey at <http://verdigrisproject.com/survey>

Verdigris 





Heroes & Zeros

Heroes

Fujifilm, for taking a stand against phoenix companies, which go bust and then reform under a new name. The idea is to avoid paying off debts, but to continue trading by transferring the assets of a limited company elsewhere and then declaring the original company bankrupt so that it doesn't have to pay its creditors. UK consumables supplier Litho Supplies was bought out of administration in December by an entity owned by Hilco, a turnaround investor, to be headed up by a former shareholder and previous group sales director of Litho Supplies, Eddie Williams.

Shortly after this was announced, Fujifilm UK made this statement: "Fujifilm UK Ltd would today like to clarify that as part of the company's policy of not supporting pre-pack or phoenix companies, it will not be supporting the new Litho Supplies Ltd company. Fujifilm would like to reassure any printers using its products previously supplied by Litho Supplies (UK) Ltd that it will do whatever it can to support them through its other established distribution channels." Way to go!

Zeroes

Bill Gates, for foolishly, and completely unnecessarily, wading into the debate on China's censorship to take a cheap shot at rival Google. Gates has criticised Google for standing up to the Chinese government's Internet censorship, saying that it's just part of doing business in China. He added that there was nothing wrong with helping the Chinese government because it was easy for China's citizens to get around the censorship.

This is to completely ignore that the Golden Shield is one of the most extensive forms of Internet censorship in the world, and is seriously compromising the human rights of millions of Chinese citizens. China has also imprisoned journalists and cyber-dissidents for daring to claim the

same freedom of speech rights that those of us in the West, including Bill Gates, take for granted.

Google, meanwhile, has finally realised that it's bad karma to help impose censorship in China. Ostensibly, Google's move was prompted by a hack attack that originated from sources close to the Chinese government, though Google's poor performance in China probably made it easier to risk giving up in China.




Boomerangs

We received this email from Manuela Blatter of X-Rite regarding the concluding part of our spectrophotometer test from the last issue:

Dear Paul

Thanks for sending me the article. I got now some feedback from our product manager about this article. The following in this article is wrong: On page 22 at the bottom left, it is written that NetProfiler Calibration Card is valid for 1 year or 12 readings. This is wrong. The NetProfiler Calibration Card is valid for 1 year or 26 readings.

Further, we do not agree with the result of the test, where the measurements at angles of 0 degree and 90 degree are compared. Our tests show different results. The SpectroEye is much better than the Techkon instrument. It is not clear, if the i1Pro were recertified, as it is recommended. Normally, the agreement is much better,

than shown in the article on page 23. The i1iSis is also much better than shown in this report. Out of the report, it is also not clear, how exactly the measurements were done. We need to understand in more details how this test was done (material, measurement modes, instrument serial numbers and more).

Manuela Blatter

Hello Manuela,

I'm very happy for your feedback and comments, thanks. On the NetProfiler calibration card, it seems I was instructed wrong in the training I undertook a couple months ago, with instructors from X-Rite. I'll send them the article as well, and inform them on those facts.

As for the results, this is what I found in my, albeit limited, tests. I'm happy to study your tests, if you make them available. The serial numbers I don't have anymore, but we can track that from the documents for the shipments. They are sent back to you in Switzerland.

I can also give more details on how the measurements were made, but I didn't think that it was needed for the article, with the target readership we have. One of the i1 Pros was brand new (the instrument you provided), the others several years old, and not re-certified (a situation I fear is quite normal among the users of the i1). I hope the result of the test encourages users to re-certify and re-calibrate their instruments according to vendors' recommendations. As you say - the chances then improve that they are as accurate as possible.

Paul



Picture This

Following a spate of snow that brought whole swathes of the British Isles to a standstill, BBC Radio 4 recently asked its listeners for alternatives to the expression "cold snap". Global warming has apparently left the British population unable to cope with the vagaries of its chilliest season. A canny listener suggested that instead of calling the snowy weather a cold snap, the BBC should simply refer to it as winter. How sensible is that?



E-ek Books

An electronic book (e-book) is a book that gets published electronically. This is much to the consternation of the world's book printers, because although the vast majority of books are printed on paper, publishers are increasingly considering the electronic option.

Perhaps a better question is to ask what is it that we buy when we buy the latest John Irving, and what do we buy in an electronic book reader? A book is just a book, an author's microcosm shared with readers via print. But an e-book reader is a storage system for books, a tool for managing an electronic library and doing other stuff too, such as making phone calls, listening to music, taking pictures and generally managing ones life. Perhaps it's a question of understanding what we are buying when we purchase a book, printed or electronic. Is the driver the desire to read the book, or to own it so that it can grace our shelves, desktops or pockets? Does it really matter what you call it?

An e-book reader was originally a device designed exclusively for reading books on screen. However since this technology came onto the scene in the 1990s (remember Voyager?), there have been substantial improvements not only in e-readers, but also in other forms of mobile content reading technologies. Whether an e-book reading device, be it a dedicated or not so dedicated device, is compelling or not depends on what it does and how well it does it. Options for reading electronic books range from laptops and full-sized monitors, to e-readers, PDAs and even a mobile 'phone such as the Apple iPhone. So the boundary between e-readers and other digital content receivers is blurring.

A consumer's choice of device comes down to various trade-offs, such as budget, overall user experience and all the usual concerns. However in addition to reliability et al, choosing a device on which to read e-books presents the consumer with more than the usual minefield.

Perhaps the most important question is to decide on the pros and cons of a digital versus an analogue user interface.

Books can be read as they are, whereas an e-book requires a digital device, which can be both relatively expensive and vulnerable to becoming obsolete as new versions come along.

As devices increase their scope to do different things equally well, will there continue to be markets for dedicated e-reading devices? For example, dedicated e-readers are mostly available as monochrome devices, which makes them suitable for text-intensive books but not for books with lots of colour pictures. The battery life, audio support and flexibility, in every sense of the word are also important, and if you want to watch video as well, you have to count out the current range of e-readers. The most popular don't stretch to colour content, nor do they provide the necessary response time. However we are still looking at a market where dedicated e-readers are considered a separate product category.

What Makes an e-Reader?

Market research firm iSupply reckons that around five million e-readers were sold last year but their figures do not clearly define what counts as a digital device as opposed to a digital delivery device suitable for reading books on. Probably what distinguishes an e-reader from other content devices is its use of electronic ink. Most devices on the market are based on E Ink, originally developed by a group at MIT in the US. E Ink is an electrophoretic technology wherein particles in a colloid move in response to an electrical charge, to create black or white shapes, ie text and spaces. This technology is easy to read and doesn't need back lighting, so it's easy on batteries because it only uses energy to turn pages. However it is slow to update.

There are alternatives to E Ink under development such as colour organic LEDs or OLEDs. These may overcome the high energy need and strain on the eye that comes with extensive reading on LED-based colour screens, but OLED technology is still very costly. LCD, as used in the Apple iPad, is a cheaper alternative. Other rivals to E Ink, include companies such as SiPix and Bridgestone who are developing colour electrophoretic displays as e-paper rather than e-reading devices, and PixelQI is looking into new LCDs. Other display technology developers are also working on some interesting ideas, so maybe we should

▶ be looking not at devices, but at e-paper technologies since they will be the basis of thin film displays, to which content can be delivered from the cloud?

The Mirasol display technology from Qualcomm, due to go into production in 2010 uses a reflective technology called Interferometric MODulation (IMOD). IMOD is based on MEMS structures combining computers with miniscule mechanical devices, such as shutters in the case of a screen, for integration with integrated circuits. IMOD uses little power and the display can be seen in bright sunlight. Pixtronix PerfectLight is another MEMS technology, one with a wide colour gamut and viewing angle, and low power use. Fujitsu's Flepia uses a cholesteric LCD in a colour e-book, has a 20cm touchscreen that can display 260,000 colours, wireless connection and up to 4GB of storage. The battery lasts over 40 hours and the device includes Windows, but at over €700 it isn't really a consumer product.

Products

There are several dedicated consumer e-books on the market, the best known of which is the Amazon Kindle, now in version 2. The Kindle 2 costs around €250 and is about 20cm x 13cm, with a roughly 15cm viewing screen. The Kindle DX at €350 has a 25cm diagonal display and is almost twice the weight of the Kindle 2, but has added features such as longer battery life, more storage and native PDF support. Amazon had a stated target to sell over 500,000 units by the end of 2009 and has over 390,000 titles available for its Kindles and competing devices.

Sony has been Amazon's only real rival in this area for a while. The company's latest devices are the Reader Pocket (13cm reading screen) and Reader Touch (20cm reading screen) editions. The Pocket models start with the PRS-300 which has 512MB of memory to hold around 350 e-books and costs around €200. The Touch Editions can have up to 13,000 with an extra memory card, and have a touch screen and longer battery life. They start at around €270 with the PRS-600.

The Kindle has wireless connectivity whereas the Sony device connects via a USB on a PC. It also has less memory and doesn't support HTML, both support MP3, PDF, .doc

The ePub format

This XML-based format was designed to reflow text so that its format matches that of the viewing screen size and orientation. It's designed to help readers organise and read digital publications on mobile devices. It includes the required technologies to encapsulate content components into a single file, describe its typography and composition, and provide the tools for navigation and how pages relate to one another.

and images. The more expensive Kindle DX also has an audio function and a basic web browser. Sony supports the ePub format developed by the International Digital Publishing Forum and is an open standard, whereas the Kindle's proprietary format is not.

iRex has a range of Iliad touchscreen digital readers with 20cm screens but not long battery life and costing around €250. The iRex Digital Reader DR1000SW due for release this summer has a 25cm screen, and support for Office and PDF. Booksellers Barnes & Noble has an E ink-based device called the Nook, which uses E Ink for the text and an LCD touch screen below it for navigation.

Less is more

HP's Slate PC unveiled in January isn't really an e-reader but it has a 10ins screen and runs Amazon's Kindle software for Windows 7. This means a colour screen, but a compromise on resolution and battery life. And much excitement surrounds Apple's iPad tablet, due to start shipping shortly with a 9.7ins screen. It has a similar interface to the iPhone, and is as gorgeous as the MacBook Air and Pro and about the size of the Amazon Kindle DX. To compete as an e-reading device it will have to have a higher resolution than the iPhone or iPod Touch.

Transparency across devices will count for a lot, as will availability of material, for instance, books, music and images from the Apple iTunes store. This device could very well have the same effect as desktop publishing, upturning the publishing industry's supply chains much as Apple did in 1984 with prepress supply chains. It has been predicted that Apple will sell two million units of the tablet at \$600 each to generate \$1.2 billion and add about 3 percent to Apple's revenue stream in 2010.

▶ Korean consumer electronics company LG has introduced a solar powered, flexible e-reader for reading newspapers, which at 19ins is the largest e-reader we have come across, as well as being the only one on the market that is flexible. According to LG, it feels like a tabloid newspaper. This 11.5ins touch screen has 1200 x 1600 resolution, and optional wireless connectivity. The same technology is used in Hearst's Skiff e-reader due for launch later this year. Hearst is one of America's large newspaper publishers with major interests in 15 daily and 38 weekly newspapers, plus stakes in other newspapers, magazines and television stations.

The Skiff Reader has a roughly A4-sized touch screen based on LG technology, but using a flexible sheet of stainless-steel foil encased in a rigid case. Content will be available from a cloud-based Skiff store.

And so the list continues: iRiver, providers of the e-100 Player is said to be introducing the Story which is more suitable for e-reading and will cost around €180. The Cybook Opus from French developers Bookeen will be comparable with Sony PRS 300 and cost about €200. Samsung's E6 and E101 e-readers have 6ins and 10ins screens and include stereo speakers, stylies and wireless connectivity. These devices should be available in a couple of months or so and will cost \$399 and \$699 respectively. Clearly this market is exploding and there are even devices coming along that can function either as a laptop or as a slate.

The Lenovo IdeaPad U1 is a hybrid laptop that features a detachable slate-style tablet screen. It therefore runs two operating systems for two processors. It costs around €800 and will be available in June.

¿Que Passa?

Sony and Amazon and their competitor's offerings are altogether more consumer orientated than that of the UK's contender in the e-reading market. Plastic Logic based in Cambridge, is going for business customers with the recently announced Que (which PlasticLogic say is pronounced like queue). Due to ship in April, the Que is what PlasticLogic call a "proreader" rather than an e-reader because according to the company it provides "a premium reading experience and access to content

anywhere anytime, while simplifying the multi-faceted lifestyle of business professionals – and to literally lighten their workload". The Que is the same size as the nonstandard American letter page, 8.5 x 11ins, and is about a third of an inch thick, and has a touch screen interface. According to Richard Archuleta, CEO of Plastic



The iLiad can display documents in various formats, including straight text, PDF, XHTML, JPG, BMP and PNG images. This monochrome reader has been superseded by the iRix DR800.

Logic: "It was built from the ground up for people who need to read. Starting today, mobile professionals can look forward to a paperless briefcase, a lighter load, and a better way to work." This is a device for business people rather than consumers, albeit one inspired by what the PR puff calls "an age-old but perfect business tool: a simple sheet of paper".

Plastic Logic has developed its own special plastic with circuits printed onto plastic instead of glass so it is much lighter and can therefore be larger. Combined with E Ink monochrome technology, the company claims it produces "an outstanding reading experience that looks and reads just like paper even in direct sunlight". This device also provides content and organisational tools, and email. It supports PDF, Microsoft Office and the software to shift

content to and from Macs, PCs and Blackberrys. There are two models: a 4GB one that can hold up to 35,000 25 page Word documents, and an 8GB model that holds up to 75,000 documents, with wireless access to leading publications and professional content on the QUE Store powered by Barnes & Noble, for access to newspapers, books, and periodicals., Plastic Logic is also partnering with Olive Software and publishers to provide content optimised for the Que. These include the Dow Jones



Like the iLiad, Irex's DR800 reader supports multiple formats. However it has a larger screen and higher resolution. Users of both devices can access free content downloads, manage their content subscriptions via the company's Myirex which bridges the e-content gap with automated content delivery, for instance, of periodicals and newspapers.

Company and the Wall Street Journal, and the Financial Times plus various other newspapers.

The Que starts at €460 for the 4GB model rising to €570 for the 8GB one. Plastic Logic is also working on a flexible version of its technology that can be bent and dropped and should be available soon. In an interview with the

BBC, developer Professor Sir Richard Friend explains that “in the past the transistors would have been made from silicon, and silicon means we have to have a glass substrate but here the transistors are made out of a polymer, a plastic semiconductor which we deposit at around room temperature onto a plastic substrate so the combination of the two plastics means we can make this flexible [high resolution] display.” Co-developer Professor Henning Sirrighaus added that “if you want to read information on an electronic device you’d like that to be as comfortable as it is on paper ... [this device] really mimics the way people read information on paper”.

Is this what consumers or indeed business users want? Is it a case of choosing the device according to the type of content, such as large screens for cartoons, or mobile phones for poetry. In the US, which is easily the largest market for e-books, sales have grown from almost \$17 million in Q4 2008 to over \$46 million, according to the IDPF and based on their members’ publishing data. For a country with over 300 million people this isn’t particularly great, however the growth cannot be ignored.

Clearly the Internet is driving a decline in traditional book retailing, but perhaps it is also starting to drive a healthier on-demand book publishing business. The way books are published is changing because authors can publish their own e-books with virtually no production cost. This could provide printers with an excellent growth opportunity.

For instance, DNL DRM is a DNL eBook security and distribution system accessible to anyone prepared to sign up for it. This includes publishers, authors, distributors and retailers. It provides tools for creating an e-book, digital rights management and sales reporting, plus the e-commerce technology to go along with it. Book publishing for consumers has been in a muddle for a number of years, with heavy discounting and competition from other media. E-books add to this confusion and as European markets embrace alternatives to print, this can only get worse for conventional supply chains. It does however suggest opportunity for new authors willing to go it alone and the printers who want to serve them.

What happens next is largely out of the hands of the world’s book printers. Some 276,489 books were published

traditionally in the U.S. in 2008. The leader in on-demand and digital book publishing is Lulu which authors can use to produce and market their work, keeping 80% of the revenue. Lulu alone published over 400,000 titles last year.

So the added competition of e-books is really more about publishing economics, and the demise of the printed book is intrinsically linked to the cost of publication and distribution. Self-publishing is growing in popularity. Of Lulu's several hundred thousand titles most are also available as e-books. Since Lulu started in 2002, more than



Barnes & Noble's Nook uses two screens: a monochrome one for the e-books and a colour one for the user interface.

1 million authors in 80 countries have used its services. According to Michael Chen, Chief Operating Officer: "The last Monday before Christmas was a stellar day for Lulu. We recorded the biggest one-day sales total in the company's seven-year history, with revenue up almost 40 percent from last year. That translates into significant financial rewards for our authors. Monday was a record day for royalties earned by Lulu creators.

"Among the trends this holiday season is strong interest in our photo books and calendars. For the month of November, the number of photo book and calendar projects started by our authors was almost double the same period last year. That tells us that shoppers are looking for creative, personalized gifts that don't break the bank. They want uniqueness and value. And they're finding success at Lulu."

The advent of e-books and tools for reading them has created more than an alternative to print, so these developments should perhaps be seen as something more than a question of electronic versus print delivery. E-books are creating new opportunities for booksellers and publishers, and authors too, particularly if they want to create new sorts of content products.

Much as boundaries between devices are blurring, so are boundaries between content. Publishers who want to capture this market of e-reading consumers need to work on ways of delivering new content formats, ones that allow the flexibility of a browser interface to deliver anything, yet that keep the readers attention and protect the amazing interactivity between the content and ones' imagination, something that so far only printed books engaging uniquely and exclusively can really achieve.

- Laurel Brunner



Editorial Processing

The editorial process is a mix of creative work, genuine craftsmanship, feeling and intuition – and efficient processing of large quantities of information.

More and more magazine publishers are taking a good look at their present workflow, and hoping to find ways to improve throughput, in order to face the challenges at hand, and in the future. One such publishing house which analysed its workflow is G+J in Madrid, because none of the editorial systems available for newspaper production was fully to their liking. Protecmedia, which offers editorial systems for newspapers, were willing to listen and adapt, and as a result the In4Magazine editorial system was born.

José Corbalán, head of technology within the production department, systematically analysed the existing editorial workflow, in the search for possible improvements. Together with the editors-in-chief he interviewed key personnel involved in the production, both journalists, editors, designers, researchers and production managers, as well as personnel in marketing, sales and administration.

G+J publish 12 weekly or monthly magazines, so this took some time, and generated many detailed flow charts over a series of iterations, before a consensus was reached on how the production was actually done. From this analysis came ideas of how an editorial system could help organise the work, and keep track of the process.

Protecmedia has already installed its existing editorial system, Milenium, at a number of magazine publishing houses, but G + J didn't feel that it was right for its needs. When Corbalán showed the process charts and explained the key ingredients that he saw as factors for a successful implementation, Protecmedia listened and found that it made sense to treat magazine production slightly different than newspaper production.

“For example,” clarifies José, “We need to manage some things that don't exist for papers (or not as frequently at least), such as jog direction, inserts, tip-ons, signature management, different bindings, et cetera.”



José Corbalán, head of technology within the production department, in the reception of G+J in Madrid. – “We wanted an editorial system that would help us with planning and content management, streamlining the whole publishing process.”

One central idea was to use the old but very systematic file hierarchy on the servers as the base for the process view in the new editorial system. Ease of use, and strong search functions and a web browser interface were other important criteria, and with this as the template the Protecmedia programmers went to work.

The In4Magazine Solution

At the core of the In4magazine is an Oracle database and one or more Adobe InDesign Servers. G+J had made the switch from QuarkXpress early, from the time of Creative Suite 1, so there wasn't any need for support of several layout engines, or re-training of designers. What In4Magazine adds to InDesign Server is mainly planning and content management functionality, including the increased use of rich metadata. An added bonus is that this helps in further analysis through the statistics that can be generated in the system.

For José Corbalán and his colleagues at G+J it was important that the new editorial systems supported all the processes in the production workflow, including



those elements that had to do with print production and delivery to the distributors (the magazine kiosks on the streets – still the most important selling point for G+J). This is why In4magazine integrates with both media databases, ad booking systems and print production systems. Some of them can be optional modules delivered by Protecmedia, but it can also be integration of 3rd party solutions suppliers. G+J used the Protecmedia PressFlow solution already, which includes prepress functions, and Protecmedia also offer an ad-booking system called AD-online Ciclon, which gives automatic preflighting and placement of ads.

In4Magazine in action

We spoke to Palma Lagunilla, Chief Editor of the magazine *Muy Historia* (All about History), and asked if the change to the system had been easy or disruptive? She told us: “I was involved in the early stages of the process of analysing the editorial workflow, so I recognised the process structure immediately when I took the training in the system. The editorial system shows the ‘tree’ hierarchy as if it was



Printouts of the flat-plan are often used in the editorial departments to create a large analogue planning board in parallel with the electronic version in the system.

the file structure, which I find easy to understand and use. When you right-click with the mouse on a certain object, you get access to the additional information about that object. You don't think much on the fact that you actually put information into the database when you add information in those windows.”

She continues: “I had three days training in all; one day to get an overview of the system, one day for the planning

functions, and finally one day for the functions specific for the editorial work. That was enough. We especially appreciate the planning overview – anyone in the

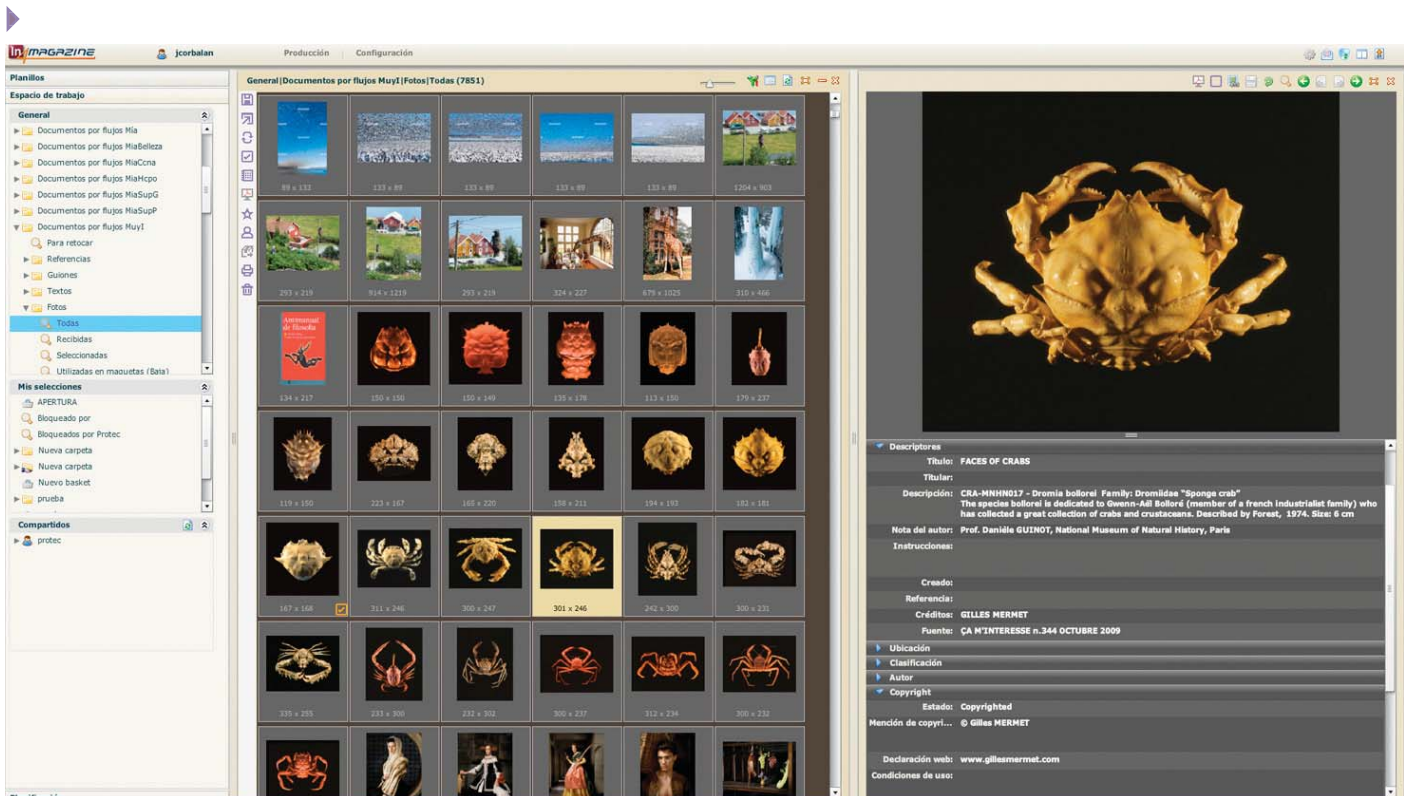


*Palma Lagunilla is the chief editor for the title *Muy Historia*, and found that three days of training was enough to get into the system, and start benefitting from its strengths. – “I really appreciate the order and structure it brings to my work.”*

editorial staff, as well as the people in the advertising sales department, can see the status, deadline and progress of the different editions. At the moment I'm planning the edition that lie three months ahead, inserting which freelance writer that should be contacted for which type of article, what type of images we need, and who is responsible for finding them and ordering them. I really appreciate the order and structure it brings to my work!”

We asked Lagunilla if she used the facilities to set deadlines, view timelines et cetera, and if this was helpful? “I must admit that I probably don't use the system to its full capacity”, she replied. “I know some of the other editors at G+J use those functions, but I haven't come around to do it yet. We are still learning how to use the system, and different people appreciate different functions more than other. I'm sure I will learn some new tricks over time when colleagues give me useful tips.”

For José Corbalán the challenge was to roll out the new system in a way that didn't disrupt the daily production, but this is now in it's final stage, and has worked well. When asked if he had seen any savings in time already, or improvements of quality, he stopped and pondered for a while. “It's perhaps too early to say for sure where we save time and how much, and if the quality has improved



An important part of the G+J editorial process is to find and manage the images used in each of the 12 titles that is produced. The media database can hold information not only about the image itself, but also copyright and publishing rights.

in ways that can be measured. But I find it very useful that anyone in the organisation can access the flat-plans, and see the status in the different stages of the processes. For example, we can retouch images as soon as they are released for use, and not wait until the last stage of the process. We are, to my knowledge, the only publishing house in Spain holding a FOGRA certification for the whole publishing process, so it's very important for us to check and control the image output."

"The automated pagination and bar code generation are other examples of where we save time and avoid errors. We will develop the processes of ad placements even further. Actually we have probably only just started to explore the opportunities with the system. Once fully implemented, we will evaluate what will be the next areas for improvement. I guess that's typically the case with quality management work – it's a never ending task," says José with a laugh!

We leave G+J with the feeling that we will hear more from them, definitely impressed with the thorough and systematic way with which they went about deciding on a new editorial system. And we wish them good luck with

their continued work on quality improvements – both in the editorial processes, as well as in design and production work – all of which seem even more inter-connected at G+J than is normally the case, thanks to the detailed analysis that was carried out.

- **Paul Lindstrom**



King of the hill

Web2print was in its infancy when ROI set up shop, but as the concept has grown, so ROI has developed beyond just selling software

ROI is perhaps best described as a distributor, and if we are honest, we weren't entirely convinced that there was much difference between one distributor and another, or that a story about such a company would be that interesting to read. But ROI, or Return on Investment, is really more of a developer than a distributor. It has a staff of 25 with a 4:1 ratio of technical to sales people, which includes programmers and developers as well as IT support.

The company was started back in 2002 by Tim Cox, John Murphy and Peter McDonnell, who each own a third of the business. Last year it had a turnover of just over £3m. Much of this is down to having a strong emphasis on customers, as Cox explains: "A lot of our business has been very consultant-based and we try to take a very holistic approach to our customers. We won't take a product on because it's flavour of the month. We only do it if it fits and we try to give customers back a return."

ROI has also been fortunate in that its history has mirrored the growth of the Web2Print market. Cox says: "We started off selling Xralle but the Internet was still in its infancy and no one really got it so we started off putting in production workflows as a consultancy."

This also helps to explain the strong emphasis within the company on software development, as ROI had to adapt the product as its customers struggled to understand what Web2Print was, and how they could use it.

Xralle is, to some extent, being superseded itself. Cox says: "We recognise that of late customers are starting to ask for a lot more from Web2Print so they have to cope with a multitude of products and outlets. It's no longer just about print."

However, ROI has for some time also been the UK distributor of PageFlex, an extremely powerful offering



Tim Cox, director and co-founder of ROI.

from the American developer, Bitstream. But ROI has gone beyond simple sales with its own team of developers that build plug-ins to add functionality. Cox says: "If there is a requirement for something beyond the product then we can do that."

Flexible friend

PageFlex has a number of advantages over Xralle. Cox says that Xralle is a PDF-out product, adding: "It will cope with database upload but without optimising that file for use with a digital printer because it's producing multiple PDFs whereas PageFlex can be optimised to the engine, so if you have a Creo RIP driving a Xerox or a specific PPML output then we can do it."

PageFlex has a much more cross-media approach, reflecting that Web2Print is now not always about printing. So, as well as PDF, PageFlex can also produce SMS text messages and emails as well as setting-up personalised URLs, or pURLs, for use with a Microsite, though you need a separate module, Campaign Manager, for this last option.

As with most Web2Print solutions, users can fully customise the appearance of PageFlex so that it can reflect

a service provider's corporate look, or a printer can set it up to match the look of each customer that logs into it. The PageFlex solution can be embedded into another website so that the log in to the main site also logs the customer into the Web2Print. It can integrate with other solutions, such as CRM or MIS and link into invoicing systems.



PageFlex is extremely flexible, using rules to determine what happens to page elements depending on the amount of text.

But perhaps the main thing about Pageflex is its sheer flexibility in the way that it handles page layouts thanks to having its own built-in composition engine, known as NuDoc, which gives it a considerable edge over most of the competitors. One of the biggest problems with Web2Print programs has been that the variable data within each iteration of a document may vary considerably in length. As with most programs, PageFlex deals with this by using a set of rules to alter the leading or font size within a given part of the layout. But unlike most programs, PageFlex can cope with huge variations between records, moving elements around a page, deleting pictures, adding extra pages so that everything fits according to the way that the file has been set up. This data-driven composition not only decides the size of the document, but even governs which printer it's sent to, or whether or not it's printed or output in another format. There's also a Chart plug-in for adding charts and graphs to a layout.

The system will also give customers a report with a chart showing how many people used the document, how many emails bounced back and which ones were opened, which allows marketing agencies to see exactly how well a given Web2Print-driven campaign is working for them.

There are several elements to PageFlex. Firstly, there's the Persona Cross Media Suite, a standalone Windows application, which is a good first step for print service providers to start offering a personalised Web2Print service. This can be used to produce database-driven documents for everything from marketing to brochures, travel itineraries and personalised booklets. It uses standard layout tools for creating a layout template, complete with all the rules necessary for dealing with variable-length elements.

There's also PageFlex Studio ID, a plug-in for InDesign that lets you setup the rules for documents created in InDesign. This comes with a PageFlex Actions scripting tool, which gives you a lot of control over how elements will move around a page in response to different types and amounts of variable data. You can also apply different templates to the variable data, so that it could be used, for example, for both a poster and a leaflet.

There's also a PageFlex server which contains the variable data composition engine and which can be used together with a Web2Print solution, or as a standalone variable data application.

Another option is PageFlex Storefront which lets users set up a website with templated documents. Customers can edit the documents or populate fields from databases and determine how the documents are to be output, and pay for it via a pre-set account, or from an e-commerce payment systems such as a credit card.

Full service bureaux

Three years ago ROI noticed that some customers seemed to be more successful than others when it came to using their Web2Print software. Cox says: "We went back to the customers that were struggling and asked about how we could help them." This led to a new service, known as ROI 360, which Cox describes as being a bureaux for a bureaux.

Essentially, the 360 team can pick up the slack for a customer, depending on the individual circumstances. This might involve helping a customer pitch for work, even down to visiting end clients on a printer's behalf.

The screenshot shows the Xralle website interface. At the top left is the Xralle logo with the tagline 'WEB TO PRINT PLATFORMS'. A navigation bar contains links for HOME, ABOUT US, SUPPORT, TERMS AND CONDITIONS, and CONTACT US. Below the navigation is a large green and white abstract graphic. On the right side, there is a user account menu with options: Welcome back xralledemo, Log out, Outstanding orders, Special offers, Basket, and Edit details. The main content area is titled 'Stationery' and shows a breadcrumb trail: Home > Property > Schedules > This is the generic property schedule for Colour Connection. Below this, there is a section for 'Information' with a button to view a preview. To the left, there are several product categories listed: Stationery (Business Cards, Compliment Slips, Headed Paper), Monaco Gym (Business Stationery, A5 Double Sided Flyer), Bespoke uploads (Stationery, Property, Point of Sale), DotEdit (Calendar, Retail POS, Fanco), Enquiries (Forms), Rentals (Agreements), and Greeting Cards (Christmas). In the center, there is an 'Image Uploads' section with a grid of six thumbnails. To the right of the thumbnails is a form with fields for 'Property Reference', 'Address Line 1', and 'Address Line 2', and a 'Next' button. At the bottom of the page, there is a message: 'What to do... Please Enter Property Reference No'.

ROI's first product was Xralle, but as the Web2Print market has matured, so ROI has found that many of its customers have moved to the more sophisticated PageFlex.

Or it might mean using 360's own team of designers and programmers to put together a Web2Print campaign to demonstrate to a printer how it's done. Or it could be that a printer has the facilities to cope with a certain level of work but uses 360 as a backup when staff are off sick or when extra work comes in.

Clearly the main benefit is that customers realise that they won't be left on their own once they've paid for the software. So successful has this been, that Cox says that it is now becoming the heart of the business.

ROI recently signed an agreement with Kodak to sell some of its products, notably its Unified workflow in the UK. Cox says that ROI needed to be able to offer its customers a complete workflow solution and felt that Kodak had the best range. Besides ROI was already selling Darwin and Preps, and as Cox notes: "They have some quite nice tools like Realtime."

As well as the software, ROI also sells Xerox hardware, and is one of a handful of resellers in the UK that have successfully sold the iGen, which is mostly sold by Xerox itself. This also means that ROI is selling the Freeflow software, which Cox admits competes with PageFlex but says is not as powerful.

Conclusion

So much about the success of ROI comes from recognising the way that the Web2Print business is changing. Cox says that it isn't really about print anymore, noting: "We are talking to people about data and the reduction of costs and waste. How many printers are going to help customers reduce their print? But those that do are winning business."

He says that too many printers think mainly about hardware and that there is no planning about how to use software. But Web2Print, variable data and digital printing are all about making intelligent use of data, rather than just learning how to print that data and this is sometimes an area that printers struggle with. Cox says that many printers have had to make cut-backs and this has in turn led to a certain amount of de-skilling: "Many companies have the wrong staff. But we can advise them on that."

ROI's response, to provide a team to ease printers into this more complex world, rather than just selling the kit and walking away, should set the template for other vendors to sell workflow solutions.

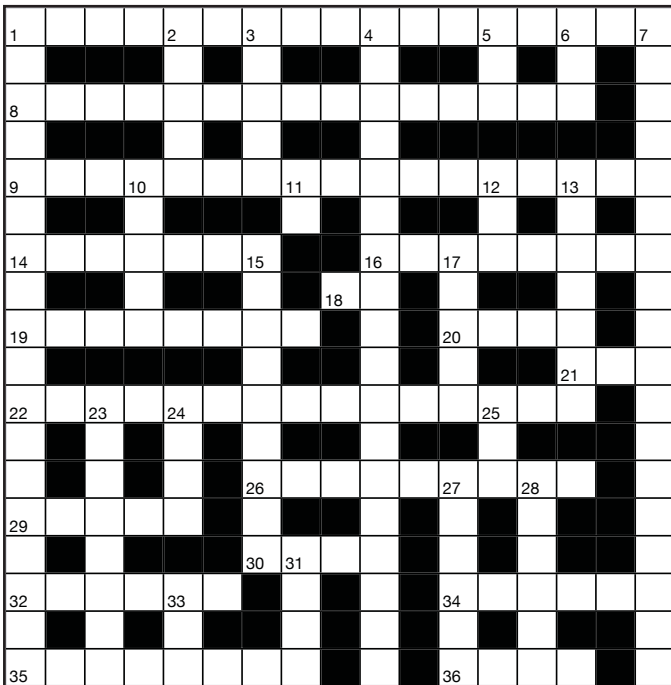
- *Nessan Cleary*





X-word Puzzle

Number 21 *



Across

1. Commonly uses a reel of stock to produce such things as labels, newspapers and packaging. (3, 6, 8)
8. The trick to getting perfect printed sheets. (3, 5, 7)
9. What media interactions are all about: information transfers? (9, 8)
14. Suggests, hints and indirectly expresses. (7)
16. Note to self, because the order's been agreed. (6, 2)
18. Information Technology (2)
19. Appearance of what's on the other side of the page, through the paper. (8)
20. Beg. (4)
21. Bigger than A4? (3)
22. What every separation must do to achieve optimum colour reproduction. (8, 2, 5)
26. A doctor blade removes this. (3, 6)
29. European, Africa & Middle East Region (5)
30. Gather together. (4)
32. Cast behind when lighting an object. (6)

34. To make a complete hash of something. (4, 2)
35. Ink not staying put. (8)
36. Collections of separations. (4)

Down

1. What you call teeny flattened folds in the substrate. (9, 2, 7)
2. Opposite of robust. (5)
3. Fundamental characteristic of a printing press. (5)
4. Another descriptor for a CTP device. (12, 6)
5. French for not yes. (3)
6. Diamonds? (3)
7. Coated, uncoated, newsprint? (6, 2, 5, 5)
10. Gravure inks sit in these. (5)
11. Opposite of stop. (2)
12. Health & Safety Executive (3)
13. Another way to say fail. (3, 4)
15. A process whereby powders are melted together. (9)
17. Anything can be mashed up and turned into this. (5)
23. Mass of paper based on area and measured in grams. (8)
24. Not quite a smear, but not sharp enough. Not a slander, but not kind. (4)
25. Ultimate colour measurement tool. (3)
27. They hold the blanket in place. (6)
28. What an editor does with copy. (4, 2)
31. And going over ground, left us thus. (4)
33. Optical Character Recognition (3)

* Answers at www.igaef.org

