Nothing is more noble, nothing more venerable than fidelity. Faithfulness and truth are the most sacred excellences and endowments of the human mind.

– Marcus Cicero 106 - 43 BC

Dear Reader,

Paul Allen, cofounder of Microsoft, is suing 11 companies including Apple, eBay, Facebook, Google and Staples because he claims they infringe patents that belong to him. Mr Allen's suit says that he owns the patents for various foundation technologies used by these companies and that they were developed over ten years ago at Interval Research Company, his Silicon Valley research laboratory. Even though the company has closed down, Mr Allen claims the infringements are causing it damage.

The main problem seems to be the patent for "making and using websites, hardware, and software to categorise, compare, and display segments of a body of information as claimed in the patent". This is gloriously vague and sounds more like an idea than the basis for a patent.

The legal whys and wherefores of all this are way beyond us, but could it be that Mr Allen has nothing better to do, too much money and he doesn't get enough attention? If so, he could find healthier ways of dealing with all three, like reading a book perhaps. Machiavelli's the Prince springs to mind.

As ever,

Laurel, Nessan, Paul and Todd

In This Issue

The new Xerox

Following its acquisition of ACS, Xerox is reinventing itself as a provider of business services. Laurel Brunner has been finding out exactly what this means for Xerox's ambitions as a developer of print technology.

see page 8

Pees in a pod

We've always been a bit confused as to exactly what Four Pees was all about – is it a marketing organisation or a distributor? So Nessan Cleary dropped in on a Four Pees reseller event last month. He found a distributor which is taking an active lead in managing its resellers, while also working directly with vendors in their product development.

see page 13

Improved and enhanced

Paul Lindström has been playing with Canon's iPF6350, an A2 large format printer that boasts a 12-colour inkset and a wide colour gamut range. It's predecessor failed to make much of a mark on the proofing sector but Canon has addressed many of the reasons for this.

see page 18

News Focus

Adobe has finally updated its Acrobat program though the emphasis is firmly on document management rather than print production. Acrobat X has a new Actions automation tool, as well as tight integration with Microsoft's Office 2010 and its SharePoint document manager.

Acrobat is only available in the Pro version for Mac Users, but Windows users get a choice between the Pro and standard versions, as well as a new Acrobat X Suite, a bundle which includes Acrobat Pro, Photoshop, Captivate 5, Presenter 7, LifeCycle Designer ES2 and the Adobe Media Encoder from CS5. Adobe has dropped the Extended version and its 3D capabilities.

Agfa has announced a new wide format flatbed UV printer, the Jeti 3020 Titan. The entry-level version incorporates 16 robust Ricoh Gen 4 greyscale print-heads resulting in fast, high quality CMYK output at a native resolution of 600 dpi, able to deliver 1200 dpi for photorealistic image quality. The machine has a maximum print area of 3 x 2 m prints up to 113 square m/hour (1,216 square feet/ hour). It's a modular platform and can be extended to incorporate more colours and higher speeds.

Agfa also has a new solvent printer, the Jeti 3348 HSS, a 3.25 m roll-to-roll printer with 300 dpi resolution and four colour output suitable for billboards, banners and posters. It uses TurbTech drying technology, which combines conventional mesh back-heaters with a front drying system. This utilises non-laminar flow warm air drying technology, which lowers vapour pressures and delivers high speed drying, vital when working at high speeds with low cost materials.

Agfa has also added new greyscale technology and faster production modes to its M-Press Tiger digital press which can now output up to 13,640 sqft/h (1267 sqm/hour) with variable drop sizes as small as 10 pico litres.

Mutoh has introduced an all new digital direct to fabric production printer with a moving adhesive belt system, called Viper TX Professional, available in 1.6 and 2.2m versions. This heavy-duty piezo drop-on-demand inkjet printer has been purpose-built for direct printing onto stretchable, knitted, woven and open structure fabrics, such as PES flag, cotton, nylon, lycra, silk, poplin, etc.

Enfocus has updated PitStop Connect 09, its PDF preflight and delivery tool. This first update streamlines the process of updating the Connectors containing PDF specifications for preflight and delivery. It also extends the support for jobs containing multiple files, allowing metadata information to be entered once and be applied to every file. Enfocus has also shipped its PitStop 10 family, as covered previously.

EFI has introduced a Fiery Network Controller designed for the Xerox WorkCentre 7545 and WorkCentre 7556 colour multifunction printers. "Our latest Fiery controller paired with the advanced features of the WorkCentre 7545 and WorkCentre 7556 means office staff of any skill level can quickly and simply produce professional-looking documents," said John Henze, vice president of Fiery marketing, EFI.

Van Gennep and **ADAM Software** announce a partnership to deliver a DAM-based, end-to-end workflow publishing platform. This aims to make it easy to automatically repurpose content across a variety of

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different publishing platforms. The two companies have already completed some joint installations but in early 2011, a new version of Van Gennep's PlanSystem will become available, fully compatible with the ADAM v4 platform.

Fujio Mitarai, Chairman and CEO of **Canon,** presented City Mayor Hubert Bruls with the gift of the Endowed Canon-Océ Chair in Business Services Innovation. The Endowed Canon-Océ Chair will be established at the Venlo campus of Maastricht University. Bruls commented: "The Endowed Canon-Océ Chair is an important contribution to one of the top ambitions of the Municipality of Venlo to stimulate knowledge development in our region."

Xerox has declared a quarterly cash dividend of 4.25 cents per share on Xerox common stock. The dividend is payable on January 28, 2011 to shareholders of record on December 31, 2010. The board also declared a quarterly cash dividend of $20 per share on Xerox Series A Convertible Perpetual Preferred Stock. The dividend is payable on January 1, 2011 to shareholders of record on December 15, 2010.

Mutoh is now shipping its Bio-Lactite inks, which were first presented at the past Fespa 2010 show in Munich, Germany. Bio-Lactite is a renewable resource based ink – 50 % of the inks are ethyl-lactate, a component derived from corn. There are no volatile organic compounds and the inks are not harmful to the ozone layer. These inks are compatible with Mutoh's Rockhopper 3 Extreme roll printers and its ValueJet Hybrid roll-to-roll and rigid printer range.

EFI's PrintMe was an early pioneer in cloud-based printing, allowing mobile users to upload documents for printing. Now EFI has enhanced the capabilities of PrintMe's cloud-aware printers with document conversion capabilities, unique smartphone apps, a new print driver, and SDKs for developers who wish to add printing capabilities to their applications. It's available for the iPhone in early November, and for BlackBerry phones in December.

Microsoft has taken another stab at the mobile market with the release of Windows Phone 7, which has gained favourable reviews. Microsoft has admitted that this is a

make or break release if it is to continue to be a player in the mobile space. It will be available on several platforms and will work with both touchscreen phones and those with standard keyboards.

Screen is to include ORIS Press Matcher // Web with Color Stabilizer with every Truepress Jet520 sold by Screen in North America and South America. The combination brings significant ink savings and colour control for full variable inkjet printing on multiple stocks, according to Tom Leibrandt, Screen (USA) print on demand product manager.

Alibre Inc has released the latest version of its 3D CAD program, Alibre Design 2011. This benefits from a complete top to bottom code re-write, native 64-bit version, powerful sheet metal conversion tools, and a myriad of time saving tools and customization features. It's available in both Personal and Professional editions.

EFI has updated its Fiery Vue application, which allows office users to edit documents through the print driver. The update adds Green Printing Statistics to track paper savings when using the Green Books booklet templates included in the application. These templates help users reduce paper usage by up to 85 percent when printing out a standard slide presentation and eliminate unnecessary draft prints.

GridIron has introduced the public beta release of GridIron Flow 2.0 Essentials. This is designed for efficient project and resource management and deals with issues commonly experienced by creative professionals: working with distributed teams without tools to track their productivity, and no way to automatically track files, users and project relationships, and their dependencies. It's sold on a SaaS basis.

News Analysis

Adobe targets digital publishing

Adobe has used its annual MAX conference to announce a new Digital Publishing Suite. This gives publishers a set of turnkey hosted services together with a viewer technology to create, publish, optimise and sell digital content direct to consumers, through content retailers or mobile marketplaces.

The heart of the Digital Publishing Suite is its four hosted services. This includes the Production Service, which works directly with InDesign CS5. Publications can be prepared in InDesign, complete with interactive elements. Once uploaded to the Production Service users can collaborate to add further content and preview the issue. This supports both PDF and HTML5.

There's a Distribution Service for archiving and distributing content to different platforms including a variety of mobile devices. This can also be set to notify readers when a new issue is available for download.

Crucially, Adobe has included an Ecommerce Service giving publishers a built in payment mechanism directly through the mobile device in use. This will also be tied into online stores such as Android Market and Apple's App Store. It will let users buy content but read it on any desktop or mobile device.

Finally, there's the Analytics Service based on SiteCatalyst, which Adobe gained with its acquisition of Omniture and which gives useful feedback to help publishers target their market more accurately. Using this, publishers can access prebuilt dashboards directly from within the hosted publishing workflow to view key advertising and subscriber data including total ad views, issue download and purchase metrics and engagement with interactive content such as video.

The Digital Publishing Suite also includes a content viewer that can be branded for individual publishers. It supports Adobe AIR and Apple's mobile iOS so that it will run on everything from iPads to Android tablets.

All in all the Digital Publishing Suite takes the basic concept behind the iPhone Packager in Flash CS5 and moves it on somewhat. It recognises that increasingly publishing is about presenting information quickly across many different platforms and particularly mobile devices. It offers a complete integrated workflow, which will appeal to publishers who often find themselves struggling to keep up with the online market place. But most importantly, it includes a number of simple payment mechanisms albeit at a price.

Incidentally, we've long recommended that Quark should have done exactly this kind of thing. Adding a lean layer to QuarkXPress to take advantage of the growing trend for mobile and online publishing would have helped Quark retain its customer base. Smaller publishers in particular are very keen to get into this market, but often lack the resources to exploit it properly.

For now it's still a beta release though Adobe has worked with a number of high profile publishers including Condé Nast and Martha Stewart Living. It should be released by Q2 of next year. There will be both a Professional and Enterprise edition. Pricing for the Professional Edition is expected to be $699 per month plus a per-issue fee, which scales with publisher volume. Adobe envisages the Enterprise edition as a custom built solution integrated into back end services such as subscription management and print fulfillment.

In the meantime you can find a preview release of the add-on digital publishing technologies for InDesign CS5 on Adobe Labs at http://labs.adobe.com/technologies/digitalpublishing.

Did You Know?

Bookish

Since Apple injected some new energy into the eBook-market, several new file formats for eBooks have been suggested. One of the more innovative of these, complete with a clever name as well, is Bookish. Basically it's based on HTML5, but with a twist. The book (the file) is stored in the Internet 'Cloud' of servers, so doesn't need to be downloaded to a particular computer or reading device.

The company behind this technology and its associated file format is called Inventive Labs, based in Australia. Inventive Labs generally does web programming when not diving into the eBook-market.

There is a fairly extensive list of file formats already in use for eBooks, among them the open industry format EPUB, as well as formats like eReader (*.pdb, formerly Palm Digital Media) and Zhook (also based on HTML5). Then there are of course some well known proprietary file formats, like Adobe PDF, Amazon Kindle (*.azw), Microsoft Reader (*.LIT), and more. In other words – it's a jungle.

But it's possible to see a way out of this jungle. If you separate out the three main parts – content, design and delivery – you can see that it might be good to format the content using a very flexible and extensible page description language, like XML. Another possibility is HTML5, which sits somewhere between 'good old HTML' and XML. Incidentally, Tim Berners Lee, the originator of HTML, received criticism from the SGML-savvy publishing snobs that HTML lacked the feature set for rich typography.

The key for flexible cross media publishing, including eBooks, seems to be to find a layout program, or publishing system, that formats in XML, while being able to perform rich layout and design tasks, including sophisticated typography.

Finally, choosing the output format is probably the easier issue, be it any of the above mentioned file formats, or

something even cleverer, not yet presented. But do have a look at the Bookish format – it looks quite promising.

Heroes & Zeros

Hero

Over the last few years the Japan (sic) Federation of Printing Industries has been strengthening its cooperation with members and partner associations. It has set up and funds a range of study groups charged to investigate environmental protection measures, recycling legislation, chemicals control and emissions. It also has a system of grants to "excellent environment-conscious factories". All in all it's a paradigm that all industry associations should follow.

Zero

DS Smith is a UK paper and packaging manufacturer that handles 1.7 million tonnes of waste per year. It claims to be "a leader in recycling" but has lately been fined over €30,000 for falsifying environmental data. The company lied about the level of pollutants it was discharging into the River Culm in Devon. According to the local press, during the case the firm was described as being involved in "blatant deception" to mislead the Environment Agency. This would appear to be greenwash of the worst kind.

Green Shoots

The bit of the *International Standards Organisation (ISO)* that deals with Graphics Technology has convened a new working group to develop standards for managing the environmental impact of print. Our very own Laurel Brunner is chairing the group. This work and the expanded scope is a continuation of the ISO Task Force's efforts into developing a standard tool to measure the carbon footprint of print media. Writing of a draft standard outlining the requirements for doing this is underway, with a view to publication at drupa 2012.

Print City is working on its next report entitled 'Carbon & Energy Reduction – A Cross Industry Report'. Due out next year, it is intended to "improve understanding and action in this area". The report provides an overview of the issues in order to provide printers with sufficient background to improve their environmental impact and all round sustainability.

The Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) is entering into a partnership with the European Union under the 2003 Forest Law Enforcement Government and Trade Action Plan (FLEGT). The agreement will ensure that the country's timber and wood products sold in the European Union carry a license confirming their legal origins. Congo has the world's second largest area of rainforest after Brazil.

Phoenix Press Inc., a family owned printing company in Connecticut USA is one of 18 companies to have recently been awarded a prize by the US Environmental Protection Agency. This government organisation recognises 'Green Power Partners' every year for "using green power, growing the nation's voluntary green power market, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions". Phoenix has installed a 100 kilowatt wind turbine to produce around 165,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity a year. It is one of Connecticut's largest wind turbines and provides 40 percent of Phoenix's annual electricity requirement.

For more green news, check out The Verdigris Project:

Verdigris

http://verdigrisproject.com

Picture This

The other week I passed through London on the Underground, and stopped in front of this billboard. The headline *'The West should use force against Iran's nuclear programme'* was signed by the normally quite well balanced weekly UK magazine, The Economist. I found the statement unnecessarily provocative, but soon understood why. Next to this billboard was a very similar one, but this time with the headline *'The West should not use force against Iran's nuclear programme'*.


When studying the two posters more carefully I also noticed that the illustration cleverly showed a bomber plane on the first poster, but a peaceful dove in the other. Finally I came to the text 'Where do you stand?', and realised that this was not propaganda, but a challenge to me to read further into the matter, and find my own position.

Nowadays these types of printed billboards are often replaced by electronic displays, but I somehow doubt that it would have worked very well in this particular case. The words of McLuhan, "The medium is the message," come to mind, again. The printed paper-based billboard is so deeply connected in our minds with advertising messages, including propaganda. An electronic billboard would just be too flashy to make that connection in this case.

Whatever the media though – we still need clever copy and illustrations to break through the noise today. Hats off to The Economist – well done!
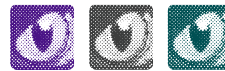
The New Xerox

It is rather difficult to fully understand the implications of Xerox's recent sharing caring conversation with analysts. We had gone to this annual chatfest expecting wise words about the company's view of the digital printing market, specifically its strategies for the iGen4 and the new inkjet press. Instead Xerox's acquisition of ACS (Affiliated Computer Services) was pretty much the entire focus of the session.

ACS is one of the world's top providers of Business Process and IT Outsourcing (BPO and ITO) and is the horsepower driving the new Xerox. But listening to the outsourcing mantra it's not really clear where Xerox's old Production wing sits.

The $6.4 billion deal created a 122,000 person company when it closed last February. Xerox now has 133,000 employees. With the ACS acquisition Xerox added 40% to its then revenues of $18 billion, and now 50% rather than 23% of turnover comes from services. The deal combines the ACS model of managed desktops with Xerox's scope for providing managed print services. Ursula Burns, Xerox chairwoman and CEO calls the new Xerox "a cash machine" which is on track to deliver $2.6 billion of operating cash this year.

56% of ACS's 85,000 employees are based in the US, but the company has a worldwide presence to support its international customer base and the US provides 90% of revenues. Xerox on the other hand derives about 50% of revenues from international markets. The ACS folks are working alongside Xerox's numerous subsidiaries and associated structures around the world. So far so cosy.

ACS is also the impetus for the new Xerox "Ready for Real Business" worldwide advertising campaign. (We wonder what were they ready or unready for before?) The ads illustrate what the Xerox ACS deal means for customers and are appearing worldwide in print and on television. They are customer specific examples of the services Xerox provides its clients and tell the world that companies don't have to bother with the nuts and bolts of business administration anymore. The dreary grind of sending out bills and statements, writing manuals or training staff is so yesterday, because Xerox can do it for you.

Print?

There isn't much mention of print in this campaign, which is odd. The ACS acquisition has strengthened Xerox's position as a world leader in document processing, and enhanced it with business process outsourcing and IT. Per Jim Firestone, vice president of corporate operations, the company is looking at a $500 billion market and "with the acquisition of ACS we have fundamentally changed our position in the market". Xerox is now in the business of managing huge amounts of data and documents, from keeping track of who runs red lights in Cleveland, Ohio to how many people had what for breakfast and when at the London Marriott.

Print is an inevitable part of documents and process management, which creates a potential opportunity for Xerox's customers, especially as colour use rises. Curiously, not much was said about information and data integration or content delivery across media and applications, or what the new Xerox could mean for its Production customers. With ACS Xerox can provide complex business services on a massive scale, a scale that doesn't yet rival IBM or HP but which sits just below them. Ursula Burns expects to capture a significant volume of business "because we talk to people and we listen to them". Fighting talk indeed.

Into the Fray

Xerox is taking the battle to vertical markets. It wants to be the world's leading provider of human resource services, leveraging ACS' HR presence, which currently serves 9.8 million people in 72 countries. Xerox also wants to be a top provider of finance, accounting and procurement services, plus customer services provision and transaction processing. The latter might be of particular interest to the on-demand digital printing industry in that it includes the provision of data analytics to customers, some of whom may want to extend their activities to print. But curiously (or perhaps not) this is not a stated goal of Xerox. Oddly Xerox makes no calculation of the market opportunity for print in this context.

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There are two parts to the new Xerox: Document Technology (the extant office and production systems); and Services, which is all the outsourcing stuff (documents, BPO and ITO). The latter looks like a revamp of Xerox Global Services and includes Managed Print Services and Enterprise Print Services. The XGS customer base is the first line of attack for ACS services.

Managed Print Services can mean many things, such as outsourcing to printing companies, providing print services using owned technologies so that the client doesn't buy machines, or selling digital printing devices

Jim Firestone, vice president of corporate operations.

so that they do. This is where Xerox comes closest to talking about printing, but Enterprise Print Services and Managed Print Services are part of Global Document Outsourcing, not Document Technology.

Doing the Splits

The division might bring Xerox into some dubious conflicts with its customers. In providing print management services, which can include installing machines in-house with clients, the company competes with digital printing companies who might otherwise have captured the work. The Xerox Premier Partner Network, a group of over 800 Xerox print production customers, obviously benefits

from Xerox's new strategy. The network includes 415 members in North America and 217 in Europe. But not all digital printers want to be in this club, and it may be that Xerox has scored a bit of an own goal when it comes to developing its production business. Far better would have been to put Production Print Services as a division providing services to all parts of the business.

According to Jim Firestone, Xerox faces very interesting opportunities in an addressable market of over $500 billion for BPO, ITO and document management. Document outsourcing, office and production (ie the graphic arts, curiously valued at only $25 billion) amount to a mere $132 billion. ACS has the expertise, knowledge and customer base for Xerox to expand into document management (hopefully including print), as well as IT. Firestone adds: "We can uniquely compete by bringing the two together". This is down to a growth strategy to accelerate the colour transition (colour currently accounts for 40% of revenues but only 30% of Xerox machines in the field and 22% of pages), advance customised digital printing and expand distribution channels worldwide.

He expects over $100 million in savings and synergies resulting from the ACS acquisition, plus revenue synergies coming from cross-selling. As of mid-September Xerox had thirty new business signings and $3.5 billion worth of orders in the pipeline. Not all of that will come through, but it's a decent start.

Boldly Going

Much of this revenue will come from sectors such as healthcare where ACS has a strong presence and in education. Expertise in these fields is one of the tenets of Xerox's expansion into developing economies. Ursula Burns expects Xerox in five years time to be "bigger in our technology business and definitely bigger in our services business. I would like to be considered a US company doing global business, significant global business … I want us to be significantly bigger and faster". The approach is to "run a company in little company ways … enabling people to lead on a local level" and for Xerox to double exports in five years.

In the meantime Xerox isn't forgetting about growing its high-end colour business and leveraging the customer

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Ursula Burns, CEO and Chairwoman of Xerox.

base. It considers itself a market leader in cut sheet and is steadily growing a position in continuous feed. Growth primarily comes from direct mail, collateral and transactional, a sector set to explode in the wake of the ACS purchase. Xerox considers cut sheet colour to be the most likely technology for DM and collateral applications and with that in mind will continue to introduce new cut sheet colour technologies. But the current structure doesn't provide much support to develop these intentions within the printing and publishing sectors.

Product Updates

Nonetheless, at the recent GraphExpo show in the US Xerox presented the new Color 550/560 printer, the 40 sheets (364 x 660) per minute iGen4 EXP press, the 125 ppm Xerox 4112 mono (the basis of the Espresso Book Machine), plus various FreeFlow workflow modules.

The Color 550/560 is a replacement for the Docucolor 242/252/260 series. Described as a crossover product, it is positioned for quick printing and some commercial applications as well as in-house reprographics. It runs

at 50/55 and 60/65 colour and mono, uses EA low melt toner and is available with EFI and Creo front ends.

The iGen4 EXP provides expanded productivity, performance and profitability in certain applications, such as web to print. It has a larger 660 mm sheet size and new larger format stacker. The controller is APPE 2.0, rather than 2.5 which is the version that includes PDF/VT. The larger sheet size increases the scope for different applications and products and adds about $45,000 to the price.

Web2print is now fully automated, with iGen4 at the heart and cooperations with partners for input and finishing, and for integrated digital and offset production using FreeFlow process manager. Customers can also brand their sites and there is a JDF server to manage job acceptance and bindery operations. iGen4 EXP is available as a complete system or as individual components and is the first in a series of combination products to be introduced.

Production inkjet technology

Xerox's digital printing revenues are growing and the company expects by 2013 that 23% of page volumes will be done on continuous feed machines. Xerox wants to exploit the Tektronix technology it acquired over a decade ago and to become a major player in continuous feed. The technology combines Xerox Piezo DOD stainless steel heads and polymeric resin and dye phase change inks. These non-aqueous inks have been Ingede certified for deinkability and are suitable for printing on uncoated lightweight stocks.

The prototype press uses the same intelligent scan bar as on the iGen to check jet direction and correction, colour registration, density and uniformity. Because there is no water in the ink there are none of the associated problems with less curl and cockle, the ability to print on cheap papers and no need for any kind of bonding agent. The technology is suitable for direct mail and transactional markets printing 45-160 gsm. However, the substrate and application ranges are to be expanded.

So although it doesn't seem to be at the heart of Xerox's strategy, printing technology and its deployment are

still important. However, according to Jacques Guers, president of Xerox Europe, Graphic Communications "is a very specific segment … those guys are the most demanding customers". Are printers really so scary?

Positioning graphic communications and production printing within the new structure appears problematic for Xerox. What printers and publishers can expect will all come down to how the company is organised on the ground. The appointment of Armando Zagalo de Lima as president global customer operations is encouraging. He provides direct support to Burns to develop a consistent global approach and emerging markets, and to leverage ACS synergies. For Zagalo de Lima ACS is not the new engine of growth, but something to be grown and integrated within Xerox.

Indeed, Zagalo de Lima et al position Graphic Communications as a unique customer segment, although arguably it crosses all business sectors. Xerox reckons there is a total market of $650 billion for print and that currently only 9.4% of it is produced digitally. This is either a disappointing outcome for the substantial investments manufacturers have made into digital printing market development. Or it suggests a huge opportunity. We would suggest it's both good and disappointing. Good in that there's a huge print market; disappointing because we all expected digital printing to grow more quickly.

Perhaps the mistake we've made is to class digital printing as a replacement technology, one that steals market from analogue equivalents? Perhaps digital printing applications should instead have started with providing exceptional output for corporate and IT driven applications? The importance of IT for highly customised short run work cannot be underestimated, especially in data driven variable data applications beyond transactional and into consumer marketing.

There are opportunities in on-demand web2print, for instance, customising advertising not just on bills and statements, but also on zoned magazines and newspapers. Newspapers and magazines are starting to use their websites to invite more intimate reader engagement. Content planning will go beyond blogs, so that people might preorder selected content (stuff that's yet to be

written) to create their own version of a magazine, with ads to match. Whatever the shape of it, perhaps this is why Zagalo de Lima says of Xerox's MPS that: "We believe we have a huge opportunity". It ought also to create huge opportunities for the printing industry.

Xerox has completely overhauled its international operations and is expanding its distribution network through acquisitions and partnerships. A new European

Armando Zagalo de Lima, recently appointed as president global customer operations for Xerox.

channel group is being established to make Xerox more attractive to multi and monobrand partners and the company has increased the number of people in the field by 8% so far this year. There is a strong correlation between increased market share and channel development and Xerox is looking for 10% growth in commercial print and books; 100% + growth in transpromo; 30%+ in photobooks and 10%+ in packaging (from a less than 1% share at the moment).

Ambit Gambit

In common with its competitors, Xerox has for several years followed a strategy of supporting customers' growth in order to foster its own. Partnering is high priority and Xerox has built strong relationships with customers.

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The new Xerox can more easily reach large publishers, public and government services, and so forth so it will be well placed to leverage its production printing expertise. Whether it does so or not is another question.

– Laurel Brunner

Pees in a pod

Most of us would like to think that poor products will be roundly rejected in the market place and that truly innovative technology will be picked up by excited users.

In reality, bigger companies have the marketing budget to give their products the necessary push, while smaller developers often struggle to sell their wares. This is the simple premise behind Four Pees, a Belgian marketing

Tom Peire, CEO of Four Pees.

and distribution company. Four Pees is the brainchild of Tom Peire, formerly the director of corporate marketing for Enfocus and its parent company Artwork Systems. The four Ps stand for product, price, place and promotion – which taken together sum up Peire's approach to marketing.

Peire developed his ideas while working at Enfocus where he found that he was helping other vendors with their

marketing. When he was made redundant he set up Four Pees, initially as a marketing company to help smaller developers. He explains: "The goal has been to combine the marketing with the sales because small companies find it hard to increase sales. The challenge is that many developers think they just have to develop a product but it's very hard to get noticed."

He started off by working with developers and distributors to improve their approach to marketing to help them increase their sales. However, this all changed 18 months ago when Four Pees signed a deal with Aurelon to become the exclusive distributor of its ProofMaster and PrintFactory products. Four Pees had been working with the previous distributor, Perfect Proof, and so knew that it was in financial difficulties and that there was an opportunity to deal directly with Aurelon. The arrangement gave Four Pees a product of its own to market, as well as a network of around 80 resellers.

But more importantly, Four Pees also picked up a different way to do business. Aurelon had developed its RIP technology in response to suggestions by Perfect Proof, but with Aurelon retaining the intellectual property. This notion resonated with Peire who says: "We felt that we had a responsibility over the further development of PrintFactory because Aurelon have got customers but don't have the connection to the outside world so we are their eyes on the market."

However, Peire has had to learn lessons along the way. One of the first companies he worked with was DevZeroG, which Adstream later bought. Peire notes wryly: "I believe that the profile we built up for them helped in the sale so after that we had more serious contracts with our vendors." Another developer, DMP, which produced an innovative web2print workflow, ended up going bankrupt. Peire comments: "So we have to more closely watch the financial situation of the brands that we represent. We also need to make a more thorough technological evaluation of the product. We thought that DMP was a great product but it was developed by a non-developer so everything kind of hung together." He still feels that there is a gap in the portfolio from the loss of
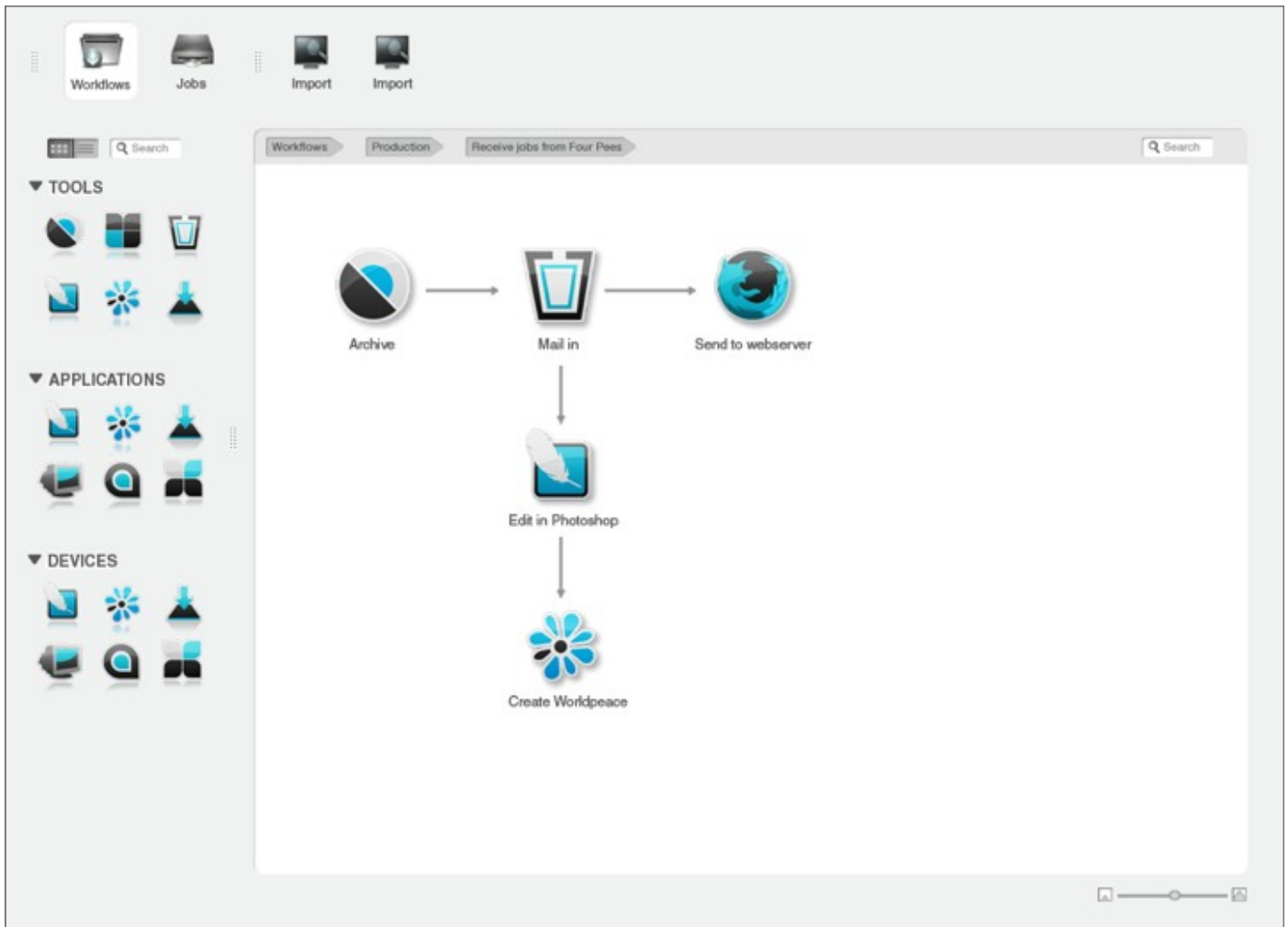
DFlux has a surprisingly clean interface that shows a lot of detail in a glance without the need to scroll through different windows.

the DMP line-up: "But we have not come across anything that does what we need it to do with the reliability that we require."

Four Pees has also fallen out with Enfocus. Peire had been talking for a long time with Peter Camps, one of the original founders of Enfocus, who left to form Gradual and then returned to Enfocus. But he left again to pursue more personal interests just at the point when Four Pees was ready to finalise a deal. Peire explains: "So I ended up signing the contract with somebody that I didn't know and he didn't know what he was signing. And that's not a great start to a relationship because you have not gone through the negotiation process together."

The Flux capacitor

Falling out with Enfocus has prompted a major change in Four Pees' flagship product, DFlux. This is a workflow tool which allows users to link processes from different programs together to create a single, automated workflow. Not surprisingly, DFlux works with all the programs in the Four Pees portfolio, and as such, it is absolutely crucial to what Four Pees is all about.

DFlux was originally based on Switch, the workflow developed by Gradual Software, based on the CasonFlow technology that Gradual acquired from Danish company CaslonSoft. Since Enfocus's acquisition of Gradual, Switch has been part of the Enfocus line-up. However, although Enfocus kept Switch, it didn't see the need to keep David Van Driessche, one of the main architects behind it. He joined Four Pees earlier this year as Chief Technology Officer and promptly set about developing DFlux.

Van Driessche explains: "We chose Switch because it was available and has developed traction over the years." However, Four Pees did find it difficult to customise Switch so being forced to change it did offer some advantages.

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The good news for current users is that Enfocus will continue to support Switch, including where it's been used in a DFlux workflow. Four Pees will encourage users to change to DFlux2 by giving the software away for free and helping customers with the installation costs.

DFlux2 will be based around technology from Aurelon, including the RIP from PrintFactory which is already a proven technology, supplemented by some technology from Callas. Four Pees owns the way in which it is presented to users giving it also a stake in the development of the product.

A key difference is that whereas Switch was very open and could be used with many different programs, Four Pees sees DFlux as linking together only those programs that

David Van Driessche, Chief Technology Officer with Four Pees.

it is working with. Van Driessche says: "If the customer has a different solution then we will make that possible but we think that they should use our options." He adds: "In software there's always a difference between offering people flexibility and building a solution that they know how to work with." There's also a change of emphasis in DFlux2, away from pure automation to production, thanks to the use of the RIP which allows it to connect directly to a printer.

At the heart of the DFlux concept is a central controller, which acts as a traffic cop ensuring that files go to the right place. Anything which is capable of performing a task, such as converting an image from one colour space to another, is called an engine, and all these engines are registered with the central controller. Four Pees will release an SDK so that other vendors can write their own engines to allow their solutions to connect to DFlux.

Files can be received via FTP or email and passed into the workflow. It has a built-in PDF engine from Aurelon for creating and editing documents and can preflight files using the Callas technology, which has also been licensed by Adobe for use within Acrobat. It supports scripting, with a choice of JavaScript or VB Script on PC and AppleScript on Mac. It uses JDF which also means that it can take in JMF feedback to know if a process has completed or if there's been a problem, and communicate with an MIS. It also makes use of SOAP, which acts as an interface between the different parts of the system using HTTP.

This new version of DFlux has a very clean interface design. At the top of the screen there is a list of the four different workspaces: workflow, job, devices and status of a DFlux system. There's also an indication of the workflows in use. Van Driessche says he has worked to ensure that all the tools, which are shown down the left hand side, are in one place with users seeing only the tools appropriate for the workspace in use and the devices available to them. Somewhat optimistically, there is also a tool for 'world peace', though Van Driessche admits: "We are still looking for a partner who can help us do that."

Four Pees anticipates two main markets, and has developed a workflow for each: publishing and printing. It's easy to see the potential benefit of automating publishing workflows. Typically publishing involves several different steps, from page layout to outputting files for production, and these often involve repetitive tasks across different programs, such as converting files from one format to another, or imposing pages to a template, so automating these tasks makes a lot of sense.

The printing workflow is largely because Aurelon has already developed its RIP engine for its ProofMaster

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program, commonly used in production environments. Peire believes that there is a need for a rules-based workflow, particularly in large format printing which does not have the same kind of workflow-based approach that one would find in the commercial prepress arena.

Forging partnerships

It's easy to see Four Pees as being just another distributor, and although the company does sit in the middle between the product developers on the one hand, and the resellers on the other, it is the depth of the relationship that it has with these partners that makes the difference.

Last month Four Pees hosted what is becoming an annual get-together with its resellers. The event took place in a former monastery in Ghent, Belgium, a quiet contemplative place more in tune with the seriousness of the economic climate than a flashy conference venue would have been. The event gives Four Pees a chance to evangelise the products it deals with. Peire mentions the philosopher Karl Popper's dictum 'optimism is a moral duty', saying: "It's something that I believe in and that in this church I have come to preach to you too."

The resellers themselves are drawn from all over Europe – Four Pees has tried to pick resellers from different countries and from vertical markets. But Peire admits that the relationship with the resellers is a balancing act: "Resellers are not always open to new technology because they have been selling one brand and are happy with it." He adds: "It's hard to make them invest in training". So he is clearly happy that around 35 resellers have invested several days in attending the event.

Peire believes that the resellers have value in their own right, saying that you need a certain dynamic in the relationship with a customer which you can only get at a reseller level, adding: "You need to have someone who's independent and answerable to himself. But they are good at selling or at technology, partly because they don't have a big company behind them, so we are trying to be that big company."

For now, Four Pees operates in Europe where it has a strong reseller base. Peire says that it's harder to set up in

Four Pees chose the quiet contemplation of a former monastery for its recent reseller event.

the United States because there are very few resellers there that can make a difference, noting: "In recent years the big developers have bought their own reseller channel."

As for the vendors, Four Pees key relationship is with Aurelon, which concentrates on developing technology, relying on Four Pees for its sales and marketing. Four Pees has also strengthened its relationship with Callas, best known for its PDF tools. Peire believes that Callas has always had the edge over Enfocus from a technology point of view, but has lacked the presentational skills which Callas now seems happy to leave entirely to Four Pees. Peire is quick to point out that Four Pees can now draw on the expertise of Olaf Drummer, as well as its own Van Driessche, both acknowledged experts, and pioneers, in the development of PDF tools.

Callas also includes Axaio, a spin off company that develops productivity tools for publishers. It's perhaps best known for MadetoPrint, billed as an intelligent printing and exporting option. It was originally developed as a plug-in for QuarkXPress, but is also available in InDesign and Illustrator flavours now.

Other members of the Four Pees stable include: CtrlPublishing, which produces plug-ins for inDesign for better managing things like layers and changes to documents; Elpical with its range of automated image enhancement programs; Barbieri, which makes Spectrophotometers; and ICS which specialises in monitor proofing.

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Conclusion

The hands-on approach that Four Pees has taken to both its developers and its resellers is clearly paying dividends. Four Pees has seen rapid expansion, doubling its staff every year and increasing its revenue this year by 146 percent over last year.

The company would like to expand beyond Europe, although Peire jokes he's planning world domination one country at a time. But Four Pees is also looking at moving further into product development. Peire says that he has wondered if the company could define a replacement for the DMP product itself, rather than simply finding another vendor to represent, and mentions that he could hire software developers from Eastern Europe. Sadly though, the tool for world peace is likely to take a while.

– Nessan Cleary

Improved and enhanced – Canon iPF6350

When Canon launched the 12-colour wide gamut inkjet printer series in 2008, including the iPF5100, it was well received and predicted to break into the high end proofing market, until then dominated mainly by Epson, but to some extent also HP.

This didn't happen, and one of the providers of proofing front ends, GMG, actually didn't even bother to provide drivers to its ColorProof system for the Canon ImagePrograf series. While our own test showed that the iPF5100 had a really large colour gamut (see Spindrift no 6-8 from December 2008), at least GMG weren't convinced that the precision and registration accuracy would be high enough for their screen dot proofing solutions.

The Canon iPF6350, and its bigger brother the iPF8300, builds on the success of the previous models in the ImagePrograf series, but with enhanced registration accuracy.

Canon took this criticism to heart, and with the new, enhanced x300-series (among the models is the iPF6350), even the picky GMG have embraced it as one of its supported printers for demanding proofing.

We have tested the printer 'as is', that is, without any dedicated standalone RIP. And you come a long way when just using the advanced printer driver that is supplied for free in the package of software and drivers for both Mac OS and PC/Windows. Some of the software features are PC-only, like the cost calculation and extended printer monitor, but the essential ones needed to print directly to the printer are also included in the Mac OS setup.
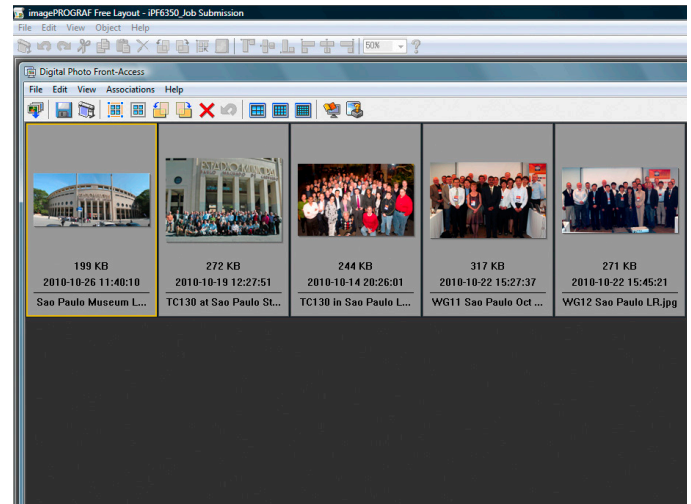
When using a large format printer it's more or less necessary to nest several smaller images in one output, to optimise paper usage and reduce waste. This can be done in the supplied software called Digital Photo Front-Access.

This includes a plug-in for Adobe Photoshop in order to make 16-bit output of high dynamic range images, like when starting from Camera RAW and not reducing the image bit depth to the more usual 8-bit per channel RGB (as with sRGB or Adobe RGB). Another useful software is the Digital Photo Front-Access, with which you can organise your photos (like on a light table), and nest multiple photos for one joint output. Other features in this control software are double-sided banners (created by folding the output – the iPF6350 does not support duplex), endlessly long banners (well, up to the length of your media roll, typically around 30 metres long).

The printer driver and control software come with a large set of predefined paper specifications, a paper library. This means that the user is not supposed to calibrate or linearise the printer, or create ICC profiles for the papers and substrates used. Optimum ink amount and the relevant ICC profile are chosen by the printer driver

Besides the necessary printer driver, Canon also ships a range of software with the printer, including the Accounting Manager (PC only). By inserting the costs for ink and paper the cost for the actual image is calculated, since the amount of ink used is known by the advanced driver.

if and when the correct paper is selected in the output dialogue menu. With our range of test images this worked reasonably well, we had smooth gradations and pleasing colours, if not exactly matching what we saw on the calibrated monitor beforehand.

To reach a higher level of accuracy between preview on screen and final output, it's (as usual) necessary to use a dedicated RIP, not only for proofing, but also for high-end photorealistic imaging. When printing through the printer driver you need to stick to printing RGB images – the printer driver doesn't know what to do with pre-separated CMYK images. In a follow-up to this test we will use a selection of RIP systems to see where and why we might squeeze out some extra capacity from the printer, and hopefully increase the accuracy between softproof and hardcopy output.

As with the previous series of ImagePrograf printers, the iPF6350 has two printheads of 2560 nozzles, with each printhead printing six different ink sets. First we have the standard CMYK ink sets, then the quite common extended ink set Light Cyan and Light Magenta, as well as dedicated Red, Green and Blue ink. That is nine ink sets so

far, and that means we also have room for a matte black, as well as a mid grey and a photo or light grey. The printer offers both a very wide gamut for colour images as well as high dynamic range (and smooth gradation) with black and white imaging.

The resolution is addressable to 2400x1200 dpi, where the native resolution in the print head is 1200 dpi. The imaging width is 24ins, but there is a bigger model, the iPF8300, which is a 44ins printer, also using the 12 colour LUCIA EX pigmented inks. Both the iPF6350 and the iPF8300 have an 80GB internal hard disk to improve output speed by off-loading the output data faster from the host computer. The hard disk also makes it easier to repeat jobs and administer the job queue.

When analysing some of the pre-built ICC profiles in the colour library we found that the printer reached well over 700,000 colours on heavyweight glossy photo paper. Compare this with the gamut of sRGB, for example, which is just over 800,000 colours and it means that you should be able to make a perceptually very similar reproduction on the iPF6350 of an RGB image that you view on your monitor. Most monitors don't show much more than

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sRGB, unless you have invested in a top range wide gamut monitor that matches or surpasses the gamut of Adobe RGB.

The only remaining request we have for Canon is that it should offer an option to buy the iPF6350 with a built-in spectrophotometer. Then this series of high-end printers would fit perfectly in a fully automated proofing workflow. For skilled prepress operators it's not much of a problem to calibrate the printer using a handheld spectro, but for users less savvy in applied colour management, a built-in spectro would make the calibration a breeze, and facilitate remote proofing scenarios. But besides this, the iPF6350 is close to being a dream machine for anyone interested in reaching the widest possible colour gamuts, and image fidelity.
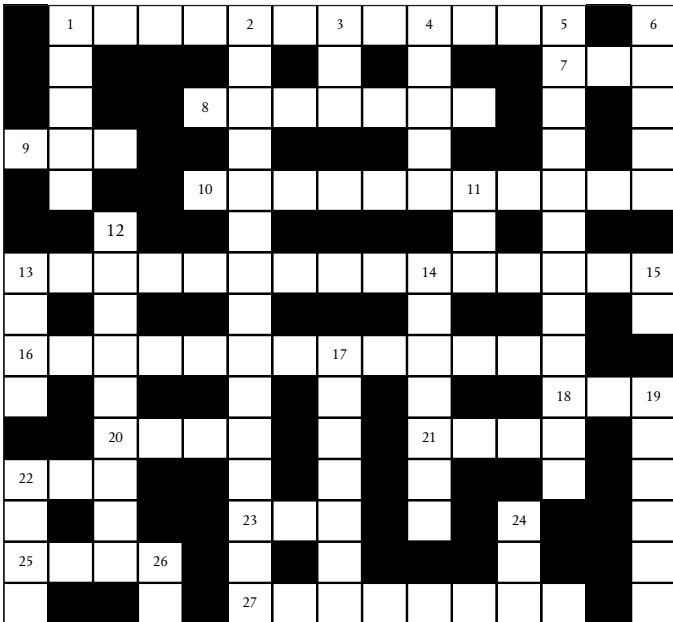
– Paul Lindström

X-word Puzzle

Number 26

(Answers at www.igaef.org)

Down

1. Akin to fall or drop, but required for successful (yes, no?), coordination. (5)

2. Important to take into account as part of colour management. (5, 10)

3. Once perfect image management tool.

4. Style sounding like a halo effect. (5)

5. If they are not right moiré a possibility. (6, 6)

6. That perfect reality rarely achieved. (5)

11. To make something little go further. (3)

12. Removed parts of an image. (5,4)

13. Small unit, room or ink container. (4)

14. Treasure chests we want as full as possible. (7)

15. Anno Domini or the Common Era? (2)

17. Excess copies coming off the press. (7)

19. Practice runs? Take refuge in a little start? (6)

22. Not magenta, yellow or black. (4)

24. Payment. (3)

26. Information Technology. (2)

Across

1. The perfect systems for those who don't want hard copy proofs. (4, 8)

7. Computer Aided Design

8. One of two key properties of paper for colour management, the other being surface. (7)

9. Some sort of character recognition. See 7. (3)

10. Another way to describe the cells used in rotogravure. (7, 4)

13. The necessary basis for certification to a standard. (11,4)

16. Not the remote option for checking page content and printability. (5, 8)

18. Look up table. (3)

20. Finished? (4)

21. It's yours to take when the work is done. Simply. (4)

22. Central processing unit. (3)

23. ISO propanol? (3)

25. Feeling fidgety in the USA's body? (4)

27. Common type of press. (5,3)

Number 25 – Answers

C	O	N	F	E	R	E	N	C	E	P	L	A	C	E
Y			L		E		O			R			H	
L	A	B	E	L	S		T	Y	P	O	S		A	
I		E	X		I	M	I			B		A	R	T
N			I		Z		F			L			T	
D	O	U	B	L	E			I	N	T	E	R	E	S	T
E			L				C			M				R
R		R	E		P	L	A	C	E	P	H	O	T	O
E	P	A	P	E	R		T			A				V
N		N	A		O		I	N	K	G	R	A	D	E
G			C		G	T	O			E	A		R	
R	A	C	K		R		N		A		G		Y	
A		P	A	G	E	R	S		B		S	N	I	P
V			G		S				A				N	
E	D	G	E		S	H	I	N	G	L	I	N	G	