

Digital Technology Trends *Pro Version*

by Howie Fenton, Principal, DTP Ink

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▶▶ **R&E Council Becomes "R&E Council Of NAPL"**

The Board of Directors of the National Association for Printing Leadership (NAPL) and the members of the Research and Engineering Council of the Graphic Arts Industry, Inc. (R&E Council) have approved a merger of the two printing industry trade associations. The combination is expected to enhance the value of membership in both organizations significantly as it preserves the identity and mission of the R&E Council. Under the agreement, all members of the R&E Council and their companies are being enrolled as full corporate members of NAPL.

<http://www.napl.org/>

▶▶ **ITC Announces the ITC 1500 Library**

International Typeface Corporation, a major supplier of fonts and custom typefaces, has released the ITC 1500 Library. Comprised of 1,579 fonts, the library spans ITC's three-plus decades of design and is the only complete ITC library product on the market. The collection contains 245 more fonts than ITC's previous library, and 650 of the fonts are not available from any other source.

<http://www.creativepro.com:80/story/news/17700.html>

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▶ **Microsoft updates IE 5.1, 5.2 for security issues**

Microsoft has updated Internet Explorer to version 5.1.6 and 5.2.2, for Mac OS 8.1/9 and Mac OS X respectively. The new builds fix security shortcomings.. Problems that could cause IE 5.1 to stop responding or cause a memory problem that compromised the security of the computer have also been resolved, according to Microsoft.

Internet Explorer 5.2.2 is the latest version available for Mac OS X. As with Internet Explorer 5.1.6, the update resolves a security vulnerability associated with the validation of digital certificate chains. That problem could, under certain circumstances, cause identity spoofing, according to Microsoft. Both are available from Microsoft's Mactopia Web site.

<http://www.microsoft.com/mac/>

▶ **New Preflight tools**

At the Seybold San Francisco show Markzware, showed HawkEye, a product designed to help creatives ensure that their files are prepress ready. Before content is created, designers or production directors establish design specifications for the job using either HawkEye's interface or the independent TrueFileSpec Creator tool. If the content designer mistakenly places an element or font in the job that does not meet the TrueFileSpec established, HawkEye alerts the designer and provides an opportunity to fix the problem.

Extensis has introduced PrintReady, a web-based system for preflighting, collecting and submitting files for printed output. PrintReady, based on Extensis' Preflight Online technology, is a new family of products that simplifies preflighting making it a seamless part of the file submission process. The product line includes a product for designers and small workgroups (priced below \$400), and two enhanced packages aimed at service providers, large printers and publishers.

http://ep.pennnet.com/Articles/Article_Display.cfm?Section=OnlineArticles&SubSection=Display&PUBLICATION_ID=29&ARTICLE_ID=155137&pc=ENL

◀ **Commentary** ▶

The Extensis product is a huge step forward in the right direction. After two years of very vocal criticism of the pricing structure of these products, finally someone has dipped their toe into the water of the more affordable online preflight tools with the associated much larger market. Previous pricing was out of the range of most small printers, service providers and file creators.

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Markzware Markznet was priced at \$15,000 plus a \$1500/yr maintenance fee and Extensis Preflight Online was \$6,000 plus a per usage (click fee) ranging from .50-\$1/each.

There is no doubt that faster preflight and online preflight tools can have a very positive effect on cycle time and cost reductions for print providers. Unlike years ago when the prepress production bottlenecks were found in stripping, proofing and plating – today the bottleneck is often in order entry, preflight and file repair. Bottlenecks “up-front” can appear to be prepress problems and are typically blamed on untrained prepress staff, inconsistent procedures and old equipment.

However it is not until after new equipment and procedures are established, often costing “boo-ko bucks” does it become clear that the real bottleneck is somewhere else. And some companies don’t discover the real culprit until years later when they go through a general prepress audit and discover that streamlining order entry, preflight and file repair (which costs almost nothing) can increase productivity as much as 20%. This can translate to one more job being printed on each press on each shift.

<http://www.gt.kth.se/research/littlesister/LSA4.pdf>

▶ **TWGA Report Sees Another 12 Months Of Challenges for Creatives**

A recent TrendWatch study predicts that creative professionals should expect 2003 to be another challenging period in terms of business activity. In the TWGA Summer 2002 report, only 14% of ad agencies reported excellent business conditions, and TWGA Business Conditions Index for nearly all creative businesses hit record lows.

According to the Creative Forecast 2003 report, magazine publishers are the only publishing market who saw an improvement in business conditions from Winter 2001/2002 to Summer 2002. Here's some of the top sales opportunities cited by creative professionals:

- Collateral print projects, are the #1 sales opportunity, as cited by 61% of respondents, down slightly from six months ago
- Web page design is still a top sales opportunity, (cited by 40% of respondents) though it wasn't too long ago that Web design was the number one by a long shot. The bulk of the work has transitioned from new site development to basic maintenance, updating, and expansion of existing sites, about which creative professionals seem less enthused;
- Digital photography is at an all-time high: 39%, up from 31%, making it the #3 sales opportunity, especially high among commercial photographers;

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- Corporate identity, which was at an all-time high of 39% six months ago, fell to just 31% this time. Corporate clients simply don't have the budgets for this type of work at the moment.

<http://www.architosh.com/news/2002-09/2002a1-0926-twga-creative.phtml>

▶▶ **ISO Publishes New PDF/X Standard**

The latest in a series of PDF/X standards for digital data exchange has been published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). The new standard, ISO 15930-3:2002 (PDF/X-3), covers complete exchange of print-ready material using color-managed and CMYK data, and is based on the Acrobat version 4 (PDF) 1.3 Specification, not the Acrobat 5 1.4 spec.

It joins the very successful PDF/X-1a standard (ISO 15930-1:2001), which facilitates complete exchange of print-ready CMYK files. Together these international standards satisfy many of the data exchange needs of the printing and publishing industry.

The PDF/X (Portable Document Format for Prepress Digital Data Exchange) family of graphic technology standards is a specific adaptation of the Adobe PDF specification for use by the printing and publishing industry. PDF/X is increasingly used in print production, especially for the "blind exchange" of digital advertising material, and is gaining acceptance in other printing environments.

PDF/X-3 makes use of International Color Consortium (ICC) color management to allow exchange of both three-component data (RGB, CIELAB, etc.) and CMYK data. Both PDF/X-3 and PDF/X-1a enable the exchange of spot color data. PDF/X-2, which will allow image substitution, is still in development within ISO Technical Committee 130 (Graphic technology).

<http://www.iso.ch/iso/en/CatalogueDetailPage.CatalogueDetail?CSNUMBER=34941>

▶▶ **Scitex Digital Printing introduces new DOD product**

Scitex Digital Printing (SDP) has introduced two new printing systems designed for printing addresses, bar codes, and other variable applications. Both are part of the Dijit "imprinting" family of products. The Dijit Liberty 7122 uses a 2.13-inch head based on the continuous-ink-jet technology that SDP has used in previous products. It prints at speeds up to 1,000 feet per minute.

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What is most interesting however is Dijit Passport 4300, uses drop-on-demand (DOD) technology - which Scitex has never before used. Its maximum speed is 300 feet per minute.

According to a recent Seybold bulletin (Volume 7, Number 49; September 5, 2002) the new direction was the result of the new CEO. When Homi Shamir took over as CEO in 2001, he encouraged the company to rethink the assumptions that all SDP products should be based on SDP's own continuous ink-jet technology.

www.scitexdpi.com

<http://www.seyboldreports.com/Bulletin/subs/vol7/issv7n49.html>

▶ **Seybold News - NY show and PDF shootout**

Officials at Key3Media Events, Inc. organizers of the Seybold Seminars say that registration for conferences in San Francisco increased more than 10% over last year's attendance figures. This is not surprising considering that Seybold was shortly after 9/11 last year. Meanwhile, the number of exhibitors and exposition attendees decreased significantly enough from previous years' events that rumors of a conferences only version of the Seybold show was discussed by Key3Media officials. Although still in discussions rumor has it that a very well know, jolly-old professor from RIT may be involved if the conference is offered.

Among the most significant announcements made at the San Francisco show were the results of a PDF usage survey, in which PDF users ranked as the file format's biggest benefit fewer cross-platform issues, while its leading drawback was difficulty in editing the files themselves.

Conducted in his last act while working for Seybold John Parsons polled 2,221 printers and designers who found that 47% of PDF creators reuse PDF files for other print jobs (61% for the Web and 39% for CD-ROM), while 52% use PDF for soft proofing. The whole study is available as a special report from Seybold.

<http://www.seyboldreports.com/pdfsurvey3.html>

▶ **Google beta tests news search engine**

Not long after completing the beta testing on the usenet newslists search function Google has embarked on another beta test search function for news searching. Although sounding confusing the usenet newslist searches the questions and answers posted by ordinary people in the usenet newslists.

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In contrast the news search feature searches more than 4,000 news sources on the Web for articles that match your query. Compared to conventional news services, Google doesn't collect the text of the articles - instead it points directly to the source. However, Google does sort results by date, making it a great way to find stories that have been recently posted.

<http://news.google.com/>

▶▶ **New AOL for Mac OS X**

Based on extensive member research and consumer feedback, AOL for Mac OS X introduces a suite of new enhancements to the most popular AOL features, additional "Mac first" features such as the integration of the Netscape Gecko Web browser. AOL for Mac OS X features an Aqua interface, with glowing buttons and drop shadows, translucent menus and animated dialog sheets. The clean, streamlined design is easier to navigate, delivers more personalized information and highlights the most relevant places on the service: the AOL Welcome Screen, Channel Menu and Toolbar.

Communications enhancements to AOL for Mac OS X software include: E-mail features auto-suggest from the Address Books, saving time and eliminating the chance of sending an email to the wrong address. HTML emails support rich and colorful graphics, and a new Buddy Link feature indicates when e-mail recipients are online and allows one-click action to send Instant Messages or e-mail or add a contact to the Buddy List or Address Book. The address book is now accessible from any computer at home or work.

<http://www.apple.com/macosx/applications/aol/>

▶▶ **New Technology for Embedding Data in Images**

A new technology jointly developed by Xerox and the University of Rochester will allow data to be hidden inside digital images and removed without harming the integrity of the original image. The patent-pending technology, called "reverse data hiding," is being discussed as an alternative to digital watermarking. Digital watermarking is used to authenticate an image but unlike this new technology alters it irreversibly. The technology was presented for the first time at a recent IEEE International Conference on Image Processing.

"The technique will be widely applicable to situations requiring authentication of images with detection of changes, and it can also be used to encode information about the image itself, such as who took the picture, when, or with what camera," said Murat Tekalp, professor of electrical engineering at the University of Rochester, and one of the key developers of the technology.

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The algorithm can be embedded in software and hardware, and will be owned by both Xerox on the University. It may not be used in printing as much as other fields such as the legal, military and medical fields, where 100 percent image integrity can be of utmost importance.

"These days, many commercial systems can be used to manipulate digital images. By encoding data in this way, we can be sure the image has not been tampered with and then remove the data without hampering the quality of the picture," said Tekalp.

http://www.knowledgebusiness.com/resource/news_read.asp?id=1062

▶ **HP refines email marketing by tying to product life cycle**

Still thinking that e-mail marketing is a waste of time and an invasion of privacy. How does \$20 million in sales each month sound? Hewlett-Packards (HP) sends out a newsletter called HP Incoming which is responsible for delivering \$20 million in sales/ month and because recipients are more inclined to contact customer service by e-mail than phone, there are call-center savings up to \$150,000 a month.

That is because the e-mails go out to decision-makers each month and they are keyed to the age of products purchased, they are customized to needs and past behavior.

The program started about two and a half years ago when Digital Impact offered to custom-build an "engine" smart enough to target e-mail to the life cycle of the product — and react to customer behavior over time. "The engine automates the decision-making," said Michael Lewis, senior account manager at Digital Impact, San Mateo, CA.

One-to-one marketing results. "This is not just segmenting into clusters," Lewis said. "This is micro-segmentation to the extent that there are 50,000 to 100,000 different contact combinations that go out to customers each month."

Customers sign up for the newsletter when they fill out the registration card online after their firm buys a product. HP Incoming covers about 100 items, including all HP printers, PCs and computer storage products. The newsletters broadcast to half a million companies.

About half of the newsletter content relates to product life cycle: a sequence of messages is generated depending on when a customer entered the program and what product was bought.

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Each content item in the e-mail is presented as a teaser with a link to a Web page, so recipient activity can be tracked. As the customer clicks through, their behavior is recorded in the database and then added to the data gathered when they registered.

≪ **Commentary** ≫

If you're thinking this is unrelated to commercial printing, then try thinking outside the box. The product life cycle of a book could be digital printing for test market or review, offset printing for the growth period, then digital printing at the end of the books life.

http://directmag.com/ar/marketing_hp_email_reaps/index.htm

▶▶ **Artworks Systems Continues to Innovate**

In what could be classified as a David and Goliath scenario Artwork systems continues to innovative prepress workflow systems against giants such as Creo and Heidelberg. At the recent Seybold show they were showing an entirely new OS X-based system, code-named "Odyssey," for small to mid-sized printers, trade shops and in-plants (as opposed to the large printers it traditionally has served). Odyssey is a modular, hot folder-driven system utilizing Enfocus PitStop and Artwork Systems' trapping technology as well as third-party applications, such as Distiller.

<http://www.artwork-systems.com/>

≪ **Commentary** ≫

A few years ago the Artworks systems prepress solution was found exclusively in prepress and printing companies focusing on packaging. Today I am finding more and more commercial printers considering or buying prepress systems from Artworks. According to people I work with there are a few overriding reasons for considering Artworks.

First they offer some functionality that is difficult if not impossible to find other places such as 5 and 6 color process color printing and trapping. Second, satisfied customers say that the system works and costs less then the big players. And third people talk about superior customer service when compared to what is offered by the giants and their dealers.

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▶▶ 1st Issue Digital Technology Trends *End User ships*

The first issue of the End user version was emailed last month. For anyone unsure about the content the table of contents is below.

- **Prices for flat panel monitors going down**
- **Computer sales and what's new with computers**
- **51% Of U.S. Online time is now high speed or Broadband**
- **Study discusses proofing, cross-media, & digital camera usage**
- **Free Web Directories (catalogs)**
- **PC World Ranks Inexpensive Inkjets**
- **Happy Mac Gets the Ax**
- **DVD sends the VCR tapes packing**
- **Happy – smiley opening Mac Icon gets the ax & it's a bad sign**

If you would like to receive it email me (HowieAtPre@aol.com) and write "add to End User list" in the subject



Adding or Removing Names

- **To add someone email HowieAtPre@aol.com and write "add to End User list" or "add to Pro list" in the subject**
- **To be removed from either list - email and write "remove from Pro" or "remove from End User list" in the subject line**
- **To switch write "switch from Pro to End User" or "switch from End User to Pro" in the subject line**



Questions about the alphabet soup of digital technologies?

- **CTP (computer to plate)**
- **QC (Quality Control) or process control**
- **PDF (Portable Document Format)**
- **CMS (Color Management Systems)**
- **STEPS (Increasing productivity with staff, training, equipment, or procedural - changes)**

drop me a note: HowieAtPre@aol.com

