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IPEX 2002

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Updates about IPEX 2002, a UK print show in April

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Saturday, April 13, 2002

Printme definitely works. Throughout IPEX there are places to try it out. Log on at www.printme.com

PDF is one of the supported formats. If Seybold Reports conclude that PDF is not good enough for litho, I will just use Printme instead.

More at the Electronics for Imaging stand.

posted by Will Pollard 3:09 AM

I usually get feedback that I've mistaken some aspect of the Job Definition Format but attempting to describe it is one way to check how far understanding has gone.

The basis is a spec rather than a file format, although the spec is suitable for XML. PJTF - the portable job ticket format - is shown on the diagram but as a contribution to the current spec in the area between creation and pre-press. There is no assumption that the XML data will be stored as part of a PDF, so if a PDF is used it is just for the page description. The JDF will include all instructions. There is no intention to use Postscript code within PDF for device control.

There is reasonable confidence in XML being a standard. Triplearc offer one of the first products based on JDF and this is written in .NET. There will be a meeting for developers during GraphExpo in Chicago later this year. Members of CIP4 can use C++ and Java code. This will be updated soon after the 1.1 upgrade later in April.

Creo fully support JDF and see 'Closed Loop - Open Systems' as a linked idea to 'Networked Graphic Production'. Agfa and Man Roland seem to be working towards an even better demonstration of JDF workflow at the next Drupa. Heidelberg made it very clear in the press conference that JDF will be fully supported in all their future products.

Comment

It would have been helpful for Adobe to have been there, just to confirm explanations on how this all fits with PDF.

posted by Will Pollard 3:03 AM

The DTI seem to regard the print sector as part of their approach to e-commerce. Just as at the launch of Print 21 the relevant minister turned out to be Douglas Alexander MP, responsible for e-commerce and competitiveness.

He pointed out that print can too easily be taken for granted within the new communications economy. He questioned why this should be given a £13 billion turnover and how print could project an image to attract a high skills workforce.

Research showed that over half of UK printers have the intention to be able to take orders online within two years. ISDN is widely used. Potentially, print companies can expand into design, data storage and direct mail. A world class event such as IPEX helps to showcase the modern face of the industry and consign the 'hot metal and oily rags' image to history.

The answer to a question on targets for broadband was in specific UK terms rather than a general assertion about international comparisons. Changes recently announced by BT included 100 more exchanges equipped for ADSL, increasing coverage to 66% of UK population. Cable modems are already available to 50% of UK population.

He added that 'Broadband is a challenge for business, not just for government', inviting the print industry to demonstrate potential benefits.

Comment

The Vision conference is intended to attract new people into print. It would be useful to show print as part of network publishing or some such broad description. Classic pre-press skills reflect what a Mac is capable of. Web design and animation should be part of the training, even for humble users of Windows. If data storage and direct marketing are involved then skills need to cover networking and telecoms. It will be interesting to see what the scope of Vision includes.

posted by Will Pollard 3:01 AM

Adobe are convinced about Network Publishing. Some people have thought about it as just a useful marketing phrase but it seems the concepts have to be considered to explain Adobe decisions.

Not long ago Adobe drew attention to support for InDesign from Agfa, Creo and Heidelberg. Now at IPEX they concentrate on connecting with digital solutions from IBM, HP and Xerox. On the Apple stand they explain how InDesign is suited for eBooks.

Although Adobe were one of the 'big four' that defined the Job Definition Format, there appeared to be no Adobe representation during the seminars and press briefing arranged by CIP4. This was the first CIP4 event at IPEX. It may be that given the potential of streaming media and server software, print is no longer a high priority.

Network Publishing is supposed to describe wave three of something that has already included the internet in the 90s and started with desktop publishing in the 80s.

If the products that started with desktop publishing in the mid-80s are now mature and need little support or explanation, then it follows that they should soon be dropping in price. The 'collections' have started this direction but unfortunately four products are not enough. Another problem is that Adobe have not included Acrobat in the web collection, a really strange decision given that epaper is one area they can compete with Macromedia.

Currently a sensible solution for someone starting from scratch could be to buy the design collection and then buy Flash and Dreamweaver. Of course most people already have one or more of the mix but this is not reflected in an upgrade price.

To include six products might put the cost of a collection over the £1000 price point

initially. However the current Amazon.co.uk price for Quark 5 is higher than that so there is some scope. "Six Adobe products for the price of one from Quark" could be an attractive proposition, especially with upgrade options for people who have some of them already.

posted by Will Pollard 3:01 AM

Gareth Ward from Dotprint was quoted during the CIP4 meeting-

"Some will be able to remember back to IpeX 88, which was the PostScript IpeX. At that show, miracle upon miracle, PostScript Rips could manage to process the Adobe Lady Golfer in 20 minutes, or 18 minutes, such was the competition. Many old heads would shake and declare that PostScript was not really suitable for the printing industry.

Those old timers lost their heads in the revolution which followed as those that doubt that JDF will have as profound an impact on the industry are the next in line for the guillotine.

JDF may not happen in the next year, not even in two years. But I guarantee by the time IpeX 2006 comes around, JDF will have permeated the industry to such an extent that we will not even be concerned about it.

Where will I be heading to find out about JDF? First and foremost there is PrintCity whose whole concept is that of linking disparate equipment from different sectors of the business into a single workflow."

Follow this link for the full text

http://www.dotprint.com/community/events/ipex/news/02_04_08_009.shtml

You may skip the first bit where Dotprint has slipped into chat mode and deals with contested memories of obscure facts from previous print history, such as who paid for the drinks.

posted by Will Pollard 3:00 AM

{ Wednesday, April 10, 2002 }

Available at Print City (Halls 17 and 18) the Competence Interface is a CD packed with managed knowledge.

My impression is that this is one CD you should make sure to take away from IPEX.

posted by Will Pollard 1:54 AM

Mike Jahn is presenting the idea of Certified PDF at the Enfocuss stand (Hall 4, Stand 707B). Software can fix a PDF to conform with PDF/X-1a:2001.

The background to this is that Time will fully support PDF for advertising as from June.

Apparently other print file formats are not as suitable for use on the web.

posted by Will Pollard 1:51 AM

Tuesday, April 09, 2002

There may not be updates for a while, possibly Friday.

posted by Will Pollard 7:19 AM

IPEX Daily has been printed ok from PDF. Creo's presentation of Networked Graphic Production seems to complement Adobe's Network Publishing, though obviously with a print bias.

Print City is getting better at explaining workflow and the links to work on the Job Definition Format. From discussion after their presentation it appeared that practical links may follow IPEX across the way things have so far been presented, for example workflow involving MAN Roland and Creo.

There was frank admission that explanation of workflow issues had been poor at Print City's first DRUPA. This may have influenced Adobe's decision not to continue as a member. There is certainly energy going into explanation at IPEX so maybe PDF will be more fully explained at the next DRUPA.

posted by Will Pollard 7:17 AM

Seybold have not shipped over free copies of a guide to IPEX this time which is a great disappointment.

They have announced a PDF Workflow Shootout with results to be announced at Seybold San Francisco on September 10th. This will involve a survey of 150,000 PDF creators and output service providers. The tests will assume PDFx 1a so this is some sort of standard unless the test results are alarming.

There is a free article on their website. Not quite the same as a hard copy guide to IPEX but an introduction to the issues raised by the PDF Workflow shootout.

<http://www.seyboldreports.com/TSR/free/0122/html/pdfx.html>

posted by Will Pollard 7:06 AM

Ascent (Hall4 Stand 222) do have a Windows PC on their stand but they choose a Mac to demonstrate Forms Xpert3, a plug-in for InDesign. XML2InDesign imports data into your form.

posted by Will Pollard 6:59 AM

Creo are supporting the IPEX Daily with PDF workflow. More on this when one actually appears.

posted by Will Pollard 1:00 AM

At Print City, in Halls 17 and 18, Agfa are showing Apogee Series 3. Apogee Create actually uses the data aspects of PDF. Information consistent with the Job Definition Format is stored in the Portable Job Ticket Format. At later stages the data is held in other formats but a print customer can use Apogee Create to produce a single PDF file with the image and data. Later this year Agfa will release ApogeeX, consistent with new versions of the Job Definition Format. Some information may be available at the Agfa stand but it may be hidden away.

The above is my best current understanding. Whenever I try to describe this area I discover something has changed or I have confused something. Fortunately Blogger

allows old posts to be edited.

posted by Will Pollard 12:58 AM

The Cross Media Theatre will feature Adobe on PDF Workflow, today at 11am and 1pm

posted by Will Pollard 12:51 AM

The Cross Media Theatre, Hall 4 Stand 328, is located near several interesting stands - Apple, Markzware, Jetplate CTP via inkjet, and Ascent forms design. Ascent have one of the first extensions for InDesign and this should be available for Mac and Windows. However their support for Windows has often been expected without actually happening. If Ascent actually exhibit a Windows product it will be a sign of significant change.

posted by Will Pollard 12:51 AM

Heidelberg see '1to1' marketing as a way to secure the competitiveness of print against electronic media. Bernhard Schreier explained that the new NexTreme software for variable data would make print 'more exciting'.

NexTreme 50 will be bundled free with the Nexpress 2100 for proofing and small volumes. NexTreme 100 allows higher volumes and Nextreme 1000 is scaled for a server. Design works with Quark or InDesign on Mac or Windows. Data can come as ASCII files, integrated with ODBC or through COM interfaces.

In addition, everyone in the workflow saves valuable production time and costs with platform-independent PDFs. The software is the first variable-data solution that allows soft proofing - locally or remotely - of any page in the job, with every element of variable content in place. These proofs are created as platform-independent PDFs and therefore can be viewed on any computer.

The NexPress 2100 uses Adobe Extreme Postscript, designed to work with PDF. Bernhard Schreier made it clear that Heidelberg intended further development for digital printing. Print will benefit from new data connections with PDF.

posted by Will Pollard 12:47 AM

The Seybold stand is 375 in Hall 4. there may be a free show guide issue. If so, this is the place to start.

posted by Will Pollard 12:37 AM

{ Monday, April 08, 2002 }

This is to test if the links courtesy of Electronics for Imaging are working.

posted by Will Pollard 3:22 AM

There is now a test PDF to interest journalists. It should print A4 and show web links for news from Dotprint and Printweek.

It includes an extract from Printweek on PDF workflow for the IPEX Daily, thousands of copies printed litho, nothing short run digital about it.

If the PDF workflow holds up for a week it will probably last out the show.

<http://www.acrobat-services.co.uk/News.pdf>

posted by Will Pollard 1:40 AM

{ Friday, April 05, 2002 }

This log is to add updates for the website at <http://www.acrobat-services.co.uk>

Current thought is that the main news so far is the Adobe decision not to have a stand.

Their website asserts things are four times better because of presence at stands such as Apple, IBM, Xerox and H-P.

Meanwhile the Job Definition Format seems not to connect with the data storage aspects of PDF. This impression could be wrong so updates will follow.

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