

## Colour Systems Produces all 19 European Editions of *Reader's Digest*

Meeting the Challenge with Customized, Integrated Workflow Solutions from Dalim Software, SGI, and Xinet



*"We are very satisfied with Colour Systems' ability to provide a bulletproof workflow that integrates the best software and hardware solutions available."*

— Howard Reynolds, Global Prepress Manager (Product), *Reader's Digest*

In 2002, *Reader's Digest* handed Colour Systems a challenging assignment: provide centralized prepress services for 19 simultaneous European editions of its 200-page biweekly magazine, printed in a dozen languages by multiple printers.

Colour Systems Ltd., a leading premedia design, digital management, and workflow solution company, enlisted premier systems integrator Turning Point Technologies to architect a web-based, crossborder solution incorporating SGI® Origin® servers, with Dalim Software and Xinet® workflow software. With the resulting system, Colour Systems Ltd. is now bringing all European editions of *Reader's Digest* into a centralized, electronic workflow which expedites every step of the prepress process.

### Colour Systems: Mastering Prepress Workflow

*Reader's Digest* was already well acquainted with London-based Colour Systems before handing the company a three-year prepress contract for all its European editions. Colour Systems, an SGI user since 2000, had already provided prepress services for an illustrated *Reader's Digest* book series and had completed a successful trial of centralized prepress for Scandinavian and U.K. editions of the magazine. Colour Systems also boasted a handsome portfolio of scores of clients, including Jaguar (*The Jaguar Magazine*), Ikea [its lifestyle publication *Room*], and *FHM*, the glossy, high-profile magazine for European men.

### Xinet® WebNative™: Centralizing Prepress Operations

The Colour Systems solution enables its clients to log on 24 hours a day to dedicated web sites where they can download and upload files and access archived assets through a custom interface. The site also provides online tools such as Quickproof™ to proof high-resolution files interactively. This deceptively simple global workflow solution called Systemassets™, is an adaptation of Xinet's® WebNative. WebNative enables the company to publish server volumes across the web for soft-proofing and collaboration. Distant clients can view complete Quark pages containing all images over client-specific web interfaces designed by Fresh01, a Colour Systems sister company.

On a typical day, clients use the system to download 20GB worth of images and Colour Systems is currently installing a 100MB link to the Internet to accommodate this growing traffic. Systemassets recently earned Colour Systems a Production Initiative award from the Periodical Publishers Association.

"We are very satisfied with Colour Systems' ability to provide a bulletproof workflow that integrates the best software and hardware solution available," said Howard Reynolds, global prepress manager [product] at *Reader's Digest*.





"Through publishing our U.K. and Scandinavian editions with Colour Systems, we saw an improvement in our efforts to rationalize costs, streamline distribution, and maintain a single point of control for tracking and delivering assets. We look forward to expanding these benefits to the production of the remaining European editions."

With 19 countries publishing separate biweekly editions of *Reader's Digest* in 11 languages and handling prepress with printers in Poland, France, and Switzerland, some chaos was inevitable. The Colour Systems web-based workflow is smoothing out these wrinkles. "What we're doing for *Reader's Digest* is centralizing all the assets for their European editions on our SGI servers," says David Brin, managing director of Colour Systems. "*Reader's Digest* staff in each country can now log on to a dedicated web site, download a low-overhead positional version of an image, place it in their laid-out page, and upload the page to us across the Internet. We automatically process, proof, take care of the color, and send it all off to the printer using FTP."

#### Xinet® FullPress®: Enterprise Prepress Server

Colour Systems provides its services to *Reader's Digest* from a 32-processor SGI Origin server at its London Technology Centre. "We now have, on average, 100 people working off the back of the SGI server on Macintosh workstations running QuarkXPress," says Dominic Duffy, Colour Systems technical director. The server, runs Xinet® FullPress®, which provides Open Prepress Interface [OPI], file sharing and print queue management, widely used in the publishing industry. FullPress makes low-resolution versions of the files for page makeup: high-resolution files are accessed across the network for any necessary retouching. When the file is printed, the SGI server replaces the low-resolution version with the high-resolution version.

#### DALiM® TWiST™: Streamlining Complex Workflows

In addition to its 32-processor SGI Origin server running OPI and 4TB of RAID storage, Colour Systems operates a 10-processor SGI® Origin® 2000 series server (as a backup to the OPI server) and a four-processor Origin 2000 series server running DALiM TWiST, a highly configurable, template-based publishing workflow system.

"DALiM TWiST is amazing software," says Duffy. "It allows us to create our own tools, if necessary, to configure complex client-specific workflows. We can bolt about 150 tools together and view the whole thing as a template." An example of this flexibility is the DALiM TWiST preflight checking tool, which can be configured to check font, file size, image type, and many other characteristics before work begins on the file. At one point, Colour Systems had used TWiST to create 400 project-specific workflows. The common elements of each workflow are held in a database and accessed from

all workflows. In reality, there is just one workflow and one database, which streamlines processes considerably.

"Using DALiM TWiST, we ultimately create a print-ready PDF of the Quark page," says Duffy. "It is a true representation of what's going to be printed. We make around 70,000 PDFs a month, which translates to some 60,000 pages. The SGI server is absolutely running flat out. It's really fantastic."

#### DALiM® FiCELLE®: Live Flat-Plan Tracking

DALiM FiCELLE, which runs on the same SGI Origin server as DALiM TWiST, enables Colour Systems account managers to book and track the progress of any magazine edition as it moves through the shop. In the DALiM FiCELLE display, each page contains a symbol that represents its current status in the process. By simply viewing a constantly updated flat plan—a representation of the magazine pages as they will appear when shipped by the printer, progress is monitored.

"It's live," says Duffy. "It runs in the background and changes the display before your eyes. As a production tool, this is fantastic. Before DALiM FiCELLE, our account managers kept track of it all—logos, pictures, type, shadows, barcodes—on paper." Colour Systems plans to work with Dalim Software under a DALiM FiCELLE development agreement to enable clients to make page changes, such as moving articles to other pages. Their changes would simply appear in the updated database. "That kind of automation is fantastic," says Duffy.

#### The SGI and Dalim Software Difference: Reliable Graphics Power

One reason for the success of Colour Systems' use of Dalim Software is the graphics power and reliability of its SGI Origin systems. "We selected SGI largely because of Dalim Software's recommendation," says Duffy. "They let us know that they'd been working with SGI for some time, and that SGI had built up a reputation with Dalim Software customers as basically not going wrong."

"We have always recommended best-of-breed solutions to our channel partners, who are free to partner with a number of UNIX vendors," says Gee Ranasinha, director of marketing at Dalim Software. "But in terms of enterprise-level, high-throughput, failsafe solutions, if we're put on the spot, we generally base our recommendations on SGI Origin servers because we're very comfortable with it. It's proven itself time and time again with a number of channel partners and customers.

"We're obviously very happy that *Reader's Digest* is happy with Colour Systems' service. Dalim Software has been associated with the deployment of SGI® IRIX® and MIPS® hardware for about 15 years. During that time, we have seen how partnering SGI equipment with Dalim Software's innovative production solutions has helped our customers take their businesses to new levels of competitive advantage."



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