

# Graphic Exchange

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## Production Notes

PREPRESS Ernest Green & Son  
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## PUBLISHER'S NOTES

# New Age Publishing means redefining the publisher's role



**T**HERE I WAS ON THE SEYBOLD SHOW FLOOR, CHATTING WITH STAN KLEBANOFF AT the Epson booth (and by the way, I swear by Epson's 5000 inkjet for all my proofing), when up walked my good friend Ira Gold, a regular contributor to ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING magazine and Rockaway, NJ's foremost prepress expert.

Naturally, it wasn't long before the subject turned to GRAPHIC EXCHANGE.

"Love your magazine!" he chortled in his distinctive New Joisey dialect. "You know what you are? You're the MAD Magazine of the graphics industry!"

Putting on my best Alfred E. Neuman grin, I answered, "I'll take that as a compliment, Ira."

From there the conversation segued into a discussion about the odd and slightly inexplicable demise and reincarnation of PUBLISH! magazine, the largest circulation (around 100,000) unaffiliated journal in the U.S. for the design and publishing market and, in my opinion, the slickest and most informative.

For those of you unfamiliar with recent developments in the U.S. graphics market publishing sector, it was announced in mid-August that IDG, owners of PUBLISH! magazine, had turned over control of the business to Barry Harrigan, publisher of the IDG book's chief competition, DESKTOP PUBLISHERS JOURNAL (a somewhat pedestrian trade publication with approximately the same circulation and directed at the same market). Harrigan, who assumed a 25% share in the magazine, promptly folded DTPJ and proceeded to close up the PUBLISH! San Francisco offices, dismissing all its staff and moving the operation back to his Topsfield, MA headquarters where DTPJ will be resurrected as the new PUBLISH!.

Ira agreed that this could only represent a windfall opportunity for ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING to make further inroads with advertisers.

But it got me thinking again about the general state of the publishing industry and specifically the future of print-based publishing, a subject I discussed within a Canadian context in our last issue (*Of stars and stripes and the end of Canadian publishing as we know it*, GRAPHIC EXCHANGE June/July).

On the one hand, a recent article in FOLIO magazine stated, "About \$6.85 billion in magazine properties changed hands last year, triple the amount in 1997." From all appearances, that trend will continue this year. Recent examples from south of the border include Walt Disney Company placing its Fairchild Publications magazine division on the market; the news that Rupert Murdoch was close to buying media giant Ziff-Davis, including its substantial publishing arm; Primedia selling its publishing division, Supplemental Education Group, to investment group Ripplewood Holdings LLC; Stern Publishing offering for sale its seven alternative weekly newspapers (including The Village Voice); the acquisition of EDITOR & PUBLISHER magazine by BPI Communications; and, closer to home, the recent sale of Plesman Communications to Transcontinental Publications.

Meanwhile, a recent trade report said that total circulation for eight of the top ten largest circulation magazines in the U.S. was either flat or down in the first half of 1999. Factor in other related news, such as a release disclosing that Ford Motor Company, one of the largest print advertisers in the world, is said to be slicing its year 2000 magazine advertising budget by 25% to 30%, in favour of a heavier em-

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phasis on Internet-based promotion.

What does all this mean?

It's probably too early to draw conclusions, but two come to mind.

The first (hardly a revelation) is the undeniable fact that, uncomfortable as it may be for some in the traditional publishing sector, print publishing is now just a subset of a larger publishing market which, these days, is being driven and shaped more by the Internet than by ink on paper. News reports detailing sales in the publishing market invariably make reference directly or indirectly to web-based assets and/or database marketing as a key component of the transaction.

The second point is that magazines appear to have become simply another commodity group which large corporations will swap and sell as part of their "communications" portfolio. In the process, what will become of the independent traditional publishing sector? Will we see a dark shadow fall across it as its heart and soul gets sucked out by corporate managers, leaving nothing but flat, generic publications that simply "feed" web- and database-driven one-to-one marketing machines? Or might the "level playing field" of the web and the expansion of publishing into electronic formats spur a new era of greater creativity, higher levels of entertainment, value-added information and content, and tighter publisher-reader communication? And what will be the role of the 21st century publisher?

The Seybold show has long been the bellwether of prognostications for the publishing industry. At September's Seybold San Francisco, the emphasis, as it has been for the past three or four years, was on integrating web publishing technologies with print-based publishing.

THE S FILES, our Seybold report beginning on page 16, offers three regular GRAPHIC EXCHANGE contributors who offer their observations on this year's west coast event. In PICKS, PERKS AND PARADOXES, Lorne Cherry provides comments on Apple's new G4s, XML and digital asset management; Shane Steinman takes us on a circuitous trip up the Big Sur on his way through insights about web-based preflight and collaborative workgroup technologies, in WHAT I DID I ON MY SUMMER VACATION; and finally, Lerrick Starr shares his selection of Seybold floor picks for prepress together with his unusual eating preferences via his article entitled PREPRESS-A-RONI: THE TRUTH IS OUT THERE.

To add a little mystery to it all, your sleuthing publisher investigates THE CASE OF THE E-CONSPIRACY, in which he delves into the apparent attempted overthrow of print while stumbling on a few new products in the course of his investigations.

This issue also features reviews of three important new software products, starting on page 16. In a collaboration of efforts, we look at Adobe's much-awaited new page layout program, *InDesign*; for web designers, Peter Dudar provides a detailed examination of Macromedia's newest version of *Flash*; and for multimedia producers, Bob Connolly explains how Apple's just-released *Final Cut Pro* can form the heart of an inexpensive moviemaking studio.

And Photoshoppers will find Ben Willmore's tips as enlightening as always, as he illuminates techniques for IMAGE BLENDING on page 48, the first of two parts.

In this issue we also say farewell to a GRAPHIC EXCHANGE editorial institution. On page 56, Gary Shilling bids adieu with his final *FoolProof* column, ROY G. BIV, INTERNATIONAL MAN OF COLOR. We wish him good luck in his new endeavours and hope to see him back again sometime in the future, perhaps even under another nom de plume.

As for the question of being a publisher in the new millenium, let me simply say that I know what publishers *cannot* be. They cannot just be salesmen. They cannot be simply writers. And they cannot be bean counters.

The 21st century publisher will require a combination of creative and business skills to survive and prosper. Publishing will not be a matter of just delivering information; it will call for the ability to *filter* an overload of information for a well-targeted readership in an Information Age where one's most precious asset is — time. \*