



# GRAPHIC EXCHANGE

## *Fire*

BUILDING INTERACTIVE RICH MEDIA WEB SITES

CANADIAN MAGAZINES: AN INDUSTRY IN DECLINE

10 WAYS TO KEEP YOUR MAC AND PC SYSTEMS RUNNING CLEAN

## *When*

IS THERE A MANUFACTURING MODEL FOR COMMERCIAL PRINTING?

PHOTOSHOP TECHNIQUES: TYPE AND BACKGROUND EFFECTS

ADOBE INPRODUCTION 1.0 • MACROMEDIA FREEHAND 9

HOW TO NOT MAKE MONEY — A PRINTER'S TALE

## *Ready*

MAR/APR 2000 \$7.95

0 2



# IN the Production Trenches

## Prepress Production Software Adobe InProduction 1.0

by Shane Steinman

When Adobe introduced PDF, many rejoiced at the prospect of being able to create, access and modify designs within the framework of a truly cross-platform format. In our giddiness, we tended to overlook the fact that one third of those operations (modification) would probably remain largely out of practical reach for many users.

The editing abilities of the Adobe Acrobat application remain somewhat "clunky" to this day, but support for prepress handling of PDF files has improved dramatically with the introduction of InProduction, a suite of five tool sets that acts as a professional-level extension for high-end file handling.

### THE TOOLS

#### Color Conversion

#### Preflight

#### Separation

#### Trapping

#### Trim & Bleed

These tools provide comprehensive solutions to what were formerly gaping holes in any independent PDF workflow strategy. Many advanced PDF users were either driven to buy expensive systems in order to

efficiently handle (what should have been) fairly routine prepress operations, or ended up having to cobble together makeshift solutions from a patchwork of available components that performed one or more of the required tasks.

In constructing my own PDF workflows, I have used as many as five applications in any one production stream. As you can imagine, having five sets of applications to learn (and possibly debug) isn't the most enviable position in which to be (not to mention managing five sets of upgrade paths spread across two computing platforms).

Now, the arrival of InProduction doesn't necessarily obviate the need for supplementary tools in PDF wrangling, but it certainly simplifies the situation and, correspondingly, brightens the mood of many an IT or process manager.

### COLOR CONVERTER MODULE

Using this easy-to-navigate interface, the user can select whether to convert colors to CMYK for printing, or simply tag them with an ICC profile for In-RIP separation. ICC tags can also be removed if desired. The conversion actions can be applied to all colors (RGB, CMYK and Grayscale) or confined to swapping one color space for another, the most common need being to translate RGB into CMYK.

Because PDF files may contain RGB values for text and linework elements as well as RGB scans/rasters/CTs, the Color Converter allows you to treat each of

these conditions separately with regard to the CMYK conversion process by allowing the user to define what Rendering Intent will be used.

Generally, the module is well-configured to work in ICC-profiled workflows, but offers scant support for customized conversions that advanced users may pre-



InProduction's **COLOR CONVERTOR** not only converts colors for type and linework but images as well. You can select the original color space, the targeted condition and the rendering intent.

fer to specify themselves. The module taps into the color management system that is in use on the workstation being used. In my case, this was Apple's ColorSync working at my System level.


The software can also be run in Batch Mode, so that the user may convert an entire folder of PDF documents consecutively.

Ideally, I'd like to see further expansion of the Color Converter interface to include CMYK to RGB conversions for web/multimedia use, importing of Separation Setups as defined by Photoshop, and completely separate handling for images, text and linework since only the Rendering Intent for each of these can currently be altered.

It would also be nice if color conversions could be directed from within the Preflight module as an automatic corrective action.

### PREFLIGHT MODULE

Although PDF files can be verified to match specific requisite conditions by using such preflight software as Markzware FlightCheck, Extensis/CreativePro.com Preflight Pro, or Enfocus PitStop, this capability had never before been available

 <p><b>ADOBE INPRODUCTION 1.0</b></p>	<p><b>System Requirements</b> Macintosh only</p>	<p>PostScript 3 RIP with IRT</p>
	<p>Minimum: Power Macintosh PowerPC 604 processor Recommended: G3 or higher Mac OS 8.5.1 or later 64MB RAM minimum (128MB recommended) ColorSync 2.1 or later Trapping module requires</p>	<p>List price \$US699 InProduction 1.0 and Acrobat 4.05 package price \$US899 Introductory price until October 15/00 (download only) \$US499</p>

directly inside Adobe Acrobat — and it has never been this fast.

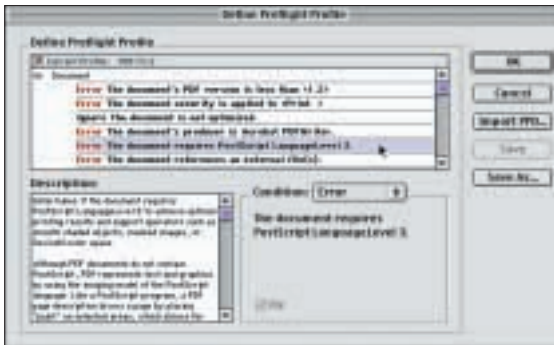
Pre-defined Preflight setups for typical situations (Adobe Press, Adobe Print, PDF/X-1) are available as default settings in the interface and these may be duplicated and customized to the user's liking. New profiles may also be created from scratch.

The PDF/X-1 profile is a welcome sight. Considering the recent DDAP Association approval of PDF/X-1 as a vehicle for digital ad delivery and the pending approval of same by dMACS and Magazines Canada, it was unexpected that this profile would be available in the first release of InProduction. PDF/X-1 defines a standard specification for the blind exchange of data between production partners, which eliminates the need for much of the extensive verbal and written communication that was previously required for these transactions.

The results of a Preflight scan can be viewed interactively in the document using the Locator feature, which can be set to zoom and highlight each problem area as you "surf" through the offending PDF. "Problems" can be broken into four categories; Ignore, Note, Warning or Error, with each subsequent level becoming respectively more serious. These "flags" can be set according to user preference. For example, the user may decide to ignore whether the PDF file is Optimized or not, based on how this may impact the workflow downstream. In certain situations, like ICC profile tagging, the problem situations can be automatically remedied by the software to reduce the need for manual intervention in the file.

A nice touch is the detail and background information pro-

**PREFLIGHT PROFILE** options are separated into six categories which can be expanded to show all of their sub-attributes. Some problems can be fixed automatically.



**THE PREFLIGHT SETUP** dialog offers a range of options for diagnosing and viewing the results of the preflight scan. New profiles can be created, stored and shared with other users.



**5 years ago**

**we said we**

**would NEVER sell**

**ROYALTY-FREE images**

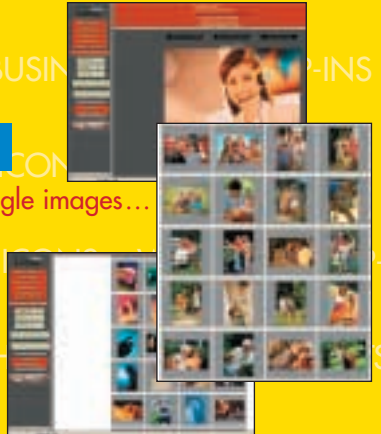
# We lied.

**ORDER ONLINE ▼**

110 Discs & thousands of single images...

**ALL ROYALTY-FREE.**

- Business, Technology, Finance
- Lifestyles, Families, Couples, Kids
- Sports, Fitness, Health
- Medical, R&D
- Background Graphics
- Objects with clipping paths
- Scenics, Travel, Animals



• RUSTY RELICS • BUSINESS BACKGROUNDS • MON

[www.comstock.ca/110Lies](http://www.comstock.ca/110Lies)

EY BACKGROUNDS • SUNS-CLOUDS-KIES • PATT

**NEW!** Canadian Web site... with ALL prices in Canadian currency!

COMSTOCK Photofile Limited  
401-49 Bathurst St.  
Toronto, Ontario M5V 2P2  
1-800-387-0640 • fax: 416-504-6619  
e-mail: toronto@comstock.ca

**COMSTOCK RF**  
STOCK PHOTOGRAPHY  
**ROYALTY-FREE DIVISION**

vided in the Description window of the interface, which could be very useful during software orientation or training.

The Preflight tools certainly provide the user with more ammunition than they've ever had access to before in a non-supplemented Acrobat environment, but many users may be inclined to continue using third-party developer plug-ins to gain even more leverage over their PDF workflows. In the case of preflight issues, an obvious case in point would be Enfocus PitStop, whose Action Lists, Preflight and Global Change features make it a more comprehensive solution than that provided here.

### SEPARATION SETUP

The lack of separation control as a native Acrobat trait has been much lamented in many circles for years. Lantana Research, the developers of Crackerjack, can be counted among the numerous companies

tions directly within Acrobat, including the assignment of Printer's Marks, PPD selection, Save or Load pre-defined Separation Setups, application of transfer functions or halftone screens, and the ability to preview the separations individually or in combination with each other. All in all, it's a well-constructed and familiar-looking dialog.

### TRAPPING MODULE

While the trapping styles that you prefer can be defined and saved for later use, and trapping zones can be interactively specified through the preview in the interface, the user should remember that these traps will only be respected if the RIP being used for printing has Adobe In-RIP Trapping (IRT) installed.

Traps can be defined in points or fractions of an inch and can be specified by Threshold, Trap Width, and how IRT will treat traps against continuous tone or bitmap objects.

Presently the construction of trap zones can only be indicated with rectangular shapes (other tools will probably be added later), but this is sufficient for most needs as these rectangular zones can overlap each other at varying sizes to delineate most areas in need of attention.

### TRIM AND BLEED MODULE

In the world of evolving PDF workflows, the ability to add, delete or edit the five bounding boxes inherent in the PDF 1.3 specification will be extremely important as they pertain to the control of PDF imposition, ad placement and general automation of production processes.

In the version of the software I reviewed, you could manipulate the Trim Box, Art Box, Bleed Box and Media Box, but there was no control over the Crop Box, which is a mandatory element in PDF/X-1 files. Currently, if a file with an improper or missing Crop Box is preflighted, the Preflight module can detect this, but you can't seem to do anything about it. I suspect this is being addressed.

The offset adjustment tools could stand



The TRIM/BLEED MODULE allows you to create or modify four of the five PDF bounding boxes.

being a little more user-friendly; when I adjusted them intuitively, I almost always ended up moving them opposite to the direction I intended.

### SUMMARY

If you're serious about PDF production for print, you're going to want a copy of InProduction hanging on your tool belt. It's a sophisticated, well-featured product, with most of the refinement you'd expect in an Adobe release. The interfaces are comfortable, barring the occasional awkward moment.

It's not a runaway, hands-down victor in the pursuit of PDF file perfection, but it's a very respectable first showing by a trusted industry icon with a reputation for excellent follow-up development. You know that it's only going to get better.

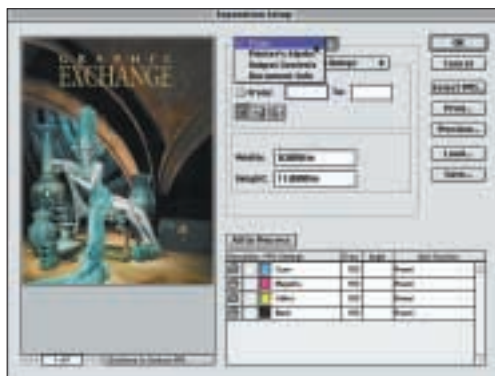
Should you throw away all your other PDF gizmos?

Not yet.

I'm hanging onto Enfocus PitStop, Lantana Crackerjack and Intense Software PDFSeps2Comp which each have particular specialties that I can't seem to live without. In a chaotic environment such as digital imaging, it's better to be armed to the teeth than taken by surprise.

Adobe InProduction is shipping as of April, 2000 at a list price of \$US699, or \$US899 for InProduction and Acrobat bundled together. Up until October 15, Adobe will let you buy InProduction online and download it for only \$US499. **G**

*Shane Steinman is Technical Director of Archangel Media Inc. of Toronto and Project Leader of the dMacs initiative ([www.dmacs.org](http://www.dmacs.org)).*



In the InProduction SEPARATION SETUP you select the colors to print, choose a device-specific PPD, apply crops and registration marks and request an interactive preview.

which have built businesses upon what's been missing from Acrobat.

Just as the Preflight module competes with PitStop, the Separation module competes with Lantana's Crackerjack. Now I didn't say that it obviates the need for Crackerjack; the newest version of Crackerjack (3.1) offers support for DCS 2.0 file generation, tiling, and alternate high-value compression (Mr.SID).

What the Separation Setup module does is to provide the user with the controls necessary to output proper separa-



The Canadian Directory of professional Photographers and Illustrators

Reserve your space before May 1<sup>st</sup> 2000, become a CAPIC member and get up to 40% discount on the advertising rate.

Information/Reservation: 1(877)LUX-9393 ext. 283 luxbook@infopresse.com www.espacecom.com/lux



ÉDITIONS  
INFO PRESSE

**ILLUSTRATOR  
FOR SALE**

**There is an alternative.**

**LUXbook<sup>1.0</sup>**