

Seybold San Francisco Hot Picks

The variety of this year's Seybold San Francisco Hot Picks illustrates the breadth of this year's conference. From among a field of more than a dozen nominated products, Seybold editors chose the following new products:

Cadmus Communications 3Path

Cadmus Communications' newly launched Web-based content delivery system, 3Path, delivers rich-media and interactive digital content directly to users' desktops via a custom-branded channels. According to the company, 3Path can send bulky, balky files effortlessly by using underutilized Web bandwidth.

Snapbridge Software FDX Cross Media Server

Debuting at Seybold SF, Snapbridge Software's new server is touted as the "world's first true multiplatform cross-media server for Windows, Linux and OS X." According to Snapbridge Chairman and CTO Benjamin Chen, the company's XML-based platform "solves a pressing problem for magazine and newspaper publishers who are seeking an easier and more affordable method to search, retrieve and repurpose their content across different properties."

Design Science Mathplayer 2.0

Those of us migrating toward trifocal glasses — or worse — are particularly appreciative of Design Science's effort

with its Mathplayer 2.0 product. It's a mathematics display engine for Microsoft Internet Explorer 6.0 that's not only free, but speaks a mathematical notation embedded in HTML and XHTML Web pages. "MathPlayer 2.0 brings math accessibility to the world's most popular Web browser," said Paul Topping, DSI's president and CEO. "This is an important step in making science and technology content available to visually impaired readers."



Artifex FontFocus

This font-rendering technology from Artifex improves readability of text on low-resolution handheld devices by about 20% through a software-

only solution that does not degrade font appearance. Seybold wants to know: Can it make Lotus Notes messages on the Mac legible?

Master Colors

HVC Color Quantification Suite

Master Colors' released this two-product at Seybold, featuring HVC Color Corrector, a tool utilizing the perceptual HVC space for image adjustments, and HVC Color Composer, a creative solution that allows access to the HVC for color selection, contrast measurement, and to create dynamic palettes. "This utility brings professional quality color to the fingertips of the design world," said Casey George of Great Western Litho. "This is the must-have plug-in for Photoshop."

pot is coming to the boil at last. Attendees at the conference were clearly interested in digital asset management and recognized the issues inherent in acquiring metadata.

Pound Hill Software, a tiny company whose Catalyst plug-in generator we described last fall, is garnering increasing interest among OEMs and end-users, some of whom were at the conference. This XMP-based product adds a user interface to Adobe's Creative Suite and other applications to facilitate the entry of custom metadata. Pound Hill is the canary in the coalmine of XMP, and its survival will be an indicator of the broad adoption of the standard. (Pound Hill President Ron Roskiewicz is a contributor to THE SEYBOLD REPORT).

In his keynote, King was in many respects preaching to the choir; Adobe's evangelizing task lies well beyond the Seybold audience. But the notion of XMP as enabling a disruptive change in workflows should be expounded upon in greater detail. Real innovation in workflows will occur when the metadata embedded in a workflow object triggers events without user intervention. This, of course, is the vision of JDF. But the same notion could apply to rights management, intelligent forms navigation and any number of cross-media workflows. Adobe has more work to do.

Developing a Prepress Workflow from Scratch

The session on creating workflows from scratch was one of the most popular, and we heard Chris Jackson, president of Harper House, a full-service print and prepress house in Texas, explain how his company developed a prepress workflow from scratch.

Jackson gave the audience the right mix of detail and strategy as he went through the steps management had taken to evaluate, test and install a new system. Jackson said his evaluation team had to remain focused on its goals and not be swayed by system features that were nice but didn't help get the job done. He added that partnerships with vendors, including ongoing support, were at least as important as the equipment. **TSR**

version history can be seen, and InDesign, Creative Suite lets users see metadata for images and other components of the document, as well as for the entire document.

Most of the time, audiences are bored to distraction by product demonstrations during keynotes, but we noticed that was not the case with Penikis' demonstration. People took notes and nodded and whispered to one another about what they were seeing on screen.

King concluded his address by citing industry analyst Gartner's observation that 75% of the productivity gains in enterprises over the next three years will come through better management of knowledge. Historically, he said, technological

advances first improved individuals' productivity, then enabled networks of individuals to collaborate, and finally allowed them to restructure the way things are done. King suggested that XMP will be the enabler of the third phase for many creative and publishing workflows.

Conclusion

It's a pity that XMP, which won a Seybold HotPick award in 2001, has not been more eagerly adopted by other vendors. King mentioned that Adobe is still trying to convince Apple and Microsoft to adopt the standard in their upcoming versions of their operating systems. It evidently remains an uphill climb, but perhaps this