Efficiently publishing to multiple tablet devices using Adobe® Digital Publishing Suite, Enterprise Edition attracts and builds subscriber base for well-established magazine

In 1888, explorers began gathering at the newly founded National Geographic Society to regale each other with stories of their exotic world travels—marking the beginning of a rich heritage of discovery and visual storytelling. Today, *National Geographic* magazine continues to inspire people to care about planet Earth through stunning photography and unparalleled journalism. As one of the most iconic and enduring print magazine brands, *National Geographic* connects people to new places and discoveries as fascinating as those detailed by travelers from decades past. Now, *National Geographic* has extended its legacy into the future with digital editions, created using Adobe Digital Publishing Suite, Enterprise Edition.

"Digital editions have become the fastest growing piece of our business," says Declan Moore, president of publishing at National Geographic Society. "Hundreds of thousands of people globally are sampling the digital edition and converting to paid subscribers. We’re on track to acquire or exceed a paid digital circulation of 300,000 by the end of 2012, and have plans to expand to other form factors and reach half a million subscribers in the near future."

**Results**
- On track to reach more than 300,000 paid subscribers with digital editions and continue to drive recurring subscriptions
- Easily and quickly repurposed content for multiple devices
- Began to attract advertisers through growing digital subscriber base
- Boosted content richness through new media to provide more detail and perspective, without increasing production staff or undergoing extensive training

**National Geographic**

A journey to multiple devices
Spurring creativity and evolving new financial models

With a competitive and growing tablet market, National Geographic views delivery of content to multiple devices as a competitive imperative. By creating digital editions of the magazine, National Geographic is attracting a new and very attentive readership at a rapid pace, confirming that the new formats for iPad and Kindle Fire deliver a satisfying, immersive experience—one that subscribers are more than willing to pay for on a recurring basis.

The digital editions complement the print version, both from creative and financial standpoints. National Geographic has been perfecting the craft of print publishing for nearly 125 years and continues to produce more than five million copies of the magazine each month, plus map supplements. For the business, print is still popular, but the digital editions have higher margins and hold the promise of attracting more advertisers interested in reaching National Geographic’s well-educated, desirable demographic as circulations grow.

From a creative point of view, the team brainstorms how the magazine will be presented both in print and digitally from the start, and that’s making a dynamic and positive change in quality and innovation. According to Bill Marr, creative director for National Geographic, conceiving digital presentations that are less limited by the boundaries of print—such as splitting a gorgeous photograph across two pages, or eliminating supporting narratives that might not fit on a page—helps the team create a better product, regardless of the ultimate delivery medium.

Ensuring that digital pays off

To maximize the benefits of digital publishing to multiple devices, National Geographic must keep a keen eye on production costs and time to achieve a solid return on investment. The publisher chose Adobe Digital Publishing Suite and Adobe Creative Suite to deliver richer, more in-depth content across multiple form factors for a variety of reasons. Chief among them is integration. Designers and copy editors use Adobe InDesign and Adobe InCopy for layout and editorial as part of the K4 Publishing System.

Once content is laid out on the page, the production team begins to build the digital issue in InDesign using integrated tools. The digital issue is available within Digital Publishing Suite for additional production, preview, and testing. According to designers, as well as copy and photo editors, Digital Publishing Suite is efficient and easy to use within the existing Adobe workflow. Print layouts are easily converted to iPad, and then adjusted for the Kindle Fire within Adobe InDesign.

"Adobe Digital Publishing Suite has made us more efficient, especially because people are already skilled with Adobe InDesign," says Marr. "Adding to the success, we can keep most processes in house. The editors who put together the print story can take the next step in the storytelling process, adding videos, interactive graphics, picture galleries, and so on—all within Adobe InDesign."
Boosting production efficiency

Enhancements to Adobe Creative Suite 6 and InDesign CS6 in particular are saving National Geographic time in designing for multiple screens and devices. According to National Geographic Acting Director of Digital Publishing Lisa Lytton, these new features help maximize digital publishing productivity and manage costs.

Among the most crucial new Adaptive Design Tools in InDesign CS6 are Adobe Liquid Layout and alternate layout, capabilities that enable Lytton’s team to efficiently create and deploy multiple versions of a layout and link content for different devices or print needs, all within a single InDesign file. Each time a digital edition is created, the original iPad version can be easily optimized for the Kindle Fire in a fraction of the time. A recent report by Pfeiffer Consulting specifically shows that alternate layout tools in InDesign CS6 enable designers to work more than twice as fast when creating content for multiple devices.

"Adaptive Design Tools in Adobe InDesign CS6 make repetitive tasks related to producing the National Geographic digital edition for multiple devices fast and easy," says Lytton. "There's no need for cutting and pasting, and all of the interactive elements carry over and can be easily altered for the new format. Alternate layout in Adobe InDesign CS6 gets us much further towards a new format, much faster than we could have done in the past."

Attracting top-tier advertisers

The ability to efficiently create tablet issues for multiple devices directly affects the company’s ability to drive recurring subscriptions and advertising revenue. By publishing across a variety of devices and mobile platforms, National Geographic content is accessible to a larger audience, which, in turn, drives demand for premium advertising space. Currently, National Geographic is seeing the bulk of its returns coming from a rapidly growing, multi-device subscriber base, but sees advertising revenue as a prime opportunity.

"Advertisers follow audiences," says Moore. "With Adobe Digital Publishing Suite, we are building a critical mass of digital readers by repurposing content for multiple platforms—and the advertising model is evolving in tandem. When publishers start approaching the half million mark in paid subscribers, advertisers and their agencies start to take notice."

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Declan Moore
President of publishing, National Geographic Society
Enriching stories through new media

For National Geographic, going digital expands one of the world’s richest publishing palettes. The magazine uses interactive overlays in Digital Publishing Suite to deliver more detailed, immersive experiences to consumers worldwide that include video, newsfeeds, and animations, making the content even more intricate, surprising, delighting, and informative than ever. A short video of someone showing relics from ancestors who fought in a Civil War battle, for instance, might accompany a photo gallery of the battlefield.

And the world-renowned photography? It shines more than ever when shown on today’s high-resolution tablet displays. Upleveling National Geographic’s photography in any way is no small feat. The publisher has its own in-house photo engineering group, known for having printed the first color photographs, the first night photos, and invented the critter cam—a camera that can be worn by wild animals—which has enabled scientists to learn about the behaviors of animals such as whales and seals without causing pain or injury.

Exploring new frontiers

As a brand, National Geographic sees exciting new opportunities and more flexibility by adding digital publishing into the mix. The potential possibilities include audio-rich publications on smaller form factors such as smartphones, or subscription-based models that would enable consumers to sign up on an annual or monthly basis for content on specific topics of interest, from kids to travel.

Moving to Adobe Digital Publishing Suite has also opened the doors toward rendering publications for forthcoming digital televisions, enabling the publisher to reach audiences using both bigger and smaller devices. The publication also foresees delivering exceptional content with greater frequency, even potentially including live update feeds.

"We have always been innovators in bringing meaning to life on Earth—throughout our history," says Moore. "Now, with Adobe Digital Publishing Suite, we are crossing a new frontier as we reinterpret telling stories on new devices, in a way that is rooted in, yet advances, our rich tradition."

"Adobe Digital Publishing Suite has made us more efficient, especially because people are already skilled with Adobe InDesign. Adding to the success, we can keep most processes in-house."

Bill Marr
Creative director, National Geographic

For more information
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