



Making ELLE even better

Leading international magazine company looks to a web-centric future, and moves its titles to a new level of design and an enhanced workflow experience

Hachette Filipacchi (HF UK) is the publishing company behind famous and fabulously popular brands such as ELLE, ELLE Decoration, Red, Sugar, Real Homes and All About Soap. Present in 39 countries, worldwide Hachette Filipacchi publishes 262 titles and sells over one billion copies of its magazines a year.

When ELLE's staff decided to redesign and relaunch ELLE, HF UK moved the magazine over from Adobe Creative Suite 1 to Adobe® Creative Suite® 3 in just one month, re-launching the title based on new templates. Sugar magazine followed, and now all titles work on Adobe Creative Suite 3. The ELLE 'from-scratch' redesign and the Sugar and subsequent magazine migrations went without a hitch.

"Adobe InDesign enhances our editorial productivity and is quick and easy to use. Its increased compatibility with other Adobe applications allows us to achieve the best results in the shortest amount of time."

Marissa Bourke, creative director, ELLE magazine



Now HF UK has its magazines working on a production software platform that is easier to use, more flexible, has higher-performance and, vitally, web-ready. Adobe Creative Suite 3 also works better and faster with HF UK's reprographics business partner, and ensures the company never experiences compatibility problems with promotional materials and listings pages that are provided by outside media companies. Moving to Adobe Creative Suite 3 has also allowed HF UK to future-proof the production and design process, and ensure its magazines are ready for the next stage of HF UK's online strategy, where content will be shared across print and web publishing platforms.

Completely redesigned, better than ever

Stuart Knipe is the editorial systems and helpdesk manager for HF UK. Any technology that affects the editorial workflow is his area, from desktop systems to the back end. "It's about providing a workflow solution for the magazine that's easy to use, quick to learn, and of the quality that a stable including ELLE requires."

HF UK was running Adobe Creative Suite 1, but had installed Adobe Creative Suite 2 on one workstation to deal with TV listings it receives for its soap opera titles. "The ability to easily use documents produced by parts of the industry that had already moved up to Adobe Creative Suite 2 was something that

we knew was going to affect us, especially when we exchange information across regions such as France, Italy, America and Russia." HF UK is part of global publishing empire Hachette Filipacchi Medias (HFM), the world's leading magazine publisher. Knipe knew that as other parts of HFM moved to gain the advantages of Adobe Creative Suite 3, exchanging documents with them would prove increasingly problematic.

Converting the documents was not enough, however. "We could and did use interchange files," says Knipe, "but we knew we'd be better off working with files in their native formats." When Knipe started at HF UK he was already involved in the Adobe beta programme, so he knew where Adobe Creative Suite 3 was in development and what it would deliver. "From the beta programme I realised it was a stable product with various advantages," says Knipe.

The management team of ELLE wanted to completely redesign the magazine for a relaunch in January. The February 2008 issue would be better than ever – and the new ELLE would be done entirely in Adobe Creative Suite 3.

Meeting demanding needs without compromise

Marissa Bourke, ELLE's creative director, designed the 'new' magazine's templates.



"With Adobe Creative Suite 3 we can link style sheets with XML tags. Magazines are moving to a more hub-oriented content-sharing set-up, so that's a key feature."

Stuart Knipe, editorial systems and helpdesk manager, Hachette Filipacchi

"ELLE is a vast magazine handling hundreds of thousands of images and text every issue. We need a program that is flexible and accommodates such demanding needs without compromising on quality. The redesign of ELLE was created seamlessly in Adobe Creative Suite 3," she says.

Knipe's team moved on to converting Sugar magazine's templates to Adobe Creative Suite 3 "Most art directors are happy with their templates; they don't want to spend the time, especially on the weekly and the fortnightly magazines, to completely redesign their templates," he explains. So, if Sugar's templates could be upgraded to Adobe Creative Suite 3 without a hitch, the other HF UK magazines could go the same way without any impact on production. "Both ELLE and Sugar changeovers were easy. We didn't come across any problems in upgrading the templates or with designing the templates from scratch." Knipe and his team have now moved the other six magazines in HF UK's stable over to Adobe Creative Suite 3 – a turnaround time of just five months.

And, says Knipe, Adobe Creative Suite 3 is so easy to use, HF UK's trainer had a relatively easy job to do. "It turned out we only needed half to two-thirds of the training time for Sugar," says Knipe. Bourke's ELLE team had no time for training at all: "The redesign of ELLE was done in Adobe Creative Suite 3

before we had time to schedule in any training," she says, "proof that, once you are up to speed with the basics, any improvements make perfect sense and only increase efficiency."

Enhanced productivity, easier to use

Moving Adobe Creative Suite 3 has had a number of workflow and day-to-day benefits at HF UK. Apart from its vastly increased capability for integration with other Adobe tools, there are straightforward performance benefits.

HF UK uses a production system with its reprographics house which lets staff on HF UK magazines get real-time remote flat planning and create instantaneous digital dummies. Staff get more out of VIP now they have the fully integrated and web-focused elements of Adobe Creative Suite 3.

Those improved web capabilities of Adobe Creative Suite 3 were also a major overall reason to upgrade. "A key feature that drew us to Adobe Creative Suite 3 was the ability to link style sheets with XML tags. News and magazines are moving to a more hub-oriented content-sharing set-up which means we need to have all our content web-capable. Content needs to be ready to go quickly, whatever the platform it will be published on," says Knipe.

Customer:

Hachette Filipacchi UK
www.hf-uk.com

Industry:

Print and web media

Challenges

- Address issues with file compatibility
- Create a more web-capable media platform
- Upgrade magazine templates painlessly

Solution

- Adobe Creative Suite 3
- Hachette Filipacchi UK moved its six magazines over to Adobe Creative Suite 3 in under six months, without a hitch.

Results

- Improved production workflow performance
- Web future-proofing of templates
- Faster, easier production of titles across the board

Systems At A Glance

Adobe Products Applications:

47 seats of Adobe Creative Suite 3 Design Premium

10 seats of Adobe Creative Suite 3 Web Premium

Platform: Apple Mac OS X

Hardware: Mac Pro, Mac G5

ELLE

On the ground at ELLE, Bourke says Adobe Creative Suite 3 has made ELLE a better product. “Adobe InDesign® is a very intuitive tool and is very magazine-friendly. It enhances our editorial productivity and is quick and easy to use. Its increased compatibility with other applications like Adobe Illustrator® and Adobe Photoshop® allows us to achieve the best results in the shortest amount of time.”

“With Adobe Creative Suite 3 we have quicker formatting of text, better control with drop shadows, more ‘Adobe Illustrator-like’ functions within the program itself, the capacity to place multiple images, faster frame fitting, the fantastic visual pages panel and the workspace that can be customised to fit your needs – not forgetting Autosave. All of these improvements directly benefit our workflow and efficiency.”

Knipe’s customers are the users at HF UK, and they like the benefits they can see following the change. “They like the user interface, they can have huge amounts of information available on their screens, they can move about between palettes really quickly to get the information they need on style sheets, on fonts, on sizing and on placement etc.”

He continues: “One of the things I like about Adobe Creative Suite is the integration and the fact that files move seamlessly between the applications – that’s a key benefit.”

It’s not just the product that is important to a firm like HF UK, says Knipe – it is the company relationships. “I’ve had an Adobe InDesign engineer from America in our office asking our art directors why they like it, asking them what they like and don’t, what works and what doesn’t,” says Knipe, “and that attitude to development pushes the product forward quickly and keeps it evolving in a productive way. That level of commitment is fantastic.”



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Adobe Systems Incorporated
345 Park Avenue
San Jose, CA 95110-2704
USA
www.adobe.com

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