

# PlanSystem3™ ushers in a new level of workflow control for FUEL.

Advanced system shaves time from the creative and production process.

### > CHALLENGE

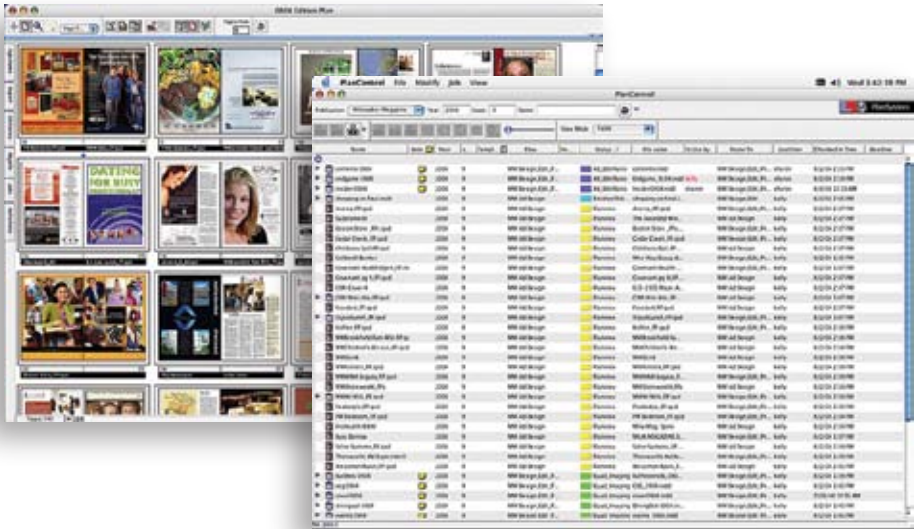
With a growing volume of work, an expanding number of required versions and the need for elements to flow between three office locations, FUEL needed an even more efficient management solution for its creative and production workflow.

### > SOLUTION

PlanSystem3, designed by Van Gennep and distributed by QuadSystems

### > RESULTS

- > Improved productivity
- > As much as 10 percent time savings
- > Increased accuracy
- > Simplified and improved post-production auditing



FUEL is a member of the Interpublic Group of Companies, one of the world's largest agency networks. Located in Toronto, Canada, FUEL is a full-service advertising agency specializing in print and convergent online marketing solutions. It manages a large volume of work for one of Canada's largest department store chains, along with a diverse range of advertising and custom publications for numerous other clients.

**Background.** Before the installation of PlanSystem3, FUEL had an "open file structure," which relied on servers and folders, according to Leslie Kellow-Hall, Vice-President of Production. "Different departments could work on the same file at the same time," Ms. Kellow-Hall says. "We did restructure the serv-

ers to institute lock-down volumes, reducing file access somewhat. Still, we felt there must be a way to further improve our workflow."

As its clients' versioning requirements increased, FUEL's open-access system created additional challenges. "We had to be extra diligent to ensure that a revised file from the production group had incorporated changes prepress had made to an earlier version," states Byron Peddle, Director of Production for FUEL. "We realized we needed a solution that provided better control of the flow of work from start to finish."

**Love at first sight.** "We had evaluated many different vendors and solutions for our issues," says Corey Messom, Director, Tech-

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*Leslie Kellow-Hall*  
Vice-President of Production  
FUEL

nology. "Very few of them seemed to match our environment or were adaptable to our workflow and other production systems. When I saw PlanSystem3, it was love at first sight. I immediately recognized that it would fit perfectly with the work we do."

Deployment began in summer of 2005 with FUEL's integrated creative digital services studio. "We were cautious in the way we implemented PlanSystem3," Ms. Kellow-Hall notes. "We were pleased with how readily it was adapted and the benefits it offered. We extended it out to our prepress and then our Flyer Groups soon after. They've taken to it like ducks to water."

**Control with a capital C.** FUEL creates over 7,000 versioned flyer and editorial pages annually. "Every flyer has to be zoned for the different provinces," Ms. Kellow-Hall explains. "We also have three publications that we produce quarterly. The tricky part of this volume is that everything is seasonal. Everything happens at the same time, and it can be challenging. Add to this several hundred newspaper ads yearly, many of which may have as many as 25 variations, and there's a lot of stuff flying around. This is where PlanSystem3 has been amazing. It's given us the control we need to keep everything flowing. Now, we can instantly identify who has a file and where it sits in the process from creative to production. And we're ensured that there aren't numerous versions of a file being worked on at the same time. I'd estimate PlanSystem3 has helped us shave at least 10 percent off the time spent on our larger projects."

**Improved accuracy.** "From creative through production, PlanSystem3 minimizes the opportunity for errors," Mr. Messom says. "The automatic check-out/check-in system ensures designers are working on the current file. PlanSystem3 not only saves huge amounts of time, but streamlines the entire process, eliminating the possibility of file control errors."

**Ultimate version control.** PlanSystem3 maintains a history for each file, enabling the review of every previous version. Ms. Kellow-Hall

says the history feature is "very, very helpful." In particular, it gives the client added flexibility to make changes throughout the process and makes it easier to respond quickly and accurately to each revision.

**Advanced planning.** PlanMaker™, a PlanSystem3 module, provides real-time space calculation, graphic status and element tracking. With rapid repagination and a graphical display of pages, potential production problems are identified earlier and deadlines can be managed more effectively. "PlanMaker also gives us added control," Ms. Kellow-Hall states. "We can see exactly how the whole book is coming together. We can also change the pagination at the drop of a hat instead of having to make 14 'turn-into-a-pretzel' Quark moves. And it's all done in real time and everybody can see the pages as they change and evolve."

**Easy implementation.** Phasing PlanSystem3 into all three FUEL locations has gone extremely well, according to Mr. Messom. "Once people understood the value PlanSystem3 brought to the workflow, they were quick to embrace it. The training curve is short as it's a simple program to learn. Support, training and our ongoing relationship with QuadSystems has been great. In fact, of the dozens of vendors I deal with, I'd say they're at the top of my list when it comes to service and support."

**Next Steps.** "We're just tickled with it," Ms. Kellow-Hall commented, referring to PlanSystem3. FUEL plans to begin using the PlanView™ module in the near future. "PlanView will provide our clients with an online approval system," Ms. Kellow-Hall says. "They'll be able to go into PlanMaker through PlanView and see their paginations as they're coming together. They can easily see how ads are fitting in and how the book is evolving. They can view changes online and approve quickly. By the time we get to the backend of the process where there's always a time constraint, it won't be the first time the client has seen it and is making changes. PlanView will make our client relationships more dynamic and easier."

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