

Cross-media Editorial Workflow

Cellesche Zeitung, Germany



Facts and information

The Cellesche Zeitung, a local newspaper, sells just over 30,000 copies a day. It is published by Schweiger & Pick Verlag. The Madsack media group, located in nearby Hanover, has a stake in the Cellesche Zeitung.

The Cellesche Zeitung operates an editorial office that produces the local desks as well as national politics, business and sports pages.

CELLE. It is Monday, May 9, 2011. At 11:07 p.m. things are finally ready: the Cellesche Zeitung has successfully produced its full-run pages using the new editorial solution, Content-X. An exemplary go-live, a great success for the local paper and a long story full of accuracy, preparation and pride.

The history

In 2008, the Madsack media group, which has a stake in the Cellesche Zeitung, decided to change the working environment at the editorial office from Mac and Quark to PC and InDesign, a decision requiring new processes and software. In Hanover, a quick decision was reached in favor of a new editorial system. In Celle, this took a little longer. Finally, in January 2011, after a thorough examination of the market and many discussions with

providers, the Executive Board chose Content-X, the joint editorial solution offered by Digital Collections and ppi Media.

The editorial workflow

March 2011: while not everything had to be implemented again, many new things had to be integrated, such as the administration tool for topics and deadlines, iDater by Desatec, that was already in place in Celle. "The workflow is at the center of everything. The software is adapted to it. It perfects and automates the individual processes and system components," said Volker Franke, Deputy Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor at the Cellesche Zeitung.

This is how it works: iDater is at the center of the workflow for the local desk. Using the administration tool, freelance

personnel and editors in the field are informed about orders, including lengths and deadlines. After the order has been accepted and texts and pictures transmitted, the articles are stored in DC-X, the Content Management System, and revised by an editor. The final article is sent to the layout artist, who enters it in InDesign and releases it at a later stage for production.

"We work with just a few template pages. The handling of Content-X is very intuitive and the page layout is so quick that most articles can be laid out using text modules from the InDesign library, making them more appealing. Our pages are vivid and unique," said Franke, describing how simple it is to work with Content-X.



“Content-X is in a class of its own. The editorial solution is self-explanatory and easy to handle. The innovative concept, the combination of InDesign and the Content Management System enable independent and individual newspaper production. Supported by an excellent team in Celle, ppi Media, Digital Collections and Desatec experienced a go-live without any hitches. Accurate training of the staff in Celle was a further important reason why this worked so well.”

Volker Franke, Deputy Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor at the Cellesche Zeitung.

Preparation is everything

Despite the conscious decision to avoid too many template pages, one thing is very clear: nothing is more important than solid preparation. This impression is heightened by the comic hung up behind the desk of the Managing Editor, which states in large letters: “It pays to be organized.”

Using this credo as a guiding principle, the staff in Celle took part in several short workshops and learned the basic functions for doing editorial work in InDesign. Step by step, they built up libraries of articles in InDesign. Three weeks after this diligent preparation, there were templates for news, comments, pictures, teasers and much more. Editors just have to drag and drop them to the designated position on the page and arrange them in content groups which are transmitted to the Content Management System DC-X.

Content-X: InDesign and CMS

Digital Collections’ DC-X is an integral element of the editorial solution Content-X. It is the CMS that offers possibilities for innovative research and content capture.

It merges with ppi Media’s ContentLink, the InDesign plug-in, to become a novel editorial solution. “A solution that is not comparable with any of those offered by the competition. Content-X is self-explanatory, easy to handle, fast and flexible. It’s in a class of its own,” said Franke as he described the editorial software.

Therefore, just a few days after going live, the editors at the newspaper feel confident working with InDesign and DC-X. Research for background information is carried out as a matter of course in DC-X, as are searches for editors’ own articles, deliveries from freelance journalists or the latest reports from news agencies. They are shifted to the content groups and continuously repositioned on the InDesign pages as needed. The work flows, just like the news.

Cross-media: online with just one click

Nor is cross-media publishing a problem in Celle. Desatec’s Web-CMS is supplied with news directly via DC-X. Just one click and all of the articles are also available online. The priority of an article and how up-to-date it is automatically determine its position on the website.

Step-by-step implementation

Before Content-X went live in the editorial office, the solution was implemented and tested step by step in other departments. It was the PR Department of the Cellesche Zeitung that first produced single pages using the new system. In a second step, the advertising journal “Celler Markt” was published using Content-X. Just a short while later, the Production Department at the Cellesche Zeitung switched all of the processes for full-run production to Content-X, followed by the local desk one week later. The production of the Cellesche Zeitung was, therefore, shifted within only one week from QuarkXPress 3.32 under Mac OS 9 to Content-X using InDesign CS5 under Windows 7.

Next steps

Naturally, shortly after going live, there are still some small requests for optimizing processes. Altogether, though, the joy over such an extremely successful implementation outweighs everything else. “Everything worked out just fine: no emergency production, all of the pages were free of defects and the deadline was always met,” concluded Volker Franke, summing up the first successful days using Content-X.

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