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Colo. publisher rolls out workflow software to unify production

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EDITOR

LONGMONT, Colo. — In a bid to standardize production at its northern Colorado dailies, Lehman Communications in April deployed workflow software from Prolmage.

Lehman's Daily Times-Call in Longmont and the Reporter-Herald in nearby Loveland tapped ProImage's browser-based NewsWay app to streamline production at its dailies as well as four weeklies in the Boulder/Longmont area. The publisher also prints roughly 100 commercial jobs including the Denver Business Journal and the Boulder County Business Report.

Lassoing workflow was a logical step for the Daily Times-Call (daily, 21,361; Sunday, 23,149), which also recently converted from film to computer-to-plate imaging, installing two Kodak Trendsetter 70 thermal units. In addition to "a much better dot on the plate" with thermal, according to Tony Harrison, prepress manager, the smaller footprint of the units was also a factor for Lehman, which has limited prepress space.

The publisher's old ECRM filmsetters resided on the second floor of the building in the middle of the Daily Times-Call's editorial and advertising operations. The newly freed-up space will be divided between those departments.

Integrates, stitches

NewsWay dovetails with the Daily Times-Call's Tera GN3 editorial archive and Tark archive software, and Software Consulting Services' Layout 8000 and ClassPag apps. Preflighting is done with OneVision's Asura software.

"It integrates very well with all of the front-end systems," said Systems Manager Suzanne Barrett.

The customization of the software — which also allows the Daily Times-Call to manage multiple zoning for its products — has also been key, according to Vice President of Production Dale Carr.



Photos: Newspapers & Technology

Suzanne Barrett, systems manager; Tony Harrison, prepress manager; and Dale Carr, vice president of production at the Daily Times-Call, in the newspaper's prepress area.

Below: The Times-Call installed NewsWay workflow software from Prolmage in conjunction with its conversion to thermal computer-to-plate earlier this year.



The space previously occupied by film imagesetters on the second floor of the Times-Call building will be divided between the advertising and editorial departments.

"That's important because we have very specific needs," he said.

Unique to its workflow is the Daily Times-Call's use of ad stitching. NewsWay takes separate ad and editorial elements and stitches them together for pagination, allowing the paper to accept ads earlier in the day.

"The ad stitching has made a big difference with the content coming in remotely from Loveland," Harrison said. "And ads generally come in ready to go."

Content for the (Loveland) Reporter-Herald (daily, 17,632; Sunday, 18,149) — which has the earliest press time of any Colorado daily — comes into the Daily Times-Call over a T1 line.

NewsWay's Edition Planning feature includes edition tracking, soft

proofing, e-mail conferencing and annotation, allowing the Daily Times-Call's sister publication and commercial customers to check and approve pages over the Web. Harrison said approximately 90 percent of customers supply PDFs.

NewsWay's Plate Wizard creates custom 2-, 4- and 8-up impositions or other custom plate configurations so pages can be dragged into the appropriate place on the template for automatic imposition. Plates are then output and NewsWay load-balances jobs to either of the two Kodak CTP devices.

Communication

Key to making the project tick are

Continued on next page

communication and cooperation, Barrett said — something that comes easy to this newspaper's staff, which he said exemplifies the spirit of newspapering.

"You can do well with a good group of people," she said. "You've got to have key people in each department that understand how the process works."

Many on the Daily Times-Call staff have been at the newspaper for more than 20 years. Carr has been at the paper twice that long, to which a black-and-white picture of the paper's 1974 Goss Uniliner press commissioning that recently turned up in the pressroom attests.

"Who's that guy?" Carr joked, pointing out a 30-year-younger ver-



Photo: Newspapers & Technology

Vice President of Production Dale Carr proudly displays his newspaper's commercial jobs on the walls of his office.

sion of himself.

The human element is key, Barrett said, because "a project of this magnitude touches every aspect of production."

Next up for the publisher: a possible press and production facility upgrade, although Carr would not comment specifically.

"Urbanites are workhorses but they're becoming obsolete," he said of Lehman's current 9-unit Goss press, which handles more than 75 press runs each week.▲

Prolmage

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