



The image shows a screenshot of the EMedia website's navigation bar. At the top left is the 'EMEDIA' logo. To its right are four colored boxes: 'EMEDIA LIVE!' (green), 'EMEDIA MAGAZINE' (yellow), 'DVD PRO' (orange), and 'ONLINE INC.' (blue). Below these are six yellow boxes: 'CURRENT ISSUE', 'SUBSCRIPTIONS', 'EDITOR'S CHOICE', 'EDITORIAL CALENDAR', 'INFOLINK', and 'CONTACT'. A search bar with a 'Search' button is on the right. Below the navigation bar is a banner for '1984 Apple revolutionizes desktop publishing.' with a clapperboard icon. A 'Browse by Subject' link is at the bottom right.

# information insider

## Manage Your Media: Back to the Future

**Robert J. Boeri**  
**Martin Hensel**

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There's nothing like a vacation to reset your perspective, and Bob's recent trip to Ireland was no exception. Maybe the folks in Fitzgerald's Pub thought the document management talk was just a result of too much Guinness, but the real inspiration came from Dublin's marvelous Book of Kells.

This beautifully illustrated Latin Gospel text, over 1,000 years old, survived not only the ages but theft and mishandling. Yet there it is on display in Trinity College, radiant as ever. Those were simple times when compound documents were text, graphics, and gold, and both portability and archival qualities were obviously first-rate. Moreover, the illustrations in Kells are richer than 16 million colors, the text was written in a stable language (Latin), and the only viewer required was your eyes. There was a problem duplicating these texts though; the monks could work only so fast, and--so far as we know--there is only one Book of Kells.

Now fast forward 1,000 years to 1971--the year IBM invented the floppy disk. This not-attractive 8-inch device held a whopping 80KB, enough to store maybe 50 pages of the Kells text, and--more importantly--was easy to copy. Today, finding a system to use that floppy could be a problem. Device interfaces, viewers, standards, and ever-increasing media capacity make management a continuing challenge. "Storage" and standards (Web and XML) have spawned overwhelming numbers and types of document objects, each requiring tracking and management. Finding and combining the right objects and the right versions of those objects, and tracking their progress, is increasingly difficult. What's a publisher to do?

In the early days of document management there were two main contenders: Documentum and PC Docs. Documentum had the top-down or enterprise view and let you manage and assemble document components; PC Docs let you start small and connect corrals of document files. Both provided workflow tracking and control, and managed versions of documents so you were guaranteed to be working with the latest document objects to avoid confusion with lingering older versions. Document management also included schemes to let you find documents wherever they lurked in the publishing lifecycle, either by metadata (such as time-created or last modified, or author's name) or content (full-text searching often integrated with systems from Verity or Fulcrum). Even with the verifiable cost savings, enterprise solutions required enterprise resources.

Three factors then shook up the Document Management picture: the Web's emergence as a medium screaming for management, XML's presenting a customizable way of dealing with document components, and the simple need to manage documents without all the overhead of an enterprise (or even large workgroup) solution.

### **à la carte or in your office?**

It should be no surprise that Microsoft, via its Office suite and Outlook email system, provided one of the first wide-scale document management solutions for professionals. True, the system doesn't offer fancy workflow, yet it does provide controlled enterprise access to document folders, with basic content and attribute searching.

Recent workgroup applications offer more targeted management facilities. To manage authoring, Adobe's FrameMaker+SGML and Arbortext's Adept (via Epic) both offer easy integration with Documentum. Based on its recent work with AT&T, Arbortext announced a strategic alliance with Documentum. If you want a fully integrated lifecycle publishing system with built-in document management, Interleaf's BladeRunner or products from Inso can fill the bill. Interleaf recently acquired Texcel, another object-oriented management system.

For document management à la carte choices with all the benefits of the integrated approaches, Enigma's Insight might be your cup of tea. It offers optional management with PC Docs or Documentum and accepts a wide range of inputs, from Acrobat PDF to word processors to FrameMaker to SGML or XML, and delivers structured electronic book applications with focused searching-by-element, sharable annotations, and LAN-CD (or LAN-DVD) hybrid delivery. In fact, your document management choices now range from office-based, focused publishing applications to lifecycle integration.

### **do you object?**

XML cries out for modularity and objects, and object-oriented systems like Arbortext's Poet are designed to oblige. Documentum aims for higher performance by using relational technology to track these objects.

Confused? It gets worse. There are no industry standards for content-based retrieval or workflow systems. Even medium-size enterprises often have one or two document management systems in addition to a system like Outlook offering rudimentary document management. Integrating, maintaining, and training everyone to use these disparate systems is expensive and challenging.

Lastly, have you heard the latest recommended strategy for managing potential financial Y2K problems? Keep paper copies of your bills and statements. After all, those print-dependent monks and their books survived the last millennium, right?

*Robert J. Boeri ([bboeri@world.std.com](mailto:bboeri@world.std.com)) and Martin Hensel ([mhensel@hensel.com](mailto:mhensel@hensel.com)) are columnists for INFORMATION INSIDER. Boeri is Information Systems Publishing Consultant at Factory Mutual Engineering of Norwood, Massachusetts. Hensel is president of Texterity Inc., a Newton, Massachusetts-based consulting firm that builds SGML-based editorial and production systems for publishers, corporations, interactive services, and compositors.*

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