

Native Migration of Workstations to QuarkXPress 6 at McCann-Erickson France

“No one at McCann-Erickson France hesitated over our proposal. Migration to QuarkXPress 6 was an obvious choice,” said Frédéric Alexandre, IT director of Fast Micro and IT provider for McCann-Erickson France. “Since we’ve been running McCann’s IT, our priority has been to provide long-term solutions for existing activities whilst simultaneously introducing new evolutive technologies. By renewing its trust in Quark, our client has obtained access to a range of tools that in due time will allow it to optimize production flows.” Frédéric Alexandre is convinced that the future lies in content management servers, a field in which Quark is the acknowledged leader.

“The QuarkXPress 6, Mac OS X, and G5 package paved the way for change,” said Patrick Lorrain, Managing Director of McCann-Erickson France. “Once all three were available, it seemed logical to adopt Frédéric Alexandre’s proposals. We were fully aware that it could enhance our productivity. We have full faith in Fast Micro. They manage our IT requirements and we view them more as partners than suppliers.”

According to Alexandre: “Our clients acknowledge that we have acquired an expertise in communication industry requirements. They expect us to anticipate their future requirements in line with industry developments. McCann-Erickson is one of our key clients with 700 people across 3 sites. Seven of our consultants work on-site full time with the ad agency’s IT department and are responsible for managing a network of 132 Macintoshes — all of which were recently upgraded to Mac OS X to run the new version of QuarkXPress.” This move was proposed and planned to coincide with the purchase of QuarkXPress® 6.

QuarkXPress 6: The Culmination of a Strategy

Once McCann-Erickson had made the decision to upgrade their systems to QuarkXPress 6, they took their time to draw up a comprehensive plan to ensure a seamless transition. The objective was to ensure a smooth transition and not to disrupt systems in any way or jeopardize any of the creative department’s activities. No leaflet, flyer, or poster designed by the agency could be overlooked. When working for such prestigious clients as L’Oréal, Michelin, Microsoft, and Nestlé, you can’t afford to take risks. That’s why the network was gradually upgraded to Mac OS X. During the first phase, creative teams worked with a mixture of QuarkXPress 3 and 4 under Mac OS® 9 or in Classic under Panther (Mac OS X 10.3). Version 5 was intentionally left aside as the objective was never to work permanently under Classic.

Thanks to this methodological approach, all 132 workstations were upgraded to the new Mac OS throughout 2004, paving the way for QuarkXPress 6.

“During this time, we were able to prepare and adapt the machines for Mac OS X and replace a number of G4s with powerful G5s and to calmly focus on the

QuarkXPress upgrade,” explained Alexandre. “I must admit that once the migration to Mac OS X was complete, most of our worries were over. The operators were so familiar with QuarkXPress that they simply started working on the new version. They didn’t need any help from us.”

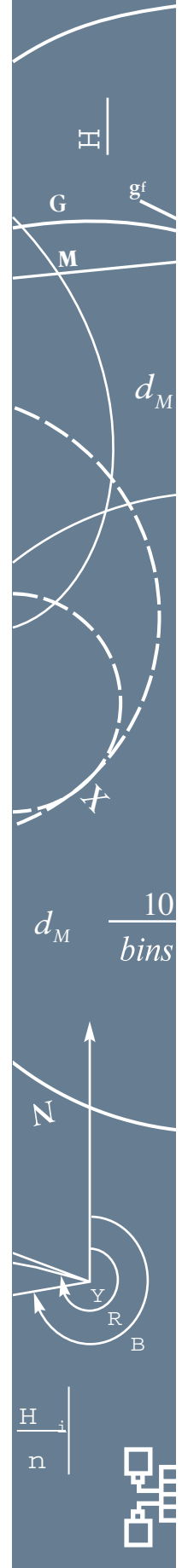
Fast Micro acknowledges that this was a huge advantage. “Alternative solutions involve considerable user training, and this often has an impact on a company’s production capability. In other words, you think you’re saving money by buying a cheaper solution, but in fact this saving is more than offset by other associated costs.” McCann-Erickson did not quibble. Their objective was to make a long-term financial and rational investment and to continue to use reputable stable and robust software. Furthermore, most of McCann’s European subsidiaries also work on QuarkXPress.

The last and perhaps most decisive factor was Quark’s decision to establish closer relations with its clients.

“It is fair to say that for many years, Quark’s technical and sales teams failed to establish close relations with their customers. In order to facilitate the deployment of QuarkXpress 6, we asked Quark whether one of their engineers could help us set up the Quark License Administrator (QLA),” said Alexandre. “All it took was one phone call for the engineer to be sent over. Quark has the resources to provide a top quality after-sales service, and that is reassuring. The fact that they have recently opened a Paris office is hugely significant and highlights their ambition to become a major player once again and to capitalize on their existing client base.”

Fast Micro engineers know that they are going to need to invest time in training staff. They plan to make a quick presentation of QuarkXPress 6 to each team to demonstrate its new features.

“Synchronization of text between several documents, layer management, and project concepts... are just some of the new features operators will have to learn about. Often, experienced users adapt too quickly to software upgrades,” said Alexandre. “It’s sometimes worth taking a little more time to be operational to ensure that new time-saving functionalities are fully exploited.”





The Future in Perspective

Fast Micro particularly appreciates the developments introduced in the latest upgrade, which facilitate the fast deployment of QuarkXPress 6 on an Open Directory type client-server architecture. This feature makes centralized network management significantly easier with two G5 Xserves backed up by two Xserve RAIDs. Furthermore, this architecture opens up McCann-Erickson's IT department to future possibilities and endeavors. Fast Micro and McCann-Erickson are interested in other Quark® solutions, such as Quark Digital Media Server, Quark Rights Management, and Quark Workflow Engine for optimizing centralized content management, rights management, and production flow.

"The communications professionals at McCann-Erickson fully understand the issues at stake and budget the appropriate resources to keep their IT systems up to date," said Alexandre. With QuarkXPress 6, McCann Erickson is able to proceed into the future in capable hands.

CONTACTING QUARK

In North America

Quark, Inc.
1800 Grant St.
Suite 800
Denver, CO 80203
www.quark.com
solutions@quark.com
800.676.4575
303.894.8888

In Europe

Quark Media House Sàrl
Rue de Saint Nicolas 7
2000 Neuchâtel
Switzerland
euro.quark.com
solutions@quark.ch
00800 1787 8275

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