

## Content Takes Center Stage

*Putting content into context has never been this complex or exciting.*

by Teri Tan

In the publishing BPO world, everything is contentcentric. Using XML technologies and standards, you as the publisher can now create the content once and publish that same content-- in different forms-- over many channels, such as via your Web site, on CD- ROM or as e- book files.

With its New York office soon to be opened, Planman is shifting from being U.K.- centric--90% of its clientele is British-- to seeing more North American activity. Says senior manager for business development Amit Vohra, "About 65% of our revenue comes from the publishing sector with the rest from other BPO transactions. The publishing projects, 70% books and 30% journals, are handled by our 200- strong Okhla publishing division."

At Planman, part of India's largest multi- interest consulting and business services corporation, its e- paper solution for the newspaper publishing industry is unique in the marketplace. "We are the first India- based company to offer an e- paper solution that addresses conversion of both current and archival content for the Arabic newspaper market. We are currently contracted by a leading U.K.- based newspaper publishing group to convert about 1,500 pages daily from 17 tabloids. The project cycle time is tight: the PDFs would be FTP- ed across at around 4 a.m. Indian time, and we have a four- hour window to deliver the XML files. So we structured the work flow to have most of the XML tagging and special characters converted automatically, and at a very high accuracy level. We also created the digital edition for Web publishing using customized XSL/ T, which is then transferred to a user interface specifically designed by our Web development team."

For one monthly project of two secondary- level textbooks, Vohra's team takes on the design and prepress tasks. "We have about three weeks from receipt of edited manuscript to first InDesign- based PDF proofs. Each title has over 250 illustrations, and we often have to either redraw or color according to the artwork brief provided. Upon completion, the pages would go to our on- site project manager for approval before they are FTP- ed to our client. We have four days to incorporate the changes, if any, before printing the second proofs." Planman also offers e- book conversion, abstracting and indexing, nondestructive book scanning, photo research and syndication liaison, as well as content development.

Operations- wise, the company is comparatively small, but therein lies its strength. "It allows us to personalize our service to suit each client's needs. We have the advantage of knowing up close and understanding our client's projects and the markets they serve, and being able to conduct our own research to help them work better and generate new products using existing content. By the same token, our team presents a cohesive single- control operation, thus streamlining the work flow, eliminating redundancies and keeping costs low. We are now focused on further developing the relationships we have with the existing clientele, increasing our international presence and strengthening our publishing services capabilities."