CASE STUDY

Ad Import Plug-in
For
MEI (Managing Editor, Inc.)

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The Client

MEI (Managing Editor, Inc.) is a privately owned software company that develops and integrates innovative software solutions for rapidly evolving publishing markets worldwide. Additionally, MEI is a portfolio company of Adobe Systems, Inc. The company provides a variety of automated pagination and workflow solutions to newspaper and magazine publishers, as well as to other print and electronic publishing markets. MEI's flagship software is its automated ad layout solution, Page Director Ad Layout System (ALS), which has become the number one choice for publishers worldwide.

Challenges

MEI requires efficient capabilities to import layout information from its own software offerings into Adobe InDesign. Any solution must be compatible with the MEI's existing software offerings and systems, including:

- *Page Director Ad Layout System (ALS)* allows users to control and manage the advertising side of publications.
- *AdForce* is a smaller-scale, semi-automated advertising layout and issue-management system.
- *Page Director Classified Layout System (CLS)* allows users to create classified pagination with the most advanced feature sets.
- *ClassForce* is a smaller-scale, semi-automated classified layout system.

MetaOption Solutions

Ad Import Plug-in

- Ad Import Plug-in allows ALS and CLS users to open page dummies directly in Adobe InDesign.
- For each ad placed in ALS, Ad Import Plug-in creates a graphic frame in InDesign. If ALS-placed ads include valid file paths, the graphics are auto-linked to picture boxes in the InDesign document.

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- For CLS documents, Ad Import Plug-in creates the frame type specified for each object type in the CLS type manager.
- Ad Import Plug-in works with both Intel and Macintosh systems.

Architecture

Adobe InDesign is a small host application. Features are implemented through client plug-ins. InDesign defines architecture, and the architecture determines how a plug-in interacts with the host. Architecture also provides the building blocks from which each plug-in is made.

Object Models

An object model is a set of rules or conventions that describe how objects are created and handled within a system. The C++ language can implement an object model, describe it as a contiguous block of memory (at its most basic level), and define how that object is instantiated, behaves during its lifetime, and can be destroyed.

Object models can be used to map the behavior of large, complex systems. The Microsoft® COM (Component Object Model) defines objects with interface functionality, making it possible to have distributed components.

Model-View-Controller (MVC)

MVC architecture formulizes relationships among input, output, and data processing. InDesign Plug-ins use COM Object Model, MVC architecture, and various Design Patterns, such as Observer, Façade, Chain of Responsibility, Command, etc.

Technology & Environment

- Adobe InDesign CS3 SDK
- C++
- Development Environment
  - Visual Studio .Net 2005
  - XCode 2.4.1
- Operating System
  - Windows
    - Windows XP or later
  - Macintosh (Power PC/MacIntel)
    - Mac OS X 10.4.9 or later

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