

# Taking the DAM challenge

Elvis Presley and Osama Bin Laden are two unlikely figures behind the success of the Australian operations of New Holland Publishing, a specialist non-fiction publisher that has been operating in this country for over 16 years.

Begun as a series of picture books in the style of *Where's Wally*, *Where's Bin Laden* was a hit with the public and has now spawned a version incorporating the King of Rock 'n' Roll, Elvis Presley. Also soon to be released following the death of Michael Jackson is *Where's Michael*.

Conceived by New Holland Managing Director Fiona Schultz, the *Where's Bin Laden* series allows all the family to join in the fun of searching for the Al-Qaeda mastermind in a series of busy pictorials.

Since being launched in 2006, Australian illustrator Daniel Lalic has created three editions of the *Where's Bin Laden* puzzle book and even a 3D jigsaw. New Holland is now looking to replicate its success with the *Where's Elvis* and *Where's Michael* series.

The New Holland Web site at [www.newholland.com.au](http://www.newholland.com.au) showcases a diverse catalogue of titles that cover cooking, parenting, sport, biography and travel. The publisher releases over 70 new titles a year onto the local market, largely wholly Australian content alongside content from its international parent.

Warren Moore, Digital and E-Marketing Manager for New Holland Publishers in Australia, is responsible for implementing a digital asset management (DAM) system to manage a large archive of images and illustrations that have been built up over the length of time the company has been in operation. This has grown even larger with acquisitions of image archives from Landsdowne, Rigby and other sources going back to the early part of this century.

One archive of sporting images in particular prompted the move to acquire a DAM system. A library of cricket photos includes some of the giants of Australian Test teams from the 30s, 40s and 50s. While these images sat in filing cabinets as transparencies there would be little likelihood the company could exploit their commercial value.

At the beginning of 2009 New Holland elected to move forward with a digital asset management (DAM) platform from Cumulus.

"Our first priority was the image library," he said. "We had an asset that we could not use as it was not catalogued."

## Digitising workload

Accomplishing this would be no easy task. Digitising tens of thousands of transparencies and photos presents a major logistical challenge for a small company unable to devote major resources at the task. The company is only 28 strong at its Chatswood, Sydney head office, with about a dozen staff involved in book production.

The production workflow followed by the designers uses Adobe InDesign although there is some residual use of Quark Publisher. Cumulus has not yet been integrated into New Holland's production workflow, all PDF files and images are archived on a physical disc once a book is published.

"Given the size of the company, our focus in 2010 will be on inputting images to the Cumulus DAM, beginning with 10-12 years of CD archives," said Moore.

"We also have a huge library of high resolution transparencies and photographs to scan. We do have a transparency scanner and will probably look at getting a top end consumer scanner for the photographs.

"At this stage my thinking is we will probably scan the photographs at low resolution sufficient for cataloguing, as it does not make sense to scan the 30,000 images at high resolution on the off chance we will need them. Its easy enough to pull them out of physical storage when we do, but at least the DAM will give us the ability to know what we have."



"OUR FIRST PRIORITY WAS THE IMAGE LIBRARY, WE HAD AN ASSET THAT WE COULD NOT USE AS IT WAS NOT CATALOGUED." - WARREN MOORE, DIGITAL AND E-MARKETING MANAGER.

While the scanning program is under development, New Holland's in-house photographer is already building a considerable library of digital images on the DAM. These are processed in Apple's Aperture suite and converted from RAW images to JPG with the appropriate metadata.

New Holland's Cumulus DAM has been installed on a Windows server with associated storage server offering up to 16TB capacity. This is backed up to tape every week onto a pair of alternate tapes.

The New Holland network is a mix of Macs and PCs, and it was essential to setup Web access for the international company's IT manager located in South Africa.

The DAM was installed by Cumulus distributor DataBasics and Sydney reseller Go Systems, with engineering assistance from Canto in Germany. The task of categorising images as they are ingested has been simplified by means of the Cumulus i-prefillerPro plugin, which was configured to generate a popup form prefilled with descriptive metadata.

Cumulus also offers an ecommerce plugin that will allow New Holland to eventually provide the ability for visitors to the company Web site to browse and buy images online.

For a small publisher like New Holland, it will be a big investment to categorise and scan more than 100,000 individual hard copy images. To ensure a payoff it will need to make the job of accessing and acquiring images simple and pain-free wherever you are in the world, whether holed up in a motel in Memphis or hiding in remote Afghanistan.