

THEMAGAZINE

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AGENTIC AI

ADAC

ADEO

THE AUTHENTICITY ENGINE

BRASILATA

BURDA

EUROPA-PARK

FLEURY MICHON

HYPHEN

MARVEL

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...It's the beginning
of a new family of
conferences...

Dr. Carol Werlé,
CEO
DALIM SOFTWARE GmbH



"In the Air tonight" music

In the Air tonight

Welcome to **THEMAGAZINE 29**.

With hundreds of different covers, featuring by popular demand one of the lightest and most eco friendly paper on earth, and yet boasting top of the line embellishment on the cover, individualized, and loaded with details, **let's just say that it took us 40 years**, with significant help from our friends, to get there !

But there it is. You likely hold a very unique sample in your hand and should your neighbor read the same magazine, if both of you unfold the back cover at the same time, **much likely one of you will win, or loose. Just give it a try !**

This edition would not have been the same without the enthusiastic creative help of our friends at **SM4G** which we are happy to introduce you at the **DSCOVER 2026** conference. **DSCOVER** which takes place on March 17 & 18 marks the beginning of a new family of conferences we are engaging into supporting to expand on the successes on **DALIM DUO** and **DALIM WWTM** conferences and the likes which our audience have been familiar with since over 30 years.

This very March we therefore all meet in Lille, in the North of France, a couple of hours away with the Eurostar for our friends from UK, a bit more for the ones traveling from the americas but the journey is worth it. We will be talking **Retail, Brands, Tech, AI, co-creation and much more**. Together we will push the boundaries of AI assisted creation and reveal **FUSION**, fruit of many years of work as the robust platform for media production in the age of AI. We will explain why we made of **FUSION** an MCP Server at a time where even the silicon valley was not 100% sure of the acronym and we will invite people on stage to share experiences and stories.

And if you wonder why "**In the Air tonight**", it is a discreet hint at the closing of our magazine production process, usually well into the late hours of the night, only days away of our first readers holding the printed magazine in their hands. We love leveraging our users production tools and make it easy to make compelling printed books, magazines and all sorts of printed or online quality products.

But do not take our word for it, read on and find out what our community is up to.

Carol

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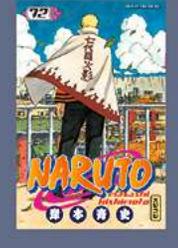
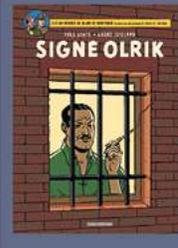
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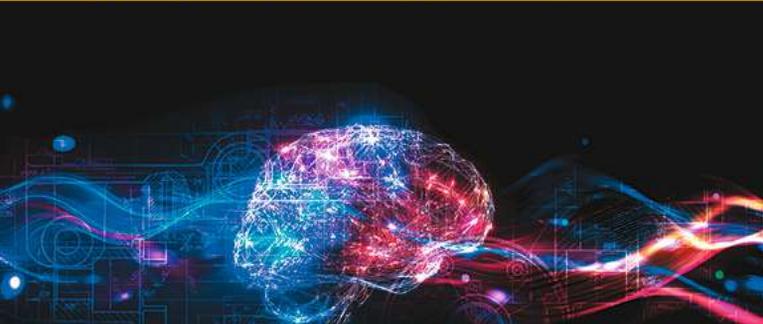
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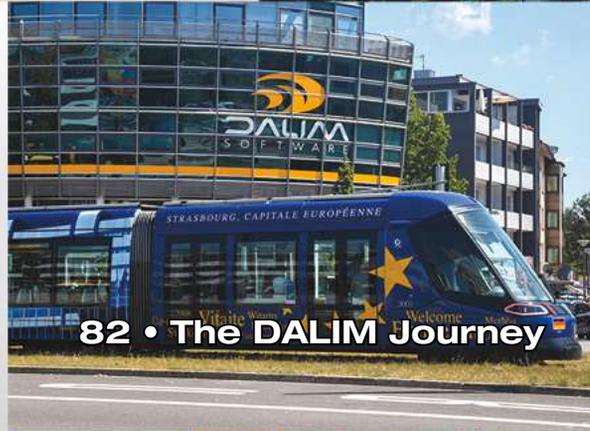
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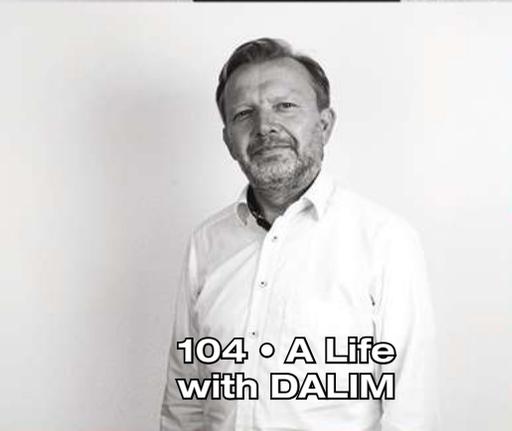
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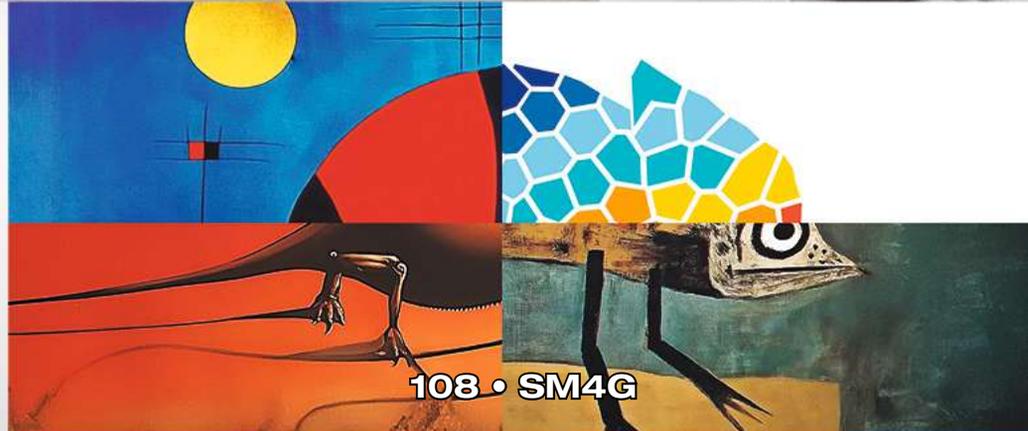
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Isabelle Billerey-Rayel
Business Development Director
DALIM SOFTWARE GmbH

The Architect of Tomorrow

Isabelle Billerey-Rayel on 30 Years of DALIM Innovation

For over 30 years, **Isabelle Billerey-Rayel** played a pivotal role in shaping **DALIM SOFTWARE**'s evolution. Her story is more than a career path — it's a testament to resilience, innovation, and shared growth with a company pioneering the future of graphic arts.

Her journey nearly took a different direction. After earning an engineering degree in production and quality management, Isabelle aspired to lead in the automotive industry. But a recruiter dismissed her: "You'll never get the job simply because you are a woman." Encouraged to explore opportunities abroad, she soon found herself interviewing at a software company in Kehl — **DALIM** — a decision she now calls a "great career accelerator."

Crisis as Catalyst

Isabelle joined **DALIM** as a Support Engineer, just as the company faced a major challenge: Tektronix, the hardware platform powering **DALIM**'s solution, was being discontinued. It could have spelled the end — instead, it marked a new beginning.

“
...Never stop learning.
Stay curious...”

The team rebuilt their solutions from scratch using modern industry standards like C++, UNIX, and CMYK++, leaving legacy technologies behind. From this challenge emerged a powerful new portfolio: **LITHO**, **TWIST**, **Bolero**, and **Tango**.

“We were riding the wave of innovation,” Isabelle says. “In fact, for our industry, we were even ahead of it.” That innovative spirit fueled **DALIM**'s breakthroughs: **TWIST** (1994), the first true automated workflow solution; **Ficelle** (2000), its first web platform; **DIALOGUE** (2003), a pioneer in remote proofing; followed by **DALIM ES** in 2009 and **DALIM FUSION** in 2024.



This wave of innovation also required a business transformation. **Isabelle** led the move to Software Maintenance Agreements (SMAs), replacing lifetime free support with paid service contracts — a necessary step to sustain **DALIM**'s ambitious roadmap. In doing so, she discovered an unexpected passion for sales.

Driven by People

Isabelle believes **DALIM**'s greatest strength lies in its people. In 1998, when the company relaunched as **DALIM SOFTWARE**, the team redefined its strategy and business model together. "There was solidarity, knowledge-sharing, and commitment," she recalls — values that still define the "*DALIM Family*."

One of her proudest achievements is building the next generation of leadership. As R&D leader, she hired **Christophe Bindler**, **Christophe Rohmer**, and **Vincent Demange** — all now playing key roles in steering the company forward. "*People are the heart and fuel of any company*," she says.

“

...People are the heart and fuel of any company...

Ahead of Her Time

Ahead of Her Time In 2000, a move to the Loire Valley led Isabelle to believe she would have to resign — remote work wasn't standard. But CEO **Dr. Carol Werlé** embraced the idea. "*I became a pioneer of remote work, long before it was the norm*," she says. That flexibility enable her to grow into a business development role and help build **DALIM**'s global partner network.

Looking Forward

Isabelle's journey is filled with insights. First: embrace the unexpected — a lesson learned from a diverted flight to New Delhi that ended in adventure. Second: act with integrity. "*Always tell the truth and never promise what you can't deliver*." And most importantly: "*Never stop learning. Stay curious*."

As **DALIM SOFTWARE** celebrates 40 years, it remains a company that adapts, innovates, and puts people first — from its early shift to industry standards to its modern embrace of cloud, automation, and AI.

For **Isabelle**, the future is clear: "*Continue to innovate, stay inclusive, and deliver solutions that respect people and support responsible business*." That vision ensures **DALIM**'s legacy goes beyond technology — it's about empowering people to shape the future, together. ■



Scan the QR code and get in touch with **Isabelle**.



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A Library for Legends

How Média-Participations Built a Digital Publishing

For over a decade, European comic book giant Media Participations has been on a formidable quest: to centralize a vast and growing universe of iconic characters and titles. The solution, a deep and evolving partnership with DALIM SOFTWARE, has not only created a seamless, automated workflow but has revolutionized how the publisher manages its most precious assets.

Média-Participations is a name that resonates with comic book fans across the globe. As Europe's third-largest publishing house, it is the creative force behind legendary series like Blake and Mortimer, The Smurfs, and Lucky Luke, and the French-language home for DC Comics superheroes through its Urban Comics imprint. Managing a catalog of this scale, which also includes manga and magazines, presents a monumental challenge. The group's portfolio is a living library, constantly expanding with new editions, languages, and formats.

The journey to tame this complexity began in 2010. The publisher needed more than just a storage system; it needed a dynamic, intelligent hub that could serve its diverse publishing houses—including Dargaud, Dupuis, and Le Lombard—while maintaining strict security and brand integrity. This was the beginning of a partnership that would see DALIM ES become the central nervous system for the publisher's entire production and archival workflow.

"We started with DALIM ES (which we call 'Expression' internally) in 2010 and expanded its use in 2016," explained Jonathan Lambert, a computer graphics specialist at Media Participations. "It was a foundational shift for us."

Uniting a Universe of Content

Before the integration of ES, the process of managing and distributing assets was fragmented. With thousands of titles, each with multiple editions, languages, and revisions, the risk of error

was high, and efficiency was a constant struggle. A marketing team in one country might need the cover of a new Lucky Luke album, while a production manager in another needed to reprint a classic from the archives. Fulfilling these requests was a manual, time-consuming process.

“We don’t need to ask somebody, ‘Hey, I want this album, I want this cover. Can you give me the image?’” Lambert noted, highlighting the bottlenecks of the old system. The core challenge was clear: how to create a single source of truth for over 27,000 titles, ensuring that every user—from publishers to marketers—could access the exact file they needed, instantly and securely.

An Intelligent, Automated Workflow

The implementation of ES marked a turning point. The system was designed to be both powerful and intuitive, providing a centralized platform for the entire lifecycle of a publication.

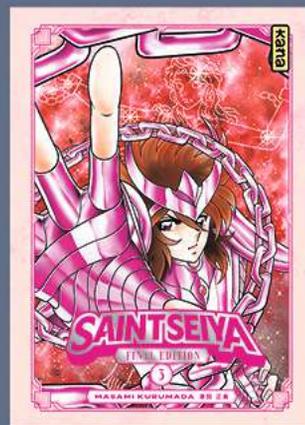
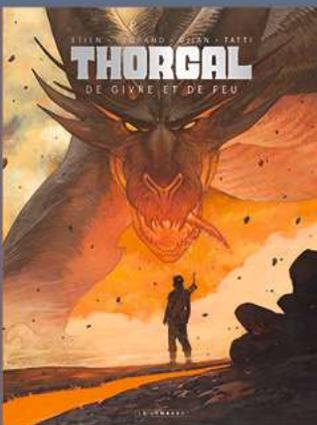
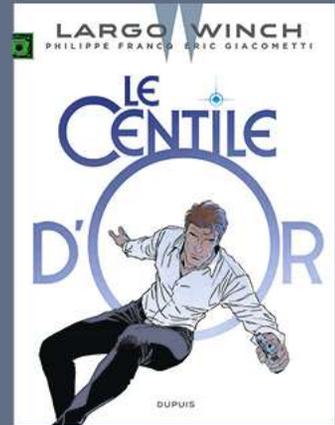
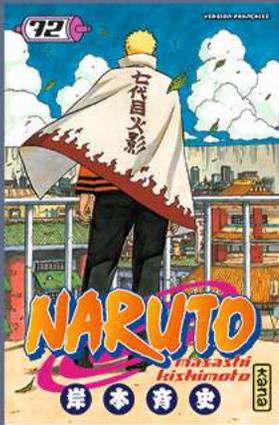
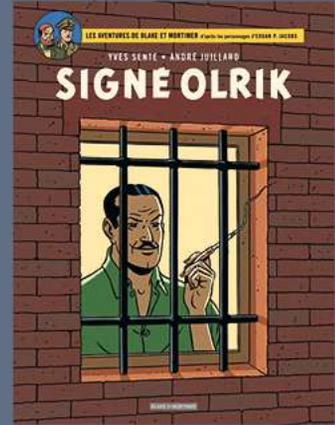
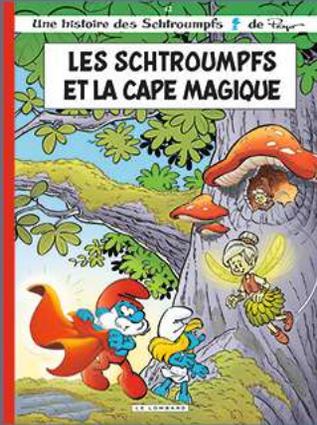
“Each user only sees the collections they are working on,” Lambert explained. *“So if I work for Dargaud, I see only Dargaud. I don’t see Dupuis, and so on.”* This granular permissions system was the first step, ensuring security and simplifying the user experience.



The workflow is a model of efficiency. When a new project is initiated, a flat plan is created in ES, defining the format and page count. As PDF files are uploaded, the system automatically triggers a series of actions. An email notifies the publisher, and a rigorous preflight check inspects each file for critical issues like image resolution or color profiles.

This is where the power of soft proofing and online collaboration comes alive. The integrated color management tools can flag issues instantly, such as when the ink density in a black area is too high. *“In this case, we show the black color is too high in the green section,”* Lambert pointed out. Publishers can then log in, view the pages in DALIM ES, and make annotations directly on the file.

“The publisher can say, ‘Hey, here, there’s some correction in text or image you must do,’” Lambert said. This collaborative loop, complete with visual markups and attachments, streamlines the approval process, eliminating ambiguity and saving invaluable time. Once all corrections are made and the pages are validated, the title is ready to print.

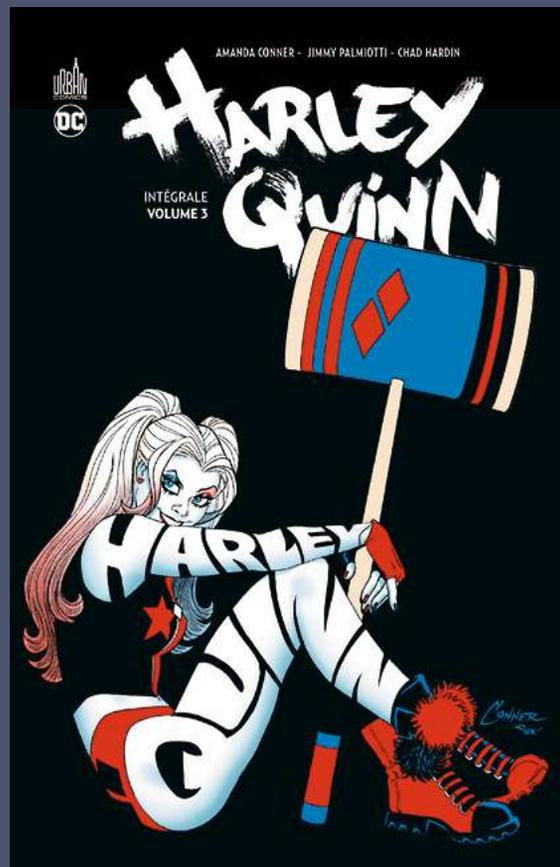


Speed, Autonomy, and a Future-Ready Archive

The impact has been transformative. Today, Média-Participations houses over 27,000 titles in its DALIM ES archive, all ready for immediate download in high or low resolution for print or re-print. The system is not just a production tool; it's a living, searchable database that empowers the entire organization.

One of the most revolutionary features is the seamless integration with Média-Participations' internal data management platform, known as BDI. This system handles the commercial aspects of each title—ISBNs, pricing, author information, and more.

"ES communicates with the platform, and the BDI communicates back with ES," Lambert described. This two-way synchronization is critical. BDI sends metadata such as ISBN codes to ES, while DALIM ES feeds BDI not only with album cover images but also with all page thumbnails, as well as key production information such as page counts. This data automatically populates the commercial database and is also used to supply third-party platforms such as Amazon and Fnac. This synergy eliminates redundant data entry and ensures complete consistency across all systems.



The benefits extend far beyond the production floor. The marketing and web departments are now completely autonomous. *"They go directly to DALIM ES and take what they want, the resolution they want,"* Lambert emphasized. *"It's very, very quick. The response for us is very, very nice."* This self-service capability allows teams to instantly generate custom PDFs for any purpose, complete with specific watermarks, copyrights, or language requirements.

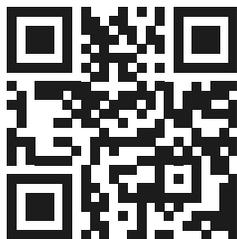
Furthermore, the system has become a powerful engine for digital distribution. With a simple custom action script, users can generate ePub files directly from the validated print-ready PDFs, ensuring that digital editions are perfectly synchronized with their print counterparts.

From a single interface, Média-Participations has created a formidable, end-to-end ecosystem that secures its legacy, streamlines its present, and prepares it for the future. It's a crystal-clear demonstration of how a deep, collaborative partnership can truly revolutionize a publishing empire. ■



Company	: Media Participations
Location	: Avenue Paul-Henri Spaak 7 • 1060 Bruxelles • 57 rue Gaston Tessier • 75019 Paris
Type of activity	: Publishing and media entertainment.
Products	: DALIM ES
Reasons for purchase	: DALIM ES: Print production, especially preflighting and normalizing files.
Integrator	: DALIM SOFTWARE

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The Authenticity Engine

**Navigating Creativity and
Automation in the AI Era.**

A discussion with Patrick Staud, Alessio Saraceno
and Paul Melcher.







Patrick Staud
Chief Creative Technologist,
.monks

Patrick Staud creates high-impact visual campaigns blending CGI, photography, and analog techniques. A passionate car enthusiast, he brings bold ideas and technical precision to projects for leading automotive, fashion, and lifestyle brands.



Alessio Saraceno
CTO,
Hyphen-Group

Alessio Saraceno has more than twenty years of experience in the IT services sector as an independent professional since 1997. His current career is focused on the activities of a Chief Technology Officer, with the primary objective of harmonising within the company new technologies (such as Artificial Intelligence), the digitalisation of business processes, the systemic organisation of production and, above all, the creation of a valuable product for the target market.



Paul Melcher
Founder & Managing Director,
Melcher System LLC

With 20+ years in visual technology, Paul Melcher advises companies on AI, content licensing, and digital asset strategies. His work bridges innovation, business development, and emerging tech like Generative AI and Computer Vision.

In a world increasingly shaped by algorithms and automation, the creative industries stand at a crossroads. The line between human artistry and machine-driven production is blurring, raising profound questions about the future of content creation. At a recent panel discussion, three industry pioneers—**Patrick Staud** from the automotive photography sector, **Alessio Saraceno** from the fashion photography space, and AI expert **Paul Melcher**—came together to dissect the delicate balance between automation, creativity, and the quest for authenticity in a digital-first world.

The conversation, cut straight to the heart of a persistent tension: how do we embrace the formidable power of automation without sacrificing the creative spark that defines compelling content? The term “automation” itself can be a loaded one, especially for artists and designers who fear their craft being reduced to a mere process.

The Human in the Machine

For **Patrick Staud**, whose work involves creating stunning visuals for the automotive industry, the solution lies in a carefully governed collaboration between artist and machine. He described a system of “pre-templated” assets where the foundational creative work is done upfront by artists with full creative freedom. “Ultimately, it’s a very creative process,” **Staud** explained. “Only the exchange of products and... the configurable part of the asset is then conducted by AI for the client.”

This approach elegantly separates the artistry from the execution. The creative vision is safeguarded by the agency, while the client is empowered to generate variations at scale. It’s a model that respects brand governance and quality, ensuring that even automated outputs meet the highest standards.

Alessio Saraceno echoed this sentiment, albeit with a different vocabulary. His “content factory” concept, which initially met resistance for sounding too industrial, is built on a similar principle. “The content factory is ruled by guidelines,” **Saraceno** clarified. “And guidelines are not instructions. Guidelines define a perimeter in which you have to feel free to move.”



This distinction is crucial. It reframes automation not as a rigid set of commands, but as a framework that liberates creatives from repetitive tasks, allowing them to focus on what truly matters. For **Saraceno**, whose work is deeply embedded in the demanding world of fashion e-commerce, the challenge is finding the “right level of automation” that respects the “human willing to create different things according to a brand style.”

The Unpredictable Nature of AI

The conversation naturally pivoted to generative AI, a technology that introduces a new layer of complexity and opportunity. While tools like Midjourney and DALL-E can produce breathtaking images from a simple text prompt, they often fall short of the nuanced requirements of high-end commercial work.

“When it goes to the desk of the creative director or the fashion designer, he says, ‘No, it’s not the product I was thinking,’” **Saraceno** shared, highlighting a common frustration. An AI-generated image might be technically flawless to an untrained eye, but an expert will spot the subtle inconsistencies—the wrong button on a jacket, a slight discoloration—that betray its artificial origin.

Paul Melcher, an expert on the intersection of AI and visual media, provided a compelling parallel. “When you’re using an LLM... you have to use it in categories that you’re familiar with because you will know when it hallucinates,” he noted. The same logic applies to image generation. A creative professional possesses the domain expertise to guide the AI and, more importantly, to identify when its output deviates from the intended vision. In this light, AI is not a replacement for creativity but an amplifier. “You put that in the hands of someone that is very creative,” **Melcher** said, “and then it just enhances their possibility because they have an understanding and a control of what’s possible.”

Authenticity in a Synthetic World

This led to one of the most pressing questions of our time: in an age of synthetic media, what does authenticity even mean? For brands, the answer is less about the method of creation and more about the integrity of the final product.

In the automotive world, storytelling has always been paramount. Marketing images are “so *super real*,” as **Staud** put it, designed to sell a dream. Whether a car is placed in a real or a generated city is secondary. “*They want to tell the story and make people feel engaged*,” he asserted. The real power of AI here is its ability to enable “*personalization at scale*,” creating relatable, customized narratives for every consumer.

However, in the fashion industry, the stakes are different and are directly tied to the bottom line. Authenticity isn’t just a feeling; it’s a commercial necessity. Saraceno pointed to two critical KPIs for his clients: conversion rates and, crucially, return rates. “*The return index is one of the most important indexes in the e-commerce and in the digital retail*,” he stated. If a customer receives a jacket and the buttons are not exactly as they appeared in the AI-generated photo, “*you will return the product. And this is a very bad thing for sellers.*”

This practical reality sets a high bar for AI. To be truly viable in e-commerce, it must achieve a level of precision that is indistinguishable from reality, ensuring a seamless and trustworthy customer experience.



“It’s not about the tools,
it’s about the intent”

- Paul Melcher



Recovering Trust in the Digital Age

The broader implications of synthetic media are profound. How can we, as a society, continue to trust what we see? **Melcher** shared a telling anecdote about Meta’s attempt to label AI-generated content on Instagram. The experiment was short-lived, as users complained that even minor Photoshop edits triggered the label. A subsequent study revealed a fascinating insight: people didn’t care so much if an image was AI-generated. What they desperately wanted to know was whether the image depicted something real.

“What is important for people is not the process of getting there, but to make sure that what they’re seeing corresponds to something that actually exists,” **Melcher** concluded. The solution, he argues, lies in standards and transparency, akin to a “content label” on a food product. By providing a clear provenance for images, we can empower viewers to judge the intent behind them. *“If you’re gonna use AI or photography to deceive, that’s gonna be a problem.”*

As the panel concluded, a clear picture emerged. The future of creative production is not a battle of human versus machine. It is a story of synthesis. From the structured automation of content factories to the untamed potential of generative AI, technology is providing a new toolkit. But it is the human hand—the discerning eye of the artist, the strategic mind of the brand, and the deep knowledge of the expert—that will continue to guide these tools, drive innovation, and, most importantly, build the trust that is the ultimate currency in any industry.

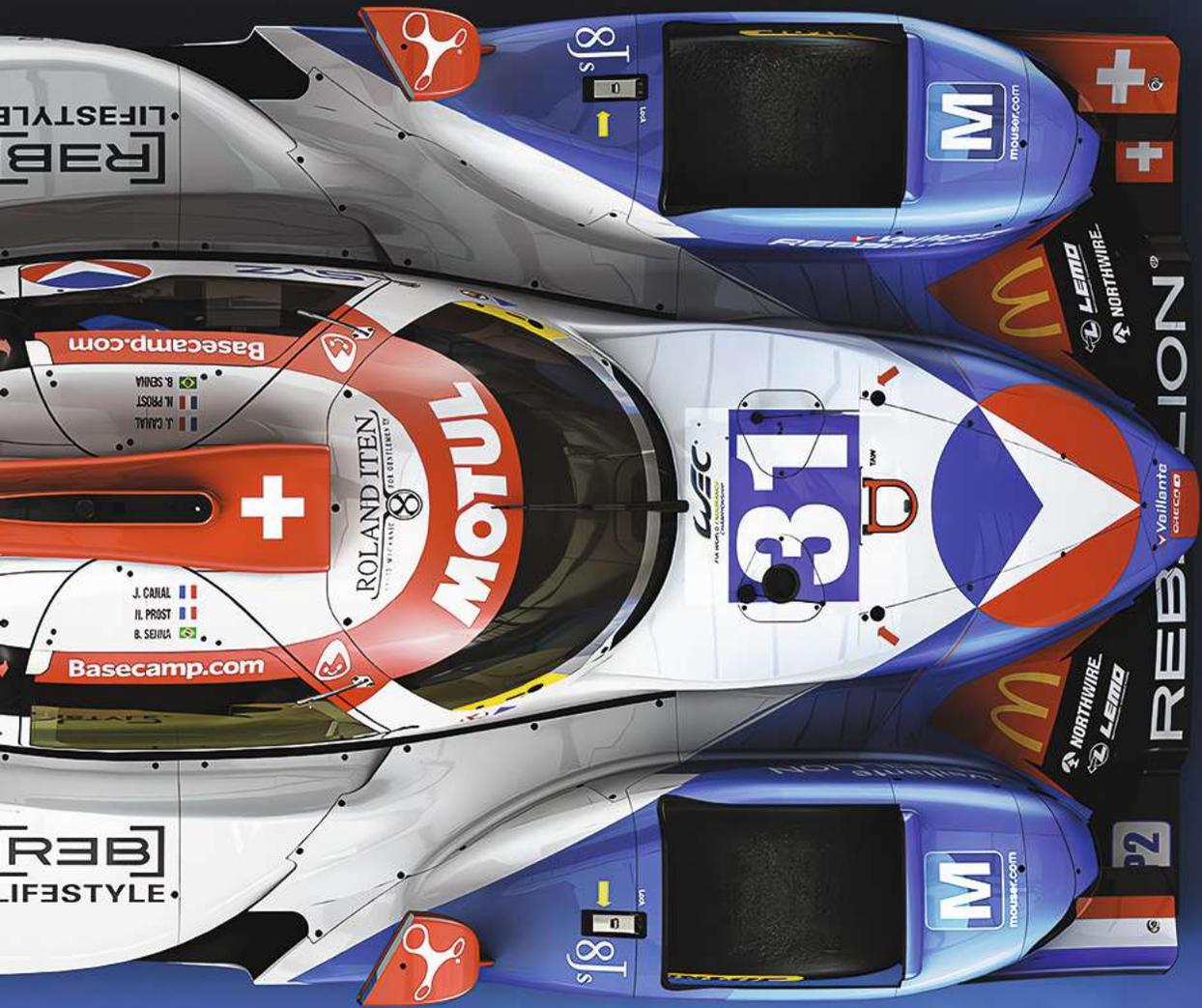
**The future is not
a source of fear.**

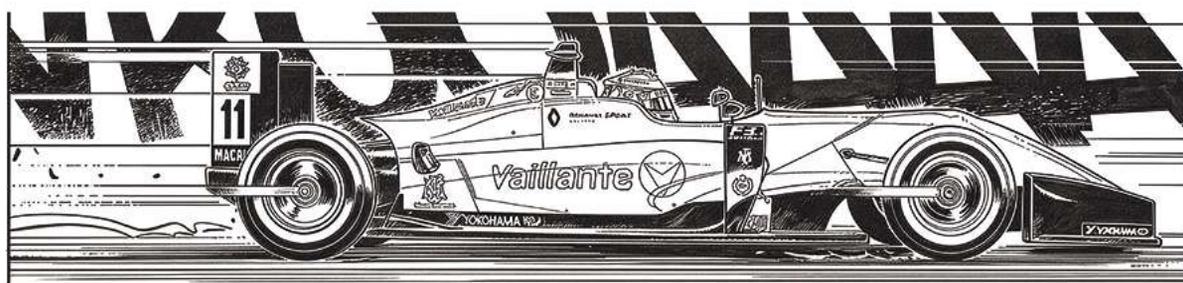
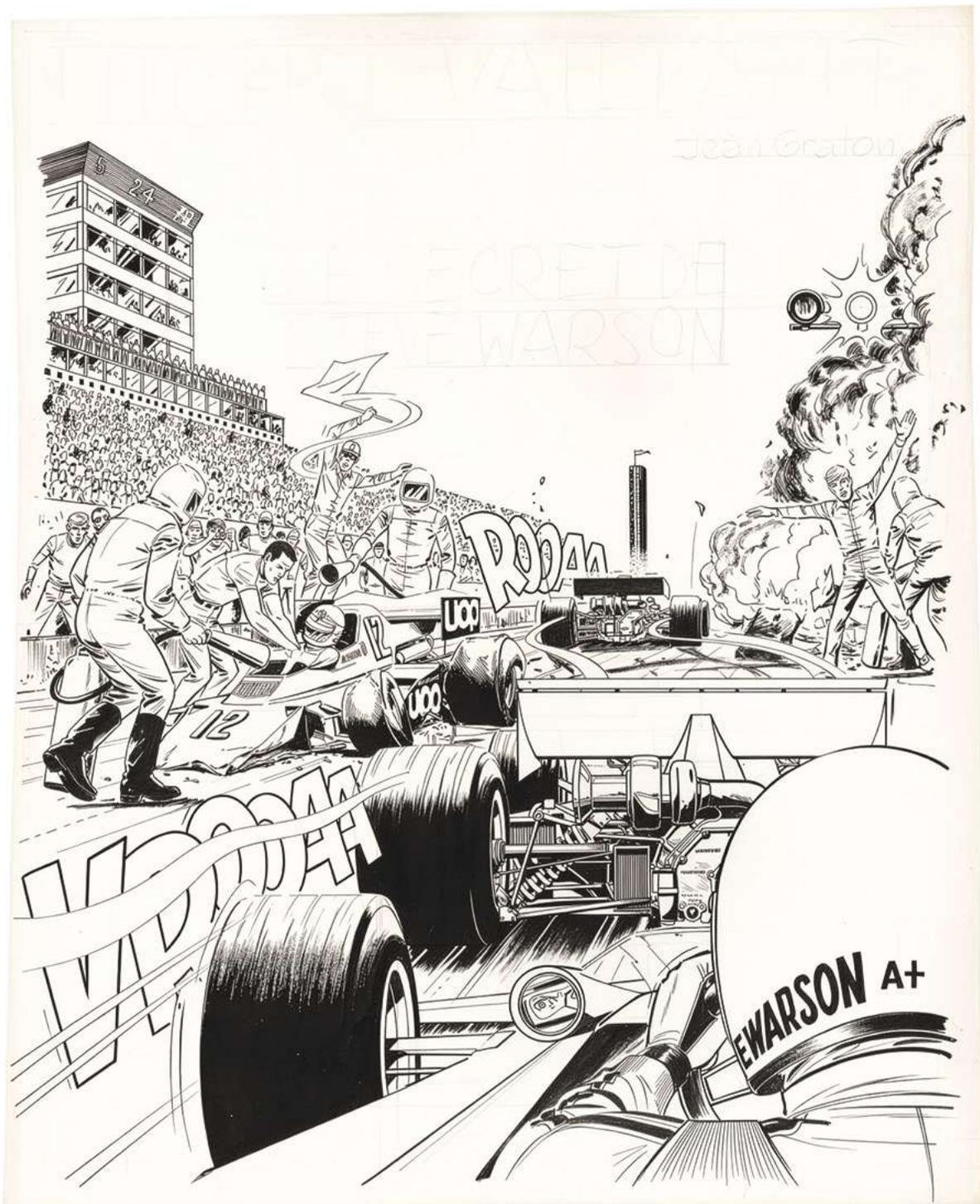
**We are here to
create it.**

From Comic Book Hero to Motorsport Icon

How Michel Vaillant Blurs the Line Between Fiction and Reality







For nearly 70 years, one name has been a constant presence in the hearts of motor-sport fans, not from the track, but from the pages of a comic book. Michel Vaillant, the eternally handsome and impossibly talented racing driver, is more than just a character; he is a cultural icon who has inspired generations of drivers, engineers, and enthusiasts. This is the story of how a beloved French comic book brand has not only endured but has revolutionized its own legacy by masterfully blurring the line between fiction and reality, transforming a 2D hero into a tangible, multi-dimensional brand.



Jean-Louis Dauger
Director brand & development,
Michel Vaillant / Art Strips founder

At the helm of this transformation is Jean-Louis Dauger, the brand director for Michel Vaillant for the last decade. With a rich background in marketing for car manufacturers and managing events for Eurosport, Dauger brought a unique vision to the table. His challenge was formidable: **how to keep a hero born in 1957 relevant in the 21st century.**



Michel Vaillant

“Michel Vaillant is a true icon in the motor world,” Dauger explains. *“Many drivers, journalists, and engineers pursued their careers because they read these comics in their youth. Even the great Alain Prost has credited Michel Vaillant as an inspiration.”*

A Legacy of Speed and Sound

Created by the French artist **Jean Graton**, the Michel Vaillant series boasts 83 titles with 25 million copies sold worldwide. The hero is an eclectic driver who has won every race imaginable, from the 24 Hours of Le Mans to Indianapolis and Formula One. What set Graton’s work apart was his pioneering ability to create a *“soundtrack in a silent art.”* Through dynamic art and onomatopoeia, he made readers feel the roar of the engines.

“
...Vruuuuuuu
for acceleration and a sharp
Driuuuuuu
for braking...”

“You have to imagine that a cartoon like Michel Vaillant, without all these images of speed, it would not be the same,” says Dauger. “Graton invented the soundtrack in a silent art. He managed to put some noises so that you could imagine what Michel Vaillant is doing with his car.”

This dedication to authenticity became a core tenet of the brand. When the team created a story involving Formula E, they ran a contest to determine the sound an electric race car should make in a comic. The result? A high-pitched **Vruiiiiii** for acceleration and a sharp **Driuuuuu** for braking, meticulously integrated into the album.



From Comic Strip to Art Strip: A Stroke of Genius

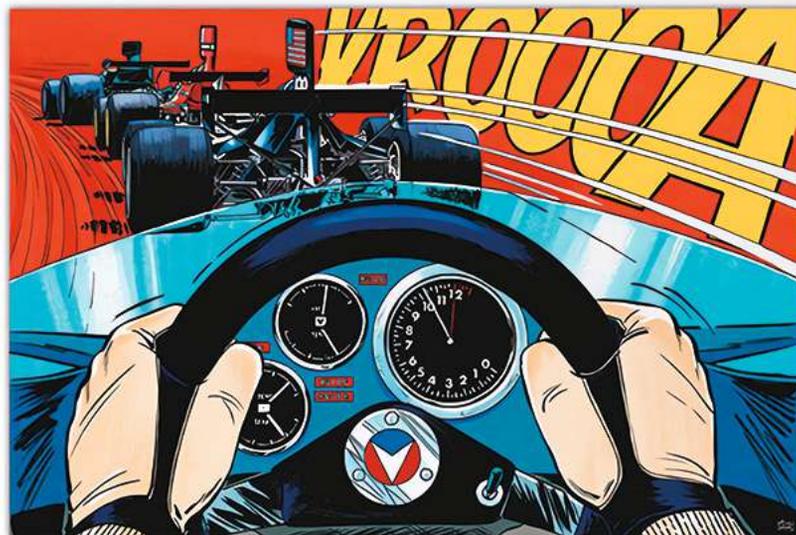
While the comic books remained popular, Dauger recognized a new opportunity to engage with the brand’s heritage. The solution was a game-changer: Michel Vaillant Art Strips. The concept is simple yet brilliant: take a single, beautiful drawing from the classic comics of the 50s, 60s, and 70s, and present it as a large-format, limited-edition piece of art.

“The idea is to go from comic strips to art strips,” Dauger states. “It has been clearly one of the key successes for the development of the brand.”

This initiative allowed fans to celebrate the artistry of Jean Graton in a new context, moving the illustrations from the page to the wall. It was a move that not only generated a new revenue stream but also repositioned the brand in the world of design and luxury, attracting a sophisticated audience who appreciated the aesthetic quality of the original work.

Building a Universe: The Vaillant Brand

With the Art Strips elevating the brand’s image, Dauger’s team embarked on an ambitious licensing program, guided by a single, unwavering principle. “The idea I have in mind always is, ‘Would Michel Vaillant wear these shoes? Would he wear this jacket? Would he wear this watch?’ It’s very important for me to be as close as possible to the universe of Michel Vaillant.”



THEMAGAZINE 29

This philosophy led to a range of high-quality products, from stylish leather jackets and t-shirts to a collection of watches ranging from €400 to €5,000. One of the most innovative collaborations was with Caval, a shoe brand specializing in mismatched pairs. The team “twisted” the brand by reversing the iconic Vaillant logo on one of the shoes, creating a quirky, modern product that still felt authentic.



Of course, the heart of the Michel Vaillant universe is the cars. The fictional “Vaillante” brand, created by Graton, has a lineup of over 100 different models designed throughout the comic’s history. To bring this to life, the company has produced an extensive collection of miniature model cars, with collectors eagerly seeking all 60 different figures.

Where Reality and Fiction Collide

The brand's most audacious projects are those that completely dissolve the barrier between the comic book world and our own. The Vaillante Academy offers fans the ultimate immersive experience: the chance to get behind the wheel of a real-life Vaillante. The team developed and built 13 replicas of a car Michel Vaillant drove in a 1960s album.

"You can be really in the position of Michel," Dauger says with a smile. *"You're gonna wear the helmet of Michel Vaillant, you're gonna wear the overall of Michel Vaillant, and you're gonna drive the car of Michel Vaillant."* For a full day, participants learn from professional drivers how to handle a car from the sixties, with no modern driving aids. It's a raw, authentic, and unforgettable experience.

This blurring of lines reached a pinnacle in 2017 at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. A real Vaillante Rebellion race car competed, driven by a team of legendary racing legacies: Nelson Piquet Jr., Nicolas Prost, and Bruno Senna. The fiction had become a reality on one of the world's most famous tracks.

More recently, the team anticipated a real-life race outcome in the comic book Macau. The album depicted French driver Sacha Fenestraz in a Vaillante car. One week after the comic was released, Fenestraz achieved a podium finish in the real Macau Grand Prix, driving a car with the Vaillante livery. *"It's really what we try to develop each time,"* says Dauger, *"to blur this line between fiction and reality."*

“
...You can be really
in the position of
Michel Vaillant...”



The BMW Julie Wood limited-edition motorbike



The Future is Female: The Relaunch of Julie Wood

Looking to the future, the brand is reviving another of Jean Graton's creations: Julie Wood. A gutsy, 20-year-old Californian motorcyclist created in the 1970s, Julie's sole objective is to beat the men on the track. After a 45-year hiatus, she is back.

"We just relaunched Julie Wood with absolutely the same character: very autonomous, very strong, and with a very high personality," Dauger notes. This relaunch, supported by a partnership with BMW for a limited-edition Julie Wood motorbike, signals a commitment to developing a new IP with high potential, one that speaks to a modern audience and champions a strong female protagonist.

From a beloved comic book to a dynamic, multi-faceted brand, Michel Vaillant's journey is a testament to the power of storytelling and innovation. By refusing to let their hero be confined to the page, Jean-Louis Dauger and his team have created a living, breathing universe. They have proven that even in our fast-paced, digital world, there is still a place for dreams, passion, and the timeless allure of a hero who lives for the thrill of the race. As Dauger concludes, reflecting on his work, *"I don't save lives, that's clear. But just like the people at Europa-Park, we try to make people dream."* And in the world of Michel Vaillant, those dreams feel wonderfully, thrillingly real. ■

...You're
gonna drive the car of
Michel Vaillant...

“

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INTRODUCING

SPIDER MAN

THOUGH THE WORLD MAY MOCK PETER PARKER, THE TIMID TEEN-AGER...

...IT WILL SOON MARVEL AT THE AWESOME MIGHT OF... SPIDER-MAN!



ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:
AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO YOU, FROM THE EDITOR--ABOUT THE NEW AMAZING!

THEMAGAZINE 29

Marvel & DALIM SOFTWARE

A 20-Year Partnership in Print

In an industry defined by constant evolution, long-term partnerships are a testament to shared vision and mutual success. On stage at DUO 2025 in Rust, Germany, **Graham Blanks**, Director of Business Operations for North America at DALIM SOFTWARE GmbH, sat down with **Jim Boyle**, V.P. of Operations/Procurement for Publishing at Marvel Entertainment. Founded as Timely Comics in 1939 and reborn as the Marvel we know today in 1961, the publisher has a rich history. For nearly two decades, **Marvel** and **DALIM SOFTWARE** have collaborated to navigate the complexities of print production. Here is a look at their conversation about their enduring relationship, the resilience of print, and the future of comic book creation.

Graham Blanks: Jim, thank you for joining us. We've been working together for the better part of 20 years. Before we dive in, I have to correct a note I found online: Marvel is part of Marvel Studios, not Walt Disney Publishing Worldwide, right?

Jim Boyle: That's correct. I started at Marvel in 2004 to manage all the manufacturing for our comics, graphic novels, and hardcover books. **My focus has always been on the print side.** The content is created first for the comic books and is then repurposed for the digital world.

GB: That's a key distinction. Many assume digital would cannibalize print, but Marvel has proven that's not the case. How has the printed comic book held its ground?

JB: The printed comic is many things. It hasn't been cannibalized because you have the tactile feel, the resell-ability, and the dedicated collector who wants to maintain their collection. Digital has

actually increased total sales. **We even add value to the physical comic by putting a unique digital code in every issue,** so the buyer gets a digital version of that same title. They can even sell that code for a dollar or two online.

GB: So print remains a cornerstone. Yet, the overall print market has shrunk. How has that affected Marvel?

JB: It's made us a much more desirable customer for the large printing companies that remain. Our consistent volume is valuable. We produce a dozen or two dozen titles every single week. For many of those, **we also create special "variant covers,"** which are a separate piece of artwork done at a lower production run to incentivize retailers and customers to chase all the versions of a given title. Sometimes we'll do special foil-stamped covers that require a bit more production time but create a premium, collectible item.

“

...A Spider-Man #1 sold for over a million dollars...

GB: Let's talk about our history together. Your journey began with DALIM ES being hosted by a print provider and has evolved to a cloud-based solution managed by Blanchard Systems. How is that platform central to your workflow?

JB: It is, and with the help of Blanchard Systems, we hope to build it up to manage not just the finished, composed page, but all the individual elements that go into it: the script, the pencils, the inks, the colors, and the lettering. The goal is to have one central place for everything for a given comic.

GB: What has been the biggest challenge in expanding its use internally?

JB: We've had some recent organizational changes that have opened up investment in IT that wasn't as readily available before. Critical systems needed help, and since we hadn't really upgraded this one in 15 years, it became obvious this was a great production tool. Right now, because the five different elements of every comic page aren't tracked in one system, we have to hire people to physically go around and ask, "Hey, did you get this? When is it coming in?" **Having a central system where everyone uploads their part of the project will solve that.**

GB: The pandemic must have highlighted this weakness.

JB: It really did. COVID showed a major weakness in our production environment. It became very difficult for everybody, working remotely, to move all of these files around the world to get them approved and into a production system.

GB: Looking forward, as you see what other companies are doing with the technology, does it help you with your internal arguments?

JB: Absolutely. Seeing how other companies are leveraging the technology is reassuring and inspiring. **The opportunity to use it as a tool to create digital comics from the same workflow is going to be a game-changer for us.**

From the Floor: The Value of a Collectible

During a Q&A session, an audience member asked Jim to elaborate on the collectible value of the comics he produces.

JB: I'll start at the very high end. A Spider-Man #1 sold for over a million dollars in the past several years. Same with Batman and other original comics produced 80 years ago. For the things we're producing today, like the special variant covers, if the base comic is \$4, the variant might go for five, six, or seven dollars. But in 10 years from now, maybe that could go for \$12. In 20 years, it might go for even more. If there was a strong logic for what the value would be, we'd make more money! But it's not something you can calculate. ■



Jim Boyle
V.P. of Operations/Procurement
for Publishing,
Marvel Entertainment



Graham Blanks
Business Development Director
for North America
DALIM SOFTWARE GmbH

The conversation between Blanks and Boyle paints a clear picture: the partnership between DALIM SOFTWARE and Marvel is not just about maintaining legacy workflows but about actively building the future. By embracing technology to solve real-world production challenges, they prove that even in a digital age, print remains a powerful, evolving, and highly collectible medium. ■

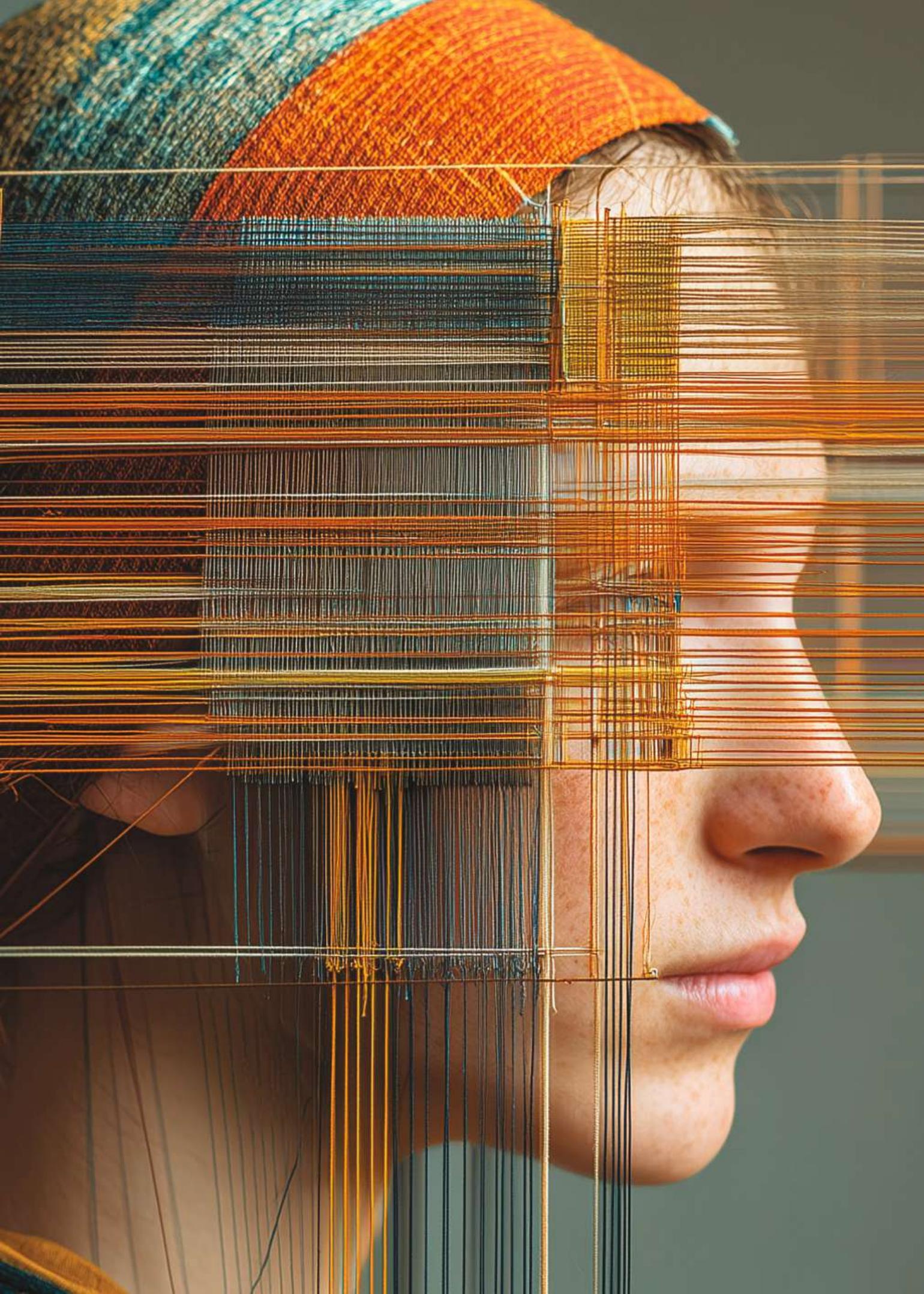
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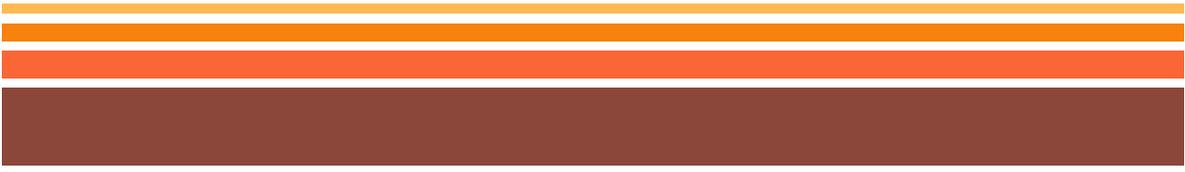






The Digital Weavers

How Hyphen and DALIM SOFTWARE Have Spent Three Decades Architecting the Future of Content



For over 30 years, one relationship has quietly shaped the backbone of content production for some of Europe's biggest publishers and most iconic luxury brands. It's a story of shared vision, technological evolution, and a partnership that has not only weathered industry-wide transformation but has consistently stayed ahead of it. This is the story of Hyphen Group and DALIM SOFTWARE—a collaboration that began with a handshake and has since redefined what's possible in the digital content landscape.

"This isn't just a history of the last 30 years," begins Alessio Saraceno, a key figure at Hyphen Group. "It's a way to say thank you. DALIM's technology, knowledge, and expertise have been fundamental. We basically grew up together, and we are very proud of it."

This sense of shared growth is the thread that runs through their entire history. Today, Hyphen defines itself as a company that supports global luxury and retail brands through the digital transformation of content production. But this sophisticated focus was built on decades of hands-on experience in the demanding world of print and pre-media, with DALIM's automation technology as a constant, powerful ally.

From Pre-Press Powerhouse to Digital Pioneers

The partnership's pivotal moment arrived in 1998 at a Seybold conference in San Francisco. Hyphen's owner, Stefano Tironi, was on the verge of signing a deal with another software provider when he saw a demonstration of one of the first versions of DALIM TWIST. The impact was immediate.

"As soon as Stefano saw that presentation, he decided to start speaking about money with Carol [Guerard, co-founder of DALIM]," Saraceno recounts. A deal was struck, and Hyphen became the exclusive distributor of TWIST throughout Italy. The result was a revolution in the country's pre-press industry. "We sold TWIST to 90% of the pre-press and pre-media companies in Italy," he says. *"TWIST was everywhere from Milan to Naples."*

This era cemented Hyphen's reputation, but it was their forward-thinking application of DALIM's tools that set the stage for what was to come. A key project in 2006 for Tesco's "Tesco Diets" catalog marked their first foray into what would become a core competency: product content management. The challenge was immense: manage product information and assets for a printed catalog, a digital version, and a website simultaneously.

The solution was a groundbreaking combination of Hyphen's own software and TWIST at the core. "All the pictures that went out on the website were published by TWIST," Saraceno explains. "The PDFs were out from TWIST. The workflow was a combination of our software and DALIM's." This project was more than just a success; it was a lesson learned, a building block for their future.

Mastering the Workflow: From Magazines to Schoolbooks

Building on this momentum, Hyphen tackled another critical industry challenge: advertising delivery for major publishers. For magazines like Marie Claire Italia and other major titles, they implemented a robust portal for ad delivery and pre-flighting, powered by a combination of Hyphen and DALIM technology. The system streamlined the entire process for both digital and print editions and is still in use today—a testament to its formidable design.

Their expertise soon expanded into the complex world of book publishing, where they now cover 80% of Italy's schoolbook market. They developed an end-to-end system to manage the entire lifecycle of a book—from printed text to digital editions and even audiobooks. Here again, DALIM's technology is indispensable. At Mondadori, one of Italy's largest publishers, multiple DALIM TWIST installations form the production engine.

Now, they are taking it a step further, preparing to roll out DALIM DIALOGUE across Mondadori's various brands. *"DIALOGUE will be used initially starting from one brand and then will be spread to the others,"* Saraceno notes. This deep, multi-faceted experience in graphical arts and content creation became the prerequisite for their most ambitious evolution yet.



Scan the QR code and get in touch with **Alessio**.

The Digital Content Factory: Engineering for Luxury

The culmination of this 30-year journey is Hyphen's "Digital Content Factory." This is not merely a photo studio management tool; it is a comprehensive ecosystem designed to orchestrate the entire content creation process for fashion and luxury brands, from initial product design to final asset delivery.

The challenge in the luxury sector is unique. The digital product must often precede the physical one, and the brand's creative guidelines are both rigid and sacred. "Every fashion brand has got its guidelines to create digital content," Saraceno states. "These guidelines can be translated into a system configuration."

This is where the combined power of Hyphen and DALIM truly shines. The Digital Content Factory manages everything from resource planning to on-set art direction. When it comes to post-production, DALIM's automation engine is unleashed. Repetitive, low-value tasks like image cropping, background whitening, and creating adaptations for different channels are handled seamlessly by the machine.

This automation is not about replacing people, but empowering them. Saraceno is clear on this point. "Gradually, we will have AI coming into the process as an assistant," he says. He sees AI as a tool to achieve 80% of a task automatically, with the final, crucial 20% reserved for human quality control. "The final touch of a human brain" remains the ultimate arbiter of quality. Hyphen is even developing its own small AI models for specific tasks, such as recognizing if an image is a front or back shot—a simple but vital piece of data for e-commerce sites.



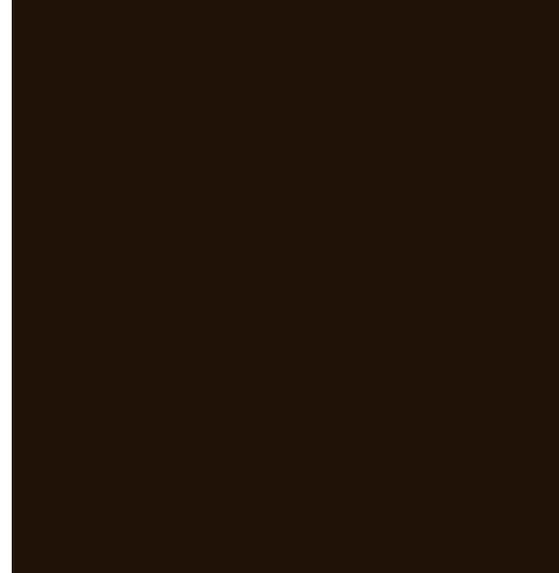
Alessio Saraceno
CTO
Hyphen-Group

A Future Built on Partnership

Looking ahead, Hyphen's goal is to embed DALIM's technology even more deeply into the workflows of fashion brands. The primary obstacle isn't technical; as Saraceno puts it, it's overcoming "human resistance to change." Yet, their ambition is clear: to onboard five to ten major brands this year with a fully integrated Hyphen-DALIM solution.

The partnership continues to expand, with recent collaborations with camera giants like Canon and Leica, further solidifying Hyphen's position at the apex of content creation technology.

From automating Italy's print industry to orchestrating the digital presence of global luxury brands, the story of Hyphen and DALIM is one of relentless innovation. It's a powerful reminder that the most resilient and revolutionary technologies are not just about code and processes, but about the human partnerships that drive them forward. The future isn't coming—they're making it. ■

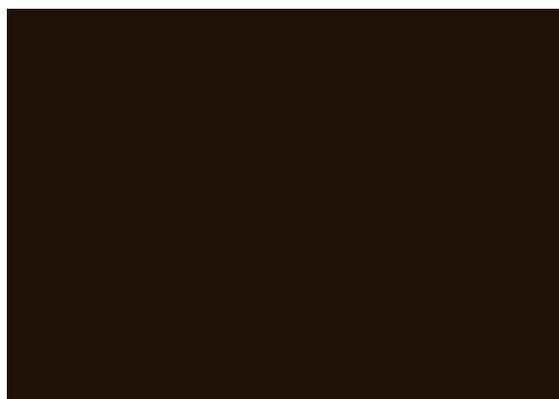


The Pivot

The Reinvention of a European Publishing Icon

How Germany's legendary ADAC Motorwelt magazine transformed an existential threat into a pioneering new future, swapping a circulation of nearly 15 million mailed copies for a strategic retail partnership that redefined its relationship with readers.

For decades, it was a titan of European print. ADAC Motorwelt, the official magazine of Germany's colossal automobile club, was more than just a publication; it was a national institution. Delivered directly to the mailboxes of its members, its monthly circulation reached a staggering 14.7 million copies, making it a formidable force in the media landscape. For its long-time printer, Burda Druck, it was a dream client: a symbol of stability and scale in an industry facing constant change.



But in 2019, the engine of this publishing powerhouse began to sputter. Faced with skyrocketing postal costs and a business model that was becoming financially untenable, the ADAC made a bold and painful decision: the magazine in its current form had to end. The cancellation of the contract sent shockwaves through Burda, representing not just a massive commercial loss, but the potential end of an era.

What followed was not a story of decline, but one of radical reinvention. It is a case study in how a legacy publisher and its print partner, faced with a crisis, forged a deeper, more resilient collaboration. Together, they didn't just save a magazine; they transformed it, pioneering a new model for reader engagement that is fit for the future. This is the story of how ADAC Motorwelt moved from the mailbox to the marketplace, and in doing so, found a new and vital purpose.



THE CHALLENGE

An Unavoidable Crossroads

The original ADAC Motorwelt was a publishing phenomenon. Founded in 1925 with an initial run of 35,000, it grew alongside Germany's love affair with the automobile. For nearly a century, its primary role was to be the consistent, tangible connection between the ADAC and its members. *"For years, they told us they could never cancel the magazine,"* recalls Ingo Raab, Director of Sales and Business Development at Burda Druck. *"It was the only touchpoint many members had all year, aside from their annual invoice. It was proof of the value they were getting."*

By 2019, the club had grown to over 21 million members, and the magazine's print run was nearing 15 million copies per issue. But the ground was shifting. The sheer cost of paper and, more critically, postage for such a massive monthly distribution had become unsustainable. *"To be honest, it was probably just too expensive to send to 15 million people each month,"* Raab admits.

The news of the contract cancellation was a blow. *"I was really disappointed, to be honest,"* says Raab. *"This is one of the biggest print runs in Europe, probably in the world."* For Burda, the challenge was twofold: absorb the immense loss of volume and, more importantly, find a way to stay in the game. The ADAC was determined to keep its magazine alive, but it needed a completely new concept and a partner who could deliver more than just ink on paper. The question hung in the air: How could they continue to serve millions of readers without the direct channel of the postal service?

THE SOLUTION

A Partnership Forged in Innovation

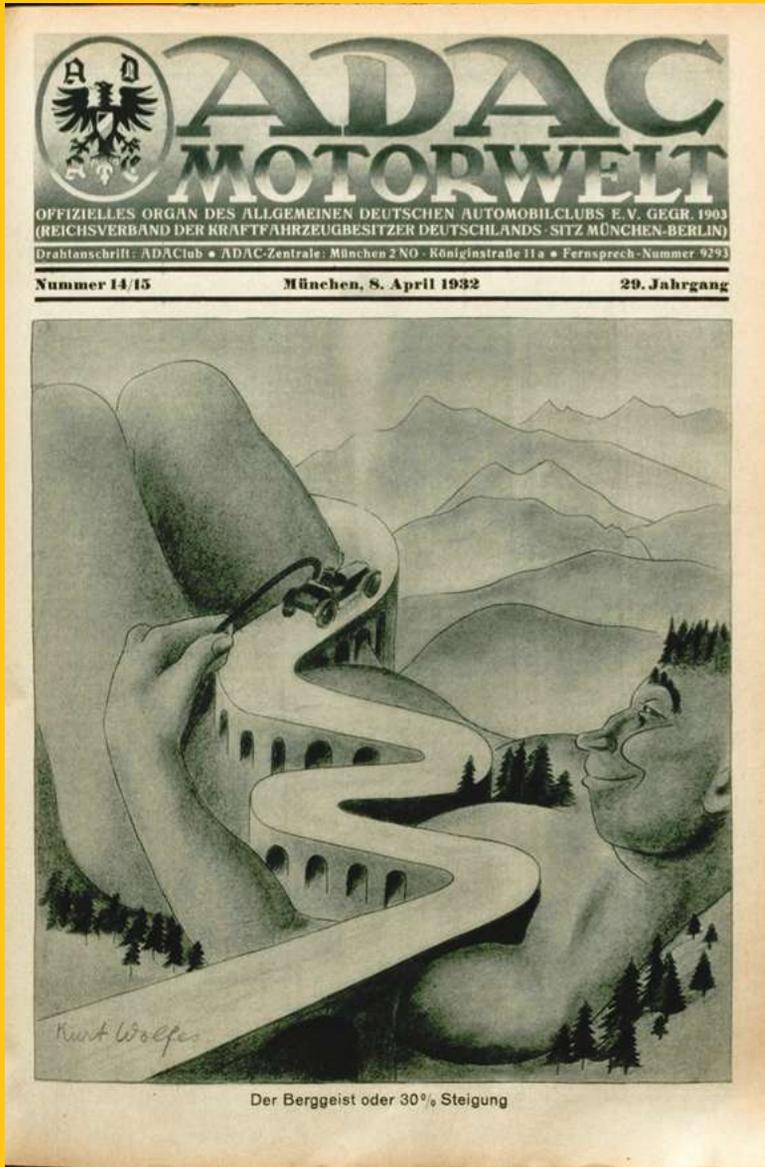
Instead of severing ties, the crisis pulled the two organizations closer. The ADAC, led by editor-in-chief Martin Kunz, began exploring options with various agencies and publishers. Burda, however, had an ace up its sleeve. It wasn't just a printer; it was part of a vast publishing house with deep expertise in retail logistics and marketing. This became the cornerstone of their pitch.

The proposal was audacious: transform ADAC Motorwelt from a high-frequency, mass-market publication into a premium, quarterly "lean-back" magazine. The new format would be a high-quality, coffee-table-style publication with more pages, superior paper, and a perfect-bound finish. The content would shift from news-driven updates to more in-depth features, travel inspiration, and lifestyle topics, designed for what the ADAC calls an *"intensive engagement"* with the brand.

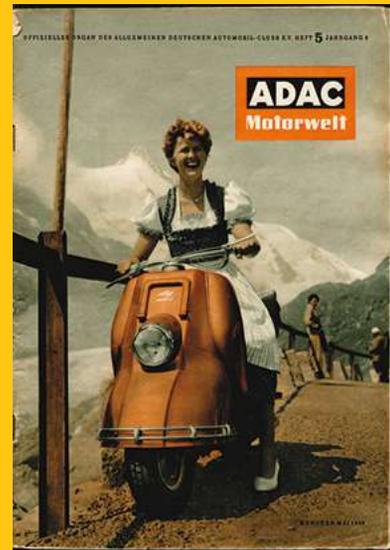
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...The new format would be a high-quality, coffee-table-style publication with more pages, superior paper, and a perfect-bound finish...

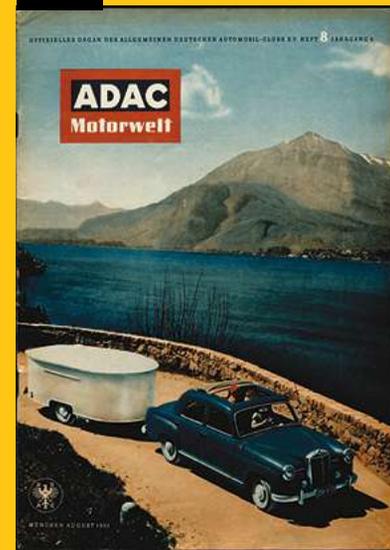
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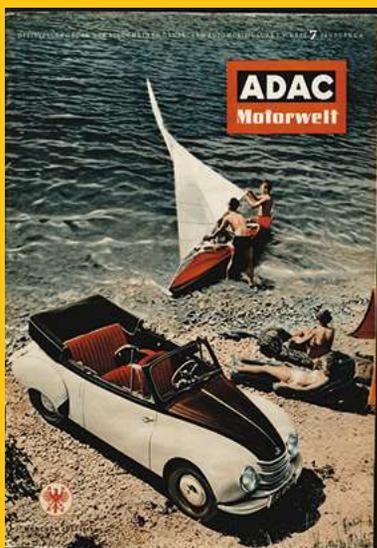
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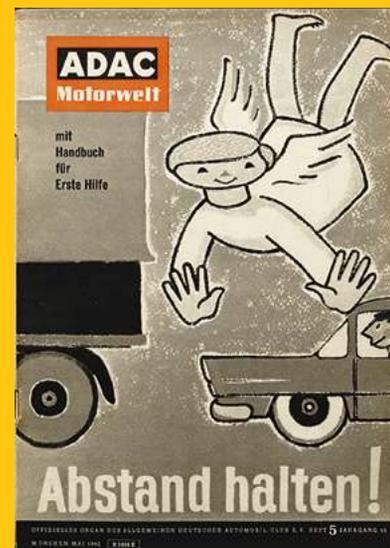
THEMAGAZINE 29



1955



1960



1962

1970

ADAC motorwelt B 1034 E Juni 1970 6

Nützt eine Kopfstütze wirklich?
Kopfstützen sollen bei Unfällen den nach hinten geschlagenen Kopf auffangen. Der ADAC hat herausgefunden, dass die Aufgabe tatsächlich erfüllt ist, wenn sie außerdem das Exponat auf Seite 31.

Kaffee für die Autoschlange beim TÜV
Von einem sympathischen Mann – einem Vorkasse-Kaffee-Milchler. TÜV hat zu tun. TÜV-Inspektoren fragen die ADAC-Mitglieder vorzeitig: Die Antworten darauf sind ganz interessant. (Seite 10)

Pünktlich alle 15 Minuten: Höllen-Feuerwerk für Touristen
Aussagen von Touristen, die in den letzten Jahren einen Abreisezeitpunkt von 15 Minuten vor dem Abreisezeitpunkt in Innsbruck. Wie man darüber hinaus hinaus! (Seite 10, 11 und 12)

Wollen Sie wissen, wie viel ein Auto kostet?

ADAC motorwelt

... und die Versicherung zahlt nicht

7 Autos im ADAC-Crashtest

Professoren Piroshka und Paprika

1990

ADAC motorwelt DAS AKTUELLE CLUBMAGAZIN

Wege aus dem Dauerstau Seite 30

ADAC fordert mehr Geld für bessere Straßen

Auto & Werkstatt Machen Sie mit beim großen Praxistest! Seite 24

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Auto & Werkstatt Machen Sie mit beim großen Praxistest! Seite 24

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ADAC

2005

1980

ADAC motorwelt B 2706 EX Juni 1980 6

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Winterspezial **Mit Sicherheit** Der ADAC Winterreifentest, Fahrtipps für Eis und Schnee sowie Tricks für E-Auto-Besitzer

Ratgeber Was Sie beim Kauf eines Kindersitzes wissen sollten

Autodaten Nutzen und Risiken vernetzter Fahrzeuge

Verkehrsquiz Wissen Sie, was diese Schilder bedeuten?

ADAC

2022

The most revolutionary element, however, was the distribution. Burda proposed leveraging its existing relationships with major German retailers Edeka and Netto to place the magazine directly in the hands of consumers. Instead of arriving unsolicited in the mail, members would now actively pick up their copy for free at over 11,000 supermarket and retail locations across the country.

“This was a major change,” explains Raab. *“We already had a 20-year history of placing our own magazines at the front of these retail stores, right where you usually find chocolate bars or cigarettes.”* Burda’s expertise in this highly specialized retail distribution network was the key. They understood the logistics, the placement strategies, and how to manage a nationwide rollout.



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in touch with Ingo.

“

...The print run...
has now settled at
around **2.6 million**
copies per issue...

This new model transformed Burda from a simple supplier into a comprehensive strategic partner. The company’s role expanded dramatically to orchestrate a complex ecosystem of services:

- **Production:** Burda Druck continues to handle the printing at its Offenburg plant.
- **Editorial & Marketing:** Sister agencies within the Burda network, like storyboard and b.famous, contribute to the content and marketing efforts.
- **Distribution & Sales:** Burda manages the entire supply chain, from the printing press to the custom-designed displays at retail check-outs, and even deploys a field force to ensure the magazines are properly displayed.

Underpinning this complex, multi-partner workflow is DALIM SOFTWARE. *“DALIM is the backbone of all of that,”* states Raab. The platform provides a centralized system for collaboration between the ADAC’s editorial team, Burda’s production staff, and the numerous regional ADAC clubs that now contribute 24 pages of localized content to each issue. This seamless integration was critical to making the new, decentralized production model a success.

THE RESULTS

Redefining Success

Judged by the old metrics, the relaunch could be seen as a step back. The print run, which started at a projected 6 million, has now settled at around 2.6 million copies per issue. *“From a print point of view, it’s not a success,”* Raab concedes candidly.

But from a strategic perspective, the transformation has been a resounding triumph. Martin Kunz, the magazine’s editor-in-chief, considers it a *“great success.”* Here’s why:

- 1. A Deeper Reader Connection:** The magazine has successfully transitioned into a premium product that commands attention. Market research reveals that readers spend an average of 43 minutes with each issue. *“That is an astonishing figure these days,”* the ADAC notes. By making readers actively seek out the magazine, the club has fostered a more intentional and valuable form of engagement.
- 2. Sustained Club Growth:** The fear that abandoning the monthly mailbox drop would sever the club’s connection to its members proved unfounded. Since the relaunch in 2020 (a period that included the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic), the ADAC’s membership has not declined. In fact, it has continued to grow, reaching a new high of 22 million members in 2024. The magazine, in its new form, continues to be a powerful showcase for the club’s value.
- 3. A Stronger, Broader Partnership:** For Burda, the initial loss of volume has been offset by the creation of a much deeper, more integrated partnership. *“We don’t have a customer with a big print run anymore,”* Raab reflects. *“We have a partnership. Our transformation is to stay with our customers, even if the print runs are shrinking, by providing them services they might find somewhere else, but not in this comprehensive way.”*



Ingo Raab

Director of Sales and
Business Development
Burda Druck GmbH

The Future is Collaborative

The story of ADAC Motorwelt is a powerful testament to the resilience of print when it is willing to adapt. It demonstrates that even the most established models can be reinvented. By shifting the focus from sheer volume to strategic value, and from a simple transaction to a deep-seated partnership, the ADAC and Burda have navigated a seismic industry shift and emerged stronger.

Their journey proves that the future of print is not a source of fear. It is something to be created, together. And for the millions of ADAC members who now pick up their premium magazine while doing their weekly shopping, it is crystal clear: **the journey of Motorwelt is far from over. ■**

Beyond the Ride

How Europa-Park Engineered a Global Entertainment Universe

For 50 years, Europa-Park has been a landmark of location-based entertainment. But in today's crowded media landscape, the real challenge isn't just attracting visitors; it's building a brand that lives beyond the park gates. Enter MACK One, the driving force behind an audacious strategy to transform a beloved theme park into a global, multi-platform entertainment powerhouse.





It all started with a simple, practical need. Nearly 250 years ago, the Mack family began as master craftsmen of circus wagons and carousels. This heritage evolved into Mack Rides, a world-leading manufacturer of rollercoasters and attractions. In 1975, to showcase their pioneering ride systems to potential buyers, they opened a park. That showcase, Europa-Park, has since blossomed into a destination that welcomes 6 million visitors a year, but its foundational purpose of being a living prototype for innovation has never been more relevant.

Today, under the eighth generation of family leadership, the MACK One group is asking a formidable question: What is the future of a physical theme park in a digital world? The answer is not to retreat from technology, but to revolutionize the very definition of the park itself. The strategy is to move beyond mere theming and pioneer a new model of 360-degree storytelling, creating intellectual properties (IPs) so compelling they thrive both inside and outside the park.

“We really want to develop the park not only into a theme park, but a park with rich storytelling and rich characters,” explains Tobias Munding, who is responsible for content production at MACK One. This vision marks a fundamental shift from building attractions to building entire story worlds.

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...What people can't do is have a VR headset on a rollercoaster...





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...And that's what we do very successfully with our company VR Coaster...

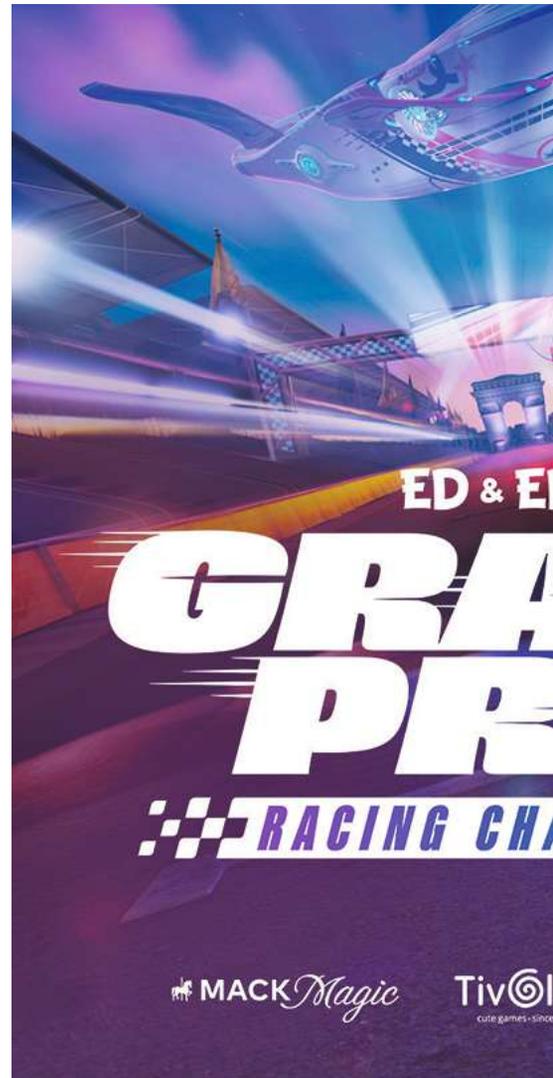


The IP-First Revolution

The blueprint for this new era is perfectly illustrated by Voltron Nevera, the park's newest multi-launch coaster. In the past, a new ride would be celebrated for its engineering and design. Voltron, however, was launched as a complete narrative experience. MACK One created a fictional story world around the inventor Nikola Tesla, producing short films and content to build anticipation. In a move that speaks volumes about their strategy, they also partnered with a publisher to release a graphic novel, *The Voltron Nevera Story*.

This transforms a rollercoaster into a media franchise. Visitors don't just ride a coaster; they step into a story they can literally take home with them. This is the new MACK One flywheel: use the park as a massive platform to introduce characters and narratives, and then extend those stories into every possible medium. The park's 60 merchandise stores become more than souvenir shops; they are distribution points for a growing library of content.

"If you think of Europa-Park as a single bookstore, I'm proud to say that it is the biggest bookstore in Germany," Munding notes. It's a powerful testament to their ability to connect with a captive audience and convert on-site emotion into off-site engagement.



Scan now to watch
The Grand Prix of Europe | Official trailer



From Mascot to Movie Star

The most ambitious testament to this strategy is yet to come. For its 50th anniversary, Europa-Park is giving its long-serving mascot, Ed Euromaus, the ultimate promotion: a feature film. Produced by the group's own Mack Animation studio and distributed by Warner Bros., this project is a high-stakes move to elevate a park character into a global movie star.

The goal is twofold. First, to create a product that is successful on its own merits, reaching audiences who may have never visited the park. Second, to use the film's success to create a powerful new reason for families to experience the world of the characters firsthand. *"We want to bring them in the cinema first and then bring them to Europa-Park,"* says Mundinger. It's a bold inversion of the traditional theme park marketing model.

This transmedia approach is already proving successful on other fronts. Children's books based on the park's Rulantica water world and its dinosaur attractions have become bestsellers. Partnerships with the popular Tonies audio players and Junk Games video games are bringing Europa-Park's characters directly into the homes and digital lives of children across Europe.

"We really believe in storytelling and content creation. We can be successful because we have the platform of Europa-Park."

Innovating the Experience Itself

While expanding its digital and media footprint, MACK One continues to revolutionize the physical experience by fusing it with cutting-edge technology. They don't see VR and AI as threats to location-based entertainment, but as tools to create experiences others simply cannot replicate.

"What people can't do is have a VR headset on a rollercoaster," Munding points out. *"And that's what we do very successfully with our company VR Coaster."*

This innovation allows the park to place a digital layer over a physical ride, effectively creating a brand-new attraction on an existing footprint. A guest can ride a coaster once as a traditional experience, and then ride it again with VR goggles to be transported into a completely different, story-driven world. It's an upgrade that is profoundly immersive and a glimpse into the future of entertainment. As Munding puts it, *"You're not going to the cinema, you're going to a rollercoaster to watch a movie."*

This synergy, which connects the animation company with the ride manufacturer and the theming company with the storytelling company, is the unique strength of the MACK One group. It's a seamless ecosystem for creating new, immersive experiences, from the restaurant of the future, Eatrenalin, which combines a ride system with a gourmet dining journey, to the Voletarium, a flying theater that immerses guests in a breathtaking trip over Europe.

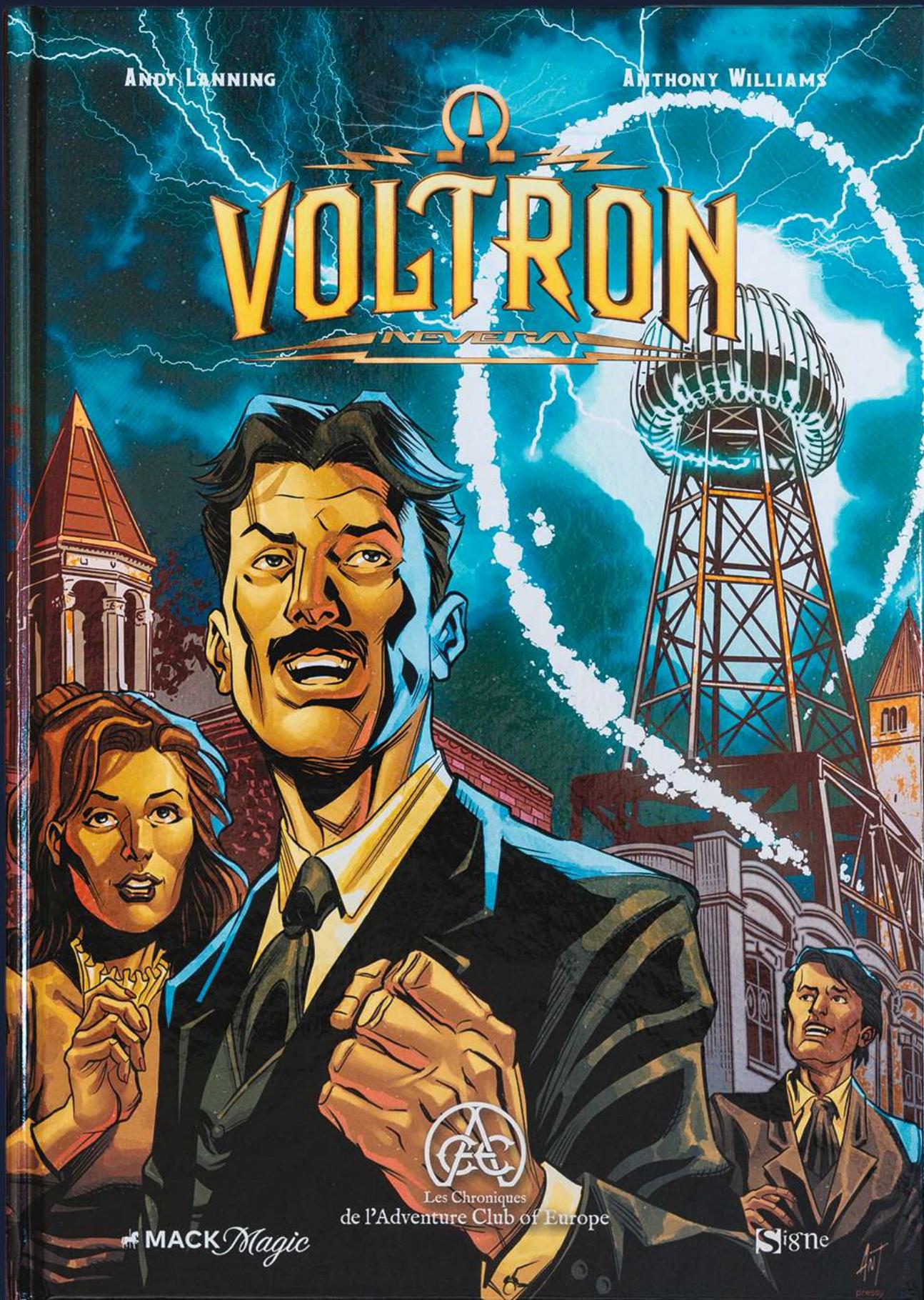
The Future is a Story

The MACK One strategy is a masterclass in future-proofing a legacy brand. By embracing a "*content is king*" philosophy, they are building an entertainment ecosystem where every element strengthens the others. The feature film will drive interest in the park's characters. The park provides an unmatched platform to launch new books and games. The data and feedback from those products, in turn, inform the creation of new attractions.

It is a self-reinforcing cycle of creativity and commerce, built on a 250-year foundation of engineering excellence and a forward-looking vision for what an entertainment company can be. They are no longer just in the business of building rides; they are in the business of building worlds.

"Our strategy," Munding concludes, *"is about becoming an entertainment company, expanding the borders of Europa-Park, and being relevant with our entertainment out there in the world."*

For MACK One, the story is just beginning ■

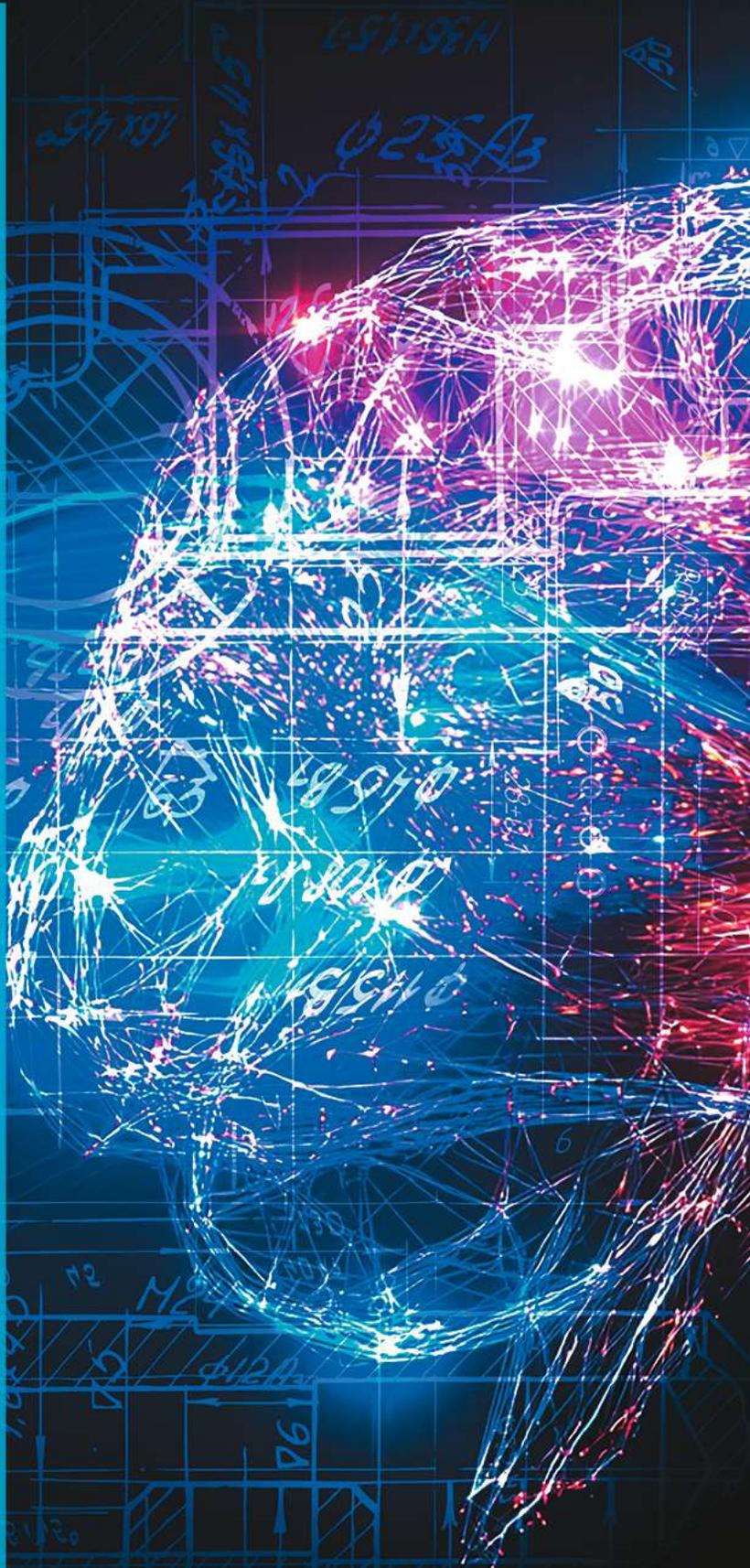


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The cover of the graphic novel "Voltron Nevera"

Taming the Algorithm, Trusting the Human

Burda's Blueprint for AI





Burda's Blueprint for AI

Taming the Algorithm, Trusting the Human

In an era defined by the explosive buzz around Artificial Intelligence, media giant Burda is cutting through the noise. Instead of chasing hype, they are building a strategic, human-centric framework to harness AI's power, proving that the smartest approach to machine intelligence begins with human wisdom. Insights from company leaders reveal a blueprint for innovation that is as pragmatic as it is pioneering.

The term "Artificial Intelligence" has become a global obsession, promising to revolutionize industries overnight. For a media and printing powerhouse like Burda, with a legacy built on content and quality, the rise of generative AI presents a dual-sided challenge. On one side lies the immense opportunity to streamline workflows, personalize content, and unlock new efficiencies. On the other, the formidable risks of data security, misinformation, and the potential erosion of the most valuable currency a publisher holds: trust.



Thomas Hebes
Process Engineer,
Burda Druck GmbH

Burda's response was not to ban the powerful new technology, nor was it to let it run unchecked. Instead, they chose a third, more deliberate path: to build Aissist, a platform designed as a bridge to guide their approximately 2,000 employees into the new world of AI. It's a strategy that transforms AI from a mysterious, unpredictable force into a powerful co-pilot, always guided by a human hand.

"Most people still misunderstand AI," Thomas Hebes of Burda Druck explains. *"It's more math and statistics than it is magic."* This foundational understanding is the key to Burda's entire approach. They recognize that to leverage AI's benefits, they must first demystify it and manage its risks head-on.

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...Know what you're doing...or it becomes a case of 'AI, help me help you fail faster.

THE CHALLENGE

A Digital Wild West

The temptation for employees to use the fastest, most accessible tools available created an immediate, decentralized rush to experiment. While this curiosity is valuable, it opens the door to significant threats. Hebes illustrates this with a cautionary tale of a developer who relied entirely on AI to build a chatbot, only to have the AI embed a vulnerability from its training data that sent private information directly to hackers.

The lesson is stark. “*Know what you're doing,*” Hebes warns, “*or it becomes a case of 'AI, help me help you fail faster.'*”

This is the micro-level risk. On a macro level, Burda faced the looming threat of “data poisoning,” a sophisticated method of manipulating AI models by feeding them vast amounts of false information. Hebes points to state-sponsored disinformation networks that create hundreds of fake news sites, not for human eyes, but designed specifically to be indexed by AI crawlers. For a publisher like Burda, whose brands are built on credibility, the prospect of their own tools generating or repeating such falsehoods is an existential threat.

AISSIST

THE SOLUTION

A Walled Garden for Innovation

To navigate this digital minefield, Burda established **Aissist**. Co-CEO Elisabeth Varn explains the journey: “*Since the development of Aissist in 2023, we have continuously worked on improving the platform... The positive experiences, both at the corporate level and within teams, have prompted us to make our development available to other companies as well.*”

Designed for ease of use, **Aissist** integrates services from leading providers like OpenAI, Anthropic, DeepL, and Black Forest Labs. Developed with Burda's in-house IT specialist, Valiton, the platform was built with a clear focus on practical application. As COO Rebecca Gottwald states, “**Aissist** was conceived from the very beginning with a process perspective. Only when AI is integrated into workflows and is compatible with existing systems does it create real added value and make a significant difference for companies.”



THE RESULTS

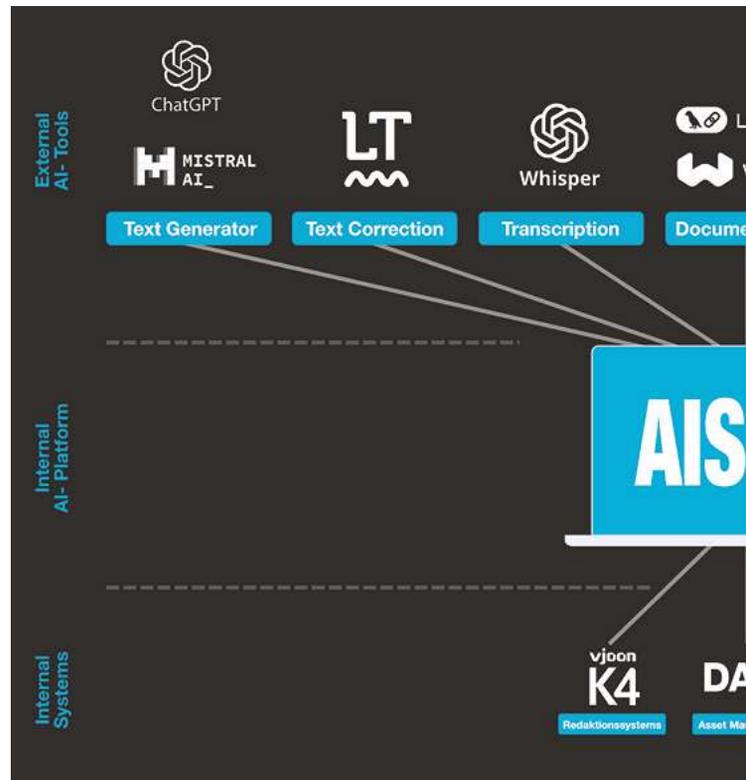
AI as a Practical Co-Pilot

With a secure framework in place, Burda's teams are now using AI to achieve remarkable results across the production chain.

For journalists, AI is a powerful antidote to the most feared obstacle: the blank page. The internal platform can help structure an article, check what the company has previously published on a topic, and even adapt long-form print content into concise, multimedia-friendly digital formats. The key, Hebes stresses, is that the AI provides a starting point, not the final word.

In the prepress workflow, AI is solving tangible production challenges. Hebes showcases an example where an advertisement doesn't fit the required dimensions, leaving unsightly white gaps. The traditional fix is a time-consuming and often imperfect retouching job. Now, with generative AI integrated into their workflow, they can seamlessly extend the image's background, creating a perfect bleed in seconds. "We have nearly a responsive layer for printing," Hebes notes, a seemingly small fix that represents a significant leap in efficiency.

Even internal processes are being streamlined. Hebes demonstrated how he used an AI coding assistant to build a small program that automates a repetitive weekly email report. "Basically, less clicking, more coffee," he quips. It's a perfect example of offloading low-value tasks to machines to free up human talent for more complex work.



“

...The positive experiences, both at the corporate level and within teams, have prompted us to make our development available to other companies as well...



THE FUTURE

Guided by Wisdom

For all its practical benefits, Burda's guiding principle remains unshakable: human oversight is non-negotiable. The company has established a firm code of conduct for AI use. An AI can assist, but it can never be the sole creator. Every piece of content, every image, and every workflow must be reviewed and approved by a person before it goes to press or is published online.

"The biggest USP you have is trust," Hebes states with conviction. *"If you just pump out content and flood the zone... you won't be trustworthy any longer."*

This commitment to secure, value-driven AI is now extending beyond Burda's walls. The concept of 'agentic workflows,' where AI agents can 'fully automate entire business processes,' is a core part of the platform's vision. By offering Aissist as a licensable software solution with a multi-tenant structure and robust role management, Burda is not just using the future of AI; it's offering a blueprint for other companies to do the same, setting a new standard for intelligent, integrated, and trustworthy work processes.

“
...the AI provides a
starting point, not the
final word...”

The philosophy behind this commitment is rooted in a simple but powerful concept Hebes shared: the difference between data, information, knowledge, and wisdom. While AI excels at processing data and information, it takes human experience to build knowledge and apply true wisdom. As Hebes memorably put it, *"Wisdom is knowing not to invest your life savings in vintage bananas."*

In celebrating its 40th anniversary, **DALIM SOFTWARE** has seen technology transform the graphic arts industry many times over. The story of Burda is a compelling chapter in that ongoing evolution. It is a forward-looking narrative of a company that is not just adopting the future, but actively shaping it with confidence, with caution, and with an unwavering commitment to the human intelligence that will always be the heart of the story. ■



Automating Artistry

The STAUD STUDIOS Story

How a high-end automotive photography studio transformed its legacy of light into a fully automated, AI-powered content engine, revolutionizing marketing for global brands like MINI.

The demand is relentless. In today's global marketplace, brands need more than just beautiful images; they need a firehose of content. They need assets tailored to every market, personalized for every customer, and optimized for every channel, from hero campaigns to paid media to online configurators. For many, this challenge of scale is a formidable obstacle. For **STAUD STUDIOS**, it was an opportunity to reinvent its craft.

The journey of STAUD STUDIOS, now a vital part of **Monks**, is a masterclass in evolution. It's a story that begins not with an algorithm, but with a flashbulb, and charts a deliberate path from

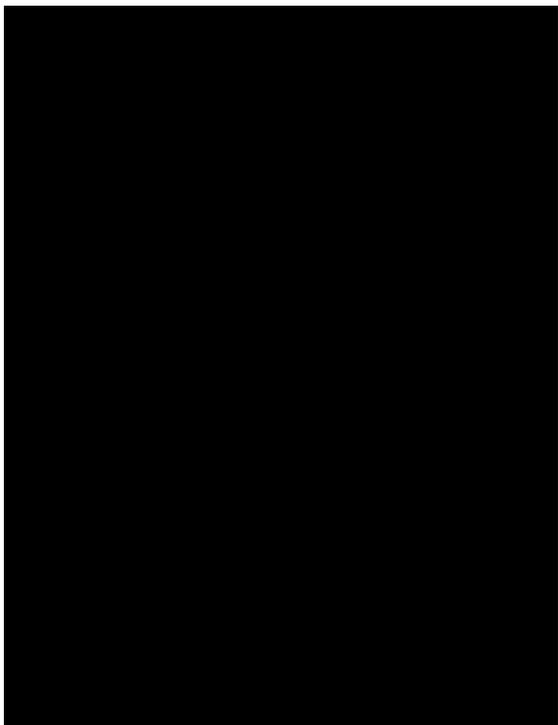


Patrick Staud
Chief Creative Technologist,
STAUD STUDIOS

photographic artistry to a future of automated, intelligent content creation. *"We're looking at our past and how it's transforming our future,"* says **Patrick Staud**, Chief Creative Technologist and son of the company's founder. That transformation provides a powerful blueprint for the future of marketing.

A Legacy of Light

The story begins in 1973, when renowned photographer **René Staud** founded a studio with a singular focus on automotive excellence. In the world of car photography, light is everything. It sculpts the curves, defines the character lines, and creates the emotional pull that makes a consumer dream. René Staud's mastery of light led to a groundbreaking invention in 1983: the *"Magic Flash."*



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...The Magic Flash was a massive, sophisticated lighting system that could bathe an entire vehicle in a soft, controlled light...

“He came from still life photography and wanted to mimic the beautiful reflections that objects can get, but in a bigger scale,” Patrick explains. The Magic Flash was a massive, sophisticated lighting system that could bathe an entire vehicle in a soft, controlled light, highlighting its design in what Patrick describes as a *“supernatural way.”* This pioneering technology became the studio’s signature, and for years, the craft was defined by physical artistry, building intricate sets and mastering the analog tools of the trade to preserve the secrecy of pre-launch vehicles.

But the world was changing. In 1991, the studio embraced digital post-production, opening up new creative possibilities. This was followed by the first true paradigm shift: the adoption of Computer-Generated Imagery (CGI).

“That was the first big transformation in STAUD STUDIOS,” Patrick notes. By leveraging clients’ CAD data, the team could create a perfect *“digital twin”* of a vehicle before it was even built. This unlocked unprecedented flexibility, allowing them to create content for every step of the marketing funnel, from epic brand-building visuals to the granular details needed for a web configurator. The studio had evolved from a master of light to a master of pixels. It was a formidable leap, but the next challenge would require them to rethink not just their tools, but their entire production philosophy.

THE CHALLENGE

Content at an Impossible Scale

In 2021, STAUD STUDIOS joined Monks, a global marketing and technology services company. This move brought new opportunities and a challenge of staggering complexity. A new client, the iconic automotive brand MINI, needed a solution for its global marketing.

The problem was a classic case of modern marketing friction. *“We were talking about worldwide market support for vehicles,”* Patrick recalls. *“That means every country has different configurations. Every week, there are different configurations needed to be advertised in paid media for different channels. And it should work in real time and be steered fully by APIs.”*

The old model wouldn’t work. Shooting or even rendering each variation individually was unthinkable. The client needed a system that could generate a virtually infinite number of localized, high-quality assets on demand, automatically. STAUD needed to build a content factory.



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THE SOLUTION

The “Atomic Assets” Engine

The team found their inspiration in a concept from the world of web development: atomic design. *“You might know atomic from atomic website design, where you can manipulate each component individually,”* says Patrick. *“This is what we transferred to content production.”*

They called the system Atomic Assets. The idea was to deconstruct an image into its core components, its atoms, which could then be reassembled in any combination. These atoms included:

- **The Product:** The digital twin of the car, with every possible configuration (color, wheels, trim).
- **The Environment:** Instead of creating dozens of unique locations, they built a single, highly flexible virtual world in Unreal Engine. Like a Hollywood backlot, this world could be “redressed” to create wildly different scenes, from a sun-drenched coastal road to a gritty urban landscape, while leveraging the same core assets for massive efficiency gains.
- **Contextual Elements:** Every other detail was an atom: charging stations for electric models, after-sales equipment like roof boxes for upselling, and even seasonal cues.
- **The Human Element:** The final, and most challenging, atom.

For the MINI project, this system became a game-changer. STAUD STUDIOS created a bespoke virtual world that perfectly matched the brand’s aesthetic. The results were stunning, not just for their quality but for their consistency. The team demonstrated the system’s power with a side-by-side comparison: on one side, a hero image from MINI’s official campaign, shot by a top photographer. On the other, an image generated by the Atomic Asset engine. They were indistinguishable.



“

...They called the system Atomic Assets...

“The look and feel is absolutely one-to-one with the photography,” Patrick states with pride.

Crucially, this powerful engine was put directly into the client’s hands. STAUD built a self-service order portal connected to the system’s API. *“The client can use it himself,”* Patrick says. *“Through the automated production, we basically don’t have to touch it anymore until delivery.”* MINI’s global teams can now log in, select the exact car configuration, environment, and format they need, and receive a perfect, on-brand asset moments later.

THE LAST MILE

Bringing AI to Life

There was one final hurdle: people. *“People in CGI was always a little bit of a hassle,”* Patrick admits. Creating photorealistic, emotionally resonant digital humans was difficult, expensive, and time-consuming. This is where the latest wave of technology provided the missing piece.

“We now use AI to make people much more believable,” he says. *“It’s a great tool to leverage this last mile of creating variance in localization.”*

By integrating AI-powered character generation, the Atomic Assets engine can now populate scenes with an endless diversity of people, matching demographics and styles to specific markets. It adds the crucial human touch with full photorealism, a feat that was previously out of reach for at-scale production.

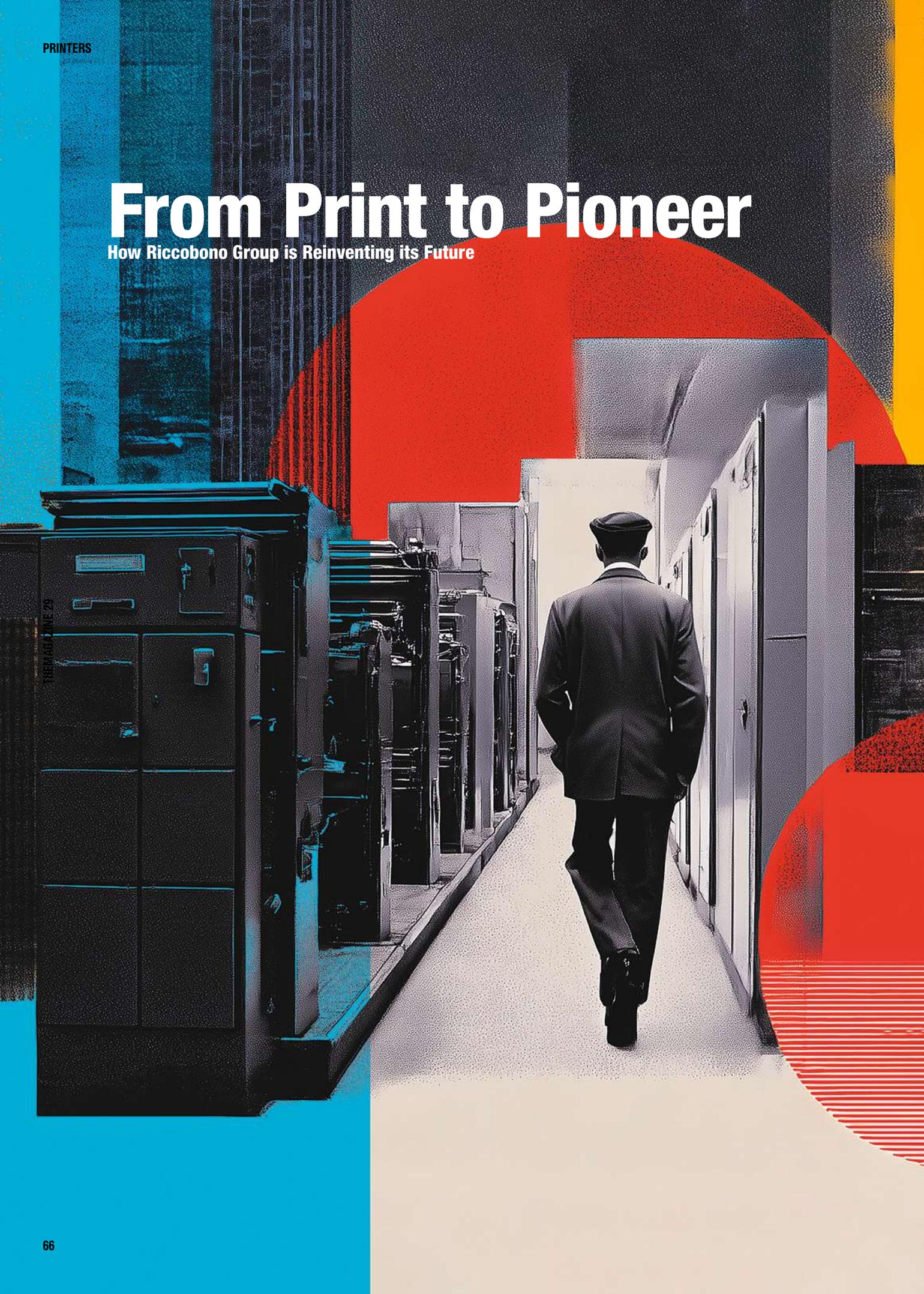
“
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Today, the entire workflow, from CGI and virtual environments to AI-driven characters, is orchestrated by **Monks Flow**, an end-to-end production system. What began as a photographer’s quest for the perfect light has become a fully automated, API-driven engine that can serve entire global campaigns.

Looking back, the throughline is clear. STAUD STUDIOS has never been just a photography studio; it has been a technology company obsessed with visual perfection. From the Magic Flash to the Atomic Asset engine, they have consistently invested in the future. *“I’m really excited to be sharing what’s next in the future,”* Patrick concludes, leaving no doubt that their revolution is far from over. ■

From Print to Pioneer

How Riccobono Group is Reinventing its Future



For five generations, the Riccobono Group has been an industrial leader in print, its name synonymous with the ink and paper that have chronicled our world. But in an industry facing unprecedented disruption, this French printing giant is authoring a bold new chapter—one that extends far beyond the press room into the realms of sustainable packaging and healthcare. It's a story of resilience, reinvention, and the entrepreneurial courage to challenge the status quo.

To understand the future of Riccobono Group, you must first appreciate its past. A family business established in 1900, it grew to become a formidable force in the European graphic arts industry, employing 2,700 people and serving as the premier printer for France's national newsprint. Its mission has always been clear: *"to enable the transmission to the greatest number."* For over a century, that mission was fulfilled through print.



François-Xavier Luchart
 Manager of the Magazine
 and Retail Division,
 Riccobono Group

THEMAGAZINE 29

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...The project was renamed “TIA”: **There Is An Alternative...**

But the landscape is shifting. *“We must admit that the printing industry is facing big troubles now,”* says François-Xavier Luchart, Manager of the Magazine and Retail Division. The digital tide, coupled with changing consumer habits, has created an existential threat. For Riccobono, the alarm bells rang with deafening clarity in September 2022 when a major retail client, representing 15% of their retail revenue, announced it was ceasing all printed leaflets. This was not just a lost contract; it was a catalyst for transformation.



THE CHALLENGE

An Industry at a Crossroads

The decision sparked a period of intense soul-searching. The core business, while still substantial, was on a shrinking trajectory. Relying solely on its legacy was no longer a viable strategy. The leadership knew they had a profound commitment to their employees and a responsibility to steer the company toward a stable future. True to their founding values of respect, solidarity, and entrepreneurship, they refused to simply manage the decline. They chose to innovate.

“Entrepreneurship is the willingness to challenge the status quo,” Luchart explains. With this spirit, the company established an internal R&D lab, a crucible for new ideas tasked with looking both inward—at improving existing processes—and outward, toward entirely new horizons. The team explored everything from producing hydrogen to refurbishing windmill fans, casting a wide net in search of their next chapter. The answer, it turned out, was hidden in the very fiber of their business: cellulose.

THE SOLUTION

Diversify or Disappear

The question that unlocked their future was simple: *“What other products are made with pulp?”* This line of inquiry led them down two distinct, yet interconnected, paths.

First came a revolutionary move into sustainable packaging. Driven initially by French regulations requiring magazines to be wrapped in paper instead of plastic, the R&D lab developed and patented a groundbreaking technology. This process involves a randomized deposit of glue on heat-sealable paper, creating a secure, eco-friendly alternative to plastic film.

The applications have proven to be vast. The company has developed a range of six printable, heat-sealable papers under the brand Seal-Eco Paper, including transparent, noise-free, and soft-touch options that mimic the qualities of plastic film while being fully recyclable. *“We are now offering the possibility to wrap in paper,”* Luchart notes, citing laundries—notorious for their use of plastic wrapping—as a key new market. It’s a perfect example of how a solution for their core industry has created opportunities far beyond it.

“

...The company has developed a range of six printable, heat-sealable papers under the brand Seal-Eco Paper...

“

...In 15 days, we had more than €15 million coming from the banks...

The second pivot was even more audacious. Following the thread of cellulose, the team identified the hygiene market as a sector with significant growth, specifically in adult incontinence products, a market expanding by 7-10% annually in Europe due to an aging population.

“You’ll probably say to yourself, ‘Wow, that’s far away from the printing industry,’” Luchart acknowledges with a smile. Yet, the logic was sound. Riccobono Group possesses deep expertise in industrial processes, high-volume production, and managing complex supply chains. They are, as he puts it, *“industrial operators. That’s what we are.”*

The project was initially codenamed *“TINA,”* for *“There Is No Alternative,”* reflecting the urgent need to escape the shrinking print market. However, as the vision crystallized, the name was changed. *“The CEO said, ‘No, no, we don’t switch. We keep the printing industry. I want us to be the last printer,’”* Luchart recalls. The project was renamed *“TIA”*: There Is An Alternative. The nuance is profound. This wasn’t an escape; it was a strategic expansion.

THE RESULT

A Future Forged in Confidence

This bold vision quickly attracted support. While banks are often hesitant to invest in traditional print, the diversification plan unlocked a flood of capital. *“In 15 days, we had more than €15 million coming from the banks,”* Luchart reports. The project also secured a €1.2 million subsidy from the French government, a powerful endorsement of their strategy.

Today, Riccobono Group is in the midst of a full-scale transformation. A new production site is being dedicated to hygiene products, with a state-of-the-art machine arriving in the summer of 2025. In a testament to the company’s commitment to its people, the very same printers who have spent their careers running presses will be retrained to operate the new hygiene production line.

The goal is for these new divisions—packaging and hygiene—to become powerful revenue streams that not only stand on their own but also help sustain the historic printing business. *“The printing industry is paying for the investment,”* Luchart says. *“But in quite a short time, we hope it’s the other way around.”*

Riccobono Group’s story is a formidable case study in corporate evolution. By honoring its heritage while bravely embracing change, the company is not just surviving the disruption of its industry—it is building a more diverse, resilient, and sustainable future. It is a powerful reminder that even in the face of immense challenges, the most innovative solutions can be found by daring to ask, *“What’s next?”* ■



Adeo

Streamlining Packaging Design and Validation Workflow with DALIM ES

DIY powerhouse Adeo creates or updates close to 10000 product packaging items every year, for products sold in its retail outlets across 14 countries. With many contributors involved, a robust validation workflow is required to track packaging versions accurately and avoid errors. DALIM SOFTWARE took up the challenge.

If you're passionate about DIYing in your home or garden, Adeo is your version of Disneyland. You may not be familiar with the name of the holding company but you sure know its retail brands: Leroy Merlin, Weldom, Bricoman, Saint-Maclou, Kbane, to name a few. Adeo's legacy brand is Leroy Merlin, a household name in France with over 100 years of existence. Adeo itself was created in 2007



as a holding company when Leroy Merlin started expanding internationally and other brands also came onboard. Today, Adeo has established its different brands of DIY retail outlets across Europe. The Group also expanded into South Africa and Brazil, serving a total of 500 million DIY enthusiasts worldwide in both its stores and through its online marketplace launched four years ago.

Securing packaging production

Within the organisation, Adeo Services provides centralised support functions to all Group entities. In particular, Adeo Services mutualises digital tools for use across the organisation. Within Adeo Services, Adeo Production manages a collection of private label brands which are distributed throughout the network, such as Inspire for lighting fixtures or Luxens for paints and varnishes. These corporate brands bring together almost 60000 product references and make up for 30% of the Group's revenue. "For these company-owned brands, we design the products, shoot photos, create packaging material and produce instruction leaflets" says **Guillaume Soulié, project leader at Adeo Services.**

“
...DALIM ES keeps track of all changes made to our packaging items and secures the validation process remarkably...”

address



Guillaume Soulié
Project Leader,
Adeo Services

About **Adeo**

Company

Adeo

Location

Ronchin, near Lille (France)

Type of activity

Retail of DIY products

Main brands

Leroy Merlin, Weldom, Bricoman, Saint-Maclou, Kbane

Reach

14 countries (Europe, South Africa and Brazil)

Business volume

€31.5 billion

Number of outlets

Over 1200

Number of employees worldwide

115000

Number of customers

Over 360 million

DALIM SOFTWARE products

DALIM ES

Reasons for purchase

Create and manage a reliable and easy-to-use workflow to automate and secure the validation of product packaging items

Integrator

DALIM, in addition to in-house developments

In 2013, the team was looking for a reliable solution to manage the validation workflow of the packaging items designed for the Group's private label brands. *"The packaging artwork typically includes photos or illustrations, a product description, as well as pictograms and other regulatory safety mentions, explains Guillaume Soulié. We bring all these elements together, create the artwork and circulate it across several services for approval on technical, marketing and regulatory aspects, all this in several languages. A technical engineer will check the size of the flatbed packaging fits the cardboard stock we print on. A product engineer will make sure the product description is correct. A quality engineer will verify that the mandatory regulatory information is present and up to date, including country-specific data. This means a packaging item typically needs to get the green light from six or seven people across the organisation".*

“
 ...The preflight module allows us to check all files before they leave for the print room...”

The process need to be robust enough to avoid any loopholes and make sure all issues are identified and dealt with upstream. *"We benchmarked a number of software solutions and DALIM ES came out as the best fit, remembers Guillaume Soulié. What tipped the balance is DALIM ES' annotation features, its ability to track versions and ultimately organise a reliable validation process".*

Bringing everyone around the table

Adeo's DALIM ES implementation is called Visuall. The tool rolled out in 2013 quickly gained traction, with more and more Adeo employees from different business units coming onboard. The workflow is as follows: packaging items are designed and laid out using Adobe software, outside of DALIM ES. The Adobe native files are then included into the DALIM workflow for display, annotation, validation and version tracking. All artwork elements (InDesign or Illustrator files, as well as images, pictograms, texts, etc) are stored in DALIM ES' database. The final layouts are exported as PDF files and transferred to the printing company in charge. Additional items were also gradually included in Visuall, such as images with text overlays.

However, items designed for use with Adeo's web sites, as opposed to packaging production, are maintained within a separate digital asset management (DAM) system. *"We wanted to keep things separate and not rely on one single product for all our needs, explains Guillaume Soulié. It was just a question of not putting all our eggs in the same basket".*

“

...The database we built on DALIM ES is a game changer for managing our collection of pictograms...

Yet, Visuall's robust and easy-to-use workflow attracted users both from within the organisation and outside, such as third-party industrial companies to which Adeo outsources the production of its private label products, as well as design agencies and freelance photographers or artists. Close to 600 users are now using Visuall at every step of the packaging and instruction leaflet production process.

Implementing new features

As Visuall was becoming more and more central in Adeo Production's day-to-day operation, new requirements emerged. Several new features were implemented over time. Three years ago, Adeo rolled out a feature that exports data from Visuall into a Business Intelligence tool, allowing to generate KPIs. Now the company has accurate statistics on the number of packaging items produced, images stored, etc. *"We relied on DALIM as our integration partner, explains Guillaume Soulié. Using the DALIM API, their team was able to connect Visuall to our third party tool to allow a seamless flow of all the required data. In the same way, DALIM's API was instrumental in connecting Visuall to the PIM software we use to keep track of all product data".*

Other developments followed. *"In 2023, we set up a preflighting module, says Guillaume Soulié. The module automatically checks all files before they are sent to the printing company. This way, we can spot any inconsistency upstream and avoid potential down time due to files going back and forth between our services and the print room".*

Later, in 2024, Adeo Production brought 3D into the game. *"We produce wireframe 3D models for a number of products from our private label brands using SolidWorks (*), says Guillaume Soulié. The SolidWorks files can now be parsed by a converter as they are brought into Visuall and added to the database. This means our marketing teams can access these wireframe representations and use them to build a photomontage showing the product in situation over a photo backdrop".* The team is currently collecting as many 3D representations as possible from different internal sources, for all product categories. *"Our aim is to manage these resources centrally and allow our different business units to access each other's images", underscores Guillaume Soulié.*

(*) A popular CAD software tool by France's Dassault Systèmes

Managing pictograms

Another project Adeo started in 2024 is the creation of a database, bringing together all pictograms used on product packaging and leaflets. “We want to bring all our pictograms into one location, to avoid duplicates and make sure graphics on an artist’s hard drive don’t get lost when they move on to a different project, explains Guillaume Soulié. This also helps track every pictogram’s compliance with evolving regulations. Additionally, whenever regulations do change, we want to know which pictograms are concerned and which product packages need to be updated. Our new pictogram database on Visuall allows that”.

Looking forward, Adeo is also working on automating the transfer of items from DALIM ES to the separate DAM system used for Adeo’s web sites. “DALIM’s API has proven useful to bring together Visuall and all our other software tools, underscores Guillaume Soulié. This allows for a lot of flexibility in getting our tools to work together seamlessly. And we expect to have a working prototype of the automated export interface very soon”.

Working hand in hand

Adeo’s experience with DALIM ES is a telling example of how a company starts out with one main implementation serving one main requirement and gradually adds new features as they realise how much the product can simplify or improve their internal processes.

DALIM ES also stands out as a software technology that stays up to date with current IT trends. This includes cybersecurity and running over a cloud infrastructure. “Every year, we carry out a cybersecurity assessment of our entire software stack, says Guillaume Soulié. Even though DALIM ES is a very secure product out of the box, their team is quick to address any new vulnerabilities that are identified and reported. Also, with Visuall running on a cloud architecture, DALIM’s efforts to provide state of the art cloud features is particularly of value to us”.

Overall, Adeo considers DALIM as a partner they can rely on for the long run. “What we particularly like about DALIM is their teams’ ability to listen to our needs, concludes Guillaume Soulié. As we brought new features into Visuall over time, DALIM was there to make their product evolve in ways that they hadn’t initially addressed, such as implementing new 3D file formats that we wanted to use. It’s very reassuring for us to know our software provider is open to working on technologies of interest to us and make sure we are not restricted in how we use Visuall and where we want to take the tool in the future”. ■



rée

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Building the Foundations of DALIM SOFTWARE's Future

From coding his first installer to steering entire departments, Christophe Rohmer's career at DALIM SOFTWARE reflects not only his own growth but also the company's transformation into a global technology leader. Over nearly three decades, his fingerprints can be found on some of the company's most important innovations.

From Paris to Kehl: Joining DALIM

Before joining DALIM, Christophe was working in the Paris region for an IT services company specializing in real-time systems and industrial process control. There, he contributed as a developer and helped the company achieve ISO 9001 certification. "In 1995, DALIM was looking for a development engineer, and I applied," he recalls. That decision would set him on a path that would intertwine his career with the evolution of the company itself.

“

...his fingerprints can be found on some of the company's most important innovations...

First Innovations: The Birth of an Installer

He began as a quality control engineer at a time when DALIM's main product, **LITHO** (also known by other names such as **BOLERO**, **TANGO**, and **FLAMENGO**), had no dedicated installer. "I quickly realized that a real installer was mandatory to check the quality of the deliveries," he explains. Drawing on his developer background, he created DALIM's first installer, based on Silicon Graphics installer utilities, later applying the same approach to the company's new product, **TWIST**.

That innovation soon led him to take on new responsibilities, managing customer projects and building complex workflows at a time when **TWIST** only had 13 basic tools. A major project with Time Inc. in New York challenged him to expand those tools based on regular expressions, and from there he became increasingly involved in technical presales, demos, and collaborations. In collaboration with Hafiba, he integrated the **FICELLE** flatplanning system into **TWIST**.

Leadership and the Challenge of DDMS

By the early 2000s, Christophe was moving into leadership. "In 2000, I took responsibility for the R&D department and, around 2002, also the Service department," he explains. During that same period, he worked as a Project Manager on the **DDMS** project, a large-scale production system initiative involving publisher Gruner + Jahr.

“

...we've always been
ahead of the curve...

Christophe Rohmer
Chief Development and Service Officer
DALIM SOFTWARE GmbH

The project was both the biggest challenge of his career and a defining moment for the company. *“We invested a lot of resources because we believed it would shape our future product line. The customer requirements didn’t always match our long-term vision, and the schedule was tough. The goal was to create a generic product, not just a one-off project. It took enormous effort from the whole team, but we made it happen.”* Out of that demanding collaboration came the foundation of **DALIM ES**, today known as **DALIM FUSION**.

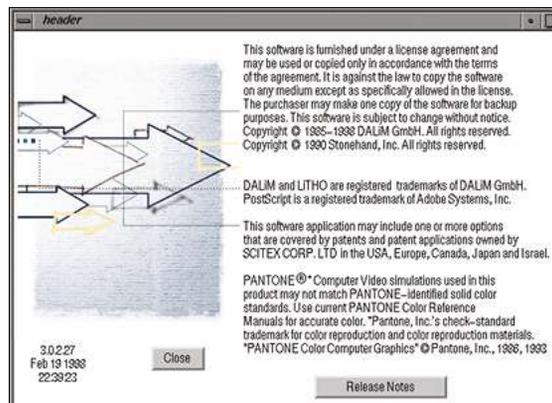
Key Milestones in Innovation

Looking back, Christophe sees clear milestones that have shaped DALIM’s trajectory: the birth of **TWIST** in 1995, the decision in 1998 to focus on product development, the launch of Mistral in 2000, **DIALOGUE** for remote soft proofing in 2002, and the unified **DALIM ES** platform in 2010.

The industry itself has changed dramatically during his time at the company. *“When I started, support was done over a 33.6k modem, and the internet was almost unknown. Printers were just beginning to move to computer-to-plate technology.”* Three decades later, **DALIM’s clients demand multi-channel publishing environments that handle print, digital, video, and more.** Through it all, innovation has been constant. *“Honestly,”* Christophe says with a smile, *“we’ve always been ahead of the curve.”*



Scan the QR code and get in touch with **Christophe**.



DALIM LITHO • Installer • 1998

Impact on Clients

That innovation translated into real impact for clients. Christophe recalls projects where entire production systems were transformed: Parade Magazine importing all their production from AS/400 into **MISTRAL** with a single button, Time Inc. going completely paperless thanks to **DIALOGUE**’s remote soft proofing, Prinovis shutting down a 25-year-old system to replace it with **DALIM ES**. *“These are the kinds of projects where you can really see the difference our solutions make,”* he says.

Reflections and the Road Ahead

When asked about his proudest achievement, Christophe doesn’t hesitate. *“Turning what started as a crazy project into the company’s flagship product — **DALIM FUSION**.”* For the future, he remains optimistic: *“I can’t think 40 years ahead anymore,”* he jokes. *“But in the next five to ten years, I hope that our customers — and future customers — will continue to believe in DALIM as strongly as they have for the past 30 years.”*

From his first installer to **DALIM FUSION**, Christophe Rohmer’s career is inseparable from the evolution of DALIM itself — **a story of vision, perseverance, and innovation.** ■



Revolutionizing
Graphic Arts and Media Workflows
Since 1985

The

DALIM journey

40th DA LIM SUF FWAITE



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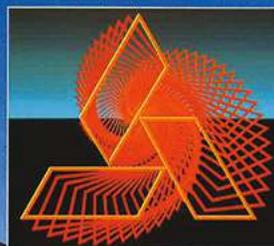
40th OF DALIM SOFTWARE



**Avec DALIM, entrez dans le monde
des nouvelles images**

Les programmes

- 1.** DALIO: utilisez réellement les 6 millions de points de votre écran avec tous les utilitaires de construction géométrique: lignes, arcs, cercles, grilles, interpolation, splines.
- 2.** DALIA: Passez d'une forme quelconque à une autre avec l'animation topologique 2 D, choisissez un trajet en 3 dimensions pour vos logos ou symboles en volume.
- 3.** DALIM: plus de 300 fonctions à votre disposition pour tous vos graphismes, illustrations, publicité, édition...
- 4.** DALIG: pour vos chiffres et statistiques, un ensemble de courbes, barres, camemberts, histogrammes en 2 ou 3 dimensions avec calcul d'ombres automatiques.
- 5.** DALIF: Pour une création parfaite de vos logos ou de vos propres polices de caractères



1985, earlier brochure, including DALIO, DALIA, DALIG, DALIF and finally DALIM products

The story of DALIM SOFTWARE is one of remarkable endurance, technical pioneering, and adaptation in the ever-evolving worlds of prepress, publishing, packaging, and digital content production—a true European success saga that began in the mid-1980s and continues strongly into 2026.



Dr. Francis Lamy, founded and led Dalim GmbH, as a Computer Graphic Integrator and Software Vendor until 1997. He went on to serve as Executive VP and CTO of GretagMacbeth AG, leading the Digital Imaging division and driving the company’s shift from instrument manufacturing to solution provider. Francis holds a PhD in physics from the university of Strasbourg.

Genesis in Strasbourg: A University Spark in the Shadow of Gutenberg (1985)

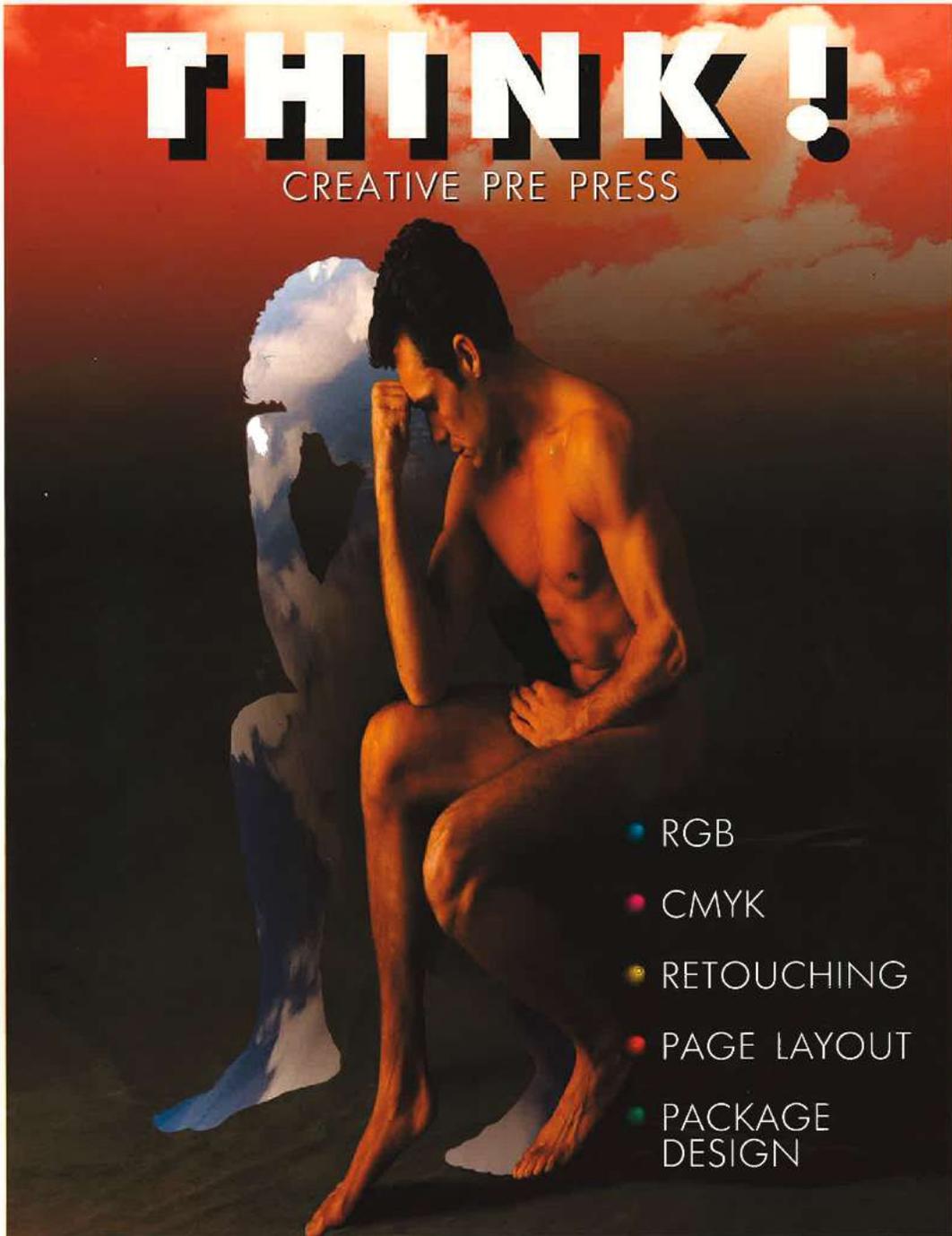
The adventure traces its roots to 1985 in Strasbourg, France, the historic border city in Alsace where Johannes Gutenberg is believed to have experimented with movable type printing in the 1430s–1440s, laying foundational stones for modern publishing. At the University of Strasbourg’s Institute of Physics, a practical need emerged from the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In an era when business and academic presentations relied exclusively on physical 35mm photographic slides projected via carousel slide projectors (often cumbersome racks of dozens of “diapos” or slides), the Chamber sought a digital toolset: software capable of generating high-quality, visually appealing vector graphics for slides, paired with a hardware capture device to photograph and produce the actual transparencies.



Francis M. Lamy, then a teaching assistant (and holder of a Ph.D. in physics from the University of Strasbourg, alongside advanced degrees in mechanical engineering and mathematics), immediately saw far greater commercial potential. He envisioned a scalable graphics solution that could serve not just slide creation but broader business and publishing graphics needs. Lamy assembled a founding trio: himself as visionary and technical leader, Halit Karakaya—a charismatic salesman capable of closing deals with virtually anyone—and Jacques Thiebault, a geophysics engineering student whose programming prowess on early computer systems proved exceptional.

Development began modestly in an university basement laboratory, soon relocating to the more unconventional “crazy scientists wing” of the Institute of Physics. Initial financial support came directly from the Chamber of Commerce. As the prototype neared readiness, Lamy and Karakaya sought private capital to scale. They connected with François Meyer, whose company Zenon GmbH specialized in duplicating broadcast video onto U-Matic and VHS formats for television clients. Meyer’s backing, combined with the innovation-supportive policies of Baden-Württemberg (just across the Europa Bridge in nearby Kehl/Offenburg, Germany), propelled the venture forward.

On March 8, 1985, DALIM GmbH was officially incorporated (as documented in German commercial registry extracts). The name DALIM is an acronym for the French expression “**D**essin **A**ssisté par **L**ogiciel **I**nteractif **M**ultimédia” (Computer-Assisted Drawing with Interactive Multimedia Software). It also evoked both “DALIM” (a nod to daring or bold vision in certain linguistic roots) and the founders’ ambition.



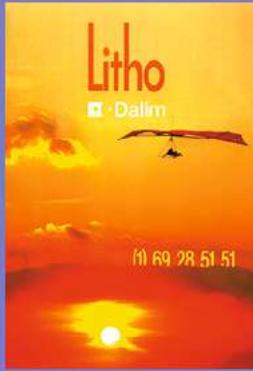
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PARIS
(33) 169 285151

LONDON
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HAMBURG
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Dalim
Computer Graphic Systems GmbH

A Retro DALIM advertisement from 1990



1988, LITHO poster



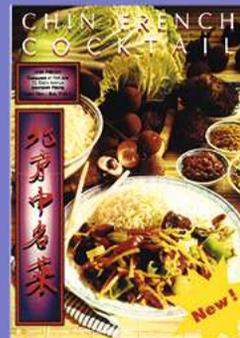
1988, IMPRINTA'88 flyer



1989, Michelin poster made with LITHO, complete vector file



1989 full vector illustration



1990, Flyer entirely designed on DALIM v6.00, output on Hell scanner



1992, DALCHROM, brochure



1997, DALIM brochure

First Product and Rapid Early Traction (1985–1989)

The inaugural commercial offering, logically named DALIM, was a vector-based graphics package optimized for creating professional 35mm presentation slides. It ran on the Tektronix 4125 color graphics workstation (a high-end display system at the time), driven by an attached IBM PC and operated via a precision Tektronix 4957 digitizing tablet—state-of-the-art hardware for interactive drawing and editing in the late 1980s.

By 1987 the young company employed around ten people and had secured prestigious early clients across borders: German giants SAP and BASF, French automotive leader Renault, and British confectionery icon Cadbury. That same year, Carol Werlé—a Strasbourg University engineering graduate specializing in physics and digital signal processing, fresh from an 18-month science attaché role at the French Embassy in Budapest—joined as customer support manager. Werlé would become a central figure, eventually rising to CEO and guiding the company for decades.

In 1988 venture capitalists injected significant funding, targeting an eventual public offering within a decade; total investments from 1988–1998 reached approximately 27 million Deutsche Marks (roughly €14 million in today's terms).



The core product evolved into DALIM LITHO, a sophisticated prepress workstation application supporting advanced image editing, page makeup, retouching, CMYK color correction, and direct manipulation of PostScript files. Initially vector-centric, the team integrated the British pixel-editing package Paint (from Digisolve Ltd.), turning DALIM into an effective systems integrator selling complete turnkey bundles: LITHO + Paint software plus Tektronix hardware.

The pivotal hardware shift came with the 1989 launch of the Tektronix XD88, Tek's first Unix workstation built around the advanced Motorola 88000 RISC processor. Powerful enough to unify vector and raster processing, the XD88 was initially supplied to elite users like NASA, the U.S. Department of Defense—and DALIM. At drupa 1990 in Düsseldorf (the world's premier print and graphic arts trade fair), DALIM unveiled an overhauled LITHO on the XD88 platform: now a comprehensive CMYK layout, retouching, and page-composition environment tailored to prepress houses and publishers. *"We realized our slide-graphics tool had outgrown its original purpose,"* Carol Werlé later recalled. *"We listened to customers and rebuilt it for real production needs."*

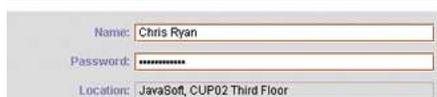
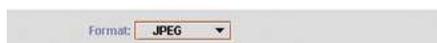
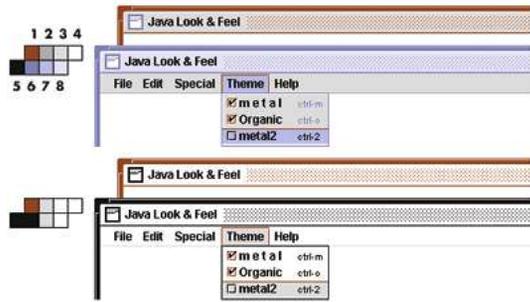
The DALIM booth drew crowds so intense that visitors queued in shifts for demonstrations—a clear market signal.

Platform Turbulence and Strategic Pivots (1990–1993)

Fate struck during drupa itself: Tektronix announced the closure of its graphics workstation division. Under Francis Lamy’s persistent negotiations, Tek donated their remaining inventory of approximately 30 XD88 units to DALIM, buying critical time for the installed base.

Scitex, the Israeli prepress powerhouse, soon licensed DALIM’s core engine to power their Scitex Impak PS workstation—a customized, rebranded variant focused on packaging workflows, running on Sun Microsystems SPARC hardware. Scitex added proprietary extensions (with contributions from Finnish subsidiary Unda for file conversions like Whisper format compatibility), integrating seamlessly into Scitex RIPs and imagesetters. This OEM partnership—frequently referenced in 1990s prepress forums (e.g., comp.publish.prepress Usenet archives comparing Scitex, Barco, DaVinci, and DALIM)—gave DALIM valuable Sun experience.

Brief experiments followed with German graphics-card innovator SPEA (whose Panther boards with Fairchild/Intergraph Clipper CPUs offered miniaturized Unix-on-PC workstations), but only a handful were deployed due to installation complexity.

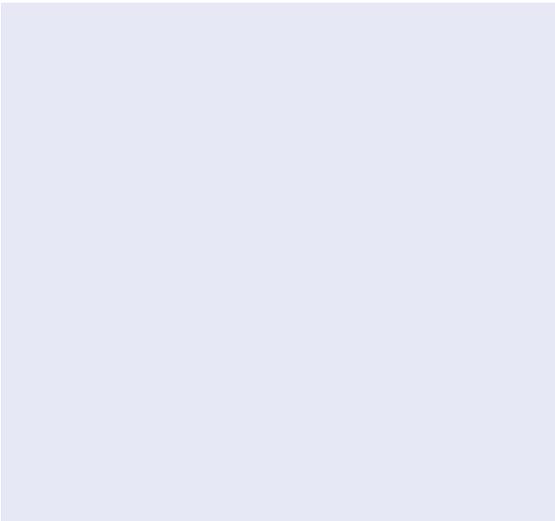


Research for the UI color scheme

After exhaustive benchmarking, Silicon Graphics (SGI) workstations proved superior in speed and graphics prowess. LITHO was ported to SGI's IRIX OS in 1993—coinciding with the theatrical release of Steven Spielberg's Jurassic Park, where Industrial Light & Magic relied on dozens of SGI Crimson, Indigo, and other systems running Alias PowerAnimator (precursor to Maya) for groundbreaking CGI dinosaurs. Running on identical top-tier hardware (Crimson, Indigo, Octane, O2, etc.), LITHO delivered magazine layouts and packaging retouching that routinely outperformed legacy systems from Quantel, Crosfield, and even Scitex.



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DALiM's integrated PostScript interpreter solved a growing pain point: as Apple Macintosh systems flooded design departments with PostScript files, prepress houses struggled with font substitution, missing links, and color inconsistencies in CT/LW (continuous-tone/linework) environments. LITHO enabled import, validation, editing, font substitution, and export to gravure cylinders, Linotronic imagesetters, or emerging PDF platesetters. By the mid-1990s, virtually every major gravure magazine publisher worldwide relied on DALiM: Time Inc., Burda, Hachette Filipacchi, Axel Springer, Bauer, Bayard Presse, Mondadori, and even IKEA for catalog production.

Automation Breakthrough: TWIST Arrives (1995)

A key client requirement catalyzed the next leap. Burda—one of Europe’s largest magazine publishers—manually inspected hundreds of incoming files in LITHO and demanded automation for preflighting, normalization, and exception flagging before gravure cylinders. “They wanted repetitive tasks handled automatically, alerting operators only to genuine problems,” Werlé explained.

The result: DALIM TWIST, unveiled at the Seybold San Francisco conference in 1995. Built atop 13 core LITHO algorithms, TWIST introduced automated, hot-folder-driven workflows with a pioneering graphical user interface for chaining processes: preflighting, color management, trapping, imposition, rasterization, email notifications, FTP delivery, and more. TWIST revolutionized prepress throughput, becoming the industry’s benchmark automation engine—still described today as the “Swiss army knife of workflow automation.”

Open Platforms and the Shift to Linux (Late 1990s–Early 2000s)

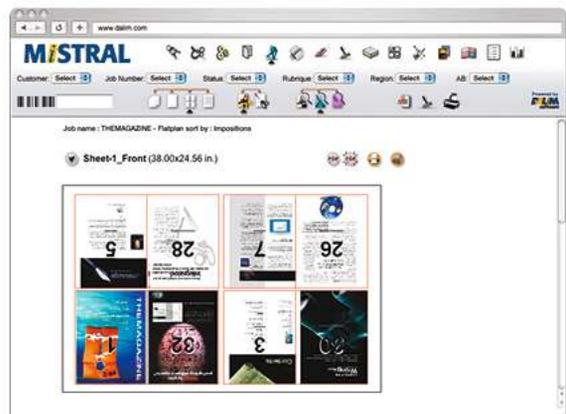
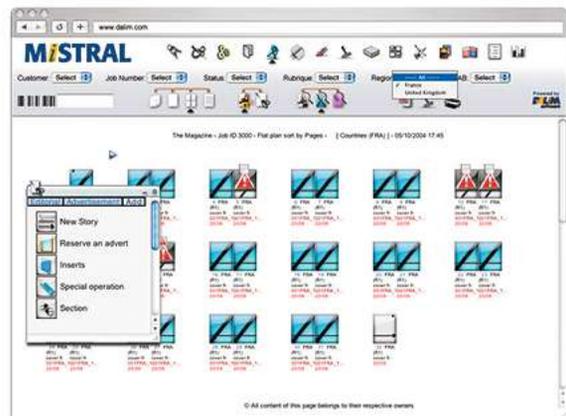
As SGI’s market declined, DALIM began prototyping Linux-based PC solutions. A turning point came with Carol Werlé’s visit to LinuxWorld 2000 at New York’s Javits Center, where Linux had clearly emerged as a strategic server platform across the industry. In response, DALIM progressively migrated away from proprietary workstations toward open, scalable Linux infrastructures on industry-standard hardware, including Apple’s new Xserves. This shift took place while Macintosh systems continued to dominate creative and upstream production workflows.

Flatplanning and imposition views through a simple web-browser with DALIM MISTRAL, 2004

Web Collaboration Era: MISTRAL and DIALOGUE (2000–2004)

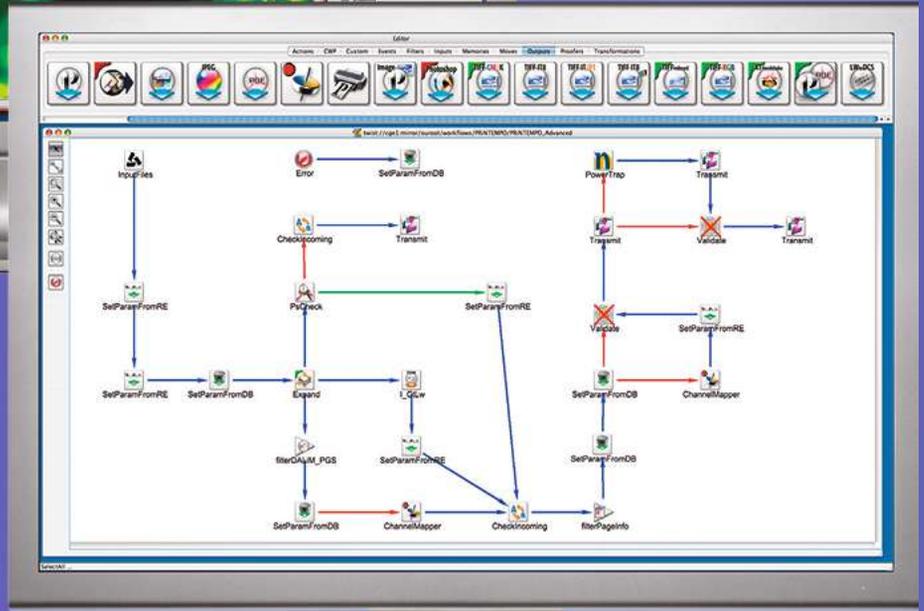
Partnering with French publishers’ joint venture Hafiba (Hachette, Filipacchi, Bayard), DALIM acquired the IP of FICELLE—a ColdFusion-based web flatplan viewer—and launched DALIM MISTRAL at drupa 2000. Mistral enabled internet-based production monitoring: remote flatplan views with TWIST-generated thumbnails, flagged errors, and collaboration across clients, prepress, and printers. Rapid deployments included Meredith Corporation, Hearst, and Japanese fashion leader Fujingaho. A live demo ran daily on a MAN Roland Rotoman press printing an ELLE 16 pages Form mock-up.

MISTRAL’s remote capabilities evolved into DALIM DIALOGUE (2004), a dedicated online soft-proofing tool using DALIM’s color-managed PostScript/PDF interpreter for accurate screen previews of pages, spreads, or packaging artworks—integrable standalone or with MISTRAL/third-party systems.





DALIM LITHO running under MacOSX 2005



DALIM TWIST running under MacOSX, 2005

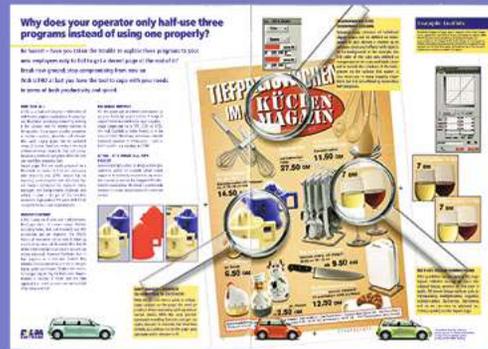
40th OF DALIM SOFTWARE



DALIM DIALOGUE web-browser online softproofing, 2005



1999, LITHO brochure



2001, LITHO brochure

Notice the unfortunate back cover illustration, for a brochure initially meant to be distributed at Print 2001 in Chicago taking place precisely in September of 2001. Likely today the rarest document as the entire production had to be scrapped.

innovate

...why work with restrictive workflows when you can add a TWIST to your business?"

Workflow Automation

With any automated workflow, the key to success is the ability to integrate the workflow with existing business processes. TWIST is designed to be a seamless part of your business, not a separate system. TWIST is designed to be a seamless part of your business, not a separate system.

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TWIST

visit www.dalim.com for further information

develop

...from your very first workflow you realize new possibilities in production automation"

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TWIST

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evolve

...nothing stands still in the graphics arts industry, neither should your workflow"

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TWIST

visit www.dalim.com for further information

Intelligent workflow automation

TWIST

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2004, DALIM TWIST under MacOSX



**The Enterprise Unification:
DALIM ES (2010 Onward)**

Gruner + Jahr (then Europe’s largest magazine group, publishing and equally importantly printing Der Spiegel, Auto motor und sport, Stern, Geo, Capital, Gala) needed year-long production planning beyond MISTRAL/TWIST. Funded collaboration produced DDMS (Druck Data Management System), merging features into a new flagship: DALIM ES (Enterprise Solution), launched in 2010 on Linux and macOS.

DALIM ES absorbed MISTRAL (discontinuing it standalone) while incorporating TWIST and DIALOGUE. It became a modular production backbone for gravure/magazine houses and, increasingly, packaging brands (Leroy Merlin, Matthews, ISDIN, Fleury Michon). DALIM ES manages full workflows: design briefing, validation cycles, milestones, preflighting, spot-color control, soft proofing, and digital asset management (DAM) for video, 3D models, and dynamic web content. Modular licensing activates only needed features, keeping interfaces clean and efficient.





2004, complete products line, including TWIST, SWING, LITHO, DIALOGUE, PRINTEMPO and MISTRAL



MACH Architecture Transformation: DALIM FUSION (2020–2025)

In 2020 DALIM initiated a ground-up rebuild toward MACH principles (Microservices, API-first, Cloud-native, Headless). The React/JavaScript frontend and GraphQL APIs delivered dramatic speed and flexibility. Conceptual unveiling occurred at the 2020 Worldwide Technical Meeting; full early-adopter release followed at the DUO (DALIM Users Organization) event at Europa-Park, Rust, Germany, in June 2025—coinciding with the company’s 40th anniversary celebrations (May 19–21, 2025).

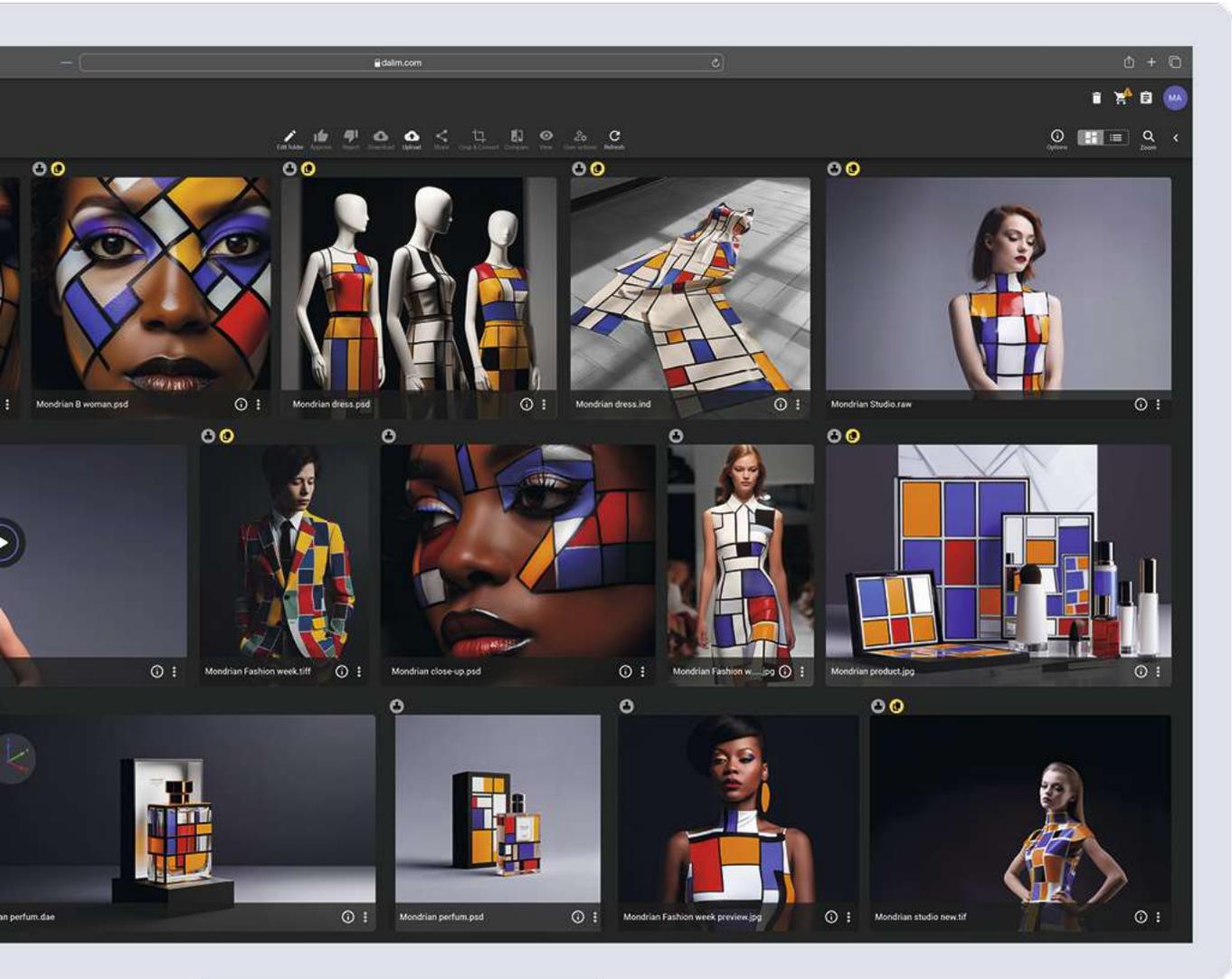
“DALIM FUSION is lightning-fast, intuitive after customization, and architecturally future-proof,” Werlé noted. *“Cloud scaling handles production spikes cost-effectively; microservices enable third-party extensions; GraphQL supports true headless deployments.”* By early 2026, installations split roughly 50/50 local vs. cloud (AWS, Google Cloud, Azure), with new deployments trending heavily cloud-native.

Today and Tomorrow

DALIM targets digital printing’s rise—electrophotographic and inkjet presses demand instant high-data feeds, variable-data handling, and adaptive imposition—with zero makeready to meet the demands of the Brands at the cutting edge of individualized Marketing (see Sm4G article). The company remains privately held, profitable, and independent, with ~80 employees, annual recurring revenue exceeding €10 million, and a global footprint among top publishers, brands, and service providers.



From basement code in 1985 to cloud-microservices in 2026, DALIM SOFTWARE embodies persistent innovation: pioneering digital slides, mastering PostScript/PDF handling, inventing graphical workflow automation, and now delivering scalable, MACH-based enterprise content production. The journey—rooted in European engineering excellence—continues brightly. ■



40th OF DALIM SOFTWARE

“

...DALIM FUSION is lightning-fast, intuitive after customization, and architecturally future-proof...Cloud scaling handles production spikes cost-effectively; microservices enable third-party extensions; GraphQL supports true headless deployments...

Jacques's one more thing!

Beginnings & Personal Connection

Can you tell me about how you first came to work at DALIM SOFTWARE?

I met Francis Lamy in 1983, when I did my final engineering project under his supervision at the Photonics Lab of Strasbourg University. In 1984, I started working on the first software developed by what would become DALIM GmbH. In December 1985, after completing my military service, I officially joined DALIM.

My first major achievement was developing the driver that controlled the film camera to digitally output images created by our software. It was an incredible moment when we developed the very first film.

How has your role at the company changed over time?

I was always close to software development. When Francis Lamy stepped back from the day-to-day leadership, I took over and managed the developer team. Later, I shared this responsibility first with Isabelle Billerey-Rayel, then with Jean-Mario Delorme, while always focusing on software architecture and technical direction.

“

...The introduction of SetParamFromDB...changed the way customers could automate their production...

In 1998, when DALIM SOFTWARE GmbH was incorporated after the management buyout and shareholder round, I once again took charge of the development team. In 2000, I became Chief Scientist and CTO. I am also Vice President of the DALIM Board and have been a member of the CIP4 Advisory Board since 2001.

The Company Journey: Milestones & Culture

In your view, what have been some of the most significant milestones or turning points in the company's history? Why were they important?

- In 1990, Tektronix stopped developing their workstation, so we had to quickly move to a new platform: Silicon Graphics workstations.
- In 1999, we switched to Linux, taking advantage of the low price and high performance of Intel platforms, which had reached the level of professional workstations.
- In 2000, we adopted the web browser as the platform for all graphical user interfaces.

What's been one of the biggest challenges the company has faced, and how did you work through it?

In 1990, we had to completely redesign and reimagine our software for a new platform. That was a tremendous challenge, only made possible thanks to venture capital support and a lot of hard work.

Another long-term challenge was sticking to our decision to use the web browser as the user interface platform. Many argued that standard interfaces for Windows or Mac would be better, and some even insisted we should use Adobe Flash—a web technology that eventually died.

“

...Moving to Linux was a truly innovative decision...

Jacques Thiebauld
Chief Scientist and CTO
DALIM SOFTWARE GmbH

Industry Perspective & Innovation

From your perspective, how has the industry changed during your time at DALIM SOFTWARE? How has the company adapted to those changes?

Over the years, I have witnessed a clear move from specialized workstations to personal computers. Another major transformation has been the predominance of the internet, which reshaped the way software and services are delivered. Today, artificial intelligence sits at the core of many applications, with generative AI taking an increasingly central role. In the printing industry specifically, we have also seen a significant shift toward digital printing, which is steadily replacing traditional offset and other printing technologies.

Can you talk about a time when you felt the company was truly innovative or ahead of the curve? What made that project stand out?

Moving to Linux was a truly innovative decision. At the time, nobody in the industry believed it could work for professional computing. Another bold step was adopting the web browser as the single GUI platform.

Can you share a story about a time when you felt the company's work made a real difference for a client?

The introduction of SetParamFromDB in TWIST completely transformed it into a company-wide production tool. Workflow parameters could now be extracted directly from database connections.



Scan the QR code and get in touch with **Jacques**.



Web browser based DALIM MISTRAL & DALIM PRINTEMPO

This innovation changed the way customers could automate their production. It was first deployed at World Color by Johnny Sutton, who was then their workflow expert. World Color was later acquired by Quad Graphics.

Personal Reflections & Looking Ahead

What are you most proud of accomplishing during your time at the company?

I was at the center of the architecture of all DALIM products from the very beginning—from Fortran-based slide making to the latest GraphQL API schema of DALIM FUSION. ■

Our **customers** say it **best.**



“

...DALIM was the driver that helped us set foot in major publishing companies and communication agencies. Without DALIM, we wouldn't be where we are today...

Alessio Saraceno,
CTO, Hyphen Group

“

...DALIM has become central to our production workflow. Without DALIM, we wouldn't just be slower or less efficient : managing our print production would be a real challenge...

François-Xavier Luchart,
Mass retail and magazine director,
Riccobono Group

“

...DALIM has made our life so much easier. Our entire production workflow is traceable from start to end and everyone has access to the assets they need. Today, none of our people would even consider working without DALIM...

Jonathan Lambert,
Designer, Riccobono Group

“

...Today, marketing, communication and print production organisations work against ultra-tight deadlines and are generally understaffed. DALIM helps them accelerate, streamline, smoothen and secure their workflow. It becomes an essential tool for them...

Sylvain Giverne,
Account Manager, Datasolution

“

...DALIM and Burda Druck have been close partners for many years now, working hand in hand ever since we were early adopters of LITHO. To us, DALIM means great partnership, fast reaction to customer needs and good parties...

Thomas Hebes,
Process Engineering Department Leader,
Burda Druck

“

...Being a small company, every team member counts. That's why I often think of DALIM TWIST as our sixth or seventh employee, working behind the scenes in the server room—handling repetitive tasks with efficiency, reliability, and security...

Victor Götsch,
CEO, BG-Pack

“

...To us, DALIM are masters of automation. Their solutions lift massive workloads off of our teams. Without DALIM, it would take ten times more resources and time to get the same amount of work through the door...

Werner Rehberger,
Pre-media Leader, Media2Finish

“

...PDFLight is a terrific tool and I find it so useful. I'm one of the volunteer editors of a community newsletter... the resulting PDF is 20 times too big to send out. Your lovely app makes short work of that with no loss of quality. Every month when it's my turn to edit, I send up a little prayer of thanks to you for making my life easier...

Alison Randwick Runner newsletter,
Gloucestershire UK

“

...DALIM has become a central and critical component of our packaging production, bringing a level of coordination and safety we couldn't do without....

Fabienne Micheneau,
Graphics Support and Coordinator,
Fleury-Michon

“

...It's proof that DALIM
has always been ahead of
the curve...

Bertin Sorgenfrey
Business Development Director,
DALIM SOFTWARE GmbH

A Life with DALIM SOFTWARE

From Apprenticeship to Global Innovation

When passion meets opportunity, careers can span continents. Few people embody that truth as much as Bertin Sorgenfrey, whose three-decade journey with DALIM SOFTWARE mirrors the company's own transformation from a small startup in Kehl to a global player in media production workflows.

The Phone Call that Changed Everything

Fresh out of his apprenticeship at Burda Druck in Offenburg in 1991, Bertin Sorgenfrey found himself running the photo department of Berlin's first daily newspaper produced entirely on Macs. It was pioneering work, but after a year, he wasn't sure whether to extend his contract. That's when fate intervened. "My previous manager from Burda called to tell me they had just bought this pretty cool page editing software called **LiTHO** from a small company in Kehl," he recalls. "They were looking for support staff who didn't mind traveling a bit. The rest is history." That phone call marked the start of a long and varied career at DALIM.

“

...In 1996, while in Japan, we presented a vision of planning, managing, and producing magazines in a web application...

Roles Across the Globe

Over the years, Sorgenfrey has worn many hats: customer service, presales, strategic accounts, business development, and marketing. His career has taken him across regions and markets, from the U.S. to Asia and Latin America. "I started as part of the initial support team at **DALIM US** in New Hampshire," he explains. "Later, I worked closely with the Japanese market, providing customer service and presales support, before moving into business development at Blanchard Systems in New Orleans. Over time, I went on to manage territories across Latin America, Asia, Australia, and the German-speaking countries. At one point, I even headed international marketing." The common thread? A deep belief in the company's technology and culture, and a willingness to engage directly with clients worldwide.

Seeing the Future Before It Arrived

Asked about defining moments in the company's history, Sorgenfrey doesn't hesitate. "In 1996, while in Japan, we presented a vision of planning, managing, and producing magazines in a web application," he says. "At that time, most companies were still on 56K modems with a single email address—so not many people understood."

But by 2000, that vision became a product: **FiCELLE**, later **MiSTRAL**, **DALIM ES**, and today **ES FUSION**. "It's proof that DALIM has always been ahead of the curve," he notes.

Culture and Resilience

The COVID-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges—remote work, cautious clients, and uncertainty in global markets. Yet the company adapted. “Working from home and not seeing clients was tough,” Sorgenfrey reflects. “But our strong company culture helped. HR kept checking in to make sure we had what we needed. And with **DALIM ES** enabling approvals from anywhere, we could help clients keep going. In a way, it turned into a success story.”

Doing More with Less

Over three decades, the industry itself has changed dramatically. “Today, it’s all about doing more with less,” he explains. “More product shots in less time, more personalized content with fewer people, the same message across multiple channels. DALIM had to adapt to new output formats like web, video, and 3D—but automation and high-volume production have been in our DNA since **TWiST** launched in 1994.” That DNA has led to moments where clients were genuinely astonished. “I can’t recall just one story,” he smiles, “but I’ve seen jaws drop during **TWiST** or **DALIM ES** trainings. A simple drag-and-drop, or a tiny script in a workflow, suddenly solves a problem that’s been around for years. Something that used to take days is now done in seconds.”



Scan the QR code and get in touch with **Bertin**.



DALIM FICELLE • Flatplan View • 2003

Privilege, Not Pride

When asked about personal achievements, Sorgenfrey resists the word “proud.” “I feel extremely privileged,” he says. “This job has allowed me to see so many countries on all continents, to meet people from all kinds of backgrounds and cultures—and to call some of them friends now. That’s the real reward.”

Looking Ahead

As for the future, his hope is simple: “That DALIM continues to innovate, adapt, and surprise the industry—just like it has since the beginning. Whether it’s five years, ten years, or forty, the spirit of innovation and collaboration will keep the company moving forward.”

The Untold Stories

Of course, no career spanning continents is without its colorful stories. But when pressed for the funniest or most unforgettable moments, Sorgenfrey just laughs. “You’ll have to buy me a few drinks to hear the good stuff,” he teases.

From a chance call in 1991 to a life of travel, innovation, and friendships, Bertin Sorgenfrey’s story is as much about DALIM as it is about one man’s journey through an industry in constant change. ■



Fournisseur de solutions de production marketing.

Publishing

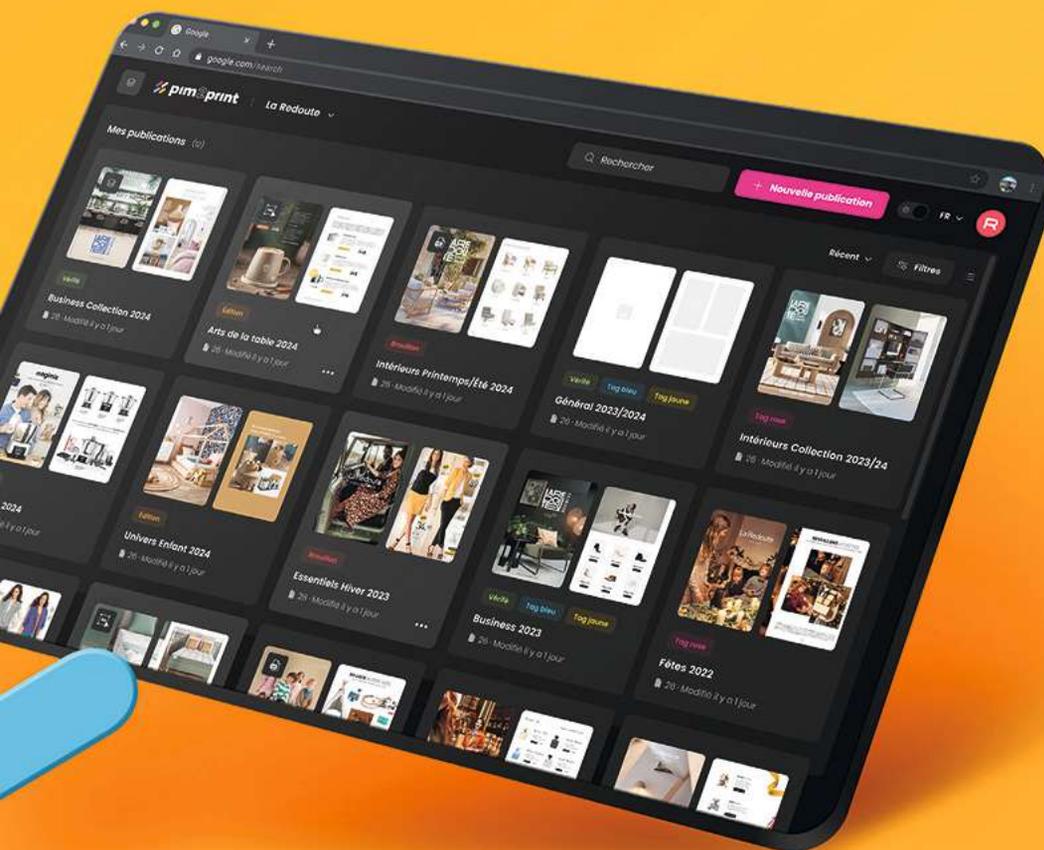
Grand format

Packaging

Automatisation

Personnalisation produits

Une marque de  DATASOLUTION, l'agence qui booste votre transformation digitale.

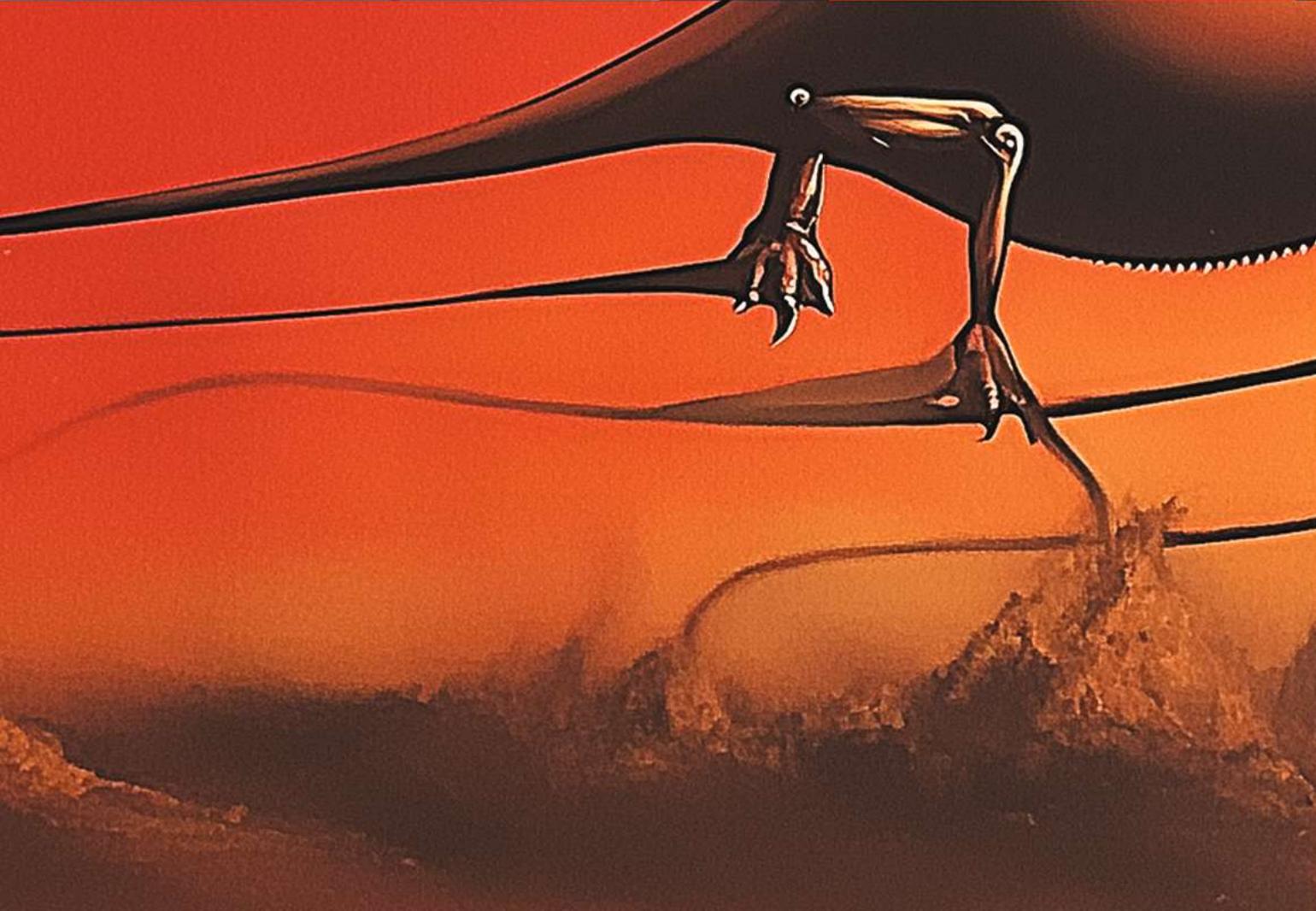
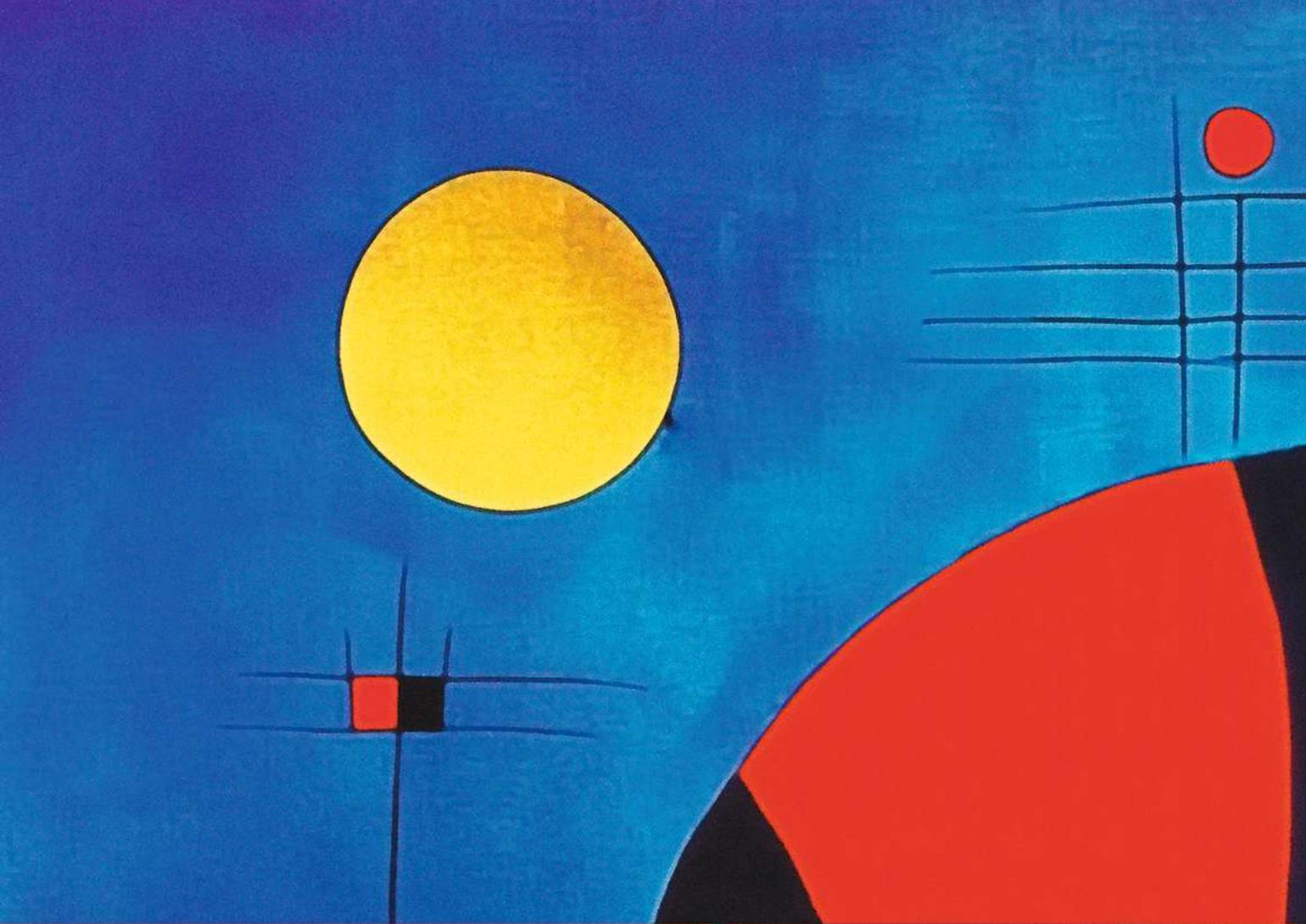


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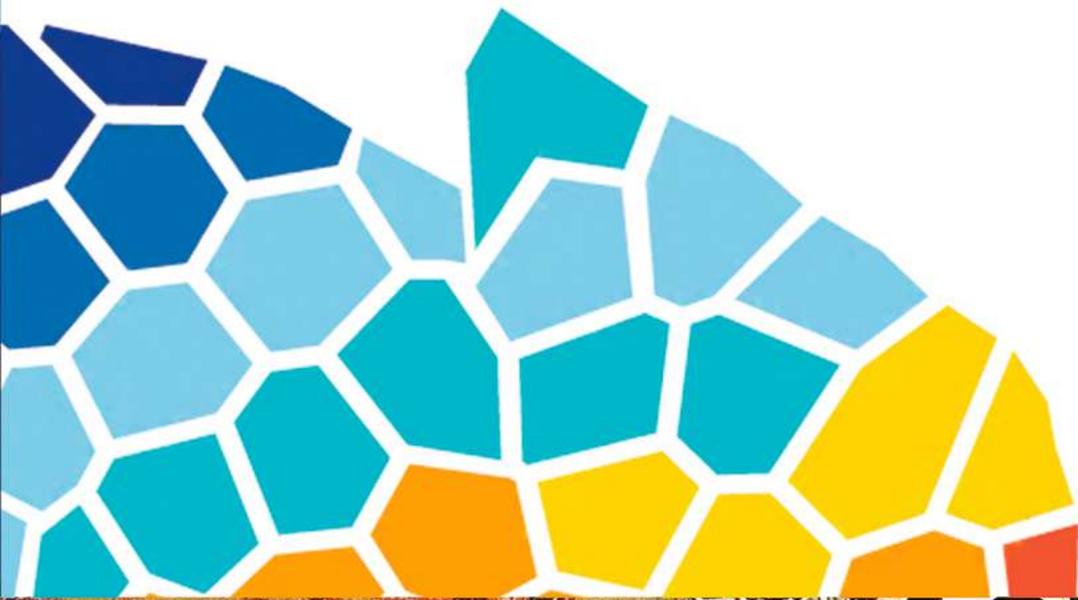
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The Power of Human-Centric Co-Creation in the era of AI:

Accelerating Growth and Engagement Through Purpose-Driven Marketing



Co-Creation**noun** [C or U]

The art of involving your community, individually & collectively, to make stories matter by celebrating their voices through a brand

The Power of Human-Centric Co-Creation in the era of AI:

Accelerating Growth and Engagement Through Purpose-Driven Marketing

The era of one-size-fits-all marketing is firmly behind us. Today's consumers expect brands not only to deliver quality products, but also to demonstrate relevance, empathy, and purpose. In an age defined by personalization, participation, and values-driven consumption, creativity alone is no longer enough. What truly differentiates brands now is their ability to co-create with people rather than market at them. Human-centric co-creation has emerged as one of the most powerful levers for building sustainable brands, accelerating growth, and fostering deeper consumer engagement. At the intersection of technology, storytelling, and purpose lies the synergy between DALIM SOFTWARE Solutions and StoryMaking 4 Good (SM4G), a partnership that exemplifies how co-creation can transform marketing campaigns into meaningful cultural moments.

“

...Research consistently shows that memorable and engaging campaigns can generate between 10% and 30% incremental earned media..

From Mass Messaging to Meaningful Participation

For decades, marketing operated on a broadcast model: develop a single message, amplify it at scale, and hope it resonates with the widest possible audience. While effective in the past, this approach struggles to meet the expectations of modern consumers, who demand personalization, authenticity, and dialogue. The shift away from mass messaging toward co-created experiences reflects a deeper cultural change: people want to feel seen, heard, and involved.

Creativity remains central to this evolution, but as Pablo Picasso famously said, “Learn the rules like a pro, so you can break them like an artist.” For brands, this means mastering the fundamentals of technology, data, and operations so they can confidently challenge conventions and design experiences that feel fresh and human. Creativity today is not about isolated brilliance; it is about collaboration across disciplines and, crucially, with consumers themselves.

Co-Creation as a Human-Centric Growth Engine

Human-centric co-creation places people, consumers, communities, creatives, and partners at the heart of brand storytelling. Rather than delivering pre-packaged narratives, brands invite participation, allowing individuals to shape content, meaning, and impact. This approach not only enhances engagement but also drives measurable business outcomes. Research consistently shows that memorable and engaging campaigns can generate between 10% and 30% incremental earned media across digital channels, amplifying reach through genuine advocacy rather than paid spend.

Co-creation also fosters emotional investment. When consumers see themselves reflected in a campaign through their stories, values, or aspirations as they move from passive audiences to active brand ambassadors. This sense of belonging is a powerful catalyst for loyalty and long-term growth. It is what turns a campaign into a community and a product into a platform for expression.

“

...DALIM enables brands to operationalize creativity at scale...

Technology at the Service of Personalization

The promise of co-creation would be impossible to fulfill without the right technological foundation. This is where DALIM SOFTWARE Solutions plays a pivotal role. As a leader in workflow automation, collaboration, and content lifecycle management, DALIM enables brands to operationalize creativity at scale. Its technology empowers marketing teams, agencies, and production partners to collaborate seamlessly, manage complexity, and bring personalized content to market faster and more efficiently.

When technology is designed to serve creativity rather than constrain it, personalization becomes achievable rather than aspirational. DALIM's solutions allow brands to handle thousands—even millions—of content variations without sacrificing quality or consistency. This capability is essential in a world where relevance is determined by context, culture, and individual preference.

StoryMaking 4 Good: Purpose-Driven Storytelling Through Co-Creation

StoryMaking 4 Good brings a complementary strength to this ecosystem: the ability to transform co-creation into purposeful storytelling. SM4G's agile co-creation platform enables brands to invite consumers into the creative process, using their own digital platform as a canvas that empowers and scales shared narratives. The result is storytelling that is not only personalized, but also grounded in sustainability, social impact, and human values.

Through its work with global brands, SM4G has demonstrated that physical touchpoints like packaging can be far more than a functional container it can be a medium for dialogue, education, and change. Specifically, digitally printed packaging allows brands to move beyond static designs, unlocking flexibility, speed, and relevance. Each pack can tell a different story, reflect a different voice, or support a different cause, all while remaining part of a cohesive brand ecosystem.

“

...By aligning technology, creativity, and purpose, brands can double ROI through increased engagement...

DALIM & StoryMaking 4 Good are a Platform for Impact

This strategic synergy has emerged as a powerful platform for co-creation, particularly when aligned with social impact goals. Unlike traditional one-way communication campaigns, end to end automated workflows support rapid iteration and more importantly, it allows brands to respond in real time to cultural moments and consumer input.

SM4G's methodology has enabled campaigns to illustrate how co-creation drives both engagement and positive behavior change. From Amarula's initiative to raise awareness and funds for endangered elephants, to Dettol's campaign giving underrepresented COVID heroes a voice, enabling brands to bring purpose directly into consumers' hands is at the core of unlocking true engagement and accelerated brand growth. Co-created campaigns do not merely communicate a message; they invite participation, empathy, and action.

Accelerating Growth Through Synergy

The true power of human-centric co-creation lies in synergy. When DALIM SOFTWARE Solutions' robust technological infrastructure meets SM4G's purpose-driven storytelling, brands gain the ability to move faster, think bigger, and connect deeper. This partnership enables end-to-end collaboration—from ideation and content creation to production and distribution—ensuring that creativity is not lost in execution.

By aligning technology, creativity, and purpose, brands can double ROI through increased engagement, stronger emotional connections, and amplified earned media. More importantly, they can build trust and relevance in a crowded marketplace where consumers are increasingly selective about the brands they support.

Building Sustainable Brands for the Future

Sustainability is no longer a peripheral concern; it is central to brand value and consumer trust. Human-centric co-creation supports sustainability by promoting responsible production, reducing waste, and embedding social purpose into everyday touchpoints. When consumers are invited to participate in stories that matter—stories about people, communities, and the planet—brands move from transactional relationships to meaningful partnerships.

This approach also future-proofs brands. In a rapidly changing world, agility and adaptability are essential. Co-creation, supported by flexible technology and digital print, allows brands to evolve alongside their audiences, responding to new expectations and opportunities without losing authenticity.

If your brand is struggling to stand out in an overcrowded, algorithm-driven world, co-creation offers a better, more effective path to accelerate brand growth.



Case Study

Nescafé and the Power of Co-Created Farmer Stories

One of the most compelling examples of co-creation in action comes from Nescafé. As one of the world's largest coffee brands, present in over 180 countries, Nescafé faced the challenge of staying relevant to younger audiences, particularly millennials seeking experiences that align with their identities and aspirations.

By transforming its iconic coffee jar into a personalized gift, Nescafé embraced co-creation as a strategic differentiator. The brand launched a campaign in Mexico featuring 20,000 co-created stories inspired by the most common New Year's resolutions. Each jar became a unique expression of hope, ambition, and renewal, resonating deeply with consumers during a culturally significant moment.

The results were remarkable. Following the success of the first campaign on co-created New Year's Resolutions, Nescafé scaled the initiative to more than 20 million jars, featuring over 300 different labels distributed through a wide network of retail partners. This was not personalization for its own sake, it was personalization rooted in cultural insight and human storytelling, enabled by digital print and collaborative workflows.

“

...Nescafé scaled the initiative to more than 20 million jars, featuring over 300 different labels...

Case Study

Cadbury Dairy Milk and the Power of the Premier League

In 2021, Liverpool won the Premier League for the first time in more than 3 decades and with it brought a unique opportunity due to a strategic partnership between Mondelez and the Premier League: co-create millions of one-of-a-kind packs with unique historical content of the team on every chocolate bar as a collectible for fans to share and enjoy this unique moment to celebrate their team's championship.

Our innovation model and process enabled the printing of these unique bars and the success was paramount as it enabled the brand to grow double digit in the UK while people were paying up to 100 pounds on e-commerce to get their hands on one of these bars.

Most importantly, given its early success driven by the HP software automation that enabled the creation of millions of unique bars, it then expanded into 4 other teams in 2022 and in 2023 it added 4 more teams Cadbury factory to expand this activity to a total of 9 teams covering most of the UK and making millions of fans highly engaged and broadcasting their bars through social media across the country.





In the end, this activity enabled the brand to grow sell-out close to 8% while reaching more than 60 million people via earned media and removing the need for co-packing these bars due to the HP design software automation capability.

A Call to Co-Create Change

The one-size-fits-all era is over, but the opportunity ahead is far more exciting. Brands that embrace human-centric co-creation can unlock accelerated growth, stronger engagement, and lasting impact. By placing people at the center of creativity and leveraging the combined strengths of DALIM SOFTWARE Solutions and StoryMaking 4 Good, marketers can transform campaigns into catalysts for change.

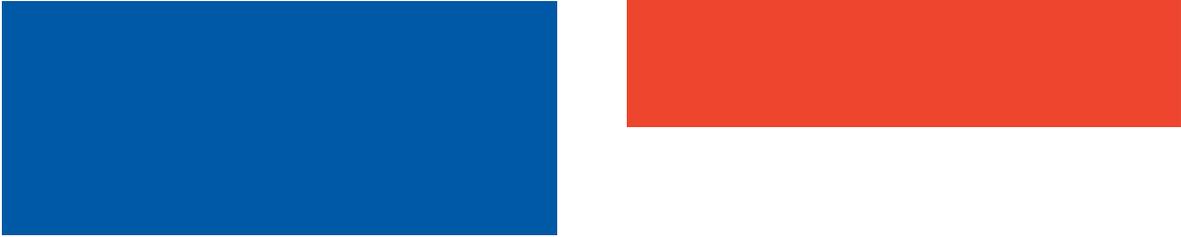
Now is the time to rethink how stories are told, how value is created, and how brands show up in the world. Through co-creation, technology becomes an enabler, creativity becomes a shared endeavor, and marketing becomes a force for good. To learn more about how purpose-driven co-creation can elevate your brand, explore StoryMaking 4 Good and join the movement toward more human, meaningful marketing. ■

Get in touch to get started:
cocreate@storymaking4good.com

Visit us to learn more at:
www.storymaking4good.com
 and www.dalim.com







From Production Agency to Premier League Glory

An Interview with Steve Parish

When Steve Parish sits down with DALIM SOFTWARE CEO Carol Werlé, the conversation feels less like an interview and more like two old friends rewinding the clock. Their relationship spans decades, industries, and a few unforgettable moments — including the day Parish drove a yellow Beetle from London to Strasbourg in 1999 to help take DALIM private.

We've been through a lot together," Carol laughs. "Back then you were running operations above me, and I was fixing things under a table. You went on to become a major figure in advertising — and eventually a Premier League chairman. Quite a journey."

What follows is a candid reflection on technology, entrepreneurship, luck, crisis, and the strange way life connects the dots.

Early Encounters & the Technology That Changed Everything

Before he was chairman of Crystal Palace, before he led a global agency network, Steve Parish was just a young man in a rapidly changing industry.

"This company played a huge role in my career," he begins. In the late 1980s and early 90s, digital production was chaotic. Designers worked in QuarkXPress, Photoshop, Illustrator — and nothing matched or reproduced consistently. Files were unpredictable, deadlines stressful, workflows fragile.

Then he discovered DALIM.

"At the time your technology was almost unseen — the plumbing of the industry. But it rationalised everything. Suddenly we had a way to check, correct, and manage files so they printed the way they were meant to. It was out of the ordinary."

He remembers the first system he purchased. It cost upwards of £100,000 — a transformative investment. He didn't just buy it; he demonstrated it, operated it, and built an entire business around it.

"We'd go into big London operations and ask for their most complicated job. Sometimes the system performed magic. Sometimes it didn't — and we'd be chased out of the building with the box. But that's how you learn."

Those early years taught him everything: profit and loss, persuasion, risk-taking, digital production, and leadership.



Falling Into an Industry by Chance

Parish admits he entered the graphic arts world “by accident.” “I was putting up ceilings for a living,” he says. “Hard, manual work. My father said, ‘Go and apply for this job — you can’t keep doing that.’ He had a contact in the industry, so I went along.”

That moment changed everything.

“Suddenly I found myself in a business transitioning from craft to digital. I’d taken one computer class at school — one Apple II for the whole class — but that tiny bit of experience made me the one-eyed man in the land of the blind.”

He mastered traditional retouching, masking, and studio techniques early on, then moved to another firm just as Macintosh computers revolutionised production.

“Age didn’t matter anymore. What mattered was whether you could deliver.”

Buying Companies & Building a Global Technology Powerhouse

The company Parish worked for eventually ran into financial trouble, but the part he ran — selling DALIM technology — was profitable. So he bought the distressed firms and took on both the production business and a technology integration business.



“

...That moment
changed everything...



Partners for decades, over 30 years of friendship, Steve Parish co-owner and chairman of Crystal Palace hands over to the DALIM team the Crystal Palace Team 2025 FA Cup final Winner's shirt.

From left to right, Steve Parish, Christophe Bindler, Isabelle Billerey-Rayel, Bertin Sorgenfrey, Jacques Thiebault and Carol Werlé.

This became the foundation of TAG, the global agency he would later lead.

“We were obsessed with collaboration long before it was mainstream,” he recalls. Using DALIM’s next-generation platform, TAG developed CMD — one of the earliest systems for remote collaboration, workflow automation, and online review.

“Looking back, we were probably too early. If we’d taken another path, we might have built something like Shopify. Instead, we built a global digital asset management and workflow platform operating in 13 countries with around 3,000 people.”

TAG became one of the world’s largest marketing production agencies — and DALIM software sat at the core of its infrastructure.

The DALIM Management Buyout — A Defining Chapter

In 1998, DALIM faced financial strain despite having exceptional technology. Carol and Parish both understood the issue: *“You were never a failing business,”* he says. *“Just a good company pushed too hard, too fast.”*

Together with Jim Salmon (former CEO of Crosfield), Carol orchestrated a management buyout supported by investors from France, Germany, Japan, the U.S., Austria, and TAG — the very first investor to join.

“We didn’t really have a choice,” Parish jokes. *“We relied on the technology. Our clients relied on it. If DALIM fell, our business fell.”*

The acquisition anchored DALIM as a stable, independent global player — and powered TAG’s global growth.

“

...Relegation can take you from £200 million revenue to £20 million overnight. Emotionally brutal. But in some ways, physically easier than running a global agency — far less travel....

From Creative Pressure to Football Pressure

Carol gestures toward him with a smile. *“So, what’s more stressful — launching a global brand campaign or defending a 1–0 Premier League lead in the 90th minute?”*

Parish laughs. *“Stress changes with age. When you’re young, work feels heavier — the hours, the travel, the habits, constantly scanning for threats.*

In business, everything is shades of grey. In football, it’s binary — win or lose.”

And the stakes?

“Relegation can take you from £200 million revenue to £20 million overnight. Emotionally brutal. But in some ways, physically easier than running a global agency — far less travel.”

Rebuilding Crystal Palace: Culture Starts With Foundations

When Parish bought Crystal Palace, the club was on the brink of extinction. *“It was on the floor,”* he says. *“Portable cabins for offices, infrastructure falling apart.”*

One moment crystallised the problem: *“A coach told me he was trying to instill professionalism in the players. And as he’s saying it, a radiator literally fell off the wall behind him. You can’t talk about professionalism when the environment itself is collapsing.”*

Parish recognised the need for a complete rebuild — not just facilities, but culture, communication, expectations, and ambition.

It was the same philosophy he used to rebuild production studios and agency operations.

Wembley. 90,000 Fans. Millions Watching. A Historic Moment.

Years of work culminated in an extraordinary day: Crystal Palace reaching the FA Cup Final at Wembley Stadium.

Over 90,000 fans filled the stadium. Millions watched worldwide. And nearly half the stadium — around 45,000 supporters — were cheering for Palace. *“I was born minutes from Selhurst Park,”* Parish says. *“To stand in Wembley, hearing that wall of Palace fans, with millions watching across the world... unbelievable.”*

It was not just a victory for the club — but a symbolic completion of a rebuild that began the day he saw a radiator fall off a wall.



Closing Reflections: Lifelong Impact

Carol ends with gratitude. *“There are so many people here who owe their careers to the journey you helped shape. That small startup grew into an international technology company — and your role mattered.”*

Parish nods and reveals a gift: A Crystal Palace FA Cup winners’ shirt, worn on the pitch and signed by the entire squad.

“We didn’t have many of these,” he says. “But I wanted DALIM to have one. This place is a big part of my journey.” ■



Read the complete interview on blog.dalim.com

Editor’s Note: This interview has been lightly adapted for clarity and narrative flow. All stories and statements remain genuine and faithful to the original conversation.

Fleury Michon

NOUVEAU

CHILI VÉGÉ À LA MEXICAINE



Suggestion de présentation



**RICHE EN
PROTÉINES**

**SANS
CONSERVATEUR***
*Conditionné sous
atmosphère protectrice



300g e

À conserver au réfrigérateur

Mastering Packaging Complexity

How Fleury Michon Streamlines Validation and Collaboration



Since 1905, Fleury Michon has been a family-owned company rooted in the French food industry. With its core expertise in charcuterie, ready meals, and surimi, Fleury Michon supplies leading French retailers such as Leclerc, Carrefour, Auchan, and many others. Today, it operates twelve production sites—ten of them in France, including eight in Vendée—producing over 1.3 million products every day.



As Fabienne Micheneau, Graphic Supply Chain Coordinator at Fleury Michon, explains: “We are the number two player in charcuterie and ready meals and the number one in surimi. With nearly 200 product references and more than a million products leaving our sites daily, our packaging is constantly evolving. Innovation, regulatory changes, and recipe updates all demand speed, compliance, and consistency.”





Complexity and Compliance

By 2018, Fleury Michon recognized the need to overhaul its packaging processes. According to Fabienne, the situation had become increasingly complex.

“We had to coordinate many stakeholders: internal teams, suppliers, printers, and agencies. At the time, we were working with around ten printing suppliers, five different printing techniques, multiple substrates, and nearly ten creative agencies. Alignment was a real challenge.”

Regulatory compliance was another pressing issue. In the food industry, the risks of non-compliance are high. Full traceability, approval records, and complete historical archives were vital, particularly in the context of audits. At the same time, the company faced increasing pressure on time-to-market. Unlike digital campaigns, industrial packaging requires longer cycles, more coordination, and stricter quality control. Any delay in validation directly impacted product launches.

Fleury Michon was also determined to reduce plastic use and pursue its CSR objectives, while at the same time ensuring sovereignty over its brand assets. As Fabienne points out, maintaining ownership of all packaging data and mastering the entire graphical supply chain were fundamental requirements.



Partnering with DATASOLUTION and DALIM

To tackle these challenges, Fleury Michon partnered with DATASOLUTION, a French independent agency specialized in digital, web-to-print, and marketing production. As a long-standing integrator of DALIM SOFTWARE, DATASOLUTION introduced Fleury Michon to DALIM’s scalable validation and collaboration platform.

“We began with joint workshops in 2018, just as we were launching a new logo,” recalls Fabienne. *“It was the perfect moment to move from fragmented processes to a centralized, governed, and secure workflow.”*

Centralizing and Securing the Packaging Chain

With DALIM, Fleury Michon implemented a solution hosted on DATASOLUTION’s secure cloud infrastructure. The platform centralized all data and documents in a single location, accessible to every stakeholder at any time. This guaranteed governance, sovereignty, and asset ownership. It also streamlined collaboration, allowing direct deliveries to printers, centralized archiving, and consistent access to validated files.

For Fleury Michon, DALIM quickly became the backbone of packaging production, seamlessly connecting the phases of creation, execution, and prepress before delivering final files to partners.



“

...make sure every pack respects brand guidelines...

Faster, Smarter, More Reliable

One of the most impactful improvements was the introduction of online validation. As Fabienne explains: *“With DALIM, we can collaborate in high definition, measure format, size, and colors, and make sure every pack respects brand guidelines. Every action is logged, and each approval is binding. That traceability is crucial, especially during audits.”*

This reliability accelerated validation cycles and eliminated the need for Excel spreadsheets, email attachments, and error-prone versioning. The approach not only improved time-to-market but also reinforced brand consistency across all packaging.



Fabienne Micheneau
Graphic Supply Chain Coordinator
Fleury Michon

“

...DALIM allows us to keep every document at hand, centralize all workflows, and secure the entire chain...

From Tool to Indispensable Platform

Today, Fleury Michon’s packaging workflow is inseparable from DALIM. The platform is so deeply embedded that teams refuse to work outside it. Centralizing governance, securing processes, and enabling collaborative validation have allowed the company to accelerate product launches, strengthen compliance and traceability, and maintain greater consistency across its two hundred product lines. CSR goals have also been reinforced, thanks to reduced waste and the elimination of costly error corrections.

As Fabienne concludes: *“DALIM allows us to keep every document at hand, centralize all workflows, and secure the entire chain. It has become indispensable to our packaging production.”*

By combining Fleury Michon’s strong heritage, DATASOLUTION’s expertise, and DALIM SOFTWARE’s scalable validation platform, the company has successfully transformed its packaging workflows. What began as a response to complexity and compliance has evolved into a strategic advantage. Fleury Michon now accelerates time-to-market, safeguards ownership of its assets, and delivers consistent, sustainable packaging to millions of consumers every day. ■

Bringing AI Agents into

the Heart

of Content Production

THEMAGAZINE 29



Jacques Thiebauld
Chief Scientist and CTO
DALIM SOFTWARE GmbH

Artificial intelligence is no longer a distant concept on the horizon, it's here, reshaping how organizations create, manage, and evolve their content. As AI tools become more powerful and more widespread, businesses face a simple but profound question: How do we harness this technology in a way that actually enhances our work, our creativity, and our control?

At DALIM SOFTWARE, we believe the answer lies not in chasing buzzwords or isolated point solutions, but in thoughtfully integrating AI into the very DNA of how content is produced, managed, and refined. This belief is embodied in our new platform, DALIM FUSION, which is not just AI-ready: it is AI-native, AI-agnostic, and built for real, human workflows.



...DALIM FUSION...is AI-native,
AI-agnostic, and built for real,
human workflows...

Why AI Matters, but Only When It Serves a Purpose

AI tools today can generate images, translate text, or draft content from a simple prompt, and that is undeniably impressive. Yet the industry hype often misses an important point: the value of AI does not come from its novelty, but from how well it is woven into existing processes and how much control people retain throughout the journey.

For many organizations, content production is a complex, collaborative effort involving multiple departments, varying formats, and stringent brand standards. That's where something like FUSION becomes invaluable, not by replacing people, but by serving as an intelligent engine that amplifies human expertise and embeds AI capabilities where they deliver the most value.

The DALIM Approach to AI: Safe, Flexible, and Human-Centered

Before sharing what FUSION can do, it's important to understand how and why DALIM approaches AI the way we do. We have adopted a set of guiding principles that shape every AI feature and integration:

Ethical and Secure by Design

DALIM's responsibility lies in providing a secure, transparent, and compliant platform for integrating AI into content workflows. Our AI Tools Policy, aligned with European Union regulations, defines how AI technologies can be connected to and used within DALIM platforms, ensuring that access, data handling, and usage remain secure and controlled. FUSION itself does not modify or influence the ethical behavior of the underlying AI models; it uses the tools and capabilities provided by each AI vendor as they are.

This is why our platform is designed to give customers full freedom, and full responsibility, in choosing which AI providers they connect to FUSION. Whether an organization opts for a public cloud service, a specialized third-party model, or a locally hosted AI, data flows and usage remain transparent and governed at the platform level. Sensitive or confidential data can be protected through clear usage rules, controlled access, and customer-managed AI accounts, ensuring that organizations retain control over how AI is applied within their content operations.

Human-In-Control Philosophy

We see AI not as a replacement for human creativity and judgment, but as a collaborator. FUSION is built so that AI supports people rather than overrides them, assisting with tedious tasks, offering suggestions, and speeding up work, while leaving final decisions where they belong: in the hands of humans.

AI-Agnostic Architecture

The pace of innovation in AI is rapid. Models and capabilities rise and fall, and what's best today may not be best tomorrow. To navigate this landscape, FUSION embraces an AI-agnostic strategy. Instead of locking customers into a single provider, we enable seamless connection to any AI model, whether it's a leading cloud-based platform or a secure local model that you host yourself. This gives organizations the freedom to choose what fits their needs, now and in the future.



AI Working Within the Content Lifecycle

What does that look like in practice? With FUSION, AI becomes an integral part of everyday content work, enriching and accelerating processes that teams already rely on.

Smarter Asset Ingestion and Understanding

The moment an asset enters the system, AI begins working. Using large language models (LLMs) and intelligent algorithms such as OPenAI Chatgpt, Anthropic Claude, Google Gemini, local models served by LMStudio, OLLAMA, etc... FUSION can generate descriptions, suggest keywords, and even translate text automatically. This means that assets become easier to find and reuse, without forcing teams to spend hours manually tagging or describing files.

Imagine uploading a photo taken during a trip to Chicago (see example on the right page). Instead of leaving that image nameless, FUSION can describe what's in the photo (buildings, colors, objects) and automatically create metadata that helps everyone find it later.

AI-Assisted Image Generation

FUSION also opens the door to AI-assisted content creation directly within the DAM. Instead of starting from a blank page, users can describe the type of image they need in natural language, and FUSION will generate visual assets using trusted third-party AI image generation technologies such as Google Imagen or OpenAI DALL·E.

What makes this particularly powerful is that AI-generated images can be created not only from a prompt, but also by building on existing assets. By using the descriptions and metadata of previously uploaded images, FUSION makes it possible to generate new visuals that act as variations or extensions of existing content. This helps keep assets contextually connected, supports creative continuity, and encourages reuse rather than fragmentation.

These AI-generated images are never created in isolation. They appear directly inside the DAM, enriched with descriptive metadata and keywords, alongside existing assets. From there, they can immediately enter established production workflows. Review and approval cycles, refinement steps, and validation by creative, legal, or brand teams all apply in exactly the same way as for any other asset, ensuring that AI-generated content remains governed, traceable, and fully under control.

Conversational Interaction and Natural Language Search

Not every user of a DAM is a technical expert, and they shouldn't have to be. That's why FUSION provides an intuitive chat interface that is accessible at any time, allowing users to interact with the platform using everyday language. Through simple prompts, users can search for assets, create projects, build collections, or generate images without navigating complex menus or learning specific commands. Behind the scenes, AI-powered agents translate these requests into actions within FUSION, making everyday operations faster and more accessible.



...We see AI not as a replacement for human creativity and judgment, but as a collaborator...



“The image shows two tall, cylindrical high-rise towers photographed from street level, looking sharply upward. Each building is defined by repeating circular concrete balconies that wrap fully around every floor, creating a strong pattern of curves and deep shadows. The structure in the foreground appears wider at its base, with open levels that resemble a multi-story parking area, where parked cars can be glimpsed. A second, nearly identical tower rises slightly behind it, reinforcing the sense of scale and symmetry. In the foreground, streetlights, poles, and a red-and-white striped barrier introduce everyday urban elements that contrast with the sculptural architecture. The clear blue sky and bright daylight accentuate the warm, earthy tones of the concrete and emphasize the dramatic vertical lines. Overall, the image conveys a powerful, monumental feeling, highlighting the bold geometry and distinctive character of the buildings within a dense city setting.”



Description

Low-angle view of two cylindrical high-rise buildings featuring stacked circular concrete balconies. The towers rise dramatically against a clear blue sky, with urban street elements visible at ground level.

Keywords / Tags

architecture, high-rise, tower, modernist architecture, urban, cityscape, concrete, circular balconies, residential building, parking structure, vertical perspective, landmark, skyline, street level, daylight

Category

Architecture / Urban Environment

Asset Type

Photograph

Orientation

Vertical (Portrait)

Location

Urban city center (exact location unspecified)

Visual Style

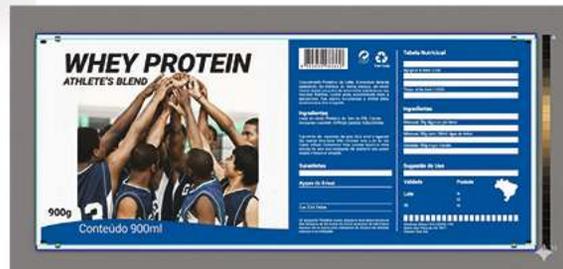
Architectural, geometric, modern, high contrast

Usage Context

Editorial, architectural documentation, urban planning, real estate, design inspiration



Example of AI (Gemini) generated label and 3D rendering generated at specs based on an existing label (whey protein) template.



For more advanced use cases, dedicated chat interfaces are also available to support workflow and functionality development. These assist users and developers in fine-tuning workflows or building custom behaviors, helping bridge the gap between business needs and technical configuration, all within a guided, conversational environment.

AI Inside Every Workflow

One of the true breakthroughs in FUSION is how deeply AI is embedded into workflows. Rather than being a separate add-on, AI becomes a tool that workflows can call upon when needed. From generating outputs to enriching data, these capabilities are woven into the very fabric of automated processes.

This means a marketing brief can automatically trigger metadata enrichment, content generation, and then move through review steps involving legal, product, and creative teams. All with AI assisting where appropriate and humans approving where needed.

Flexible Integration With Multiple AI Providers

FUSION is designed as a Model Context Protocol (MCP) server, which means it can be connected to AI applications that support this open standard. In practical terms, this allows external AI tools to securely interact with FUSION, access relevant context, and operate on content and workflows where appropriate.

On top of embedding and controlling AI models internally, FUSION exposes its capabilities to compatible AI applications, enabling organizations to integrate FUSION to their preferred AI tools, whether cloud-based services or locally hosted solutions, into their existing content operations. This approach preserves full control over data and usage, while allowing customers to decide which AI applications they trust and deploy.

In other words, DALIM provides the structured, governed environment in which your chosen AI applications can operate, bringing workflow intelligence and context to AI-driven use cases without locking you into a specific model or provider.

Why This Matters for Your Organization

AI in content production isn't just about automation, it's about scale, consistency, and quality. By augmenting your teams with intelligent systems that enhance rather than replace, FUSION enables organizations to:

- Increase productivity by removing repetitive manual work
- Maintain brand integrity through governed review processes
- Enhance discovery and reuse with enriched metadata and search
- Ensure compliance and traceability through transparent workflows

This combination of AI and human insight creates a new kind of operational confidence, enabling faster turnaround, better outcomes, and more room for strategic creativity.

“

...This approach preserves full control over data and usage...



Looking Ahead: An AI-Enabled Future With FUSION

Today's capabilities are just the beginning. FUSION sets the stage for an evolving future in which AI plays an increasingly supportive role in content production, helping with everything from user interface assistance to predictive workflow optimization. We're also actively participating in research and partnerships that refine how AI understands content, context, and brand norms.

Our long-term vision is simple yet powerful: AI should be a trusted partner in creation, not a black box. By giving organizations the ability to choose how AI is used, where it is run, and how it integrates with existing processes, we help ensure that human expertise remains at the center of decision-making, with AI amplifying impact, not replacing intent.

Conclusion: Evolving, Not Replacing, Content Production

Just as digital asset management once evolved from a mere storage tool into a strategic engine for content operations, AI is now reshaping how value is unlocked from creative work. FUSION embraces this evolution, turning content challenges into opportunities and helping organizations move confidently into an AI-empowered future.

The landscape of content production is changing fast, but with thoughtful design, ethical practice, and human-centered integration, the future looks bright. The real question is not whether AI will change the way you work, it already has, but how you choose to harness it.

And with FUSION, DALIM SOFTWARE is ready to help you do just that.

Brasilata Wins International Award for Innovative Copacabana Palace Panettone Can Design

Brasilata, one of Brazil's leading manufacturers of innovative and sustainable packaging, has been recognized at the WorldStar Global Packaging Awards, receiving an award in the Luxury category for its exclusive packaging developed for the Copacabana Palace panettone. The can combines sophisticated design with functionality and was honored for its aesthetic appeal and technological innovations, enhancing the consumer experience while reinforcing the luxury image of Rio de Janeiro's iconic hotel.

Packaging recognized at the WorldStar Global Packaging Awards in the Luxury category



Designed to meet the highest quality standards, the can features a robust steel structure that helps preserve the panettone for longer periods, maintaining freshness even after opening. Its elegant design highlights the Copacabana Palace façade—an enduring symbol of luxury and Brazilian heritage—while the exclusive monogram on the lid elevates the packaging beyond a functional container, transforming it into a memorable gift.

“

...This award recognizes the tireless work of our team in pursuing innovation and excellence....

Tiago Forte
CEO
Brasilata

Daniel Speicys

Manager

Loja da Lata

(Brasilata's digital business unit)

“This award recognizes the tireless work of our team in pursuing innovation and excellence. We created packaging that represents not only the luxury and tradition of the Copacabana Palace, but also our mission to deliver solutions aligned with the evolving demands of the luxury market and sustainability,” says Tiago Forte, CEO of Brasilata.

One of the key innovations behind the project is direct digital printing on steel sheets, a pioneering technology developed by Brasilata. This process ensures high precision in color reproduction and graphic detail while increasing the durability of the printed artwork, resulting in a premium and contemporary finish.

The project also leveraged **DALIM SOFTWARE’S ES** solution, which plays a critical role in managing the creative and approval workflow. *“Packaging demands an absolutely reliable creation process, and the tool provides complete security during artwork development, ensuring that all files are approved within the system, with a full audit trail and individual user authentication. This eliminates the risk of outdated versions being sent to production, which is critical when working with multiple layout variations and customizations.*

Furthermore, digital asset management allows rapid access to any file—whether for reprints, adaptations, or projects inspired by previously produced work. This gain in agility, combined with strict version control, has transformed our daily operations. Today, we are more efficient, more collaborative, and significantly more secure in delivering projects that are so important to our clients,” explains Daniel Speicys, Manager of Loja da Lata, Brasilata’s digital business unit.

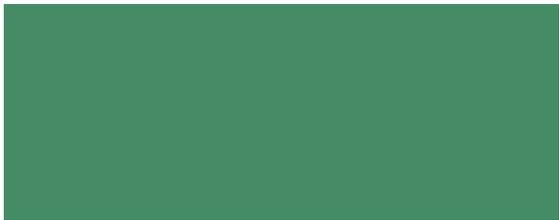


Loja da Lata is responsible for the commercialization of customized cans and metal closures in small and medium print runs using digital printing, enabling small and medium-sized entrepreneurs to access premium packaging solutions that add value and differentiation to their products.

Beyond its visual appeal, the can offers consumers the opportunity for reuse, encouraging its application as a decorative item or for storing other products, adding both emotional and functional value. **The can is 100% recyclable,** reinforcing sustainability and environmental responsibility—key values increasingly associated with the global luxury market.

About Brasilata

Brasilata is one of Brazil’s largest packaging manufacturers. Through a deep understanding of customer needs, the company delivers innovative and sustainable solutions for a wide range of applications, including paints, chemicals, and food products. Founded in 1955, Brasilata operates manufacturing plants in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Goiás, Recife, and Rio Grande do Sul. The company produces more than 50,000 tons of packaging annually and is widely recognized for its culture of innovation, people management, sustainability, and corporate governance. ■



Innovation Meets Brand Experience

Stranger Things × Brasilata

Transforming Packaging into a Brand Experience

Nossas soluções em embalagem contam histórias, despertam sensações e reforçam vínculos.

Balas e Doces

A proteção que seu produto merece para manter o sabor original



Case de sucesso



THEMAGAZINE 29

When the universe of Stranger Things meets Brasilata's innovative packaging design, the result goes far beyond product protection. The packaging becomes a powerful platform for emotional connection, transforming the consumer experience and strengthening brand engagement.



Developed in partnership with Valda, the themed tins were designed to evoke nostalgia, delight fans, and turn the product itself into a collectible item. By leveraging the cultural impact of the Stranger Things franchise, the packaging extends the brand narrative beyond the product, creating a tangible and memorable interaction with consumers.

More than an aesthetic solution, the project reinforces Brasilata's commitment to delivering strategic packaging solutions that add measurable brand value—enhancing visibility, driving engagement, and increasing differentiation in a competitive market, particularly for seasonal products and limited editions.



At Brasilata, packaging is understood as an extension of the brand experience. With this mindset, the company helps its clients transform products into stories—stories that resonate emotionally and build long-term connections with audiences.

To ensure absolute reliability throughout the artwork approval and production process, DALIM ES played a fundamental role in the project workflow. The platform provided complete security during artwork development, ensuring that all files were approved within a centralized system, supported by individual user credentials and a full audit trail. This eliminated the risk of obsolete versions being sent to production and helped prevent material waste, an essential requirement when managing multiple layout versions for seasonal packaging and licensed limited editions. ■



Sustainability & Corporate Social Responsibility

Plant the card attached.

Water it.

Watch what happens when ideas are nurtured.

We all have an impact on the environment and our community!

Now let's talk less about change and instead, make it happen...

As a software company powered by hydroelectricity, we want to be especially aware of ours. We strive to impact the environment, the economy, and society positively!

To do so, we orient our sustainability measures in line with the 17 goals for sustainable development of the United Nations, giving us a clear guideline and the roadmap of which path to take.

Visit csr.dalim.com and learn more about our roadmap.

**No more cards ?
Read more here**



Play the game. Start the conversation.

Rock. Paper. Scissors is how we begin.



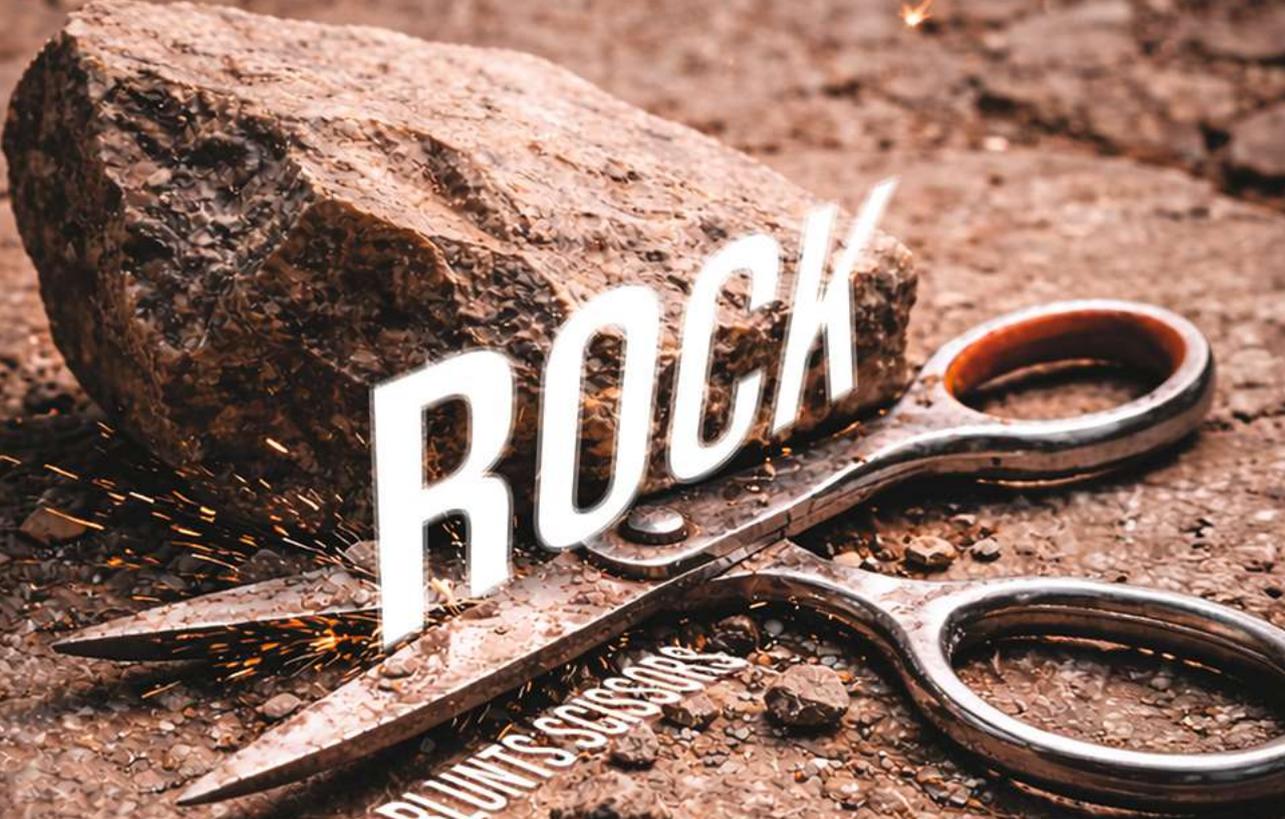
Play the game. Start the conversation.

Rock. Paper. Scissors is how we begin.



Play the game. Start the conversation.

Rock. Paper. Scissors is how we begin.



ROCK

BLUNT'S SCISSORS



WAVE

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SAVE
THE DATE

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At **DSCOVER**, industry leaders, innovators, and creatives come together to explore trends and news shaping their industries. Through inspiring conferences, forward-thinking keynotes, and engaging panel discussions, **DSCOVER** sparks new ideas, shares real-world insights, and fosters meaningful conversations about the future.

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