K4 Publishing System 5.5 – New Features

K4 Publishing System is the most widely used database-driven publishing solution for workflows built around Adobe InDesign and InCopy. It is being used by publishers around the world to increase productivity and create better publications. With its multilevel security controls and robust customization options, K4 supports a transparent and secure production workflow for individual workgroups or entire publishing enterprises.

K4 Publishing System version 5.5 will now enable publishers to stay at the head of technological advancements in terms of layout and editorial software with built-in support for Adobe InDesign CS2 and Adobe InCopy CS2. Version 5.5 is designed to help you increase revenue by making it easier to re-use your content. The new version also includes improved features that allow editors to more conveniently edit articles. Major areas of improvement include:

- Support for InDesign CS2 and InCopy CS2 as well as InDesign CS and InCopy CS
- Targeted convenience features for InCopy users
- New K4 XML-Exporter for automated re-use of content
- Improved K4 File Manager for picture editors or other contributors

In addition, we have added many major and minor improvements, many of which were requested by our customers.

Support for Adobe Creative Suite 2 ▲

A short time ago, Adobe released new versions of their Creative Suite products. With exciting new features such as image placing and scaling directly in InCopy, multiple user dictionaries, dynamic footnote support and much more, this update brings important improvements and enhancements to any publishing workflow. These features in combination with K4 help further improve the editorial workflow and keep users on the cutting edge of technological enhancements.

As one of the first InDesign plug-in developers, SoftCare is dedicated to promptly supporting new versions of Adobe software that is used with the K4 Publishing System. Additionally, K4 remains compatible with InDesign CS and InCopy CS. This combination offers publishing houses, creative agencies and corporations the possibility to benefit from CS2 right after its release or to continue using CS with the new version of K4.

Convenience Features for InCopy Users ▲

InCopy layout view is a very important InCopy feature for editors, as it allows them to see the entire InDesign page and find out how their texts fit on the page and how it interacts with other articles. However, if many articles are located on the same spread, it may get difficult to find out which parts of the page can be edited. To make it easier for editors to access "their" content directly, K4 supports editors with three new features to make working with articles in InCopy even more convenient.

Editors can dim all elements of the page that do not belong to the article or articles they are currently working on, making it easier to spot all text frames they can edit on the page, while still getting an idea of the overall page layout. In addition, users will also be able to hide all layers that do not contain article content to entirely hide non-relevant page content.

Last but not least, SoftCare Notes Manager will follow this example. SoftCare Notes Manager lets you monitor in-line notes in InDesign and InCopy much more efficiently than the built-in Notes palette, by showing notes in a list view and enabling filters to show notes by user or edit date. In its new version compatible with K4 version 5.5, Notes Manager will also provide a means to editors and designers alike to list only those in-line notes that belong to text the user can edit.

K4 XML-Exporter ▲

A finished print product does not automatically mean that the print content has reached the end of its life cycle. A growing number of publishers realize that it is important to be able to re-use content easily and automatically to increase efficiency and revenue. SoftCare now introduces K4 XML-Exporter as an optional add-on to the K4 Publishing System, in order to provide a flexible and forward-looking solution to this task.

K4 XML-Exporter creates a standardized XML file with information from any kind of K4 object. This data can then be used to feed an archive, online publishing or asset management system or for syndication.

The necessary data is exported directly from the database. The data comprises all information about the individual K4 objects. In addition to article text, all images, ads, and multimedia objects are included. For images, ads, and multimedia, not only does K4 XML-Exporter collect the original files, it also collects detailed information on scaling, rotation and shear so that images can be recreated exactly as they appeared on the printed page.

K4 XML-Exporter transforms all data into an open XML format defined by SoftCare. This intermediate format is designed to provide everything that may be needed for a later XSL transformation into a final XML format for a publisher's individual needs.

Exported XML data is absolutely independent of the original data. Therefore, you can archive the SoftCare XML data and transform it at a later time, for example to generate files in a new XML format that was not previously used when the data was originally exported.

K4 XML-Exporter can be triggered manually or automatically from within K4. For example, by defining meta-data information as a trigger, XML-Exporter could automatically export every article that is ready for print, as soon as it has reached the corresponding workflow status. This way, text and images that have been approved can be prepared for the Web, even if the page itself with all its other content has not yet been fully approved.

Thanks to the flexibility it offers, K4 XML-Exporter is an efficient means to extract data from K4 for immediate or later re-use.

Improved K4 File Manager ▲

Many K4 sites use K4 File Manager for bringing text, images, and ads into the K4 workflow, or for providing workflow functionality to the image editing and ad departments. With K4 File Manager, you can, for example, access a picture and change its data in Photoshop. This new image version is available to all K4 users, so that an InCopy editor can see that an image has been modified and even load the new image without waiting for a new layout version.

K4 File Manager has now been improved to more closely resemble the look and feel of the K4 Query Palettes in InDesign and InCopy. User-based queries can be created, modified and deleted, query results can be sorted and displayed according to user-definable column layouts.

Other Improvements ▲

In addition to the improvements described in this document, K4 version 5.5 comes with new features and enhancements in other areas, helping you to improve and streamline your workflow to keep up with ever-increasing demands on your productivity. Here is a small selection of the improved details:

- Names and colors for the User color in InDesign and InCopy can be set in the system, overwriting the local settings in the programs.
- New publication settings enable InDesign and InCopy users to automatically load modified objects upon check-out or geometry update, or before check-in or printing to make sure that the latest available version of all content is being used.
- InCopy users can switch between image variants when working in an environment that uses variants, e.g. for multi-language publications.
- If a page-planning system inserts a new layout file into K4 without specifying a template, the InDesign user is prompted to select a template from his or her publication.
- If an object is delivered for automatic placement on a page from an ad planning or asset management system, the accompanying object rule can specify the layer to be used for placement, e.g. a special layer for all ads.
- Improved language support for Central European and Middle East languages.

If you want to learn more about K4, please don't hesitate to contact us or one of our K4 System Integrators. You can find testimonials and a list of K4 Integrators on our Web site at www.K4PublishingSystem.com.