



K4 Publishing System 5.1 – New Features

K4 Publishing System is the most widely used professional 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 5.1 offers a variety of new features and improvements that will expand the range of possible workflow setups with K4 and provide better overall integration into existing environments. Version 5.1 will significantly increase the security and productivity of your publishing workflow. Major areas of improvements include:

- **Variants** for text, image, ad and multimedia objects
- **Design alternatives** using layers
- **Virtual layouts** for connecting to ad layout or page planning solutions
- **Object rules** for connecting image databases or asset management systems
- **Fast check-out of articles** without geometry
- **Email notification** for new assignments
- **Display of text length** (characters, words, lines) and copyfit information as metadata
- **Visual highlighting of metadata fields**, e.g. for deadline management

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

Variants for text, image, ad and multimedia objects ▲

In K4 version 5.1, every frame in an InDesign document can now contain not just one element per frame, but multiple variants of text, images, ads or multimedia objects, dramatically increasing the flexibility of K4 and its adaptability to different types of publications. One text frame can, for example, contain an English, German and French variant. For regional newspaper editions, K4 can manage different ads in the same image frame, associated with or independent of different text variants for selected articles.

All variants share the same layout geometry, making it easy to manage multi-lingual or multi-version publications and to keep file sizes down. Some systems use the layer functionality within InDesign to manage variants. However, this means the designer still has to edit items on every layer individually, should the page have to be modified. With K4, on the other hand, there is just one frame that has to be edited—giving you a significant boost in productivity when creating publications that require you maintain different variants.

Design alternatives using layers ▲

While variants can be used to manage different versions of frame content, sometimes it is necessary to create different versions of the overall design for the same content. This is where InDesign layers will be used to create design alternatives. A setting in K4 allows the administrator to decide for each publication whether editors working in InCopy will see all layers contained in an InDesign file, or just the layers visible when the layout file was saved to the system.



– 2 –

Virtual layouts and object rules ▲

Many magazines and newspapers use an ad layout or page planning tool to plan their issues before starting to work on the actual pages. With K4 version 5.1, data from such solutions can be sent to K4 directly via XML. K4 can read and interpret these rules to build layouts and/or place objects dynamically, then send back information about the placed files and page status—as well as JPG previews of InDesign pages—to the integrated system.

Let's consider an example. If a four-page layout with two half-page ad is defined in the ad layout solution, K4 will show a new item in the K4 palette in InDesign. The layout artist just needs to double-click this item and K4 will automatically build the four-page layout and place the ads in their correct position. Once the layout designer saves the file to the system, K4 sends a preview image of the page back to the planning solution. Thus, the ad department always has the current information about page status and content at its disposal. If a change is made in the ad layout system, again the K4 layout designer is automatically alerted of the requested change to his layout file and all changes—including adding or removing and renumbering pages—are executed automatically.

The layout designer has a rule list at his disposal and can easily check at any given time, whether all objects on the page are in compliance with their rules. Should an object violate the rules, this is pointed out to the designer when he checks in the file. Also, the head of production and others may search for files that contain rule violations to make sure everything is fine before the files go to print.

Object rules for images or multimedia objects can be sent to K4 from asset management systems or image databases in exactly the same way. In addition, K4 saves information on the use of an image, its scale, rotation, offset and shear. This information can be transferred to other systems used for further image editing or commercial use.

Connections to page planning solution JournalDesigner from dataplan and DAM system myCONTENT from picturesafe were shown at IfraExpo 2004. Connections to other solutions are in the making.

Fast check-out of articles without geometry ▲

When dealing with large InDesign files or in a remote location with a slow connection to the central server, checking out layout or article files can take some time. This may well mean unnecessary idle time for editors, if they just want to make minor changes to a text.

K4 version 5.1 provides an option for editors to check out text without layout or geometry, significantly reducing the time needed for checking out articles. The editor can edit text in InCopy, but cannot see the layout or any copyfit information.

Email Notification ▲

Not all users are connected to the system all of the time, so that they can continuously check for new jobs. In order to let these users know in a timely fashion that they have been assigned a new job, K4 can send email alerts to a user. If a file is assigned to a user group, every group member will receive such an alert. The email message may contain any metadata available for a publication, e.g. deadline information for an article or its current status.



– 3 –

Display of text length and copyfit information as metadata ▲

A new feature in K4 allows users to see the number of characters, words and lines in a text object as individual metadata fields. Thus, this information is available in the job list and the page objects palette that give the user an overview of all the items on the layout he is currently working on.

In addition, a metadata field can display the lines of overset or underset of a text object. In combination with the new highlighting feature, this enables editors to see quickly which articles still need tweaking.

Visual highlighting of metadata fields ▲

Any metadata field using a number, date, or time format can be highlighted with a custom background color, depending on the current field value. For every metadata field, up to three colors can be made available that can be associated with a specific value or value range.

For instance, the deadline field for an article can be highlighted in yellow four hours before deadline, and go to red 15 minutes before deadline. At the same time, a field with copyfit information could be displayed in red to warn users that there is underset or overset text.

Other Improvements ▲

In addition to the improvements described in this document, K4 version 5.1 comes with new features and enhancements in many 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 many improved details:

- The check-in process for layouts has been optimized once again, so that check-in is faster in many cases.
- Names and colors for the Notes and Track Changes features in InDesign and InCopy can be set in the system, overwriting the local settings in the programs.
- The contents of a query palette can be exported to an InDesign/InCopy file for printing or other uses.
- New user right "Overwrite check-out" allows users to undo check-out of a file even if another user has checked out the file.
- In the K4 Admin, every user can be given a short name that can be used to log on to the system.
- Enhanced layout preview in K4 Query palettes displays all pages of a layout, as well as corresponding InCopy articles, text objects and variants.
- A time stamp can be used to automatically advance previous, current and next issue to the next values.

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.