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Jen Olsen, material supply manager
Steve Parizek, guided vehicle supervisor

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DRINKS, DRUGS

Digital asset management taps secret savings

Packaging departments that have made digital asset management a priority are more efficient and have cut 'rework.'

The amount of digital data generated by companies has grown to gigabyte proportions.

Consider that the average personal computer 20 years ago had a 60 megabyte (MB) hard drive and 16 kilobytes of RAM (random access memory). Now, a typical laptop computer boasts a whopping 30 gigabyte hard drive and 256MB of RAM.

The real kicker? Today's computers fill up just as quickly as ever. In all areas of business, elec-

tronic files are ever-increasing in their volume, importance and complexity. Digital asset management (DAM) programs can help packagers organize and quickly find important and often-used computer files.

Here are answers to the most frequently asked questions about DAM.

Why do you need to manage digital assets?

Can you afford the time and money of package design rework? Vendor consolidation forced Dan, a general manager in charge of packaging for a consumer product company, to switch package printers three times in as many years. Each time, Dan's department had to redo carton designs for the new supplier.

In your department

alone, how much **wasted time** is spent looking for a computer file? Research has shown anywhere from 12 to 28 minutes a day—per person—is wasted looking for things. A system that organizes needed files can save countless search time.

Or, consider the **legal ramifications**. Robert Williams, president of Cohasset Associates, published a paper with the Association of Information and Image Management (AIIM) titled "Realizing the Need and Putting the Key Components in Place to 'Getting It Right' in Records Management."

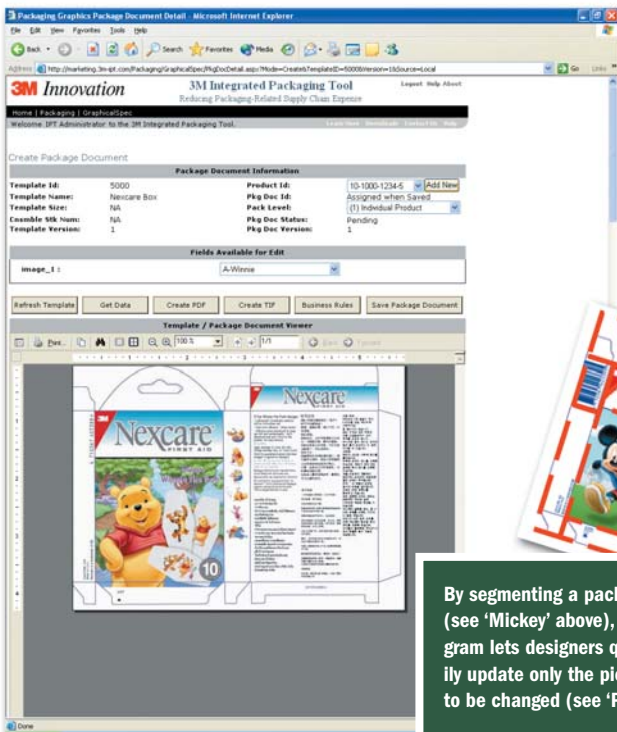
Williams writes: "Consider this hypothetical: three months from now, unforeseen litigation is filed against your organization. The records requested in discovery involve the reconstruction of transactions that occurred seven to eight years ago—within the statutes of limitations for such events. How will your organization access, review, and produce the requested records from those legacy systems on which they were created and stored?"

What packaging assets should be part of a DAM program?

DAM makes sense for archiving:

- Package/label graphics, including photos, illustrations and company and brand logos.
- Regulatory requirements and

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Editor-in-Chief



By segmenting a package's design (see 'Mickey' above), the 3M program lets designers quickly and easily update only the pieces that need to be changed (see 'Pooh' at left).

evidence of compliance, such as for 21 CFR Part 11.

- Document approvals.
- Label and/or insert contents and layouts, including a history of versions and Nutrition Facts, Drug Facts or Supplement Facts. These can be primary package labels or shipping labels.
- Specifications for packaging materials or machinery.
- E-mail communications between internal departments, as well as with outside parties.

How can you convert non-digital assets into digital format?

A number of options exist to make something non-digital, digital. Time, cost and future use should help you decide which method is best.

- You can recreate the information on a computer. This is the most time consuming and costly way, but gives you the best means of making changes in the future.

- You can scan documents and/or package graphics or film. Today's high-quality scanning equipment is so good at digitizing packaging graphics that even counterfeiters are able to quickly copy your packaging! This method is fast and relatively inexpensive, but alterations to the original materials are severely limited.

What are key attributes of any DAM system?

The success of any computer database is how easy it is to use. It's important that the system has an **intuitive user interface**, especially since not all participants will use it every day.

Other questions to ask: Does the program have a logical naming scheme for the files? Does it show a history of versions? Does it use

If it worked for 3M...

To solve the vast problem of controlling the digital assets of more than 60,000 stock-keeping units (SKU's), 3M developed its own highly successful digital asset management (DAM) program. 3M determined that it was possible to avoid millions in excess annual costs.

After extensive research that showed other companies were experiencing the same organizational pains, the 3M Global Packaging Services business unit was created and the DAM solution was commercialized.

Launched January 2003, the 3M Integrated Packaging Tool integrates all the elements of a package—structures, graphics and text—into one fluid web-based platform. The program includes several sections that, once optimized, quickly pay off. By keeping track of data for shipping labels, primary packages and packaging specifications, companies can save on material costs, creative work and engineering time.

Among the features of this comprehensive product are:

- Translation management, allowing you to reuse common foreign-language phrases. This is especially useful for multinational brands.
- Automated document routing and approval, with E-mail notification and confirmation. This feature sort of acts as a project manager by keeping

track of where you are for a product launch or redesign and what still needs to be done.

- Speed of primary package design/redesign. During a private demonstration, I saw a carton layout changed within minutes. New graphics and text were selected from drop-down menus and were correctly positioned automatically. Even the fonts matched (see images on opposite page).

- Enforces regulatory/legal requirements by pointing out need-to-know rules. And, as a safeguard, it prevents you from moving ahead if something isn't right.

According to Mike Haldane, business manager for 3M Global Packaging Services, "We believe that regulated businesses such as packaged foods, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, personal health care and chemicals will benefit most...so that's where we're focusing our first effects. We are already involved as a manufacturer in many of these markets and, therefore, know firsthand that the 3M Integrated Packaging Tool can drastically improve the packaging information management process."

The 3M Integrated Packaging Tool is already in use at several CPG companies and related creative agencies.

— LMP

icons to show the contents? Is the data organized in a way that's easy to navigate? Can you set up various levels of access for security?

Who offers DAM solutions?

Twenty years ago, two initial companies struggled to survive in the newborn DAM market. Today, the list of solution providers is as broad as it is deep and includes:

- Prepress service organizations, such as Creo, Esko-Graphics, Schawk and others.
- Packaging material suppliers. Inland Paperboard and Packaging, Pechiney and Rock-Tenn are among the many suppliers that offer DAM programs for structural

and/or graphic package design.

- DAM service providers, such as AdProps, Document Control Systems, HAHT Commerce Inc., Mystic Management and 3M Global Packaging Services (see "If it worked for 3M..." above).

What DAM programs are available?

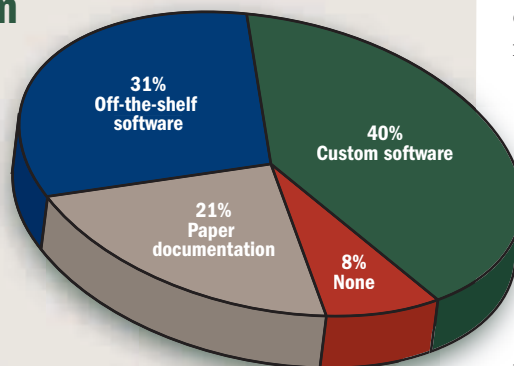
No matter what software you use, web-based or not, the most important step is to set a policy for digital asset management. Identify the data you want organized, then find the DAM product or service that best fits your needs. It might be an off-the-shelf program; or you may need one custom built.

Here are *just a few* of the

What type of DAM system do packagers use?

Custom software just barely edges out off-the-shelf solutions for managing digital assets. Incredibly, more than a quarter of respondents don't use a computer to keep track of their computer files.

Source: Institute of Packaging Professionals (www.iopp.org) Quick Poll, based on 119 respondents.



options available today:

■ From Esko-Graphics, the Web Center archives design layouts and/or CAD/CAM drawings for major manufacturers, including Kraft Foods.

■ From HAHT Commerce, the HAHT Consumer Products Suite helps consumer product goods (CPG) companies manage and share brand information with retail partners on the back end of packaging—through the supply chain.

Companies can manage complex packaging relationships (case lots for a certain outlet, for example) by defining multiple packaging configurations for each product. In addition, the "New Product Introduction" workflow process helps decrease time to launch. Also in the Suite is the UCCnet Global Registry and a personalized "Favorites" portal clip that speeds finding frequently ordered or accessed product data.

Clare Knight, director of electronic data interchange and B2B information systems at Pfizer Consumer Healthcare, says, "We've invested heavily in our product brands and the data that defines them. HAHT consumer products solutions make it easier to optimize that investment and ensure consumers receive the best products and the best brand experience through our retail partners."

Another HAHT customer, Dan Bowen, chief financial officer for Mt. Olive Pickle Co., says,

"UCCnet compliance was becoming mandatory in order to continue to do business with leading retailers, making it easy to justify the [return on investment] associated with another IT [information technology] investment. By managing the Mt. Olive product data in our customers systems, we've ensured a smooth flow of data while also reducing the need for manual intervention related to inaccuracies of data."

■ From Interchange Digital, a subsidiary of Schawk Inc., PaRTIS™

(Production and Resource Tracking System) uses a job-centered hierarchy that connects production information with graphic assets to help improve communication between all packaging team members. It includes online proofing and project management.

■ From MRO Software, Maximo® helps customers manage their outsourced maintenance

business to help cut maintenance costs and reduce overall equipment and operating costs.

■ From Mystic Management (one of the first DAM companies specializing in packaging), DCS 6.0 Pro controls and manages engineering and quality documents including packaging specifications, standard operating procedures, testing instructions, assembly instructions, training documents, sales and marketing literature and more.

■ From NuGenesis, the Scientific Data Management System (SDMS) helps drug companies access and use research data more effectively throughout the drug discovery, development and manufacturing cycles. With IBM's Tivoli® Storage Manager, SDMS can help customers achieve long-term data preservation, intellectual property protection and overall cost management in compliance with the Food and Drug Administration's 21 CFR Part 11 requirements for electronic record-keeping.

■ From Stelex-TVG and RSA Security Inc., a white paper entitled "Best Practices for Secure e-Mail using RSA Security Products

The success of any computer database is how easy it is to use.

for 21 CFR Part 11 Compliance" is available for a free download at www.rsasecurity.com/solutions/pharma/downloads/RSAS_TEL_WP_0303.pdf.

Whether you opt for a full solution or do it piece by piece, getting control of your packaging digital assets can help you uncover hidden savings. So let the DAM flow! **F&DP**

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