

Seybold Seminars chooses Miramo

Seybold Seminars turned to *Miramo*® to solve a frustrating problem. The leading publishing technology seminar and education organization wasn't using state-of-the-art technology for its own publishing efforts. This had to change — Seybold's customers were demanding it.

For the last twenty-five years the entire Seybold organization has been at the forefront of composition and prepress technology, offering newsletters, seminars and consultation to the graphic arts industry and to professional publishing organizations around the world. Last year ZD Events, who bought Seybold Seminars from founder Jonathan Seybold in the early 1990's, became Key3Media Events, the world's leading producer of business-to-business expositions and conferences for the information technology industry. Key3Media Events currently produces over 50 events in 18 countries and 28 cities around the world, including Comdex and Networld+Interop. Seybold Seminars offer two events, Seybold Seminars Boston, held each spring, and Seybold Seminars San Francisco, usually held in September.

Seybold Seminars are the largest of their kind. The fall program attracts about 4000 paying seminar attendees, and some 40,000 visitors to the technology tradeshow. The seminar program is enormous, with over 30 days of programming crammed into the one-week event. Topics range from color management to computer-to-plate, and from e-books to XML. Nearly 500 speakers participate, mostly from the US, but from Europe and Asia too.

A range of publications help to inform Seybold customers and prospects, mostly in advance of each event. The largest and most ambitious publication is the onsite Program Guide. As large and as elaborate as a book, the Program Guide is handed out to every seminar attendee, providing them with complete details of each seminar and tutorial program, as well as photos and bios of all speakers and instructors.

The task of organizing each Seybold event falls on the shoulders of Craig Cline, Vice President of Content. Craig is a 12-year Seybold veteran, joining the company while Jonathan Seybold was at the helm. Working

with him is Thad McIlroy, Program Director, who also works outside of the Seybold organization as an industry analyst and consultant, at Arcadia House, based in San Francisco. They are in turn assisted by a large Seybold internal support staff, including Chad Pfohl and Liz Grady, and numerous Key3Media staff.

While Seybold may be a leader in educating about the use of digital publishing technology, the Seminar group was not practising what it preached. The Program Guide was produced with a near-manual effort. Pages were constructed one at a time in QuarkXPress. Photos were individually placed and sized. The effort was enormous.

"It's everything we needed. Miramo and FrameMaker met all our requirements."

Worse than that, because of the scope of the project, work began two months before each event, and the cut-off date for including program and speaker information was as early as four weeks before a conference. Seminar events and speakers change frequently in the weeks before an event. While the resulting Program Guide was easy on the eyes, the information it contained was always out of date and incomplete.

The process of collecting and maintaining data on program sessions and speakers improved significantly in the mid-1990s when the company implemented a FileMaker Pro database with the help of consultant Bob Harlow. The database contained up-to-the-minute information. Unfortunately the art department was not trained to edit data directly in FileMaker. Information that appeared in the Program Guide was exported to text files and edited in Microsoft Word and in QuarkXPress. Those edits never made it back into the main database.

Frustration mounted. In 1999 Seybold tried publishing a program guide directly

PROFILE

Seybold Seminars

The Seybold organization provides in-depth newsletters and reports, seminars and consultancy in composition and prepress technology to the graphic arts industry and to professional publishers around the world.

Manual page layout for its seminar Program Guide was cumbersome with a long lead time that omitted many late program changes.

Now event data is extracted from the core database and formatted into pre-designed templates by Miramo and FrameMaker, removing the manual page layout task and ensuring that content is completely up-to-date.

from FileMaker. The text and graphic formatting features of FileMaker are limited, and while the result was more up to date than previous efforts, the appearance fell well short of the professionalism the organization required.

The turning point came in the summer of 2000 with a meeting between Richard Davies, the president of Datazone, and Thad McIlroy. Datazone was looking for some advice on marketing its software in the U.S. and had approached Seybold for consulting support. McIlroy took the assignment. He soon realized that a more immediate task that could benefit both companies was to professionally automate the publication of the Seybold Seminars Program Guide using Datazone's Miramo database publishing software.

Miramo offers a simple but powerful inline markup system that enables text, forms and graphics to be formatted, viewed and printed. It uses the high-end Adobe FrameMaker publishing program as a hidden formatting engine to produce documents at a rate of thousands of pages per hour. Document types range from one to fifty-page customer statements, produced in high volume and at high speed, through to enormous, multi-thousand page encyclopedias, directories, and industrial catalogs. Both paper and electronic books can be produced either automatically via batch processing, or through a combination of batch and interactive on-screen editing.

No job too tough

McIlroy was attracted to two main aspects of the Miramo solution. "I saw that no document was too tough for Miramo to tackle," he explains. "The Seybold Program Guide is not the most complex publication on earth, but I didn't want to find out at the last minute that the program had a limitation that would force us to compromise." The other aspect was its high-end typesetting and graphics tools. "The combination of Miramo and FrameMaker is very powerful and sophisticated," he says. "I knew that the final publication would look great."

What about drawbacks? "Miramo is available only for Windows NT and Unix and uses the Adobe FrameMaker formatting engine. Our publishing experience had been limited to QuarkXPress on the Macintosh," McIlroy explains. "For this reason we needed to turn to outside consultants to achieve our objective in the very short time available." Seybold were able to call on the considerable experience of Axial InfoSolutions, Inc., a firm specializing in sales and implementations of automated publishing solutions using Miramo and Adobe FrameMaker. Axial's Sheila Carlisle spent three days in McIlroy's San Francisco office shepherding the publication towards completion. "We wouldn't have succeeded without Axial's



help," states McIlroy. "Their knowledge and experience, and their drive to solve problems, are truly extraordinary."

The task of massaging the data in the Seybold FileMaker database into a form that worked with Miramo fell to Bob Harlow, the founder of Micro Computing Consulting, a firm that consults to businesses and workgroups on FileMaker Pro. Harlow provided essential ongoing support to ZD Events throughout its internal implementation of FileMaker Pro. The same database that is used internally to register speakers and to maintain program information now drives the Key3Media Web site, where customers not only learn about upcoming programs, but can also register for each event. In a recent survey over half of Seybold's customers said they look to the Web site to help inform themselves on a Seybold conference.

Bob Harlow is the kind of technology consultant that enjoys a challenge. "I did not need to understand the inner workings of Miramo to know how to adjust the Seybold databases so that we could export the data in

The largest and most ambitious publication is the Program Guide. As large and as elaborate as a book, the Program Guide is handed out to every seminar attendee, providing them with complete details on each seminar and tutorial program, as well as photos and biographies of all speakers and instructors.

Seybold Seminars automates the production of its Conference Program Guide with Miramo and Adobe FrameMaker. A wide range of publications helps to inform Seybold customers and prospects.



the right format," Harlow explains. "Once I understood a convenient way to extract data for Miramo, it took very little time to make the necessary changes."

Design is a core element of every successful publishing project. Seybold called on the independent San Francisco designer Renaun Hochstein of Renaun Design to generate a series of page templates for each section of the Program Guide. These were in turn translated into the FrameMaker templates used by Miramo.

One of the many advantages of using Miramo is that the final output is a PDF file. "Seybold has been very supportive of the industry's move toward PDF workflows, and it was a treat to be able to test PDF in action," says McIlroy. The Program Guide printer, George Lithograph (based in Brisbane, CA) has pioneered PDF adoption, and was comfortable receiving a 204-page PDF file. More importantly they were able to accept the file three days before the book had to be delivered onsite.

Seybold executives say that the final result more than merited the challenge, calling the Seybold San Francisco Program Guide the best they've ever produced. "It's everything we needed," says Cline. "Not only does it look great, but it's far and away the most complete, accurate and up-to-date program guide we've ever published." Timeliness is essential. "Now that we're driving the Seybold Website from a single database," explains McIlroy, "we had to find a way to publish the same data in print. Miramo and FrameMaker met all of our requirements."

Miramo passes the final and most important test — Seybold has committed to continue using Miramo in the future. ■

Web Publishing Conference

<p>Event At-A-Glance</p> <p>Web Publishing Conference</p> <p>Publishing Showcase Conference</p> <p>Best Practices Conference</p> <p>Special Interest Days</p> <p>Speakers and Instructors</p>	<p>Measuring Success: How Do You Measure the Effectiveness of Design on the Internet? Location: Room 102 Moderator: Barry Swack, Research Design Speakers: Alison Williamson, WebVisions, Inc.; Bart Rickerson, SprintLab; Peter Marbach, Phoenix-Fox Productions; Stephen Winkler, SprintLab Inc.</p> <p>Brand vs. If Brand is Experience, How do You Design for Interactive Experience? Location: Room 102 Moderator: David Glaz, Genex Speakers: [Blank]</p> <p>Managing Content for Personalization Applications Location: Room 104 Moderator: Mary Lyle, VistaNet LLP Speakers: Jeffrey Glaz, Zitha.com; Neave Berry, Gelmetra.com</p> <p>Industry magazine, and it frequently asked to be a speaker on issues critical to the corporate and publishing industries. He serves as a director on the boards of Adobe Systems, Netpage Communications, Red Brick Systems, and Evers & Sutherland Computer.</p> <p>Eric Weaver CEO, Rebel US 2002 Director Emeritus, Author, CA 92018 Tel: 949-754-4242 Fax: 949-754-2888 www.rebelus.com</p> <p>Eric Weaver is the CEO of Rebel Media US, the American division of Rebel News Media AG, Europe's second largest interactive agency. An industry pioneer and trendsetter since the mid-90s, he has led and led initiatives for Procter & Gamble, South Beach, Inveread, General Electric, and IBM. Eric has an eighteen-year record combining both IT and marketing management. He has worked throughout the world for American Mail, B&W, Ford Motor Company, Hogen Industries & Design, and Telsa Bell, and built some of the first sites featuring personalization, post-based communication.</p>
---	--

10

Speakers and Instructors

<p>Connet working on EDA Dobby during its formative years. Working in a 3D CAD team led and served with 3D printing specializing in quality short-run color as well as marketing, packaging and label printing. Covered for all digital, 3D printing workflow to 2006. It is an impressive adoption of process automation technology such as thermal computer-plate equipment. All Internet/Content serving tasks on its 40-node LAN are done with Linux or FreeBSD.</p> <p>Mark Walter Editor, Seybold Publications 401 East Robinson Avenue, Maple, PA 20082 Tel: 610-662-2400 Fax: 610-662-4859 mwalter@scpub.com</p> <p>A 20-year veteran of the publishing industry, Mark Walter is a seasoned analyst and editor known for his work assessing publishing software used for electronic publishing. He is editor of The Seybold Report on Internet Publishing, an industry newsletter that tracks online publishing technology, where he has spearheaded Seybold's coverage of Web publishing systems and emerging technologies, such as XML, e-books and digital rights management. As a consultant, he works with both corporate and non-profit disciplines, helping them design technology requirements and select systems, with particular expertise in XML, editorial and content management systems.</p> <p>John Warnock Chairman of the Board, CEO and Co-Founder, Adobe Systems, Inc. 2455 Port Street, Redwood City, CA 94061 Tel: 415-533-6000 Fax: 415-533-6000 jwarnock@adobe.com</p> <p>John co-founded Adobe in 1982. Since then, he and his partner, Doug Garfield, have worked closely together to define and develop a series of pioneering software products that leverage Adobe's core strengths in desktop publishing and electronic document delivery. For three decades, Adobe has been recognized as an innovator in the field of computer software. In both three periods, he contributed many articles to technical journals and</p>	<p>Industry magazine, and it frequently asked to be a speaker on issues critical to the corporate and publishing industries. He serves as a director on the boards of Adobe Systems, Netpage Communications, Red Brick Systems, and Evers & Sutherland Computer.</p> <p>Eric Weaver CEO, Rebel US 2002 Director Emeritus, Author, CA 92018 Tel: 949-754-4242 Fax: 949-754-2888 www.rebelus.com</p> <p>Eric Weaver is the CEO of Rebel Media US, the American division of Rebel News Media AG, Europe's second largest interactive agency. An industry pioneer and trendsetter since the mid-90s, he has led and led initiatives for Procter & Gamble, South Beach, Inveread, General Electric, and IBM. Eric has an eighteen-year record combining both IT and marketing management. He has worked throughout the world for American Mail, B&W, Ford Motor Company, Hogen Industries & Design, and Telsa Bell, and built some of the first sites featuring personalization, post-based communication.</p>
--	---

15

Moving from manual page layout in QuarkXPress to automated production from database via Miramo has allowed Seybold Seminars to combine professional layout and typographic control with up-to-the-minute content, essential when programs and speakers change at short notice.

Miramo®

Seybold Seminars, Publications & Consulting
795 Folsom Street, 6th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94107-1243
+1 415 905 2300
www.seybold365.com

Thad McIlroy
www.arcadiahouse.com

Axial InfoSolutions Inc.
Bothell, Washington 98011
Tel: +1 425 486 2988
Fax: +1 425 483 3836
www.axialinfo.com

Datazone Ltd
Tel: +353 64 66 28964
Fax: +353 64 66 28965
www.miramo.com

© Datazone 2004