Cycle Time

Looking ahead: 2010 as a year of pivotal developments

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The year, 2009, has passed. Now, we find ourselves confronting a future of even greater change and uncertainty. In this issue of Cycle Time, I will piece together several discussions, developments and musings, outlining a basic shape for the year 2010 and digital asset management.

Expect wacky who-would-have-thought technologies to emerge. True to maxim that necessity is the mother of invention (and constrained resources is her mid-wife), we can expect a number of very innovation, low-cost or flat-out disruptive DAM and DAM-related technologies to emerge. Widgets, application mash-ups, single-pixel ‘assets’ and disruptive pricing. I believe that we will witness a true revolution in user interfaces and presentation layers of enterprise software and DAM, extending the user experience models advanced by Facebook, Google and Yahoo to ‘functions as a service’ and ‘apps’ in the mode of the Apple AppStore. Single-pixel assets emerged in my interview with Carlos Gaviria; he makes the case that workflows and processes become ‘conversations in XML’ and that a single pixel become the logical unit of these conversations. Thus, we will see the metadata schemas for managing a single pixel, enabling automated processes with a ‘conversational syntax and grammar’ to generate fully tagged and search-optimized pieces of rich media or textual content. Oh yes, these pieces of media or content will share all the properties of a fully development digital asset within a DAM repository. Hmmm. *Apple iPhone Tablet will change everything, again.* Wired to the AppStore and iTunes with 10-inch or larger screen and full-sized keyboard on the touch screen, the iPhone Tablet will

become the *de facto* ‘multimodal’ consumer device for accessing newspapers, magazines, TV programming and myriad private streaming channels of YouTube and Vimeo. Uh-ho. With its video out and Bluetooth, it takes only a bit of ‘imagineering’ to see iPhone Tablets as the control device for regular TV and streaming or Internet Protocol Television (IPTV). Watch for TV shows like *American Idol* or another reality TV show to incorporate real-time overlays from Twitter, Facebook and most instant messaging systems. Implications? Profound and many. Real-time viewing with data will enable social networks to track: the *mood of the market* (activated topics by brand category, sentiments (warm and cold) about competitive brands and substitutes and levels of message adoption/distortion within market segments by brand cohorts); *voice of the customer* (individual brand affiliation, comments (pro and con), immediate requests for service or innovation by individual consumers), and; *patterns of engagement* (activated criteria for engaging by individual consumer, individualized effect of marketing spend on brand awareness, consideration, trial, purchase, commitment and so on).

SaaS DAM arrives with a boom. This represents the happy confluence of many factors that will make hosted on-demand DAM a darling for many enterprises, even traditional media and publishing firms. Look for host-to-own software licensing models and flat all-you-can-use-functionality pricing to further upend the often convoluted and costly software licensing schemes. The argument for SaaS becomes completely self-evident with the addition of ‘social’ interfaces to enterprise services and

rights-controlled content. I will dedicate an entire issue to this important development in DAM. Look for it.

Sharepoint advocates surrender to DAM. Often bundled in enterprise licenses, Sharepoint appears to many IT professional as 'free' or at least a sunk cost – tailor-made for use across the firm as an enterprise standard platform. As Microsoft sees its value migrate away from desktop and into the 'server stack', it has decided to make Sharepoint its new group-collaboration 'operating system' with all the economies and lock-ins of Windows. So far, so good. Sharepoint makes a great platform for collaboration. Some argue with concision and brio, that Sharepoint makes it too easy to create projects and collections, breaching or ignoring 'best practice' templates, company-standard schemas and shared metadata models. Not to worry. In 2010, the industry will conclude that Sharepoint really, really needs three things: complete adoption throughout the firm, a backend enterprise search and auto-classification system such as Fast or Autonomy and a real, full-featured DAM for media transformations, federated metadata, faceted navigation and so on. Most DAM vendors will respond with tight Sharepoint integrations and solution services. We very well may discover that Sharepoint evolves into an enterprise Facebook and Basecamp – look for indie software developers to lead that parade.

XBRL drives text-as-metadata into DAM. The new financial reporting schema, now mandated by the US Government, establishes a 2000-item data-typing schema for each logical piece of annual and quarterly reports. This will result in a *de facto* metadata schema for Customer relationship management (CRM), Enterprise resource planning (ERP), Enterprise content management (ECM), Product lifecycle

management (PLM), Supply chain management (SCM) and, of course DAM that drives enterprise publishing workflows. Look for the brilliant interview with Gary Purnhagen in *Digital Asset Management*. XBRL represents the first meaningful expression of the Semantic Web or Web 3.0. Look for a special issue devoted just to XBRL.

DAM professional certification. We have schemed and planned this for a few years. In 2010, look for a formal program that will certify skills attainment and competencies of DAM professionals in the area of DAM operations, marketing operations and publishing operations. One group with whom we have talk plans to use color belts similar to martial arts and Six Sigma to signify levels of skills and mastery of DAM.

One final thought. The pace of innovation and change will continue to accelerate. Five years from now, your mobile phone (errr, mobile tablet with super Bluetooth earphones) will operate at speeds 10X greater; in 10 years, 100X greater. This means that in 5 years, media and digital service consumers will expect 10X greater or more performance from us and our digital services infrastructure. The Amazon Kindle will fall by the wayside; the audiocassette player in an iPod world). We will read our newspapers and magazines on our tablets and dip our digital toes into interactive stream flowing beneath or 'overlay' to each story or ad.

So...what can or should we do about all this today? May I make a modest proposal: 'master the next step'. Apply all your passion, curiosity and concentration in determining your next logical step. Then take it. Then, look around and, most importantly, inside, to your gut and apply again all your passion, curiosity and concentration in determining your next logical step. Then take that step. In word, 'focus'.