

DistEl

Cross-site Planning and Production



Central planning – local production. This is what DistEl (short for Distributable Elements) is ideal for. As intelligent distribution software, DistEl ensures that the cross-site planning and production of pages and page elements is organized as efficiently as possible. In conjunction with the planning module PlanPag, the assembly module ProPag and the ad production system AdMan, DistEl ensures a highly automated networked workflow with all the benefits of a central planning system and the flexibility and autonomy of the local print sites.





ppi's Publishing Workflow

Today, cross-site planning and production systems are a matter of course for economically-run newspaper publishers. Publishing houses with multiple production sites are, however, faced with certain problems. Large volumes of data and slow, occasionally unreliable network capacities complicate efficient page transmission, forcing the planning output to be released at a very early stage. With DistEL, ppi Media has developed a process that also allows publishing houses with local production sites to utilize all the potentials of a central newspaper planning system. Together with an ad booking system (e.g. IS-M/AM) and ppi's PlanPag (newspaper planning), ProPag (page assembly) and AdMan (ad production), DistEL offers a transparent, highly integrated and automated workflow, coupled with maximum autonomy of production at the local sites.

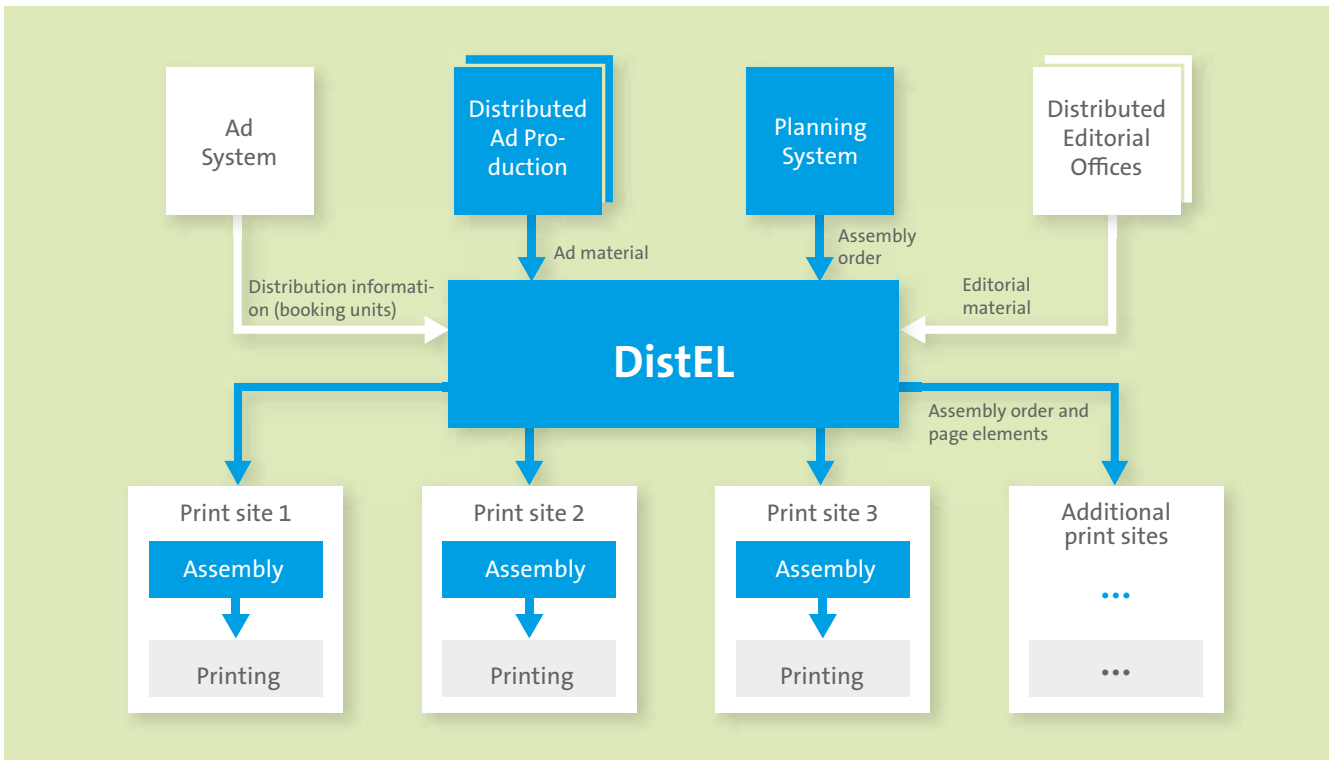
Operating principle

To a certain extent, DistEL can be regarded as a meta OPI, because during distribution, it is not the finished digital page that is sent to the local production sites, but only an assembly order which has a much smaller volume of data. The production and distribution of the associated page content is completely separate. The page elements are produced at any of the sites and transferred automatically to the required print sites, where they are assembled to pages according to the assembly order.

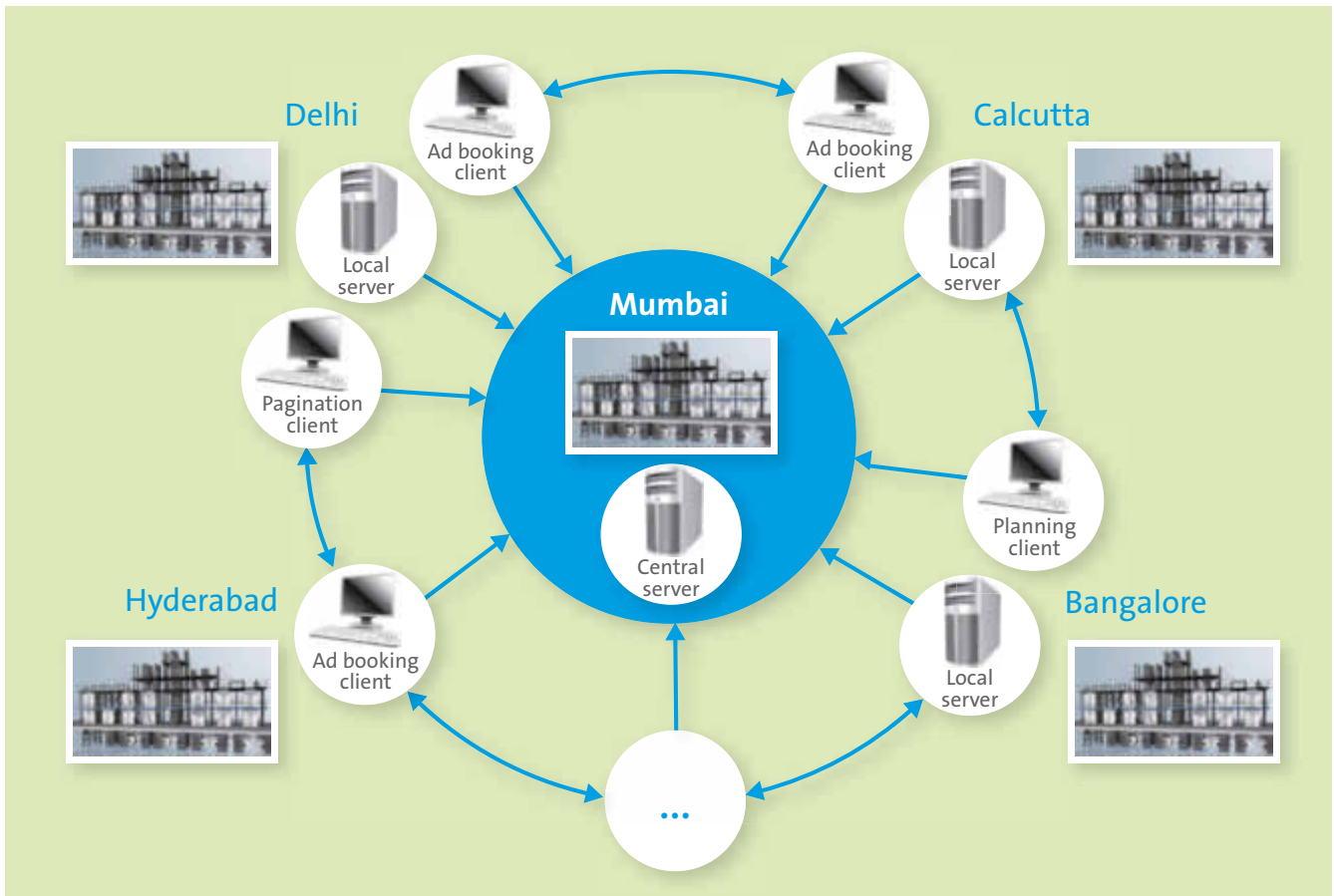
As a browser-based system, DistEL allows you to monitor the entire distribution process online from any workstation. System-wide reorganization functions ensure that all distributed elements are deleted when they are no longer needed.

Central assembly orders

DistEL imports the page layout from the central planning system and supplies it with XML references for the page elements it contains. This XML file stores all the information required for producing a centrally planned newspaper page at a local site. However, the data volume of assembly orders like this is relatively small and only requires short transmission times. It can be transmitted to the local production sites without any problems or delays when planning results are updated. At the individual sites, ProPag replaces the references by the locally stored page elements, and assembles these elements to print-ready pages according to the assembly order. Alternatively, DistEL is able to integrate QuarkXPress as an assembly system, as well as automatically trigger an OPI process for creating lo-res copies.



In ppi's Publishing Workflow, DistEL, together with three additional ppi modules, ensures cost-effective, cross-site production.



The Times of India uses DistEl to connect its 15 print sites and 52 remote offices spread across the whole of India.

Decentralized production

Page elements (in particular ads) are generated locally at different sites. DistEl ensures that all the elements are transferred to the correct print sites on schedule. In order to avoid transmission bottlenecks during the crucial stage of production, DistEl transmits the page elements based on priority and, if possible, during low-peak transmission times. In addition, only data that is actually required at the local site is sent.

An EPS, bitmap and PDF workflow can be implemented with DistEl.

DistEl in practice

DistEl is currently installed in many large, prestigious publishing houses worldwide. To name but a few, our

reference customers include Mumbai-based Benett, Coleman & Co Ltd. (Times of India), the Czech VLTAVA-LABE-PRESS (75 dailies) or the German Axel Springer publishing company, which organizes the production of its Bild-Zeitung in this way.

At the Times of India, the world's second largest English-language newspaper (see fig. above), approx. 120 print products are planned centrally with PlanPag and produced locally at 15 different print sites. Ads are booked with IS-M/AM (SAP) at 52 local sites and the key ad data transmitted online to the newspaper planning and ad production systems at a speed of 64KB/s. Ads are produced locally at the actual print sites, and most of the editorial

part-pages are generated there as well. Different local AdMan, PlanPag and ProPag clients and the DistEl software ensure that production is more or less autonomous at the individual sites once planning has been completed.

The ads and assembly orders are distributed via 2MB/s lines. While the ads are sent at night, changes to the assembly order can be sent and incorporated until shortly before printing starts. On site, both page elements that have been produced locally and those that have been transferred by DistEl are assembled to digital print-ready pages using the centrally created assembly orders.

How you benefit



- Fewer downtimes due to an autonomous and highly automated distributed workflow which is also reliable in emergency situations.
- Ideal data flow due to a priority-based transfer of page elements outside peak times.
- Load balancing due to networked print sites.
- Due to its robust design, DistEl is predestined for use in low transmission bandwidths and interference-prone lines.

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