

Minutes of ECI Meeting – March 26, 2004, Barcelona

Attendees:

Ackmann, Karsten
Adloff, Michael
Battrick, George
Behmöller, Klaus
Bierfreund, Robert
Diekjobst, Jörg
Dolezal, Dieter
Drümmer, Olaf
Ettrich, Stefan (guest/Eurohueco)
Junglas, Uwe
Kleinheider, Peter
Laue, Martin
May, Liane
Meinecke, Karl Michael
Naescher (guest/Eurohueco)
Otto, Klaus-Hermann
Rewer, Renate
Rieckmann, Wolfgang
Rossée, Jan
Schmidt, Bernhard
Schober, Jörg
Schützenhofer, André
Süßl, Florian
Schoeppy, Rainer
Young, Darrian

0. Introduction

Olaf Drümmer opens the meeting. All participants briefly introduce themselves, as three participants are present for the first time – Darrian Young, Peter Kleinheider (more below) and Stefan Ettrich.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting (2004/09/26 in Munich)

Olaf Drümmer refers to the ‘Minutes of Last Meeting‘ (2004/09/26 Munich) and asks if something is missing or wrong. No comments from the participants. The minutes were accepted as it is.

2. Action Items

The status of Action Items as of the last meeting was checked (for more details see Appendix I, Table Of Action Items):

Sending Proofing Paper examples to FOGRA:

Is still in progress. Olaf reminds everybody to continue sending examples to FOGRA, so that they can create a database containing an extensive collection of ‘proofing paper white points’.

Initiating some more traffic on the English mailing list:

Works successfully. There is more and more interesting traffic on this list.

Creating License Text for Altona Test Suite and ECI offset profiles:

License text for ECI offset profiles has been completed. Heidelberg agreed, that the profiles can be redistributed by manufacturers (e.g. with RIPs or proofing systems). They need to include the license agreement in the product, which contains the profiles. The license agreement for the Altona Test Suite is still in progress. Olaf and Florian continue to work on it.

Initiation of new working group for processing spot colors:

Has not been done yet. Olaf Drümmer could still not find time for this. He asks if somebody else would like to take care of this action item. Nobody is interested. Action Item is closed (for now).

Activities WG Web Offset Printing:

First meeting took place on January 27, 2004, in Berlin. For details see paragraph 2.2. Action item completed and closed.

Creating short description of aims and activities of each WG:

Action item is still not complete. Olaf Drümmer will do it for the WG ‘Web Offset Printing’ until Easter. Andre Shützenhofer will do it for the newly founded WG ‘Color Management Workflows’. Bernhard Schmidt has finished the description for the WG ‘Gravure’. Olaf Drümmer reminds all chairmen of the working groups to finish the description and send it to the ECI web administrator.

Implementing mailing lists for the different working groups:

Action item is almost complete. Separate mailing lists have been implemented for the WG Gravure and all other WGs.

Collecting a list of all members of each working group:
Action item is still not done (Holger Darjus could still not find time for this). Olaf Drümmer asks all chairmen of all working groups to collect the lists and send them to the ECI web administrator.

3. Current Projects (Selection)

3.1 Altona Test Suite Application Kit

Karl Michael Meinecke presents the contents of the Altona Test Suite Application Kit. It has been completed, and shipping started in February 2004. The response from users is very good. They reported that the reference prints are a substantial benefit and will help to standardize and control the print production processes.

It is planned to provide the contents of the Altona Test Suite CD also on the web site "<http://www.altonatestsuite.com>" in the future.

3.2 PR, Press, Events...

Florian Süßl discusses the experiences of some users he has been in touch with. Users found that they could produce a very good match from a reference processed through the workflow until output. The Altona Test Suite Application Kit is a very good (and long missed) tool, which helps to implement color management and standardize workflows.

The Altona Test Suite Application Kit has already been (and will be) presented at several events and in several articles, e.g. at Seybold Amsterdam in April 2004. It can be expected, that the Altona Test Suite will be seen very often in booths at Drupa 2004.

3.3 New characterization data and ICC profiles

Florian Süßl points out that the characterization data used for the new ECI offset ICC profiles were created based on the reference prints provided with the Altona Test Suite Kit. The ICC profiles contain the same black generation settings as the previous profiles. The feedback according to the new reference data is very good so that ECI clearly recommends switching to the new reference data (resp. ECI offset profiles).

Jörg Diekjobst mentions, that some profiles for some special paper types like Newspaper printing on LWC and SC papers are still missing (Web Offset for Newspaper). This process is still not part of 12647-2. Olaf Drümmer replies, that this is being discussed extensively in the Web Offset working group. The outcome of the discussion was, that there are very different needs, which nevertheless should not be met by providing many sets of characterization data and ICC profiles. The ECI auditorium agreed that the aim

should be to bring all the needs together to ‘one’ profile (respectively to a very small number of variants).

Florian Süßl summarizes, that it should be communicated, that the current ECI offset (and gravure) profiles represent the best possible level of currently available ICC technology and that using these free profiles is a huge benefit.

3.4 Color Management in DTP Applications

Olaf Drümmer, Florian Süßl and Dieter Dolezal carry out a new project called ‘Color Management in DTP Applications’. This project is funded by bvdm (German Federal Printing and Media Industry Association). Aim of this project is to find out, how well ICC color management works in today’s DTP applications (currently the most recent versions of Photoshop, Indesign, Illustrator, XPress and Acrobat are being researched). The project analyses how well color management information can be moved into and out of the application, which file formats and color spaces are supported and whether and how well soft and hard copy proofing is supported.

Planned project output: two types of reports. The first report is targeted at end-users and shall cover the real world production, providing guidelines and best practice recommendations. The second one will be a technical report, which is targeted at vendors and manufacturers. They can use the input to develop better products to improve ICC compliance and support in the future.

It is planned to provide the reports as PDF files for free. The time frame estimate is still not defined. It is intended to have the internal results in July/August and the official results for publication in autumn.

3.5 Digital Proof Forum 2004

Karl Michael Meinecke reports about the schedule and agenda of the next Digital Proof Forum. Date: September 21-22 in Stuttgart. Expected number of proofing configurations: similar to last event in Wuppertal. Agenda: same concept like on previous events; first day: proofing contest, second day: conference day. The printing process (process, paper) for the contest is yet to be determined. The contents for the conference day is also yet to be defined.

Karl Michael Meinecke asks for further ideas according to what could be presented or tested on the digital proof forum:

Test/compare measurement devices in terms of measuring stability, reliability?

Klaus-Hermann Otto: Include Screen Proofing Systems into the proofing contest?

Renate Rewer: Include repeatability and fading tests into proofing contest?

Liane May: Prepare a list of questions what to ask the proofing system manufacturers?

Olaf Drümmer suggests to initiate a new working group ‘Digital Proof Forum‘. This WG should check and decide if the ideas above can be realized on the upcoming Proof Forum. The following members will participate on the new WG: Darrian Joung, Renate Rewer, Karsten Ackmann, Klaus-Hermann Otto.

3.6 ECI White Paper

Liane reports about the status of the ECI White Paper. The update is in progress. The base part has already been updated. The appendices are still in progress. Key changes are PDF/X-3, new ISO standards, new UGRA/FOGRA Media Wedge 2.0, using LAB media wedge only optional (no longer required) and more. All changes are listed in a ‘Revision History‘ in the White Paper. Finalizing goes on. Drafts and discussions will be done via e-mail (in a small group).

4. Reports from working groups:

4.1 WG Gravure

Bernhard Schmidt reports about the last meeting of the WG Gravure (2004/03/23). Topics of the discussions have been:

Discussion of membership:

The WG has decided that some time for discussions without vendors will always be planned for future meetings. This makes sure that specific issues can be discussed in a more unlimited and open way.

Discussion about profiles for improved newsprint/MF paper:

Some printing houses reported that further profiles for improved newsprint/MF (machine finished paper) are needed (other separation settings e.g. according to total ink coverage are needed). Some tests with different separations are needed and already being carried out.

Discussion about new paper types:

new LWC papers with lighter white points cannot be used with profiles for common LWC papers. It has been decided that a working group will evaluate the needs of new profiles for this new LWC. The working group will define a list of paper types, which might be commonly used in the future. Then ICC profiles for these papers will be developed.

Discussion about proofing systems and reference proofs:

The WG Gravure plans to provide PSR Gravure reference proofs on IRIS in the future. These visual reference proofs shall help customers to check, if their proofing systems can proof gravure processes. The WG gravure decided to provide IRIS proofs, because they are more stable than real gravure edition prints (long time fading, repeatability)*. As reference data measurement data from the IRIS proof will be provided. A still open point is, what should be done with new proofing systems coming up in the future.

* Proofing stability tests were done on 4 proofs of HP and IRIS (sunny side, north side, dark with oxygen, dark without oxygen). The result: IRIS is very stable. Further stability tests are planned for HWC papers. Dieter Dolezal reported about a metamerism test: result Canon2200 has much more metamerism and fading than IRIS.

Finally it is planned to offer reference proofs (and ICC profiles) for the following papers: HWC, LWC, SC, MF (for LWC the master prints were already done in 2001).

Further issues of WG Gravure meeting:

Next meeting is planned for November in Cologne.

Changes for the text to be provided on the ECI website were discussed during the meeting in Munich and have been finalized, and will be uploaded shortly to the ECI website by Olaf Drümmer.

4.2 WG Web Offset

Olaf Drümmer reports about the first meeting of the WG Web Offset on January 27, 2004 in Berlin. The working group is chaired by Olaf Drümmer. Members of the working group come from several European countries (Finland, Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, Germany, Switzerland).

The reason for founding the WG Web Offset was that the former LWC paper ICC profile (as provided by the ECI until early 2004) seems not to be representative and useful for the Web Offset industry. Current feedback though is, that the new LWC profile (available from the ECI website since February 2004) seems to be very useful.

Additionally it was discussed, that further profiles for further paper types are needed (not that many, but perhaps up to 4 different paper shades). Karl Michael Meinecke comments, that different shades of paper types would be an overall problem in the different printing processes. Ideally the paper industry should provide helpful information about paper properties, how to use/print/view the different papers (raster, measuring,...). This would help to classify papers.

Karl Michael Meinecke suggests to implement a working group containing members of the WGs of the different printing areas together with representatives from the paper manufacturers. Goal: prepare a questionnaire about paper properties, which should be filled out by the paper manufacturers for each paper type. Olaf Drümmer will talk to George Battrick, Uwe Junglas, and Karl Michael Meinecke to try to identify paper types. Then it will be easier to decide, for which paper types characterisation data should be gathered. It is intended to do some press runs and then identify how to best classify the various types of papers.

4.3 WG Color Management Workflow ECI

André Schützenhofer reports about the first meeting of the WG Color Management Workflow. The members of the WG present a very wide range of users, end users as well as experts from ECI. The WG has a pretty good bandwidth of background. Goal: define general and practical steps for ICC workflows. Besides ICC transformations, a good workflow management strategy is needed. The goal of the WG is to develop recommendations how to set up and manage such ICC workflows.

The current status (outcome of the last meeting) is a collection of issues, which need to be addressed, e.g. the definition of borders between processing steps/systems; which data exchange format to use (PDF/X-3), which applications can/should be used, and so on.

The next step is to summarize the results and present them to the ECI members.

4.4 WG Proofing Systems

Florian Süssl (speaking for Hanno Hoffstadt, who was unable to attend the meeting) reports about the findings of the WG Proofing Systems. The goal of the WG is to specify a catalogue of methods and criteria to judge proofing systems. Outcome of last meeting in Hamburg: the catalogue of criteria is defined. Next meeting early June 2004. Next activities: test of the criteria contained in the catalogue in the real world. The catalogue of criteria might also be useful for the next Digital Proof Forum in September 2004.

4.5 WG Digital Photography

Dieter Dolezal reports about the activities of the WG Digital Photography. Because of overall overload, the activities are spare at the moment. The goal of the WG is to create a cookbook for digital photographers about how to implement ICC workflows.

Michael Adloff is asking if there is still a contact to ADF (with regard to the dvsPlus approach). There were some discussions about a new version of dvsPlus in the open ECI mailing list. It is not really clear, if dvsPlus plays an important role or not. Mr. Fittkau and Mr. Dilling are still members of the WG. Jan-Willem Rossée is also following the discussions about dvsPlus on the ECI list. DvsPlus seems not to be a solution, that is really useful for the photographers. He mentions, that he was a little bit disappointed, that the WG Digital Photography did get involved in the discussion. His recommendation: get those people involved who have been discussing this on the ECI mailing list, and delegate some of the necessary work to them.

Next meeting in about three months: hopefully the activities can be extended again.

5. ECI Organization

5.1 Reorganization of ECI Web Site

Olaf presents the new organization of the ECI Web Site:

A new content management tool (based on a web log software called Movable Type) for the ECI web site is available now. It allows entering new contents to the web site using any HTML web browser. It is very simple to use. The contents of the reorganized web page are similar to the previous site. The reorganization progress is still going on. Darrian Young (in the future with support from Stefan Ettrich) is preparing a Spanish version of the ECI site.

Next Step: Olaf Drümmer wants to delegate responsibility for WG specific contents to respective members of the ECI. Low-level technical infrastructure will be handled by Callas software. Day to day administration of the ECI web site as well as the mailing lists will now be handled by the newly appointed ECI administrator Peter Kleinheider (any administrative emails should always be sent to admin@eci.org).

Olaf Drümmer mentions, that the quality of the content is poor in some areas. Action item for everyone: look at areas belonging to one's area of expertise and ask for corrections or improvements where necessary. Any change requests should be mailed to Peter Kleinheider (admin@eci.org).

Olaf Drümmer is asking how to handle the English translation of the Web Site. The ECI auditorium agrees that it should be moved to a professional translation office. This will be sponsored by members of ECI. Who? This will be decided on a case by case basis.

5.2 Organization of WGs, mail lists, Web content generation and upload

See above...

5.3 ECI Chair/Board issues

Due to the fact that Stefan Brües stepped down as chairman and board member in autumn 2003, a new chairman and a new board member for the ECI have to be elected. Olaf Drümmer asks if there is somebody interested to volunteer.

ECI Board member: Michael Adloff offers to serve as a board member. The ECI auditorium voted as follows:
Yes for Michael Adloff: all
No for Michael Adloff: none
Abstaining: one

Chairman: The auditorium suggests Olaf Drümmer. Nobody else volunteers. The ECI auditorium voted as follows:
Yes for Olaf Drümmer: all
No for Olaf Drümmer: none
Abstaining: one

Vice chairman: Florian Süssl was suggested. Florian Süssl agrees to volunteer. Nobody else volunteers. The ECI auditorium voted as follows:
Yes for Florian Süssl: all
No for Florian Süssl: none
Abstaining: one

Thanks and congratulations to Michael Adloff, Olaf Drümmer and Florian Süssl. The resulting structure of the ECI board looks as follows:

Chairman: Olaf Drümmer
Vice chairman: Florian Süssl
Board members: Michael Adloff and Henrik Schmidt.

5.4 Introduction of new members

Olaf Drümmer welcomes three new members of ECI. Darrian Young and Peter Kleinheider introduced themselves. Florian Süssl introduced Michael Armbruster, because he was not able to attend this meeting. All of them have a lot of ICC color management and workflow management knowledge and they are confident that they can support the work of the ECI in the future.

6. ISO Standards

6.1 PDF/A, PDF/E

Olaf Drümmer reports briefly about two new ISO standardization projects (handled by ISO TC171): PDF/A (PDF for Archiving) and PDF/E (PDF for Engineering). PDF/A is intended for archiving all kinds of documents. While a lot of interest comes from government agencies in the US as well as large corporations – who are mainly interested in text documents – there is nevertheless at the same time huge interest in archiving color information in a reliable way. More information about PDF/A can be found at www.aiim.org.

PDF/E (work was just initiated in March in New York) is intended for storing complex technical drawings. Also for this type of use of PDF, reliable color reproduction can be of critical importance.

Both new PDF related standards definitions are still work in progress. The final draft for PDF/A is expected in autumn 2004. The final draft for PDF/E probably won't be available before 2005.

6.2 Position of ECI regarding 'Default Profile for Output Intent in PDF/X'

Olaf Drümmer reports shortly about a discussion, that was brought up by the Ghent PDF Work Group:

Many users do not have a clue about PDF/X terms like 'printing conditions' or 'output intent'. But when they use PDF/X they need to make a decision about which output intent is to be used. The decision is a difficult one for many users. Due to this it was suggested to create some default output intent profile. If a user does not know which 'real' profile to use for a PDF/X output intent, he or she may use the default profile. This would signal to any person receiving the PDF/X file that the output intent may not necessarily be trustworthy. Olaf Drümmer asks the ECI auditorium, what it would think about implementing a PDF/X output intent profile with a generic name like 'Generic PDF/X Profile'?

The advantage: the recipient gets an additional/hidden hint, that the colors are not necessarily properly characterized. The disadvantage: more people would select this option without trying to learn what to do. Still more inadequate files would be produced and exchanged.

Another possible solution could be a profile like ‘Generic Press Profile (ISO coated)’ (which in essence is just the same profile as “ISO coated”). This suggestion has been discussed but no clear outcome could be achieved.

Olaf Drümmer summarized: the idea is not strong enough (not outstanding). So ECI cannot suggest a really good and clear solution, which might be helpful enough for the less than professional user. However, Olaf Drümmer is asking the auditorium, if the ECI should get active at this point or not. The ECI voted as follows responding to the question ‘Do NOT get active’:

Yes for ‘Do NOT get active’: almost all

No for ‘Do NOT get active’: none

Abstaining: three

So ECI will not get active at this point.

6.3 ISO 12647-3 status: characterization data and ICC profiles for news print (Ifra)

Uwe Junglas gives a presentation about the status of the new Ifra newsprint profiles.

Some pre-release version of profiles have already been created, which are just being tested. Mr. Bestmann optimized the new characterization data. In the European region a profile with 26% dot gain will be used. The USA will use a profile with 30% dot gain. Visual quality criteria have been checked. Gamut Mapping has been checked: saturation favorite: Monaco, details favorite: ProfileMaker. It is planned to provide the beta version of the profiles for a field test end of May 2004.

Germany: nationwide switch to the new profiles July 1, 2004.

Characterization data will be provided on www.color.org

ICC profiles will be provided on www.ifra.com

6.4 Status of ISO 12642 (characterization target)

Karl Michael Meinecke reports about the status of ISO 12642 (IT8/7, ECI 2002). The final ISO 12642 is expected to contain three parts:

12642-1: IT8/7-3

12642-2: ECI 2002 CMYK

12642-3: ECI 2002 CMYK Enhanced (IT8/7-4)

The IT8/7-4 is a compromise of ECI 2002 CMYK and a draft from the USA. It may happen, that the US participants in ISO TC 130 go back to their original version, given

we go on voting for the ECI 2002 CMYK. So the ECI recommends to accept the current draft for IT8/7-4.

Background: the original chart was the IT8/7-3, the new draft (IT8/7-4) contains all of the ECI 2002 patches, with the addition of some patches which address the needs of packaging printers. The chart thus covers the needs of commercial press, newsprint, flexo, gravure, etc.

7. Further Projects

7.1 ECI Proofing Certification

Olaf Drümmer explains, that vendors are asking again and again, if they can get certification for their RIPs, proofing systems etc. by ECI. A good starting point for this could be to verify that a proof system can print the Altona Test suite without any problems. The big question is, would the ECI like to do this or would it require too many resources that we simply don't have?

Olaf Drümmer suggests providing a catalogue of criteria, which has to be fulfilled by an ECI-conforming proofing system or RIP. It could be a kind of clearly specified recommendation. Vendors can check this catalogue and communicate to their customers, whether they claim to meet the criteria. The WG Proofing is already working on a criteria catalogue.

Olaf Drümmer further suggests founding a new WG, which checks out what kind of criteria are needed for which kind of constellations (RIPs, Proofers, DTPs). A new WG with the following members was found: Michael Adloff, Darrian Young, Robert Bierfreund, Florian Süssl.

7.2 EU Project Print Future Benchmark

Karl Michael Meinecke reports about this project. A consortium of several European associations, universities and vendors, led by bvdn and University of Wuppertal, has applied for EU funding for an ambitious research project that intends to develop a comprehensive set of tools as well as educational material to help the European print industry move forward towards increased efficiency and improved productivity. The project would make it possible to carry out activities similar to the development of the Altona Test Suite or organization of events like the Digital Proof Forum on a more professional and efficient level and above all in a more comprehensive way. The EU committee responsible for granting funding is expected to make their decision by end of June 2004.

8. Next Meeting

The next ECI meeting will be held in Berlin, at the office of MetaDesign AG, Leibnizstrasse 65, 10629 Berlin, on October 22, 2004 from 10:00 to 16:00.

Appendix I: Action Items

Action items from April 4, 2003 meeting in Hamburg

Request to IFRA: Providing new Newsprint profiles until end of May 2003

Karl Michael Meinecke

Done

Test modified Quiz Profile

Bestmann, Adloff

Done

Update ECI White Paper

Liane May

In progress

Build WG Digital Proof Certification

Johannes Hoffstatt

Done

Review contents and structure of ECI web page

ECI Head, Holger Darjus, WGs

In progress

Review contents of ECI mailing list

Darjus, H. Schmidt, Romberg

In progress

Follow up on setting ECI up as a formal association

ECI Board

In progress

English ECI mailing list

Drümmer, Darjus

Done

Action items from September 26, 2003 meeting in Munich

License text for ECI offerings

Drümmer, Süßl

ATS still in progress

WG Web Offset: Contact further printing houses

Olaf Druemmer

Done

Description of goals and activities of the WGs

Each WG chairman

In progress

Review WG gravure text (ECI Web Site)

Bernhard Schmidt

Done

Consolidate WG email addresses
All chairmen of WGs
In progress

Collection and distribution of WG member lists
All chairmen of WGs
Done, WG Web Offset in progress

Action items from the March 26, 2004, meeting in Barcelona

Spanish section for ECI web site
Darrian Young, Stefan Ettrich
In progress

New WG 'Identifying Paper Properties'
Olaf Druemmer (comes back to George Battrick, Uwe Junglas, Karl Michael Meinecke, Bernhard Schmidt)
New

New WG 'Digital Proof Forum': involve proofing system stability and reliability test
Rewer, Ackmann, Otto, Young
New

Update/optimize web page contents
All (all ECI members with regard to their expertise)
New

New WG 'Recommendations for ECI Compliance' (ECI Certification)
Adloff, Young, Bierfreund, Süssl
New