Title
Colour management tools in use: the Portuguese case study

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Abstract
Colour wields a huge influence in everything that surrounds us. This phenomenon, by itself, can affect the way we see, feel or act and cross transversally our society in all its dimensions. Of crucial importance for artists, photographers, architects and designers, nowadays almost all of us deal with colour in digital form because the technologies for create, capture and edit images have been made accessible. The enormous amount of information, technological developments and changes drove in the media sector, end up to permanently change the way designers connect with clients and manufacturers. Thus, colour management systems become fundamental tools in order to provide a suitable and predictable communication of technical data of colour.

Starting from the definition of Ware (2008, p. 66), describing the colour reproduction as the "... discipline dealing with how colors are printed on paper, as well as methods for transforming color ... through color gamut mapping", we aim to study and establish the role that colour management tools currently accomplish in the workflow of designers and national printers. We purpose to realize the level of use of these tools and the role that different players take in the process in order to promote predictability in colour reproduction.

The main outcomes of studies already carried out show designers as professionals with little concern about the colour settings of the software applications that they use, always giving preference to pre-established standard parameters (Riordan, 2006, pp. 9-10). They identify that such behaviour is due to the fact that they deposit the responsibility of the final colour adjustments to prepress and printing professionals. In the study of O'Neill (2007, p. 245), they arrive at the conclusion that designers and print providers rarely use colour management systems and both workflows are often mismatched, making it necessary to perform tasks in duplicate, thus increasing the probability of error. Later on, Martin (2008, pp. 9-10) adds that only a small percentage of the files arrive with embedded colour profiles, and when that happens, the print suppliers reject them because they do not trust the way they have been created.

Management systems based on icc colour profiles can show some weakness by being used by a great variety of industries with different needs and have a large number of players. Any process that includes such tools must be strict and comply with all the conditions issued by the icc consortium, since any deviation implies a breach of the whole system.

In order to evaluate the real situation regarding the use of colour management tools in Portugal, we performed a study by setting up a survey. So that the data achieved could reflect what is happening in the communication of colour data, we decided that these inquiries should have two different models - one driven to designers and

another for printers. Thus it will be possible to know what kind of tools are used to avoid problems in colour reproduction, as well as this technical information regarding the colour is being created, transmitted and interpreted.

References

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