

**BIRDS OF THE RAINCOAST: SOME REFLECTIONS ON
PRODUCTION AND PROCESS MANAGEMENT**

by

Peter Frederick Read
B.A. Cultural Studies, Trent University 2002

PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF PUBLISHING

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Faculty of
Arts & Social Sciences

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Approval

Name: Peter Read
Degree: Master of Publishing

Title of Project *Birds of the Raincoast: Some Reflections on
Production and Process Management*

Examining Committee:

Dr. Rowland Lorimer, Senior Supervisor
Director, Master of Publishing Program
Professor, School of Communication
Simon Fraser University

John Maxwell, Instructor
Master of Publishing Program
Simon Fraser University

Howard White, Industry Supervisor
Publisher
Harbour Publishing
P.O. Box 219
Madeira Park, British Columbia
VON 2H0

Date Approved

April 25, 2005

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Abstract

This project report examines management activities at Harbour Publishing associated with the publishing of a book.

The core is made up of three parts, Chapter 2: A Sequence of Events, is a presentation of events associated with the publishing of the full colour, non-fiction book, *Birds of the Raincoast*. Chapter 3: Management of Events, is a discussion of both management practices employed, functional management and process management. Chapter 4: Behind Nine Problems, examines nine problems that I identified in the publishing process after an examination of the events described in Part 1 of this report. The conclusion, Chapter 5, offers comments on Harbour Publishing's management process and suggests one recommendation.

The report will show the events that led to the creation of the book and offer suggestions for fine-tuning an existing management system.

Dedication

To my parents, without whom I'd be nothing, both figuratively and literally.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Harbour Publishing, the faculty at the CCSP, MPub '03, the Buckhorn Crew and Ullr the snow god for overlooking my little mountain town long enough for me to get this thing done.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The object of this report is to examine management activities at Harbour Publishing associated with the publishing of a book and offer suggestions for fine-tuning an existing management system.

Chapter 2: A Sequence of Events, is a presentation of events associated with the publishing of the full colour, non-fiction book, *Birds of the Raincoast*. These events are not presented as a continuous whole but rather as a series of discrete events that have relevance in examining management activities in a small publishing house. Chapter 3: Management of Events, is a discussion of the basic management practices employed, both functional management and process management, as well as a brief discussion of the use of Microsoft Project, a project management tool. Chapter 4: Behind Nine Problems, examines nine problems that I identified in the publishing process after an examination of the events described in Part 1 of this report. The conclusion, Chapter 5, offers comments on Harbour Publishing's management process and suggests one recommendation.

As Marjolein Visser notes in her project report *An Analysis of Project Management in the Book Publishing Process*, "The techniques I propose in this paper have not withstood the rigour required to manage the day-to-day events in [the] offices. My analysis is hindsight... [and] hindsight, as people commonly know, is always clearer than the views

one has during the actual moment.”¹ The same statement could be made of this report as the analysis proffered benefits from hindsight. It was conducted long after *Birds of the Raincoast* was printed and delivered to booksellers across British Columbia. Moreover, this analysis was carried out after a scant five months within the walls of Harbour Publishing.

HOW THE BOOK BEGAN

Birds of the Raincoast began as all books do, as an idea. The transformation into a book did not follow a linear path and many unforeseeable problems were encountered, yet through experience and knowledgeable action a book did appear within an acceptable period of time. This transformation of idea into a book is of course called publishing, and its dynamics are touched upon in this report.

COMPANY BACKGROUND

Harbour Publishing is roughly three hours from downtown Vancouver, separated by the waters of Howe Sound. This rather remote location would at first appear disadvantageous as compared to the rest of the Canadian publishing industry. Situated over 2000 kilometers from Toronto—the centre of Canadian publishing—Harbour Publishing must also contend with BC Ferries’ schedules when shipping and receiving daily business items to the Lower Mainland and beyond.

Founded by Howard and Mary White in 1974, Harbour Publishing has steadily grown over the years and is now kept running smoothly by a full-time staff of at least 12, and consistently produces high quality books that promote the culture of coastal BC and its residents. Their initial publication was the first issue of *Raincoast Chronicles*, “a series of anthologies on BC coast history and culture, of which 19 have now been produced”.² Since that first publication, Harbour Publishing has gone on to publish over 200 book titles and although the books do focus on regional non-fiction and history, Harbour Publishing has also developed a solid reputation for high quality “guide books”, as well as

numerous titles which have received high acclaim, including *Easy Kayaking Basics*, *Hiking the Gulf Islands*, and *Kayaking Vancouver Island*. During the 2004 season Harbour Publishing celebrated its 30th year producing Canadian books by publishing an additional 14 new titles.

A NOTE ON DISTRIBUTION AT HARBOUR PUBLISHING

Harbour Publishing has always distributed its own books in BC, and recently it assumed responsibilities for distributing its titles to Eastern Canada after experiencing two failed distribution partnerships, first with General Distribution Services (GDS) and second with Whitecap Books. Harbour Publishing finally decided that it would handle national distribution after Chapters was unable to split purchase orders between two different distribution sources—Whitecap Books for Eastern Canada, and Harbour Publishing for BC—for the same ISBN.³

Harbour Publishing thus became one of a few publishing companies in Canada distributing its own books. This distribution is conducted out of the Lagoon Road Warehouse in Madeira Park BC, which, interestingly enough, has no street address thus confounding some suppliers as to how to address shipments. “Just say Lagoon Road Warehouse, everyone up here knows where it is” is a common refrain.

Although taking over its own distribution in Canada, Harbour Publishing teamed up with publisher and distributor, Graphic Arts Center, to handle its accounts in the United States, and another distributor, Gazelle Book Services, to distribute Harbour Publishing titles throughout the UK and Europe.⁴ These changes in distribution resulted in increased sales in the US in 2004 over 2003 and also freed up the Canadian Sales Manager, Brian Lee, to focus on new and existing sales accounts in Canada.

PERSONNEL

Over the course of this report, many different names appear and it will help the

reader if I lay them out in advance.

The first group comprises those who worked at Harbour Publishing during the summer of 2004. Some of these people were returning from maternity leave, some were about to go on maternity leave, and some have since left Harbour Publishing to pursue the next stage in their careers. They all played a role in transforming *Birds of the Raincoast* from an idea into a saleable product.

HARBOUR PUBLISHING STAFF

Howard White	Publisher
Mary White	Publisher
Silas White	Publisher, Nightwood Editions
Vici Johnstone	Production Manager
Brian Lee	Sales Manager
Regina Kasa	Accounting
Shyla Seller	Publisher's Assistant
Marisa Alps	Marketing Director
Alicia Miller	Marketing Manager
Pamela Barclay	Customer Service/Sales and Marketing
Nadine Pedersen	Production Coordinator
Sarah Petrescu	Intern
Peter Read	Intern

The second group is composed of those who created, shaped and delivered the artistic and intellectual content of the book. As used by publishers, the term “contributors” denotes authors, photographers, editors, lyricists, designers, illustrators etc. In the case of *Birds of the Raincoast*, just saying ‘author’ would only identify Thommasen, the initial author.

CONTRIBUTORS

Harvey Thommasen	initial author and photographer
------------------	---------------------------------

Kevin Hutchings	author employed to shape text
Mark Hume	author employed to shape text
Roger Handling	designer for first set-proof
R. Wayne Campbell	biologist employed to verify imags and who later provided images
Michael Wigle	provided images

Eight other photographers provided occasional images that Harbour Publishing was unable to procure from Campbell or Wigle

This report will provide the reader with a description of the publishing of *Birds of the Raincoast*, allowing the reader to experience the procedures and problems that occurred during this publishing. It also provides a view of the solutions that were applied by the staff members at Harbour Publishing to facilitate the creation of the book.

Chapter 2: A Sequence of Events

BIRDS OF THE RAINCOAST, PRE-PUBLISHING PHASE

Birds of the Raincoast began as a manuscript titled *Birds of the Salmon River*. Howard White, publisher at Harbour Publishing, initially felt the manuscript suffered from a narrow focus, being restricted mainly to birds of the Bella Coola Valley. But, the manuscript not only identified birds. It also delved deeply into specific bird's habits and habitats. Howard expressed interest in the unusual idea of including material on habits and habitats, but he was worried about the narrow focus of the manuscript and felt that if the area covered in the manuscript, namely the Bella Coola Valley, could be broadened then he would be more inclined to publish it.

Bird (or avian) habit and habitat information is not the kind of information that is readily available to the general birding public, as bird books usually consist of pictures of birds, descriptions of how they sound and information on regions in which to find them. This can be seen in the following excerpt from *Petersen's Guide to Western Birds*:

Excerpted from *A Field Guide to Western Birds*:

Steller's Jay *Cyanocitta stelleri*

Field Marks: Between Rockies and Pacific, the only jay with a crest. *A large dark black and blue bird with a long crest.* Foreparts blackish; rear parts (wings, tail, belly) deep blue.

Similar Species: (1) Blue Jay (east of Rockies) has white spots in wings and tail. (2) Scrub and (3) Mexican Jays are paler, lack crests, prefer oaks, scrub (Steller's prefers conifers).

Voice: A loud *shook-shook-shook* or *shack-shack-shack*... Frequently mimics Red-Tailed Hawk, Golden Eagle.

Where found: *Resident* from s. Alaska w. and s. BC, sw. Alberta south through conifer regions of the Pacific States...

Habitat: Conifer and pine-oak forests. **Nest:** A twiggy, rootlet-lined bowl in conifer. Eggs (3-5) greenish, spotted.⁵

Petersen's Guide to Western Birds is without question a well-researched, informative book, and it would provide any amateur birder with the information he or she would need to seek out and identify a bird. However, *Petersen's Guide*, like other bird books, does not delve into how and why birds act the way they do. Thommasen, however, claimed that *Birds of the Salmon River* did just that.

Unfortunately, the manuscript as initially submitted did not achieve the potential of Thommasen's idea. Although it was written as a guidebook it was not thorough enough to function as a guidebook, and in its submitted state it would not be able to compete with the likes of a National Geographic, Lone Pine or a Petersen Series publication. The manuscript, according to Production Manager Vici Johnstone, was "caught somewhere between a guidebook and something else...and because of that it kind of sat on the back burner for quite some time".⁶

Yet no one, least of all Howard White, was willing to give up on such a distinctive idea. He felt that Thommasen should be encouraged to continue working on the idea, recognizing that Thommasen had proven to be a gifted author as well as someone who the rest of the staff at Harbour Publishing enjoyed working with due to his professional demeanor, skilful writing style and eagerness to respond quickly to queries from staff.

A letter from Thommasen to Harbour Publishing, dated November 20, 1999 sheds some light on the effort that Thommasen was making to bring this book forward. This letter also mentions the addition of Wayne Campbell, the first of several contributors who

Thommasen proposed could help to move the book closer to publication.

“...Enclosed is the most recent version which we have attempted to edit from the last manuscript. As mentioned over the phone, Wayne Campbell has some suggestions to add and I will include them. I have edited it down to the topics and birds I want to talk about. I’ll still need your direction on whether this is what Harbour Press (sic) also had in mind – especially the illustration end of things. I envision that we will need to do another edit, then your staff will have to do an edit and it should be ready for publication. Cheers, Harvey”⁷

That *Birds of the Salmon River* went through a time of indecision and lack of clarity is not terribly unusual. When book ideas are approved at the concept stage or “on spec” there is usually a need for re-evaluation when the manuscript arrives. Many ideas from an author take the time of both author and publishing house to mold into a saleable book.⁸

Harbour Publishing often receives and approves conceptual outlines for books “on spec”, that is, rather than send a completed manuscript, the idea for the work is pitched to the publisher who then decides whether it is worth pursuing—both for the author and publisher. The author then works up the idea into a manuscript and while one might anticipate that the manuscript would take its form from the outline, according to Production Manager Johnstone, manuscripts often arrive slightly different from the idea that was pitched.⁹ “Often you won’t quite know what you are going to get until the finished manuscript arrives.”¹⁰

CHANGES TO AN IDEA

Birds of the Salmon River was accepted “on spec” and so it was not surprising that the first draft had yet to find its footing. Howard White hoped that if another author were added to the book, that author might be able to work with the “potential” and create something that Harbour Publishing’s management felt would be worth publishing.

With Thommasen’s approval, Howard White asked Mark Hume, national correspondent for *The Globe and Mail*, and an author of previous books with Harbour Publishing if he would “clean up” the manuscript and “add colour”.¹¹ With Hume on

board, the changes that Howard White wanted, primarily to turn the focus of the text away from the Bella Coola Valley, and to modify the text so that it read less like a sectioned guidebook, were undertaken.

Once Harbour Publishing received Hume's edited version of Thommasen's manuscript, in the summer of 2003, a staff member created a readers' report. The readers' report, a portion of which is reproduced here, expressed continuing concerns regarding the manuscript:

General notes on manuscript:

The introduction is clearer and gives a good outline of the structure and why the author has presented the information the way that he has. I think [the book] is more suited to a Fall picture book treatment than a field guide. Material is organized by habitat, mixed with a more traditional organization like the chapters on scavengers and birds of the night.

Mark [Hume] has expanded the range of the book...however the phrase "Bella Coola Valley" still [appears] too often, especially in the later chapters. I don't think Harbour should do a book that is only about birds in the central coast area—too limited.¹²

A new plan to keep this book alive was required. Hume's good work had built on Thommasen's but Hume had other commitments and responsibilities and as the manuscript was still not "there" yet, another author was needed. Kevin Hutchings, an assistant Professor of English at the University of Northern British Columbia was asked by Howard White to come on board to continue fine-tuning the book. The title of the book was changed at this time from *Birds of the Salmon River* to the more general title, *Birds of the Raincoast*, to reflect the changes that were being made to the manuscript.

ISSUES WITH ACCURACY OF INFORMATION

Although the book now had an author and two separate supplementary authors, the book was still lacking an ornithologist to verify the work that Thommasen and Harbour Publishing had done. None of the three authors, Thommasen, Hume

or Hutchings was a biologist, and while Thommasen's concept was solid, Harbour Publishing is known, and wanted to remain known, for accuracy in their publications. "Anytime you do a science-based book," said Production Manager Vici Johnstone, "it's a long drawn-out process...even worse when you have hundreds of images to be played."¹³

The members of the production department had learned just how difficult achieving accuracy could be during the production of the third edition of the Harbour Publishing title, *Wildflowers of the Pacific Northwest*, published in 1998. Since it's first edition, many of the Latin names for the wildflowers presented in the book had changed, resulting in a time-consuming task of finding the new names and updating the information. "When you're dealing with a scientist who is also an author, they are very concerned with accuracy—as are we."¹⁴

Birds of the Raincoast was no exception. While there was no problem of differing Latin names, one of the biggest concerns about accuracy in this book related to differing subspecies. A bird, say a Solitary Vireo from a particular location in coastal BC can look the same to the untrained eye as a Solitary Vireo from a location in the interior of the province, or even from another province. But to an ornithologist the difference between subspecies is obvious and to overlook the difference is embarrassing. An expert was needed, and consequently Wayne Campbell, who had worked on the manuscript in 1999 was again contacted by Harbour Publishing to fill this role in 2003.

With three contributors in addition to Thommasen, editing continued on the book for months until finally, in the late fall of 2003, the manuscript had reached a point where Harbour Publishing's management felt it was a publishable book. Howard White was sure the book would appeal to the many bird enthusiasts who would appreciate the unique information that Thommasen, Hutchings, Hume and Campbell had created and compiled.

At this stage, on everyone's mind was the book's format. The manuscript had been around so long without the need for such a decision that no one was quite sure what

the decision would be. Eventually, the management at Harbour Publishing decided that a “Fall Picture Book” would not be a suitable treatment. Instead, *Birds of the Raincoast* would be published as a small-sized, black and white guidebook, a decision that was made for two reasons.

First, black and white printing would keep the costs down, something that would affect both the initial cost to Harbour Publishing and the final price for consumers, and second Howard White felt that the information was so good that people would want to take the book with them as they went birding, and no one would conceivably bring an oversized hardcover book with them into the forest.

Initially, management perceived the book’s design as resembling another Harbour Publishing title, *Full Moon, Flood Tide*, a book that was laid out as a novel, but interspersed with sketches, flourishes and line-drawings throughout—both in the margins as well as at the beginning of each chapter.¹⁵ This kind of treatment for *Birds of the Raincoast* would result in an entirely different feel than a standard birding book, a difference that the content deserved.

So, with these decisions made, complemented by a full catalogue page in the 2004 Spring Catalogue, Brian Lee, the Harbour Publishing Sales Manager, presented the book to Harbour Publishing’s sales representatives at Kate Walker and Company in December 2003 with the plan being that the book would be ready for Spring 2004 publication. With Hume and Hutchings working on final changes to the manuscript, and Campbell on board to fact-check, an idea that started as *Birds of the Salmon River* in 1999 became *Birds of the Raincoast* in 2003, and was well on its way to being published.

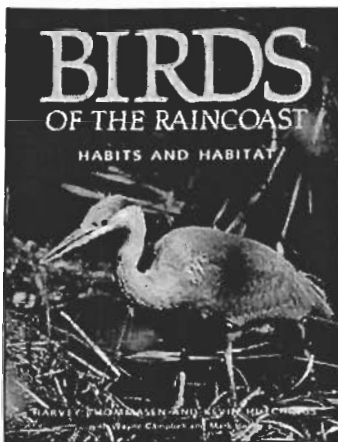
Figure 1: Harbour Publishing Catalogue Page

New Releases from Harbour Publishing

BIRDS OF THE RAINCOAST

Habits and Habitat

Harvey Thommasen and Kevin Hutchings with Wayne Campbell and Mark Hume



Did you know that birds that spend a lot of their lives on the ocean can drink seawater? They have large glands nestled between their eyes that remove excess salt from the blood.

• Did you know that at least 32 species of birds are known to eat snakes? Even the American Robin has been seen feeding young garter snakes to its babies.

• Did you know that the nests of the common Marbled Murrelet are so well hidden they remained a mystery to bird-watchers and biologists until one was discovered 1974?

Birds of the Raincoast represents the next step in West Coast bird books, a book that moves beyond simple identification to probe deeper into the lives of our feathered friends. Richly illustrated with excellent photographs, it examines birds in their environments, noting what they do, and where and when they can be found.

In an engaging, familiar style enlivened by the authors' personal experience and highlighted with intriguing facts by renowned bird biologist Wayne Campbell, *Birds of the Raincoast* is an indispensable tool not just for learning how to find coastal birds, but also for gaining an understanding of their natural history.

Harvey Thommasen is a physician, researcher and naturalist whose previous books include *Grizzlies and White Guys: The Stories of Clayton Mack* and *River of the Angry Moon* with Mark Hume. He makes his home in central BC with his wife and two children.

Kevin Hutchings is an English Professor at UNBC in Prince George, British Columbia.

Wayne Campbell is a renowned bird biologist and the author of *Birds of British Columbia: Volumes 1-4*.

Mark Hume is an award-winning journalist and national correspondent for *The Globe and Mail*. He lives in Vancouver, British Columbia.

ISBN 1-55017-300-6

6 x 9, 260 pages

Colour and B&W photos

\$24.95, paper

Birds • Nature

Also by Harvey Thommasen:
Grizzlies & White Guys: The Stories of Clayton Mack and Bella Coala Man: More Stories of Clayton Mack, page 34.

APRIL

www.harbourpublishing.com

3

PREPARATIONS FOR PUBLICATION

By late 2003, the work that Harvey Thommasen had done collecting hundreds of images of birds for the book resulted in a package of these images being sent to Harbour Publishing in preparation for work to begin for the Spring 2004 publication. The Spring catalogue was laid out, proofed and printed, and on page 3 was the entry for *Birds of the Raincoast*, a 260 page 6x9 book that would contain colour and black and white photos. While material for the other books was arriving, so too were things that were to be included in *Birds of the Raincoast*. Everyone at Harbour Publishing fully expected to see the book in the warehouse by Spring 2004.

However, while the images had arrived, the final manuscript was still not in house. Because it was still early in the season, the production department did not view this as a problem. However, as it is often the case, because each department has an active interest in the topic of the day, some of the images that were in house were given a cursory examination by many of the Harbour Publishing employees. While those who saw the few photos agreed that the images were beautiful, it was also observed by the Production Department that colour books are expensive to produce, and colour guidebooks are even more so (due to higher design, material and printing costs). After this brief examination, the management decided that the book would be set up as a “reader”, filled with primarily black and white images that would be relegated to a more peripheral role. Those particularly striking images that Thommasen had found would be placed together and printed in a full colour signature that would be inserted between the black and white signatures.¹⁶

Weeks passed and while work continued on the other publications for the 2004 Spring season, the final manuscript for *Birds of the Raincoast* was nowhere to be seen. The additional work that was being done by the supplementary authors was taking longer than the staff members at Harbour Publishing had expected. While waiting for the manuscript, members of the production team again pulled out the slides that had

been provided by Thommasen, this time for a thorough examination. Although some of Thommasen's slides had been reviewed at an earlier date, the majority of the images had not been carefully considered from the point of view of actually using them in the book.

When the bulk of the images were unpacked and scrutinized the production team found that each new slide seemed to be as good or better than the last, and they were "not just good, they were spectacular."¹⁷ This was cause for a mix of celebration and hand-wringing as the pictures were deemed good enough for a high quality full colour book, but everything—including a catalogue page—was already in motion towards a black and white reader. Johnstone pushed the authors for the manuscript, attempting to convey the notion that "time was of the essence" and with each day that passed, the likelihood of the book being published as planned—in the upcoming Spring 2004 season—was rapidly diminishing.

When the manuscript was finally returned in March 2004 from the two editors, Hume and Hutchings, well more than halfway into the season, the staff at Harbour Publishing felt there would not be enough time to begin and follow through with the immense amount of work needed to bring the book to the market. If the book reached stores late in the season, lost sales could be crippling. Johnstone understood this dilemma and while no official decision was made, she expected that *Birds of the Raincoast* would not be published for the upcoming Spring Season.¹⁸

THE DECISION TO "GO COLOUR"

Rather than accept this situation as a defeat, the staff at Harbour Publishing took the occasion to review the project. Armed with "really spectacular photos" but no corresponding manuscript, the management at Harbour Publishing felt the window of opportunity was rapidly closing. After a few days of tense discussion as to where the book was going, Howard White recognized an opportunity at hand, and decided that Harbour Publishing should consider publishing a full colour tome which would not only

highlight the depth of information contained within the manuscript, but also showcase the stunning images.

The ramifications of changing the format were carefully considered, including the fact that the book was already listed in the Spring Catalogue with a lower price based on the black and white version. Harbour Publishing recognized that with full colour the book would have much higher production value and would command a higher price. This added production value was balanced against a reluctance to make changes that affect the final price point for consumers, with the former outweighing the latter.¹⁹ In Production Manager Johnstone's words, "we could take advantage of all the images and work supplied to us, and we could make a coffee table book. Basically, we could then justify our costs and price because of the stunning pictures and the great information".²⁰ Johnstone would now have to devote a considerable amount of time to reviewing the "spectacular" slides in preparation for the "set", a gargantuan task that consumes more post-it notes and person-hours than any other production task.²¹

The images and text were indeed exceptional, and the opportunity was impossible to ignore. Having discarded the black and white version in favour of a full colour coffee table book, the publication date was moved to the Fall 2004 Season, and all work on *Birds of the Raincoast* ceased until May when work on the Fall Season would begin.

BUILDING THE BOOK: MAY 2004

PRINTER QUOTES:

Now that the book was to be printed in full colour, the issue of printing became paramount. Quality is of the utmost importance, but must be balanced with speed and price.

During this time the production manager was sending out requests for quotes for other front-list titles, not just *Birds of the Raincoast*. Printer quotes at Harbour Publishing are usually done early, before the rest of the production process really begins. The request

is based on forecasts of page count, print run, production quality, and projected sales. Typically, for a colour book of this size, printing the book in China keeps the per-unit cost lower than printing the book in Canada. However, this requires that the book be completed and sent to the printer more than two months before the advertised ship-to-store date. While the financial savings are significant, shipping time on return from China is normally six weeks. A book that arrives late, especially for the fall season, can quickly negate any savings in printing costs.

The other option was printing in Canada. Friesens Corporation, located in Manitoba, had the equipment to both print the innards of the book as well as bind the printed pages into a hardcover format, while keeping costs at a competitive level. In the summer of 2004, Houghton Boston, another commercial press in Canada was able to print the innards of the book but if the book were to be bound as a hardcover, Houghton Boston would have to outsource the innards to a bindery. It works out in the case of printing a hardcover book in Canada that, "it's just cheaper and easier to print it with Friesens".²² Nonetheless, there are times when the prices in China are simply too good to pass up, and Johnstone routinely sends requests to China, and one Chinese firm in particular, Colorcraft.

When the quotes came back from Colorcraft and Friesens, the quoted cost for printing in China was, as expected, less expensive than Friesens, but it was considerably higher than the norm for prices from China. When important items such as ship-to-warehouse and ship-to-store times were compared between Friesens and Colorcraft, Johnstone realized that Colorcraft simply could not compete. Regardless of the lower cost, the simple fact was that Harbour Publishing could not accept a six-week transit time after the book had been printed. Time was too valuable.

Consequently, Johnstone began moving Harbour's fall list of books to Friesens. If she entertained any doubts, after "encouraging words" from Harbour Publishing's sales manager about the impact of late delivery times from an overseas printer, these passed.

Johnstone worked towards securing a “good price” from Friesens on the entire print run for the season. After achieving this—and with a rapidly approaching deadline—it was decided that *Birds of the Raincoast* would be printed in Canada.²³ In the case of *Birds of the Raincoast*, speed and price were weighed, each for their significance. If there is a delay to achieve the best price, the book could arrive late, affecting sales negatively.

In early May the first of 13 books in the new list went out the door to Friesens and the production manager was feeling rather good about how the Fall Titles were shaping up—that is until Friesens quoted a six-week turnaround time for the first book, a considerably longer turnaround time than usual. While they were chosen for their ability to return printed product in relatively short order, it seemed that Friesens was so inundated with print jobs that the line-up for the press in Manitoba was longer than it had been in years. But by now, it was too late to send the book elsewhere. This delay, as it turned out, would not be the last.

DISAPPEARANCE

During the time that printer quotes were being requested, other tasks were being planned. The contributors were being contacted to ensure that they would be available to examine proofs and generally just be available for consultation if need be. In the course of these preliminary tasks it was discovered that Wayne Campbell, the expert who would be checking the images for the book, had disappeared—although not in a sinister way. One day the production manager called him and he was just not there, and repeated calls to his office and residence turned up no clues. Finally, a rather frantic phone call to his department at the University of Victoria yielded results. Campbell had gone out on fieldwork and his office was not clear where he was or when they should expect him to return.

With this information the production manager then made a difficult decision. Weighing several different factors, most notably the allocation of production personnel

to other books on the production schedule, she decided that Harbour Publishing would enter into production of *Birds of the Raincoast* whether Campbell was available or not.

Arguably, Campbell's role as biologist was key to the book's critical reception, if not its sales success, as he would be the one to indicate whether an image had been misplaced or mislabeled. The decision to proceed without his consultation for an unknown period of time was based on the view that there was still more than enough adequately labeled material to put a solid book together. The other reason was that "He couldn't stay gone forever".²⁴ This was, of course, a risky maneuver. With so many books, and such a tight schedule, *Birds of the Raincoast* officially went into production in mid-May 2004 with a forecasted ship-to-printer date of mid-August, a time frame that left little room for error.

Chapter 3 Management of Events

THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

The production process consists of numerous tasks performed by many individuals in a variety of roles: the production co-ordinator, the designer, the assistant, the proofer, the prepress house and finally the staff members at the press. The production process can be further differentiated into smaller tasks performed by other individuals or groups. The coordinator organizes both the tasks and the people who perform them allowing each to add his or her distinctive value, and this includes the contributors.

SCHEDULING

Scheduling is an over-arching activity that has ramifications at all levels and for all departments. The value of a good schedule or plan depends on the time required to perfect it. Too much planning can overshadow the task itself, and while a useful plan requires flexibility so that it can be changed when needed, being able to recognize “when needed” comes more readily as one gains experience.

Scheduling is the act of laying out all the tasks that need to be completed to create the finished product. Calendars and scheduling programs, such as Microsoft Project, are often employed by the scheduler to project activities over time, usually with some

amount of leeway built in for the unexpected. The purpose of the schedule is to plan how and when a product, in this case a book, will come together and how much time this process will take. In effect, a schedule provides each department with a guarantee that the item scheduled will be produced on time, thus allowing the other departments to continue work on other aspects of the book, confident that when their plans begin, there will be a corresponding product. While decisions made at any time by the production manager affect each department, at no stage of the process is the effect felt more keenly than during the scheduling phase. The production manager's schedule defines what tasks other departments must take on, when they can commence, and when they must be complete. The marketing department uses the schedule to book author tours. The Sales Manager plans sales trips based on it. And members of the editorial department—or in the case of Harbour Publishing in 2004, the freelance editors—and members of the production department watch as the schedule becomes more and more complex and commits more and more of their summer.

The scheduling effort takes place in an all-day closed-door meeting in which the production team sits down in Production Manager Johnstone's office and projects the fall season with a series of notes and the use of a program called Microsoft Project. This program creates a schedule taking into account all aspects of the process which it projects over a timeline using different coloured bars to indicate different tasks. The final chart created by Microsoft Project is in fact a Gantt chart, a functional management tool, which is a "graphical representation of the duration of tasks against the progression of time."²⁵ Areas where tasks intercept and overlap are very easy to see in this visual representation. These are called "critical intercepts". In addition to these critical intercepts, "crunch times" become obvious. It is these crunch times that must be managed to prevent any serious logjams in the productivity of the team.

To illustrate: once a book returns from the designer, at least two days of intensive study are needed to proof the design to catch any changes. Production Manager

Johnstone maintains that a designer will only create an 80% accurate product the first time around. This 80% accuracy rate can also be applied to a review of new or changed material and it is an approximation that held true each time *Birds of the Raincoast* returned from the designer. For example, the second to last “set” had a section of text missing that amounted to one whole page. Subsequently, an image had to be dropped to make up enough space. If more than two books are scheduled for return on the same day, there is only a weak probability they will all be proofed accurately and returned in keeping with the schedule.

Once most elements were decided, but before all tasks were finalized, the Microsoft Project schedule was printed out in full colour on six tabloid size sheets of paper and posted on the wall outside the production manager’s office. Rather than spend days perfecting a chart that she knew would change, the production manager posted the schedule on the wall in a state that appeared to be incomplete. I was soon to learn that the word “incomplete” was misleading.

An observation on the question of how much effort should go into achieving accuracy can be made by referring to the “Traveling Salesman Problem”. This problem, studied in computer science classes, is to find the shortest circuitous path connecting N cities. (A traveling salesman following that path travels to each city, and only once). Although the problem can be solved in principle by brute computing power (by calculating the length of every possible circuit), this is not practical because the number of circuits grows so fast that even for $N = 25$ cities it would take longer than the age of the universe (~10 billion years) to check every path, even at a rate of one million paths per second.

However, if one just wants to be within 90% of the optimum solution, an answer can be readily found by instructing the computer to ignore those connections that would only marginally affect the final solution.

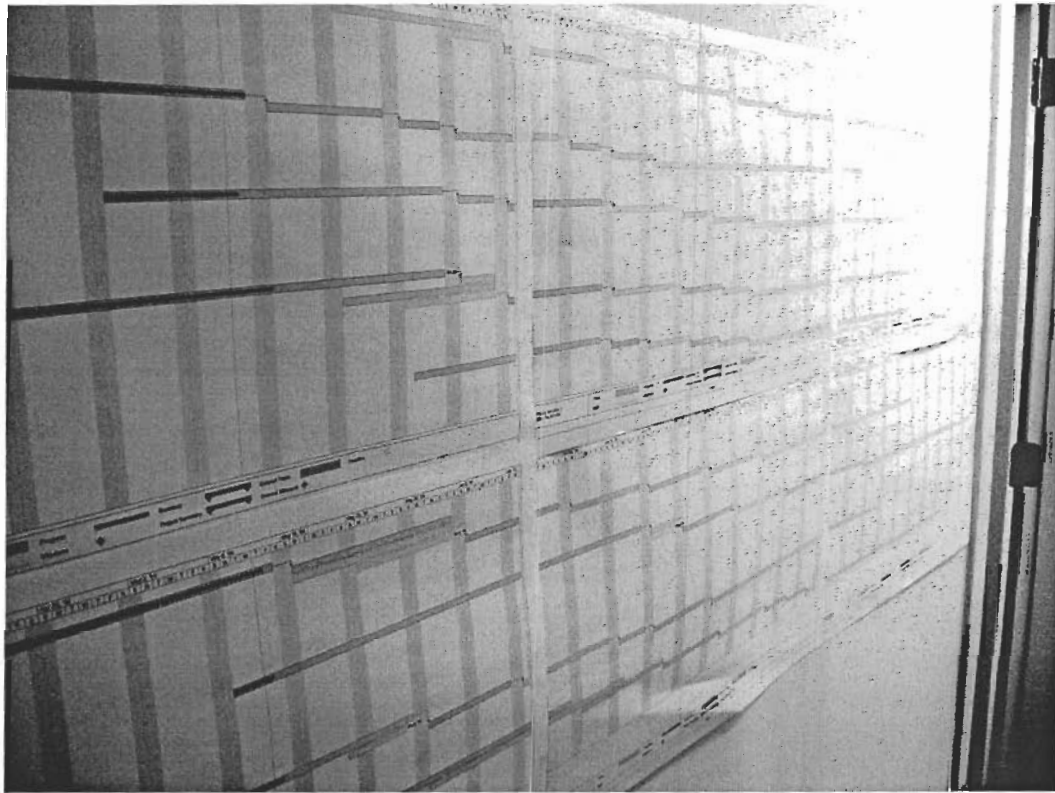
Of course finding which connections to ignore is the crux of the problem, but the

real point is that in seconds one can find a good solution, as opposed to spending years to find a superior solution that in fact would only be marginally better.

For *Birds of the Raincoast*, after the chart was posted, Howard White came by Production Manager Johnstone's office later that day and remarked, "I love when you get this chart up, it makes me feel like everything is under control." Howard fully appreciated that the plan was not 100 percent perfect and complete but that it was "good enough". Moreover, he knew that circumstances could change, both often and sometimes substantially, so stopping at a 90 percent solution was appropriate.

Figure 2 is a photograph of the scheduling chart for *Birds of the Raincoast*.

Figure 2: *Microsoft Project Chart*



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The charts remained on the wall for reference for everyone to consult when he or she had questions or concerns about the progress of the books. As time went by I came to

appreciate Howard's choice of words: "It makes me feel like everything is under control" instead of "Now I know everything is under control." He knew that a schedule was a living document that had to sometimes follow events rather than decree them.

IMAGE MANAGEMENT: CATALOGUING, LABELING AND PLACEMENT

Scheduling, once complete, sets the framework upon which the rest of the process can be built. For image heavy books, the raw materials—the images—must be labeled and catalogued, so that a contributor's property is not mishandled or lost.

For *Birds of the Raincoast*, each image had to be systematically labeled, catalogued and entered into an Excel spreadsheet from which the information could be easily retrieved. This system had to be implemented before placement could begin.

IMAGE CATALOGUING

The first stage of cataloguing is image selection, the stage that has the most potential to "slip" of any of the steps.²⁶ Repeated readings of the manuscript are vital to get a feel for where images should appear, and to what degree they are integral to the text. This "feel" helps the production manager determine the size the image should appear in the finished product. In a project such as *Birds of the Raincoast*, with an initial count of just under 1000 images—the majority of which were originals, and all of which were owned by someone other than Harbour Publishing—it was of the utmost importance that each image be accounted for and catalogued.

All the slides or printouts of the digital images (be they from a library, archive or CD) were labeled with a letter code that would be used throughout the process. The naming convention for each book used the same basic procedure, where the letter code chosen was an abbreviation of the title of the book. *Birds of the Raincoast* was "BRC"; *Bijaboji*, another front list title that season was "BJ"; and *Backstage Vancouver*, yet another

high-quality book was assigned the code “BV”.

Following the letter code would be a number code of a length fixed according to the number of photographs that were in-house at the beginning of production. Having produced many books of a similar scope in previous seasons, this was not a new task for the production team. As in the past, the uniform naming convention was applied to this book and all its materials. In this case, due to the large number of images, four digits were to be used in the number code, but culling of images allowed the use of only three digits, for example, BRC001 or BRC756.

The value of this focus on labeling and cataloguing is that it increases efficiency by decreasing search times; reduces liability by keeping a record of who owns what and where it is; reduces proofing times by listing proper photographer credits; and generally smooths the process by having a record which all production staff can consult.

As it turned out, the Production Department received over a hundred new slides after the book had already been set. The naming convention implemented for *Birds of the Raincoast* allowed the assignment of numbers in sequence to the late arriving images and they were readily retrievable due to their higher label number.

THE DATABASE IN SPREADSHEET FORM

Once the labeling was completed, the next task was to create a database in spreadsheet format to contain all relevant material about the image. They may say a picture is worth a thousand words, but you can't retrieve the most appropriate image without a selection of key words to choose from. The spreadsheet content included where the photograph was taken, a description of the image, the filename, a field for manuscript page number (which would eventually become “book page number”) and the photographer credit. An early manifestation of this spreadsheet is shown as Figure 3.

Figure 3: Early Iteration of Spreadsheet

Intro				
	0 Trumpeter Swan	swan-trumpeter-BCEstuary.tif OR Swans,trumpeter- inflight.jpg	scan	MW
	0 gulls in flight	BRC320	slide	Wayne Campbell
	0 Great Blue Heron with dinner	BRC004	slide	Wayne Campbell
	0 gulls in Pacific Sunset	BRC502	slide	Wayne Campbell
	0 Eagle in flight ?		scan	MW
	0 hummingbird	hummingbird rufous male.tif	scan	MW
	0 Stellars Jay	Jay-Stellar's 38x10(204-25- 95).tif	scan	MW
	0 Pine Siskin	Sisken,Pine.tif	scan	MW
	0 Yellow Rumped Warbler	Yellow Rumped Warbler.tif	scan	MW
	0 Cedar Waxwing	BRC260	slide	Wayne Campbell
	0 loons	loon-common.tif	scan	MW
Ch 1 Estuary				
	1 opening habitat shots	Kilbella estuary- 1 (180-13- 96).jpg	scan	MW
	1 opening habitat shots	Kilbella estuary and eagle (177-13-96).jpg	scan	MW
	1 opening habitat shots	Estuarine-habitat-ground-1.tif OR BRC035	scan	MW
	1 opening habitat shots	Estuarine-habitat-groundview- 2 OR BCE-intertidal-2.jpg	scan	MW
	1 Eagles in nest	BRC294	slide	Wayne Campbell
	1 Mallard	BRC501	slide	Wayne Campbell
	1 sandpiper	BRC088 OR sandpiperpeep- 1.tif		

This iteration was created June 8th, 2005. As is shown, there is already a great deal of information in the spreadsheet, designed to assist in the subsequent placement process. This iteration had only five columns, but more columns were added as the spreadsheet was updated.

Throughout the 17 page long spreadsheet there were numerous instances of “flagged” items, all of which allowed the production team to see where problem areas existed. For example, once identified as a problem, the “Sandpiper” entry in Figure 3, at the bottom of the spreadsheet would be shaded in pink or red by a staff member, to indicate that the image had been placed but existed only in digital format—of insufficient quality to print.

By July, the spreadsheet had become more robust, and now consisted of 9 columns.

The first column was simply marked with an “X” or not, which stood for how committed the team was to the image chosen. An “X” indicated that the production team loved the image and no more thought should be given to potential replacements. The second column was reserved for indicating the chapter number in which the image should appear while the third column represented where the image was originally located in the manuscript and was merely left in the spreadsheet for reference. The fourth column contained a brief description of the image for the sake of reference and the fifth column held the image title.

In the early stage represented in Figure 3, many images were not yet labeled under the Harbour Publishing naming convention, and were still named using the naming convention of the photographer. These names were moved into a separate column—column 6—to be preserved as a secondary method of ensuring that the proper photographer was credited for their work, “just in case”.²⁷

The seventh column indicated whether the image was a slide or a scan. Scans were considered “dangerous,” and if at all possible, placing these images was to be avoided

as there was no guarantee that the production team would be able to obtain the actual slides. The eighth column held either the photographer's full name or first initials. Recording this information as the spreadsheet was being created simplified crediting the photographer later, an extremely important activity that had to be carefully monitored.

The final column was for notes. Members of the production team often worked independently of one another but on the same files. Each time something was changed—whether new slides were added, or a better image was found—the spreadsheet would be updated and a note placed in the final column. By updating this column members of the production team were able to work on separate tasks and avoid unnecessary meetings where the focus would be to advise each other each minor detail that had been changed.

While meetings on specific books did happen, they happened infrequently. The problem being, with a production team of three and more than 10 books undergoing similar treatment, there were very few occasions when all three staff were working on the same or complementary portions of the same book.

Figure 4: Final Iteration of Spreadsheet

	Intro			scan name	source name			Bird eating salmon, Salmon River
X	half title		common loon	BRC707		scan/slide	MW	
	full title		gulls in sunset	BRC503 or		slide	WC	
X			gull in sunset	BRC313		slide	WC	scanned?
X	TOC		Eagle on Piling	BRC282		slide	WC	
X	double spread		swans against snowy mountain	BRC915		scan	MW	
		0	Trumpeter Swan	BRC702	inflight.jpg	scan/slide	MW	
X		0	gulls in flight		BRC320	slide	Wayne Campbell	
X		0	Great Blue Heron with dinner		BRC004	slide	Wayne Campbell	
		0	gulls in Pacific Sunset		BRC502	slide	Wayne Campbell	
X		0	Eagle in winter	BRC900	winter.jpg	scan/slide	MW	
X		0	hummingbird	BRC703	male.tif	scan	MW	
		0	Stellars Jay	BRC704	38x10(204-25-95).tif	scan/slide	MW	
		0	Pine Sisken	BRC705	Sisken,Pine.tif	scan	MW	
		0	Yellow Rumped Warbler	BRC706	Yellow Rumped Warbler.tif	scan/slide	MW	
X		0	Cedar Waxwing		BRC260	slide	Wayne Campbell	
	011 Estuary							
		1	5 opening habitat shots	BRC708	Kilbella estuary- 1 (180-13-96).jpg	scan/slide	MW	
X		1	5 opening habitat shots	BRC709	Kilbella estuary and eagle (177-13-96).jpg	scan/slide	MW	
X		1	5 opening habitat shots	BRC710	ground-1.tif OR BRC035	scan/slide	MW	
		1	5 opening habitat shots	BRC711	Estuarine-habitat-groundview-2 OR	scan/slide	MW	
		1	5 opening habitat shots	BRC712	BCE-intertidal-2.jpg	scan/slide	MW	

As is evident in Figure 4, as work progressed the spreadsheet began to take on a more uniform look. In this reproduction of the spreadsheet the visible filenames are all in the BRCxxx format, which tells anyone on the team that all those images are scanned and in-house. Also, the page number column no longer refers to manuscript page, but now is updated to indicate the set-book-page. By this point, trouble areas can be found two ways. First, if a cell is shaded a certain colour, it is a problem area—not in-house, lo-res only—and second any other name besides BRCxxx signifies that the image is not in-house or not an original. Caution must be exercised before deciding to place such an image in the book.

When created and maintained correctly the spreadsheet makes working with images much easier, and allows for considerable autonomy on the part of each member of the production team. When everyone in the process is apprised of how the spreadsheet works, the entire package can be given to anyone within the production process—production coordinator, designer, scanner, intern, proofer, prepress or press—with very little explanation or chance of error.

PLACEMENT

While the cataloguing and labeling are quite regimented and methodical, placing an image into a book is not. The simple task of arranging a photo and text on a page is not simply knowing which photo goes on which page. The blending of the two requires a lot of art and a little bit of page layout. To determine a placement one has to be familiar with the available images, how they complement the text, and when to say “that’s enough.” Image placement is time-consuming and laborious, although it is also a very creative and satisfying exercise. It is one of the few opportunities for a publisher to introduce beauty into a book. (Other times are in the selection of the paper, the typeface and the design of the jacket cover, all of which affect the look and feel of the book and should complement the book’s contents.)

When the “unset” *Birds of the Raincoast* manuscript arrived back from the freelance copy editor, the members of the production department responsible for image placement began their work. Due to the number of images and the tight deadline, two staff members, Production Manager Johnstone, and a production coordinator, were involved in reading and re-reading the manuscript to fully understand where and how images should appear in the book.

According to Production Manager Johnstone, many authors and photographers select an image and suggest where it should appear, based on its relevance to adjacent text. In many cases, the image they would choose would lack the power or beauty that a coffee table book buyer would expect. “The trick is to choose the image that, while best suiting the text, is also most pleasing to the eye.”²⁸

While keeping in mind the beauty of the book, it is very important to place images in a quick and efficient manner. The longer it takes, the further back subsequent tasks get pushed. If the designer takes longer than scheduled, then the next stage starts late as well. In process management, these “critical intercepts” can be flagged by managers.

When presented with a thousand slides, one could quite easily spend hours hunting for the “better picture” when it may not exist. Thommasen had conducted the majority of the image research for *Birds of the Raincoast* during the creation of his manuscript, and filled missing information as needed from many different sources. Doing so alleviated a great deal of stress on the production team by eliminating the need for the team to conduct costly and time-consuming photo research.

Many of the photos were in slide form, physically in the office, and able to be examined in person by members of the production staff. Images of the more popular or spectacular birds—such as Eagles, Great Blue Herons and Steller’s Jays were plentiful. The production department had a particularly simple task finding and placing images of that nature. Johnstone stressed that we should only place images that we had slides for, but it soon became clear that we simply did not have slides for some birds. For example, when

the team encountered the Yellow Vireo—a relatively rare bird— the process became bogged down.

It was at this point that Johnstone grudgingly accepted that we had to venture away from the slides that we had in-house. Thommasen had collected digital images from photographers and museums, most notably the Provincial Museum of Alberta staff who had sent him a number of compact discs that he then forwarded to Harbour Publishing. This meant that to make our image choices we were forced to work with digital low-resolution (or “lo-res”) images that would function well enough for the placement process, but not for printing. In early discussions, the Provincial Museum of Alberta seemed willing to accommodate requests for use, so much so that the members of the production team started thinking of these images as being a sure thing, as though they were “in-house”. While the production team was assured that these images would be easy to retrieve from the museum once they were needed for the prepress stage, this turned out to be not entirely true.

When the images needed from the Provincial Museum of Alberta were identified, the Production Manager contacted the museum to officially request that roughly 70 slides be sent to the Harbour Publishing office in Pender Harbour. Johnstone anticipated numerous lengthy placement sweeps of the manuscript, news that the curator of the museum was unhappy to hear. The slides Harbour Publishing was seeking to borrow from the museum were one of a kind and the curator did not like the idea of ‘losing’ more than 70 of these to Harbour Publishing for an imprecise—but certainly lengthy—time. After repeated discussion with the curator, it was suggested that the museum could scan high-resolution (hi-res) images and send them to Harbour Publishing via File Transfer Protocol (more commonly referred to as FTP, a way of transferring large files from one computer to another over the internet).

THE FIRST PLACEMENTS

The first “set” involved lengthy sessions reading the manuscript and going over approximately 1000 slides. For the first pass through the book, that is, the first time the production manager went through the book with all the materials laid out in front of her, the production manager chose at least one image for each important subject. For instance where there were a number of acceptable images for one subject, a very quick vote would be held to determine which suited the content best. Over the next few weeks the production team made pass after pass of the manuscript, choosing some images, cutting others the next day, and invariably finding new images that were superior.

It was at this stage that a number of images from the Provincial Museum of Alberta were chosen. All the slides that had made the first cut were sent to the in-house designer to be scanned at low-resolution to become for-placement-only (FPO) scans. For-placement-only, or FPO images are low-resolution images or scans that are supplied to the designer that will allow him or her to work on the layout of the book while the high-quality scans are being created or—worse—hunted down. This can increase productivity by allowing two different stages—such as pre-press and design—to be performed simultaneously.

Having the production team work with digital copies served two very important purposes. First, it allowed the team to create a digital file of each chapter and as well, perhaps more importantly, it effectively reduced any unnecessary handling of the slides. One of the primary concerns that any photographer has is that his or her original property be handled with the utmost care. As such, early access to for-placement-only scans is desirable. Maintaining positive relations with authors and photographers is one of the other tasks that is so necessary of a production manager.

RE-EVALUATING THE CATALOGUING SYSTEM

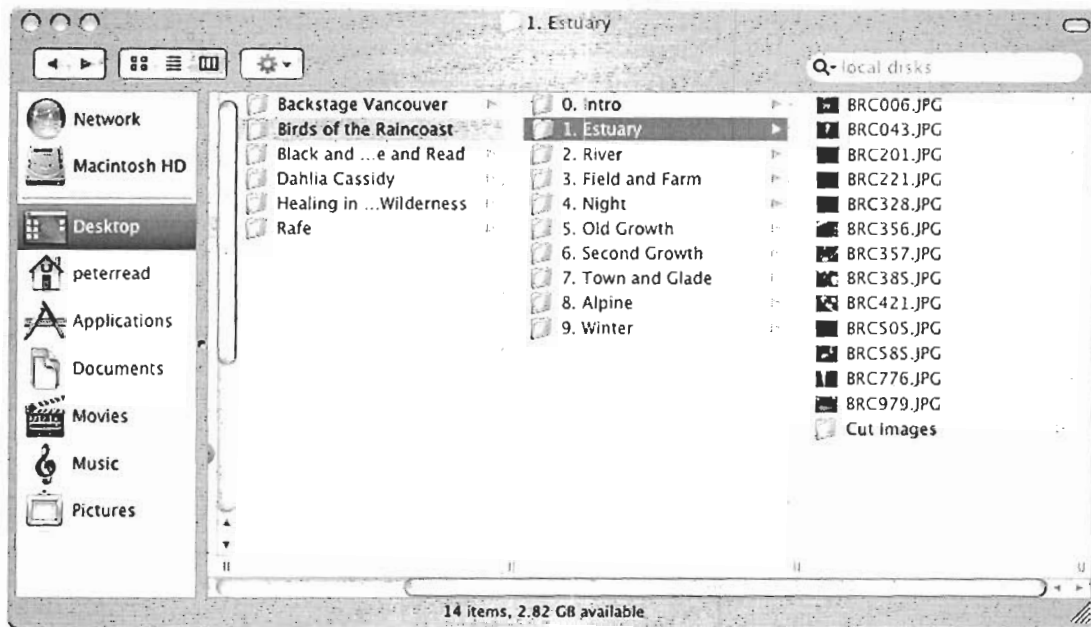
While the slides were being FPO scanned, a new file management system was

being created and updated on the server. This system was developed to further smooth out the process of updating or changing the images that would appear in a particular chapter. In the early stages the production manager would create a folder on her computer and name it after a book, into which went all the images for that book. In the later stages of production there was no time to spend hunting through images in one big folder, and a greater degree of organization was needed to ensure the proper image was in the proper place.

Once final image placement began, a new system of folders was created and images were placed into these folders according to their location in the book. There was one sub-folder for each chapter into which was placed the finalized and back-up images for that chapter.²⁹ In addition, a “cut” folder was created and placed in each chapter folder. This “cut” folder functioned as a further backup, and into it went any images that were removed from the manuscript. These images were kept “just in case”, which served to reinforce the mantra, “never throw out or delete anything,” that being one of the first lessons taught to new employees at Harbour Publishing.

Once these folders were ready, the images that had been chosen to appear in each chapter were placed in the corresponding folder. The person doing the FPO scanning named the scans as per the original title assigned by the production coordinator for the spreadsheet. For example, slide number “BRCo06” became “BRCo06.jpg. As the process continued, the folders and spreadsheet were constantly updated. These jpg files would be placeholders until the final versions were scanned. Figure 5 is a re-creation of the folder system.

Figure 5: Re-creation of folder system



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DESIGN

Once the first “set” was completed by the production team at Harbour Publishing, the package —consisting of the spreadsheet, tagged manuscript and scans—were sent to a designer to create the first mock-up. In this case, management at Harbour Publishing chose a freelance designer who they work with on a regular basis: Roger Handling from Terra Firma Design in Roberts Creek. He had considerable experience in dealing with Harbour Publishing on a number of large, high-quality books. Most recently he designed the layout for the book *Bella Coola: Life in the Coast Mountains* and the production team was always impressed with Handling’s work and time-management skills. When the first set was ready, Handling sent it to Harbour Publishing’s FTP site as a lo-res PDF.

The feeling around Harbour Publishing was that the initial set was “what we ordered, but not quite what we wanted,” and Production Manager Johnstone was concerned. There were two consequences of the “set” being “not quite there yet”.

First, Production Manager Johnstone would need to spend more time directing the designer, Handling, so that he would better understand what the management at Harbour Publishing anticipated, which was a book that leaned much more towards “beauty” than a “guidebook”. The images were the focus, and many in the original set were played too small or in a way that was deemed too similar to the guidebooks that supplied images simply for identification. The scheduled time for design would need to be adjusted to account for subsequent re-sets.

Second, the image choices would need to be revisited since, in some cases, the choices that the production team had made were revealed to be just not that good. When viewed together on a page some were too similar, and others looked bad together—certainly not the fault of the designer.

Included here are two examples of changes that were made to create a more artistic feel. In Figure 6, the treatment of the two sequential images at the top of the page was deemed to be too much like a guidebook. In Figure 7, the image of the trumpeter swans contributed more effectively to the feel of the book than did sequential shots of a swan flapping its wings. Campbell would later inform us that the sequential images we removed were in fact not of a Trumpeter Swan at all.

Figure 6: Swans, Version 1

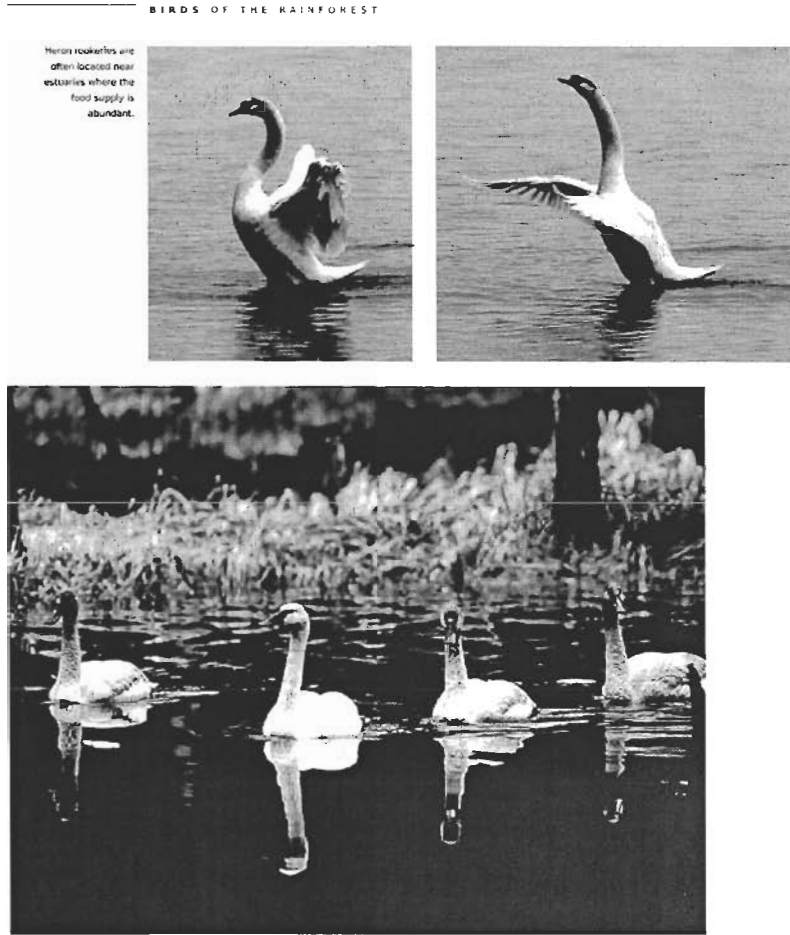


Figure 7: Swans, Version 7 (Final Version)

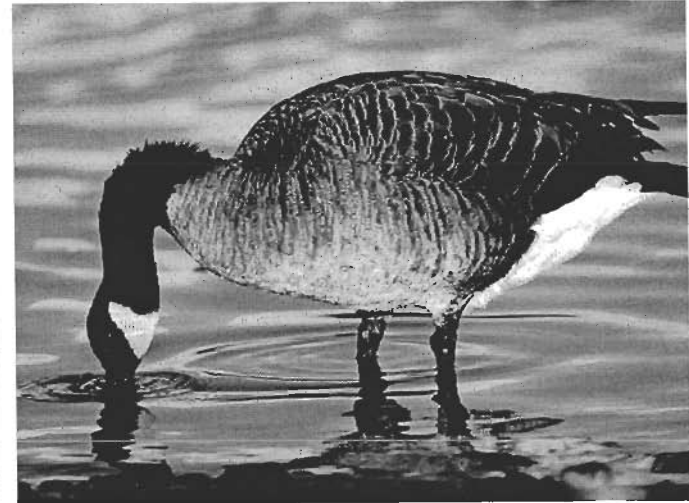


The Trumpeter Swan is the largest North American waterfowl; an adult can weigh more than nine kilograms. The young are readily recognized by their plumage, which is all grey. R. Wayne Campbell

bird inhabiting many parts of the globe, including North America, Europe and Asia. Among the dabbling ducks, this bird is a relatively late migrant and is not seen until mid- to late April, with peak sightings occurring from mid- to late May of each year.

In the larger estuaries, look for the graceful silhouettes of elegant snow-feathered Trumpeter Swans. When you catch a glimpse of these ethereal creatures as they glide upon the water's surface, you will perhaps appreciate William Blake's poetic representation of swans as veritable emblems of the soul. Most often, Trumpeters will be found in flocks of 10 to 50 along the water's edge. Some will be sleeping, others busily preening their feathers. The bills of these swans are entirely black, contrasting sharply with their snow-white adult plumage. When startled, the flock takes to flight with a chorus of loud, sonorous bugles. Watch them as they fly away, getting smaller and smaller until all you can discern is a disappearing V in the distant sky.

The Trumpeter Swan is the largest of all North American waterfowl, measuring up to 1.8 metres (6 feet) in length and weighing over 9 kilograms (20 pounds). The younger swans, called cygnets, are easily recognized—but also comparatively well camouflaged—by their light grey plumage. Currently these youngsters comprise roughly 20 percent of their species' coastal population. This is a good sign for the overall Trumpeter Swan population, because when cygnets make up less than 20 percent of the total, nesting survival may be lower than optimum for the species' long-term survival. Many swans mate for life, lending some empirical support to their occasional anthropomorphic representation as models of faithfulness and fidelity (sometimes symbolized by the fanciful—if rather contorted—iconographic image of a loving pair of male and female swans "embracing" via a mutual intertwin-



A Canada Goose feeds on spawning animals. On land, this bird grazes on clover, grasses and other succulent plants. R. Wayne Campbell

of long, slender necks). In the spring, the swans' white plumage appears strangely out of place against the backdrop of last year's dying brown and yellow vegetation. But on the breeding grounds in northern British Columbia, Yukon and Alaska, to which they will migrate during the first half of March, these birds will be effectively camouflaged against remaining patches of melting snow.

After Trumpeter Swans make their spring departure, smaller numbers of migrating Tundra Swans often appear upon the estuary, arriving from Oregon and Washington en route to their breeding areas in Alaska and the Canadian Arctic. The Tundra Swan is not easily distinguished from the Trumpeter, but it is much less common. The best way to tell these swan species apart is by listening to their calls. The Tundra Swan's call is a mellow, high-pitched *hoo-hoo, hoo-hoo-hoo*, and the Trumpeter Swan's call is much louder, lower pitched and more bugle-like.

When visiting grassy fields, you will almost certainly encounter one of Canada's avian icons, the ubiquitous Canada Goose. Among the most familiar of all wild birds (perhaps because of their common and sometimes controversial residency in so many of the nation's urban parks), these birds are especially common during the spring and autumn. Migrating flocks of Canada Geese fly high over the coastal valleys in long, undulating lines or in characteristic V-shaped formations, *ku-runking* resonantly as they pass. Unlike many of its feathered counterparts, the Canada Goose migrates both by day and by night. Lift your eyes toward the evening sky, and if you are lucky you may see a flock of these birds silhouetted against the rising moon.

Like Trumpeter Swans, Canada Geese are monogamous creatures, remaining loyal to their chosen mates. Having distinct nesting populations, they also breed in the same place each year. Their north-

Shown in Figure 8 is an example of how Handling made a smaller image overlap a larger one, something he repeated a few times throughout the book. Johnstone felt this treatment was too much like a guidebook and suggested they all be changed. Figure 9 shows how the subsequent set also moved images around, allowing for an increase in size of an image to showcase the standard habitat of birds of the river.

Figure 8: River, Version 1

Upstream from estuaries the fresh, salty smell of the sea air gives way to more earthy odours rising from the soil, mosses and thick forest foliage. The crashing of waves is soon replaced by the soothing sound of meandering water or the louder rush of falling rapids. The expansive ocean view, with its far horizons and distant rising cloud banks, gives way to more sheltered prospects—the teeming nooks, crannies and glades of the streamside forest.



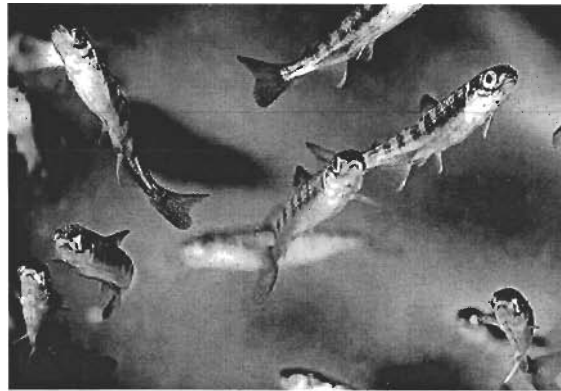
Michael Wigle

A day walking along the banks of a stream can teach one a lot about the nature of birds, the many ways they feed and how each species is perfectly adapted to its particular niche. Plan to visit a coastal river between late March and early April. At this time of year, the water is usually clear and cold and sweet to the taste. The birds you find here come in search of the abundant food the river supplies, including salmon fry, lampreys and a host of aquatic insect nymphs and larvae.

Heron rookeries are often located near estuaries where the food supply is abundant.

By far the most important and plentiful foods birds obtain at this time of year are the salmon fry, for spring is the season during which these tiny fish emerge from the gravel stream beds. Some salmon species, such as pinks, rapidly migrate out of fresh water, moving in clouds of tiny vibrating fish. Others, like coho, stay for a year, leaving as much larger smolts. The bigger a fish is when it migrates out of fresh water, the better its chances of survival, in large part because as it grows bigger, it becomes faster and is better at escaping predators. Of the billions of salmon fry that hatch from coastal riverbeds, less than half will survive the perilous journey to the estuary. In a study conducted along the Big Qualicum River on Vancouver Island, researchers discovered that Bonaparte's Gulls, loons, mergansers, dippers, scoters and gulls can consume more than 300,000 juvenile chinook in a single season of feasting.

Heron rookeries are often located near estuaries where the food supply is abundant.



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Often found fishing in rivers and streams, Common Mergansers congregate in groups of up to 100 birds. Stately and handsome, the male has a brilliant red bill, a dark greenish black head and a sharply contrasting white body with a black back. The female has a rusty brown head with a spiked crest, a white chin and breast, and greyish upper parts that are well separated by colour. With their streamlined bodies and crisply coloured feathers, these birds exude an air of elegance.

To obtain a fat but nutritious meal, Common Mergansers visit tidal areas to snap up fry that have been trapped in shallow tide pools. Proficient divers, mergansers can chase down and catch fish that are as long as 25 centimetres (10 inches). Occasionally they take larger fish. The merganser's bill is long, narrow and lined along the edges with backward-pointing serrations that help the bird grasp its slippery prey. When large numbers of fry are in the river, mergansers fish communally, forming lines and driving the panicked fish into the shallows for easy picking.

Breeding pairs of mergansers situate their nests in cavities and stubs in old-growth forests along the river, most commonly near the river mouth. It is known that Common Mergansers return each year to the same nesting area and that they sometimes use the same nest site year after year. Your best chance of discovering one of these well-hidden nests is if you are lucky enough to see an adult coming or leaving the site during nesting season.

Typically the Common Merganser nests in large coniferous or deciduous trees. Cavities such as those found in rock recesses or under tree roots will do, but where possible this

Heron rookeries are often located near estuaries where the food supply is abundant.

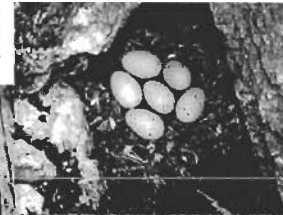
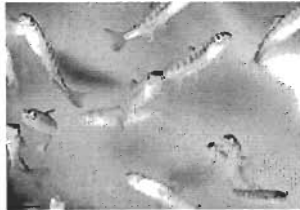


Figure 9: River, Version 7 (Final Version)

BIRDS OF THE RAINCOAST

Upstream from estuaries the fresh, salty smell of the sea air gives way to more earthy odours rising from the soil, mosses and thick forest foliage. The crashing of waves is soon replaced by the soothing sound of meandering water or the louder rush of falling rapids. The expansive ocean view, with its far horizons and distant rising cloud banks, gives way to more sheltered prospects—the teeming nooks, crannies and glades of the streamside forest.



Previous pages: The presence of the American Dipper is a sure sign that fresh water streams and rivers are healthy. Michael Wigle

Above: Chin salmon fry emerge in late winter and early spring. Salmon fry are an important food for many river birds. Michael Wigle

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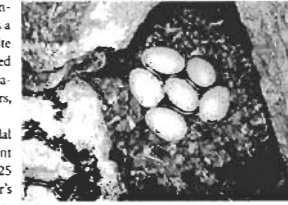


May-June: streams and rivers flow through the forests of the raincoast to reach the ocean. Michael Wigle

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RIVER BIRDS

Often found fishing in rivers and streams, Common Mergansers congregate in groups of up to 100 birds. Stately and handsome, the male has a brilliant red bill, a dark greenish black head and a sharply contrasting white body with a black back. The female has a rusty brown head with a spiked crest, a white chin and breast, and greyish upper parts that are well separated by colour. With their streamlined bodies and crisply coloured feathers, these birds exude an air of elegance.



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Breeding pairs of mergansers situate their nests in cavities and stumps of old-growth trees along the river, most commonly near the river mouth. It is known that Common Mergansers return each year to the same nesting area and that they sometimes use the same nest site year after year. Your best chance of discovering one of these well-hidden nests is if you are lucky enough to see an adult coming or leaving the site during nesting season.

Typically the Common Merganser nests in large coniferous or deciduous trees. Cavities such as those found in rock recesses or under tree roots will do, but where possible this bird prefers to nest in a natural crevice in a tree rather than one carved out by a large woodpecker. The female does all the

A nest of Common Merganser eggs located in a crevice between large boulders along a river. Mergansers also nest in large tree cavities located high above the ground. R. Wayne Campbell

[Page 49 - bottom] A female Common Merganser and



As Handling's first treatment was being evaluated, Campbell returned from his fieldwork and was now devoting considerable time to the book. When he looked over the first "set", he was quick to point out that certain images from the Provincial Museum of Alberta were separate sub-species that did not appear on the "Raincoast" and thus were incorrect to include in the book. For example, an image of a sandpiper by a river had been placed with a section of text that described a certain time of year when, according to Campbell, the sandpiper would not be there. In another case, he was not fond of a picture of a snowy owl, as he felt it depicted a "tame bird". Unfortunately, this was the only image we had at the time and was from the Provincial Museum of Alberta collection.

Campbell's valuable information spurred a new hunt for alternative slides. Desperate pleas were made to Michael Wagle, imploring him to search again through his vast slide catalogue. Other photographers were contacted in the hope that they would be able to provide the stressed out production team with some good news and some good slides.

When all seemed lost, Campbell suddenly began sending emails with scans of slides from his own collection—slides that he himself had taken. In addition to providing many usable alternatives for the images he had pointed out as erroneous, he also began to criticize many other choices we had made. He advised that he had many more slides in his possession—all shots he had taken himself—and many of those slides would be far superior to the chosen thus far.

The production team had worked hard to get the book completely set only to hear, at this late point in the summer, that there were many "better" images that could be used. Lesser mortals might have said that what they had completed was more than good enough, but not the staff members at Harbour Publishing. So, this meant more slides in the mail, and another complete overhaul of the proofs. Over the course of the production schedule, seven versions of *Birds of the Raincoast* were created.

The first three were devoted entirely to achieving the feel that Johnstone and Harbour Publishing had in mind for the book and consisted of sweeping changes

throughout. Once the basis for the feel of the book had been realized, the contributors made their comments. The fourth and fifth versions were the iterations that incorporated changes made by Campbell, many being simply swapping out incorrect or less striking images for new images that he supplied.

The sixth version was scrutinized by both the production team and the contributors to ensure that all were satisfied with the beauty of the book. A very close reading was necessary in this version as well, for the “gobbledygook” captions were replaced by the proper ones. Other minor image changes (more to size or location than to the actual image choice) were made on this sixth version that led to the seventh and final one that would be printed by Friesens.

PREPRESS

After the completion and approval of the seventh version when the final decisions were made about which images to include in the book and which to discard, the chosen slides were scanned at print quality resolution—at least 300 dots per inch (dpi) and freed of all imperfections. This work was undertaken by the pre-press house Agile Media Group, a company located in Vancouver. Materials were moved back and forth between Harbour and Agile via a same-day courier service.

A pre-press house is essentially an intermediary that streamlines interaction between a publisher and a printer. A pre-press house generally makes its money by taking over tasks that the publishing house is able to do, but may not have the time or person-power to perform. While technically capable of performing the necessary scanning in-house, due to the size of the task, and time-constraints, Harbour Publishing’s management decided to outsource this job. Agile Media Group had been contracted previously by Harbour Publishing for a scanning job on *Bella Coola: Life in the Coast Mountains*, and—according to Production Manager Johnstone—were a pleasure to work with and produced exceptional results.

Agile Media Group charges rates based on the size of the scans they are to create. In this case the images had to be scanned to final print size. Considering that the book had the trim size of 8.5"x11", and many of the pictures were to be played at full or double page spreads, the costs were to be very high.

It was imperative that the images be scanned both quickly and carefully. To help the scanning technician, the slides were individually labeled with the exact size to which they were to be scanned before being sent to the pre-press house. The book's designer, Roger Handling, extracted image measurements from the layout program and supplied them to the production team. These measurements were reviewed in house, and it was then that the production manager recognized an opportunity to save time and money. She observed that the vast majority of images fell under five general sizes and were the team to simply indicate which size each image was to fall under it would save considerable time in the scanning process as the technician could scan an entire block of slides to one size. To take advantage of this idea, images were assigned to five different size groups. Rather than scan each image to its exact printed size, they would be scanned to one of double, full, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{1}{4}$. The images were then sorted out into those categories, packaged and shipped to Vancouver for scanning.

Production Manager Johnstone was concerned about times and deadlines, and she became more so when she found out that the scanning technician she had worked with on *Bella Coola: Life in the Coast Mountains* was to be leaving for vacation in under a week, leaving very little time to scan over 200 slides. Johnstone went to the Agile Media Group office in Vancouver to offer any assistance as well as to personally oversee the scanning job itself and—having studied the slides for weeks now—offer her opinions on colour correction.

Scanning proceeded very smoothly, as Johnstone was there to perform colour correction as the scans were being done. The now digitally rendered images were burned to CD-ROM with the same filename as the FPO images. The high-resolution images

were to be added to the “set” book-file by technicians at Friesens because if the images were added to the file by Handling, the file size would rapidly become unwieldy. Digital versions of the scans were printed out as digital laser proofs so that Friesens’ press technicians would have something to use as a colour reference.

SENDING THE PACKAGE TO THE PRINTER

The CD-ROM’s containing the images and InDesign file were shipped to Friesens in mid-August, while a version for reference was set up in Portable Document Format (PDF). PDF files allow any user on any computer to view the file as it was intended to appear by the creator regardless of what program was used to create the file. This reference PDF was provided to Friesens’ FTP site where technicians could begin the make-ready procedures.

When Friesens began running the images through its machines, the technicians were unable to calibrate their printing press to match the ICC colour profile of the images that Agile Media Group had supplied. The technicians then scanned the laser proofs with a Fuji self-calibrated scanner in the hopes that they could create a colour profile from their own scan that would mimic the Agile colour profile more closely. But for whatever reason, the technicians could not match the colour profile and they called Harbour and suggested that the technicians at Agile and Friesens could work together towards a solution. Agile and Friesens sent numerous ICC colour profiles back and forth, but in the end neither company had any idea what why they could not get a match. While these colour profiles were travelling the country, valuable time was passing and production Manager Johnstone was, understandably, upset.³⁰

The initial concern was that she would have to go to Manitoba for a press check, costing time and money. Luckily, the experienced printers at Friesens offered a different solution. They would print out the images using their CMYK version and check them against the Agile Media group digital laser proofs—occasionally called “digiproofs”—to

get the closest match. Then, they would send us a selection of images via courier that would allow the Production Manager to verify the quality of the colours.

Johnstone agreed and the press in Manitoba started churning out copies that, once checked by technicians at Friesens, were sent to Harbour Publishing for verification. When received, many of the images were acceptable, but some had a “bluish tinge” that needed to be corrected. Johnstone spent hours poring over the images while simultaneously on the phone with the technician at Friesens, even though the technicians there offered to check them all again themselves, and specifically for the “bluish tinge.” When all the images had been checked and confirmed as acceptable, at a cost of many hours and shipping costs, the press began printing *Birds of the Raincoast*.

Throughout this final series of problems, Johnstone made clear that a publisher “should never let someone from outside the company make a decision on behalf of the company, even someone you have dealt with hundreds of times before.”³¹

The last bit of wisdom imparted to the proofers by Vici Johnstone was that they “read the captions”. Johnstone makes all the designers set “gobbledygook” for captions, that is, groups of letters that do not form words as this reduces the chance of a “dummy” caption being overlooked and printed. Still, she emphasizes the importance of checking the captions, which at Harbour Publishing are usually written in house. Thankfully, this proofing stage was one part of the process that did go according to plan and the proofs were sent back with no delay. The production process for *Birds of the Raincoast* had ended. On October 12, 2004, the book had arrived at the Lagoon Road warehouse, where copies were prepped and packaged to fulfill pre-orders made by book retailers.

Chapter 4: Behind Nine Problems

Birds of the Raincoast was published in the Fall of 2004. It has been subsequently nominated for the 2005 “BC Booksellers Choice Award in Honour of Bill Duthie”, one of the 2005 BC Book Prizes, to be awarded April 30, 2005.

If ever asked about *Birds of the Raincoast*, other than in the context of this project report, my comment will be similar to “Christopher Wren and I are building a Cathedral.” This phrase, hypothetically uttered by a stonemason working on the construction of St. Paul’s Cathedral, illustrates strikingly the stonemason’s commitment to, and involvement in, the whole project and not just his specific task. I felt the same commitment to the process of creating *Birds of the Raincoast*, and understood that the tasks I carried out were contributing to a larger whole. As such, I feel pride in having had a hand in the creation of such a beautiful, thoroughly informative and, above all, unique book. My comment, similar to the stonemason’s in core meaning, will be “I know the book well. I was on the Harbour Publishing team the year we published it.”

In the context of this report, I provide comments centered on functional management and process management. Further, and again in the context of my report, I even put forward a suggestion.

MANAGING TOWARD AN OBJECTIVE

Creating a book or a cathedral is an objective, and one can imagine that there are different ways to reach that objective. Indeed one can imagine managing the elements used in achieving the objective. Included could be the management of time (e.g., this task is worth three hours after which we take what we have completed), the management of people (e.g., which people should be trained for what and which tasks should they perform), and the management of material (e.g., yes that looks nice but it is twice the cost and is only 50% as durable as the first choice).

Moreover, based on the type of objective, different theories lead to different forms of management that could be employed. To illustrate, place an engineering project such as building a house at one end of a continuum and place a period of painting by Van Gogh at the other end. For the house, we could reasonably expect to know exactly what would be needed to complete the house, including where activities would fall in time in relation to other activities, the interactions and interrelations among tasks and exactly what a successful outcome would be. In short, we would expect to manage tasks or individual functions.

However, not all tasks are equally manageable. Consider the following definition of “manageable task”.

“A manageable task is one in which the expected results can be easily identified; success, failure, or completion of the task can be easily ascertained; the time to complete the task can be easily estimated; and the resource requirements of the task can be easily determined.”³²

With respect to Van Gogh’s work, there are very few manageable tasks in the sense of the definition just provided. His works were not engineering projects. Nor were there sub-activities to be maneuvered soullessly in order to create the next painting on time and under budget.

“Soon after arriving in Paris in 1886, Vincent senses how outmoded his dark-hued

palette has become. He paints studies of flowers, which Theo describes as “finger exercises”-practice pieces in which he tries to “render intense colour and not a gray harmony.” Vincent keeps balls of wool with threads in different hues-red and orange, blue and yellow, orange and gray-to sample and test the effect of different colour combinations. His palette gradually lightens, and his sensitivity to colour in the landscape intensifies. Vincent regularly paints outdoors in Asnières, a village near Paris where the Impressionists often set up their easels. Later, he writes to his sister Wil: “And when I painted the landscape in Asnières this summer, I saw more colours there than ever before.”³³

Publishing a book sits somewhere on this continuum between building a house and creating a masterpiece. Furthermore, the publishing of different books can sit at different locations on the continuum. Some, like publishing a phone book, could be compared to the construction of a house while other books, creatively depicting artistic material, might be closer on the continuum to Van Gogh producing a painting. The important idea to draw from the definition of manageable tasks is that given a set of manageable tasks it becomes possible to manage these tasks individually in an efficient and effective manner, but also as part of a planned whole.

We could use the continuum idea again and place two management theories at opposite ends. The first is referred to as functional management. The second is process management. Functional management and process management both accept the notion of managing in order to achieve an objective, but they differ in how they are applied and to what they are applied. Functional management focuses on managing functions or sub-projects, using manageable tasks. Process management deals with the entire process as a whole. Of these two I believe process management is more relevant to publishing and so I give it more attention.

FUNCTIONAL MANAGEMENT

Many of the activities encountered in publishing of *Birds of the Raincoast* were managed using functional management. To illustrate these I sketch a tool of functional management—Microsoft Project, to show how functional management was applied.

This tool requires that a considerable amount of information be known about manageable tasks prior to beginning the project. This focus on tasks, central to functional management, can create the impression that individuals should be concerned only with their tasks, with no obvious commitment to the overall project. Hancox claims that this introduces three general weaknesses that are inherent in functional management. First, “only the supervisor knows in detail how the units tie together; second, if a task needs to be completed before another can begin, it is not uncommon for that task to be completed well ahead of time and then remain dormant and unproductive until it is required later in the process”; and third, if a “critical intercept” is missed by a team or individual it has the chance to cause a “domino effect”, delaying the entire project.³⁴ Examples of this domino effect will be seen later.

PROCESS MANAGEMENT

Process management differs from functional management in a few ways, most notably in how tasks are regarded and completed. In publishing, process management recognizes that “sequential functions must be integrated and be generally understood by all those who undertake the publishing process”.³⁵ In contrast, functional management tends to view tasks in an “assembly line” fashion, suited to “manufacturing processes”.³⁶

As was apparent in publishing *Birds of the Raincoast*, recognition of the existence of tasks not directly controlled by the publisher is essential in achieving the ultimate objective. According to Hancox, the application of process management to publishing encompasses all aspects of the process, “from the selection of the intellectual property... through editing, design, pre-press preparation, printing, production, warehousing, marketing, distribution, sales and all the administrative processes of rights acquisition, payment and accounting.”³⁷

HARBOUR PUBLISHING MANAGEMENT CULTURE

Harbour Publishing is a successful publishing house, having been in business for

30 years with a publication list in the hundreds. While a management consultant could assess Harbour Publishing's methods of operation in terms of one or more management models, a more useful approach would seem to be to identify what was supposed to happen, as well as what did happen and to make recommendations on how adjustments to the methods they employ could result in changes for the better.

I have chosen nine specific problems that arose during the publishing of *Birds of the Raincoast*, to see if the response to these was driven more by solving individual tasks, that is, adhering to a functional management approach, or by working through these in a more process-oriented fashion. Further, I comment on the expertise or experience that was drawn upon to achieve the nine successful resolutions that can be examined individually and reviewed in the interest of fine-tuning the system.

There were other problems that arose that I do not comment on as I consider these to be routine problems expected to be encountered for almost any book. An example: Johnstone's comment that "a designer will only create an 80% accurate product the first time around". Although which 20% that will not be accurate is not predictable, it is known that there will be a 20% error, and time for proofing must be budgeted.

A TEXTBOOK APPROACH

Microsoft Project is a standard "textbook approach" to project management that is known to Harbour Publishing. Although it was activated at the start of the publishing cycle for the Fall List, it was not "kept active" throughout the duration of that cycle. In fact, this harks back to the traveling salesman problem discussed earlier. The Microsoft Project chart created in the early spring was never updated, in keeping with the notion that when creating the schedule one can sacrifice a little accuracy for an immediate solution that is "good enough".

While it is technically true that Microsoft Project charts were "created and then never updated", to attribute any problems to the lack of updating is misleading. The charts did serve as a useful touchstone for the members of the production staff, as each member

could look forward a few days or weeks to prepare for future tasks.

This was followed by a large white board containing information directly relevant to the final stage of production. This information, which included final page count, proofing stage, and anticipated ship-to-printer date were all moved onto a large dry-erase marker board that was hung in the hallway in a location for all employees to see, just down from the production manager's office.

This information existed not only for the sake of managing, but also as a reminder for the production team who had numerous books in various stages of production in other parts of the building or province. The information on the board was never recorded for comparison to changes made, and if the information was changed, the old information was just erased while the new data added. As such, the white board was a constantly updated record of where each book was in production, but only for the clarification of the production team.

The information on the board did not offer the chance to micro-manage a book, instead the information was there as reference. I expect that the existence of tasks not directly under the control of the publisher, as noted by Hancox, contributed to this move away from the total control of individual tasks implied by Microsoft Project and towards the managing of a process.³⁸

The usefulness of Microsoft Project was in initially determining how production of the Fall List might reasonably be expected to unfold. It was replaced when the process approached completion. Note that this is another way of stating that the originally identified tasks were not manageable tasks. A doubter might claim that the tasks were not managed.

OBSTACLES IN PROCESS MANAGEMENT

Process management is not the be-all and end-all of management theories. Hancox identifies two types of obstacles that may arise when process management is

being used to guide activities. They are strategic and tactical.³⁹ In the case of strategic and tactical obstacles, the obstacles themselves are not discrete issues. When present, the two types of obstacles have the ability—or even tendency—to compound their joint effect.

Strategic obstacles “form systemic hindrances to achieving publishing objectives.” This means that an absence of a clear purpose or mission, unavailability of financing, inaccessibility of raw materials, indiscriminate hiring practices or bad business locations—can all hinder smooth and efficient operations.⁴⁰

It could be said that Harbour Publishing does not have any strategic obstacles to overcome, even its chosen business location. Although its location might appear to be a strategic obstacle, from the inception of the business it apparently has not contributed to any serious difficulty.

The second type, tactical obstacles—problems that arise in the process of carrying out plans—do appear to be possible at Harbour Publishing. Hancox outlines a number of tactical obstacles in his paper, *The Essentials of Process Management*, including “territorial” conflicts, breakdown of equipment, increase in price of raw materials, missed schedules, delays in delivery and errors in execution.

CONFLICT

Functional or “territorial” conflict is a concern in any organization. Success in sharing work at Harbour Publishing creates the potential for overlapping and conflicting duties. Harbour Publishing’s small size results in the functions for each department spilling over into other departments. Although having staff aware of each other’s activities and problems can be beneficial, it can also lead to conflict.

For example, a marketing department may feel that the fate of the book, “or even the entire enterprise” is in their hands due to the need for a successful execution of their marketing and promotion plans.⁴¹ This may then lead the marketing department to criticize paper quality or design choices, thereby interfering with the professional opinions and requirements of other departments. This kind of territorial conflict must

be guarded against. Comments like “those responsible for marketing [should not] have any control over quality... this [is] the...responsibility of the...production manager/art director/publisher,” are problematic because the marketing department is also made up of professionals, just as the production and sales departments are, and decisions in process management should be made by consensus. Rather than dismissing comments and critiques from other departments, instead agreements and commitments should be agreed upon at the outset of the project, and there should be follow-ups in the event of major changes.⁴²

Another source of potential conflict at Harbour Publishing arose from the lack of a Managing Editor in the summer of 2004. Almost all editorial duties—save the identification and selection of material to be published—were undertaken by freelancers. Arguably, the lack of a Managing Editor was problematic, but according to Craig Riggs, a business studies practitioner, “the thing about process management is that it doesn’t matter who does the work, just provided it gets done”⁴³. So, the tasks generally performed by a Managing Editor were assumed by other Harbour Publishing employees, a solution that, while not the most favorable, worked reasonably well. In addition to the production manager, other employees at Harbour Publishing understood—like the example of the stonemason—that they were not just trying to complete a series of discrete tasks but were involved in a coherent process.

NINE INSTANCES OF PROBLEMS

In the summer of 2004, a number of problems, some in the form of strategic or tactical obstacles, arose in the path of *Birds of the Raincoast*. Four of the nine chosen problems were relatively easily managed as the issue was only in the details of the problem. Since similar problems had arisen in the past they were immediately recognized and a known solution was apparent to the manager. Three of the problems were surprising with respect to the magnitude of the problem, but again, there was immediate

confidence that known solutions were available. The last two problems were unexpected, fell outside the normal problem handling culture of Harbour Publishing, and had to be resolved on an ad hoc basis.

Four questions can be asked with respect to these problems:

- 1) What does the recognition of and response to each problem indicate?
- 2) Could any of these problems have been avoided?
- 3) Could any be avoided in future?
- 4) What did Harbour Publishing learn from the problem and how was that knowledge retained?

FIRST FOUR: RELATIVELY EASILY MANAGED

1. *Birds of the Raincoast* was represented by Thommasen as using a distinctive approach but when received, it had too narrow a focus and needed extensive editing and rewrites to achieve the promise of the proposal and make it fit for publication. This was not the first time that a proposed book arrived and was not exactly what it was supposed to be. "Often times what you expect to receive is not what you actually get."⁴⁴ But in this case, Thommasen's original intellectual property was an idea that, even in its early manifestation as *Birds of the Salmon River*, was felt by Howard White to have real promise. It was in discussion with other staff members, that he decided that other editors could be employed to provide focus to the manuscript. Hancox states that process management in publishing "is recognition that sequential functions must be integrated and be generally understood by all those who undertake the publishing process".⁴⁵ He states that the selection of the intellectual property is one of the tasks covered by process management.

It appears that Harbour Publishing is small and integrated enough that decisions on what to publish, although residing with the publisher rather than a committee, do get discussed with other employees before a final decision is arrived at. Howard White and the staff members at Harbour Publishing are aware that proposals and reality can differ, and coping with that reality in most—if not all—instances is already a skill that the staff

members at Harbour Publishing are blessed with. That said, *Birds of the Raincoast* was a special case that required more effort to keep under control than previous books that had experienced a disparity between proposal and reality. This obstacle could be classed as a known type of problem with a known form of solution.

2. There was an unexpected delay in the delivery of a revised manuscript by the two additional authors that delayed the timing of all jobs.

This is a tactical obstacle, “arising in the course of executing plans”, falling under the umbrella title of “missed schedule”.⁴⁶ The delay itself could not be attributed to the management at Harbour Publishing, but perhaps there could have been a more rigorous method for dealing with delays, such as by periodically tracking how effectively and efficiently the manuscript was being handled.

On the other hand, Johnstone makes provisions and budgets time for just such a late delivery into each plan she makes on MS Project. “For each task assign a realistic assessment of time and then add 20% for slippage”, but once this is complete, follow-ups tend to happen only when the book is perilously late.⁴⁷

Johnstone’s planning would usually ensure that this delay in receiving the manuscript was not a make-or-break problem. However, *Birds of the Raincoast* was slightly different from the usual case in that most authorial delays are in the creative stage, not the revisiting stage, and less time is budgeted for such an instance.⁴⁸

Once the book is accepted and designated for publication in the current season, the publishing house is obliged to wait a reasonable amount of time. The difficulty is in deciding what amount of time is “reasonable”. Obtaining best estimates of conclusion times for various tasks, even if they are not under the control of the publishing house, and then following-up if these conclusion-times are not met, is reasonable. While there are delivery dates specified, with so many other books in the works, it is common for a book to be put aside, “yes it’s late, but we can work on these other items while waiting for it.” It is a bit simple to say so, but in the case of *Birds of the Raincoast*, it was not until the lateness

of the delivery significantly interfered with—and in fact almost halted—progress, that action was taken. In this instance this delay created sufficient time to make the decision to “go colour”. Not all problems bring with them such opportunities.

3. After considerable work, a new collection of images was produced to replace images that were inadequate. This effectively forced the team to discard much of the original placement work to restart. This was another tactical obstacle, and one that no one could have foreseen, especially given the number of slides that the production team originally had in-office.

The first collection of images was used to lay out the book. Once this “set” version was examined by Campbell, mainly for accuracy, he declared some of the images unusable. He generously offered replacements from his own collection to improve the book, which, while a godsend, required more image selection.

In hindsight it might have been better had the contributors each been asked if the materials they had provided were, as far as they were concerned, the best available. Whether such a request would have produced earlier replacements of the original images is difficult to say because both the concept of the book and the contributions of the various authors were very much in flux. Further to this, Harbour Publishing did not supply a “set” copy to the contributors until mid-summer, nor were the contributors in contact with one another to discuss what had been happening to the book, which certainly contributed to part of the “re-set.”

The other problem was time. With contributors in various parts of BC, some remote enough to impede postal deliveries significantly, there was simply not enough time to work on a feasible plan. Arguably, a rough set could have been shown to all the contributors, but delivery times were too long, deadlines too short, and Campbell was altogether unreachable.

Indisputably, images had to change, and no amount of planning would have been able to alert staff members to that possibility in the first place. In the future however,

this kind of problem could only conceivably be avoided by asking the contributors if the materials they supplied were, to their knowledge, the best or most relevant available.

4. The decision to change *Birds of the Raincoast* to full colour late in the process was an unusual “bump” in the process. Such a decision clearly indicates that staff members at Harbour Publishing are constantly monitoring the “whole process” instead of individual tasks. Had they been too focused on the discrete tasks, perhaps they would have missed the opportunity to “go colour”. Pulling the book entirely, after it had been announced and given an entire catalogue page for the 2004 Spring season, was a big decision, one that could not be made without a clear image of the book as a whole. While some might say that Harbour Publishing knew enough about the book to make the decision, others, particularly readers of Peter Grant and Chris Wood’s book *Blockbusters and Trade Wars: Popular Culture in a Globalized World*, could say that while Harbour Publishing made the right decision, they could not in fact have known it would turn out so well. It is Grant and Wood’s claim that in cultural industries, “until audiences actually experience a cultural product, it simply cannot be evaluated. In advance of the actual release of the title, nobody knows...” what will happen.⁴⁹ “Hits are flukes,” and being able to respond to a perceived opportunity and remake a book into a better format is part of the flexibility of being small and able to change directions in midstream.⁵⁰

THREE SURPRISES

5. The prices quoted by the Chinese printing house were, after considering time delays, not competitive with quotes provided by the domestic printer, Friesens. This was not expected, but there was more than enough collective-experience at Harbour Publishing to allow a shift to domestic printing with no delay being introduced while making that decision. Experience was a key component of the resolution.

6. Rapid printing at Friesens thwarted.

Because of greater business than expected at the time Harbour Publishing was able to deliver the files to the printer, Friesens was unable to adhere to the usual

turnaround times of approximately one month. Suddenly, an extra two weeks were added to the schedule for all of Harbour Publishing's books. This problem was discovered after the first book *One River, Two Cultures* was sent to Friesens, and the response was a much longer printing time than anticipated. Production Manager Johnstone was upset, but there was little she or anyone could do other than accept a longer turnaround time. This was an unforeseeable problem but was accepted without a lot of time being consumed by looking for "magic" solutions. Sufficient experience at Harbour Publishing existed to recognize this as an unfortunate and not readily solvable problem but also as one that would not ruin the season.

7. Technical expert Campbell goes AWOL.

In the early stages of the 2004 Fall Season, Harbour Publishing staff members were already working long hours on the other front-list titles, and although Johnstone knew Campbell was unavailable, the sheer magnitude of the effort required for *Birds of the Raincoast* dictated that production had to begin—even if it meant starting without the expert. It is difficult to criticize that decision given the rationale that Campbell would have to return. Arguably, the real issue in this case was the amount of time between the initial set and the review by Campbell. This could have been prevented by explaining to Campbell that his "virtual" presence, if not actual assistance, would be required between such and such a date. As it was, his disappearance resulted in a delay in delivery as well as causing what in essence amounted to an error in execution on the part of the production team that set the book.

The most critical overall problem that arose from this decision to proceed without Campbell centered around missed schedules, which caused a "domino effect" in regards to ship-to-store schedules for the fall season. The schedules in fact were changed almost weekly, with the earliest forecasted arrival date for the book being in September, and the latest being October. Individual task deadlines were pushed back and forth, sometimes more than once, with the book ultimately arriving in the warehouse October 12th.

When the decision was made to publish *Birds of the Raincoast* for the fall season, had all contributors known the major elements of the production schedule and been given some sense of the need for their availability, fewer problems in regards to missing contributors might have occurred. Yet, oftentimes, the money earned by authors is insufficient for them to make their book authorship top priority.

It is hard to criticize the success of Harbour Publishing, but it should be mentioned that earlier meeting dates for big seasons—as the 2004 fall season certainly was—would allow for the production team to get a head start on advising contributors that “this is the time we will need you the most.” While leaving town or heading out on vacation is acceptable, being totally unreachable is most certainly unacceptable. While it is impossible and foolish to think that it would be feasible to manage the time and availability of contributor, the managers of the project could have made exceptions to avoid the total absence of a contributor.

LAST TWO: UNEXPECTED PROBLEMS

8. Handling delivered what was ordered, but it turned out to be not what we wanted.

The initial “set” supplied by Handling was exactly what was asked for by Harbour Publishing. But, when it arrived, the feeling around Harbour Publishing was that we had ordered the wrong thing. By itself, the fact that this problem would result in reworking might not have been remarkable, but after several other delays its impact was pronounced. At this point one could ask if this book just happened to run into a number of discrete obstacles or if the nature of the book was unusual enough that it needed extra care. In hindsight, it was not just another run-of-the-press book. Perhaps it really needed process management, meaning a distinctive handling from selection to warehouse, and normal processing was just not good enough. *Birds of the Raincoast* was a unique book for Harbour Publishing, similar in many ways to the coffee-table book *Bella Coola: Life in*

the Coast Mountains, yet quite different in that aspects of the book were much closer to a guidebook.

9. The technicians at Friesens were not able to match the colour profiles supplied by the Agile Media group, the prepress house.

This was not expected nor anticipated. It was a technical problem and one can say all technical problems are predictable and are solvable ahead of time, given awareness of the possibility of the problem ahead of time. Consider the problems that Microsoft Word's automatic pagination can cause in formatting a document. A person creates his or her document, turns on the automatic pagination, and forgets about it. Yet, unless it is properly adjusted for situations like the insertion of images, figures or charts, the page numbers will no longer make sense. The ability to prevent the page numbers from being wrong comes from the knowledge that the automatic numbering can go wrong. The ability to prevent technical errors comes from the awareness of the possibility of these errors.

This leads to the idea that knowledge and experience play a large factor in the management of production. While one could predict that problem x or problem y will never occur again, this will be true only if those who might encounter this potential problem in future are now aware of it. This colour profile problem could have easily been avoided had someone merely asked "what profile are you using, and will Friesens be able to accurately match your output?" Some record of experiences like this one should be recorded for future use. The combined knowledge and experience of each employee makes for a very powerful well of resources. However, if an employee were to leave, they could take that knowledge and experience with them, and the problem with the ICC colour profiles could re-occur.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendation

As we have seen, the management process at Harbour Publishing seems ready for any eventuality, although some of these eventualities may need considerable effort to resolve. The use of Microsoft Project to line up the books at the start of the cycle has a certain value. However, the use of this functional management tool as progress is made is limited. The nature of the publishing business for a small firm such as Harbour Publishing which is unafraid to take on projects that extend its expertise means that not all tasks are manageable tasks. The Microsoft Project chart assists in the implementation of the white board and further organization. Perhaps the white board could be examined more thoroughly and the expectations attached to its use clarified so that all employees know both what to contribute, and what to conclude from its display. It appears to be a representation of the process and might benefit from a little touch of formality.

Harbour Publishing is an experienced company/team that does not use a formal documented management process but does employ certain elements of process management. Over 30 years a collective knowledge has been built that allows employees to handle most obstacles as expected obstacles, and also to overcome unexpected new obstacles. That collective knowledge does not arise from a standard textbook, instead it has been distilled from experience. This experiential base of expertise leaves

Harbour Publishing vulnerable should key people leave the company. Consolidating and documenting experience is not an unusual event and fits the profile of any company not wanting to solve the same problem anew each time that problem appears. Various solutions exist, and in very large companies there are systems in place such as training programs for new employees, reference texts, company policies, documented case studies, interpretations and even files of Frequently Asked Questions.

For smaller companies, a process to record, and hence retain, experience can be as simple as a collection of descriptions of actual problems, together with the solutions that worked. Given that a person involved in publishing might characterize publishing as “solving problems”, perhaps the next Harbour Publishing intern could spend a portion of time collecting tales of past obstacles and how they were solved. Naturally they would have to be catalogued so they could be retrievable to be useful. While perhaps a necessary practice, this “record of experience” may never be sufficient as writing down experiences may not get to the core of what really makes Harbour Publishing function effectively.

A last observation: Harbour Publishing may be too capable for its own good. Staff members may have become so adept at solving problems that they now tolerate the presence of more problems than they should. Perhaps this paper will stimulate the fine-tuning of Harbour Publishing’s existing management processes and build it into a stronger system.

Notes

¹ Visser, Marjolein. *An Analysis of Project Management in the Book Publishing Process*. Simon Fraser University: Vancouver, British Columbia 2000, p. 4-5

² Raincoast Chronicles, "About Us" and "Raincoast Chronicles First Five", in About us and Browse

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³ Lee, Brian, Sales Manager, Harbour Publishing. *Interview*, February, 2005.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Peterson, Roger Tory, *A Field Guide to Western Birds* 2nd Ed
Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961 p. 163

⁶ Johnstone, Vici, Production Manager, Harbour Publishing. *Interview*, September, 2004

⁷ Thommasen, Harvey. "Birds of the Raincoast" Letter to Harbour Publishing, Harbour Publishing Archives, 1999

⁸ Johnstone, Vici, Production Manager, Harbour Publishing. *Interview*, September, 2004

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Harbour Publishing, "Readers Report: *Birds of the Raincoast*." Readers Report. Harbour Publishing Archives

¹³ Johnstone, Vici, Production Manager, Harbour Publishing. *Interview*, September, 2004

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Signatures: Commercial printing presses print on large sheets of paper which come out of the press, and are folded and cut. It is these “signatures” that when bound together make up a book. One colour signature can be inserted between black and white signatures, which serves as an alternative to having colour pictures throughout.

¹⁷ Johnstone, Vici, Production Manager, Harbour Publishing. *Interview*, September, 2004

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ “Set” is no doubt a derivation of the term typeset—which is the word used to describe the physical act of setting a manuscript in type in preparation for the printer. It should not be confused with the Harbour Publishing use of the word “set” which means to create a “set of instructions” for the designer. The “set” will see Harbour staff members place images, write captions and generally combine the manuscript and the raw materials—text, images, idea—to create a marked up manuscript and spreadsheet (the “set of instructions”) that can be given to a designer who will in turn create the finished product.

²² Johnstone, Vici, Production Manager, Harbour Publishing. *Interview*, September, 2004

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Gantt Chart Information “Gantt Charts” on the home page and examples page.
Retrieved March 5, 2005
<http://www.ganttchart.com>

²⁶ Slip and Slippage are terms used to describe when a task is not completed on schedule

²⁷ Johnstone, Vici, Production Manager, Harbour Publishing. *Interview*, September, 2004

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ We saved back-up images as potential replacements for problem images.

³⁰ “ICC, or International Colour Consortium profiles help you to get the correct colour reproduction when you input images from a scanner or camera and display them on a monitor or print them. They define the relationship between the digital counts your device receives or transmits and a standard colour space defined by ICC that is based on a measurement system defined internationally by the Commission Internationale de l’Eclairage (or CIE, also referred to as the International Commission on Illumination). Thus, if you have a profile for each of your scanner, camera, display and printer, the fact that they refer to a standard colour space

lets you combine them so that you obtain the correct colour as you get images from the scanner or camera and print or display them.

ICC Colour Profile "Frequently Asked Questions" in Frequently Asked Questions,
Retrieved March 10, 2005
<http://www.color.org/faq.html>

³¹ Johnstone, Vici, Production Manager, Harbour Publishing. *Interview*, September, 2004

³² Modell, Martin E., *A Professional's Guide to Systems Analysis*. 2nd Ed
New York: McGraw Hill, 1996
Retrieved from <http://www.dai-sho.com/pgsa2/index.html> March 10, 2005

³³ Van Gogh Biography "Impressionism and the City" in Van Gogh's Life,
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<http://www.vangoghmuseum.com/bisrd/top-1-2-2-4-3.html>

³⁴ Hancox, Ralph, *The Essentials of Process Management*, Master of Publishing Course, MPub 600,
Victoria: Publishing and Management Consulting, 2003 p. 27-28

³⁵ Ibid. p. 23

³⁶ Ibid. p. 27

³⁷ Ibid. p. 1

³⁸ An observer could note that, whether or not it was intended, this chart, in effect, becomes a tool of process management in it's "imperfect" or incomplete state.

³⁹ Hancox, Ralph, *The Essentials of Process Management*, Master of Publishing Course, MPub 600,
Victoria: Publishing and Management Consulting, 2003 p. 25-26

⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 26

⁴¹ Ibid. p. 20

⁴² Ibid. p. 20

⁴³ Hancox, Ralph and Craig Riggs *Topics in Publishing Management*, Master of Publishing Course,
MPub 600, Vancouver: Simon Fraser University, Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing,
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⁴⁴ Johnstone, Vici, Production Manager, Harbour Publishing. *Interview*, September, 2004

⁴⁵ Hancox, Ralph, *The Essentials of Process Management*, Master of Publishing Course, MPub 600,
Victoria: Publishing and Management Consulting, 2003 p. 23

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 36

⁴⁷ Johnstone, Vici, 'Production Management' Seminar Handout, 21 January, 2004. Master of Publishing, Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing, Simon Fraser University, 2004 p. 1

⁴⁸ Johnstone, Vici, Production Manager, Harbour Publishing. *Interview*, September, 2004

⁴⁹ Grant, Peter S., Chris Wood. *Blockbusters and Trade Wars*.
Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre. 2004 p. 48

⁵⁰ Ibid. p. 61

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