COPYDOT SCANNING

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Copydot means scanning halftone or line work jobs on film so that they are digitised and they can be handled by a computer. It is particularly useful for newspaper and magazine production. Advertisements are supplied on film and are scanned so that they can be incorporated into a computerised page and output onto film, plate or direct to press.

It is ideal for digitising ‘standing jobs’ which are on film. It is uneconomical to strip film into large format imagesetter output and impossible to do so with the entirely filmless process of computer-to-plate (CTP) and digital presses.

Copydot scanning in its pure sense reproduces film images dot-for-dot. Ideally the software will convert colour separation scans into a file format that retains the CMYK colour separation files. In most case the format will be EPS (encapsulated postscript) files.

Some systems can optionally de-screen CMYK halftones and apply a new screen on output. Only the black component, carrying text and fine lines, is scanned dot-for-dot. This is faster and easier, but softens the images and may upset advertisers who signed off a proof based on the original film.

Newspapers were the first to use copydot systems for digitising adverts supplied on film. Eskofot invented the term ‘copydot’, but did not register it, so every one uses it today. Conventional scanners can also be modified for copydot work, this involves the use of a pin-register system. Specialised software is required to handle copydot scanning.

Copydot scanning is an interim technology that eases the problems for printers who want to implement all digital workflows, but still receive film from clients. It is hard to say how long such mixed workflows will prevail before all images are created with digital cameras.

QUESTIONS ON COPYDOT SCANNING

(1) What is copydot scanning?

(2) Give an example of where copydot scanning can be used?

(3) Copydot scanning is an interim technology, what is replacing this technnology?