

## EXPERTS ON CALL

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# Scotts & Co buys into ec2i's catalogue management system

Scotts & Co has completely overhauled its catalogue management system and bought in to ec2i's bespoke CMS, Renaissance, which is already beginning to show significant cost and time savings.

Well known to Direct Commerce readers, Scotts & Co forms part of the largest group of independent specialist catalogues in the UK and, in 2017, produced over 4000 catalogue pages across

six brands with just short of 500 separate cover versions.

Keeping track of this mass production through their existing legacy CMS was proving more and more difficult with duplication of images becoming out of control with the restricted search functionality available.

Prior to implementing ec2i's Renaissance system, internal Catalogue Managers would

literally have to cut out and paste items from previously produced catalogues onto a new physical layout which their internal artworkers would then plan up on screen before submitting the pages to external designers to add the final artistic aspects. The layout might change multiple times requiring manual reloading and repositioning of the artwork. It presented a huge production headache and became massively time-consuming with pricing

and text changes having to be manually updated on the system at the end of each production. It also meant that previous errors would be carried forward to a new publication where updates had not been spotted or updated as their system wasn't capable of automatically doing this.

## Browser based product selection & placement

After reviewing several systems Scotts & Co concluded that because of its flexibility, ec2i's Renaissance system provided remedies for all the headaches the old CMS couldn't solve.

At the heart of the system is asset management. All Scotts & Co images have been loaded into one single source and curated so that duplicated or obsolete imagery has been deleted leaving a repository of 23k images that is accurate and usable across all media.

Starting with one publication, the pagination is now on-line for all to view and work on, with total flexibility of data. It can be easily manipulated and changed by Scotts & Co's internal art working team while management and marketing can also add products and comments. Indeed, multiple versions of a virtual layout can be created using the online 'Design View' tool before deciding on a final layout.

Another useful tool for Scotts & Co is the 'Flatplan View'. This is automatically updated as the virtual page mock-ups are being built allowing the team to re-paginate and re-folio by simply dragging and dropping them into new positions saving vast amounts of production time. Product data and images can then flow directly into the pages using the correct fonts and styles via the Renaissance Adobe InDesign plug-in. Last minute changes to product or copy can be fed back to Renaissance via the plug-in, ensuring data is the same across all Scotts & Co's marketing channels and accurate for future use. This feature has already proved a massive benefit over their previous way of working.

Says Kevin Davis, director of data & analytics at Scotts & Co, "The product database is brilliant and a massive step forward for us. I have been watching the project unfold with awe at the level of patience and effort ec2i has shown and how well they have coped with the difficulties we have thrown at them".

## Squinch Analysis

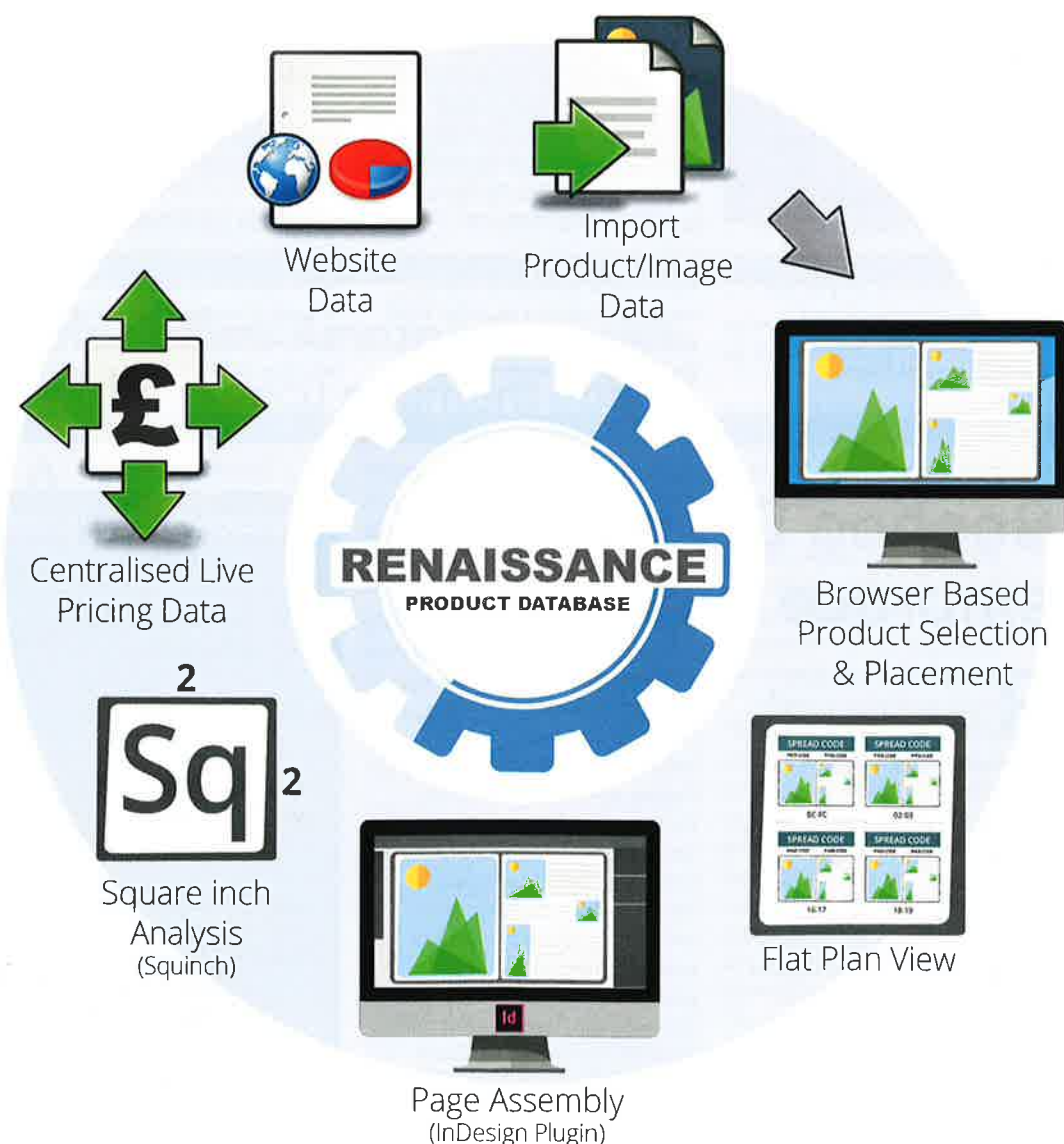
A game changer for Scotts & Co is the availability of the Square Inch Analysis (Squinch) tool. Historically, a member of the team would spend days analysing how much room products used on the page and their return on that investment. ec2i's Renaissance automatically carries out this analysis displaying the coverage area of both image and text for each product. This allows marketers to measure the product placement ROI. This data can be viewed at any stage before or after publication and has taken enormous time and pressure off the production team.

## Centralised Data

Renaissance allows Scotts & Co to hold product data centrally, pulling feeds from multiple other systems at Scotts. Should the product data change prior to print, it can simply be pushed from the database into the document right up until publication time. This will automatically feed through to all other marketing channels including the website too.

Scotts Chairman, Nigel Swabey, says "We've known for some time that our CMS was no longer fit for purpose but finding a solution and, more importantly, implementing it, was always going to give us a huge headache and require a massive learning curve. It's early days yet but already, as a business, we are seeing the benefits with a much more simplified production and significant cost savings.

"ec2i has been great to work with. They've put multiple resources into the project and their people are continuing to work tirelessly with my team on what is, no question, an ongoing project and one that will enable us to deliver our catalogues and other marketing collateral in an efficient and more streamlined way for many years to come".



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