Graphic Design

DTP

Rendering 3D

Fotoritocco

Web

mambo

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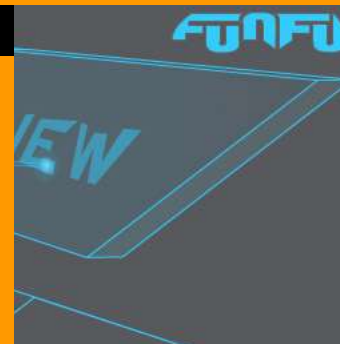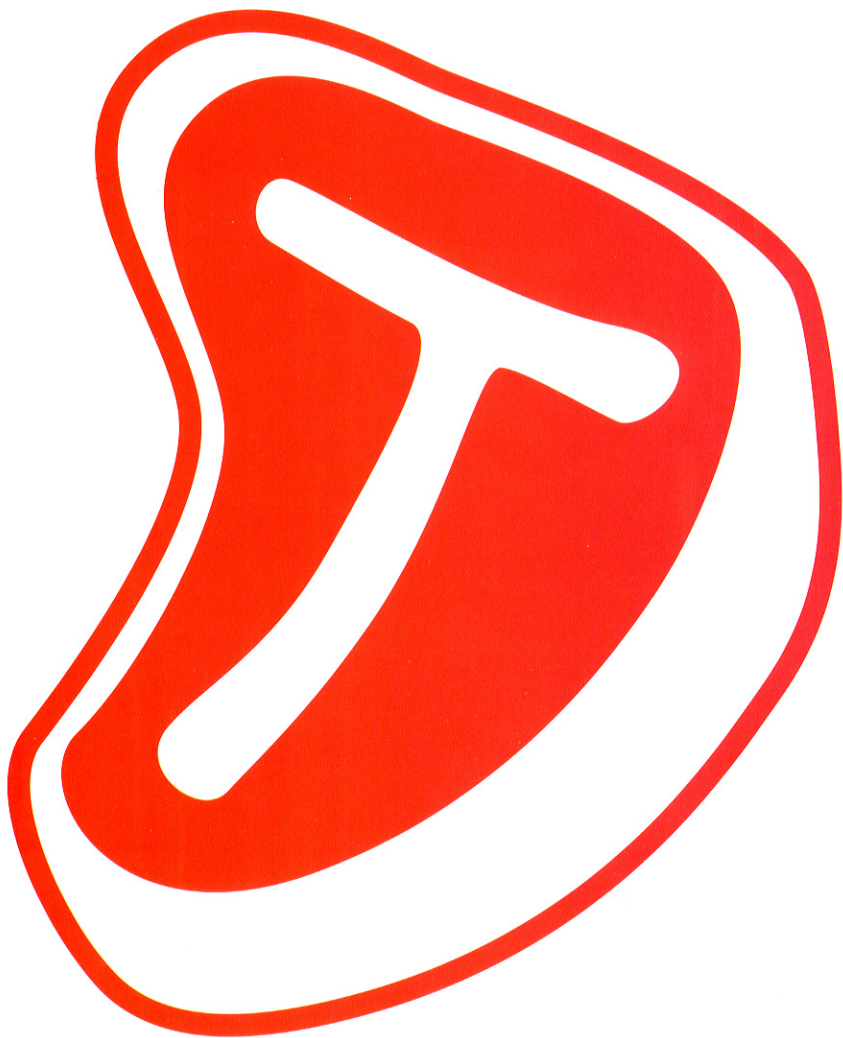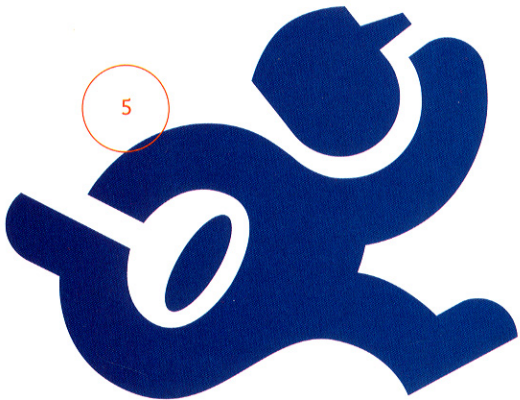
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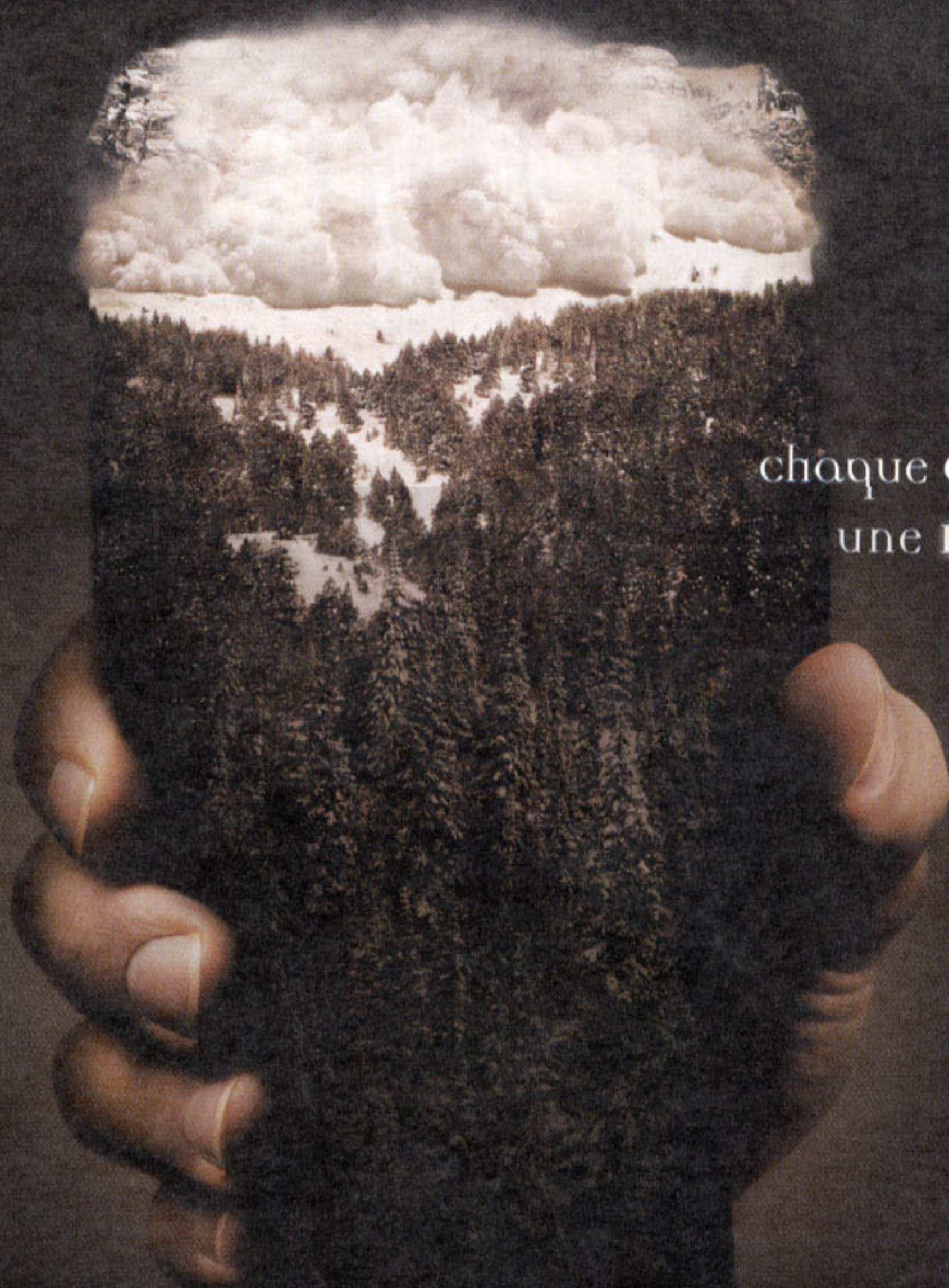
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Planning the Next Wave

If the first battle of the publishing revolution was waged on paper, then the next would be fought on the World Wide Web. By the close of the 20th century, the Web was transforming communication in terms of content distribution and commercial transaction. Unwilling to abandon its hard-won position in the printing and graphic arts markets, Adobe embraced the model of cross-media publishing, in which content once created is distributed through multiple methods, whether print or online. The company expanded its product line to include more-robust Web authoring tools, reinvigorated its page-layout line, and refined the software that served as a fulcrum between the print and online worlds. With PDF, like PostScript before it, Adobe had developed another industry standard.

Acrobat Takes Hold

If 1998 was a year of inner turmoil for Adobe, the company entered 1999 determined to reassert itself. Adobe's traditional graphic arts products continued to sell well, but Adobe executives knew that, as with PostScript before it, diminishing returns were inevitable. The more mature the product, the fewer features can be added with each update, leading to a sales plateau. If Adobe was to thrive into the 21st century, then it had to look to new markets. The challenge before Adobe wasn't just to come up with sexy new software, either. What was needed was a technology platform around which a cohesive product strategy could be built.

The company didn't have to look far for the way out. It was right under their noses in the form of Adobe Acrobat.

In the years immediately following its public debut under the name Carousel in 1991, Acrobat seemed to many observers like a solution in search of a problem. The product had long been cast in the shadow of its flashier graphics siblings. But surrounded by fundamental changes in communications and guided by Warnock's tenacity and unwavering faith, Acrobat had slowly transformed itself into an indispensable part of Adobe customers' daily work. As features were added to the technology and its suite of applications, Acrobat expanded its scope in Adobe's product lines: from printing, where it has virtually replaced what we knew as PostScript; to graphics, where it can serve as the Esperanto of file formats; to the Internet, where millions of Web pages are posted as PDF files; to corporate communications, where it provides secure document transmission.

"If Chuck and I agreed, then the board of directors would go along. Chuck and I agreed about Acrobat."

— John Warnock

1999

Revenue: $1 billion
Employees: 2,800

Adobe acquires GoLive

Adobe releases
Acrobat 4.0, InDesign 1.0

Dot-com boom hits
highest point

2000

Geschke retires, Warnock steps
aside; Chizen promoted to
president and CEO

Corel buys MetaCreations'
graphics products

Adobe releases GoLive 5.0,
LiveMotion 1.0, Network
Publishing campaign

Products buys digital prepress operations of Scitex Corp.,
forming CreoScitex

Apple introduces Mac OS XCreo

2001

Warnock
retires

Revenue: $1.2 billion
Employees: 3, 043

Economic slowdown
hits technology
industry

Microsoft releases
Windows 2000 and XP

Adobe ships After Effects 5.0,
Illustrator 10.0, Acrobat 5.0,
Photoshop Elements 1.0

2002

Adobe releases
Photoshop 7.0,
InDesign 2.0,
GoLive 6.0,
AlterCast 1.0

Adobe acquires Accelio
(electronic forms
technology)

sion 1.5, which followed six months later—piqued customer interest with their advanced typographic controls (including support for the OpenType font standard), interface components that were shared with Photoshop and Illustrator, and built-in graphics tools. Sales of InDesign skyrocketed initially—curious customers of both QuarkXPress and PageMaker wanted to see what the fuss was about—but then dropped off quickly. InDesign wasn't quite yet the "Quark killer" the public had expected from Adobe.

InControl: The Strategic Hub

Adobe continued work on InDesign even as it updated PageMaker in late 2001. As product features evolved, so too did the philosophy behind it. InDesign was more than a page-layout application. It was the hub of a cross-media publishing strategy that spanned print, Web, and even wireless communications. InDesign needed to work seamlessly with Adobe's other graphics applications such as Photoshop and Illustrator as well as dynamic-media applications such as GoLive and LiveMotion. InDesign, too, would become the authoring application for PDF files that could be distributed across the Internet, or deployed on handheld devices, or read as electronic books.

InDesign therefore had to support anything Adobe's other applications could throw at it—not just PDF but also a host of evolving file formats and technologies like XML, XMP, SVG, and WebDAV, all of which make it possible to share and repurpose content across platforms and devices. "InDesign will be a machine—a machine for publishing highly automated documents,"
Warnock says.

InDesign also needed to work around the world. It supports OpenType—the extended font format that allows for greatly expanded character sets and rich typographic controls—and Unicode, the universal font-encoding scheme that standardizes languages across platforms, applications, servers, and other devices. Because InDesign supports both OpenType and Unicode, it is well suited for Japanese and other non-Latin-alphabet languages, in which a single font can contain thousands of characters. InDesign-J, designed specifically for the right-to-left and vertical text composition of some Asian languages, takes advantage of the program's modular construction. Instead of trying to modify an existing left-to-right-reading application for a Japanese audience—the method previous page-layout programs used—Adobe can swap out InDesign's Latin-alphabet composition engine for the appropriate Japanese one. As a result, desktop publishing is finally taking off in Japan, nearly 15 years after Adobe landed on those shores with PostScript fonts and printer interpreters.

When InDesign 2.0 shipped in January 2002, it garnered accolades almost immediately and certainly shook up the status quo. "The success
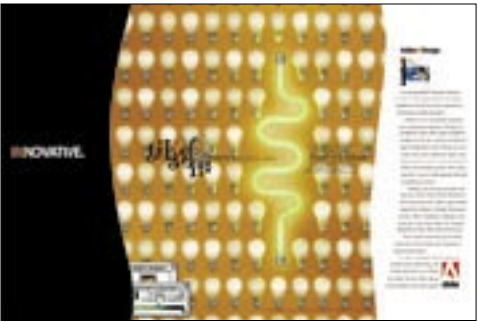
Adobe's first advertising campaigns for InDesign 1.0 played off words beginning with "in"—such as *Innovative and Inspiring*.

> *"We knew we could change the underlying paradigm of what a page-layout application could do."*
>
> — Al Gass

This poster by Michael Mabry showcases InDesign's ability to flow text into graphic shapes.

of InDesign is inevitable," says Shantanu Narayen, Adobe's executive vice president. "Buying QuarkXPress now would be like looking in the rearview mirror."

If InDesign 2.0 had shipped under the old paradigm of desktop publishing, it would be the most significant page-layout application released in a decade. But InDesign reaches far beyond the printed page to a publishing environment that takes many forms, including the World Wide Web.

Second Story Interactive was one of a new breed of Web design firms Adobe sought to cultivate with its Web product offerings.

Building a New Infrastructure

With InDesign, Adobe delivered a product that addressed its core constituency: creative professionals who produce pages for print. But with its hooks to PDF and XML, InDesign also showed that publishing in the 21st century had to reach beyond the printed page and embrace different media, including the Web. Adobe may have stumbled out of the gate in the early days of the Internet boom, but it had quickly regained its footing. It saw the Web not only as a publishing platform but also as the digital network for an evolving communications strategy.

No longer just the domain of scientists and Net nerds, the Web had worked its way into the mainstream. For publishers, the Web created new opportunities for customized content, dynamic delivery, and lower production costs. For information consumers, the Web offered distinct advantages over print media for getting up-to-the-minute news. Like cable television the Web was live 24 hours a day, seven days a week. But even accessing the Web from a desktop computer was too limiting under some circumstances. As a result, a new breed of portable devices emerged that enabled customers to take the Web with them.

Most companies at the time were operating under the theory that content needed to be freed from its form so that it could be deployed anywhere—on paper, on the Web, even on the new raft of mobile communications devices like cellular phones, personal digital assistants, and electronic books. Adobe recognized the trend, but struggled with the unaesthetic output that resulted from it. The notion of separating content from its formal appearance was a radical departure from the Adobe of old, which believed that presentation—through layout, typography, graphics, and PostScript printing—was as important as the message itself. But with PDF as the linchpin of the publishing workflow, the visual integrity of a document could remain intact even as the content changed dynamically through database tie-ins and the use of XML.

Before Adobe's vision could become a reality, however, it had to bolster its Web presence in applications, systems, and even communications.

Buying GoLive

To become a force in the Web publishing market, Adobe needed better Web tools than its earlier offerings. So in January 1999 it acquired GoLive Systems and its Macintosh-only Web authoring tool CyberStudio. Lauded as one of the best WYSIWYG editors for creating robust Web

The notion of separating content from its formal appearance was a radical departure for Adobe.

"When John promoted me, I thought I'd be president forever. I thought he wouldn't leave," Chizen says. "But he kept giving me more to do. He was testing me, to see how I'd do." By the end of the year, Warnock was ready to relinquish control. He told Chizen he wanted to spend more time with his family. In December 2000, Chizen was named CEO, joining the board of directors. Warnock then took the title of chief technology officer (CTO).

With Warnock as CTO, Chizen assumed that nothing had really changed, that Warnock would come into the office every day just as he had before. "Three weeks go by and I don't see John. When I do, he tells me he doesn't want to be CTO anymore, either," Chizen says. "He stepped out and I was running the show."

Warnock announced his retirement on March 15, 2001. Geschke thinks Warnock's exit was in part inspired by his own departure. "After retiring I noticed that my shoulders were straighter and my gait was lighter. I think John's wife Marva noticed that, too," Geschke says.

That April saw a passing of the torch onstage at the Seybold Seminars publishing trade show in Boston. After receiving a memento from Seybold president Gene Gable, an emotional Warnock thanked the audience for allowing him to realize his dream of uniting technology and the creative arts. It was a fitting forum for his farewell: Nearly 20 years earlier Seybold had given Adobe a podium from which to trumpet PostScript and to foment a revolution. When Warnock left the stage, Chizen and Narayen appeared to explain Network Publishing.

"If anyone had told me 20 years ago that we would have a fundamental impact on the publishing industry, I wouldn't have believed them," Warnock says today. "We never expected it. It was a matter of being in the right place at the right time." But when asked about the impact of his company, Warnock says it was less about transforming the graphic arts and publishing industries than about changing how people communicate. "Adobe should always be tied to effective communication, about how we get ideas from point A to point B,"
he says.

Playing to Strengths

For his part, Chizen settled quickly into his new role. "Being CEO is easier for me than being head of products," he says. "I had to work hard to stay on top of the applications, especially the engineering," he says. "This job plays more to my strengths."

That said, Chizen knows he's competing with the legacy of Warnock and Geschke. "I need to maintain their culture and values, their integrity and honesty, their passion for results," he says. "But I'm tougher than John and

Chuck. I hold people more accountable and responsible. I flush out the weaker performers." Chizen admitted to being anxious before a *Fortune* magazine article came out naming the best places to work in America as ranked by their employees. Adobe had traditionally scored in the top 100. Had it changed for the worse since he took over? The February 2002 list placed Adobe 27th out of 100—up three places from the previous year.

"There's a common thread of honesty and integrity that runs through John, Chuck, and Bruce," says Dyrdahl. "It's found in your values of how you treat people."

There's no doubt that Adobe will be a different company as it goes forward. For 20 years it was identified with men widely considered to be not only two of the nicest guys you'd ever meet but also astute businessmen, brilliant scientists, formidable competitors, and unshakable partners. Chizen brings different skills. "Bruce is an extrovert," Dyrdahl says. "He loves to sell. He's the guy in Brooklyn with the trunk of his car open just selling what he's got. He loves selling the opportunity."

Chizen has the backing of both Warnock and Geschke. "We couldn't find a clone of ourselves," Geschke says. "Bruce has a great sense of marketing and he knows how to carefully manage resources." Warnock adds: "Bruce is a straightforward guy. He has no agenda other than the success of the company."

In retirement, Warnock and Geschke remain close, but they don't see each other as much as they used to, even though they live a half-mile from each other in Los Altos, California. One reason: "I don't play golf," says Warnock, referring to Geschke's time on the links. Warnock owns a bed-and-breakfast in Utah and spends much of his time there, skiing in the winter, oil painting in the summer, and trying to educate his customers about fine wines. Geschke divides his time between his main residence and outposts in Indian Wells, California, and Nantucket Island, Massachusetts.

As co-chairmen of the board, both are still actively involved with Adobe. "Bruce is brilliant at execution," Warnock says. "Chuck and I have a tendency to think outside the box. Customers and employees like that out-of-the-box thinking. As long as we can be on the board of directors, we keep that spirit alive."

Adobe's new executive team includes (opposite page, top to bottom) CEO Bruce Chizen, EVP of products Shantanu Narayen, SVP of corporate marketing Melissa Dyrdahl; (this page, top to bottom) SVP of worldwide sales and field operations Jim Stephens, SVP of human resources Theresa Townsley, and CFO Murray Demo. Not pictured are SVP and general counsel Karen Cottle, SVP of digital imaging and digital video Bryan Lamkin, SVP of the creative professional business unit Jim Heeger, and SVP of ePaper solutions Ivan Koon.