

Automation for print,  
online and mobile



case  
study

## Billabong

### Carving up a gnarly publishing pipeline

#### From local surfboard maker to global boardsports brand

Founded on Australia's Gold Coast in 1973 by surfer and surfboard shaper Gordon Merchant and his then partner, Billabong has grown from a local producer of quality handmade boardshorts to one of the world's most recognised surfwear brands.

Throughout its ongoing growth and international success, Billabong has upheld its brand integrity, continuing to produce and sell high quality retail goods and maintaining a strong commitment to the global boardsports sector (surf, snow and wake) through athlete sponsorship, event hosting, and management and support of industry bodies.

Billabong's head office is on the Gold Coast in Queensland, Australia, with branch offices located all over the world. Sales catalogues are produced locally in each sales region, with the Gold Coast office managing the catalogues for Australia and New Zealand.

- Sales catalogues for international manufacturer and distributor of fast-moving consumer goods.
- Production time for catalogues reduced by 50%.
- Automated composition allows content to be managed separately from the design process.
- Catalogue data is easily and accurately updated at any stage of the production cycle.



The detailed product information and images contained in Billabong's catalogues are managed in a centralised product database. The data hierarchy is fixed, with product content organised into specific fields.

## The challenge: Speeding up product catalogue production with 100% accuracy

In 2008, the Gold Coast office produced three series of print catalogues per year in-line with seasonal range releases, with four separate catalogues for the Mens and Womens Garment and Accessories collections produced in each series.

*“Typefi has helped us reduce catalogue production timelines and reliance on graphic designers to carry out catalogue composition.”*

To produce the catalogues, the production team performed a data merge from the centralised product database into Microsoft Excel, and then imported the Excel data into Adobe InDesign for the in-house graphic designers to lay out.

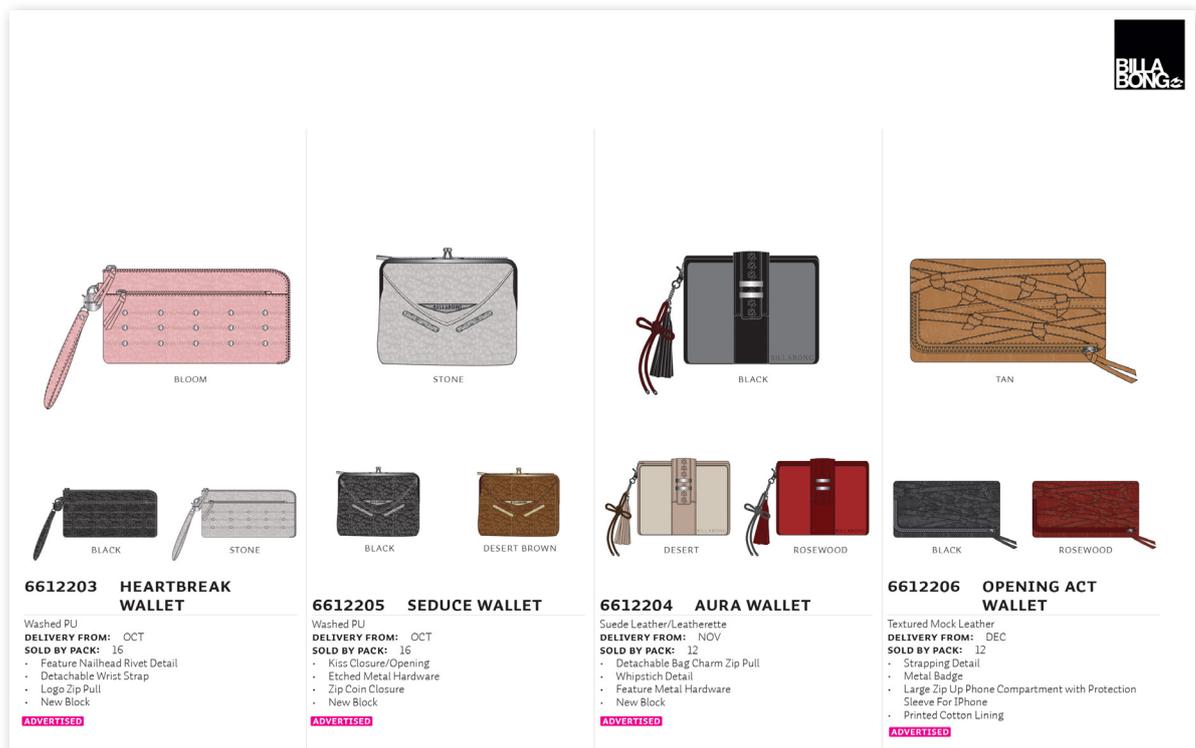
As Billabong’s product data changes with reasonable frequency during catalogue production cycles, the team found the established publishing process inflexible and prone to errors.



The product data could only be imported into InDesign once, with designers then spending considerable time manually applying layout and styles.

It was very difficult to make substantive, but essential, changes to the copy, such as removing a discontinued product, adding a new product, or changing the order for product listings. Seemingly minor changes created flow-on effects that could be extremely time-consuming.

As sales and orders are made from the catalogues, it is also imperative that the product data is 100% accurate. The manual updating process was prone to error and required many proof corrections to manage changes in core data.



**The solution: Separating product data from catalogue design with Typefi**

Billabong’s production team implemented Typefi, an end-to-end automated publishing platform which enabled a faster and more efficient workflow.

*“It is so much easier to make significant changes at any stage, like rearranging the order of content or making essential product updates.”*

While product data and images continue to be managed from the centralised database, designers work separately in Adobe InDesign to build the catalogue templates required for each seasonal release.

With the click of a single button, Typefi automatically populates the pre-prepared design templates with the most up-to-date catalogue data, rendering it in InDesign for layout modifications, or PDF for proofing and printing.

**Improved accuracy and faster production cycles, even for last-minute updates**

Rhonda Saunders, Project Manager at Billabong, said that Typefi delivered on the anticipated benefits.

“Typefi has helped us reduce catalogue production timelines and reliance on graphic designers to carry out catalogue composition. Typefi has delivered the benefits we hoped for – improved accuracy and faster production times,” she said.

# Billabong

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**By 2009, print proofs were available in half the time – from an average of two weeks down to within a week – and the turnaround time on changes to the proofs was also much shorter.**

*“Typefi has delivered the benefits we hoped for – improved accuracy and faster production times.”*

As well as delivering speedier production turnaround and increased accuracy, Typefi introduced far greater flexibility into Billabong’s publishing workflow.

“It is so much easier to make significant changes at any stage, like rearranging the order of content or making essential product updates,” Rhonda Saunders explained.

If product information changes prior to publication, the data is simply run through Typefi again to generate a new InDesign file for proofing. This means that catalogue data can be updated with efficiency and accuracy, keeping the production team right up to date with sales, marketing and design changes and minimising the potential for introducing errors to content during the design process.

Since boldly carving up its publishing pipeline in 2008, Billabong has rolled out Typefi to its offices worldwide and continues to maintain the platform at the heart of its automated publishing workflow.

**DO MORE .**



TYPEFI™

## *The world’s most recommended publishing platform*

Established in 2001, and with offices in Australia, USA, UK and the Netherlands, Typefi is the world’s only single-source publishing platform which fully integrates print, online and mobile production in a seamless end-to-end automated workflow.

We help people publish content faster.

Contact us to request a demo, or visit [typefi.com](http://typefi.com) to learn how we can help you DO MORE.

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