

## PRESS RELEASE

### Gradual Software launches Crossroads: a cross-vendor communication platform for publishing automation

**Ghent (Belgium), 31 August 2007** — Gradual Software, specialist in publishing automation solutions, today announced the launch of Crossroads. Centered on the robust SWITCH automation technology, Crossroads is a unique communication platform that draws together a large ecosystem of software vendors offering automation products for publishing workflows.

The objective is to present users with solid information on solutions that combine products from various vendors, in cooperation with those vendors and with the user community at large. Crossroads will take a concrete presence in a variety of ways, such as a web site and a user forum, and it will also be present at selected trade shows and industry events.

“It is no longer possible to automate workflows from end-to-end by installing software from a single vendor,” states Peter Camps, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Gradual Software. “Combining products from multiple vendors allows selecting best-of-breed technology, yet also raises concerns about interoperability. Crossroads offers a more unified view of the final solution and addresses those concerns. Responsibility for each of the products – and for their innovation – remains with the participating vendors.”

At the launch event in Ghent, Belgium, ten software vendors joined Gradual Software to kick-off the Crossroads communication platform. “When we started to approach vendor partners about Crossroads, the enthusiasm for the initiative was overwhelming,” comments David van Driessche, Chief Operating Officer at Gradual Software. “Everyone agreed that better communication about automation is paramount. Not just between the different vendors to make sure the solutions work together well, but also between the software vendors and the user community, and

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between the people responsible for workflow automation in the various publishing companies.”

## **Seamless automation of partner products**

SWITCH 07 includes more than 20 configurators; these provide configuration and automation of key third-party applications directly from within SWITCH and can be added to a flow using simple drag-and-drop. , “The MadeToPrint configurator in SWITCH 07 is an important tool, but there is a need for even more than that,” says Achim Kuhlmann, Product Manager at axaio software. “Customers want to know how to best use that configurator in a real solution for specific problems. Crossroads makes it much easier for them to get that information.”

Crossroads targets the complete publishing workflow: it delivers solutions for job reception, PDF creation and preflight, color correction, proofing, image manipulation, and more. In most cases, Crossroads offers more than one solution for a problem, giving the customer the freedom to select the solution most suitable to their environment.

## **Cooperation as the key to customer success**

The home of Crossroads is the website: <http://crossroads.gradual.com>. The site contains information on more than 30 products from over a dozen different vendors active in the publishing space. "It's great to have a resource that explains how our product, Quite Hot Imposing, can be combined with other powerful solutions into a sophisticated workflow," explains Aandi Inston, Founder of Quite Software . "Crossroads takes our customers to the next level. It also leaves each vendor free to concentrate on their own strengths, rather than providing endless and confusing duplication."

The Crossroads platform isn't confined to just the website; the initiative will reach the end-users through participation in a number of industry events, starting with IfraExpo Vienna 2007. On booth A 765, several Crossroads partners will showcase their solutions and demonstrate how they can work together to create an expanded and more robust automated workflow.

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## **About Gradual Software**

Gradual Software was established in November 2004 to develop and deliver software to accomplish full automation across the numerous stages of professional publishing workflows. Gradual's core product line called SWITCH, is designed to benefit all participants in the publishing workflow, including content originators (authors and designers), content processors (editors, designers and layout artists), brand owners (publishers and marketing departments) and service providers (printers). Gradual Software is privately held by its management team, and is located in Ghent, Belgium. For more information, visit [www.gradual.com](http://www.gradual.com).

## **About Crossroads**

Crossroads is a multi-vendor platform for communicating about publishing automation solutions, founded by Gradual Software. Centered on the robust SWITCH automation technology, Crossroads pulls together a large ecosystem of software vendors offering automation products for publishing workflows. Crossroads targets the complete publishing workflow: it presents solutions for job reception, PDF creation and preflight, color correction, proofing, image manipulation and more. For more information, visit [crossroads.gradual.com](http://crossroads.gradual.com).

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