

"First of all, I'm completely against hiring an accountant or bookkeeper, although I'm not against buying a little bit of advice from Bernie. Hiring any sort of specialists like that may mean saving Dumont, but the risk is too great that it be turned into a small private business with its facilities too restricted for other users to develop."

"It seems to me that there's two choices: going on the way we have commercially but with drastic internal changes, or else gradually winding down the commercial nature of the sop until it becomes a non-commercial workshop.

"The first direction will only work if we can be certain that the market for typesetting in K-W (and among groups in Toronto and elsewhere from whom we get work) is sufficiently large to support a place like Dumont. From what was said on the phone (that we are only owed \$3,000) it doesn't seem like the market is big enough. But this figure strikes me as strange, because my impression of the work coming in was that we were going to be fairly busy (CKMS, Last Post, Tom Foster's magazine, Labour Bibliography & trade work), but maybe I'm wrong. In any case our market has changed so drastically in the last year that Dumont might just be a dinosaur. If we're going to continue, we're going to need enough work to cover the cost of sales and equipment development.

"Our operating costs may be significantly less with two people gone. But we will probably have to consider increasing productivity by working longer hours (a full 8 hours a day plus lunch rather than 8 hours including lunch), less pissing around, each person working mainly in an area that they are very competent at and minimizing administrative time and meetings during work hours. In other words, if other businesses are strangling us in the market, we're going to have to at least match their efficiency. This is a drag, and I think I'd rather quit than do this, but Dumont is no longer the only typesetter in the area and we no longer have the captive market of the student press.

"Other things within this scheme that we could look at are:

- Billing & invoicing done immediately on completion of the job by one of the people who worked on it;
- We should no longer handle any printing for anyone (we make too many mistakes);
- We spend too much time on administrative work (with more of

a division of labour, a person in each area could be responsible for ordering supplies for that area, and if we're in trouble with our regular suppliers we could order through people like Moirs or Imprint);

- We should sell off as much of our paper supplies as possible;
- We should send all small jobs to KK or elsewhere;
- Our quotations should be made flexible, quickly and ruthlessly.

"In other words, most of this boils down to questions of why we are spending so much time doing non-productive work. "If there isn't a whole lot of work for Dumont, then there should be only a small number of us working there, and we should be operating the place more by the seat of our pants. There are a lot of small businesses that are working that way (without full-time accountants or bookkeepers)."

"If people aren't interested in that kind of scenario, then we should really consider closing down the commercial operation. There are some big problems with this:

1. Paying off the bank loan
2. Paying off back debts
3. We would all be out of work
4. BTL would be in trouble.

There are some advantages to this scheme if it's true that Dumont is a failing concern, commercially speaking. If Dumont goes bankrupt, then almost certainly all or most of the equipment will be lost; this has to be avoided. If Dumont is closed down carefully, the important pieces of equipment can be saved and put into a less expensive environment. We might all be happier working at situations where our frustration's and anger aren't levelled at our friends. If we decide to close down, we could approach groups like the Clarion for temporary helps we could ask them for some of their work within the near future, just enough to help us pay off our debts and keep bankruptcy away. We would only take on that work which is labour intensive in order to keep cost of supplies down; we could avoid a great deal of small shit work – we would no longer have to do small work for the hope of getting larger work later, we could decrease overhead costs slightly (one phone) and sell excess equipment (van, one PMT processor, one or two keyboards, some office equipment).

But the really big hope might be to reduce Dumont to only the essentials for a good graphics workshop. The big step here would be to eventually get rid of the VIP.

We could follow the above closing down plan for a while (I would certainly be willing to go on UIC and draw no wages from Dumont to help this out). Immediately we could test out the Clarion for some sort of merger. we would share work until most of Dumont's past debts are paid off, then sell the VIP and related equipment to the Clarion. Hopefully this would raise enough capital for us to pay off the bank loan and we would be relatively free. We would keep a couple of keyboards (and hopefully have a device like what Bill Wharrie is developing). This would allow us to prepare copy in Kitchener (perhaps more easily than before), but we would go to Toronto, or send tapes to Toronto to be run off. I doubt that there would be enough non-commercial typesetting in Kitchener to justify leaving the VIP around; also it would be very difficult for us to maintain & develop it; the Clarion would be much more capable of it. We could still do periodic commercial work in order to meet overhead costs of the workshop.

Thus we could sell 2 or 3 keyboards, the VIP, processor, CG 7200 headliner most of the office equipment, air conditioners, the van most of our paper, the Correcterm, and we could move into a much smaller (cheaper, easier to heat) place. I would also suggest that we sell the camera and re lace it with a vertical camera, they are easier to use (you don't have to go in & out of the darkroom), it uses less electricity (doesn't need as much light) is easier to adjust, doesn't break cables, can be used as a contact printing frame, doesn't cost as much (usually), only takes up about 4' x 4' of floor space.

Under such a plan we could end tip with: 2 keyboards or editing terminals, waxer, paste-up_facilities, photo-typositor, camera, sinks, complete darkroom facilities, plate-burner, press, cutter, stapler and whatever odds and ends we wanted to keep. If we rented, say, the basement and bottom floor of a house, we could probably also have room for a resource center. Again, we could probably make arrangements with Moirs, the Imprint & the Clarion to buy the printing and photographic supplies we need.

Obviously, there's a lot of "ifs" involved here, but the possibilities are interesting enough to renew my enthusiasm about our rather depressed situation. One thing that seems clear — Dumont cannot go on as before without a great deal of suffering.