

The way that the Harris Intertype computer phototypesetting system worked was that typesetters inputted onto punched paper tape. This tape was then passed to the reading department where it was read through a tape reading head onto the screen of the Harris 1100 editing terminals. After the readers had read and corrected the text on screen a new punched tape was produced and passed on to the typesetting computer where it was printed out through a developer and fixer on photographic paper. Display advertisements and other more complicated setting were handled slightly differently in that they were produced without codes, read and corrected and then processed by the Harris 2200 display terminal where codes were added to give the desired effect before being processed through the typesetting computer.

As the technology of heat set presses improved so did the number we had, and because of this a decision was made to switch greater and greater proportions of our production over to magazines; unfortunately both the press crews and the origination staff had little or no experience of high quality magazine production, but nobody seemed to think this important enough to worry about. This meant that we were going from the full-colour newspaper field in which we were market leaders into the highly competitive world of contract magazine printing where we had to fight for our market share against highly experienced specialist firms with a reputation for high quality work.

Additionally the high cost of these more advanced presses meant the company was getting into quite high debt, but the work to service these loans was not forthcoming although we did briefly print some weekend magazines for insertion in Saturday and Sunday papers. Unfortunately the quality of our work was not as good as some of our competitors, and we could not compete on price as most of them were only printing contract work on downtime when not printing their own publications; our own local newspapers had been sold a few years earlier to pay off the owner's divorce settlement, a move which was now to prove disastrous for the company.

Because of the downturn in work and the high cost of interest on the loans a series of voluntary redundancy exercises then began. These continued over a period of about five years with reasonably high payouts to those who accepted the terms offered, with most of the casualties coming from the composing room, typesetting and proof readers, with the double day shift system coming to an end eventually for origination, leaving a straight day shift and a night shift. It soon became apparent that