Web to Print publishing, tohoop provides the magic!

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Publishers in the Arab World are perhaps more affected than others by the double whammy of the Internet digital revolution and the political upheavals in the area. This saw many newspapers on the verge of extinction, and some famous brands such as Assafir of Lebanon and the Pan Arab Al-Hayat cease publication altogether, hopefully temporarily.

Thus, Arab publishers are in desperate need for affordable tools that can help reduce costs as part of a digital-first strategy and ppi Media seem to have the answer with 'tohoop'. By allowing an existing Web CMS such as Thunder, Drupal or WordPress to act as the CMS for Print, adding to it simple to use but powerful page production management functionality, ppi Media hope to make tohoop, meaning together in low German, available to all kinds of publications from magazines and weekly newspapers to an enterprise own at an affordable price using the SaaS model.

I have sought to test tohoop's suitability for Arabic accompanied by a production manager colleague from an established Arabic publication. ppi Media provided us web access to Thunder and CX Planner, which can be regarded as a core element of tohoop. We quickly discovered that Thunder, an open source extension of Drupal has much of the Arabic localisation and Arabic support readily available, so was ppi Media's CX planner, localised for Arabic. Within hours we had both newspaper and magazine publications up and running!
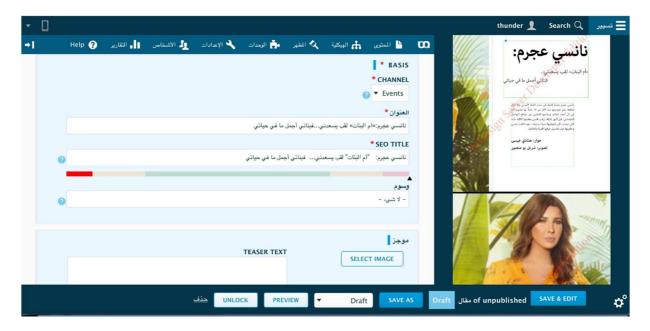
Figure 1 Create a Thunder WebCMS article for Print, drag to template and preview its page placement while editing

For me, acting as a journalist, it was a joy to publish an article on the Web with Thunder, do a Print version of it then drag it to a page template creating a publication without even having to use Adobe InDesign! For my colleague as a designer and production person, it was easy for him to create in InDesign the page templates for use by journalists and also to fine-tune my page work if necessary on his local Adobe InDesign, with any changes he made reflected seamlessly on the page views in CX Planner and in the Thunder article.
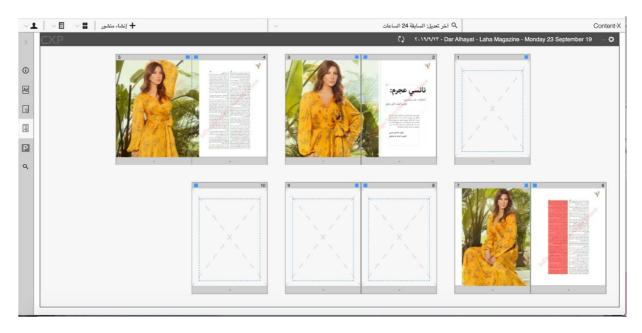
Figure 2 The article is simply dragged to its assigned page template using CX Planner. Ads can also b placed as part of production planning.
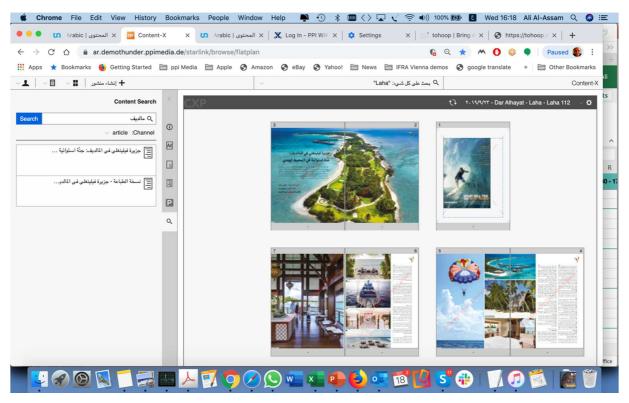

Figure 3 A Thunder article can span multiple pages, occupying its place on the multiple-page template with one single click!

To me, who helped design and implement newsroom software over the years, such as KnowledgeView's RAPID Browser, the process was a dream and a revolution.

With online first publishing there is certainly a need to simplify greatly the process of multi-publishing to cut costs and achieve profitability. tohoop does this wonderfully making it affordable for publishers across the Arab World as an SaaS model. ppi Media colleagues tell me that with tohoop they seek to add affordable print management functionality to the new exciting open source initiatives for WebCMS such as **Thunder,** an initiate of Hubert Burda Media, and the **Newspack** initiative by Google and WordPress.

To see tohoop in action you are welcome to visit ppi Media stand B06 at WAN-IFRA Expo, Berlin 9-9 October 2019