

DESKTOP PUBLISHING

a DETstudio guide to
features & techniques





MAKE A STATEMENT

Computers have transformed the world of graphics and no place more so than the layout and composition of publications.

Creating newspapers, magazines and posters used to be a laborious task of cutting, pasting and generating photostats to send to print. The range of effects and experimentation of different layouts was limited due to the high cost.

Since the late 1970's, computers and 'layout' software - called Desktop Publishing (DTP) as it could be composed at your desktop...) - have become more powerful and affordable.

As part of Graphic Communication, you will be expected to become very familiar with DTP and how to use it to create professional looking layouts that are attractive to a target audience.

DTP is used in conjunction with "Design Elements" and "Design Principles" - having a good understanding of these can help you compose that perfect layout.

You will be shown how to use the software in class. However, you do need to know some key phrases and definitions for the course exam. This document is designed to help that. Commit these to memory...

Things to know...

1. What DTP stands for
2. Layout terms
3. Types of printer
4. Capturing graphics
5. Advantages of DTP
6. Hardware needed

FIRST, GET YOUR BIG IDEA!

THUMBNAILED NOT ART!

Look, to be frank, computers don't come up with ideas. They are mindless speed machines that can help your ideas come to life - but you must have a 'big idea' first. Thousands of design students have committed millions of hours staring at the screen hoping for an idea to leap out from the pixels.

Do some research into your target audience then sketch basic ideas.

Use different weight of black pens and don't be afraid to make mistakes - we all do it. You can add a splash of colour to emphasise a point, but don't spend too long making them art pieces - communicate your ideas and annotate them.



THINGS TO MENTION

Annotations are critical! They allow you to talk about your ideas without being in the room. You can annotate various aspects that may be too time consuming to sketch, or to justify ideas.

Some basic things to annotate about are...

- What colours are you going to use and why?
- What typeface are you going to use and why?
- What graphics or photos are you going to need and where are you going to get them?
- What design elements and principles are you going to apply and why do you think they will be effective?
- Any particular DTP features you are going to use?

A PICTURE SAYS A THOUSAND WORDS...



PHOTOGRAPH

Taking photos can allow you to get exactly what you want to suit your layout idea. You don't need expensive cameras or equipment - many mobile phones have fantastic cameras - and photo-editing software can touch up any image.

If you take a photo, you own it. This is valuable in industry and can be very profitable.



STOCK IMAGES

Getting images other people have made can be fab! Hey, no work for you!

A couple of problems however. Images are controlled by copyright - and if you didn't take the photo, you don't have the right to use it. Don't worry, in school, Google images is okay - but if you are making work public, you need to pay for the right to use the image. It can also be hard to source a suitable image.



DIGITAL ARTWORK

Sometimes photos won't do. You may have a design idea in your head that requires custom made graphics. This can be done by drawing directly to the computer with a tablet or mouse (professionals use tablets).

Like photographs, you will own the copyright to any artwork you make yourself. It takes practice, but well worth the effort.

DESKTOP PUBLISHING

MAKING IT REAL



INKJET

Inkjet printers can be found almost anywhere. They are inexpensive to buy and reliable.

However the cost of ink is amazingly high - some of the most expensive liquids on the market (next to scorpion venom apparently...)

These printers deliver photo-quality prints with fantastic colour quality...



LASER

Laser printers are the backbone of most schools, universities and offices. They are designed for relatively high-volume printing and come in monochrome or colour.

Whilst monochrome prints can be very sharp, the colour on colour-laser printers can appear washed out and muted - certainly not the quality you will get on screen.



OFFSET LITHOGRAPHY

Printing lots of of something? Well, you probably wont want to use an inkjet (waaay too expensive) or laser (slow, expensive and of dubious quality).

You are going to need to go to a professional and make use of an offset lithography printer. It can appear expensive to get a company to set up a print job, but it is worth it if you are printing thousands of copies...

A stray item of text carrying over from the previous column.



IN TERMS OF LAYOUT, 2

Flow text along-a-path

All DTP packages will have a palette of shapes that can be applied to create graphical features quickly.

Registration Marks

Critical marks when using offset lithography printing.

These are used to ensure the paper is being guided through the printer perfectly straight...

Crop Marks

The area to be cut once a document has been printed - this allows for bleeding images without a white border.

This is commonly done in commercial printing

Copy + Paste

Eh, you copy an item to the computer's memory and then paste a duplicate back onto the page (saves a lot of redrawing...)

Edited Typeface

Sometimes the perfect typeface needs tweaked to make it fit with your 'big idea'

Most DTP packages will allow you to edit the shape of text to create an effect.

Quick Shapes

All DTP packages will have a palette of shapes that can be applied to create graphical features quickly.



Layers

To send an item back or forward, so one is front of another.

Rotate

Change the angle of an item

Header Space

The name of the top margin area, above the title.

Fully Cropped Image

Image with the full background removed.

Bullet Points

A small mark to lead some key text.

Square Cropped Image

An image with the left, right, top and/or bottom cut away.

Header

An item or text or graphic within the header space. Usually the name of the publication or chapter title.

Colour Matching

The colour dropper tool, used to match colours on the document.

This can ensure unity in colour usage in a layout.

Folio

An item or text or graphic within the footer space. Usually the page number...

Footer Space

Name of the space in the bottom margin.

Sub Heading

A title or highlighted block of text under the main title, usually giving an 'impact statement'.



Reverse

To colour text white on a darker background (typically black)

Right Aligned

An item aligned to the right...

Pull Quote

A copy of the body text that has been enlarged and positioned to create emphasis.