Popular Productivity Software: Desktop Publishing

Word processing can handle just about any document generation task, but some people need to produce documents with complicated layouts and documents that are ready to be printed professionally. For these people, the application of choice is desktop publishing. Instead of being tied to the typesetter and a commercial print shop, millions of users now create newsletters, brochures, user manuals, pamphlets, flyers, restaurant menus, periodicals, greeting cards, graduation certificates, and thousands of other printed and published items. Desktop publishing refers to the capability of producing camera-ready documents (ready to be printed professionally) from the confines of a desktop. The resulting documents are then reproduced by a variety of means, from duplicating machines to offset printing (2 commercial printing process used for high-volume printing). The files documents resulting from desktop publishing are compatible with hardware used in offset printing. Desktop publishing software can help you produce every conceivable type of printed matter, from business cards to catalogs and is changing the way organizations and individuals meet their printing needs.

Desktop Publishing and Word Processing: What's the Difference?

Both desktop publishing and word processing software assist you in creating documents, but the end result and the way you get there can be quite different. In word processing, the emphasis is on words, the text that makes up the documents. In word processing, we fill the document with words, then add images, borders, shading, and so on around the running text. The text

runs from the beginning to the end of the letter, handbook, or whatever document is being created. In desktop publishing, the emphasis is on overall document composition. Various types of objects are pulled together and laid out on a page. An object can be a block of text, an image, a border, an area of shading, and so on. Desktop publishing's page layout capabilities, combined with its precision, have made desktop publishing the choice of professional designers of publication materials.

Creating and editing text within a desktop publishing program can be cumbersome, so most seasoned desktop publishers prepare their text using word processing software. Once the page layout is established, the text is copied (from the word processing document) and pasted (inserted) into the desktop publishing document at the appropriate location. Both desktop publishing and word processing allow you to save documents in a format compatible with the World Wide Web.

Desktop Publishing Concepts and Features

The quality of the desktop publishing-produced output depends on the quality of available input and output devices. The typical office will have hardware (scanners, printers, and so on) that is sufficient for most printing needs; however, professional graphics studios with very high-resolution hardware are needed for some jobs.

Creating a document with desktop publishing software involves going through the document-composition process. This process involves integrating graphics, photos, text, and other resources into a visually appealing document layout.

Presentation Software: Putting on the Show

During the past decade, PC-based presentation software has replaced overhead projectors and carousel projectors as the presentation tool of choice whether at the lectern or the pulpit. Presentation software lets you create highly stylized images for group presentations, self-running slide shows (for example, PC-based information displays at trade shows), reports, and any other situation that requires the presentation of organized, visual informa- tion. The software, such as Microsoft PowerPoint 2000, gives you a rich

assortment of tools to help you create a variety of charts, graphs, and images and to help you make the presentation.

A progressive sales manager would never consider reporting a sales increase in tabular format on computer printout paper. A successful year that otherwise would be hidden in rows and columns of sales figures will be vividly apparent in a colorful PowerPoint bar graph. Those in other areas of business also want to 'put their best foot forward'. To do so, they use PC- based presentation software, often with an LCD projector, capable of projecting images onto a screen for all to see.