

Desktop Publishing

Intermediate Computer Technology Module

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Design in Desktop Publishing

Desktop Publishing (DTP) allows you to go beyond word processing. You can combine text and graphics to produce creative and well designed publications.

Along with basic skills and your own imagination it is helpful to be familiar with some basics of graphic design. The ideas and information in this section will help you as you plan your DTP projects.

Here are is some information and guidelines to follow as you plan your work.

1. What was your point again?

The idea of a publication is to communicate a message to the reader. Words communicate the literal message while font and graphics communicate in an emotional way.

Font

The style of font or typeface can set the mood of your document. Characters can be used to make it serious or more relaxed. When choosing any font, think of the mood that you wish to create. Try to use no more than three different fonts in your publications.

Size and Style

Choose a font size and style to complement your page layout.

For Documents:

Copy

Or body copy is the print that is used for the main story of your publication. Body copy should be 10 to 12 point font size.

Headers

Headlines and sub-headlines should highlight key ideas consistently. A point size of between 14 and 30 will work in most cases.

Captions

Captions usually appear underneath or alongside a graphic. 8 to 10 point size is appropriate for captions.

Font Face Selection

Fonts should be chosen for their readability first, secondly for their effect. Serif fonts should be used when there is a large quantity of reading. Sans Serif fonts are used to help make a point.

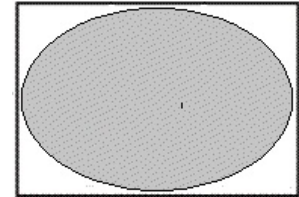


White Space

White Space is the non print area of your document (no graphics or text). White space is an important layout tool. It can help you to emphasize key ideas, much like lines. When designing a document, attempt to keep major areas of white space to the outside of the document.

Visible Structure: Lines

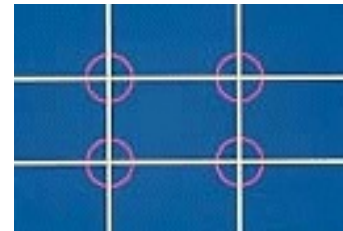
Lines are one of the most powerful compositional tools. Divider lines (horizontal or vertical) will help to frame your text or separate design elements. Use lines to lead the eye towards a focal point. Horizontal lines are easy to look at. Vertical lines are “active”, making them challenging to look at. Diagonal lines carry the eye across a scene, thus making them very influential.



Rule of Thirds

When setting up or composing a layouts it’s important to think about points of interest, something to attract the viewer. The *rule of thirds* is a device painters came up with when composing their work. Photographers and graphic designers also make use of it to create more tension, energy and interest in their work.

Using two horizontal lines and two vertical lines, divide your page into nine equal sized sections, forming an invisible grid. The intersection of these lines provide points of interest for effective placement of graphical information, or in the case of a single picture, a focal point for a main subject. Information that is placed at one of these areas will help to create a more attractive layout.



There are many excellent examples of the use of the Rule of Thirds on the Web. Take some time to check them out.

Moderation in all things.

The Greek philosopher, Aristotle, was giving advice on how to live when he said this. However he could have been talking about Fonts and Graphics in Desktop Publishing. While visual variety can be a good thing in a publication too much “visual noise” can be distracting and confusing.

Repeat after me “Repetition can be a good thing.”

Having a consistent “look and feel” to documents is important. This is true both within a single publication or across several publications. Within a single publication, using the same fonts TextArt or layout style can create a feeling of (Unity/Rhythm/Consistency) that is appealing to the reader. Doing the same thing across several publications on the same topic can help establish a “brand” that is familiar and easily recognizable.

Plan your work and then work your plan

Taking the time to plan your design will pay off. Before you touch a keyboard or mouse create a rough draft with paper and pencil. Graph paper comes in handy when doing design planning.

The Bad Examples - Design Activity

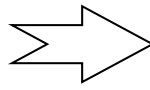
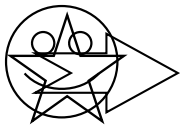
The sign for *The Bad Examples* performance is intended to be used as a discussion starter with students on how not to design a document.

Teachers may wish to present students with the document and invite them first to critique it individually or in pairs. From there, the teacher and the larger group can take up the critiques, discussing the bad examples and ways to improve on the design.

Teachers may wish to refer to the Design portion of the Desktop Publishing document during this exercise.

Problems with *The Bad Examples* sign include:

- overall a busy layout with no focal points, the viewer's eye would wander about not knowing where to begin
- the use of a wide variety of font styles and sizes
- random use of the bold, underline and italics features
- inconsistently designed and poorly laid out top and bottom borders
- poorly placed graphics
- text of message is small, poorly placed and cramped by graphics
- too much text - most could be replaced with high impact words or phrases
- a spelling error, a spacing error and a missing word - poorly proof read



THE



Bad Examples

Let's rock with the Bad Examples

Come on out and see a great new band play an exciting live show. The Bad Examples are a great new band that is going to be really famous some day. Their shows are always exciting and fun to watch. You can see them at the *Town Hall* on this Friday night at eight thirty PM. It is an all ags show so everyone can get in. Come and hear them play songs from their new release. It's called **"Don't Be Like Us!"**. The new release will also be on sale at show on Friday night. So come one come all to see *one of the best shows ever!!!!!!!!!!!!*

