The Purpose of Page Design

It doesn't matter what the words say! If the visual impression isn't instantly favorable, you can be very sure your publication will not have the desired effect!

Consider the volume of printed matter and screen displays your eyes are exposed to daily. Do you read every page you see? Of course not! In fact, if you are a typical reader, you probably read less than one tenth of all the printed matter you see.

Do you read every word of a text advertisement on the television screen?

Do you scan newspapers and magazines for headlines of interest?

When you "surf" the World Wide Web, do you carefully scroll and read every displayed screen—or do you move from screen to screen until a prominent message catches your eye?

Great speeches are worthless if not heard.

Great copy is useless if not read!

As readers are exposed to ever increasing volumes of printed matter, it becomes more and more important to ensure that attractive page layouts with carefully placed emphasis grab attention and prompt readers to absorb the more important or relevant portions of your message.

Increasingly, it is the artistic appeal of a page design and the placement of "color and contrast" that determines what the reader will read and respond to.

It is the duty of the page designer, then, to create artistic works which grab attention, convey the message quickly and clearly, and arouse a reader's desire to read on.

Quantity Reduces Quality

The advent of computers and desktop publishing software facilitated publishing by end users and amateur service providers who, two decades ago, could never have contemplated undertaking their own typesetting and page layout work.

Work which once had to be contracted to a professional printer or service bureau at substantial cost can now be carried out at home and in small businesses with minimal equipment. This has exciting implications in cost reduction for business, and extending opportunities for hobby newsletter producers and would-be small-scale service providers. But the down side of this phenomena is that anyone, from unskilled to moderately capable, can output published works that once would only be attempted by a professional. As a consequence, the quality of work has significantly deteriorated.

There is evidence of a plethora of printed material being circulated which is, frankly, grossly unattractive, unappealing, and in some cases even unreadable.

To the same extent that technology facilitates do-it-yourself production, it facilitates poor quality production.

What is Publishing?

Publishing refers to the process by which the ideas creative minds produce, in words and/or pictures, are made public.

The word *publish* derives from the Latin ***publicus*** meaning ***public.***

To publish: to make public or generally known;
to prepare or offer for public distribution;
to announce formally or officially;
to place into circulation;
to prepare a work for publication and distribution.

The publisher of a book, newspaper, or magazine is the person or group who directs the business of publishing. Specialist publishers also publish music, software, works of art, etc.

Publishing involves a number of stages of production. For example:

- Editing — obtaining, choosing, revising, and preparing the matter to be published and attending to *copyright* issues (ensuring that it is legal for the publisher to print the material and that legal protection exists so that others may not copy what the publisher is selling)
- Typesetting — typing and/or formatting the text to be printed
- Page layout — designing the overall page format and placing illustrations and headings
- Printing — manufacturing the printed product, usually using a printing press of some kind
- Assembly and binding — Placing printed pages in order and attaching them to form a book or booklet or assembling them into a folded spread, like a newspaper
- Arranging distribution to consumers

Publishing businesses may also have advertising divisions to market advertising space and assist advertisers to design and produce advertisements. Revenue from selling advertising space often helps to meet the costs of publishing a work.

Types of publishing

Book publishing covers a wide spectrum — from hard cover novels to paperbacks, trade books, specialist books (bibles, encyclopedias, dictionaries, etc.) and textbooks. Specialist book publishers sometimes market exclusively through book clubs or subscription programs.

Most book publishers select work for publication, cover the cost and risk of publishing, market the work, and pay the author a royalty or fee for his work.

Vanity Press publishers print works at the author's expense for the author to market. These publishers usually charge a flat preparation fee and a per copy fee to publish according to the author's instructions and at the author's risk.

Magazine publishers publish special interest periodicals for regular (weekly, monthly, quarterly) distribution to subscribers and for marketing through news agencies and other retail outlets.

Newspaper publishing is a major industry in most modern societies. Newspaper publishers usually print daily or weekly, circulating to subscribers and selling through retail outlets in a similar manner to magazine publishers. Newspapers are generally of a lesser print quality, on less expensive paper, and folded rather than bound or stapled.

Newsletter publishing may be considered as part of the newspaper category, though the circulation and publication size is usually much smaller. Newsletters are usually low cost, specialist publications, often printed in small quantities — circulated to special interest groups and members of clubs, groups or societies. Newsletters are often produced by amateur publishers using desktop publishing techniques.

The History of Publishing

Publishing began well before the birth of Christ. Although not commonly thought of as *publishing*, the act of pressing carved designs into wet clay to convey messages to the public certainly fits the dictionary definition of the word. Rock paintings by ancient tribes fit the dictionary definition of publications, as they were often used to tell a story or make a public announcement.

Egyptian heiroglyphics and Aboriginal rock paintings were forms of publishing

In ancient civilizations, scribes prepared copies of poems, plays, and books of law. The work was slow and tedious — hand writing each copy with quills dipped repeatedly in liquid ink. Parchment or papyrus (made from animal skins) was used instead of paper, and usually rolled to form scrolls for distribution. Distribution was very limited as these "books" were very expensive. Rich men in ancient Greek, Roman, and Egyptian societies could afford to buy books, and educated men were permitted to read them.

By the time the Roman Empire was established, publishing had become a vital element in civilized societies. The Romans began newspaper publishing, by posting official notices and bulletins of current events in public places.

In about 105 A.D. in China, Ts'ai Lun invented paper. The Chinese probably also invented *block printing* — a method of printing which involved carving raised characters into wooden blocks, inking the images, and transferring the ink to paper, in much the same fashion as we use rubber stamps today.

Pi Sheng, a Chinese printer, made the first movable type in about 1045 A.D. He fashioned each character from a separate piece of clay. However, the Chinese did not embrace the concept of movable type because printers preferred wooden blocks. With thousands of characters making up the Chinese language, movable type involved making and managing too many pieces of type.

Wooden blocks, which housed whole phrases or sentences on a single block, were simpler to use.

Europe did not finally discover block printing until the early 1400's. During the Middle Ages, learning was kept alive in Europe with beautiful manuscript books — tediously and expensively produced by hand and affordable only by the very wealthy. These books were produced and read by scholars, monks, and princes. The earliest European block print is thought to be a picture of Saint Christopher printed in 1423. Some time in the early 1420's, Europeans began to produce *block books* by binding block prints together.

Gutenberg's invention of the printing press and movable type, in about 1440, heralded one of the most significant changes in the history of mankiud.

With the Renaissance sweeping through Europe, a huge demand began to emerge for books and learning. Hand copying and block printing could not satisfy the demand. A more efficient method of publishing was required.

Publishing in the modern sense — producing printed works for mass distribution — was not possible until after about 1440, when the invention of the printing press and the development of movable type heralded one of the most significant social changes in the history of mankind. Over time, this important invention would facilitate the ready distribution of information to every member of society.

Johannes Gutenberg has been credited with the invention of movable type. The Gutenberg press was adapted from a machine used for pressing grapes or cheese. Using a crude wooden press, Gutenberg could print about 300 sheets per day. By 1456 he had completed the famous Gutenberg Bible, a bible printed with 2 columns per page in which each column had 42 lines of type. Although printed on a crude press, this Bible remains one of the most magnificent examples of the art of printing.

Gutenberg's press used pieces of type assembled into a form, then inked using leather balls, stuffed with hair or wool. The paper was placed inverted on top of the type. A huge vertical wood screw was then turned to bring a wood block down against the paper to transfer the ink to the page.

Because printing presses produced books very quickly, and each copy of a book was identical, many people feared the new art of printing was a "black art" which came from Satan. Still, in spite of these fears, printing spread so rapidly that by 1500 there were more than 1000 print shops around Europe and several million books had been produced.

The Beginning of Publishing in North America

Printing in North America appears to date back to 1539 when Juan Pablos set up a print shop in Mexico City. Then, in 1639, Stephen Daye and son Matthew set up the first press in the Colonies of America (later to become the U.S.A.) in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The authorities tried to place strict controls on printing in the colonies, but they could not stop the rapid spread of printing. Early printers did more than just operate print shops. They became full-fledged publishing houses, producing newspapers, books and magazines.

The Boston News-Letter, which first appeared in 1704 published by John Campbell, was the first regularly published newspaper in the colonies.

Canada's first print shop appeared in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in 1751. Bartholomew Green, from Boston, opened the shop. When he died, later that same year, his assistant John Bushell took over the shop, and in 1752 began publishing Canada's first newspaper — the *Halifax Gazette*.

Printers began to join the move westward, and during the 1780's. and 1790's. print shops appeared and newspapers began to be printed in Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio. By 1808, printing had crossed the Mississippi River and the *Missouri Gazette* was being printed in St. Louis.

From 1440 to 1800 there had been few changes to the design of the printing press. Gutenberg's basic design was used in print shops worldwide until an English nobleman, the earl of Stanhope, built the first metal press in about 1800. The press was constructed entirely from iron.

1811 saw a revolution in printing technology. The German Friederich Koenig invented a steam powered cylinder press. This press used a revolving cylinder to press paper against a flat bed of type. The press was first used in 1814 by *The Times of London*. It could print a remarkable 1,100 sheets per hour.

American Richard Hoe is credited with the invention of the first rotary press. Richard's press, invented in 1846, used a technique of attaching type to a revolving cylinder and using a second cylinder to make the impression. The Hoe press delivered 8,000 sheets per hour.

Later, another American named William Bullock found a way to print on continuous rolls of paper — inventing the high speed web-fed rotary press.

Until the 1880's, all print was set by hand, exactly as Gutenberg had done back in 1440. Then in 1884, Ottmar Mergenthaler, a German resident in the United States, patented the Linotype machine. This machine casts a full line of type in one piece of metal. This made typesetting a great deal more efficient.

In 1887, American inventor Tolbert Lanston invented the Monotype — which casts separate pieces of type.

Photoengraving processes, the halftone printing process, photolithography, and modern offset printing were made possible by developments in photography. These developments began with the 1826 production of the world's first photograph by Joseph Niéphore Niépce, a French physicist.

The photoengraving process was patented by an Englishman, William Fox Talbot, in 1852 — while photolithography was invented in France by Alphonse Louis Poitevin in 1855.

Americans Max and Louis Levy perfected the halftone screen in the 1880's. By the late 1880's, offset presses were appearing around Europe — used mainly to print tin sheets for making cans and boxes.

The offset printing method for printing on paper was actually discovered by American papermaker and printer, Ira Rubel, in about 1905. The method was discovered by accident. Rubel mistakenly transferred inked images onto a rubber-covered impression cylinder instead of onto paper during a print run. When he ran the paper through the press, the impression cylinder offset the images onto the paper.

Rubel noticed that the images were extraordinarily sharp—of much better quality than he produced with his usual method. The technique was adopted widely and perfected—quickly coming into general use.

The most dramatic advancements in printing have occurred since the 1930's. The last 70 years have seen more changes than the previous 500. Phototypesetting, computerised typesetting, electrostatic printing, and optical scanning have revolutionized the industry. Three dimensional printing of pictures on a flat surface creates the impression of being able to reach into the picture.

During the late 1980's and the 1990's, printing and publishing ceased to be the exclusive domain of expensively equipped print shops. Desktop publishing software and gradual improvements in laser printing technologies facilitate the implementation of short-run and specialist printing facilities in homes and small businesses.

The computer-to-plate printing press has now removed expensive and complex steps from the printing process and increased accuracy, by allowing the transfer of images directly from the standard personal computer disk file to printing plate, via a simple computerised process.

The latest developments in photocopying and printing facilitated the production of photocopiers which attach directly to personal computers in the same fashion as a standard printer, allowing the production of thousands of copies of fully collated documents directly from disk files, eliminating the need for copy masters, and delivering first-generation print quality on every copy.

The Basics of Page Design

Typography – the art of typesetting – is a complex and exacting science worthy of extensive study.

Page design, by contrast, is a relatively simple science, although one where natural artistic ability can be of significant benefit.

There are just four basic rules of page design. These can be remembered with the somewhat inappropriate acronym – *CRAP*!

Four simple rules, correctly applied, will ensure that all your pages are visually attractive.

Contrast

Repetition

Alignment

Proximity

To achieve professional status as a page designer, you will need to learn about fonts and typography, the finer points of color management, and a little about paper stocks and printing techniques. All of these will be covered in this course. The four basic rules will be introduced, one per lesson, as you progress through eight easy-to-understand lessons designed to enable you to take on page designing tasks with confidence.

Whether for pleasure, in your work, or as a service provider in a profitable publishing or page layout business, applying the techniques described in this course will substantially improve the appearance of every page you print.

Page Design vs Content

The most attractive page serves no purpose if the content is not worthy — and even if the content of your work is supplied by clients or associates, you must accept some responsibility for:

- spelling and punctuation;
- arranging text with breaks in appropriate places;
- assessing the tone of the text and matching presentation style to the tone and the target market;
- correctly identifying sections of text requiring emphasis.

Yet the most impressive content, correct grammar and spelling, and perfectly typeset copy may never be read at all if the page on which it is printed isn't visually appealing.

Step one in designing every project should be a pencil sketch of the page using lines and shapes to represent text, headings and illustrations on the page. If the sketch is not instantly appealing — if it does not catch the eye and suggest what type of content the page might contain — proceed no further. The most impressive copy will not compensate!

What's the Message?

Every page layout has a specific purpose. The design of the page must be appropriate to the purpose.

For example, if you are creating a presentation for a professional to use to market consultancy services, you would not want to make it gimmicky or glitzy. It should be neat and crisp, reasonably plain, with powerful headlines, and printed in high quality on quality paper.

The most attractive page layout will not achieve its purpose unless the page design is "psychologically correct" — that is, the design is appropriate to the message being conveyed.

Before embarking on a page design project, be sure you understand what gets read, and why.

Before beginning any page design project, consider carefully the *message* this piece is intended to convey.

The key to any successful promotional piece — advertisement, brochure, flyer etc. — is to get the psychology of the piece right. Too many amateur desktop publishers focus on creating what they think is an attractive page — without any attention at all to the purpose of the piece or the psychology behind it.

When we dress each day, we select our attire as appropriate to the event, occasion, our intended destination, the weather, and various other factors such as our intended means of travel.

The smartest, most expensively and stylishly attired lady will not impress by attending a business meeting in sequined evening gown, or arriving at a ball in a smart but casual pants suit!

In the same way, we must ensure our page design complements the content, the paper stock, the printing method, and the method of delivery.

Think carefully about the purpose of the publication you are designing — then study effective samples of work designed for a similar purpose.

Things to consider in planning the design for your publication

How will this piece reach the reader?

If you are folding the piece into a self-mailer, or to place in an envelope, take care that the overall dimensions are appropriate for folding to the desired final size. Ugly fold lines crossing critical sections of text or spoiling a beautiful illustration can spoil the most attractive page.

A small piece sliding around in a large envelope reflects amateurism.

Will a magazine or newspaper be folded or rolled for delivery?

A magazine or newspaper may be folded for mailing so that the bottom panel of the last page is exposed to show the recipient's name and address. Alternately, it may be rolled or folded for delivery. Be sure to allow for any fastening to be used so that opening doesn't tear an artistically designed heading. Check that folds fall neatly between blocks of text. Be

sure the address panel is the correct size so that you don't end up with two or three lines of text exposed at the top of the pane.

Will the publication be bound into a book?

A book should be appropriately sized so that it's thickness is proportional to its cover size.

Consider the binding method carefully to ensure that the binding allowance is adequate and you don't lose the beginning and ends of text lines into the binding area.

Is the piece meant for display in a brochure rack?

If your advertising brochure is intended to be displayed in a counter-box or holder or on a brochure display rack, size it for the holder. Its effect may be completely spoiled by ugly folds, dog-eared corners and page edges caused by jamming it into a too-tight holder, or by flopping about in a large holder that offers no support for smaller items.

Is the piece meant to post on a wall or in a window?

A poster should be sized so illustrations are identifiable and print is readable from a distance. Be sure the colors have impact. Drab colors won't attract interest.

Keep text content to a minimum. The message should be clear from just a quick glance at the piece.

Think carefully about the paper and ink stock you use. Posters that fade are impractical. Some inks lift or discolor on contact with glue or tape.

Meant to be Read?

Is this piece likely to be read in detail — or will your reader skim the page for wanted information? Be honest now! The best designed advertisement will fail to achieve a response if the reader misses the message because it is too hard to find!

Your copy may well be brilliant, but if the skim reader turns the page because there are no attention-grabbing headings or illustrations, the message is lost!

Even in a serious and detailed text document, you may need *visual blocks* and *draw cards* to keep the reader interested and ensure the important parts of the message are emphasized.

Formal, Casual, Humorous?

Like clothing, page layouts can create distinctly different effects depending on your choice of style components: fonts, page layout, paper stock, etc.

A gay "cartoon" font with favorite comic characters peeking from behind the strokes may make a very appealing headline — but not for a formal wedding announcement or a report on the treasurer's budget speech!

An invitation to a fun event should ***look like fun!*** Please don't spoil the mood with a sedate and formal page design!

But if your resume or job application doesn't look crisp, clean, professional, and easy to read, chances are an employer will reject your application without even reading your impressive qualifications!

If you are designing a flyer for a community letter box drop, chances are the paper stock and printing method will be chosen for maximum economy. A very classy formal design may look superb on heavy gloss stock printed on your color laser printer — but the effect will be lost when the local screen printer stamps out less-than-perfect print quality in one or two colors on cheap, lightweight paper. A casual page design, perhaps with a touch of humor, would be more suitable for a piece of this kind.

To get a feel for the psychology of page design, practice browsing publications and writing down your first impression as you glance at each page.

Does this page catch your eye?

- Is the "dress" formal, casual, businesslike, fun?
- What message is "shouted" by the page? Is there an instant message that you see without reading any detail?
- What is the real message — the message you find when you study the page and read the text carefully? Is it the same as the "shouted" message?
- Does this page elicit a reaction from you — or can you simply turn the page and ignore its content?
- Did something on the page cause you to *want* to read the message carefully?

Sketch the page layout using lines and shapes.

- Is the layout artistically pleasing? Does it have form and style?
- Is the layout appropriate to the content, or is the shape created by the placement of elements inappropriate to the message the piece aims to convey?
- Is the page easy to read?
- Is your eye led gently from section to section — or is it hard work wading through endless long lines of dull grey print?

Cardinal Rules of Page Design

Apply The KISS Principle

In every trade, the safest route for the untrained or less-than-expert tradesman is to *KEEP IT SAFELY SIMPLE*.

In Desktop Publishing, nothing is more certain to shout "amateur" than a crowded page or a failed attempt to be "clever".

If in doubt, keep the design simple.

Strive for crisp, clean lines—only a few different font types per page — and **LOTS AND LOTS OF WHITE SPACE!**

Look back over your past work and observe which pieces contain these marks of an amateur:

Empty spaces and borderless designs are truly quite ok. You don't need to box everything, and a page should NEVER be filled!

- **A cluttered page**
  If the page is full, it's the work of someone unskilled. Skilled designers leave LOTS of EMPTY SPACE.
- **Tizzy borders**
  Especially borders containing designs which are out of context with the content of the piece. Skilled designers use simple borders—or none at all!

  It really isn't necessary to put EVERYTHING IN A BOX!
- **Illustrations with no real meaning.**
  A professional will never place an illustration on a page that doesn't clearly enhance and expand on the message contained in the text. Illustrations must have clear meaning. If in doubt —don't illustrate!
- **Garish designs that shout "overdone"**
  Like too much lace and bows on a classically styled formal gown that clearly was meant to be worn plain.
- **Loads of fonts and type styles**
  For the beginner, the rule is *two* fonts per page, both from different families, with some additional variety created by adding bold and italic effects and some size variation.
- **Sans serif or fancy fonts used for large blocks of text.** Serif fonts are used in print for very good reason—they make for easier reading.
- **Fancy fonts—just because they are available!**
  If you have a habit of scrolling through your font list seeking something different, unusual, pretty, or attention-grabbing—**STOP!**

Appropriately selected special fonts can be wonderful for enhancing a message—but using fancy fonts just because they are there is guaranteed to spoil a published piece and advertise your inexperience.

- **"Gimmicky" text effects.**
  Text that's angled, outlined, drop-shadowed, skewed, squashed or fitted to a shape must be distorted for very good and clear purpose.

  The text effect must compliment and enhance the message being conveyed. If there is no obvious reason for applying a text effect—**DON'T**!

  Never do it just because **you** think it looks good! Your reader is likely to disagree!

Please don't YELL at me! A whisper is often more clearly heard than a SHOUT!

- **Too much Shouting**
  In speech, we modulate our tone and vary volume to stress important concepts, add interest to our conversation, and enhance our meaning.

  On paper, use contrast and text size in a similar fashion. Overuse of large bold type—or upper case text—is akin to shouting! It confuses the reader, making it unclear which parts of the message are really important, and which you are emphasizing for no apparent reason.

- **Capitals and Centering**
  Amateurs seem to love setting text in all caps and placing it in the middle of the page.

  More sophisticated page artists know that words set in all caps lack shape and therefore are less artistically attractive and harder to read.

  Similarly, sophisticated page artists understand that centre aligning creates a sedate, formal look which is really rather boring—unless centered for a special effect, or unless the page really is intended to look sedate and formal!

- **Placing elements in corners**
  Amateurs seem to have a fear of empty corners. Professionals know that empty corners are really quite OK.

White Space

White space on a page is the empty space—the space not occupied by any type or graphics. It may not always be white. It will actually be the color of the page used for printing, but usually white on the proof copy.

White space is essential on every page—preferably in significant quantities.

White space performs valuable functions, including:

- providing rest stops for the readers eye as it travels over the page;
- creating logical divisions between groups of elements to enable readers to see what elements belong together.

Trapped white space refers to white space which is misplaced between two related elements, creating an unwelcome or illogical psychological division.

For example, when placing a graphic to the right of text, some designers allow a paragraph of unjustified text to create an odd-shaped empty space between the text and graphic.

Wrapping the text around the graphic removes the trapped white space and maintains the association between the two objects.

e.g.

Alternately, you could right justify the text to create a clean line against the border of this graphic

In either case, you should avoid more than minimal white space *between* related text and graphics, but **surround the group of elements** with white space to identify it as a cohesive group or unit of information.

Similarly, white space should always be allowed ***above*** headings and subheadings. This creates a psychological division between the heading and the previous paragraph.

Never apply white space ***below*** the heading—between the heading and the text to which it relates. The purpose of the heading is to *lead* the eye into the text below—to draw the reader's attention to the text. If white space breaks the eye travel here, the reader loses concentration and the impact of the heading is lost.

Many amateur page designers seems to have a fear of white space, and particularly of unbalanced use of white space. If they can't fill the page, then at least they feel they must place elements evenly spread over the page—all elements equal distances apart, so that the white space is evenly distributed.

Evenly distributed white space is usually much less effective than white space which is placed to effectively divide elements (reinforcing proximity), maintain strong alignments, and emphasize the message the page is intended to convey.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with leaving one entire half of the page empty, or placing the entire page content in one small section close to the center of the page, or in one corner. If such placement assists in conveying the right message, use it.

Never feel you have to *balance* the page with equally sized and placed areas of empty space. A balanced page is one which is psychologically balanced, not graphically balanced!

The Rule of Proximity

The dictionary definition of *proximity* is

"the state or quality of being near in time or space".

Applying the rule of *proximity* might also be thought of as *zoning* — arranging objects on the page so that related items are near one another; grouping objects in sets.

Each set of related elements should form a visual group on the page.

A balanced page will usually contain no more than five or six groups of objects. Too many groups creates a cluttered appearance and confuses the reader.

The most difficult part of applying the rule of *proximity* is, of course, deciding *which* objects to group together. Random grouping achieves nothing. You must group items which are *intellectually related.* This requires careful examination of the elements to decide which are related.

Once you have identified the groups, zoning is a relatively simple matter. You simply place objects that are related close to each other. Ensure that you leave substantially more white space between groups, or sets of objects, than between the individual objects in a group.

Purpose of Proximity: To organize.

Zoning organizes information so that it is easier to read and remember. Organizations allows easy, fluid eye movement to locate wanted information. Organized information creates visual blocks on a page which add to eye appeal and make it easier for readers to find wanted information quickly.

How to apply Proximity: Sketch pencil shapes on pages to represent groups of elements.

Aim for a maximum of 3 to 5 groups per page

Learn to visualize every page — whether one you are creating or a page you are viewing — as a collection of pencil-drawn shapes on a white background.

Ignore the detailed content of the groups and view the page as collections of elements forming shapes on the page. Count your eye stops as your eye travels over the page.

Rules of Proximity:

- Avoid too many elements on a page. Five or six is usually a maximum acceptable number of groups.

- Avoid sticking things in the centre of the page and in the corners.

  A five-element collection will look more balanced if aligned vertically or horizontally with, perhaps, one corner filled for accent.

  Try creating interesting shapes with groups of elements. Never settle for a common "X". (Generally, an X mark means your answer was wrong!)

- Avoid leaving equal spaces between elements, except when they form part of a subset. Vary spacing between groups.

  It's O.K. to keep the spacing between items *within* the group consistent if you wish.

- Avoid confusion over with which block of text a heading, subheading, or illustration belongs. Apply space **above** headings and subheadings, not between the heading and its related body copy.

- Keep illustrations close to the body copy to which they relate. Avoid "trapped white space" between copy and a related illustration.

  The illustration should serve to draw the eye to the related text and prepare the reader for the message it contains.

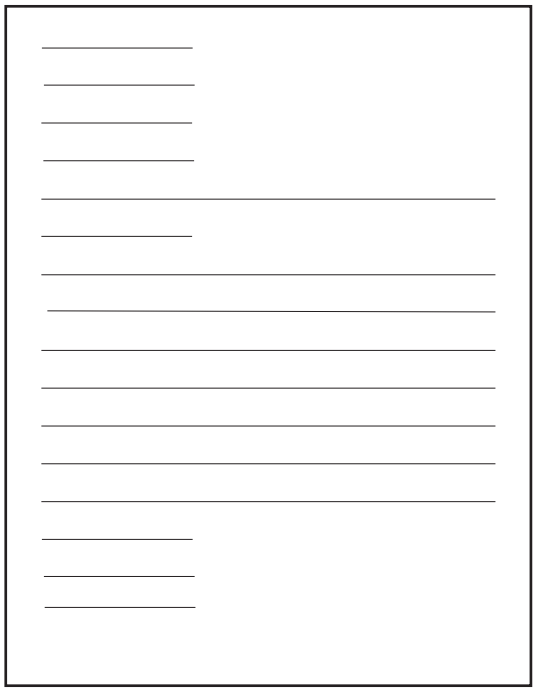
So How do I Know What Goes with What?

Here are some simple examples of grouping objects into sets or elements:

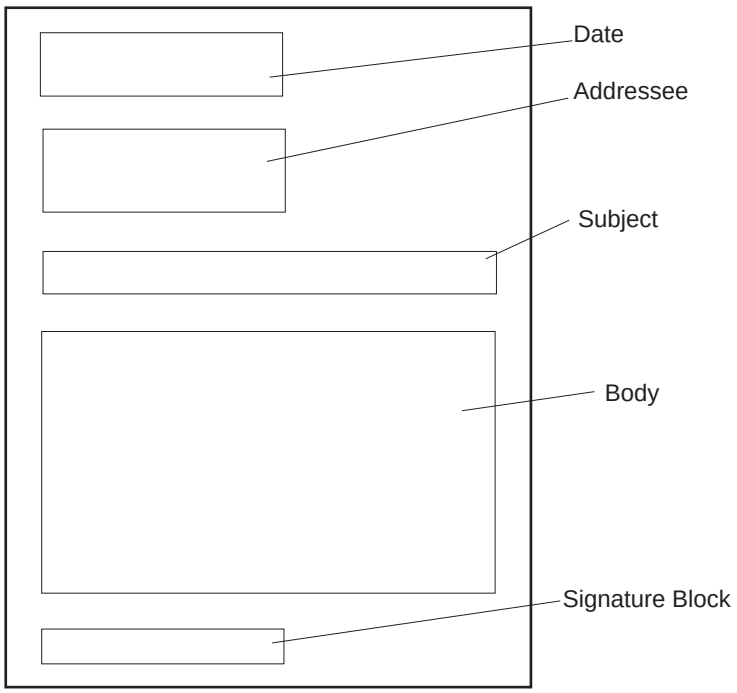
In a letter:

Element 1:	The date
Element 2:	The addressee
Element 3:	The subject
Element 4:	The body

✗



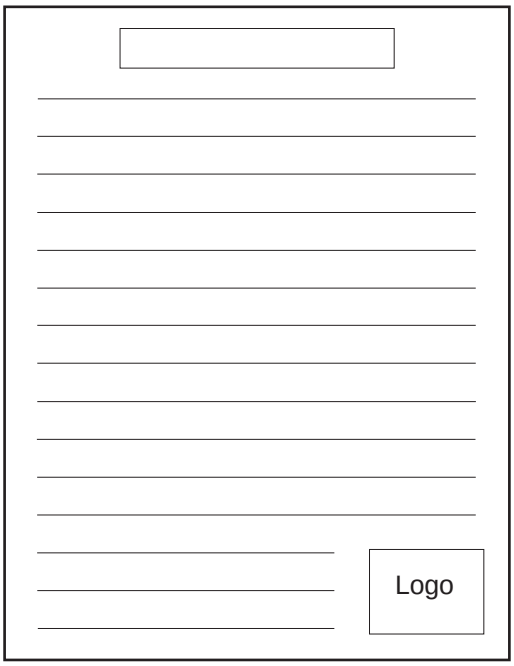
✓



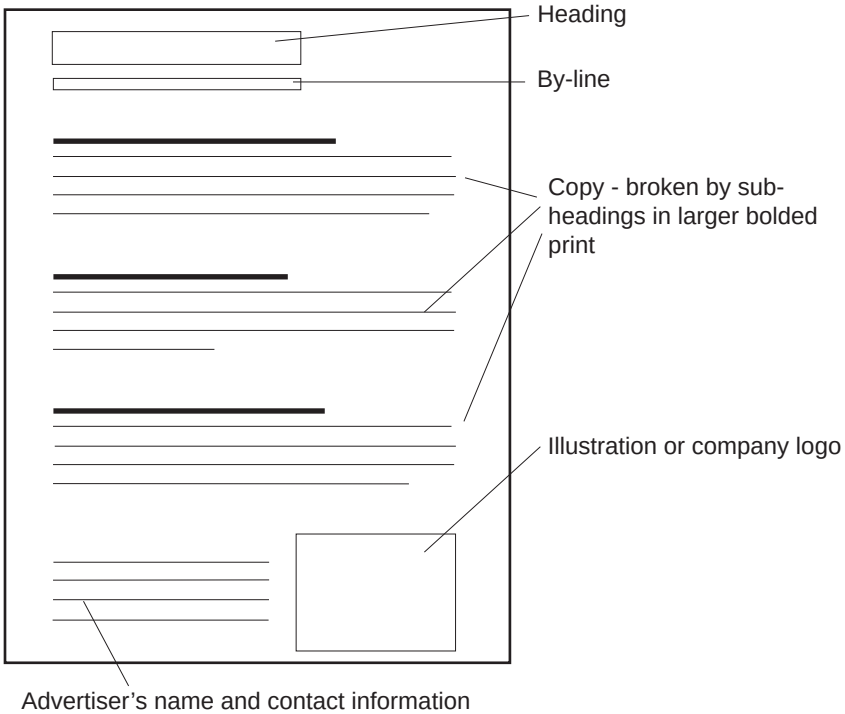
In an advertisement:

Element 1:	The heading
Element 2:	The by-line
Element 3:	The copy
Element 4:	The illustration
Element 5:	The advertiser's name, address, and phone

✗



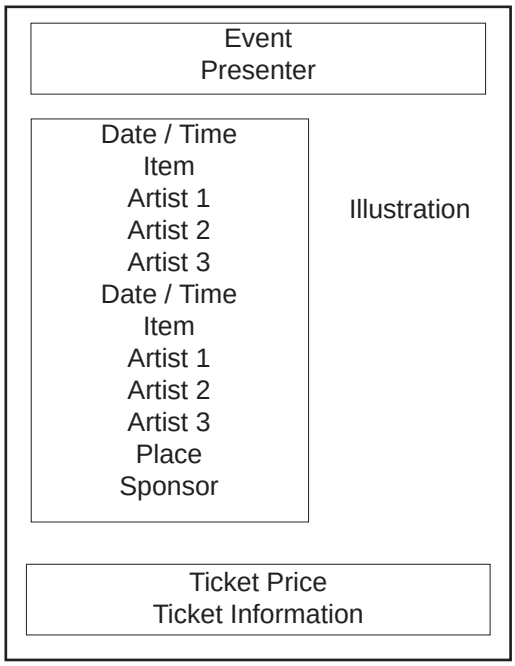
✓



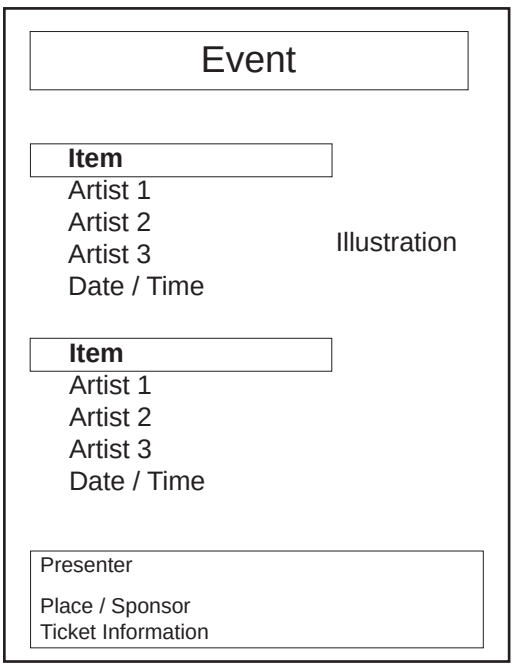
In a program for an event:

Element 1:	The heading (the name of the event)
Element 2:	Date, time and place
Element 3:	Ticket purchase information
Element 4:	Illustration (optional)
Element 5: artists,	Event information — grouping details of item, etc. under each heading

✗



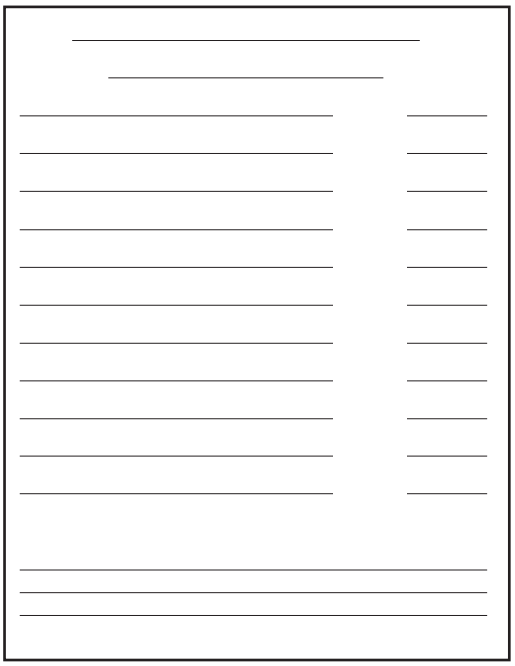
✓



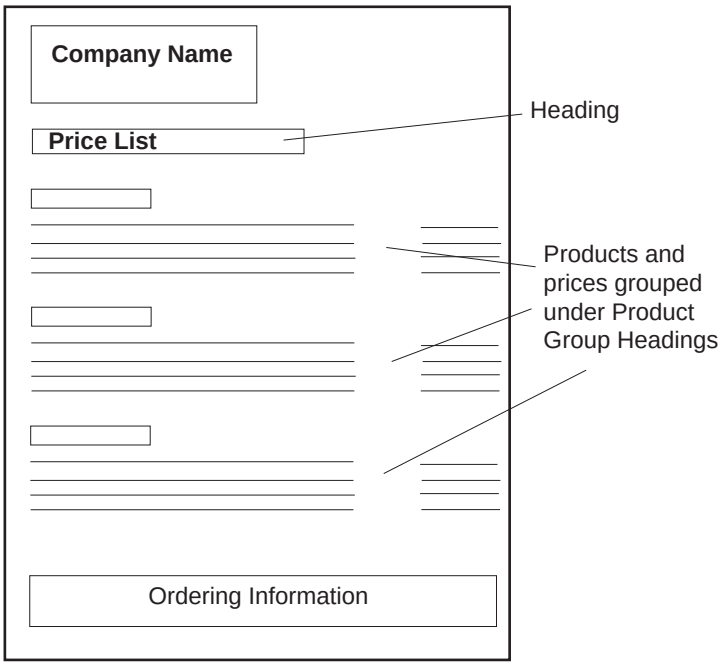
In a Product Price List

Element 1: Company information
Element 2: Heading (“Price List”)
Element 3: Product names and prices — grouped under Product Group name sub-headings
Element 4: Ordering information

✗

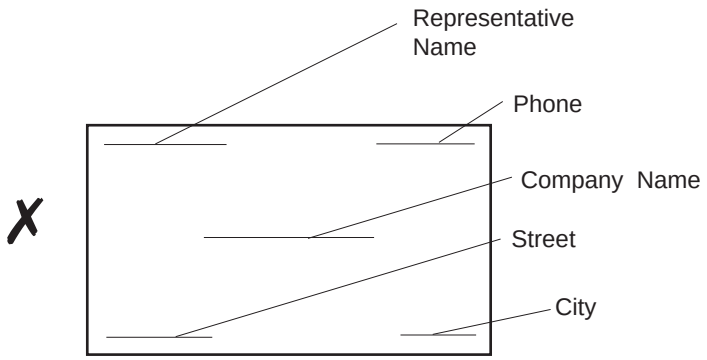


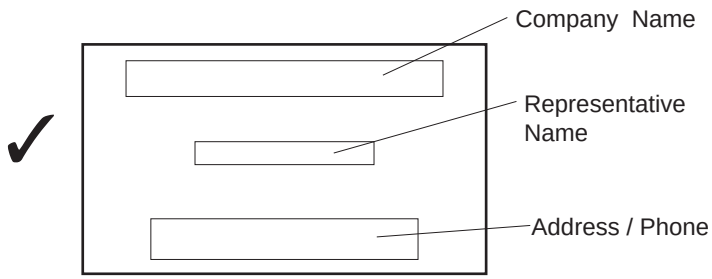
✓



On a Business Card:

Element 1:	Company name
Element 2:	Address/phone
Element 3:	Representative name





Setting up the Page Layout

This part may seem easy — but it often isn't as simple as it first appears.

In marketing a product recently, we produced a brochure on eight A4 pages stapled top left because of a temporary restriction in the type of printer we could access to print it. Later, we transferred the brochure to two A3 pages folded and stapled in the centre. The order form, an A4 sheet which had been added to the package as a separate piece, was then printed on a contrasting color paper and slipped into the centre. The effect was dramatically different and very much more effective. Reading the brochure was easier. The package was much more attractive. The page layouts had much greater impact. Sales response rates rose.

There are plenty of choices in page sizes, and you can always use a custom size and cut it. Generally, though, it's wise to stick to standard size pages for most jobs. The paper is less costly, easier to obtain, and can be readily handled by any type of paper-handling machine from printer or photocopier to paper folder.

If you are mailing the finished piece, consider carefully how it will fit into an envelope, how it needs to be folded and the effect on finished appearance, and the cost of postage.

Always fold a finished piece and place it in an envelope — then take it out and unfold and check the effect. A misplaced fold mark could ruin an otherwise superb piece of page layout artwork.

Some items can be mailed by simply folding and stapling or gluing — with an address either printed directly onto a section of the printed piece or on a sticky label. If you are using this method, take care with the positioning of the address label and return address, the positioning of text and graphics over folds, and the method of stapling or gluing. These can all have a major impact on the appearance of the finished product when it reaches its destination.

Here is a useful guide to paper sizes:

Code	**Size**	**Inches**	**Folds in half to:**	
Letter	216 x 297mm	5 x 11		
Legal	216 x 355mm	8.5 x 14		
Tabloid	279 x 431mm	11 x 7		
A3	297 x 420mm	8.26 x	A4	
A4	210mm x 297mm	11.69 x 16.54	A5	
B4	250mm x 352mm			B5
B5		6.9 x 9.84		

It is also useful to be aware of screen sizes for multimedia or electronically published documents. There is an increasing trend now to publishing on computer screen, video or television screen in preference to paper.

Sketch your page layout

This is a step many beginner desktop publishers miss. It is a vital part of getting the page design right. Don't just jump in and start placing things on pages.

Arranging on screen is never as simple or as effective, and even if you are fortunate enough to own a screen large enough to display the entire page at once clearly, you won't get an accurate impression of how the finished page will look.

It is important for a page layout artist to remember that people can be classified into different classes:

Audio:

People who respond mainly to what they hear or read. i.e. The text content.

Visual:

People who respond mainly to the overall visual impact of a document or presentation.

Kinesthetic:

People who respond to feel or sensations.

Compare the responses of two people to a consultant assisting with the page layout of an advertising piece:

> The consultant laid out an illustration of the pages. It was on the A3 pages intended to be used, center folded. The headlines were scribbled in where they were intended to go. Rough pencil-drawn boxes indicated the position of illustrations and major text sections. Pencil lines indicated text.
>
> The consultant was working with someone who was mainly audio-responsive, and someone who was intensely visual.
>
> The *audio-responsive* viewer was immediately concerned with what text would go where.
>
> The *visual* viewer would have happily sent the brochure to the target market with just the actual pictures in place and pencil lines where the words were to go. To him, it was of no importance what was actually written on the pages. An effective layout was all it would take to capture his interest and attract the desired response.

Think carefully about the implications of these responses. It means that you could spend a great deal of time and effort on a brilliantly worded advertisement which would be completely ignored by up to two-thirds of readers simply because the positioning of text and illustrations on the page is incorrect!

When sketching your page layout, mark which text will go in which boxes and where illustrations will be placed. Pay careful attention to the shape and positioning of text blocks, and to the amount and placement of *white space* on the page. The amount of empty space on a page is possibly the most important factor in the effectiveness of a layout. Space allows the eye and brain to rest. Too much print overloads the senses and tires the reader. It causes readers to ignore advertising or skip over the important content of a page.

The amount of empty space on a page is possibly the most important factor in the effectiveness of a layout.

Badly positioned empty space, on the other hand, causes the reader to wrongly associate information and therefore is damaging to comprehension. A wrongly positioned headline may appear to be a caption of an illustration and might, therefore, lose its impact entirely.

In determining how much text is permissible and how much white space is needed on a page, consider carefully the type of publication, the target reader, and the purpose of the document.

A technical paper is likely to comprise a great deal of text.

An advertisement, on the other hand, is more likely to be effective if it contains very little.

There are always exceptions to these rules — but think carefully about:

- the type of reader you are trying to attract;
- the type of publication the page appears in;
- what the reader is likely to be doing and what state of mind he/she may be in when turning to your page;
- what the reader wants from your page;
- how you want the reader to respond to your page.

All of these factors are very important in deciding how your finished page

Tired reader browsing newspaper or magazine	Ignores ads with lots of small text to read. Looks at pictures and headlines.
Casual reader browsing while waiting for someone	Reads only ads in which something grabs his attention.
Professional reading journal which he knows contains important information updates	Reads key articles in detail. May look for ads for products of genuine interest and read them carefully.
Recipient of an invitation	Looks to quickly ascertain where/when
Journalist receiving press release	Looks to quickly see what, who, when and how does it interest my reader

An Introduction to Software Tools

Publishing Software can be broadly divided into four categories:

Word processors

Designed for typing lengthy blocks of text, and equipped with a range of formatting tools for controlling the appearance of text and basic page layouts.

Some word processors are very simple and equipped with only basic tools. Others are sufficiently well-equipped with features to challenge some of the professional publishing software packages. Don't be mislead, though. Word processors are **NOT** the equivalent to publishing software and the best word processor can never replace a professional publishing software tool.

Word processors should be used for what they are designed to do — processing words!

Laying out pages, applying advanced typographic controls, and performing complex publication assembly is a task for publishing software.

Graphics design tools

Designed for page layouts with heavy graphics content — flyers, banners, invitations, advertisements, and the like.

These tools often feature good typographic control features and the ability to apply exciting text effects. Some even feature word processing tools like spell checkers. There are, however, primarily graphics tools.

Never assume they can substitute for a full scale publishing software product.

Printer, font management, and page layout utilities

These are specialist tools designed for automating tasks such as printing multiple copies of a piece (e.g. 10 or 12 business cards on a page); assembling a complex folded card or brochure with the print correctly positioned for folding; assembling booklets with pages in the correct order (last page on the left side of the sheet containing page 1); etc.

In this group also, we'll include for the time being specialist publishing tools designed for electronic publishing (including web page design).

Professional publishing software

One of these packages is a must for the serious professional. Your tool box will not be complete without it.

There is not a lot of variety in the available range, and these products tend to be quite expensive. They are also very full-featured, and equipped with a vast range of advanced tools for fine-tuning every aspect of your page layout, typographic control, and publication assembly.

Learning to use these products may require a great deal of training and/or

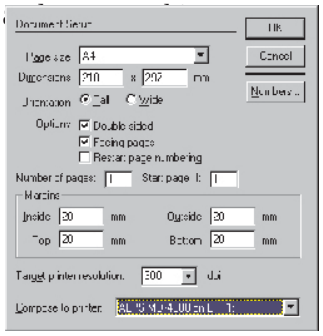
Getting Familiar with PageMaker™

The first step in document creation — regardless of the software you are using — is generally **Document** or **Page Setup**.

Typically, this step will involve specifying the page size, orientation, binding type and width, appearance of page numbers, size of margins, and whether or not the document is to be printed duplex (both sides of the page printed).

You may also need to specify the type of printer you are using and the printer resolution.

In PageMaker V6.x, the **Document Setup** menu option is under the **File** menu



Select page size from the drop-down list, or select custom to specify a nonstandard size.

If your screen shows the wrong measurement type (inches instead of centimeters, for example) or if you prefer to work in a different unit of measurement, exit this screen temporarily by pressing **CANCEL** and select **File** | **Preferences**.

When entering the margin widths, remember that some printers are incapable of printing to the extreme edge of the paper. You should check your printer manual to ascertain the “printable area” — how close the printer can print to the edge of the page.

It is possible that some text may be placed or overlap into the margin area. For example, page numbering and often chapter headings typically appear in the top or bottom margin area. Make sure that any text in the margin area does not extend beyond the printable area of the page.

For some page layouts, you may want the print to cover the entire page. If your printer does not support this, you can choose a larger size of paper in the paper size selection and set the margins to define the actual page size to be printed. After printing, you can then trim the finished work. Alternatively, you may be intending to take the work on disk to someone with a printer which can print larger format paper or edge to edge print.

Setting up Page Numbering:

Some page layout software allows you to create publications or books comprising a number of sections or chapters stored in separate files. This is very helpful — as smaller files are more manageable and less likely to become corrupted or damaged.

To define a book in *PageMaker*™, you simply open one of the included files and list all of the files in the correct order in the book list.

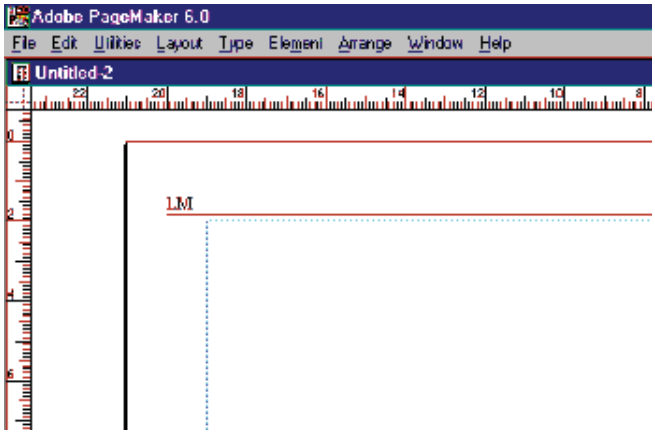
Page numbering usually commences at 1 in the first file and continues sequentially through each file. In the First Page Number box, you can specify, for example, that the first page of this chapter is page 25. The Book function will automatically update this as changes are made to the size of each chapter in the book. However, you might want to restart page numbering at a specific number for a given chapter regardless of the size of the previous chapter. For example, after an introduction with page numbers in small roman numerals, you may wish to begin numbering the pages of Chapter 1 at 1. Or you might want to start numbering pages of an Appendix or Bibliography at the end of the book at Page 1. To do this, check Re-Start Page Numbering and type the number to start at in the First Page Number box.

Under other circumstances, leave Restart page numbering unchecked and enter 1 in the First page number box. If you are working on chapter 3 and you know chapter 2 ended at page 25, you may want to type 26 in the first page number box. Remember that the Book Function will correct the page number for you when it assembles you book for printing as long as the Restart page numbering box is unchecked.

Click the Numbers button to select the style to be used for page numbers. You are offered a choice of roman numerals (small or capital letter style), letters or arabic numbers.

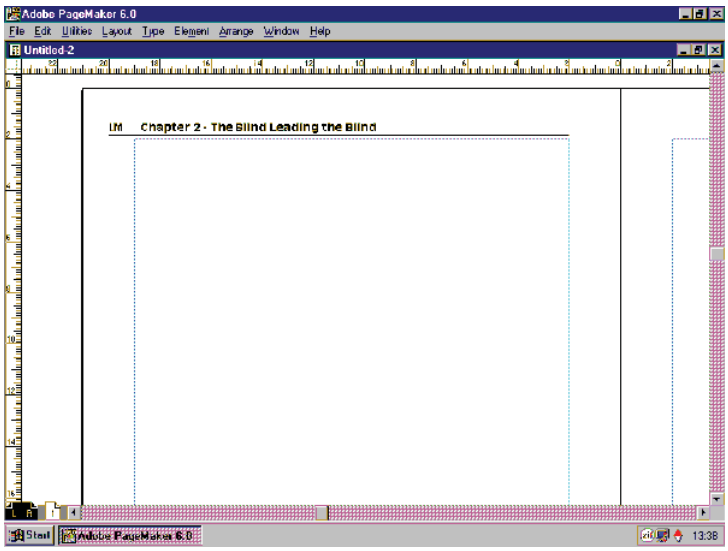
List more examples that come to mind. Ask your friends and associates what catches their eye in publications they read or browse at different times and in different situations — and why.

When you are reasonably certain how you want the document to look, you can go to the computer and begin.



With your document format specification complete, you are now ready to define your Master Pages. Not all software allows you to set up Master Pages, and some (like V5 and earlier of *PageMaker*) allow only one pair of master pages per document. *PageMaker* V.6.x allows you to define as many master pages as you wish and select which to apply to any selected page in your document. This feature enables you to retain consistency of layout with minimal effort and saves retyping and positioning of elements which repeat over all or blocks of pages — like page numbering and book title/chapter headings.

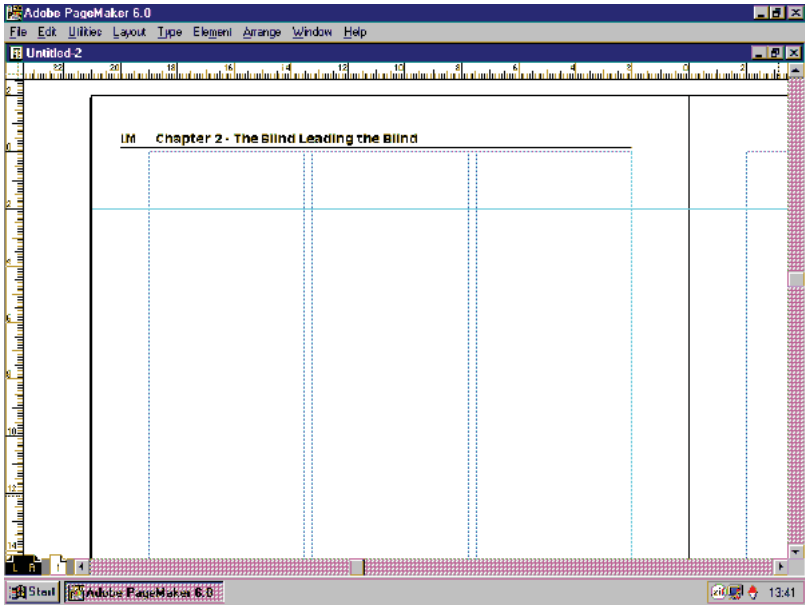
To create your master pages, click the page icon in the bottom left corner of the screen.



Your master page is now displayed. If you selected facing pages, two pages are shown to enable you to lay the left and right pages separately.

Place master elements on the page as you would place them on any ordinary page — remembering that whatever you place or type here will show on every page to which this master is applied.

Typically, you would type your page numbers on the master page. For example:



You may also want to place your publication title in the top margin area, and perhaps your chapter number and title.

You might want to define columns or place text block positioning guides. For example, you may want to ensure that if the first line is a heading, the top of the type is always located 2cm below the end of the top margin area.

PageMaker™ shows dotted lines to indicate positioning guides. You can place guides wherever you like on the page by clicking the mouse on the bottom of the ruler at the top or side of your work area, holding the left button down, and sliding the mouse to the desired location for the guide.

To ensure that you place guides accurately by measure, position the mouse cursor over the point at which your two rulers intersect.

Holding the mouse button, slide the mouse until it reaches the top left corner of the page or the point at which the top and side margin lines intersect. Release the mouse button. Notice that the 0 mark on the ruler is now at the point at which you released the mouse button. You can shift the 0 point to any point on the page to enable you to easily and accurately mark point x centromeres (or inches) apart.

Exercise 1:
Setting up a Document

Advanced Study: Adding Additional Master Pages

Typing Text

The next step in document creation is typing (or importing) text.

In *PageMaker*™, you can use the *Story Editor* like a basic word processor. Creating different "stories" (or text sections) separately makes positioning and rearranging easier. It also allows you to design pages on which stories *flow* in a defined pattern.

If you prefer — or if your material has been supplied by a third party on disk — you may type your text in almost any word-processing package or simply using a text editor.

PageMaker™ can import a wide range of text files types including text from most major word processors. If your word processor is not supported by *PageMaker*™, you can almost certainly use the **Export** or **Save As** function in your Word processor to save the text in a supported format.

Text only (or ASCII or DOS text) is always a simple and reliable file type to use and can be imported into almost any software — but you will find it is devoid of any formatting or style. If you want to use a generic and universally accepted file type which allows you to save formatting and style commands, choose RTF (Rich Text Format). This is also supported by almost all software, but allows you to retain the font, size, style and paragraph format selections made in your original document.

It is usually a good idea to avoid saving in *Word*™ or *WordPerfect*™ format unless you

are transferring the document to *PageMaker*™ on the same machine or network on which it was created and file size is unimportant. You will find that Word processor files are generally very much larger and more difficult to manage than simple ASCII text or RTF files.

If exchanging text files with associates, it is wise to adopt RTF format as the standard as it is convenient, easy to open with any software, and file sizes are compact.

If emailing, RTF will probably work fine as a file attachment. Text only is the safest and easiest way to send files by email or FTP (File Transfer Protocol) or by modem.

If you think about it, courtesy requires that you avoid using a file format which is specific to a brand name product when transferring files to another party. There is a very common tendency among computer users to email or pass files on disk in Microsoft formats. It is a rather rude practice unless you know for sure that the recipient has chosen to use Microsoft software and has product versions which can interpret the file you supply!

When there is a language available that can be universally understood, wouldn't you agree that you should communicate in that language — rather than expecting others to understand your language when it may be difficult or even impossible for them to do so? The assumption that **everyone** uses Microsoft products is completely incorrect. In fact, it is doubtful that even the majority of computer users choose to use *Microsoft Word*™ — and in any case, individuals are entitled to exercise freedom of choice. There are few industry standards at this time in computing — but certainly the use of ASCII text and RTF formats for emailing is a universally accepted standard, and a common courtesy.

Exercise 2 : Using the Story Editor

Exercise 3 :
Importing a Story

Exercise 4:
Positioning Text and Graphics Blocks

Activities

Collect examples of attractive and effective page layouts. Cut them from magazines and newspapers. Collect advertising flyers and brochures.

It is worth the effort to catalog a collection of good pieces according to the type of publication and the effect sought. When you have a layout job to do, you will be able to quickly locate samples of a similar type of job.

Study page layouts — both attractive and ugly; effective and ineffective — and write down your impression of the page design. List things you would change and how you would change them. List the features you like.

Learn the basic rules of page design and practice observing the layout of the television or movie screen when credits are shown or text appears in advertising.

As in every trade, practice makes perfect. The more you practice assessing and grading the work you see, the more aware you will become of what works and what looks unappealing.

Test your draft work by showing it to colleagues and asking for their response. It is possibly even worthwhile to take the actual words out and leave only pictures and patterns of lines or Xs to indicate text position, font, size, and