

January 2003

PRINTtips

Using Microsoft Publisher for Desktop Publishing



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For some graphic arts professionals, Microsoft Publisher is the software program they love to hate. It's not just that the program is only available on the PC platform, and most graphic arts professionals prefer Macs. It's also that in its earliest versions, Publisher did not support many of the essential functions of prepress - principally, color separations.

Today Publisher is getting a second look, in part because of its continuing popularity with printing customers. It is a good alternative to high-end design programs like Adobe PageMaker and Quark XPress, both in price and ease of use. And according to a Microsoft survey of Publisher 98/2000 users, half of the eight hundred respondents use Publisher for business applications - business cards, newsletters, flyers and brochures.

Understanding document formatting

Publisher, PageMaker and Quark XPress have one thing in common - the way they handle document formatting. Whereas a word processing program such as Word treats a document as a continuous flow of characters, a page layout program like Publisher is **object-oriented**. This means that all the document's elements are separate and distinct objects that can be moved, edited or deleted independently.

If you have ever used Word to format a trifold brochure, you are familiar with the difference between continuous and object-oriented formatting. In Word, a formatting change anywhere in the flow of characters affects the entire document. Adding so much as a period or extra space may throw off an entire, carefully



formatted line ending, table, column, panel or page break. Worse yet, a change in printer drivers (such as printing the file on two different laser printers) may cause an unwanted shift in text. Object-oriented formatting, by contrast, anchors elements in place on each page or section of the document. A change in one section does not have to affect other sections.

For Word users who want to improve control of document formatting, the move from word processing using Word to page layout using Publisher is an easy step. Many of the skills used in Word - keyboard commands, for instance - are directly transferable to Publisher, giving it a familiar feel and encouraging the transition.

Early versions of Publisher

In its very early versions, Publisher was intended for printing to the desktop and for viewing on a monitor or video screen, not for creating files to be used in commercial printing applications. Publisher offered gray scale and only one color model (RGB). It did not support the color model necessary for offset printing in full color - CMYK.

Using Microsoft Publisher for Desktop Publishing (Continued)

“The Pantone matching system (PMS) is the most widely used such system in commercial printing.”

“Offset printing uses the CMYK color space or the Pantone matching system.”

In addition, Publisher, like all PC-based programs, uses TrueType fonts as an alternate to PostScript Type 1 fonts. The PostScript output devices that are the standard in a graphics and printing workflow, such as high resolution laser printers, imagesetters and lithographic film makers, could not reliably render TrueType fonts during raster image processing. Consequently, outputting a Publisher file was risky for a commercial printer.

Responding to frustrated Publisher document creators and frustrated commercial printers, in 1999 Microsoft convened a graphics industry panel to study the limitations of Publisher for commercial printing and to recommend changes. The result was a major change in Publisher that significantly improved its support for commercial printing applications.

Color models

For commercial printers, an important change in Publisher 2000 is the inclusion of the CMYK color model. A **color model or color space** uses precise numerical values to define the range of color the model can produce. The visible spectrum contains millions of colors, and each device used in commercial printing reproduces a unique subset of the range - its specific **color gamut**. And though the color gamut for different devices overlap, they don't match exactly.

To illustrate, Figure 1 shows the entire visible spectrum. Within the spectrum is the color space for an RGB device (such as a computer or video monitor) and the color space for the CMYK process ink colors. You can see that there are some greens, magentas and violets that lie within the RGB color gamut but outside the CMYK color gamut. Printing presses can only produce color in the CMYK color gamut; therefore, if your document is using the RGB color model, it may contain colors that lie outside the CMYK color gamut, and therefore not reproducible on the printing press.

Color matching

Another improvement in Publisher 2000 is support of the Pantone matching system. A matching system is a set of formulas for producing ink mixtures using various combinations of standard colors. The Pantone matching system (PMS) is the most widely used such system in commercial printing — from various combinations of only fourteen standard colors plus transparent white, thousands of colors can be created. Printers refer to these as **spot colors**.

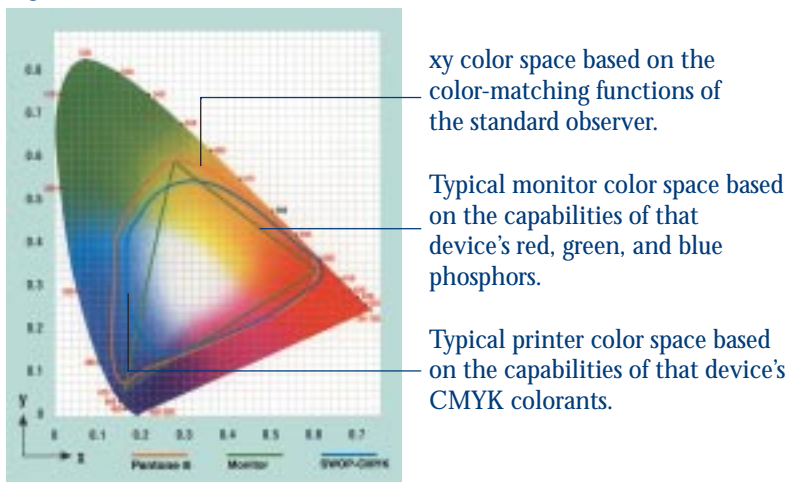
Selecting the correct color space

Publisher 2000 supports three color spaces: RGB (red/green/blue); HSL (hue/saturation/luminosity); and CMYK (cyan/magenta/yellow/black) plus the Pantone matching system. Publisher defaults to the RGB color space; keep this in mind when you are preparing a document for offset printing.

Offset printing uses the CMYK color space or the Pantone matching system. Although it is possible to prepare a document in the RGB color space and convert it to CMYK or PMS before submitting it to us, we recommend that you work in the appropriate color space during document creation.

One more caution - if you intend to print in Pantone match colors, select your colors exclusively from the Pantone swatches rather than the color selector, and return to the swatch each time you specify a color. This will ensure that like colors are together on the same press plate and that the proper number of press plates will be produced from your file.

Figure 1



Using Microsoft Publisher for Desktop Publishing (Continued)

Submitting your Publisher file

Because of the support for commercial printing applications added to Publisher 2000 and 2002, we prefer that you submit files created from these versions.

There are two ways for you to prepare your Publisher file for submission to us:

- use the **Pack-and-Go wizard** to collect graphics, fonts and files; or
- save and submit as a PostScript file.

We cannot give you a hard-and-fast rule for selecting the method. Depending on the nature of your specific project, we may sometimes prefer the native Publisher file to a PostScript file. When you are in the planning stages for your project, call us at (513) 248-2121 and we'll advise you. But whichever file format you use, remember to print a hard copy (both composite and color separated) to submit with the file.

“There are two ways for you to prepare your Publisher file for submission to us.”

Preparing for offset printing

To ensure that your Publisher document prints as you intended, we ask that you keep the following points about fonts and graphics in mind when you're preparing a file for offset printing:

Don't mix PostScript Type 1 and TrueType Fonts

Although you can use either TrueType or PostScript Type 1 fonts in your document, it may be best to use only TrueType fonts because the Pack-and-Go wizard will gather them. Do remember to check the fonts in any graphics you are embedding in your Publisher document to be sure they are TrueType, since Publisher only embeds TrueType fonts. In Publisher 2002, all two hundred fonts are fully licensed for

embedding and are automatically embedded in the publication when you use the Pack-and-Go wizard. In Publisher 2002, all TrueType font names are preceded by a double T symbol.

Avoid copying and pasting text from other programs or from the Web

If you copy and paste text into your document from another application or from the Web, you may be pasting a font that is not licensed for embedding. If you do copy and paste text, change the font of the pasted text to a Publisher TrueType font before you give us the file.



Q. *Does Publisher have an easy way to check my document before preparing it for submission to MacMillan Graphics?*

A. Yes. In **Microsoft Publisher 2000 Companion**, there are instructions for preflighting your Publisher document. The steps include verifying fonts, verifying linked graphics, editing linked graphics (if necessary), verifying colors, verifying page size and setup, determining trapping requirements, clearing existing traps (if necessary), setting automatic trapping (if desired), printing laser proofs (composite and separated).



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