

Adobe InDesignCS Review

by Steve Smith

First of all, a round of applause and a big thank you to Adam Pratt.

A Little History

InDesign vs. Quark. Its a head to head battle that Adobe has been touting for years and Quark has been ignoring. Up until InDesign 2.0 Adobe has been claiming it as the "Quark Killer" and really wasn't. Version 2.0 showed great promise but couldn't break into the market. As a prepress operator I saw little InDesign work (actually one client).

Enter OS X

With the introduction of OS X, Adobe was the first to come out with an OS X version of their page layout program, InDesign 2.0. Quark was still in OS 9 with version 5, (not a big hit in the world of printing, most designers and printers stayed in 4, which took us a few years to switch from 3.3). With Quark taking the slow boat route to OS X, InDesign caught on with the first switchers to OS X. Still not a great majority but a growing number.

Quark 6 the real Quark Killer

With the release of Quark 6 all things look good for us die hard Quarkites. OS X native and able to make PDFs, what a deal! Quark OS X was a lead bomb waiting to drop, on my G4 dual processor it took too long to open than my patience would allow. It ran sluggish like, I was working in Soft Windows™. It sped up quite nicely on my G5 but what a pain to transfer from one machine to another. I had to call Quark to get a second installation code to load it on my G5.

No, this is not a review of Quark 6, but an introduction to a major reason for "The Switch" Passages made from Quark to InDesign. Adobe's Adam Pratt was instrumental in getting enough licensed copies and learning materials to make it a no brainer.

Apples and Oranges

Comparing Quark to InDesign is like comparing apples to oranges. The only common thread is that they are both professional standard page layout programs. If you have worked in Quark all your professional life, like I have, finding the same commands or

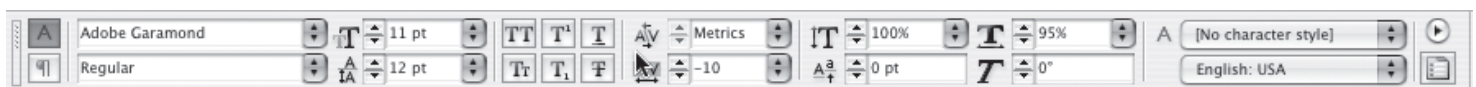
similar commands might require a trip to the help menu. Like driving a Chevy all your life and then sitting in a Dodge, you know how drive down the road but when it rains you have to look for the wipers. The real difference that sets the two apart is the companies themselves. Adobe has established themselves as the industry standard in every major category, Publishing, Illustration, Web Layout and of course PDFs. They are the industry standard in customer relations as well. Adam Pratt demos products about once a year. Quark was at our meeting twice in the six or so years I've been a member and Macromedia I only remember seeing once.

Case in Point-When Quark was at our meeting last year The Passages staff had to ambush their rep after the meeting to try and get a volume discount or package deal so we could acquire a few copies of Quark to allow members who waited to join the Passages staff but were hindered by not having Quark. When Adam was at our meeting he came to us and worked with us to get enough licensed copies of InDesign to accommodate our needs. How many

"Instrument Panels"



Quark's "Measurements" panel



InDesign's "Control" panel for character



InDesign's "Control" panel for paragraph

Quark's measurement panel is the center of basic type changes such as font, size and type alignment any future tweaking requires going to the menu bar. InDesign's control panel switches from character to paragraph formatting and has all major tweaking controls right at your mouse tip.

products from Quark or Macromedia have you seen at raffle tables? Look on page 22 in the December Passages to see who's product lucky AI is holding.

Plus and Minuses

I have in worked in Quark every working day for over 10 years, "That's-a-lot-of-lay-out" So to switch to InDesign took a little doing, but after working with it during the past few Passages I think its well on its way to replacing Quark as the industry standard.

I have a few examples of the differences between InDesign and Quark. But first the real plus and minuses.

Quark gets a plus from me just because I know it so well. That's about it. InDesign from stability to interface and functionality gets the rest of the pluses.

As the two side bars show, InDesign's type control and master pages options are more easily accessible than Quark's plus InDesign's master pages are real master pages. I always felt Quark put master pages in as an after thought. Even Page Maker (pardon by French) had better master pages, as crude as they were. InDesign's master pages are the best of both world's. You can lock the elements down on all the master pages or release them on single pages of your choice for individual page alterations. Quark master page elements can be altered on every page which can lead to elements shifting per page.

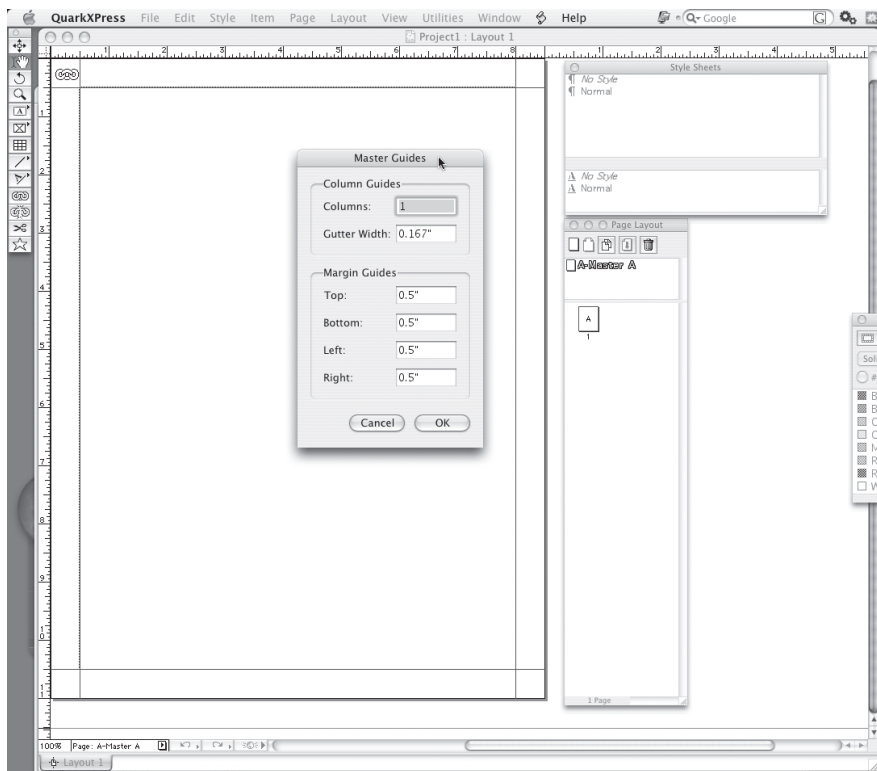
The type control panel is like a Swiss Army Knife. You can access font, size, horizontal and vertical scaling plus paragraph and character styles all from the control panel. In Quark you have buy extensions to accomplish this. That's another hundred or more bucks.

There are still nuances or different commands such as rules that I have to remember where they are so I don't have to go searching every time I want to put a rule (line) over or under type.

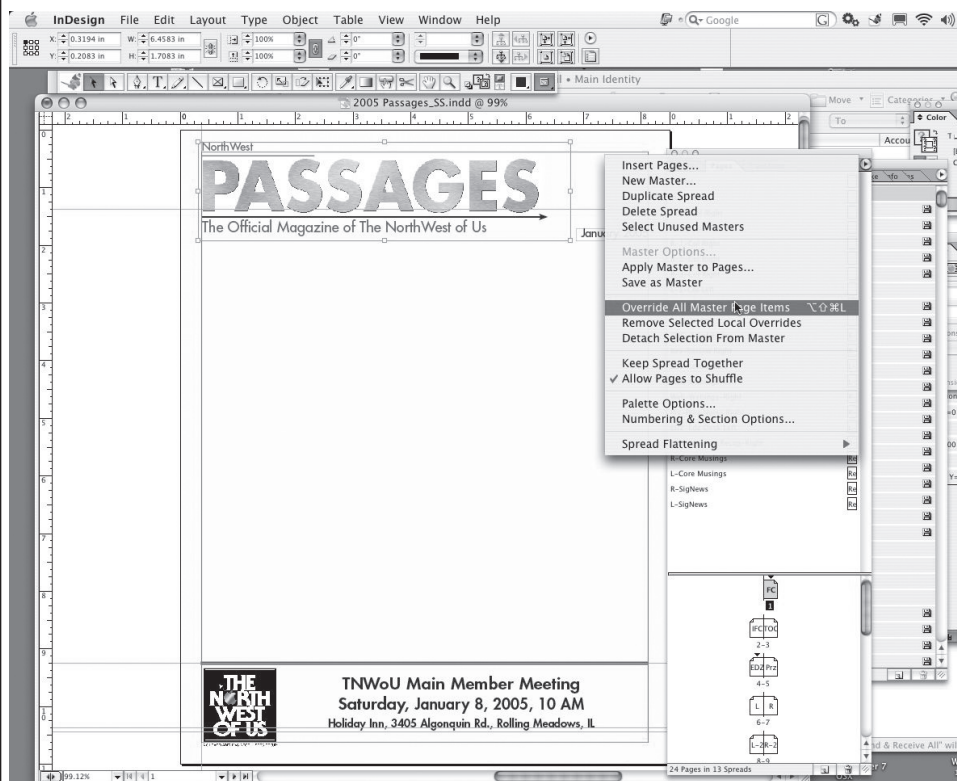
Final Thoughts

The switch to InDesign went smoother then expected, much smoother. The more I use InDesign the more impressed I am with its ease of use, stability in not crashing, and easier access to commands. I guess the final proof of how impressed I am is when clients looking to upgrade ask me which should they get InDesign or Quark, lately my answer has been InDesign. 🍌

"Mastering Master Pages"



Quark's master page options



InDesign's master page options

Quark offers limited master page options while Indesign options are more diverse and, again like the type controls, right at your mouse tip.