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QX-Tools 2.0 Features Highlights

OVERVIEW

As the first developer to combine multiple software add-ons into one complete and affordable package, the Portland, Oregon-based Extensis Corporation quickly established itself as a pioneer in the publishing technology market. Since its original release in August 1995, QX-Tools has become the best-selling collection of XTensions for QuarkXPress. Now, with the release of QX-Tools version 2.0, Extensis continues to demonstrate its dedication to providing powerful, well-rounded XTensions packages designed for a wide range of QuarkXPress users.

NEW FEATURES

Adding to its already robust feature set, the most recent version of QX-Tools offers the following new components:

QX-SmartBars

As an addition to the already popular QX-Bars toolbar system, QX-SmartBars acts as an agent that watches for the most commonly used XPress commands and automatically creates a corresponding toolbar based on the user's most frequently performed page layout functions. With one-click access to frequently used menu selections and commands, users can enjoy QX-SmartBars shortcuts without having to actually build the custom toolbars themselves.

QX-Effects

QX-Effects lets users enjoy Photoshop plug-in-compatible effects features such as drop shadows, glows, bevels and embosses, without ever leaving XPress. Using QX-Effects, users avoid the extra steps of launching Adobe Photoshop in order to create a special effect, then importing the edited image back into QuarkXPress. Via an interactive WYSIWYG preview, QX-Effects offers Drop Shadow, Glow, Bevel, and Emboss graphic effects that can be created directly in XPress, saved for future use, and applied again with one mouse click.

QX-FineTune

Using QX-FineTune, users can format paragraphs, boxes, text, and paragraph rules quickly and interactively—without ever calling up a single dialog box. While still taking advantage of the program's precise numeric controls, XPress users can enjoy the immediacy and accessibility of manipulating attributes via the QX-FineTune palette instead of wasting valuable time hunting through menus and dialogs in order to perform simple functions.

QX-CopyStyle

Users can copy and paste entire sets of attributes for paragraphs, pictures, text, frames, structure, box color, and trapping from one box to another within QuarkXPress using QX-CopyStyle. Not only does QX-Style help ensure design consistency once a box has been tweaked to perfection, it makes such attention to detail faster and easier than ever before.

QX-FindChange

Document-wide changes that would normally involve tedious and time-consuming individual editing can now be made in seconds using QX-FindChange. Users can perform search-and-replace functions on character styles as well as on graphic elements such as boxes, rules, colors, and borders. QX-FindChange encourages experimentation and creativity by offering the ability to quickly see the effects of specific design changes without having to manually enter each and every modification.

QX-DocStyles

Replacing the XPress New Document dialog box with one that presents additional options, QX-DocStyles lets users create and save custom New Document settings which can then be accessed via a pop-up menu. QX-DocStyles document configuration options include Portrait or Landscape Orientation, Page Count, Page Size, Section Start, and Default Document Name. With the ability to predefine custom layouts, users can get a head start in creating documents such as business cards and other corporate identity pieces, magazine pages, catalogs, book covers, and packaging.

Popular features from 1.0 still available

The features that helped to make QX-Tools the top-selling XTensions package are still available in version 2.0:

QX-Manager

This popular component of QX-Tools lets users choose which XTensions will load at startup. Additionally, QX-Manager now automatically moves unused XTensions into a disabled XTensions folder, freeing unused memory and allowing QuarkXPress to load more quickly. The improved QX-Manager also prevents unwanted demo XTensions from automatically converting QuarkXPress into a demo version.

QX-Layers

This floating palette lets users assign objects in a QuarkXPress document to different layers with the ability to hide, show, and rearrange the layers. Adding to these functions, QX-Layers now features the ability to restrict movement of objects to within a single layer. What's more, new objects can be assigned to a selected layer, rather than to the topmost or default layer.

QX-Scaler

This floating palette lets users resize groups of objects by any unit of measurement or percentage with one command, and includes the abilities to undo changes and to scale objects in free-form fashion. QX-Scaler is ideal for taking existing layouts and resizing them for a different purpose. For example, a book publisher could proportionally scale down all the elements of a book cover for the purpose of placing it in a catalog showing all of its book covers.

QX-Styles
This enhancement to QuarkXPress style sheets lets users create and apply character-based styles to selected text, instead of being constrained to paragraph-level formatting. Users can create a style for emphasizing words, then apply it to particular words throughout the document. Changes made to the style sheet after the character-based styles have been applied will be automatically made to the appropriate text throughout the document.

QX-Viewer
The QX-Viewer floating palette offers 900% magnification and displays thumbnail images of pages, making navigation of a QuarkXPress document easier and faster. Use QX-Viewer to quickly locate a page in a long document or display two views of the same page simultaneously. The buttons at the top of the QX-Viewer floating palette let users access the first, last, next, and previous pages with one click.

QX-Filters
This floating palette lets users run Adobe Photoshop™-compatible plug-ins (such as Extensis Intellihance™) on images without ever leaving QuarkXPress.

QX-Dingbats
The QX-Dingbats floating palette displays difficult-to-remember symbol characters, letting users enter symbols into a document using one click and without having to recall keyboard commands.

QX-Bars
This set of preconfigured and customizable toolbars offers one-click access to hundreds of XPress commands, tools and menus.

QX-Print
The QX-Print utility enhances the XPress print dialog box by letting users print non-consecutive page ranges, print multiple plates, save a selected portion of a page as an EPS image, and print spot colors as process colors.

QX-Tips & Tricks
This handy component offers an on-screen Tip of the Day for QuarkXPress written by best-selling QuarkXPress Tips & Tricks author David Blatner and can be searched by keyword to locate tips relating to a specific feature.

CONCLUSION
All told, the new QX-Tools 2.0 offers 5 completely new components as well as enhancements to existing features, for a total of 15 powerful components packed into one affordable package.