
DTP & mini Office Publisher

This short chapter reviews fundamental issues related to DTP. If you are confused about DTP - what it is, or when to use it - this section will help you. Whatever your background and experience, this chapter will give you a new perspective on desktop publishing.

What is DTP software?

There is a wide range of applications that could be called DTP software. They include drawing packages, paint programs, scanning software, clipart collections, font packs, and (according to some people) even word processors! It can get real confusing.

In fact, DTP software is usually taken to mean *page make-up and layout* software such as PageMaker, Europress mini Office Publisher, Quark XPress, Corel Ventura, and Microsoft Publisher. These packages are designed to combine objects from different sources and assemble them into a page: text from your word processor, vector illustrations from your drawing package, tables and lists from your spreadsheet, and bitmap pictures from your paint and scanning software. Typically, a DTP package lets you focus on the *design and style* of your page, while the *content* comes from other applications.

DTP packages will work with your Windows fonts, and import files from virtually any clipart collection.

Who uses DTP?

DTP software has revolutionized the graphics arts industry, and most designers and printers now use some kind of DTP package. It's quicker and more cost-effective than traditional methods. Businesses have followed as they discover that DTP allows them to use existing PCs to bring publishing in-house and replace expensive outside design services.

Larger corporations have always been aware of the benefits of good looking documents and marketing publications, but with inexpensive packages like mini Office Publisher available, now smaller businesses and the self-employed can produce high impact designs. Stores, restaurants, doctors, lawyers, and many more are discovering the benefits of using their own PC for publicity and sales material.

The biggest change is a result of the dramatic fall in the cost of computers. Inexpensive PCs are now common in the home, schools, colleges, charities, and churches, and one of the most popular software categories is low-cost DTP software. Because of this, ease of use and enjoyment value are critical as most people have little experience of publishing, and often want to produce fun pieces like party invites, birthday cards, and so on.

mini Office Publisher addresses the entire publishing spectrum, matching different needs with the two power levels - Intro and Professional. Assistants and fun Hints and Tips make learning mini Office Publisher enjoyable, but can be switched off by advanced users.

mini Office Publisher is a groundbreaking product that brings all the advantages of high-end DTP, including Vogue-quality full color publishing, within everybody's reach. And it produces excellent results on dot-matrix, ink-jet, and laser printers too. It's powerful, yet affordable and totally accessible.

The benefits of DTP

- **Creativity.** It's easy to design a wide range of documents. You can produce virtually any publication, and make it look great. From corporate-style marketing materials to fun-stuff party invites, you can do it all. Ads, brochures, business stationery (cards, letterheads, compliments slips, invoices), flyers, forms, newsletters, notices, handouts, event programs, posters, price lists, reports, announcements, invitations, greetings cards, and much more.
- **Control.** You decide what gets done, how and when. And you decide when it's good enough. If you need to do a rush job or make last minute changes, you don't have to wait until someone else can schedule it in for you.
- **Cost.** With your PC and mini Office Publisher you have a complete publishing workstation that only a few years ago would have cost tens of thousands of dollars. Doing your own design and production can save thousands. mini Office Publisher pays for itself the first time you do it yourself rather than going to a third-party.
- **Enjoyment.** DTP is fun. It has broad appeal to people's creativity, and a definite end result (the printed page) which is immensely gratifying. Let's face it; in comparison, spreadsheets, databases, and the rest are just plain dull!

What good DTP provides

DTP software doesn't aim to replace word processors, as for many tasks such as form letters for list merging, manuscripts, and technical documentation they're great. And for many DTP tasks you may prefer to use your word processor to create and edit your publication text and then import it. Rather, DTP aims to complement word processing by letting you easily undertake design tasks where word processing is weakest. mini Office Publisher, in particular, is not overloaded with long document features and is heavily focused on the layout requirements of shorter publications.

The rise of Windows word processors appears to have blurred the distinction between word processing and DTP by supporting picture import, multiple columns, and so on. But, the fact is, word processors are designed to type in text as quickly as possible, automatically format text into pages, and print out the document. Their focus is inevitably on *content* rather than *design*. When you need greater ease-of-use, more complex formatting, high graphics content, color, or simply better looking publications, you've entered the DTP zone...

- **Ease of use**
mini Office Publisher builds on the classic DTP principle - the direct manipulation of objects on the page. With a ToolBox of design aids, and the ChangeBar for interactive adjustments, mini Office Publisher brings you the ultimate in ease-of-use. And mini Office Publisher is *pasteboard* based which means you can easily drag and drop anything, anywhere.
- **A True WYSIWYG environment**
With DTP, what you see on the screen *really is* what you get when you print. Without wasting time and paper with test prints, you can visually check graphics position, line endings, type formatting, and wrap-text-to-fit around graphics as you work.
- **Text positioning**
Unlike word processors that focus on one text stream, DTP enables you to break your text into many blocks for greater flexibility. mini Office Publisher is particularly adept because it is the only product that provides *both* free and frame text. It's easy to place free text (a few words or a whole paragraph), simply by dragging the text block around. This is great for placing headlines or captions in any publication and perfect for most elements of ads, flyers, posters and so on. And mini Office Publisher allows you to flow text around, or *inside*, irregular shapes.

- **Frames**

Good DTP software lets you draw frames *and link them together* to control text flow. Each sequence of linked frames has its own text stream and can flow from anywhere to anywhere - even from the bottom of a page to the top, or the last page to the first. mini Office Publisher is exceptionally flexible and allows you to use the mouse to visually adjust margins, and lay out multiple columns of varying widths and depths in any frame.

- **Color**

The demands of color publishing require sophisticated solutions to cope with color art and photos, and print separations. High end DTP lets you import full color (24-bit) images, and apply colors to your text and drawn graphics. Then you can print directly in color to a color ink jet such as the HP DeskJet 550C, or a color PostScript printer such as a QMS ColorScript. Or produce film separations for commercial printing. mini Office Publisher supports industry-standard Pantone color selection, and can produce both *spot color overlays* and *process color separations*. Automatic trapping and support for pre-separated CMYK TIFFs and the Aldus OPI specification allows mini Office Publisher to produce the ultimate in DTP quality.

- **Layout Control**

To help you work quickly and easily on your page, DTP includes snapping based layout tools (rulers and guides), object alignment features, and extensive view options. mini Office Publisher lets you zoom out to see the whole page, or zoom in at any magnification up to 400% for detailed work. And DTP, and mini Office Publisher in particular, is highly mouse-driven to make layout easier.

- **Type Flexibility**

High end DTP provides extensive typographic adjustment for fine tuning text appearance. Sophisticated H&J (hyphenation and justification), Letter and word spacing, variable line spacing (leading), condensed and expanded type, kerning and tracking, variable slant (artificial italic), patterns, colors, and rotation are all included in mini Office Publisher.

- **Image Import**

DTP lets you import images in all industry-standard formats and quickly change the size and position. With mini Office Publisher you can also crop (only display a portion of the image, e.g., just head and shoulders from a full length shot), and colorize (apply colors and shades for "watermark" and other effects)

- **Word Processor Integration**

All DTP packages will import text from industry-standard word processors. mini Office Publisher also includes an *export as picture* function that lets you create something (logos, fancy headlines, cover pages) in mini Office Publisher and then save it as a graphic for use in your word processor. mini Office Publisher also has an integrated word processor, WritePlus, with spelling, thesaurus, and other writing tools so you can work entirely with mini Office Publisher if you prefer.

- **Drawing Tools**

DTP software gives you tools for quickly and easily drawing lines, boxes, and ovals on your page to annotate illustrations and add emphasis to your layout. It's easy to move and resize them and then apply a wide range of line styles, fills, and colors.

- **Precision Placement and Rotation**

High end DTP lets you put objects on your page with very fine control. For example, mini Office Publisher allows any object to be positioned to 0.001 inch, and rotated to 0.01 degree, either visually or by dialog.

- **Object Integration using OLE**

Many DTPs allow you to directly import a CorelDRAW! illustration or a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet directly in you page using the OLE (Object Linking and Embedding) features of Windows.

What next?

That's given you an overview of where mini Office Publisher fits in the DTP and software world.

So what next?

Now it's time for the *mini Office Publisher Tour*, which takes you through the features and methods of working with mini Office Publisher. It gives you a chance to explore and experiment.