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The Ugly Truth

I have discovered an ugly truth about myself. I prefer to spend all my free time alone with InDesign and my computer. It's my new *obsession* —I don't recall what occupied my time prior to this semester. Now I have very little time for the activities I previously enjoyed. No time to cook, paint or to play tennis. InDesign has come into my life. *Luckily* my husband is not the jealous type. My family will attest to the fact this is an unhealthy relationship that is occupying all my time!

I began this semester as a complete novice, as far as Adobe programs were concerned. I was familiar with Quicken and Quickbooks but had no experience with any type of desktop publishing software. I work part-time for a major retailer and start my workdays at 3 am, which I have discovered is perfect for allowing me more time after work to spend with InDesign obsessing on my homework. (I am also enrolled in HTML). Prior to taking InDesign, I used my home computer less than an hour a day. It is very different now. Even my family has turned against me. When tell them, "I'm working on my homework" they are extremely annoyed. They snicker and whisper amongst themselves, "Mom has turned into a NERD!!"

Features used on this Document

- Selection and Direct Selection Tools
 - Ruler Guides
 - Kuler theme colors
 - Gradient Colors
 - Eyedropper Tool
 - Paragraph Formatting
 - Character Formatting
 - File .. Place Command
 - Threaded Text
 - Layers
 - Transparency
 - Drop Shadow
 - Text Wrapping
 - Creating Paths
 - Typing on a Path
 - Typing into a text frame
 - Grouping Multiple Objects
 - Copying Objects
 - Dynamic Spelling
 - Insert Special Characters
 - Gap Tool
 - Line Tool
 - Object Arrange
 - Zoom In/ Zoom Out
 - Pages Panel
 - Preflight Panel
 - Corner Options
 - Rotate Tool
 - Scale Tool
 - Tons of the Edit Undo Command!

Stepping out with

ADOBE
INDESIGN 1

CS 72.11 A
InDesign 1



Why InDesign?

InDesign is used to style most magazine and newspapers in print today. In addition it is the front runner in the world of desktop publishing as far as designing, documents, book covers, CD jackets, menus, posters and promotional materials. InDesign has also been innovative in the development of interactive e-magazines like Martha Stewarts. I registered for InDesign because it sounded like a “fun” class I only thought of InDesign as a way to make business cards and promotional fliers. I was so *naïve*. InDesign is a very versatile and complex desktop publishing program.

Workflow

My workflow differed from students with graphic design experience, I produced *very basic* documents very slowly. I would start each project with unbridled enthusiasm, a few graphics and text files and a fair amount of sheer terror. Using Master Pages to stamp repetitive design elements onto pages helped create consistent designs. My work was not beautiful, just consistent. Ruler guides were used to help with layout. Using the tools to change the layout over and over was exhausting. Adding paragraph style was a good way to quickly change the look of the document. Once completed they were made into PDF's. I spent so many hours in the SRJC computer lab that I was forced to buy CS5 to allow me to work at home so my family would not report me as a runaway. I would finish each assignment and sent it to Cyndi

as a PDF with an enormous sense of relief. Most often I was not satisfied with the end result, but at the same time I was very thankful that the deadline had forced me to quit obsessing about the assignment and I sent it off.

My Favorite Moments

I felt like I made gigantic strides when I worked on the assignment on Character and Paragraph Style. We didn't use graphics on this assignment so the designers in my class weren't able to outshine me with their tricky Photoshopped photos and their beautiful colored documents. I was able to use the paragraph and character formatting to make my simple black and white text look GOOD! I loved typing on a path, in my case within a circle and then using fonts and kerning to make the text look just right. I spent hours on that lesson and loved every minute of it.

Hardest Thing To Master

Easily the hardest thing to master was InDesign itself. It is complicated and mysterious. After spending substantial amounts of time with InDesign the last few months we are still not on familiar ground, but I am intrigued and will continue to pursue its secrets. It is evident to me Cyndi is an “InDesign Master”. I watched enviously as she demonstrated so gracefully, the different methods for threading text or how to use the newest features we studied each week. She is Ninja quick, switching from selection tool to the text or rectangle tool creating demos for us to view. She is anxious to share the secrets of the fly-out menus. She loves this program and her enthusiasm is inspiring. Master pages were difficult to understand but Cyndi helped de-mystify them and they became less intimidating to me.

Hints For Beginners

InDesign is a “fun” program to work with but it can easily become an obsession. As an Adobe novice I found that I needed to exercise patience when working with my projects and give myself time to work through them over and over. It is an ongoing creative process. Unlike other subjects of study there is never a time I felt I had come up with the absolute right answer. It's very subjective. Deadlines were my driving force to quit working on my assignments. I wish I would have purchased the program at the beginning of the semester. An additional reference manual would have been helpful at times.

My Journey

Because of InDesign I spent hours and hours each week in front of my computer working on my projects. My family was supportive, at first, but he novelty soon wore off. They wanted me to “know what to do” with InDesign so I could quickly produce business cards and brochures for their businesses. They waited and waited. InDesign isn't just for fun I explained, it's much harder than I thought! I told them it was broken up into 3 semesters and I after I finished InDesign 2 I could publish my own book. I finally won them over the day I showed them the assignment I completed designing multiple documents using a theme. There were the new cards and fliers they had wanted!!

I know that I will continue to use InDesign to produce business materials for my family members and after a few more semester at SRJC I hope to use InDesign to design my own new business card as a Web Designer!

