



Software & Hardware Review

“Move over, Quark. InDesign finally has you beat,”

Adobe InDesign

BY DAVID WILLIAMS

Adobe InDesign 2 is publishing software created to compete with QuarkXPress, which currently dominates the high-end desktop publishing niche. The first InDesign releases were not well received by users. The program was underpowered and not worth the trouble converting files from Quark. However, InDesign 2.0 is a different story. InDesign is used for producing four-color magazines, books, and corporate identity materials as well as onscreen documents such as PDF files, e-books, and Web pages. Although InDesign 2 can not be used to create sophisticated Web Pages with rollovers, it can be used to post documents.

“If you’re looking for a friendly desktop publisher with wizards, templates, and context-sensitive help, this is not the layout app for you”. If the user is familiar with Adobe

PhotoShop or Illustrator, s/he’ll find the interface comfortable and familiar. To set up a document, define the desired page size, margins, and columns, then place text and graphics on the page. Either import whole files or type text and create drawings with InDesign’s flexible illustration tools. Unlike Quark with its rigid Place command, InDesign 2 allows the user to select a specific cursor and have a text or graphic box ready to receive the file. InDesign 2.0 also imports QuarkXPress files flawlessly, an asset since QuarkXPress is such a popular publishing programs.

Layout designers will love InDesign’s new Table and Book features. The Table feature allows designers to create and format tables as well as to convert tab-delimited text from word processing, database, and spreadsheet programs.

Although InDesign 2 is no substitute for a full-fledged

illustration program such as Illustrator or CorelDraw, its drawing tools, which include a pencil, eraser, smoother, and scissors, are quite convenient for simple graphics. New in version 2.0 are transparency controls that let the designer apply “drop shadows, feathering and other editable transparency settings to text, graphics, and images.” The program also maintains transparency in native Illustrator and Photoshop files.

On the whole, InDesign 2.0 is refined, elegant, and diverse, and this user thinks it offers more than QuarkXPress. For anyone who is looking for the top of the line in desktop publishing, this is it.

