

# Graphic design evolves into a business app

## Page Layout Software Adobe PageMaker 7

by Lidka Schuch & Lerrick Starr

Waxing nostalgic about desktop applications almost seems like crying over spilled popcorn. But we remember the glory days of Aldus, when *QuarkXPress* and *PageMaker* were actually competitors.

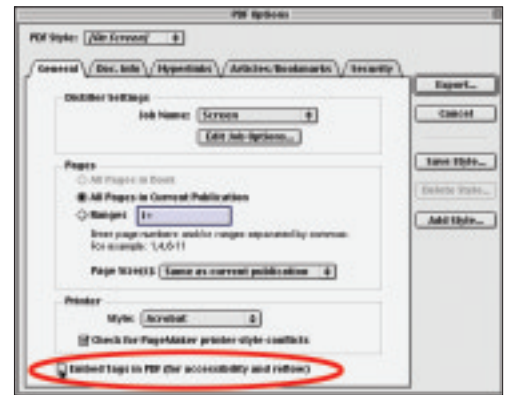
But even page layout programs must evolve (that's a hint, Fred), and in the case of *PageMaker*, Paul Brainerd's revolutionary (at least, in 1987) desktop page design and print production software, the path of least resistance is further upstream, back at the very front of the workflow. That's where pagemakers of the business world live, many of whom have remained rooted in their desktop habits. And with *InDesign* now the Cinderella of Adobe's professional creative software lineup (waiting for any prince to come along and use her), it is no

surprise that *PageMaker* has been re-engineered to appeal to corporate users.

So don't hold your breath waiting for us to describe the latest cool creative tools in *PageMaker 7*.

We can talk about new features aimed squarely at the corporate and SOHO user, beginning with the added ability to set distilling options in *PageMaker* for exporting PDFs. But even cooler is the new Embed Tags in PDF option which sets the document to the size of the device on which it is viewed. Check this box and your PDF will automatically intelligently reflow to fit on even a tiny Palm Pilot screen.

But probably the biggest improvements to *PageMaker* aren't found inside the application itself but rather in its expanded import and export capabilities. Version 7's Merge Records command from the Utilities>Plug-ins pulldown menu and the Data Merge palette (in the Window>Plug-in palettes) not only lets you merge text fields from spreadsheets and databases

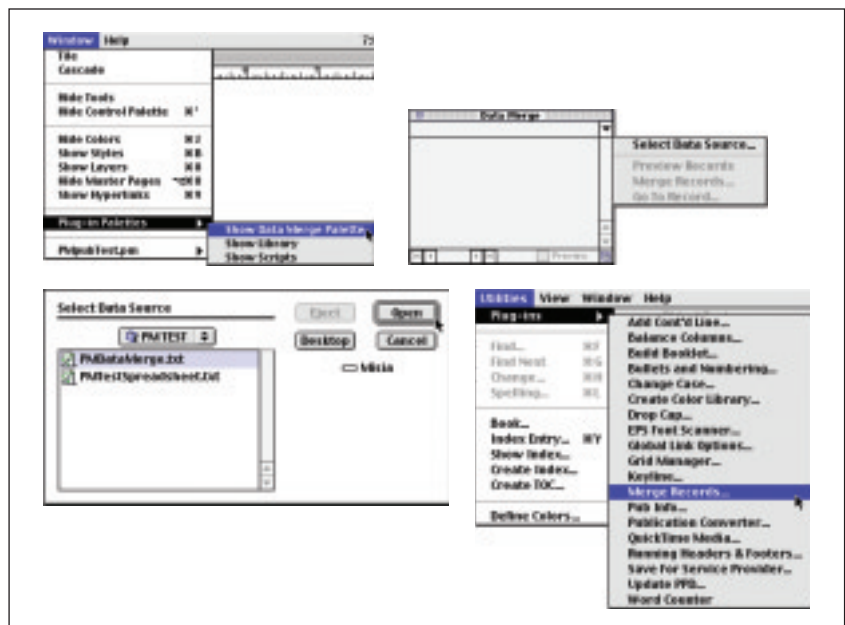
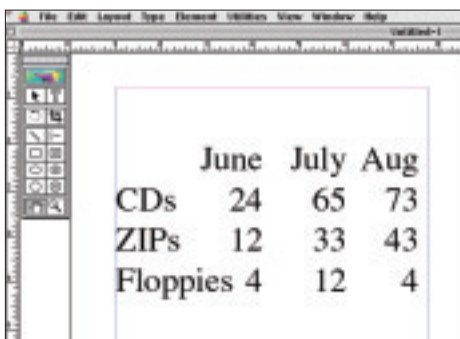
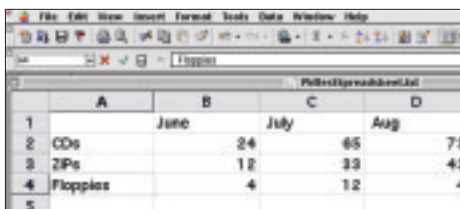


The **EMBED TAGS IN PDF** check box is the key to making layouts fit onto a display of any size and dimensions (such as a Palm Pilot). It causes text to reflow, keeping the type size big enough for acceptable readability.

(both saved as comma delimited text) but also pictures—columns and rows are maintained intact. This will be very useful for real estate agents, or anybody with catalog or directory publishing needs.

*PageMaker* now also includes a MS Publisher\_Quark Converter plug-in in the Utilities pulldown menu, a separate utility which converts *QuarkXPress* or *Microsoft Publisher* documents to *PageMaker* files.

Importing editable spreadsheets and databases (as comma delimited text) is not new in *PageMaker*, but version 7 has **UPDATED COMPATIBILITY** with the latest versions of business application software.



**DATA MERGING** capabilities are fairly extensive in *PageMaker 7*. Merging text with images is very handy, not just for mail merges but also for creating catalogues and directories. Select the Show Data Merge Palette from the Plug-in Palettes (top left and right). From the Data Merge Palette's menu, select the Data Source (bottom left). Then in the Utilities Plug-ins, choose the Merge Records command (bottom right).

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4-color

# POSTER SIZE PRINTOUTS



Unfortunately features like **Find**, **Change** and **Spelling** commands are still **NOT AVAILABLE** in the **Edit Original** mode—PageMaker still forces you to go to **Edit Story** mode.

Of course, as with *InDesign's* converter, it doesn't pick up every bit of Quark text formatting, but it does a reasonable job.

Version 7 can export both text and graphics to *Microsoft Office* applications. You can also place PDFs directly into PM7 (just like a picture, not editable)—as long as they were created in either *Photoshop* or *Illustrator* (strange that they don't mention *Acrobat*)—as well as drag-and-drop native *Photoshop* or *Illustrator* images into a *PageMaker* page (although unlike *InDesign*, it can't flatten or preflight, leaving the door open for these native files to go that way to the RIP).

But on the creative side? Nada.

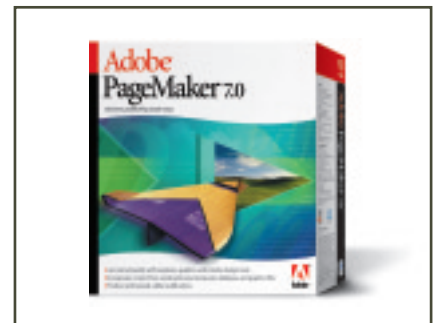
Not even one new keyboard shortcut to simplify switching tools! Users are still forced to perform incredible finger gymnastics with F-key combinations to execute toolbar shortcuts. And no contextual menus (Control-click) for Mac—only in the Windows version.

And *PageMaker* has always had an unintuitive way of editing text. To see hidden characters, or even use commands such as **Find** or **Change** (two separate commands in PM, who knows why?), or **Spell Check**, you still have to select **Edit Story** from the **Edit** pulldown menu. This permits you to view hidden characters, but all you get to see is plain, unformatted text, completely out of layout context.

Not only that, but we discovered a bug in **Edit** mode which deleted any text which was not selected!

Adobe spokespersons, however, seemed excited to point out that their programmers had fixed “hundreds of bugs” (although apparently not the one we found). We're still wondering why they'd want to brag about that.

Nonetheless, this venerable workhorse still knows how to take care of business—kerning, trapping, separations, simple bookletmaking are all longstanding and dependable features. And at no extra cost the package still includes hundreds of pre-made templates and literally thousands of clip art illustrations and photos, which should make life simpler for your average non-designer. This also might explain why Adobe recommends leaving 150MB free on your Mac hard drive for installation—and 200MB or more for Windows! 🍎



## ADOBE PAGEMAKER 7

### System Requirements

#### WINDOWS

Intel Pentium processor  
Microsoft Windows 98, Windows NT 4.0 with Service Pack 5 or 6, Windows 2000, or Windows Millennium

32 MB of available RAM (48 MB+ recommended)

175 MB of available hard-disk space for installation (200 MB+ recommended)

#### MACINTOSH

PowerPC processor  
Mac OS software version 8.6 (with Apple Software Font Manager Update version 1.0), 9.1, or Mac OS X (Classic)

16 MB of available RAM (32 MB recommended)

100 MB of available hard-disk space for installation (150 MB recommended)

### Pricing

Suggested list US\$499

Adobe Systems

Telephone 416-538-0100

Web [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)