Desktop Publishing Design Tips and Guidelines

Whether you're an experienced graphic designer or you're just getting started, the following desktop publishing design tips and guidelines will help you in the preparation of each document in the Frillio's Pizza simulation. Careful preparation, planning, and following these guidelines will get you cooking-up professional, attractive, and eye-catching documents that you'll be glad to showcase. For starters, let's take a look at what makes a well-designed document effective. The following is a checklist of items that will make a document sparkle and shine with professionalism and creativity:

- The document is attractive and pleasing to look at and read.
- The document is well-organized.
- The document is self-explanatory.
- The text and imagery are carefully linked to each other.
- The design and content are appropriate for the targeted audience.

What follows are some fundamental desktop publishing design tips, guidelines, and advice to follow as you produce each document throughout the simulation. Following these tips and guidelines will help you to produce top-notch professional documents.

**KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE**

Determine the single most important message of your document by asking yourself: If my viewer carries away one idea, what do I want it to be? The answer will be the central theme that determines your entire document design.

**WHITE SPACE**

White space is the area of a document not covered by text or graphics. The general rule of thumb when considering white space is to not have too much or the viewer's eye will wander and to not have too little or you'll confuse and overwhelm your viewer. A guideline to follow is that if your page looks cluttered, eliminate the least important text and/or graphic images from the page.

**WORKING WITH TYPEFACES (FONTS) AND TYPE STYLES**

Take a look at your favorite magazine or book. Chances are they contain no more than three or four typefaces (more commonly referred to as fonts) in total. Too many typefaces or fonts will make your document look cluttered, unprofessional, as well as making it difficult to read. As a rule, stick to using no more than a total of two to three fonts per document. Select one font that will serve as the primary font (used for areas that contain more than two or three sentences in one area) and one font to serve as your secondary font (used for areas that are headlines, headings, or subheadings).

Here are some general guidelines to follow when working with typefaces (fonts) and type styles:

- Font size should be kept between 18-24 points for headlines, 14-16 points for subheadings, and between 10-12 points for text used in the body areas of a document.
- When considering type styles, with the exception of titles, avoid using all capital letters.
- Avoid excessive use of underlines, italics, and boldface text.
- Select a typeface (font) that is appropriate to the document's subject.
- Be consistent with your typeface (font) choices throughout each document in the simulation. This will help to establish a consistent look adding to the professionalism of the document.
KEEP DOCUMENT DESIGN SYMMETRICAL AND PROPORTIONAL Creating balance and symmetry throughout a document is critical to its final appearance. If, for example, you are creating a document that contains three separate headings, keep the type size of the headings relatively the same. Otherwise, your document will look out of proportion giving it an amateur look and feel. Follow these guidelines to keep your documents looking balanced and in proportion:

- Use the same typefaces (fonts) throughout each document to give the document a crisp, clean, consistent look.
- If using columns, keep the width and the distance between each column the same.
- Use the same style and size of graphic images.
- Use the same type size for different headings and the same type size for body areas.

MARGINS AND SPACING All edges and margins of a document should be straight and even. Don't overcrowd space, and be attentive to balance content from top-to-bottom and side-margin to side-margin. If possible, organize your text into columns, rather than stretching it across the page. This will make the text easier to read and give the document a more balanced appearance.

WORKING WITH GRAPHIC IMAGES You've heard it a million times, "a picture is worth a thousand words." How true this is when it comes to document design. When selecting graphic images, try choosing those that have the same look and style. For instance, let's say you're designing the Frillio's Pizza menu and you've selected a graphic image of a pizza that has a photographic style. Other graphics that you choose to use in the menu should have the same photographic quality in them. This helps to establish consistency throughout the document and gives it a polished, professional look.

ESTABLISH A PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY When businesses communicate through print, they rely heavily on the look and design of their documents to convey their intended image and identity to consumers.

To help Frillio's Pizza establish a professional image throughout the simulation, you should:

- Use the same typefaces (fonts) throughout the simulation.
- Use the same color scheme (if using a color printer).
- Use the same style of objects and design elements. For example, if you have selected a starburst to highlight important information in one document, consider using the same starburst in other documents.
- Use the same style graphic images.

PROOFREAD FOR SPELLING, GRAMMAR AND DESIGN Nothing spoils a well-designed document more than a typo. When you are nearing the completion of a document, take the time to proofread it for spelling, grammar, and design. Are there any misspelled words? Do the sentences make sense? Did you leave out any required text or design elements? These are the questions to ask before submitting any document. A good piece of advice is to give your document to one or two people and let them proofread the document. Often they will find an error or omission that you didn't see.

REVISE, REVISE, REVISE Desktop publishing design is much like writing an essay. It
almost never comes out right the first time around. Look at your starting point as just that, a starting point. Print your document early on in the design phase and plan on making several revisions, additions, and deletions to attain a professional, well-designed end product.

**WHEN IN DOUBT, "KIS"** This rule is simple. If you are spending precious time pondering over using one graphic image versus the other or haggling over selecting a particular font, then "KIS."

"KIS" is an acronym commonly used by designers. It stands for "Keep It Simple." When faced with making a decision, always go with the one that is simplest. If, for instance, you are debating whether or not to include a graphic of a slice of pizza or a complex graphic involving a family eating pizza at a dinner table, choose the slice of pizza.

**USING DESIGN ELEMENTS** Use the nifty visual entitled *Elements and Shapes That Inspire Great Design*. Refer to this page and experiment with using one or a combination of several of the shapes and elements as you produce each document throughout the simulation.

**MOST IMPORTANTLY--HAVE A PAPER PLAN** One of the worst habits a desktop publisher or designer can establish is to start designing on a computer without first having a plan on paper. Good design starts on paper first! A sheet of paper, a pencil, and a ruler are the only tools you'll need to get your imagination and creativity steamrolling. Look at it this way--it is much easier, and faster, to experiment with shapes, graphics, text styles, and borders on a piece of paper than on a computer.