

ile No.11

DPT to PSX - By Lee Foster

The birth of Desk Top Publishing (DTP) was an exciting one which spawned a whole new industry. Dross typewritten newsletters became multi-font, multi-columned and multi-graphic laden news sheets. Traditional print was threatened by this new medium which started life as a wooden box and went on to become a multi billion dollar industry.

Initially the birth was a good one. Newspapers adopted DTP for tight deadline production, better, more attention grabbing design and reduced costs. The computer would herald the dawning of a new age of design which only professional photographers and illustrators could previously achieve. Now everyone could produce professional looking work with out so much as moving away from their desk. But there was a down side. Those who had studied for years in their respective professions would find their jobs at stake.

As computers grew steadily bigger, better, faster, the software became more clever and sophisticated, the worker found the distinction between job descriptions begin to blur. What would have taken years of experience became an automatic action. Placement of text and pictures no longer involved sticky cow gum and cutting mats. Typesetters either adopted computers or were out. Experienced plate makers, photographers, typists were all being based at one computer terminal operated by one multi-talented (though maybe not fully experienced) person, rather than an office and person per job.

The following decade witnessed the entire press and print industry move away from traditional print and fully adopt the computerised alternative. Design and print heralded the Macintosh platform as the defacto standard. Its ease of use and 'killer' apps of the day ensured its safety for a good few years. But as cheap pc's began to flood the market and major Mac applications were ported to the pc, the near monopoly the Mac once enjoyed would eventually be eaten away. Perhaps the iMac and G3's can recover that lost ground. It'll be a battle, but it's the Mac which deserves to win.

DTP has not been a professional term for a long time. The Mac brought design to the

household. Church newsletters have never been the same since the Vicar got his new LC475! Now everyone has become a designer. Unfortunately not everyone has design sense and some disturbing designs have found their way into the shops and advertising boards.

With Photoshop, Freehand and Quark on your hard drive, and a good knowledge of them all, there is nothing stopping you from getting a good job. Of course an eye for design would be of benefit. A few years at college should fix that. £1500 is all you need for a basic DTP set up. A second hand 603/604 chip Mac, scanner and printer, together with above mentioned software is all you need. This power and technology was undreamed of back in 1984 when DTP started.

Getting to the point I'm trying to make, Macintosh invented Desk Top Design and Publishing. It allowed the little people to find jobs which until then never existed. It allowed the big people to compete more aggressively in the publishing/print world. It killed off some professions but replaced it with another one. And it doesn't matter how much Microsoft copy, cheat and lie to its customers, it can never take the praise in spawning such a huge industry as DTP.

And the PSX? Well, after a hard day's work on the newsletter for your local Alien Watch Group, just stick one of your PlayStation C.D's in the drive and relax in the enjoyment of a blood bath game thanks to Connectix Virtual Gamestation. (Only in the USA at present though!)

Comments to:

 [Lee Foster](#)

[Proof reader/eZine preflight](#)

[<lee@1984-online.com>](mailto:lee@1984-online.com)