

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF DESKTOP PUBLISHING IN ADVERTISING FIELD

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A- Introduction

In advertising, the Macintosh is both a tool for the production of ads and a medium for the advertising people. The ability to make pages look professionally typeset, and the ability to include sophisticated graphics, launched the field of desktop publishing (DTP).

Desktop publishing (DTP) allows user to combine all of the elements of publication, including text, graphics, and layout designs. Now, the price of a scanner is so expensive. As prices drop, DTP users will add scanners to their systems that enable them to scan photographs and other graphics, produce digitized images of the material scanned, and then combine the material with their own document. Bowman and Renshaw (1989) have pointed out that the growth of desktop publishing has been phenomenal and essentially uncontrolled. For example, a total of 660 members of Public Relations Society of America were surveyed about general computer use and desktop publishing, and 303 responded. DTP is being used by % 56 of the respondents, either by purchasing and installing their own systems or contracting with external vendors using desktop system (Wright, 1990).

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As far as we have observed the growth of desktop publishing has been really uncontrolled in Turkey, too. Every department in every advertising agency with a large enough budget and enough document output to justify the equipment has either already purchased desktop publishing equipment or has planned to purchase such equipment in the near future. Desktop publishing is not the fastest growing computer application in advertising field by accident. For advertising, the Macintosh has added much presentation power to the work environment. Excellent representations of final print advertisements can be constructed using popular page-layout and illustration software. Final production of print advertising has been improved by the development of macintosh products; but some production processes still require too much manipulation and risk. The best example is the production of halftone images.

Because many advertising agencies were interested in newsletter production using as a public relation tool, in this paper, I would like to attempt to analyze and systematize the advantages and the disadvantages of DTP in general. It provides both the advertising agency and the clients a number of distinct advantages, however, advances in technology have their own costs, which need to be recognized.

B- Advantages Of Desktop Publishing

1. The Appearance Of Documents

Research indicates that most people read typeset documents about 27 percent faster than they read non-typeset documents (Tilden, 1987). The neater the document, the more competent the sender seems to be. Other factors being equal, readers pay closer attention to the document-take more seriously the document with the better appearance. As known, DTP equipment makes it easier. For instance, Tilden (1987) reported that workers in a school-bond referendum in a New Jersey town used DTP system to produce their drafts and final documents of educational materials, and their documents were viewed as more finished than documents opposing the school bond, which had been prepared by typewriters and letter-quality documents coming from smaller companies and even from individuals. People are initially impressed by the appearance of the document itself.

Bowman and Renshaw (1989) have pointed out that the sales of laser printers clearly indicate that businesses consider the

appearance of documents produced by desktop publishing equipment important.

2. Low-Cost

According to Arcellana (1988) the DTP system is best used for newsletters, catalogs and other documents produced on a regular basis, especially when color is not an important factor. For example, "On just the basis of savings realized on a year of newsletters, we have justified our purchase, and eliminated 90 % of our typesetting cost." says David Mena, vice president of Marketing in United Savings (Raucci, 1988). It is obvious that the most important advantages of a Desktop system is that it gives small agencies the power of effective communication (Mc Clendon, 1988 and Renshaw, 1989).

Color and halftones, however, are still produced more economically by traditional publishing equipment. The important thing is that companies have learned that they can produce virtually any text-heavy document more economically with DTP equipment and usually meet reader expectation for document quality at the same time (Arcellona, 1988).

3. Time Saving

In addition to a saving in basic production cost, when time is an important factor, the use of a DTP system can eliminate rush charges (Bowman and Renshaw, 1989).

4. Flexibility

Another major advantage of DTP equipment is that it allows the user to test typesizes, photographs, and page layouts without added expense, and the investment in time can be measured in minutes or hours compared to days or weeks with the typesetter.

5. Security

The last advantage DTP provides to users is the ability to maintain confidentiality of information. Because a document can be produced from draft through to final copy in-house with a DTP system, the diffusion of information can be eliminated. Moreover, DTP systems provide the ability to keep information in the department. By using a security code keeping information into department. (MacWorld, 1990).

C- Disadvantages Of Desktop Publishing

The Macintosh does not give us the ability to write good documents and the right documents. In addition, there is no guarantee that we are going to create a good looking document. This is the most obvious disadvantage of DTP. The new equipment allows people to produce bad documents more quickly and distribute them more widely.

1. Hidden Cost

In the hands of the inexperienced user, a DTP system can become a tool for creating garbage. To address this situation, organizations may be pressed to hire someone from outside the organization to train users as to the subtleties of kerning, font widths, white space, and other features of page layout and design. This attempt can increase the cost of using DTP.

2. Loss Of Control

The current software assumes that one person will write, design, and produce a document; whereas in most business, those tasks are usually handled by different people. The Management Information Systems (MIS) departments have traditionally been responsible for maintaining standards, maintenance, and support for computer hardware and software. According to Gralla (1988), DTP equipment, however, has often come into an organization through the back door. As a result, desktop publishing represents general loss of control over the MIS function, as individuals and departments learn to make what are essentially MIS decisions themselves.

3. Producing Counterfeit Document

DTP systems add another source of loss of control-the ability for anyone within an organization to produce documents. Anyone in the company who has access to DTP technology can now produce a flyer, job announcement, or brochure that looks official. With the use of a scanner, a DTP user could reproduce corporate logos, letterheads, or other official identification, opening the door to document forgery.

To control such an event organizations may need to invest increased amounts of time and money to police document production

and to employ specialized papers, seals, or other mechanical safeguards to help prevent the forgery of official papers.

4. The Rush-To-Print Syndrome

The DTP user may become so reliant on the software proofing features (spelling and grammar checkers) that silly and careless errors may begin appearing in the final copy of good point documents. Furthermore, in the rush to produce final copies of documents more quickly and efficiently, the DTP user may feel so confident in the document quality that she or he may bypass management approval before distribution (Tilden, 1987).

5. Need For Training

Producing a document with DTP system requires more than simply knowing how to speak and write in a language, DTP users need to know the basics of page layout so when they use the power of a DTP system, they use that power in a constructive rather than a destructive way. For this reasons, potential DTP users should receive training in the principles of page layout and design, color, and type and placement of graphics within text.

6. Print Quality

In spite of the fact that print quality is one of the most highly touted advantages of DTP equipment, from some perspectives it is also a disadvantage. Typical laser printers employed in DTP applications have a print resolution of 600 dots per inch. Those accustomed to traditional typeset quality consider DTP output draft quality at best.

7. Computing Can Be Hazardous

Hembree (1990) pointed out possible long term effects of using computers. She says that more than half of all videodisplay terminal users responding to various surveys in the United States have complained of musculoskeletal disorders, eyestrain, chronic headaches, chest pain, and stress. There is also controversy over computer radiation. There is no evidence that desktop users develop more or less cases of repetitive strain injuries than other computer users.

Consequently, it is possible to say that a DTP system saves an advertising agency and a client money and time. However the user must be fully informed about the capabilities and limitations of such a system. We need to compare not only the costs involved in producing documents by typewriter, computer driven letterquality printers, DTP equipment, and typesetting equipment; but also the reader response. For example, According to Adler (1989), the final production quality has a relatively short way to go before it will be universally accepted by advertising professionals.

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