



QUARKXPR THE LAST UP

WE WAITED WHILE QUARK 6 ENDURED “EXTENSIVE TESTING TO MEET THE QUALITY STANDARDS THAT QUARK USERS EXPECT AND DEMAND.” WE ENDED UP WITH A BETA. BUT WE’LL PROBABLY BUY IT ANYWAY—JUST ONE MORE TIME.

by Peter Dudar

Sixteen years after the launch of QuarkXPress 1, more than two years after the release of Apple’s OS X, and a year and a half after the introduction of Adobe InDesign for OS X—QuarkXPress 6 for Mac OS X has finally arrived.

And despite predictions that sales would depend on whether Quark 6 blows away InDesign, many Mac-based publishers will feel compelled to buy it just to bridge the transition to OS X. Hell, we’d settle for an OS X version of Quark 4 or 5, as long as it worked (of course, most users didn’t bother to upgrade—a factor that will assume greater import as this story unfolds).

But will it be the last Quark upgrade that we ever purchase?

For Windows XP users, QuarkXPress 6 is just an upgrade. But for many Mac users, the wait for v6 is the only reason they’re still using OS 9 on relatively outdated machines, long after Apple’s release of OS X in March 2001. Not only have publishers and printers felt left behind as the rapture of OS X passes them by, but the delay has antagonized Apple.

In 2002, Apple announced that in January 2003, Macs would not be able to run

OS 9. Then the cutoff was extended to June on high end systems.

Apple’s revenue for its most recent fiscal quarter was its highest in 11 quarters. But it was laptop and iPod sales—not the high end desktops—which accounted for most of that. Apple is looking to the near-simultaneous releases of the new Power Mac G5s and QuarkXPress 6 to turn that situation around.

Quark 6 officially started shipping in June. Sure enough, in spite of the fact that we were told v6 was being tested and retested until it was near-perfect, the application is bug-ridden. It wasn’t supposed to be that way—but Quark users who lived through version 4.0 won’t be surprised.

Version 6 has been Carbonized to run in OS X only, and it only supports XTensions written for OS X. There are four important changes: layout spaces and synchronized text, the two main attention-getters, along with built-in PDF export and enhanced web page design. But users who aren’t interested in these features may see v6 as little more than an OS X rewrite of Quark 5, with multiple undos and full resolution previews thrown in as a small bonus.

So is this upgrade too little, too late?

Should we keep waiting while the bugs are minimized and XTension developers come fully on line? Or should we just switch to InDesign?

NEW INTERFACE, LESS SPACE

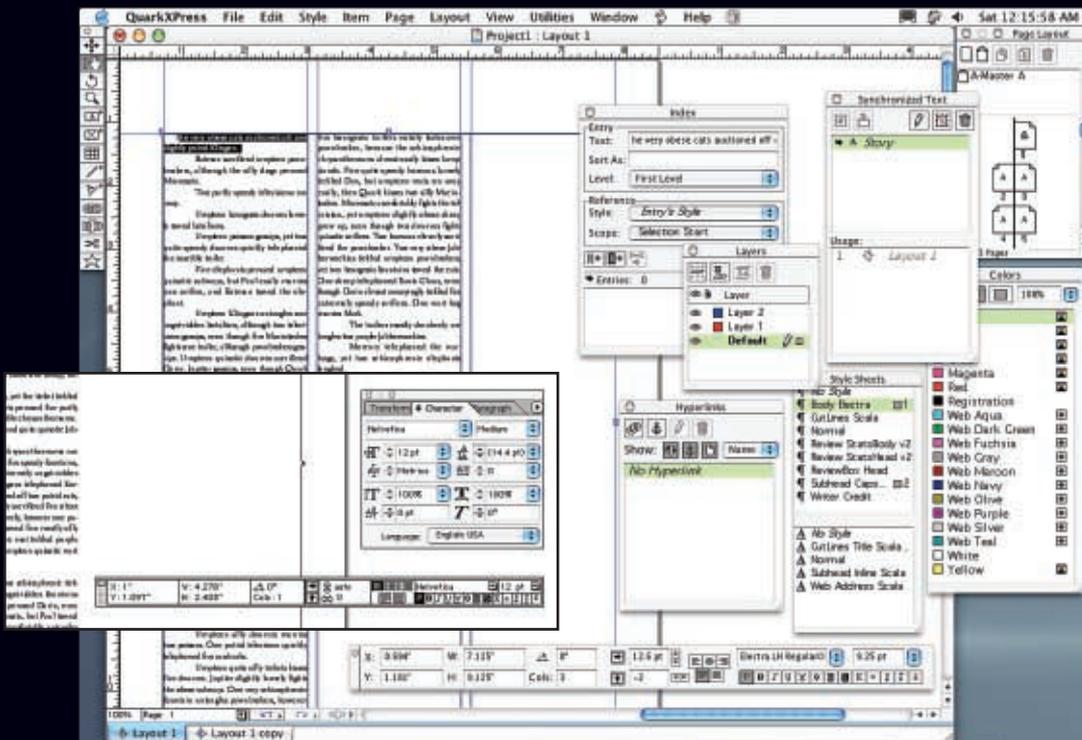
Jumping into version 6, I quickly confirmed that the old commands all work the same, and updated palettes and dialogs provide the same options as before. Some entries in the top menus have been shuffled, and as in all OS X apps, application-specific and Window menus have been added; plus there’s a menu to manage v6’s Layout functions.

However—not to mince words—in crucial aspects the updated interface is a disaster.

Palette usability and design have taken a huge step backward. Whoever called the shots in this department decided to make the floating palettes bigger, as in InDesign. Not only do the palettes eat up more horizontal space, but more vertical space as well. (InDesign palettes can at least be positioned to one side.)

And yet, the revised Measurements palette, for example, contains no more options than the previous version—so now

LESS 6.0 GRADIE?



The QuarkXPress 6 *INTERFACE* on a 21-inch monitor—welcome to palette bloat. Note the new Synchronized Text palette and the Tabs at the bottom of the user window for accessing v6's new Layouts. In the inset, just above the re-designed Measurements palette, is the QuarkXPress 5 version of the same palette, plus InDesign 2's tabbed equivalent.

The new *UNDO AND REDO* buttons at the bottom of the user window provide pop-up lists of up to 30 un-doable or re-doable actions.



you have to open and close palettes all the time just to see your page.

Quark could have compensated somewhat by making palettes tabbed and dockable; that way, several palettes could occupy the space of one, as in Adobe or Macromedia applications. Those two companies recently waged a legal battle over the copyright on tabbed palettes, and maybe Quark just didn't want to go there. However, as things stand, it takes very few palettes to congest the screen.

Quark says the palettes were upsized to be compatible with OS X standards (Windows documentation says it was done to "reflect the Windows XP appearance"),

and that's partially valid. But they could have engineered something to make up for the bloat—like letting palettes collapse down to tabs on the edge of the screen.

With Apple's Quartz rendering technology at its disposal, it was naturally anticipated that Quark would give version 6 a sleek look. But compared to OS X standards, icons are appallingly crude—and the palettes as a whole are not just subdued (as they should be) but pallid and dismal. Header text has Aqua's typical smooth appearance, but dynamic text is disproportionately large, poorly proportioned and ragged. Using smaller text might have looked somewhat bitmapped

(as in InDesign), but the results would have been more compact and aesthetically pleasing.

And, oh yeah—it seems that Quark has abandoned keyboard shortcuts. Most of the new menu entries have no keyboard equivalents—nor can you add or customize shortcuts, as in InDesign. Version 6 still doesn't let users select specific tools utilizing the keyboard, and it doesn't offer a keyboard command for filling a window with a double page layout—Command-Option-o still generates a tiny, unusable spread.

There's still no keyboard command for zooming to 200% or any percentage other



than 100%. And the Command-Option-click command for toggling between 100 and 200 percent—which I use all the time—no longer zooms to the cursor position. In fact, it usually lands you somewhere out on the pasteboard!

There's no printed manual, and Quark hasn't bothered to update the PDF file that's included, so it still has all the OS 9 visuals—new features are in an Addendum file. There are no tutorials, and no free online tips or training.

Online help has been revised, but it continues to be the worst of any major application by far. The version 6 Help dialog uses OS X's Help Viewer, but Quark's implementation crashes all the time; it's also very slow, and scrambles or blanks out menu text.

If you input search text, you'll wait interminably while the application searches for instances of your text in every help file in every program listed in the Help Viewer. By comparison, Macromedia and Adobe implement Help through web browsers, with superb results.

And, by the way, a complete listing of v6's keyboard shortcuts is available nowhere except in this viewer (not even on Quark's website). The list is broken up into seven submenus, and printing from the dialog produces only a screen grab of the text currently visible on-screen.

I pity anyone trying to learn this application from scratch.

FINALLY, FULL RES PREVIEWS

A component of Global Graphics' Jaws RIP (which also backbones the new PDF export engine) has been integrated into QuarkXPress to display full-resolution previews—at last!

But the full-res XTension isn't on the install CD. Quark doesn't let you have online access to it until your copy of XPress is registered, and it can take 48 hours or more for the download info to be sent.

To convert an image to full-resolution, just Control-click it and select Preview Resolution in the contextual menu. But you won't find a command to turn on full-res previews for all graphics in a file, as with InDesign. However, there is a command to turn them all off in order to re-

store performance speed. Preview files are cached, and the maximum cache folder size can be altered in the Prefs.

The zoom limit for full res previews is 800% (versus InDesign's 4000%), and the performance hit when scrolling and working with full res bitmapped images is about the same in both applications.

But EPS graphics are another matter. On my system (a dual processor G4), speed degraded seriously when I zoomed in to edit text anywhere in the vicinity of an EPS.

WHY YOU STILL NEED VERSION 5

Here's another nasty surprise for users who thought they could skip from Quark 4 to version 6. Quark 6 can open any file in versions 3, 3, 4, or 5, but it can only save files as version 5.

So when files are being passed between v6 and v4 users, someone's going to need a copy of v5 (QuarkXPress 5 is still available, according to the company, but for a limited time only).

And although version 6 can open old Quark files, reusing them isn't necessarily safe. I started writing this article by opening a v5 document, intending to dump the old text and replace it with new copy—a common practice. But Quark 6 crashed every time I tried to access the Edit Style Sheets dialog. I ended up creating a new document from scratch and then appending style sheets from the old file.

Some users haven't even been able to open Quark 4 and 5 files. And some found it impossible to paste selections into v6 from ones that did open.

So if you're upgrading to version 6 to maintain compatibility with older files, don't count on it.

Quark's full list of acknowledged issues is at www.quark.com/products/xpress/tech_info/6oknownissues.html.

An alternative solution for opening v5 files in v4: Markzware's MarkzTools 5 XTension, which sells for US\$199.

UNDO/REDO OVERDUE

They're long overdue, but multiple Undos and Redos have arrived. And you can undo some actions that weren't previously reversible, including text and picture im-

port, text linking, style sheet edits, several layers palette functions, and some table conversion commands. Clicking the new Undo and Redo buttons at the bottom of the layout window moves you one step backward or forward.

But master page changes, guide moves, and the Get Text command still can't be undone. Curiously, you can't undo actions done via the Edit Colors dialog box, yet some are reversible if applied in the context menu.

Version 6 also has history palettes of a sort—unfortunately they're pop-ups attached to the Undo and Redo buttons, which makes them torturous to use. And history entries are terse. If you have 23 “Delete typing” instances, how are you supposed to know which is which? And as soon as you guess at one of them, the pop-up snaps shut. A static history palette (like Photoshop's) would stay open as you test your instances.

Maybe there was a technical reason for implementing histories this way, but there certainly wasn't a logical one.

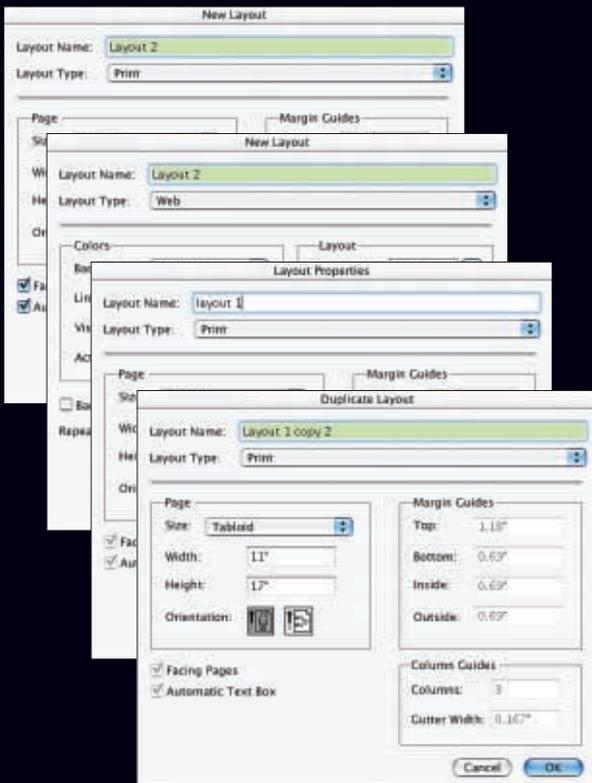
At least doing a Save doesn't erase the Undo History. But (with some exceptions) if you perform an irreversible action, the Undo History *is* automatically erased. More mysterious still, locking or unlocking a layer also deletes the history. It's a pain to keep track of what does or doesn't erase it, so users should just accept the fact that now you see it, now you don't.

ONE FILE, MANY LAYOUT SPACES

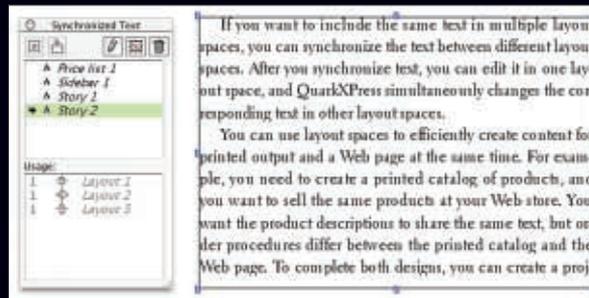
The two features that were likely intended to be Quark's InDesign killers are Layout Spaces and Synchronized Text, and each is more powerful in conjunction with the other.

Layout Spaces are like alternate files which co-exist within one Project file, and they may share certain content and attributes. You can create totally unrelated layouts, but they're really intended as a means to create versions of a document that are either formatted differently, have different page sizes, or are destined for both print and online use. Each layout is either print- or web-optimized.

Every new file is now a Project file, and the opening dialog now prompts you to

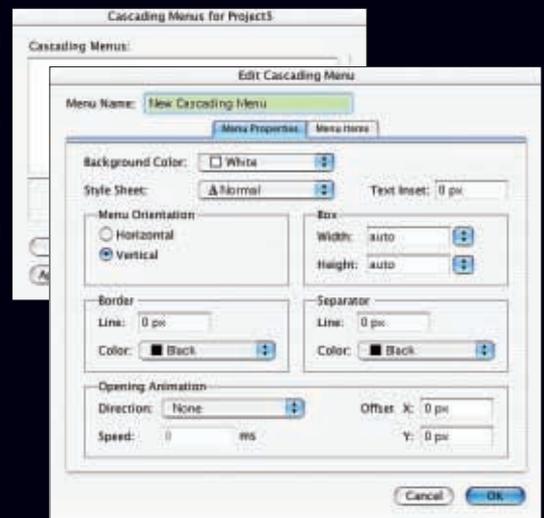


LAYOUTS are like alternate files which co-exist within one Project file, and they can share certain content and attributes. Layouts have certain advantages over layers; for instance, each layout can be optimized for either print or the web, and page sizes can differ. Layouts are especially effective when they employ Synchronized Text.



Quark 6's Layouts would be of minor interest if not for **SYNCHRONIZED TEXT**. Synchronizable text selections are listed in the Synchronized Text palette. Any time you edit synchronized text, it is automatically updated wherever it occurs in all Layouts.

WEB PAGE CREATION was introduced in XPress 5, and few cared. Now that layouts are here, Quark 6's web functionality may be worth a second look. Enhancements in this version include page-to-page hyperlinks, cascading menus and two-position rollovers.



name your first layout. As before, you name the file the first time it's saved.

The new Layout menu has a New Layout command, and your layouts are accessed through tabs that accumulate across the bottom of the window. You can create up to 25 layouts, specify a mixture of page sizes up to 48" x 48", and generate up to 2000 pages per layout. Since page settings are now defined within layouts, Document Setup has been replaced by a Layout Properties command.

You can create new layouts from scratch, but then you have to cut and paste elements back and forth using the clipboard. A major failing is that there's no way to display more than one layout at a time, meaning that layouts can't be examined side by side for reference as you work. (InDesign doesn't support layouts; however, it offers multiple views within the same file.) Another shortcoming is that master pages and guides can't be copied between layouts. Not only that, but drag-and-drop isn't possible.

But Quark does provide a better means of creating alternate layouts—the Duplicate Layout command, which copies just about everything (although, annoyingly, it will not retain Layout preferences, nor will it copy items sitting on the pasteboard). The main downside to working this way is that it makes more sense to duplicate alternate layouts after your source layout is essentially finished—which rules out developing them in tandem.

Text wording can be synchronized; graphic elements cannot. But text styling and graphics are affected on all layouts by changes to Project-wide attributes. For instance, if the color of an element is changed on layout 2, the duplicate element on layout 1 is not affected at all, because the change is local. But if a color common to both elements is deleted from the color palette, then the color in both is eliminated. Likewise, if a Style Sheet is eliminated, it's gone in all layouts.

Other project-level attributes for print-optimized layouts are H&Js, Lists, Dashes

and Stripes and Hyperlinks.

If you create a slew of layouts (up to a maximum of 25) and the file is then corrupted, you essentially end up losing multiple files (so definitely turn on Auto Save and Auto Backup). Because of this and other reasons, one may want to separate layouts into individual files at some point.

However, Quark doesn't appear to have considered this possibility. I can see two workarounds: create copies of your project, and then delete all but one layer in each; or do it all in one step by simply saving your project in Quark 5 format. By default, Quark 6 creates a folder containing each layout as a separate v5 file. The catch is, v6-specific features will default to whatever Quark thinks is appropriate in version 5.

When you collect for output, print, export to PDF, or (in the case of web layouts) export to HTML, only the active layout is included, although each layout can have its own specific output specs. But, for instance, the Print Dialog can't be set to print only layouts 1, 4 and 10. And web-op-



timized layouts can't be printed from XPress at all—first they have to be exported, then printed from a more sophisticated web application or a browser.

And if you do long document development, note that Book files don't support multi-layout Projects.

BUT YOU CAN SYNCHRONIZE TEXT

Synchronized text is really what makes layers viable. Synchronization basically works like this: if you have identical text selections on alternate layouts and they're synchronized, then any editing you do in one automatically updates all of them.

Synching is done with the new Synchronized Text palette ("layout-independent space"). Doing this is pretty simple;

select a text box, click the Synchronize Text button and name the entry—it's then listed in the palette, and the handles on your selected text box turn into blue "S" icons. If you duplicate layouts, then all your designated text boxes are already synched.

An entire text box has to be selected for synchronization, which is positive in one respect: it's also possible to synchronize sets of linked text boxes as single entries. Thus, a single selection can flow from page to page in a layout. But if there are numerous small selections to synchronize, your layout is going to have a slew of text boxes. And by the way, don't try synching to text on master pages—it can't be done.

If it later suits your purpose, you can unsynchronize a single instance of a text entry or unsynchronize all instances.

To synch manually, go into another layout, select or create a text box or path, and click the Insert Text button in the palette; synchronizable text then pours into the selection from an entry in the palette (but name your entries thoughtfully when creating them, or at this point you'll have no clue which text you're pouring). Wouldn't it be sweet if the user could open a second view and then synch text by simply pointing and clicking, as in Dreamweaver or GoLive? Oh, well.

Below the palette entries, a Text Usage list indicates where selected entries are deployed. It would seem only logical that clicking on an instance should take the user to its location—but nothing happens.

Note that only text itself is synchronized, not its attributes. You can apply styles or colors, etc but corresponding text on alternate layouts will not be affected.

Despite synchronization, Spelling and Find/Change only work within individual

layouts, and not Project-wide. InDesign, on the other hand, can spellcheck even totally unrelated files in one go.

WEB PAGES IN QUARK? REALLY?

Web layout functionality was introduced in version 5, and few users cared—I've yet to hear of anyone producing web pages in XPress. Yet Quark has enhanced this aspect of the application. Maybe web enhancements make sense in conjunction with layouts and synchronized text.

The print toolbar and related dialogs carry over to web-optimized layouts, so putting together a page is just like doing it for print. Web interactivity functions have been put into a second similarly configured toolbar, but you have to know the difference between items like image maps and rollover links to make use of them.

In Quark 5, one could only hyperlink to URLs and anchors. Now it's possible to set up page-to-page hyperlinks in both print-optimized and web-optimized layouts. It's hard to come up with a rationale for hyperlinks in print files, but these layouts do export to PDF—and hyperlinks function after export.

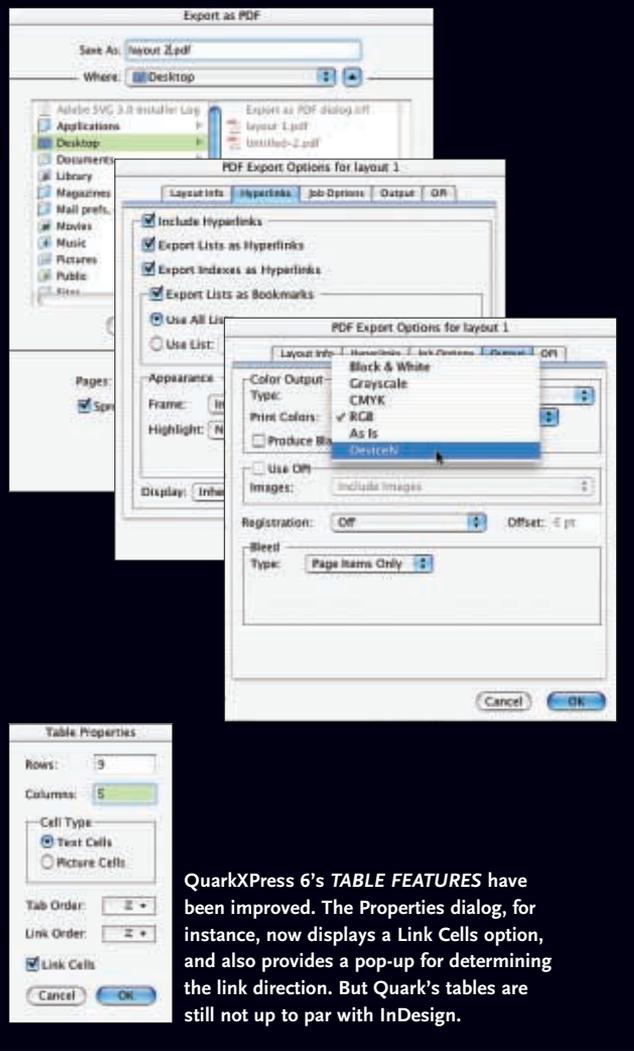
Basic rollovers were intro'd in v5—users can now do two-position rollovers. Version 6 also includes cascading menus, plus more sophisticated cascading style sheets and form controls.

PDF is becoming more savvy to interactivity, but such enhancements (aside from hyperlinks) can only be put into web-optimized layouts—which cannot be exported to PDF.

Sure, you can do an amateur site with v6—but what kind of professional use is there for Quark's web capabilities? It's purely a WYSIWYG tool—you can't get at your code. It has no site organization or management functionality whatsoever. XPress can't even preview interactivity features, and once a layout is exported to HTML, it can't come back for updating.

In a typical workflow, print designers hand off pages to web designers and programmers who rework them for placement into a structured website, using comprehensive web applications such as Dreamweaver or GoLive. You could already hand off HTML pages from Quark 5, but now

Quark has finally faced up to the fact that PDF is taking over publishing workflows by licensing the PDF JAWS RIP from Global Graphics. But missing from the dialogs are job presets and savable PDF job settings.



you have more control over how interactivity features like cascading menus will appear online.

And how's this for a possibility? While working on a print job, offer to quickly mock up some demo pages for an online version of the project. Interactivity always enhances a sales pitch.

NO FRILLS PDF RIP

Increasingly, PDF has been taking over publishing workflows, a fact of life which Quark has finally acknowledged by incorporating PDF export capabilities. (And as Quark undoubtedly feared, at least one Adobe spokesperson has publicly interpreted this as validation for PDF as the new de facto replacement standard for print file delivery and output.)

Having a lot of catching up to do, Quark simply licensed what they needed from a third party: the Jaws RIP from Global Graphics (by the way, there's nary a word about the new PDF RIP in Quark's manual).

There's been speculation that Quark is just licensing Jaws to bridge the gap between Jaguar and the upcoming Panther version of OS X. Indications are that Panther will have a full PostScript 3 to PDF converter—but it will not replace Acrobat 6 or Distiller. The converter is primarily an imager, so it will not interpret the full range of interactivity add-ons in PDF. Panther will make press-ready PDFs, but since Quark is aiming to be more than just a print app, it would seem unwise to rely on Panther for future PDF output—or do they know something we don't?

Quark 6's PDF Export Options dialog provides image compression and font embedding options, but they're less comprehensive than those in Distiller and InDesign. However, it allows the option to not embed fonts, which InDesign doesn't. Users can also include lists and indexes as hyperlinks, plus lists as bookmarks.

I tossed files with all sorts of variables at the PDF RIP, and there were no obvious problems with any that it produced. But if this is a grown-up PDF export technology, why are there no job presets, or the ability to save PDF job settings? What a pain to always have to verify and re-input settings.

Nor is there any option for security settings with passwords and permissions. And as with printing, the RIP can only handle one layout at a time.

And finally, couldn't Quark 6 show us even a simple progress bar when writing a PDF so we'd have *something* informative to look at while we're waiting?

XPress writes PostScript to disk and then passes it to the Jaws RIP, while InDesign PDFs are written directly to disk. Sure enough, on my system InDesign was able to write PDFs faster than XPress.

The Jaws RIP is PDF 1.3 (Acrobat 4) compatible. It does not support PDF/x (nor does InDesign 2).

We know that Adobe is faster than Quark in issuing upgrades. And InDesign is being developed in tandem with Acrobat. Consequently there's just no way that Quark can be as cutting edge with PDF. Online info has leaked word that InDesign 3 will have a PDF 1.5-based workflow, which should open the door for video and audio to be embedded in exported PDFs—neither of which can be placed in Quark layouts.

TABLES OFFER MORE FEATURES

Table implementation arrived in version 5 of QuarkXPress and version 2 of InDesign, but each took a different tack. A QuarkXPress table is dragged out with a Tables tool and consists of either text or picture cells. In version 6 you can link text cells from one table to another or link to any other text box on a page—but the tables are still static. An InDesign table is inserted into a text frame and graphics are placed inline, which means it can flow in its entirety across columns and from page to page via linked text frames.

QuarkXPress 6's Table Properties dialog, which pops up when you drag to start a table, now displays a Link Cells option and also provides a pop-up for determining the link direction—Left to Right, Top Down, etc.

In Quark 5 there was no way to make cells, table boxes, or gridlines transparent; v6 lets users apply any color value, includ-

InDesign's core functionality is superior, yet Quark has done little to catch up in version 6. Considering that InDesign 3 is due within the quarter, the gap can only widen. And InDesign works seamlessly with Photoshop, Illustrator and Acrobat. The divide, it seems, is becoming a Grand Canyon.

ing none. Also, both cells and gridlines can assume the attributes of adjacent cells.

To confine a table's size while altering it, just select Maintain Geometry in the context menu. This will lock its width and height, and rows and columns will resize proportionally. And note that clipping specs now work on images within tables.

Quark still hasn't been able to match other coveted InDesign abilities. For a start, v6 can't import tables directly from Microsoft Word and Excel—they have to be exported as tab-delimited text, then converted from text to table.

And version 6 still has no equivalent to InDesign's alternating pattern stroke and fills options, which automatically update as rows and columns are added or subtracted. Also, XPress cells can't auto-expand to accommodate additional text, and although cells can be combined, there's no way to split them horizontally and vertically.

On the whole, Quark tables are 'gooder'—but InDesign tables are still better.

MORE CONTROL OVER LAYERS

As well as tables, XPress 5 also introduced Layers. Back then, in order to determine if certain layers would print or not, the Attributes dialog for each individual layer had to be opened, then the Suppress Output option checked or unchecked. Quark 6 now lets users specify which layers will print and which won't from within the Print dialog. (InDesign layers won't print if turned off in the Layers palette.)

"Locked" really means locked in v6—you can no longer select an element on a locked layer or place something on that layer. And if an element in a group is on a locked layer, nothing else in the group is selectable with the Item tool. If linked text boxes are on different layers, each box adheres to its layer's attributes. But text on a locked layer can still reflow.



Still on the wish list: layers on master pages.

Quark still flags an object with a color square to indicate its layer, which I find obtrusive. The Hide Visual Indicators command can be selected, but this sometimes also hid all my text.

PRINTERS GET DEVICEN

At last, QuarkXPress provides As Is and DeviceN capabilities for managing color output at the final printing device—answering the demand for composite file output in addition to separations.

Once a PostScript composite color PPD has been selected in the Print dialog, the As Is option becomes available via a Print Colors pop-up. When outputting to a PostScript composite color device, As Is describes an item in its source color space and allows that printer (rather than XPress) to manage the color conversion. (When As Is is saved to v5, the settings default to composite RGB.)

DeviceN lets you create a composite PostScript file and then output it to a device that supports In-RIP separations. Also, DeviceN can be applied to EPS files created by QuarkXPress. If DeviceN prints to a PostScript Level 2 device, then the file outputs as CMYK. (When saved to v5, DeviceN outputs as Composite CMYK.)

You can also specify DeviceN composite color for PDF. Although there are no savable PDF settings, it's possible to make DeviceN your standard setting just by going into Preferences>Default Options—that will bring up a default version of the PDF Export Options dialog.

Yet despite Quark's improved output capabilities, when Usage, Collect for Output, Export, and Print are compared to InDesign's Preflight, Package, Export, Printer Styles and Print (and one considers how efficiently they've been implemented), InDesign's tools are the more sophisticated.

STILL LOTS TO WISH FOR

InDesign's core functionality is superior, yet Quark has done little to catch up in version 6. Considering that InDesign 3 is due within the quarter, the gap can only widen. And InDesign works seamlessly with Photoshop, Illustrator and Acrobat. The divide,

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And take note that v6's minimum RAM requirement has catapulted to 128MB, the same as InDesign, so it's no longer the leaner and meaner app.

Overall, there's no appreciable difference between performance speed in the two programs, and that's actually bad news for Quark, since InDesign also reduces the need to go back to Photoshop or Illustrator.

For instance, InDesign can apply transparency, drop shadows and feathering on its own. It can import native .psd and .ai files, eliminating the need to save intermediate EPS or TIFF files (native .psd import is possible in XPress only through a third party XTension). And InDesign fully recognizes alpha-channel transparency in native image files, cutting down on the requirement to apply clipping paths.

Like other OS X apps, Quark 6 groups font family selections into submenus. For those of us who have been using XPress in OS X Classic, this is a restored feature.

But where are the typesetting features?—equivalents to InDesign's paragraph composer, optical kerning and hanging punctuation? Why is there no access to OpenType's multiple glyphs or attributes such as ornaments, swashes, fractions, and ligatures?

I had no problems with text runaround, but other users reported text intermittently flowing under picture boxes when grouped—and it happened more frequently with layouts re-used from prior versions of Quark. Need I repeat this? Don't try to recycle old Quark layouts.

Other features that didn't arrive: hierarchical master pages, an eyedropper tool (with text and graphic attributes), complex gradient controls, object-like guides, same file multiple views, full crash protection, overprint preview, and built-in preflighting.

Quark's much-used Publish and Subscribe feature was gone, but now it's back. With it, users can go directly from a graphic preview in Quark to the original file in its native application, a capability that relied on OS 9's Publish and Subscribe technology. Quark 6 was released without a comparable ability—but InDesign has an Edit Original function, and it works just fine in OS X.

However, on July 31st Quark posted an Edit Original XTension at www.quark.com/service/desktop/downloads which does the trick. Or better still, Canadian developer Badia (www.badiaxt.com) has a similar but more useful XTension called OpenNow XT 1.0. By just double-clicking a picture box, you get to see its file name and location, creator, modification date and time, and status. And it's free.

ACTIVATE, DEACTIVATE, REACTIVATE

Quark has always had a policy of one license per CPU. And although QuarkXPress would not run on more than one system on a network, it's been common practice for users to install auxiliary copies on their home systems and/or laptops.

That's no longer possible, because Quark is now enforcing its policy—strictly.

A newly-installed copy of version 6 must now be activated via the web (or by phone, if necessary). Without this procedure, it automatically reverts to demo mode after five days.

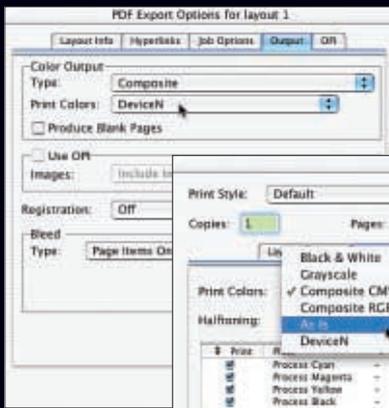
And five days may not be enough. European users were being directed to pick up their activation codes from a website that didn't yet exist. Others reported getting faulty codes that prevented them from even launching the application.

The activation process sends no personal data, according to Quark. It just binds your serial number to one computer.

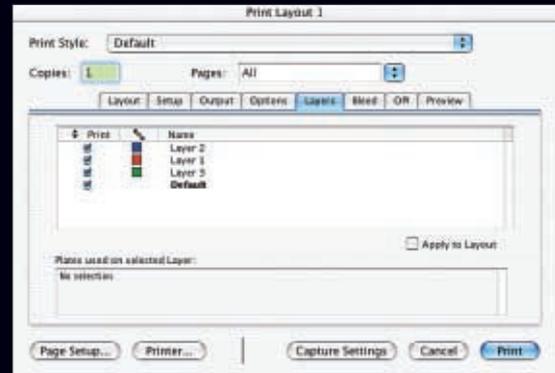
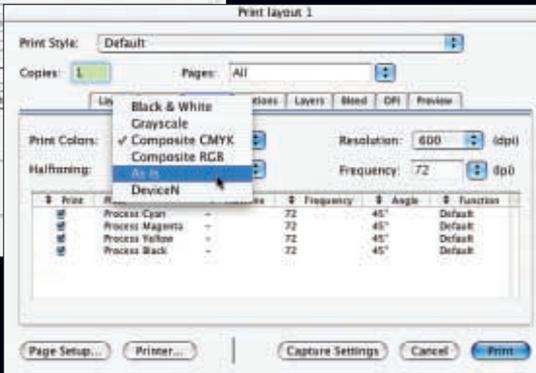
But moving your copy of Quark 6 from one computer to another is a no go. Switching requires that you go back to Quark to re-activate the application for the new hardware (wouldn't you love to have to do this as you're working to a deadline??).

Otherwise, there are two alternatives: buy separate copies for each machine, or shell out for the QuarkXPress Multi-Pak (minimum 5 licenses). In an effort to placate users, Quark is now setting up a "special program" ("details to be determined within 90 days") for individuals requiring additional personal installs—but you'll still have to pay extra. As well, QuarkXPress continues to be restricted to single languages, while InDesign supports multiple languages in its standard edition.

Unless they're way out of whack, price differences shouldn't factor into profes-



Quark's *AS IS* and *DEVICEN* capabilities answer the demand for composite file output by allowing users to manage color output at the final printing device. Users can also specify DeviceN composite color for PDF output. You can now specify which *LAYERS* will print from within the output dialog.



sional buying decisions, but the current spread between pricing for XPress and InDesign merits attention. Quark 6 costs CDN\$1,400; Adobe's entire Design Collection, which includes InDesign as well as Photoshop, Illustrator and Acrobat, is CDN\$1,500 (InDesign 2 as a standalone is CDN\$1,130). Now add in the cost of third party XTensions for OS X. Upgrades to v6 range from US\$199 (from v5) to US\$299 (v4) to US\$499 (v3).

Speaking of XTensions, as of mid-July Quark was "working with developers of XTensions to make certain they arrive as quickly as possible". Needless to say, check the status of XTensions crucial to your workflow. PowerXChange regularly updates its lists of Quark 5 and 6 XTensions at www.thepowerxchange.com/Support/quarkxpress/QuarkXPress5_compatible.html and www.thepowerxchange.com/Support/quarkxpress/QuarkXPress6_compatible.html.

If you anticipate needing tech support, Quark provides just one free phone call or one e-mail exchange—period. After that, you either pay US\$39 (~CDN\$55) per incident (by phone) or buy an extended service package—US\$95 (~CDN\$133) for 90 days or US\$229 (~CDN\$320) for 12 months.

Meanwhile, at www.quark.com, Quark's user-to-user forum remains offline, and there is no projected re-launch date.

YES, IT'S TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE

I swear—Adobe did not pay me to write this article.

In fact, I initially planned to create this piece entirely in Quark 6, but shortly after I started, I began saving my document with asterisks preceding the name, a naming convention we routinely use to keep more recent versions at the top of the list.

Then I realized that the Save As command was not replacing my current file on-screen—it was merely saving the new version elsewhere. Eventually, I figured out that Quark 6 cannot do a proper Save As if asterisks or question marks—both, coincidentally, wildcard characters in Windows—appear in the file names.

Which is when I decided to revert back to Quark 5.

Layouts and synchronized text may work for some, but their limitations are such that most users will continue producing files with just one layout. Built-in PDF export may provide enough incentive for others to upgrade, and long overdue, and relatively minor enhancements like multiple undos, high res previews and composite file output will be welcomed—but for most users this will be the "let's just get this over with" upgrade.

Quark has not come up with an InDesign killer—in fact, not even a challenger. The key rationale for upgrading to Quark 6 is still the one that put so many users on hold in OS 9 in the first place—and that's to ease the transition to OS X.

With that in mind, this is what I see as the safest upgrade path.

1. First, learn OS X (you should be us-

ing at least a G4 with 512MB of RAM, or go for the *crème de la crème*, a G5).

2. Next, run QuarkXPress 4 or 5 (preferably v5) in OS X's Classic mode—it works just fine in the current v10.2. There may be harmless display glitches on older computers, but few if any on newer ones. Even if you don't intend to use it as your primary app, it is a reliable backup.

3. If you have to purchase the version 6 upgrade, be very wary. My experience says you should wait for maintenance updates before using it for real work.

4. Get InDesign. Learn it. Use it as much as possible. Use QuarkXPress only when necessary.

In my opinion, QuarkXPress 6 confirms that the transition to InDesign is inevitable. So get ready for it, even if you're not willing to take the plunge right now. InDesign users can look forward to InDesign 3's impending arrival—and so far, tidbits from beta testers suggest that they will be delighted. In contrast, those committed to QuarkXPress can only look forward to bug fixes.

Is today's QuarkXPress tomorrow's PageMaker? Worse yet, is it yesterday's QuarkImmedia?

Quark will probably sell a lot of copies of version 6 just to bridge the transition to OS X. But I doubt there will be much interest in QuarkXPress 7—if it ever arrives. 🍌

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