DESKTOP PUBLISHING (DTP).

1.0 Introduction

Publishing is the process of producing publications such as newspapers, cards, pamphlets, pictures, calendars, books, etc that has special text and graphical layouts & designs.

Traditionally, publishing involved drawing and writing manually on wooden or metallic boards. The artwork would then be painted with ink and pressed on papers to produce a printout. Today, the art of publishing makes use of Personal computers & small printers that are able to print high-quality text and graphics. All the publishing processes can be done on a desk in the office or at home.

1.1 Definition of Desktop Publishing

Desktop publishing refers to the process of producing publications by designing their text and graphics layout using special desktop publishing software installed on personal computers. The text and graphical objects can then be inserted, edited, formatted and printed.

Examples of desktop publishers;

♦ Adobe PageMaker
♦ Adobe Photoshop   - mainly used for editing & formatting photographs.
♦ Adobe illustrator - used for creating complex freehand artwork such as drawings & logos.
♦ CorelDraw.
♦ Microsoft Publisher.
♦ Ventura.
♦ Harvard graphic.

Difference between a desktop publisher and a word processor.

− A DTP software gives the user more tools and control of the page layout, text manipulation and graphic design than a word processor.

However, today's word processors have been incorporated with text and graphic formatting and editing tools, e.g., you can design a full publication in Microsoft Word by using the available Drawing and Picture tools, create columns, etc.

1.2 Purpose of Desktop publishing software

DTP programs give the ***typesetter*** (the person designing publications) a lot of control on:

(a). Graphic design:

Using DTP software, a typesetter can create and edit very complex text & graphical objects of high quality.
For example, the software provides the user with rulers & ruler guides that can be used to place an object in the correct position within the publication.

(b). Page layout design:

With a desktop publisher, the user can design a page layout by setting consistent (constant) picture and object locations, divide a page into a number of columns, and also create layers.

Layering is the arrangement of objects on top of each other with the one on top being on the first layer.

(c). Printing:

To produce any publications, they must be printed. Therefore, DTP software helps the user to prepare *artwork* (i.e., publications that are ready for printing).

1.3 Types of Desktop publishing software

There are 2 main types of DTP software:

1). *<u>Graphical based:</u>*

They are specifically developed for editing & formatting graphic objects like pictures.

Examples;

- Adobe Photoshop. - Harvard graphic.
- CorelDraw.

Graphic-based desktop publishers have superior capabilities for handling images such as setting resolution, brightness, contrast, cropping, and filling the images with colour.

2). *<u>Layout based:</u>*

They are specifically developed to create different page layout designs for text and pictures.

Examples;

- Adobe PageMaker.
- Microsoft Publisher.

1.5 Designing a publication

Different publications have different design layouts and formatting.

<u>Types of publications</u>

There are several types of publications that can be produced using DTP software. They include:

(a). *Cards:*

They may be for special occasions such as weddings, graduations, harambee, and for congratulations.

(b). *Certificates:*

These are types of publications used to show completion of courses and special events.

Note. Certificates are very sensitive, and must be designed to discourage any type of duplication or counterfeits.

(c). *Newspapers, Magazines, Pamphlets and Newsletters:*

They contain news targeting a group of people.

(d). *Books:*

Are bulky publications with many pages that are bound together.

(e). *Calendars:*

They are used to show dates. They are also used by companies to advertise their products.

(f). *Notices*, *Brochures*, *Posters / Advertisement*, and *Catalogues*.

1.5 Features of DTP software.

1). Text can be entered directly into a DTP publication. Alternatively, the text can be entered into a Word processor and then copied into the DTP document.

- Graphics can be created in a separate program, then incorporated into a Desktop publishing program.
- A Scanner can also be used to copy images, such as photographs and drawings, into a Desktop publishing document. A **Scanner** is a device that reads text and images into a document.

2). A DTP program gives you more control over the graphics in a publication. You can:
- ♦ *move* - change the position of a graphic on a page,
- ♦ *size* - make a graphic larger or smaller,
- ♦ *Rotate* - turn or spin a graphic, and
- ♦ *Crop* - trim part of a graphic.

3). Has a wide range of Fonts & print sizes that can be merged with useful symbols, such as arrows and stars.

4). Has Columns of various widths, in which the text is fitted automatically using sensible hyphenation. The columns can also be reorganization automatically.

5). Enables Scaling and cropping of publications so as to fit the available space.

6). Page numbers can be inserted.

7). Enables production of multiple page documents.

Steps in using a DTP System.

1. Prepare your text and illustrations with a Word processor or a Graphics package. Alternatively, use a Scanner to input text and graphics from other sources.

2. Using the DTP program, develop the format of each page.
Your screen becomes an electronic paste board with rulers, column guides and other page design aids.

3. Copy the text and illustrations into the page format you have designed in the DTP program. The DTP program will automatically move the excess text to another column or page and also help size and place illustrations and headings.

4. Format the pages on the screen to look the way you want them, then store them electronically on your hard disk. If necessary, print them on a Laser Printer to produce the finished printed material.

Printing terminologies used in DTP.

1). Ranner – the main headline across the top of the page.

2). Cross head – a small heading used to break up text into easily readable sections.

3). Bullet – solid dot printed before pieces of text in order to add an emphasis.

4). Cast off – a calculation as to how much space the text will use on a page.

5). Footer – a line of text at the bottom of each page giving the publications title, author's name, etc.

6). Masthead – details of the person involved in printing the publication.

7). WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) – this means that, the presentation on the screen is exactly what you will get from the Printer.

8). Jigging – moving text around by means of DTP software.

Review Questions.

1. **(a).** What is Desktop publishing?
(b). Why is a desktop publisher preferred in designing documents than a word processor?
2. Give three examples of desktop publishing software available in the market today.
3. **(a).** What is layering?
(b). Why is layering a very useful feature in a desktop publisher.
4. Mention the three main purposes of a desktop publishing software.
5. List TWO areas of DTP application.
6. State FIVE features of a Desktop publisher.