Amateur Publishing – on a budget
Nick's story and process

For many years producing a church monthly magazine

Like many churches finances are very tight

Process has developed over time – learned as we've gone along

Where magazine came from . . .

- CONTACT used to be produced with typewriter and Gestettner copier

- Magazine producers gave up because of age

- I took over producing a weekly notice sheet

    - Using a PC at the time

    - Stumbled upon PagePlus and used for some time

- Need identified for a monthly magazine again

- Re-instigated as a means of outreach to users of our church building

- Small team of material finders and writers formed – including our Minister at that time

- Started off using the church Photocopier (painful)

- Later had a kind (free) agreement with Friends Meeting House (Quakers) – Don Rawson

- Contact with Quakers lost (Don's retirement)

- costs of having it printed professionally too much

- Bought my first Imac (24inch) in 2007 so couldn't use PagePlus any more

Process from the start

Producing the master copy

- Using Pages (why Pages?)

- Ease of use – simple needs

- Using Word Processing Mode

Layout

- Needed an A5 booklet

- Early on found Cheap Imposter (shrinks A4 document to A5 folded booklet) – not before trying lots of other stuff that didn't quite work!

- Need to build A4 document with A5 document in mind

Monthly Process

- Small team

- Individuals send stuff too

- Mostly by email

- Still some hand written stuff but quite small now
- Inbox for CONTACT items
- Scour my personal inbox because I'm not organised as I should be
- Using a template
  - Index
  - House style
  - Non Designers Design Book
- Building the Magazine
  - Begin inserting material into magazine (some things always in same spot – others less strict
  - Parish Pump
  - Christian Charity Websites
- Proofing
  - Developed over time
  - Non-Techie proof reader
    - Email feedback with PDF
    - Word Export !! – Markup?
    - Icloud ups and downs
    - Collaboration – best (please don't break it Apple)
- Printing
  - Master copies on slightly heavier paper
  - Card Covers
  - Using Cheap Imposter
  - The story of the Digital Duplicator – still going strong
- Assembly
  - Slightly larger team help with assembly
  - Over time added equipment
  - Saddle Stitch Staplers
  - Folding Machine
  - Folding & Stapling Machine (Autobookie)
  - Electric Stapler
- Distribution
  - At church
  - Unformed Organisations

- ○ Others who use our church building
  - ○ The Web

Amateur Publishing on a Budget
Pete's Tips and Comments

Know your target audience, design for them.

Do not use MS Clip Art, or the awful Word Art (search out better… or get something that can do better like ArtText/Letters)

Decent photos - take yourself or get somebody competent or use a good free library

Proofing - Get someone who has not been part of the design to proof read it. Also aind someone who is good at Spelling & Grammar to check the publication.

Get some books I recommend the non designer's design book and Graphic Design School. (Currently £10 & £0.01 respectively used on Amazon.)

Play around with some layouts show to others

Chose layout/design stick to it. If you want to make changes don't change more than 3 elements at once.

No more than 2 fonts per page / 3 or 4 per publication. Chose an easy to read font for the bulk of the text. [*I'd say this is a little strict… but over all keep fonts under control - Simon*]

Look at other magazines, newsletters. Chose ones you like, why?

Use 2 or 3 Columns, not 1 slab of text especially on A4, on A5 1 column can work if you don't cramp the type too close.

Create a style sheet in your software & then apply the style to all text. Save time. Also find out how your software deals with hyphenation, then you can eliminate most hyphenations.

Software

Page layout software like MS Publisher. I wouldn't use a word processor.

PDF editing software can be helpful if you collaborate

Basic photo editor (cropping, mono, brighten, straighten… doesn't have to be anything powerful)

Amateur Publishing on a Budget
Simon's Comments

Many years in design for print and "pre press"

I have over the years worked with all the "big pro apps" PageMaker, QuarkXpress, In Design… and have check out and tested many smaller/lesser known ones out of interest or as options to recommend to amateurs on a budget

Now – with the universal acceptance of PDF pretty much anything you want to use but top picks now obviously tend to include Pages, Affinity Publisher, BeLight Swift Publisher, iStudio Publisher, Microsoft Publisher, Pearl Mountain Publisher Plus, iCalamus, Scribus…

Everyone is different and has to find their own level and what they like the best but my top recommends are Swift Publisher and Affinity Publisher dependent on your experience and budget… Pages and Publisher Plus maybe a bit further down the list.

It really doesn't hurt to have at the very least a simple photo editor and a drawing programme in your arsenal too
• Cropping, brightening, rotating and making photos mono
Options for these are almost limitless – Amadine, Affinty Designer/Photo, GIMP, Photos, Luminar, Graphic, Intaglio… etc etc.

If you are going to print it yourself some DTP applications will help you to make/print the "printers pairs" to make a booklet – if not something like Cheap Imposter or Create Booklet 2 are good helpers
If you are not printing yourself leave your PDF as a normal document and let your print provider sort the rest out for you… honestly… And talk to your provider - people like me are happy to help you to help us, nothing makes a prepress man sadder than someone's attempt to be "helpful" actually creating a load of work

Don't be afraid of Templates, or stealing ideas for design.

Use Master Pages and make use of Text and Paragraph Styles

TEN HELPFUL HINTS

1. Make sure your document is set to the correct size... Preferably A4 or A5. Avoid US Letter (Unless you are in the US and Letter paper is easily available) If you are going to work on A4 to print A5 remember everything will end up 70% of the size - allow for bigger margins, column gutters, text sizes etc.

2. Remember that odd pages go on the right of the document and even pages on the left and a folded magazine has to have a multiple of 4 pages…

3. If you are unsure of where to put the page numbers (folios) put them in the centre at the bottom and you won't go far wrong

4. If you want to use headers/footers and folios make use of the ability of the computer/ software to do it for you

5. Your software can do a lot of the work for you, take advantage of it - centre your text with the "centred" text alignment for example, use the margin and column guides. Make use of the master page/template abilities

6. Don't use lots of differing typefaces where a careful choice of 3 or 4 will usually do

7. Adding a line between paragraphs isn't the only way to space paragraphs - more professionally you can use Space Before and/or Space After paragraph, Create Style settings and you don't have to keep entering the settings

8. PDF files are the best way to pass files to other people, especially profession al print services.

9. As a rule of thumb you should allow AT LEAST a 3mm "safe zone" between the edge of your page and the image.... and ideally the margins should be AT LEAST twice that.

10. If you are creating files with images or background that bleeds off the page (like in pro magazines) you should ideally have 3mm of bleed outside the trim IN ADDITION to the 3mm of safe zone. (if you don't know what this talk to your print provider…)