



The GeekSpeak column has two goals: to inform the community about technological advances and at the same time encourage the use and appreciation of technology among translation professionals. Jost also publishes a free technical newsletter for translators (www.internationalwriters.com/toolkit).

The common denominators of desktop publishing programs seem to be: they are expensive, they are not very intuitive for users, and they present considerable obstacles for translators.

This does not sound good, but here are the brighter aspects. Yes, they are expensive, but you may not even need to have them installed on your computer when you translate with them. They are very difficult to learn on a real expert level—after all, graphic designers, desktop publishers, and prepress specialists are well-paid professionals—but as translators we only need to translate the files, not design them. And, yes, there are obstacles, but, fortunately, there are workarounds as well.

It would definitely go beyond the limitations of this column to list all those workarounds, but as a starter it might be helpful at least to know which translation environment tool (TEN-T) supports which desktop publishing format. Figure 1 provides a quick overview.

Don't worry if all the information in Figure 1 does not make sense to you, since you will most likely be able to make it as a translator without having to battle these formats. However, for those of you who understand these issues all too well, there are some interesting trends. One is that the number of desktop publishing tools are diminishing at an ever increasing pace. On the graphics-oriented front, PageMaker is really obsolete (reflected in the lack of support among TEN-Ts), whereas Quark is holding on by its nails. The same is true for the content-oriented desktop publishing tools. Interleaf/Quicksilver is no longer even listed, and Ventura really should not be listed either. FrameMaker is still well supported, though, interestingly, inconsistently in the Trados versions. (For those familiar with the dreaded STF conversion in Trados 2007 and older versions, this is a thing of the past in Trados Studio. FrameMaker .mif files are now directly imported just like any other file, but they have to be of FrameMaker version 8 or 9.)

From Figure 1, you can also see that Alchemy Publisher is the only tool that imports FrameMaker files without having to convert them to the .mif interchange format. That certainly makes things easier, though my feeling is that Alchemy will not be happy about FrameMaker's easier processing in Trados Studio—Alchemy's campaign for easier processing of FrameMaker was clearly aimed at the old Trados ways (but then it still remains to be seen if the Studio product will actually take over the market share that the old version of Trados had).

The third-party tools in the first footnote in Figure 1 are the Trados StoryCollector tools for PageMaker, Quark 4.1-6, and InDesign 2 that are part of the Trados 2007 package and older versions (but not of Trados Studio), the CopyFlow versions that support all versions of InDesign and Quark, as well as the Sysfilter tool for InDesign.

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Figure 1

	Across	Déjà Vu	Heartsome	MemoQ	MultTrans	Publisher	SDLX	Swordfish	Trados 2007	Trados Studio	Star Transit	Wordfast Pro
InDesign												
v2, CS		x*							x	x***	x	
CS2-CS4 (.inx)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
CS4 (.idml)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
PageMaker		x*							x	x***	x	
Quark												
v4-v6		x*					x		x	x*	x	
v7-		x*					x*		x*	x*		
FrameMaker	x	x	x	x	x	x**	x	x	v8-	v8-	x	x
Ventura									x	x***		

* Through third-party tools

** Without conversion to .mif

*** Through prior processing with Trados 2007