Style Formatting

Style Formatting of text will be the topic of this podcast.

A style in a page layout is a specified setting for characters or paragraphs in your document; they are helpful for documents that have several formatting changes.

Formatting refers to arranging in a particular way text within a document; such as fonts, font styles, point sizes, color of text, drop caps, or spacing after a paragraph.

Creating style sheets containing the formatting of text allows the designer to maintain consistency and to make quick changes to text throughout a document. They are especially useful in long or multi-page documents such as annual reports, or newsletters.

Developing these style sheets will save you time and trouble when changes need to be made.

Let's look at a newsletter example and see how the designer would handle changes without a style sheet and then with a style sheet.

A 10-page newsletter features one Q&A on each page for a total of 10 questions and 10 answers. The designer has specified that each Question is set in Garamond 12pt and each Answer is set in Futura 10pt. The editor decides that all the Questions should now be in Bold.

    * Without a style sheet: The designer must go through the document, find each question, select only the Question text, and change the character attributes to Bold, one question at a time.

    * With a style sheet: The designer opens the style sheet that defines the Question text, changes the character attributes to Bold. All the Questions throughout the document change automatically or globally meaning all at once. There is no need to find each individual question to change.

Imagine how time-consuming it becomes if the editor of the newsletter requests multiple changes or wants to see printouts of the entire newsletter with a variety of Q&A styles. Style sheets make such a request much easier to fulfill.

When creating styles, the easiest way is to experiment within the paragraph first using the Paragraph palette, and Character palette.

When the text looks the way you would like, click anywhere in the paragraph with the Type tool, then create a new paragraph style from your newly formatted text by choosing New Paragraph Style from the Paragraph Styles palette. InDesign will automatically copy the text's settings into the new style, which you can further refine if necessary.

Not only does the use of styles save time, it helps eliminate errors. When manually changing attributes across a lengthy document, especially multiple changes, it can be easy to overlook entire paragraphs or buried bits of text that should change. The use of styles helps insure that changes are applied consistently and completely.