

Study Unit 2: Steps in Electronic Publishing

Introduction

In this study unit, you will understand the electronic publishing workflow, you will be able to explain the steps involved in the Electronic Publishing process. You will also be able to understand different aspects that one puts in consideration when publishing.

Learning Outcomes of Study Unit 2

Upon completion of this study unit, you should be able to:

2.1. Describe the steps in the process of Electronic Publishing.

2.1. Steps/Workflow

Good publications require well written text, appropriate illustrations, intelligent design and layout, careful typography and good quality printing and binding. Each step is important, because the final product will either motivate or demotivate the final user.

The steps that are involved in electronic publishing are below:

1. Planning
2. Gathering information
3. Determine layout and makeup
4. Data entry
5. Editing
6. Proof reading
7. Typesetting the text
8. Production of camera ready copy
9. Printing
10. Binding and distribution

2.1.1. Planning for Electronic Publishing

This is the first step and it involves:

- Determine the purpose of your publication

- Determine your audience (audience profile)
- Determine how the publication will be sold

(a) Purpose of the Publication

The first step as you plan is to determine the purpose

You should be certain that:

- You have clear goals
- Write down these goals and review them with other members of the publication team
- Purpose
 - What is the point?
 - Inform
 - Advertise
 - Get advice
 - Meet a requirement
 - What purpose do the images play?
 - Each image must have a purpose

(b) Determine the audience

These will determine how the publication will be like. Design the publication for those who will be using the publication not for your personal artistic ambitions or to please others. Their age, their interests, gender, line of work, etc.

Type of audience: Ask yourself these questions:

- Are they children or adults, scientists or laypersons, academicians? Researchers?

This will determine whether????

- Will the writing be highly technical or is it easy to read for your audience?
- Will your publication be composed mainly of text?
- Will there be need for many illustrations?
- Color or black and white? Are photographs and drawings necessary?

(c) How will it be sold

- Where will they buy it e.g. book shops, kiosks, hotels, tourist locations? Will it be distributed for free?
- Will competing titles be sold next to it? how can you make your publication stand out among the competitors?

- How will the publication be printed? E.g. offset, letterpress
- How many copies will be required?
- How will the documents be created? Mechanical artwork or on a computer?
- Which software will be needed? E.g. InDesign, Illustrator etc?

2.1.2. Gathering Information

This involves getting the information that will be needed for the publication e.g. which text will be included, which illustrations, what will the main title and theme etc.

For books, plan your interior pages first and design the cover later. Consider the basic elements (title page, contents page, opening page of a chapter, typical text pages, typical back-matter pages (index, bibliography) and any other sections with a character of their own.

2.1.3. Determining Layout & Makeup

Makeup is the arrangement of text, illustrations on a page whereas layout is the way in which the parts of the document are presented according to a plan. This stage will determine the printing technique that will be used. It is important to design publications to make the most efficient use of the printing method being used.

Questions you will ask include:

- ⦿ Is colour really necessary? To save on printing and prepress costs, you could print the cover in colour and the interior in black and white.
- ⦿ Whether to use in-house or commercial printing methods.
- ⦿ Papers and trim sizes that need to be printed e.g. A4, A5
- ⦿ Types of paper like coated or uncoated? Acid free paper vs newsprint, bond paper, decorative paper, ivory paper etc.

2.1.4. Data Entry

This is the stage where the manuscript is prepared for example by scanning, downloading, direct keying etc. The result is a manuscript (the original text of an author's work, handwritten or now usually typed, that is submitted to a publisher)

Preparing the Manuscript

- Become familiar with the content of the publication.
- Read the text carefully to make sure it satisfactorily covers the topics.
- Try to have every text element carefully reviewed by a competent editor.
- To avoid difficult inefficient and expensive corrections later on, make all revisions to the manuscript before you start the page layout.

2.1.5. Editing

This are processes of recalling the file and making corrections or adjustments to the text or to the formats or to the illustrations. It involves making revisions to and suggestions about the content of the publication, focusing on improving the accuracy of language, flow and overall readability as well as checking for grammar and spelling.

2.1.6. Proof reading

This is the final stage in the editing process focusing on surface errors. It happens after all editing revisions are finished. It is the final stage that can be done in order to consider the publication as complete.

2.1.7. Type setting

This is the process of setting material in type or into a form to be used in printing and also the process of producing graphic matter (as through a computer system) (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

To determine the different elements to be included in your layouts:

- Create a simple grid with well-proportioned column widths, gutter margins and starting points for repeating elements, determine how many pages and the page size you will need and the illustrations you require.
- Where small groups of words or lines from the start or end of paragraphs are left at the top or bottom of a page or column on their own, this makes a publication layout look unbalanced and makes the text harder to read. These are called **widows and orphans**.
- Widows occur when words or lines from the start of a paragraph appear at the bottom of a page or column. Orphans occur when words or lines from the end of a paragraph appear at the top of a page or column.

2.1.8. Producing the Camera ready copy

This is literally the **copy** in the format that the book will ultimately take, and will be requested in a standard format, such as complete with any pictorial material, tables, charts, diagrams that you want included.

It involves;

- Making the revisions to the page layouts on the computer.
- Having an editor check the designers' work carefully to make sure there are no typographic errors that were added while fixing earlier problems.
- It means ready to 'go to press' or printed.

2.1.9. Printing

Printing is the process of producing printed material by means of inked type and a printing press or similar technology (definitions.net). There are many forms of printing ranging from the desktop or digital printing to the commercial printing processes like offset printing, letter press printing, gravure, engraving, screen printing.

At this stage in the electronic publishing process, the printery will take the materials and work with them to create page proofs for your review. After thorough review of the work, the final printing will be done.

2.1.10. Binding and Distribution

After final printing, the next stage is the folding, gathering, stitching, perforation and trimming of the publication, depending on the requirements and use of the publication. The options for binding include temporary binding like spiral binding and permanent binding like edition and case binding.

It is also important to consider the different distribution channels; will it be mailed, posted, via social media, via courier service, stacked in a counter display or on the web.

Self-Review Questions (SRQ) For Study Session 2

Now that you have completed this study unit, you can assess how well you have achieved its Learning Outcomes by answering these questions. Write your answers in your Study Diary and discuss them with your Tutor at the next Study Support Meeting or Online interactive sessions.

1. Explain the steps involved in Electronic Publishing.
2. Differentiate between orphans and widows as used in Electronic Publishing.