

## Plug-ins

### Power tools for PageMaker

By Tim Cole

**PageTools 2.0**, \$99.95, Windows and Macintosh. Extensis Corporation, (800) 796-9798.

A GOOD PAGEMAKER PLUG-IN EITHER EN-ables you to do something you couldn't do before, or speeds up a task you already do. As someone always on the lookout for Plug-ins that will improve my quality of life in PageMaker, I was impressed with Extensis PageTools 1.0—but not enough to keep them installed and use them regularly. There wasn't anything in the mix that I couldn't live without, so I didn't take the time to master them and work them into my daily PageMaker routine.

With PageTools 2.0, however, it was a very different story. Not only has Extensis improved their existing suite of Plug-ins, they also asked the original PageMaker guru, Olav Martin Kvern, to develop new Plug-ins for the version 2.0 release. Because of the real-world experience that went into the development of this new version of PageTools, it's very likely that a serious PageMaker user will find at least one Plug-in worth the price of the entire package.

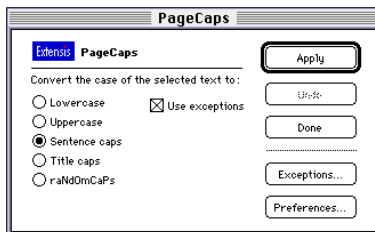
One of the most notable improvements in PageTools 2.0 is the overall increase in speed and stability. On the downside, a major annoyance that survives in version 2.0 is that the installer still doesn't give you a choice of which Plug-ins you wish to install—it's an all-or-nothing deal. You can manually remove undesired Plug-ins after the fact, as

age is PageBars. It's a well-implemented Plug-in that enables you to do two things: assemble collections of buttons for commands and other Plug-ins, and use these buttons as floating palettes or toolbars that snap to the sides of your display. The bars and palettes are easy to create, modify, and move around.

If you do a lot of work with type, you've been waiting a long time for four of the Plug-ins spec'd by Ole Kvern: PageType, PageCaps, PageTabs, and PageGlossary.

PageType lets you create character-level formats that can be applied like PageMaker's paragraph-level styles, which saves you the trouble of having to do all your local formatting in individual steps. You create a format by selecting a string of text and clicking a button on the PageType palette. From there you can select which attributes you want to save as a format—everything from the font to kerning, leading, and so forth. But character-level formats lack one important “styles” feature—changing a character-level format defini-

tion will not automatically update the format of all text to which the format has been applied. Nevertheless, this feature is incredibly useful.



If you've ever been forced to work with a large text file that's entirely in capital letters, you'll love PageCaps. This high-IQ Plug-in can take a range of text and convert it to uppercase, lowercase, sentence

unately, neither is available for Windows. PageTabs automates the application of tabs and indents, while PageGlossary lets you create glossaries of frequently used words and phrases that you can insert into text by clicking on the glossary entry name in the PageGlossary palette.

There are many other Plug-ins in PageTools 2.0, some of which I found more useful than others. They include PageColors, a utility that performs find-and-change operations on colors; PageCounter, which counts the number of characters and words in a text block, story, or entire document; and PageMarks, which creates crop, registration, and color-density bars around selected objects.

All in all, PageTools contains a number of very well-designed and -engineered Plug-ins that do what Plug-ins are supposed to do—make you more productive.

### Plugging in styles to Illustrator

By Ted Alspach

**Stylist 1.0**, \$199, Macintosh only. Alien Skin Software, (919) 832-4124.

FOR YEARS ILLUSTRATOR USERS HAVE WISHED for styles to automate formatting of objects (for paint attributes) or text (for attributes such as font, point size, and alignment). It seems somebody was wishing on the right star, because Alien Skin Software has just released Stylist, a Plug-in that brings styles to Illustrator 6.0.

With Stylist, Alien Skin didn't just add styles to Illustrator, but combined object and text styles into a single type of style. And Alien Skin took styles even further by creating something called “constructions,” a feature that lets you combine several styles for fantastic results.

Here's an overview of how Stylist's interface works. If your document contains any styles (either simple styles, such as

a grouping of attributes for a single path, or constructions, which usually consist of several paths), you'll see them listed in the top-left window of the palette. When a style is selected, its attributes are displayed in the top-right portion of the palette.

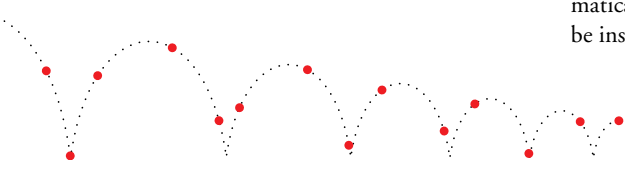


long as you remember not to throw out the “pgtools.add” (Windows) or “PageToolbox.add” (Mac) file—it's a shared resource that some of the most useful Plug-ins can't live without.

The foundation of the PageTools pack-

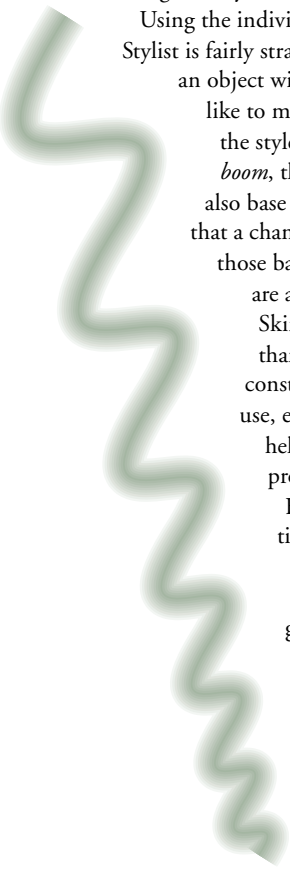
caps, or title caps. It also allows you to create your own exceptions list for words you wish to capitalize in . . . well . . . exceptional ways.

Two of the other power-user text Plug-ins are PageTabs and PageGlossary. Unfor-



Construction pieces are displayed in the lower-right portion. On the right side of the palette are also two pop-up menus for style attributes and construction pieces.

Within all these windows and menus lies Stylist's largest fault: it crams into one location the functionality of what three complex palettes (or dialog boxes) might offer, and its complexity can be overwhelming at first. In fact, it took me much longer than I would've liked to get up and running, and even longer to fully utilize all of Stylist's features. But now that I've used the palette and explored the options, I'm glad they're in one place.



Using the individual components of Stylist is fairly straightforward—you select an object with the attributes you'd like to make into a style, create the style in the palette, and *boom*, there's your style. You can also base styles on other styles so that a change in one style affects all those based on it. Constructions are a bit harder, but Alien Skin has provided more than a hundred pre-made constructions that you can use, edit, and inspect, which helps shorten the learning process significantly.

By themselves, constructions would make an excellent special-effects filter. If you've ever generated special stroke effects by overlapping several copies of a path and applying different attributes to each copy, you'll have an idea of what constructions do automatically. Any

path, from outlined type to a line drawn with the pen tool, can have a construction applied to it. When Stylist is installed, those objects remain editable as if they were one path. When you edit the construction path, the additional paths that create the special effect also change auto-

matically (of course, this requires Stylist to be installed and turned on).

One concern I had with Stylist was that of compatibility. What would happen if you gave a styled document to a pal who doesn't have Stylist? In this type

of situation, your pal would be able to see and edit the styled elements just as you would, even though he wouldn't be able to view or edit the styles himself. When you reopened the document after your friend made changes to it, all your style definitions would be just as you left them.

Stylist's only other drawback besides the complexity of its interface is its inability to read styles in text from word-processing applications. Nevertheless, Stylist's powerful capabilities and snappy performance outweigh any of its drawbacks by far. It adds functionality and features to Illustrator that I can no longer do without.

### Books

## A master typographer's manifesto

By Kathleen Tinkel

***The New Typography: A Handbook for Modern Designers***, by Jan Tschichold, translated from the German by Ruari McLean; introduction by Robin Kinross. Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1995. ISBN 0-520-07147-6. \$40. (510) 642-4247.

For the first 450 years or so after Gutenberg invented movable type, apprentices learned the practice of typography from master printers. There were few written guides to printing until the beginning of this century, and even then most focused more on composing-room practices than on the result—type printed on the page. But with the dawn of the typographic designer in the period between the two world wars, we started to see critical writing on typography and design. Jan Tschichold's *Die Neue Typographie*, published in 1928, was among the first of these books, and the 1995 edition reviewed here is its first English translation.

I can think of no individual who has had greater impact on today's typography than Jan Tschichold (*yahn tCHEE-kold*, 1902–74). He was a book designer and typogra-

pher who designed a handful of typefaces, of which only Sabon endures for the desktop. He was an international consultant who revamped the design of Penguin Books. He wrote voluminously (mostly in German) on design and, in particular, on typographic composition. Tschichold's work is remarkably coherent and inherently logical, yet his first splash was as a revolutionary—*The New Typography* was published as a manifesto for a movement of the same name that emerged from that influential center for reform in art and design, the Bauhaus.

*The New Typography* is divided into two major sections. The first is a defense of the movement and its philosophical principles, the second a how-to guide for applying them. It was, as translator Ruari McLean commented in his biography of Tschichold, “the first

publication in any language to attempt to lay down principles of typographic design which could be applied to the whole printing trade, embracing jobbing, advertising and journals, as well as books.”

The book is compelling reading for desktop publishers, graphic designers, and other typesetters of today. Tschichold was a master of detail, so although he revised some of his particular recommendations over the years, he carefully elucidated the process of designing not merely books but such varied classes of printing as advertisements and what he called “advertising matter” (leaflets, prospectuses, catalogs, and other commercial pieces), magazines, posters, business forms, and calling cards. He discusses what makes layouts effective, the use of contrast and color, the selection of typefaces and spacing of type, and the choice of paper (surface and color), and otherwise explains how to design a page intended for any particular purpose.

What earned the book its radical reputation was its tone of moral certitude and rigid absolutism—but these are views that Tschichold moderated in his future writings. The book reads to me as if the author has tried to graft the precepts of the

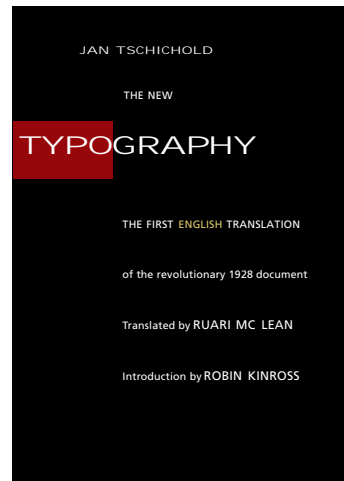
New Typography onto his own more thoughtful view of type and design. The radical bits make the book entertaining, but today we're too inured to shocking type (and used to relatively functional typography) to view Tschichold as a serious radical. You'll get his full flavor—and wisdom—by reading this book along with the author's *Treasury of Alphabets and Lettering* (published in 1966 and available in a recent paperback reprint from W.

W. Norton, 1995, ISBN 0-393-70197-2) and *The Form of the Book—Essays on the Morality of Good Design* (a collection of essays from 1935 until the author's death in 1974, published by Hartley & Marks, 1991, ISBN 0-88179-116-4).

Viewed as a book to be used (not a historic period

piece), this edition of *The New Typography* is flawed. It may make sense to use the original text, but it leaves the reader with the cumbersome chore of manually collating the author's proposed amendments. And it would have been easier to collate the old text with the revisions if the page references had been correct; most are not. More seriously, the design is infuriatingly wrong-headed for a book by a sensitive typographer. The text is set in the tortured combination of a mechanically extended and grossly letterspaced Imago with Frutiger Ultra Black display type, when different weights of the readily available Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk would have been much more appropriate. (Or the designer could have used Univers, the face Tschichold later said he would have used had it been available in 1928.)

Tschichold was a brilliant typographer who spent his life trying to understand how he designed handsome books set in beautiful type so he could share his method with the rest of us. If you're interested in design and typography, you should buy this book—despite its flaws, it's still one of the best typographic how-to books we have. ▀





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