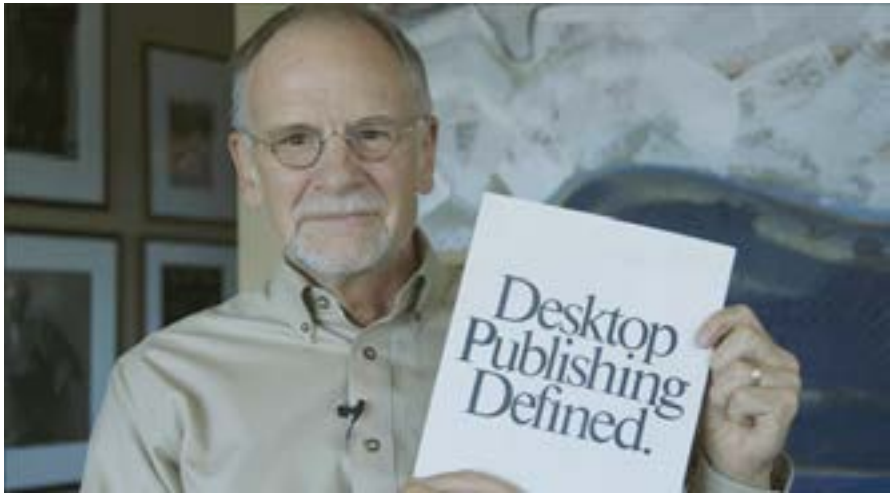


Paul Brainerd

ALDUS

In 1984, former newspaper editor Paul Brainerd formed a new company called Aldus to develop software for newspapers to produce advertisements more effectively. In July 1985, the company introduced Pagemaker for the Macintosh computer. The product dramatically transformed printing.

Pagemaker used a desktop metaphor that mimicked the traditional way that elements were placed for offset printing. It could alter font type and size and change column dimensions. Type could be integrated with scans of pictures, ruled lines, headlines and borders. Brainerd coined the term *desktop publishing* for this new method.

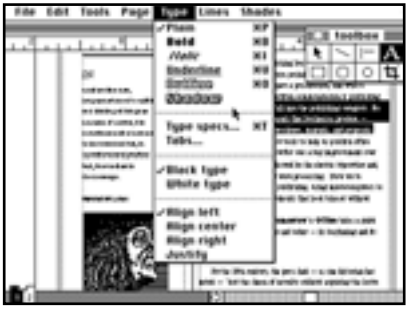
Early Years

Brainerd was born in Medford, Oregon, in 1947. He grew up working in his parents' portrait studio and camera shop. His interest in photography and experience at his parents' studio, enabled him to contribute to his high school yearbook.

Education

He attended the University of Oregon, and learned the business, technical and editorial side of publishing at the college's *Daily Emerald* newspaper. He enabled the *Emerald* to use a Springfield newspaper's presses at night, so it could shift from linotype to offset processes. To establish its independence from the university, he organized the *Emerald* into a not-for-profit corporation.

Later, he pursued a degree in journalism at the University of Minnesota, where he also helped manage the school paper. He obtained a job at the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*.



Apple Collaboration

While Brainerd was working at the *Star Tribune,* he started working for the Boston company Atex, which was computerizing the many steps involved in newspaper production. At Atex, he wrote the specifications for the word processing system used by major magazines and newspapers.

When Brainerd learned that Apple was planning a new laser printer to work with the Macintosh computer, he saw an opportunity to merge his publishing and computer experience with Apple's.

Revolution in Publishing

Named after Aldus Manutius, a sixteenth-century Venetian scholar and printer, Brainerd created the Aldus Corporation in 1984. Aldus produced Pagemaker, which revolutionized the publishing industry.

Journalist Paul Andrews described the development as follows:

> To anyone who remembered the tedious act of justifying columns in high school newspapers, of physically cutting and pasting headlines or awkward pieces of type onto glue-smudged page dummies, and of missing publication deadlines because the printer had four jobs ahead of theirs, desktop publishing was an occupational epiphany. It gave control to the creator of the document—control over the appearance, content, production and timing of the entire publishing process (*The Seattle Times*, July 17, 1994).

PageMaker 1.0 included all the basic elements needed to lay out pages: free form drag-and-drop positioning of page elements, sophisticated type tools, a well-chosen selection of drawing tools, the ability to import text and graphics (most importantly, EPS files) from other applications, and the ability to print to high resolution PostScript printers with WYSIWYG accuracy. The users could easily create professional-quality books, newspapers, newsletters, brochures, pamphlets, and other graphic products.

PageMaker not only made desktop publishing possible, it spawned entire cottage industries for clip art, fonts, service bureau output and scanning, and specialty products for laser printing such as foil overlays.

In March 1994, Adobe and Aldus merged. Former Aldus employees--Aldusians--spun off to form at least 2 businesses called Baby Pauls.

My Comments

Although Brainerd was not a graphic artist himself, his inventions enabled graphic arts to flourish. In the same way that the Internet has enable the "amateur" to publish blogs, art work and YouTube videos, Pagemaker allowed both professional graphic designers, in-house staff and amateurs to produce newsletters, logos, brochure, promotional materials, etc.

For in-house staff, desktop publishing simplified the whole process. Typesetters were no longer required because fonts could be manipulated in Pagemaker. Changes could be made easily. Digital format allowed the document to be sent to clients electronically for approval. Essentially, one person could do all of the publishing tasks that required a team of designers and printers.

I was working at USC as a computer/technical consultant when Pagemaker was launched. It enabled me to work with my department's associate director to create our alumni newsletter, graduate brochures, training manuals and other promotional materials. It literally changed the way we presented our department. I used Pagemaker in all subsequent jobs until other desktop publishing programs took its place.

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