

# Word or Publisher: Use Crabby's special recipe to decide

Applies to: Microsoft Office Word 2003

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**Crabby Office Lady**

When you sit down to compose a letter, make a greeting card, or even create a newsletter, you have choices regarding color, font style, images, and so on. But first you need to choose which Office program is best suited for the job.

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Life is full of choices: Paper or plastic? Shower or bath? Stilettos or sandals? Get out of bed and do something with your day, or lay there, paralyzed with fear that yet something else will go wrong in your once-charming, 100-year-old house? (And now you know just a little bit more about Crabby's personal life...)

Even your day at work is filled with choices: Dress up, dress down? Caffeinate or don't caffeine? (OK, that's not really a choice, now is it?) Word or Publisher?

While I can't really make up your mind for you, I can offer you some useful insight regarding when to use Word and when to use Publisher. Both are rock solid programs that have been around a long time, and both are pretty easy to get the hang of. And while, yes, you can do most things in either program, sometimes it's best to use one program over the other. Today I'll offer you some ideas to help you decide when to use which program.

## Word and Publisher: What are they?

Obviously, both Word and Publisher are Microsoft Office programs. Although I'm not particularly fond of stating the obvious, I do receive lots of e-mail messages and online feedback asking me about Outlook Express (NOT an Office program), Windows (the big brother of Office, and a close pal it relies on — but not something that I write about), and even Adobe Photoshop (not even a Microsoft program). And so, I can tell you this: Both Word and Publisher are Office programs, and, as it so happens, two programs with which I am intimately familiar.

### The similarities...and differences

Both Word and Publisher are suitable for even the beginner computer user, and both are pretty flexible when it comes to creating, well, just about anything (except for a database, a spreadsheet, or a few other things). Both can utilize text, images, and various complicated types of formatting.

If you want to create a business card, you can do it in either program. If you want to create a newsletter, the same rule holds true: Either program can handle the job. In fact, there is a whole list of tasks that either program can handle quite nicely. However (and this is a BIG however), one of these programs is better when you're dealing with a lot of graphics (Hint: That program starts with the letter "P") and one is better for legal documents and more text-intensive projects (Hint: That program starts with the letter "W").

### So...which one should you use?

Well, I started to create this really cool table that outlined all the things that each program is good for...and then I found an article page on this very Web site that does the exact same thing. A coworker — and friend — of mine created this very helpful table. (Leslie, I thank you for taking the time to do this so that I could just blather on in the manner to which my readers have become accustomed.)

| IF YOU WANT TO CREATE                                                | USE THIS PROGRAM | WHY?                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Graphically rich print and e-mail newsletters                        | Publisher        | Precise control over positioning text with images and other design elements.                                                                                                                  |
| Graphically rich catalogs                                            | Publisher        | Pre-designed catalog publications and the Mail and Catalog Merge Wizard.                                                                                                                      |
| Greeting cards                                                       | Publisher        | Greeting card types and designs you can customize for all your business and personal needs.                                                                                                   |
| Consistently branded business communications and marketing materials | Publisher        | Master Design Sets that create a coordinated look and feel for your company letterhead, business cards, brochures, and labels.                                                                |
| Posters or banners                                                   | Publisher        | Poster and banner designs with easy width and height choices to match your needs.                                                                                                             |
| 3- or 4- panel brochures or flyers                                   | Publisher        | Many designs to choose from with optional space for customer addresses, and order, or sign-up forms.                                                                                          |
| Business cards                                                       | Publisher        | Design types to match all of your business communications and marketing materials.                                                                                                            |
| Design publications to be commercially printed                       | Publisher        | Support for large jobs that require the services of a commercial printer, including composite CMYK PostScript output and advanced print settings for better color separations.                |
| Documents with a table of contents and index                         | Word             | Indexing and table of contents features allow you to create a professional published document.                                                                                                |
| Long documents                                                       | Word             | Features specific to research papers, business plans, or other longer documents including page numbering, footnotes, endnotes, and annotations.                                               |
| Legal documents                                                      | Word             | Legal document support with features such as line numbering, restricted access to sensitive documents, and checks for hidden text.                                                            |
| Short, simple documents (memos or letters)                           | Word             | Templates and Wizards that allow you to choose style and function, as well as content for the documents you write every day.                                                                  |
| Document sharing and collaboration                                   | Word             | Document Workspaces allow colleagues to work together on documents by using task lists, using links to resource materials, and storing related or supporting documents in a document library. |
| Handwritten notes and comments                                       | Word             | With Tablet PC ink features, you can take handwritten notes or mark up Word documents.                                                                                                        |
| Documents with XML support                                           | Word             | The Extensible Markup Language (XML) feature saves hours by allowing creation of document elements that are both searchable and reusable.                                                     |
| Documents requiring review or editing                                | Word             | Change tracking, inline comments, side-by-side compare, compare and merge, compare versions, and text highlighter features support document revision and collaboration.                       |

Now, doesn't that table put your mind at ease? (It certainly does mine.)

## Using Publisher information in Word files

So you've decided to use Publisher because you're getting ready to send out an e-mail catalog or perhaps even a poster. But what if your recipients don't have Publisher? As you learned from a column I wrote called [View this: Opening a file when you don't have the program](#), we offer free downloadable viewers for certain programs that let your recipients open up a file — such as a slide show or a diagram — even if they don't have the program it was created in (for example, PowerPoint or Visio). Unfortunately, there isn't a viewer for Publisher, but all is not lost (I'll get to why that is in a minute).

As well, what if you want to reuse information from a publication you created in Publisher but don't want to have to do all that cutting and pasting? Or how about this: You created something with Publisher and you just want one page of it to be something like the cover of a book you've written in Word?

There are ways to tackle this thorny Publisher-to-Word issue.

- [Save a publication as a Word document](#)

You can save your publication as a Word document in RTF format.

You can copy and paste a page or objects on a page (such as brochures) and you can do the same for a letterhead page that you want to bring into Word to make changes to.

You can save a page or objects on a page as a picture file. This is useful for calendars, book covers, or anything that you don't need to make changes to.

- [Save Publisher 2003 files in formats that others can view](#)

Using Microsoft Office Document Imaging 2003 (which is already on your computer), you can scan paper documents, view scanned documents and online faxes, and more.

Also installed with Document Imaging is the Microsoft Office Document Image Writer print driver, a component that allows you to save any printable Office document in the Tagged Image File Format (TIFF) or Microsoft Document Imaging Format (MDI). When you use this component to save your publication as a TIFF or MDI file, others can view the content of your publication even if they don't have Publisher.

And there you have it: A few decisions to make, a few lessons learned. Now, fly, be free, and learn to use the tools at your disposal.

## About the author

[Annik Stahl](#), the Crabby Office Lady columnist, takes all of your complaints, compliments, and knee-jerk reactions to heart. Therefore, she graciously asks that you let her know whether this column was useful to you — or not — by entering your feedback using the **Was this information helpful?** tool below. And remember: If you don't vote, you can't complain.

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