

Jump drives leap into large format

computer notes

from the road

by WILMA MELOT

They're called Flash Drives or USB jump drives.

The technical term is flash memory data storage device with a USB (universal serial bus) attached to the end.

No matter what you call them, I'm seeing them at almost every paper I visit – mainly because they're inexpensive, easy to find and can save the day if your network is down. Plus, they're getting cheaper and cheaper.

The internal parts are similar to that of a floppy disk, but work much better. They're hot swappable between platforms and many carry lifetime warranties. I've seen some 32GB jump drives that are very fast – and some papers don't

even have hard drives with that much storage space on them.

One 32GB, made by Edge Tech Corp., is called DiskGo™. It retails for \$174.95, and probably has enough room to backup most of your data.

This little device is also easy to take offsite for storage.

If you don't need that much space, a 16GB retails for around \$89 and an 8GB is less than \$40.

These little jump drives do create a security threat since it's so easy to plug them into any computer and copy files. If you're using jump drives, make sure your system has virus protection – on both Mac and Windows platforms.

The MacBook Air laptop offered a similar type of drive for its internal drive.



This drive uses less power since it lacks any moving parts. At 64GB this solid-state drive is durable and provides peace of mind for a laptop that can withstand jolts. Although it's relatively expensive at \$599, some people think it's worth it. Since it uses 30 percent less power than a typical hard drive, it works well for laptops and their batteries.

Samsung has developed one of the largest capacity solid state drives at 256GB for many PC notebooks, but for now it's pretty pricey. If you have the money, you can put one in your Dell.

These drives are going to keep getting cheaper and larger, and one day may replace the moving parts of internal hard drives now found in most computers.

Snippets offer another way to manage workflow

InDesign has a feature called Snippets that could be beneficial to some newspapers.

For instance, if you have a couple of people at your office putting out the paper, Snippets could be used to move ads between computers.

This is done by grouping the ad together, dragging it to the desktop and then renaming it. If you use the drag method, make sure you name the file something your partner understands.

Another way to create a Snippet is by going to File > Export and choosing InDesign Snippet. The file will be saved as an .inds file.

Snippets keep the information you see on the screen as well as their location on the page. This means you can place a Snippet back into the same location – or any location you choose – when you place the file into another document.

The advantage of this kind of file is that your partner can edit it when he places it in his document. The Snippet

has the same links as you used to create the ad.

It's a simple and clean way to work – if you store all your art in a central location and both of you are connected to that location. The central location is essential when you make a final PDF.

Another solution to making a Snippet is to first embed the art files in the InDesign document and then create the Snippet.

To embed art in an ad, go to the links palette and select the art you want to embed. Then, go to the links menu and pull down to embed file. The art file is now permanently attached to the InDesign document.

This means the art will follow your Snippet to your partner's computer, allowing him to make good PDFs without being attached to the original location of the art.

Embedding the art will increase the size of the Snippet by however large the art is. For instance, if your art is

500MB, you increase the Snippet's size by 500MB. This means it can take longer to place on the page and will increase the page size.

If you decide to use this workflow, I recommend building full-page layout documents with no more than two pages each – unless your partner has a large amount of RAM.

With this said, I still prefer to have all art in a central location and just maintain the links.

You're also going to want to make sure your text settings are the same in the preferences to keep it from jumping around on the page when files are placed.

In addition, if you're placing text this way, make sure your columns aren't preformatted or you may get unexpected results. It's best to place text the same way you always have and then format it on the page. Remember to use RTF when formatting text for best results.

plugged IN

Photoshop Lightroom 2.0

Adobe just released version 2.0 of Lightroom.

This is Adobe's version of a program that catalogs photos. It goes head-to-head with Apple's Aperture, now on its second version as well.

These programs assist people who have lots of photos to process, store and file.

The new version added more print packages, which allow you to show off photos to customers.

Since I know many of you make a little money from sports photos, you might want to look at some of these packages – if for no other reason than to manage those large photo collections.

Several new features in Lightroom offer simple color correction and even sharpening plus it integrates with Photoshop or Photo Elements better than the last version. Batch processing of large amounts of photos allows you to rename all files and put them into folders.

If you're looking for a way to handle photos, this \$299 program is a good option.

Aperture 2, for \$199, seems to offer less flexibility for photo touchup, but it does seem to boost better RAW processing if you use that format to shoot photos.

Open source desktop publishing

Scribus is the up-and-coming open source page layout program competing with big software programs like InDesign and Quark.

Open source means it's free to anyone brave enough to try it. It's a program in the making, which is being updated as often as necessary.

Scribus has many of the features we're looking – CMYK color separations and PDF creation. Linux/Unix, Mac OSX, OS/2 and Windows versions are available.

Now in the third revision of the first release, it may be worth looking at in the future as a replacement for PageMaker.

Open source programs take a little time to get off the ground, but they're worth watching.