



Microsoft Publisher 2007 Review

By Don Lewis

Product Description

Office 2007 Publisher is a desktop publishing and marketing materials program. It is used to create publications for print, e mail, and the web.

Product Information

Publisher is part of the professional version of Microsoft Office 2007. A standalone version can be purchased. The Amazon.com price for the full version of Office is \$399.99. The price for the standalone version of Publisher is \$148.99. Discounted prices may be found with computer searches.

The following URL will take you to more information and a free trial.

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/default.aspx>

Requirements

Computer and processor	500 megahertz (MHz) processor or higher
Memory	256 megabyte (MB) RAM or higher
Hard disk	1.5 gigabyte (GB); a portion of this disk space will be freed after installation if the original download package is removed from the hard drive.
Drive	CD-ROM or DVD drive
Display	1024x768 or higher resolution monitor
Operating system	Microsoft Windows XP with Service Pack (SP) 2, Windows Server 2003 with SP1, or later operating systems

Installation

The installation presented the first hassle. Microsoft has changed their packaging to a clear plastic box 7.5 x 5.5 x 1.5. The box is sealed with invisible tape. The inside is designed to swivel down and out of the outside case to give access to the CD inside. It took me several minutes to figure out how it worked and that I needed a sharp instrument to cut the tape. The box will not fit into any of the storage boxes for CDs. The product key is attached to this box. Storage of the CD with the box is awkward. I moved the CD to a regular CD jewel box and copied the product key to it. I hope I got it right. It looks like all Office products and maybe all Microsoft products are packaged like this.

After getting the CD out of the package, the installation was uneventful.

Documentation

There is no documentation other than the program help files. The help included with the program is good plus there is access to the online help, FAQ and knowledge base.

Support

Support can get expensive. You get one free phone call. After that it cost \$35 per call. I have not used my free call yet, but probably won't need it.

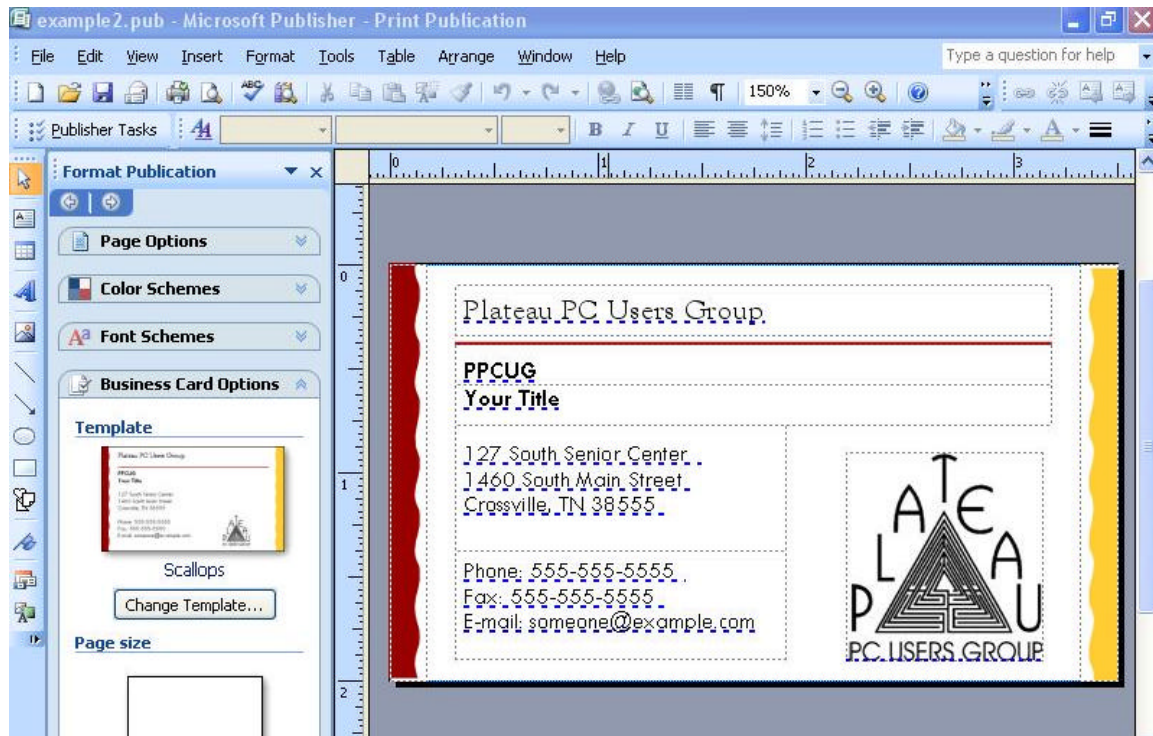
Conclusion

I have used various versions of Publisher to create the newsletter for out club for several years. As the product has been upgraded, it has matured into a solid and useful program. It always seemed oriented toward the business user and this version is even more so. However there are many potential uses for the home user. It comes with hundreds of templates in many categories from newsletters to business and greeting cards. Even more templates are available on line. All templates may be customized and saved as new templates. These templates make it easy to get started in Publisher. The more advanced functions may take a little digging to learn.

Publisher opens in the "Getting Started" mode showing a list of publication types and recently used documents.



Start by choosing a category and a template. You may customize the template by selecting different color schemes and fonts. Add business information and logos if desired. The example below shows a business card. It took only a couple of minutes to create this card from a standard template and business information.



A text box is required for text and graphics requires a picture box. These were contained in the template. They may be deleted or resized at any time. The text can be edited or new text added. Documents are very similar to MS Word documents. Notice the tool bars at the top and far left. The top bars closely match Word's bars. The Drawing bar on the left varies in that the insert picture and table icons allow drawing of a box in the document for inserting the picture or table. The Publisher Tasks bar to the right of the Drawing bar allows for changing the page options, color schemes, font schemes, templates and page sizes.

These tools make it simple to create and personalize documents. It may take practice to become proficient with Publisher.

Publisher 2007 has changed very little from the 2003 version. One useful addition is the ability to create PDF and XPS documents. This function is not built in, but requires a plug-in that can be downloaded free. It adds PDF and XPS to the Save As options. This is much more convenient than the Adobe Acrobat function I have been using. The links in the PDF documents are active by holding the Ctrl key and clicking the link. The XPS format requires .Net Framework. If you don't have it installed, Publisher offers to download and install it. The Save As function also offers many other document types, such as JPG, HTML and many versions of Word and WordPerfect as well as plain text. All graphics are lost in word processor file types.

Publisher is a convenient tool for creating documents such as newsletters, brochures and banners. However, there may be other products that could solve your needs cheaper. For instance much of this could be done with Microsoft Word, though not as easily.

