

Low T_EX

Maureen Eppstein
 Controller's Office
 Encina 200
 Stanford University
 Stanford, CA 94305

MVEppstein@SU-Score

The purpose of this new column is to offer a forum for discussion of design and layout of material using T_EX. It is aimed at the beginning or low-tech T_EX user, although we hope T_EXperts will look in occasionally to help answer questions and contribute to discussions about design.

I thought we'd start out with a discussion of letterheads or standard headings you use in your work. I invite you to send me a copy of the standard heading you use in your work, along with a listing of the output routine you use to create it, and a few words about how you designed it. If you have questions, send those too, and we'll try to get them answered for you. I also hope to persuade some typographic designers to give us pointers on how to improve our layouts.

To kick off, I'd like to tell you a little about my own work. At Stanford University I am editor of the Administrative Guide, a weighty manual covering administrative organization, policies, and procedures. Sections of the manual, known as guide memos, are updated on a piecemeal basis.

The previous editors had manually typeset these guide memos. I inherited their format (shown below), which I translated into a T_EX output routine. The design constraints I had were that the margin at the top of the page should be about half an inch, and I needed a three-string running head that contained the date, page number information, and the Guide Memo number.

The input file for my example is:

```
\input guidemac
```

December 15, 1984

Page 1 of 5

Guide Memo 54

```
\input guideoutput
\def\date{December 15, 1984}
\def\pgnm{5}
\def\mnum{54.4}
\centerline{\titlefont Rapid
  Purchase Orders }
\vskip 1.2cm
\noindent
This Guide Memo outlines ...
```

My *guidemac* file contains font information, page specifications, and a few macros for recurring layout elements. I use an 11-point computer modern roman font for the body of the text, with a 14-point bold title. *Guideoutput* contains modifications to the `\plainoutput` definitions found on page 255 of the T_EXbook.

My first problem was the half-inch margin I needed at the top of the page; the output device I use insisted on giving me a more generous allowance. To trick it, I increased the negative `\vskip` in the `\plainoutput` definition for `\makeheadline` to `-40pt`, a number I found by trial and error.

The `\plainoutput` routine gives a blank top of the page and a centered page number (in 10-point CMR) at the bottom. To obtain my top running head and blank bottom, I redefined `\headline` and `\footline` as follows:

```
\headline={\elevenrm\line
  {\date\hfil Page \folio\ of \pgnm
  \hfil Guide Memo \mnum}}
\footline={\hfil}
```

Then at the beginning of each Guide Memo file I set `\date` to the revision date, `\pgnm` to the number of pages in the piece, and `\mnum` to the Guide Memo's assigned number. The result is a serviceable format that matches the existing format of the manual.

Now it's your turn. Please send your comments, questions, and contributions to the address at the head of this column, either via paper or network mail.

Rapid Purchase Orders

This Guide Memo outlines basic procedures for purchases made directly by departments of goods services totaling less than \$500 per transaction. The objectives of this procedure are to:

- Assist departments to purchase goods and services through an accelerated ordering, receipt and payment process by allowing departments to order so-called "expendable supplies" directly from vendors.

Provide more rapid

department

we create