

InDesign Touch Workspace Validation

April 2015, Seattle



Overall Feedback = Very Positive!

I met with 8 Creative Pros in Seattle to see what they thought about using Touch for their creative work, and more specifically, gather their feedback on our current designs for the Touch Workspace in InDesign.

All of them are excited about Touch, and all of them were thrilled to see us working on a touch workspace for InDesign. Some of them had taken part in our Touch Discovery sessions almost 3 years ago and were very pleased to see how we've been following through on what we learned. Teresa Anderson, an instructor at the Art Institute of Seattle said, *"I'm loving the direction that Adobe is taking everything in. It's very well thought out,"* about Adobe's recent releases of mobile companion apps and Illustrator's Touch Workspace.

The basic themes haven't changed. The primary value they see in bringing touch to InDesign is being able to work on their files on a portable device, wherever they are. They also love the simplicity of the touch workspace, several saying they would like to work in this workspace all the time, even at desktop without touch because they like the simplicity so much. Other things they see as the biggest advantage to working in touch in ID were that it was faster, fun and more comfortable.

Biggest Advantage to TWS in ID (# of participants identifying this as primary value)

- Portability = 3
- Simplicity = 2
- Enjoyment (fun, more comfortable) = 2
- Faster = 1

What they like about Touch

They love using touch for new functionality. The gestural drawing tool awed those who hadn't seen it before, and for those already using it in Comp, they already love it. They feel it's intuitive and easy, and makes it quick to create and experiment with layouts.

New functionality, like the column widget, ability to apply paragraph styles to an entire selection, and erase with their finger is very exciting to them.

These aspects of touch, the gestures and the on-object widgets, are why some of the participants see the TWS as a faster way to work as well as a lot of fun.

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Simplicity is an important theme for all of them. For some, it's the most important. While they already feel that the new TWS is much simpler some great insights came out of these interviews that could help us take the simplicity even further:

- Eliminate the Frame Holder tools. There are already 2 other ways to make boxes for placeholders (gesture and shape tools)
- Have Copy and Paste at top level of UI (like undo/redo) so you don't have to go to the context menu to access. This would eliminate a step (having to open context menu).
- Make some of the Layers functionality available. Lock, unlock, hide, and show. Just about everyone said they wanted more layers panel functionality than the arrange menu. Most of these designers use the layers panel throughout their workflow to show and hide, lock and unlock. Several said it would be difficult to work in the TWS without the layers panel because of this. If these options (hide, show, lock, unlock) were available in the UI, possibly in the context menu (Ai has lock and unlock in the TWS context menu) then the lack of a layers panel would not be as keenly felt.
- They liked combining the Character and Paragraph Panel. That made sense to everyone. So why have two panels for Char & Para styles? If they can be combined in CC libraries, why not combine them into a single panel in TWS? Most of them were confused by the 3 icons for type functionality, so having just 2, one for type features and one for type styles would help reduce confusion and simplify the UI.
- Bring the Touch Type Tool (from Ai) to this workspace. It would eliminate the need for some of the settings in the Character and Paragraph panel, and would add a new fun, creative tool for touch. For example, you could quickly create a drop cap using the Touch Type tool. Something you can't do now in the proposed TWS.
- Go a step further with the Touch Type tool to do the same thing with paragraph settings. Ability to indent paragraphs, change spacing between paragraphs, align to top or bottom, could all be done through touch with the right widgets. A new Touch Paragraph Tool, or some new functionality to the Touch Type Tool.
- More scrubbies. They liked and understood the value of scrubbies in the Transform panel. Adding scrubbies to more fields would reduce text entry
- Text wrap also seems like it could take advantage of touch to move out of the panel. When a text object is selected, having some type of widget, as appears when a type object is selected, to adjust the text wrap would give on the art control and eliminate the need for a panel.

Issues that could block adoption

- Layers: All participants noted the lack of a Layer Panel, and most felt this would inhibit their ability to work in TWS. Digging deeper, I found that they use the Layer panel for two things. The first is organizing the content (putting all images on one layer, text on another etc..). Most do this by creating layers at the beginning of their workflow. The second thing they do is use the layers panel to hide, show, lock and unlock content.

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This is the functionality that they would miss the most in TWS. While it might not seem that much of an issue because they can switch workspaces at anytime to access the Layers panel, we learned from the Ai TWS CAB users that they found the lack of a Layers panel very difficult to work around, and very frustrating. It was also the most requested feature when Adobe Ideas was first released. So I don't think this should be taken lightly. We don't necessarily need to put the layers panel into TWS, but we should include the functionality they need the most. This could be done through other areas of the UI, including the context menu or adding buttons. Ai includes buttons for lock and unlock now in the context menu.

- Windows only: Of the 8 people I met with, 6 are Mac users and would not move to Windows, even though they were very enthusiastic about the TWS. The Mac users will hold out for this on a Mac device. They have faith that Apple will come out with a device "like a Surface" soon, and will wait for it.
- Size of screen: For some users, desktop will always be the preferred way to work because of the screen size. The two Windows users (Angie and Nissa) loved the idea of touch, but wanted it on a big screen, so they could work with it even standing up. Some of the others, who enjoy working with touch on their iPads now, are excited to work with touch, but see it as something that will extend their workflow away from the office. Not replace it due to their reliance on large or dual monitors.

Cosmetic Issues

- Master Page Icon: All participants were confused by the current icon. Most felt the sliders were related to PS features, like Hue and Saturation. One suggestion for a Masterpage icon was the old Pagemaker file icon (Page with shapes, representing layout)
- Column widget: They absolutely loved the functionality and ease of using the widget, however, the widget was not intuitive and not one person could guess what it was for. Some said they were thrown off by the number of columns, 6 seems unrealistically high, others said it looked like the font size widget, or a ruler with the straight lines increments. Suggestions from several people were to change the increments to boxes, at least for the number of columns currently being used. Also, reduce the number of columns. If this could be done contextually, for example 4 columns for a letter size layout, 8 if it's a two page spread, that would be even better.
- Group Gestural Drawing tool with creation tools, not selection tools. This was a minor thing, but an astute observation. The gestural drawing tool is currently grouped with the selection tools. This doesn't make sense as it's mainly a creation tool. It should be grouped with the Type and Shape tools.

Would they use it?

Everyone I met with said if the TWS was available to them now, and they had a device (most cases Mac) to access it, they would use it. They talked about projects they have recently worked on where it would have been useful as well as things they are currently working on that they'd to use TWS with.

As mentioned above, there are some known obstacles to TWS adoption, but looking past some of these obstacles, I asked how they would like to use it. Would this be something they would use only for comps, only for

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edits, or would they like to use it to complete a document.

For those who saw the most value in portability, they saw the TWS as something to comp up and experiment with layouts as well as to allow them to make changes or edits last minute. They liked the freedom this gave them, to capture inspiration wherever they were, and to extend their ability to work outside of the office. This was 3 out of the 8, or roughly 40% of the participants. As Gordon put it, *"In the past, if you had a great idea, you had better write it down because by the time you got to the office the idea would be gone."* They were all very happy doing most of the work back at their desktops, with their large monitors, and using TWS while away from their desks.

For the other 60%, those who felt the highest value of the TWS was its simplicity (2), enjoyment (2), or speed (1), there was a strong desire to work in TWS full time. They wanted to start the project and bring it about 95% to completion, or first draft stage, in this mode. Some saying they would even work in TWS on a non-touch device because the UI was so much simpler and had most of the functionality they needed. Daria said, *"It's more streamlined with the same amount of functionality. I feel I'm hiding and showing my palettes a lot, and with this, it feels like the hide and show is built in and I'm not having to play that hide and show game all the time."* And Loren put it this way, *"It seems like less of 'sit in front of computer and tap away', it seems effortless and easier. I can see myself sitting on the couch and leaning back"*.

Longer Term Planning

Looking ahead, beyond 2015,

- **Interactivity:** Several people brought up the lack of interactivity in the Touch workspace. Some of them are creating documents now that contain video as well as hyperlinks and consider this essential to their workflow. Some of the people I met with had attended the Seattle User Group meeting where we showed them Publish Online and were very excited about using it. They wanted to be able to create interactive documents in the TWS for Publish Online.
- **Thumbnails for Pages:** The participants were split on the lack of thumbnails. They all liked the pop-up and page functionality at the bottom of the application frame, but a few felt they would have a difficult time working in longer documents without the thumbnails. If the TWS moves in a direction where customers will work on longer documents in this mode, we may need to include thumbnails.
- Other issues, like layers and type functionality have been covered above.

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All sessions were recorded and available here:

Angie and Nissa:

<https://my.adobeconnect.com/p6m8d0h7vfd/>

Ray:

<https://my.adobeconnect.com/p7vlreirof6/>

Rodney:

<https://my.adobeconnect.com/p4qvs7yhh68/>

Gordon

<https://my.adobeconnect.com/p56h9jm9zhy/>

Daria

<https://my.adobeconnect.com/p4ybrht1pqr/>

Teresa

<https://my.adobeconnect.com/p1sw9ivud1j/>

Loren

<https://my.adobeconnect.com/p4us5k3za53/>