

# Making your computers faster

About this time every year the biggest complaint I hear from schools about technology is that “our computers are soooooo slow!” And I try them and they are. Slow. Really slow!

So here are two things you can do to really speed them up. One works for everyone, the other for just those using InDesign.

## Dump Fonts!

When someone complains about slow computers, the first thing I do is look at their font menu in InDesign, PageMaker or Word. If it looks like this...

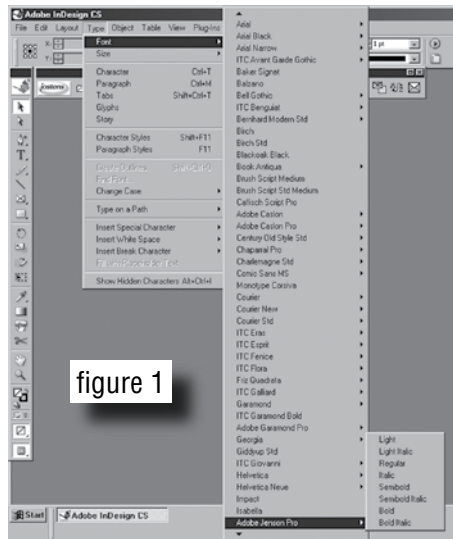


figure 1

(figure 1) then you have a problem we can fix pretty easily—too many fonts.

The more fonts that any software has to keep track of, the slower your software will run. So for a very quick fix, remove all the fonts you don't use on a regular basis. Don't delete them all together. Save them into a folder where you can retrieve them if you ever need them again.

Where do all these fonts come from? Well some are dropped in automatically by software when it is installed. Others are left over from fonts you installed when you first got the computer and never removed or they are the ones you installed to do previous yearbooks but never removed. Most schools just add the new fonts they want each fall but they never remove the old ones so the fonts just build up.

If your font menu goes more than two full screens when you scroll it, you need to remove a bunch. On one school computer I checked recently I found more than 1000 fonts. The staff told me then never used more than 20. So they should remove 980 or so. Check yours today.

## InDesign speed

If you are using InDesign you have probably figured out that it uses a bunch of RAM. And that heavy use of RAM makes your machine run slower and crash more often.

Well the good folks at Adobe made it easy for you to get back some of the RAM that the factory install of InDesign takes up. They allow you to turn off plug-ins.

Plug-ins are added pieces of software that allow InDesign to do a lot of different things. Some of them you will never use doing a yearbook. So turn them off. Some are huge RAM gluttons and turning them off will make your life a bunch easier.

To turn off plug-ins go to the Help Menu (PC) or InDesign Menu (Mac) in InDesign and choose Configure Plug-ins (figure 2).

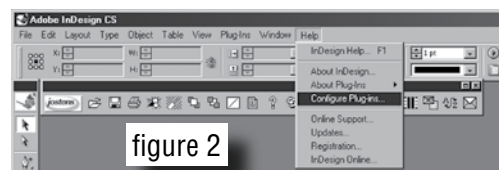


figure 2

This will open a dialog box that will allow you to scroll all the plug-ins that are currently running in InDesign (figure 3).

To turn one off, just click the check mark to the left of the plug-in name. When you do that it will tell you that you can't change the default plug-ins and ask if you would like to duplicate the set. Tell it yes and name it MyPlugins or Yearbook Plug-ins. Then you can continue to turn off all plug-ins you don't think you are going to need. And don't worry, you can't turn off a plug-in you need—InDesign won't let you. (You can't turn off the ones with the lock next to them.)

Once you have them turned off, exit InDesign and restart it (not the computer) and those plug-ins will be off and not using all the RAM they were.

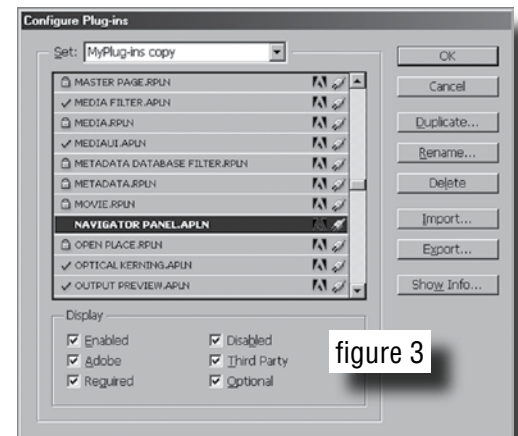


figure 3

Here are just a few of the plug-ins you can turn off if you are only using InDesign for yearbook that will save large amounts of RAM.

- 1) Navigator
- 2) any Book or Bookmark Panel
- 3) Hyperlinks or anything to with the web
- 4) InCopy plug-ins (unless you are using it.)
- 5) Anything to do with GoLive

Most of these have to do with InDesign's ability to create files for the web. Since you probably are not doing that, you don't need them and turning them off will help.