How to use adaptive layouts

You can use Adobe InDesign CS6 to create and publish digital documents to a variety of tablet devices. Adaptive layouts allow you to specify multiple screen sizes and orientations within the same document (**Figure 1**). Adaptive layout options include Adobe Liquid Layout and the Alternate Layout feature. You can use these options independently or together, depending on your workflow requirements.

Figure 1 Adaptive layouts for multiple screen sizes and orientations from one InDesign document

Adobe Liquid Layout

Liquid Layout provides a method for creating and controlling flexible layout within an InDesign document. Using Liquid Layout, you can apply page-level rules that define how objects on a page adjust to alternate layouts (**Figure 2**). One InDesign layout document can accommodate a variety of aspect ratios within a device class (e.g., tablet devices, EPUB readers) when exported. Without Liquid behaviors, you would have to create a unique layout for every possible size and orientation, greatly multiplying the number of pages to manage within a single .INDD file.

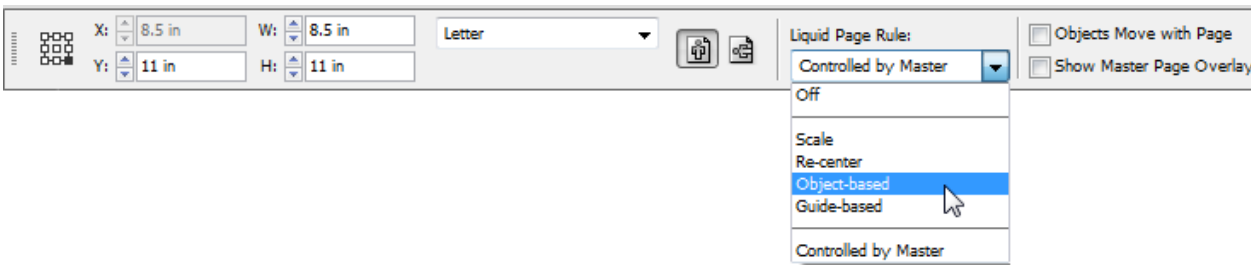

Figure 2 Page tool Control panel with Liquid Page Rule menu

Used together, the Alternate Layer feature and Liquid Layout provide maximum control and flexibility for laying out your digital publication documents.

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How to use Liquid Layout:

1. Choose File > New > Document.

   The New Document dialog box appears (**Figure 3**).

2. Select Digital Publishing from the Intent menu.

   Next you set a target device and its corresponding physical dimensions and orientation. Then you create the primary layout for all the pages as you would for any print job.

3. For this example, select iPad from the Page Size menu (**Figure 4**).

4. Click the Portrait button to set up a vertical orientation for the new document (**Figure 3**).

5. Click OK.

   The new document opens in InDesign.

6. If the Pages panel isn't visible, choose Window > Pages.

   The Pages panel opens.

7. Use a selection of InDesign tools to add text, images, artwork, and so on to the page layout. Be sure to build a document that extends across multiple pages.

   In the next several steps you add Liquid Layout behaviors to the pages to allow content to adapt to multiple aspect ratios within a device class.

8. Select the Page tool in the Tools panel (**Figure 5**).

9. Click on an object in the layout.

   A blue bounding box appears around the object.

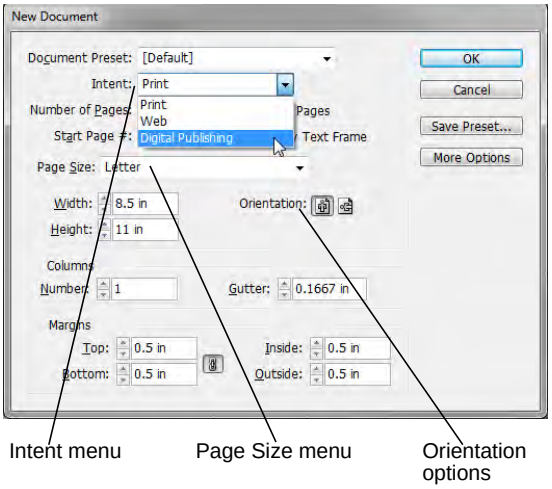

Figure 3 New Document dialog box

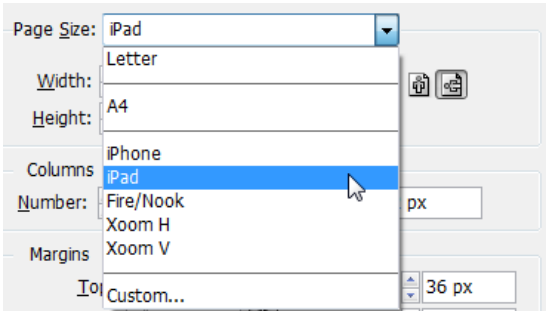

Figure 4 Page Size menu in the New Document dialog box

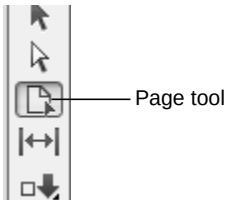

Figure 5 Tools panel

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10. In the Control panel, select Object-based from the Liquid Page Rule menu (**Figure 2**).

The *Object-based* rule defines relationships between the location of an object and the edges of the page. Use customizable pin indicators to display how an object is connected to the edges of a page.

The Liquid Page Rule options include:

- *Scale* sizes all content proportionally, adding or subtracting space around page if content can't be scaled in the X or Y direction.
- *Re-center* finds the "design center" point of content on the previous page size and then centers the design around the center of the current page size.
- *Object-based* looks at each page item on the page and resizes or repositions it according to the object's rules.
- *Guide-based* inserts or removes space or resizes page items based on position of the "liquid guides" on the page. With this policy, only objects that intersect a vertical liquid guide can resize horizontally and only objects that intersect a horizontal guide can resize vertically.
- *Controlled By Master* lets pages inherit their policy from their master.

You will use the *constraint handles* that appear along the horizontal and vertical edges of the object (**Figure 6**) to control how the object is connected to the edges of the page.

11. If you are working with artwork that needs to preserve its aspect ratio, click both the horizontal and vertical internal constraint handles to fix the size of the graphic. Note that internal and external constraint handles function differently:

- *Internal constraint handles* resize height and width of an object as the page changes size. Click to lock the object dimensions.
- *External constraint handles* permit flexible space between the object and the page edge. Click to pin the object relative to the page edge.

For example, in **Figure 7** the internal constraint handles are locked to preserve the graphic size, and external constraint handles are anchored to the top and right edges of the page. The space to the left and below the graphic remains flexible and scales as the layout changes.

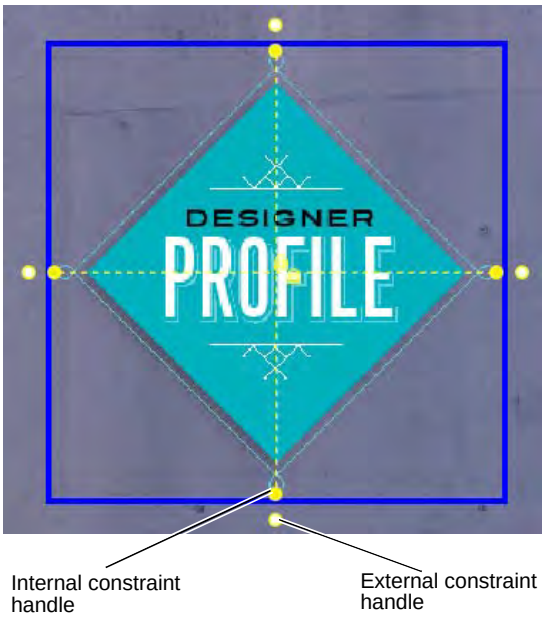

Figure 6 Object selected with Page Tool

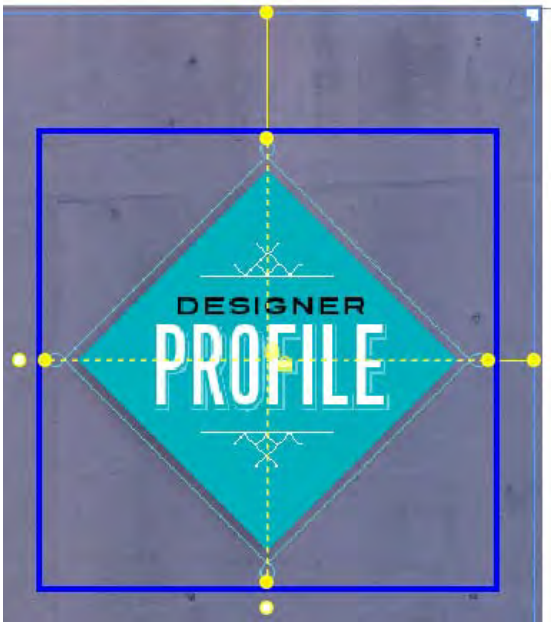

Figure 7 Internal and external constraint handles

12. Click one of the external constraint handles to anchor the object to an edge of the page.

    Note: You can also set Resize and Pin options in the Liquid Layout panel. Choose Window > Interactive > Liquid Layout and select options to set object constraints (**Figure 8**).

13. Anchor the remaining elements on the page as needed.

14. With the Page tool still selected, click on the page layout.

    Corner handles appear around the edge of the layout (**Figure 9**).

15. Drag the corner handles to preview Liquid Layout behaviors.

    The page resizes and anchored objects retain their position relative to the page edges. The page snaps back when you release the corner handles.

    Note: You can also Alt-drag to permanently change page dimensions.

16. Save the document.

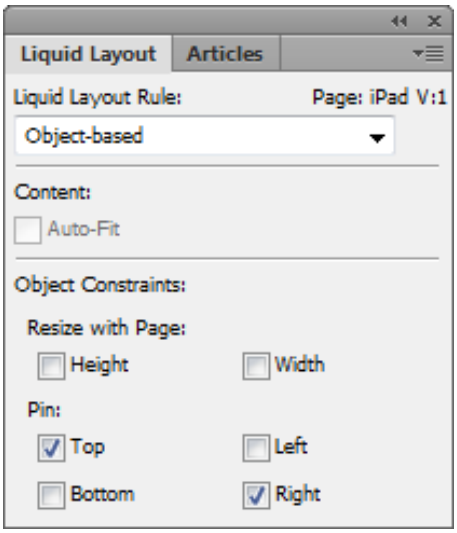

Figure 8 Liquid Layout panel

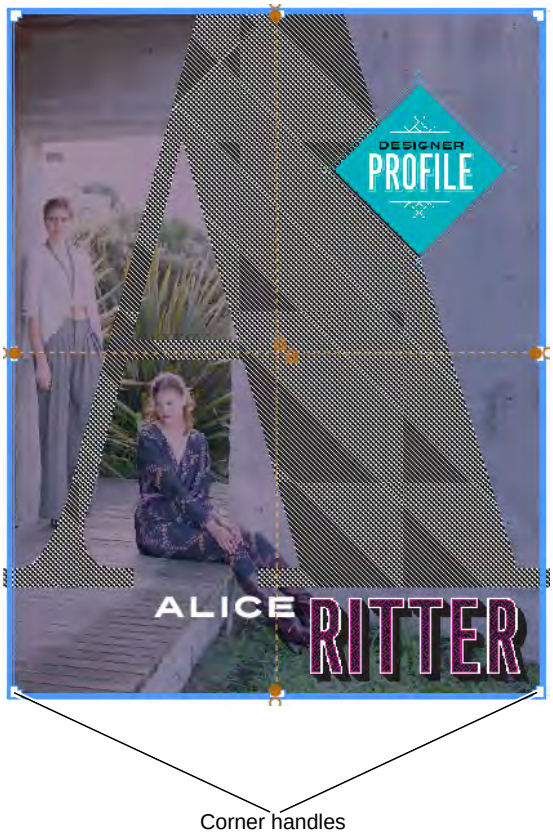

Figure 9 Page layout

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Alternate layouts

If you have created a primary layout for the iPad and you want another unique, highly designed layout for the Motorola Xoom, you can use the Alternate Layout tools to adapt your primary layout based on physical dimension and orientation of a second device. The Alternate Layer feature takes a range of existing pages with content and automatically creates linked copies on a set of new pages within the document. In this way, if you make a change to text in the original location, it ripples through as a link across all the alternate layouts within the publication.

How to create an alternate layout:

1. In the Pages panel, click the Layout Options menu, and select Create Alternate Layout (**Figure 10**).

   The Create Alternate Layout dialog box appears (**Figure 11**).

   Because you set up the initial file in the iPad portrait orientation, InDesign automatically creates the default alternate layout in landscape orientation. However, you could easily adapt this alternate layout based on physical dimensions and orientation of a second device, such as a Motorola Xoom.

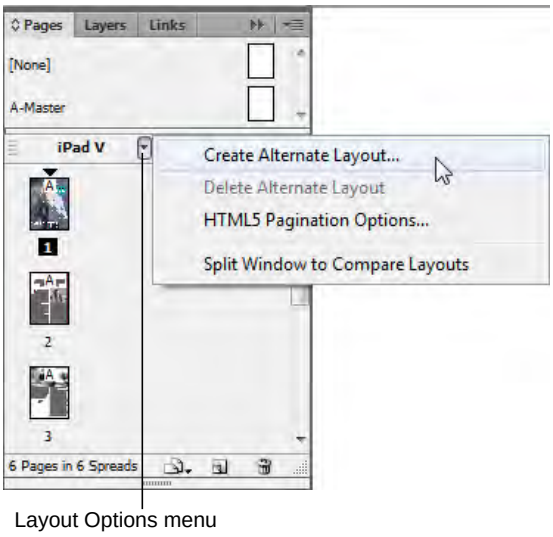

Figure 10 Pages panel

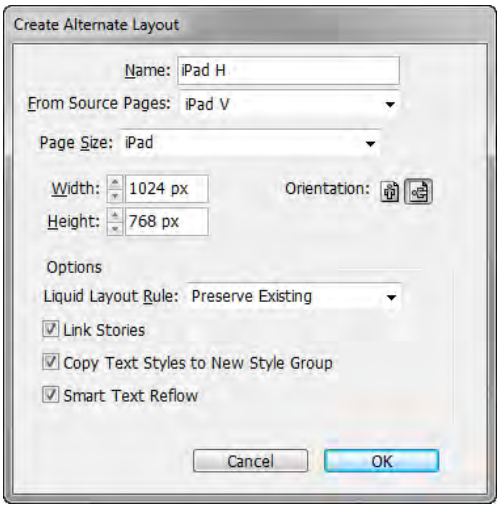

Figure 11 Create Alternate Layout dialog box

2. Click OK to close the Create Alternate Layout dialog box.

   An alternate layout, iPad H, appears in the Pages panel beside the original layout, iPad V (**Figure 12**).

   This creates a new section in the InDesign file. All the pages in this section mimic what was in the first section but the orientation of the page is different.

   Note: While creating alternate layouts is useful, the look and feel of the content in the new layout doesn't always transfer over well and may need to be redesigned to fit the format.

3. Find a section of text in the original layout, and make a change to the text.

4. In the Pages panel, double-click the corresponding page in the alternate layout to view that page.

   The text has not changed, but a warning icon on the text frame indicates a broken link (**Figure 13**).

5. If the Links panel isn't visible, choose Window > Links.

   The Links panel opens.

6. In the Links panel, locate the item with the broken-link warning icon (**Figure 14**).

7. Double-click the warning icon to update the linked content.

   Note: Alternatively, you can single-click the warning icon on the text frame in the document page to update the broken link.

8. Save the document.

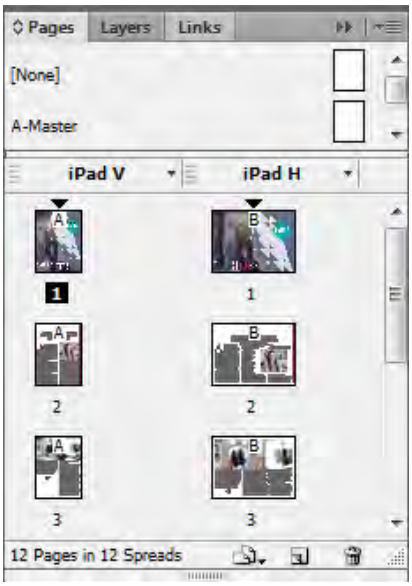

Figure 12 Pages panel

Figure 13 Linked text in alternate layout with warning icon

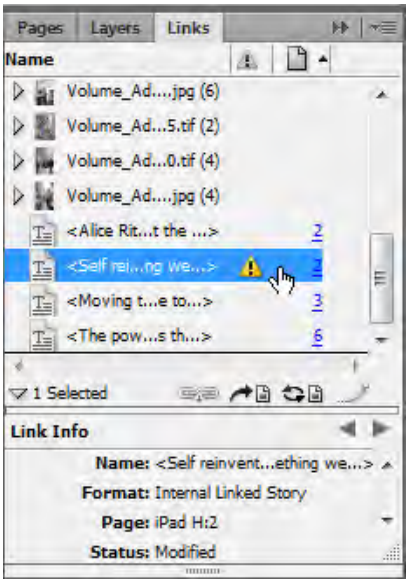

Figure 14 Links panel

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