IT instructor uses WordPerfect® to create workbooks for Microsoft® Office courses

> **"The simple fact is that I prefer to use WordPerfect because I feel the application never gets in my way."**
>
> **Leo Staggs**
> **IT professional/Instructor**

Leo Staggs is an experienced IT professional and instructor based in Orpington, Southeast London. In his role as a teacher of adult students, he designs and produces workbooks and other materials for his many Microsoft Office training courses. "I've been an expert user of Microsoft Office since 1995, but I create all my teaching materials in WordPerfect. It's a much more intuitive product," he says.

The irony of using WordPerfect to write workbooks for courses in Microsoft Office is not lost on Leo Staggs.

"Interesting, isn't it?" he says on the phone from his home office. "The simple fact is that I prefer to use WordPerfect because I feel the application never gets in my way. I'm an expert Word user, and I still get frustrated with how the program tries so hard to guess what I want to do next. As a writer, I want to let my ideas flow without distractions. When I'm using Word, I feel like I get interrupted all the time with surprising formatting changes and other things I have limited control over."

Leo Staggs has a degree in Psychology with Cognitive Science from University College London. In addition to training services, his IT consultant firm offers a wide array of other computer services, including PC support, custom PC orders, desktop publishing and Web design.

"The British government has been pushing IT really hard the past few years, and it has created incentives for a lot of people to improve their computer skills," he explains.

His company, Staggs Personal Computer Services, offers beginner, intermediate and advanced computer courses to people of all ages.

"I teach several multi-media courses with image and video editing, but the majority of my work is centered around productivity suites like Microsoft Office," says Leo Staggs.

Some of the students in his classroom are pure beginners, others want to brush up on their existing skills. Regardless of level, all students need workbooks and other structured course documents.

According to Leo Staggs, the only word processor that can handle his table of contents and index requirements is WordPerfect.

"WordPerfect has several features that are absolutely invaluable to me. For instance, I use style guides to tag texts, headings, subheadings, et cetera, in my textbooks. These styles are used to create the table of contents. However, there are instances where I don't want a particular heading in the table of contents and in WordPerfect it's easy to remove it by using Reveal Codes. This is impossible to do in Word in my experience, without lengthy and frustrating workarounds."

Leo Staggs is also currently undertaking a teaching qualification.

"In the academic world, it's absolutely crucial to have full control over your footnotes, endnotes, headers and footers, et cetera. These important features are so elegantly implemented in WordPerfect. The application has the exact right balance between powerful tools and ease-of-use. For instance, the numbering schemes are an absolute godsend. I can easily create multiple separate schemes with different symbols, none of which interfere with each other. This can't be done without significant efforts in Word."

Small business owners like Leo Staggs often have to squeeze the most out of their software purchases, and by using WordPerfect as a modest but highly functional database application, he doesn't have to invest time and money to get an application like Microsoft Access or FileMaker Pro up and running.

"I use the Variables function in WordPerfect to quickly create a series of documents that are

COREL®
Case Study

identical in look and feel, where only a few items need to be replaced in each document. For instance, my Course Description template document has variables like Title and Course Number scattered throughout the document. I only have to change the variables once, and the changes cascade all the way through the document automatically. It's very easy to set up and use. "

Leo Staggs is of course proficient in all the other applications in the WordPerfect Office suite. His company's invoicing routines are easily handled in QuattroPro, with a few custom made macros to speed up the workflow.

"It was very simple to create a macro that increases invoice numbers sequentially, and a few relatively simple formulas calculate taxes and other things automatically. This can of course be done in Excel as well, but I find the process much less intuitive. As an IT instructor, I know that a small business owner without experience in the Excel Object Model programming language might find it intimidating."

When Leo Staggs wants to show a slide show in the classroom he relies on Presentations 12.

"The included transitions in Presentations are better than in PowerPoint in my opinion, and the text effects are easier to use," he enthuses. "I'm often asked to present at satellite locations, sometimes on somebody else's computer. Few people have Presentations installed on their system of course, but that's rarely an issue. I can save my files as a PowerPoint p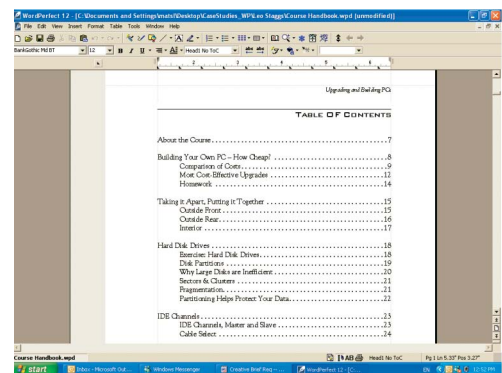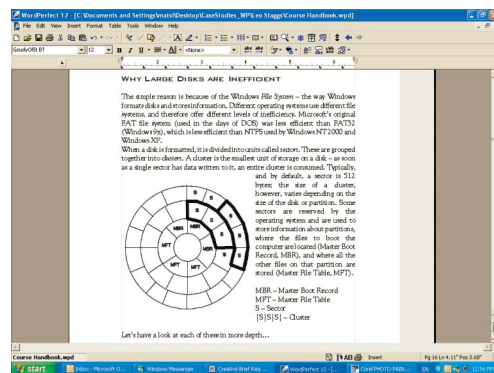resentations. If I want to send printable handouts to the organizers in advance, I just export my slides to PDF and send the file in an email."

Corel Presentations also allows Leo Staggs to export his slides to a Flash file that can be viewed in any browser.

"This is great for portability," says Leo and continues: "If I know they have an Internet connection where I'm presenting I can send the Flash presentation to myself in an email. I don't have to bring anything, I just download the files from my email and I'm ready to present in a few minutes."

Power users know that WordPerfect gives the user a degree of control other word processing applications can't match. Add to that an industrial strength stability and speed, and it's no surprise many people use Word.

"I've used word processing applications on a professional level since the DOS days and I've never had to deal with a corrupt WordPerfect file," declares Leo Staggs. "With Microsoft Word, now that's another story. A few years ago I was working on a 500-page publishing project done in Word. The night before we had to deliver the document to the printer someone made a minor change to the style sheet and the file was hopelessly corrupted. Tables and illustrations disappeared, much of the formatting was lost and there was nothing we could do about it. We lost a full day's work repairing and re-creating the formatting. That's just one of many reasons I'm a WordPerfect user today," summarizes Leo Staggs.