

**Complete Benchmark Results**

# **The Adobe InDesign CS2 Benchmark Report**

**Productivity Measures of Adobe InDesign CS2**

**Client: Adobe Systems**

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**About the Benchmark Project**

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## 1 About this Report

This report presents the results of the benchmarks conducted for the Adobe InDesign CS2 Productivity Benchmark Project.

## 2 About the Benchmark Project

This benchmark project was conceived and conducted to document differences in productivity between design and publishing workflows based on Adobe InDesign CS2 and QuarkXPress 6.5, respectively.

Additional applications common in these workflows, such as Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator, were used wherever necessary.

## 3 Productivity Measures: Methodology Overview

### 3.1 Overview

The creative workflow benchmarks were defined as **complete publishing/design assignments**, covering everyday design operations and magazine publishing. For every assignment, a real-world publishing workflow example was defined in detail. Every aspect of the assignments was covered. Additional benchmarks were conducted to measure specific aspects such as productivity in everyday work situations as well as the impact of integration with native file formats on overall productivity.


(See also “Benchmarks and Productivity Measures: Detail” on page 6)

### 3.2 About the execution of the productivity benchmarks

Productivity Benchmarks were composed as a number of phases. Every phase of the benchmark was then defined as **several sets of clearly defined, repeatable steps**. These steps were then executed in a strictly identical way by trained professionals.

Each set of steps was executed three times; the average of all three results was used in the charts. The total times for each benchmark were obtained by **cumulating the average measures obtained for each individual set of steps**.

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### 3.3 Scripting

No scripting was used in the execution of the benchmark: the main aim of these measures was to show real-world productivity, and had to take into account the time necessary for a trained operator to perform all the steps required in a project.

### 3.4 Keyboard shortcuts

Commonly used keyboard shortcuts were authorized in certain sets of benchmarks, and used in an identical way in all programs.

## 4 Hardware Overview

### 4.1 Hardware platform

All benchmarks and productivity measures were conducted on the Macintosh platform.

### 4.2 Hardware configurations used

- 2.5 GHz Power Mac G5

### 4.3 System software

- Mac OS 10.4

## 5 Configuration – Overview

### 5.1 System setup

- All tests were performed using a standard system installation and configuration.
- All computers were completely re-initialized prior to tests, using the default values for installation.
- All hard drives were re-formatted using a single partition.
- All software was installed from scratch, using default settings.
- The only software installed on the systems were the applications necessary for the benchmarks.
- No peripherals were connected to the systems during performance benchmarks.

## 6 Application Software

All application software was used in its most recent officially available release:

- Adobe InDesign CS2
- QuarkXPress 6.5
- Adobe Photoshop CS2
- Adobe Illustrator CS2

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**Benchmarks and Productivity Measures: Detail**

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## 7 Application Integration Benchmarks

These benchmarks measured the productivity linked to integration of the page layout applications with Adobe Illustrator and Adobe Photoshop.

**Application integration Benchmarks were comprised of:**

- **Photoshop Round-trip (50MB)**
- **Photoshop Round-trip (100MB)**
- **Photoshop Round-trip (200MB)**
- **Illustrator Round-trip**

For QuarkXPress 6.5, Photoshop files were accessed though the PSD Import XTension. PSD Import is not directly included with QuarkXPress 6.5, but can be downloaded at no charge from the Quark website. (Without PSD Import, Photoshop files need to be converted to a standard format in order to be used in a QuarkXPress page layout)

## 8 Assignment Based Benchmark

### 8.1 Overview

The assignment based benchmark consisted in a complete publishing project, a double-page spread for a magazine, which was executed from the start to finish in a clearly defined and completely monitored way.

### 8.2 Magazine publishing productivity measures

The project for the magazine publishing productivity benchmark consisted in the creation of an opening spread for a magazine feature.

Work included creating the basic layout, importing pictures and text, formatting text, creating a headline with a drop shadow as well as other image work in Photoshop, importing and placing a graphic element from Illustrator and fine-tuning the final page layout.

**Project Phases:**

- **Phase 1: Create basic layout**
- **Phase 2: Import and format text**
- **Phase 3: Image-related work**  
(Create and adjust picture and drop-shadow, add and position Illustrator graphic.)

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## 9 Productivity in Everyday Design Operations

### 9.1 Overview

Several Benchmarks were defined to assess the real-world productivity of QuarkXPress and InDesign in everyday work situations. How do the programs perform when they are faced with the task of repeated reformatting of the same page? How fast can a designer try out different sizes for a same illustration, change column arrangements or experiment with different typefaces?

### 9.2 Productivity in everyday design operations: complete assignment

In order to measure fluidity in common design and page layout operations, Pfeiffer Consulting created a special project file: a 70 page, multi-column document. All columns in the document were linked; the complete text-chain contained a 55 000 word (328 000 characters) text; in addition, every page contained several pictures.

The benchmark project consisted in repeated modifications of this document: switching to a specific spread in the middle of the document, reformatting the text and picture boxes, switching to another page, deleting one picture box and scaling up another one, and so forth.

### 9.3 Placing picture files

Importing images is one of the most frequent tasks in building page layouts.

This benchmark measured the time necessary to place several image files in a page layout, in order to assess the throughput which can be expected from both programs for this operation.

### 9.4 Importing formatted tables

This benchmark measured the time necessary to import a formatted Excel spreadsheet fitting into a single A4 page. The time measured was the time required to display the imported table in the page layout document.

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## 10 Productivity Gains from Built-in Functionality

### 10.1 Overview

Adobe InDesign CS2 incorporates a number of original functions which are not currently available in QuarkXPress, such as creation of drop shadows, transparency effects, among several others.

The following benchmarks were defined in order to measure the impact of these functions on productivity, when compared to workflows based on QuarkXPress.

### 10.2 Drop shadow

This benchmark measured the time necessary for creating a headline with a drop-shadow. InDesign CS2 integrates this possibility; QuarkXPress based workflows require the use of a separate program (usually Photoshop or Illustrator) for achieving this effect.

### 10.3 Creating a simple transparency effect

This benchmark measured the time necessary to create a simple transparency effect over an image in a page layout document. For QuarkXPress the effect was created using Adobe Photoshop.

### 10.4 Formatting of text with nested style sheets

This test compared the time necessary to apply rich formatting by using the Nested Styles option in InDesign CS2. The benchmark measured the time necessary to apply character style sheets individually for portions of a paragraph, as compared to the time required to apply the nested style sheet.

### 10.5 Formatting multiple paragraphs with “Apply Next Style”

The benchmark measured productivity gains linked to the use of the “Apply Next Style” feature introduced with InDesign CS2, compared with formatting the same paragraphs individually.

### 10.6 Formatting multiple objects with Object Styles

This benchmark measured the productivity impact of InDesign CS2’s “Object Styles” feature, compared to the time necessary for formatting several objects individually.

### 10.7 Sharing parts of a page with Snippets

The benchmark measured the time necessary to share parts of a page with a co-worker on the local area network, in one case using traditional methods such as cut and paste into a different document, in the other by using the “Snippets” feature introduced with InDesign CS2.

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### 10.8 Generating a PDF file

This benchmark measured the time necessary to create a PDF file from a page layout document.

The benchmark consisted in creating PDF files of different versions:

- **PDF 1.3**
- **PDF 1.5**
- **PDF-X1a**

(QuarkXPress 6.5 can only export PDF 1.3 files. For the other versions of PDF files, automatic conversion using Acrobat Distiller was used.)

### 10.9 Place multi-page PDF file

This benchmark measured the time to place a 5-page PDF document inside an existing page layout document.

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**Results and Charts**

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## Application Integration Benchmarks

### Photoshop Round-trip

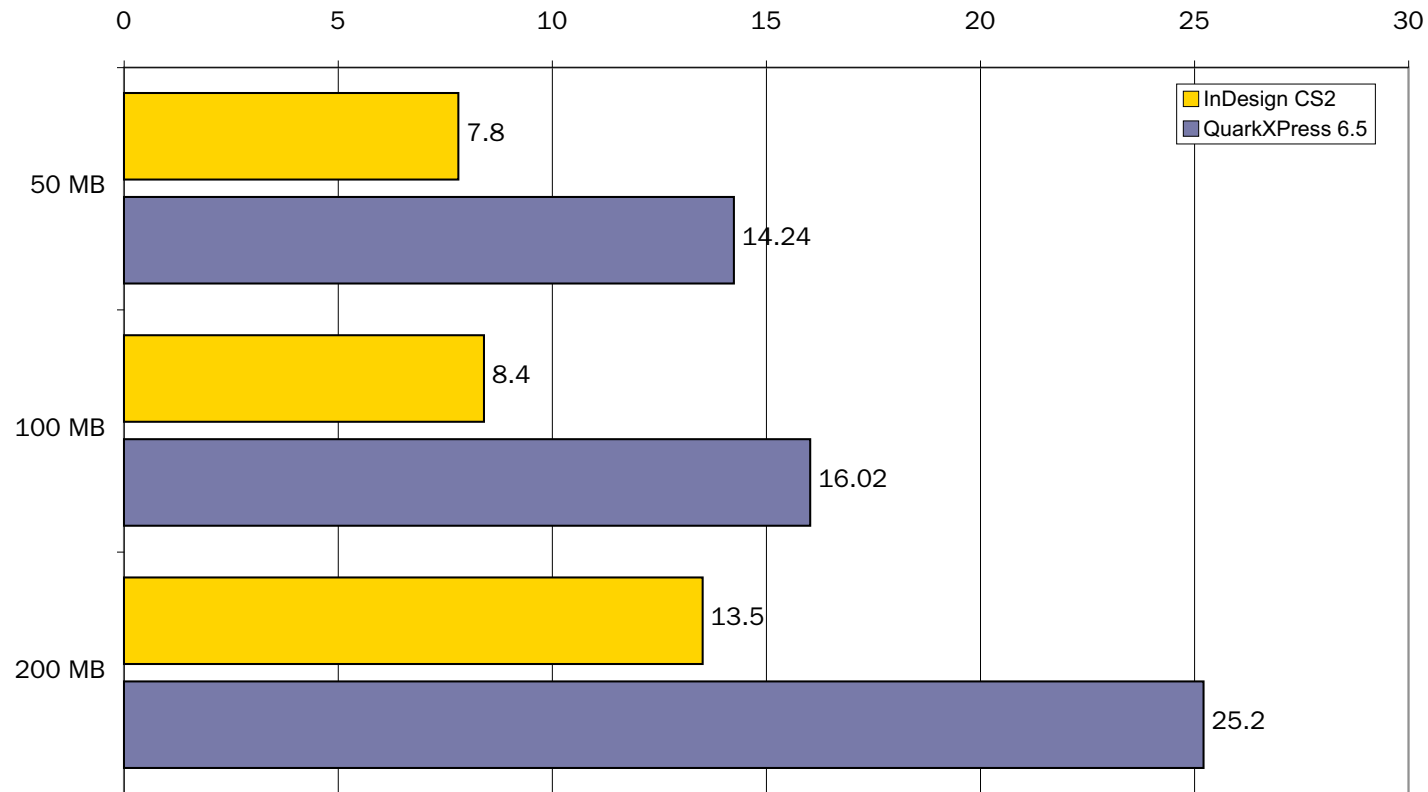
	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS2
50 MB	14.24	7.8
100 MB	16.02	8.4
200 MB	25.2	13.5

### Illustrator Round-trip Round-trip

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS2
Illustrator Roundtrip	22.3	19.5

Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

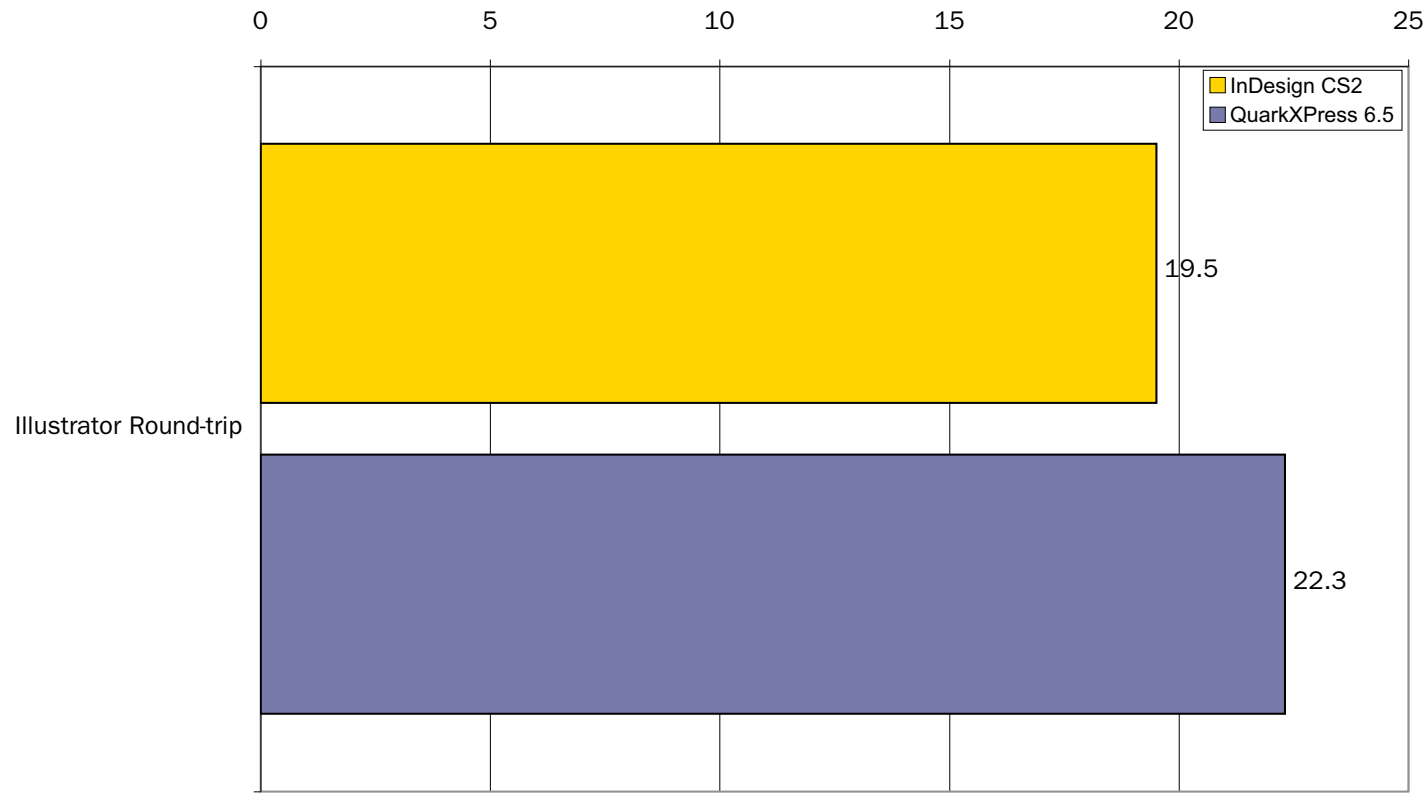
**Application Integration: Photoshop Round-trip**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

**Application Integration: Illustrator Round-trip**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.



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## Assignment Based Benchmarks: Magazine Publishing Productivity Measures

### Magazine Publishing Productivity Assignment

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS2
Phase 1: Basic Layout	557.2	356.43
Phase 2: Text Work	364.6	369.7
Phase 3: Image Work	549.1	175.4
<b>Complete Assignment</b>	<b>1470.9</b>	<b>901.53</b>

Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

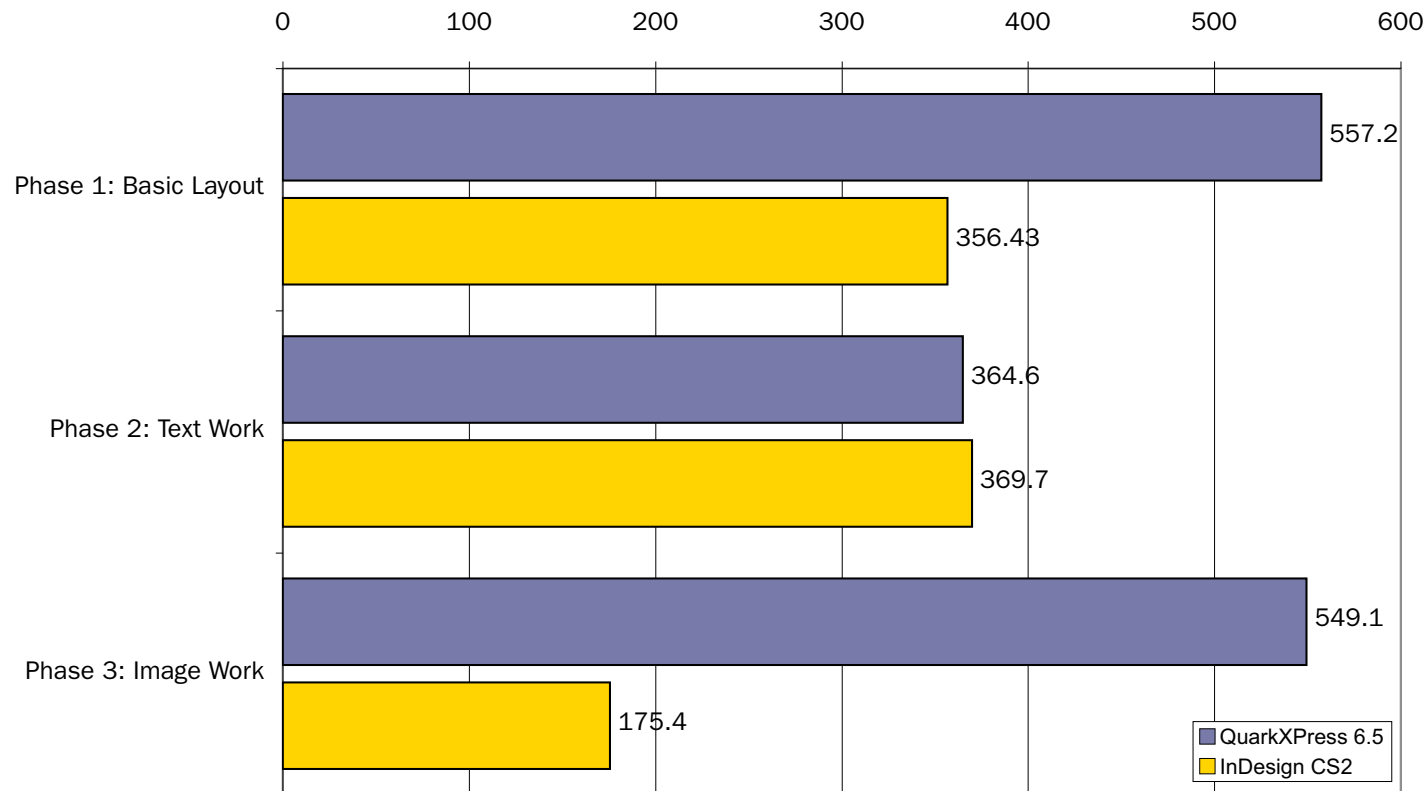
#### Section: **Results and Charts**

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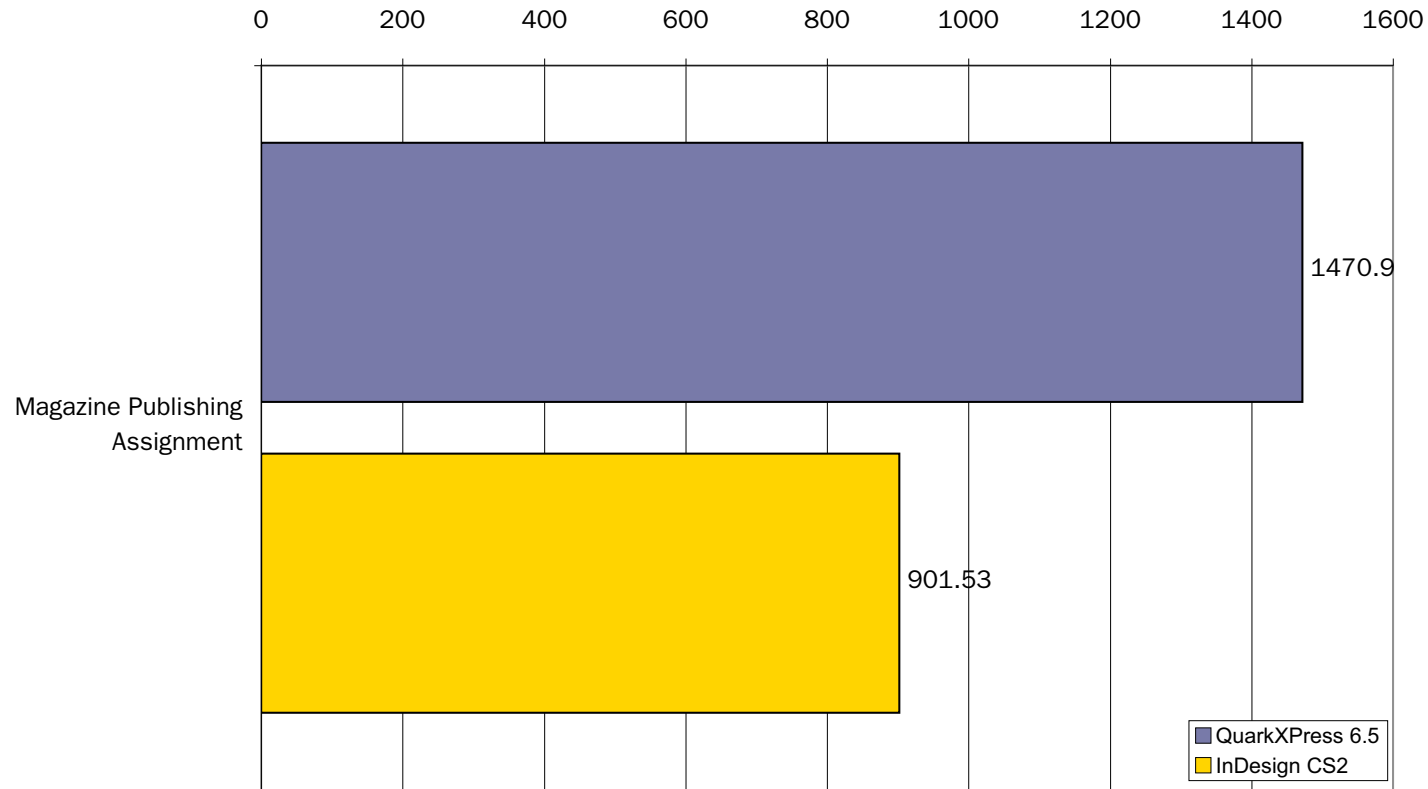
**Magazine Publishing Assignment: Detail**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

**Magazine Publishing Assignment: Total**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

## Productivity in Everyday Design Operations

### Productivity in Everyday Design Operations

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS2
Phase 1	43.8	29.7
Phase 2	70.8	40.2
Phase 3	84.9	50.6
Phase 4	91.7	69.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>291.1</b>	<b>190.3</b>

### InDesign CS2 : Table Import

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS2
Import Formatted Table From Excel	36.6	3.1

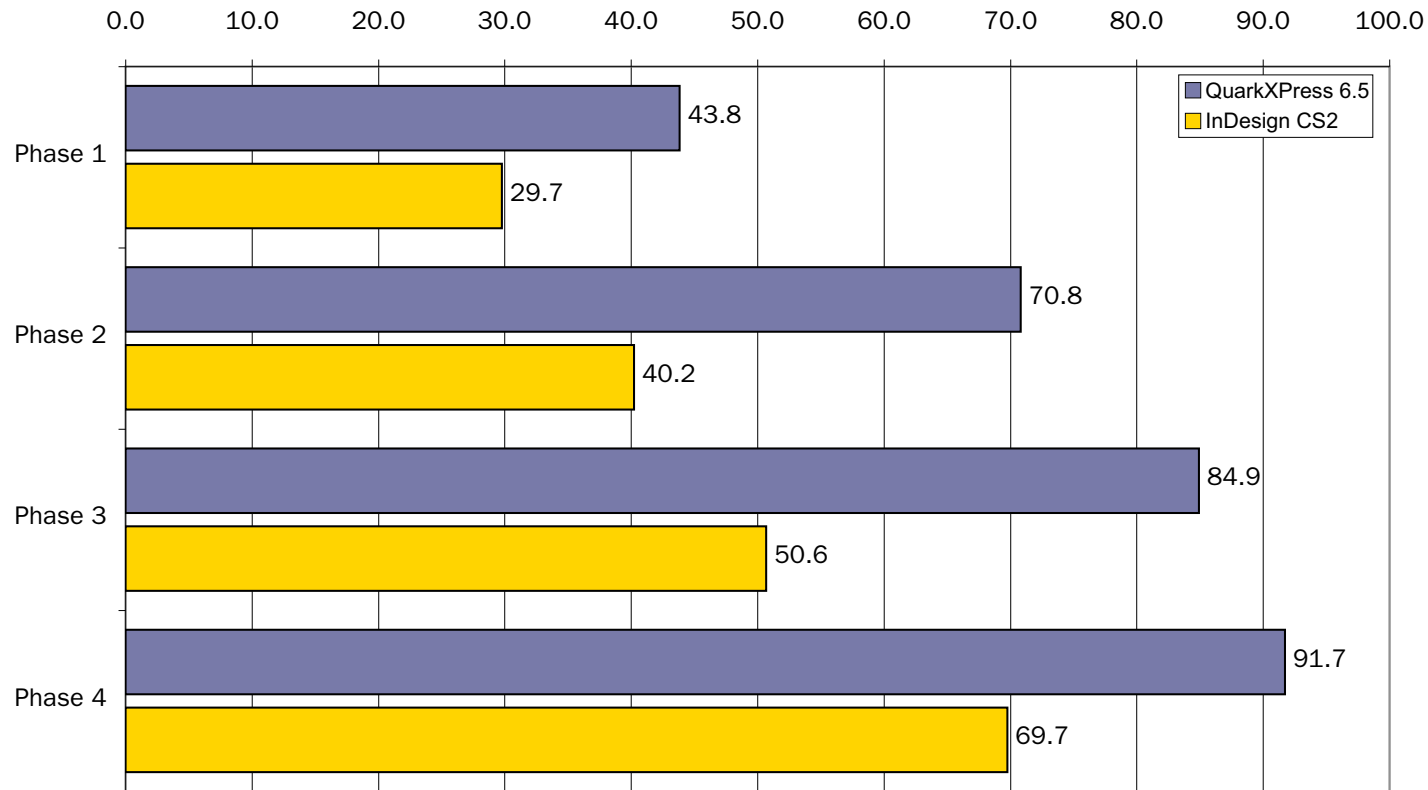
### Place Images (Average time for 10 Images)

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS	InDesign CS2 + Bridge
Average Time per Image	8.2	6.8	3.8

Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

### Section: Results and Charts

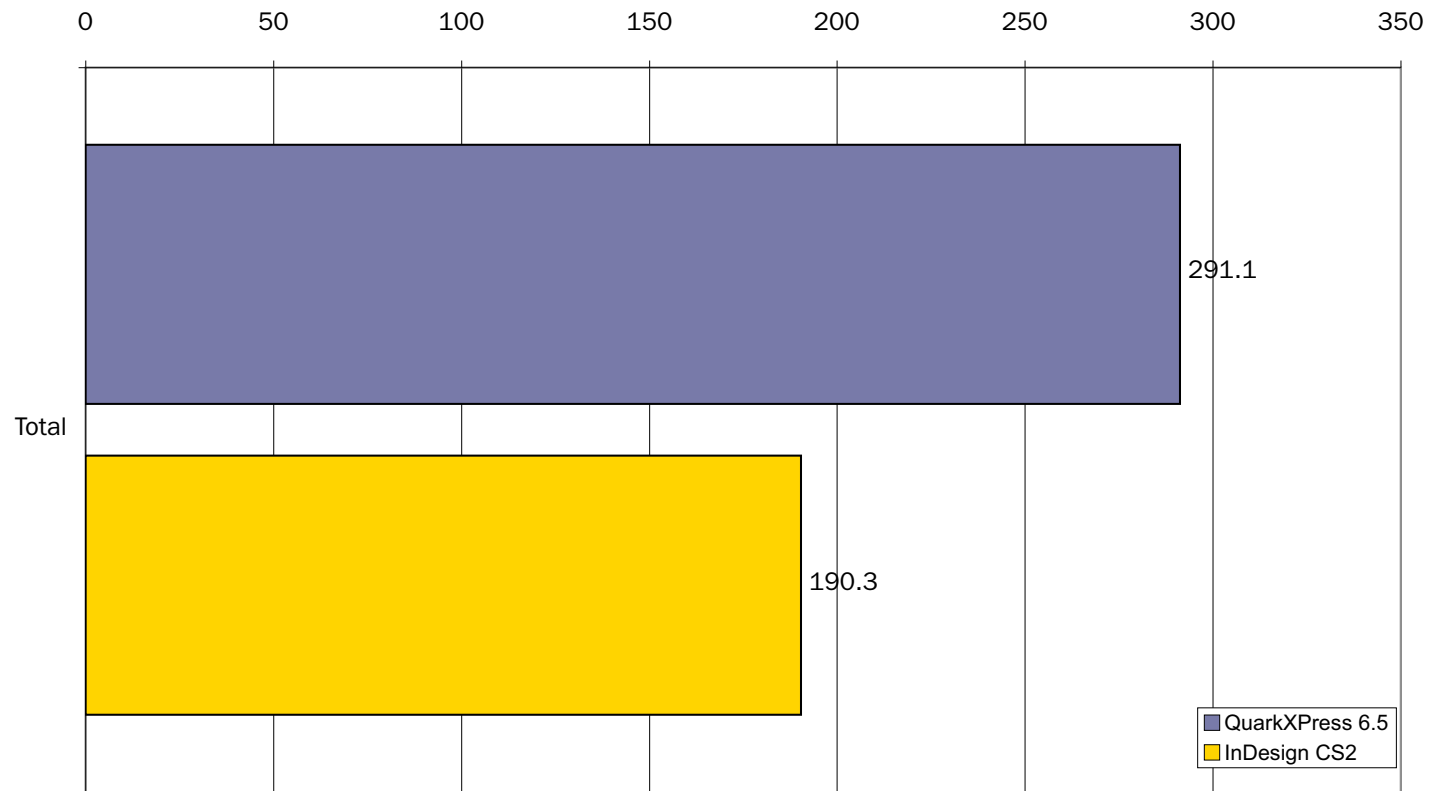
**Productivity in Everyday Design Operations: Detail**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

**Productivity in Everyday Design Operations**



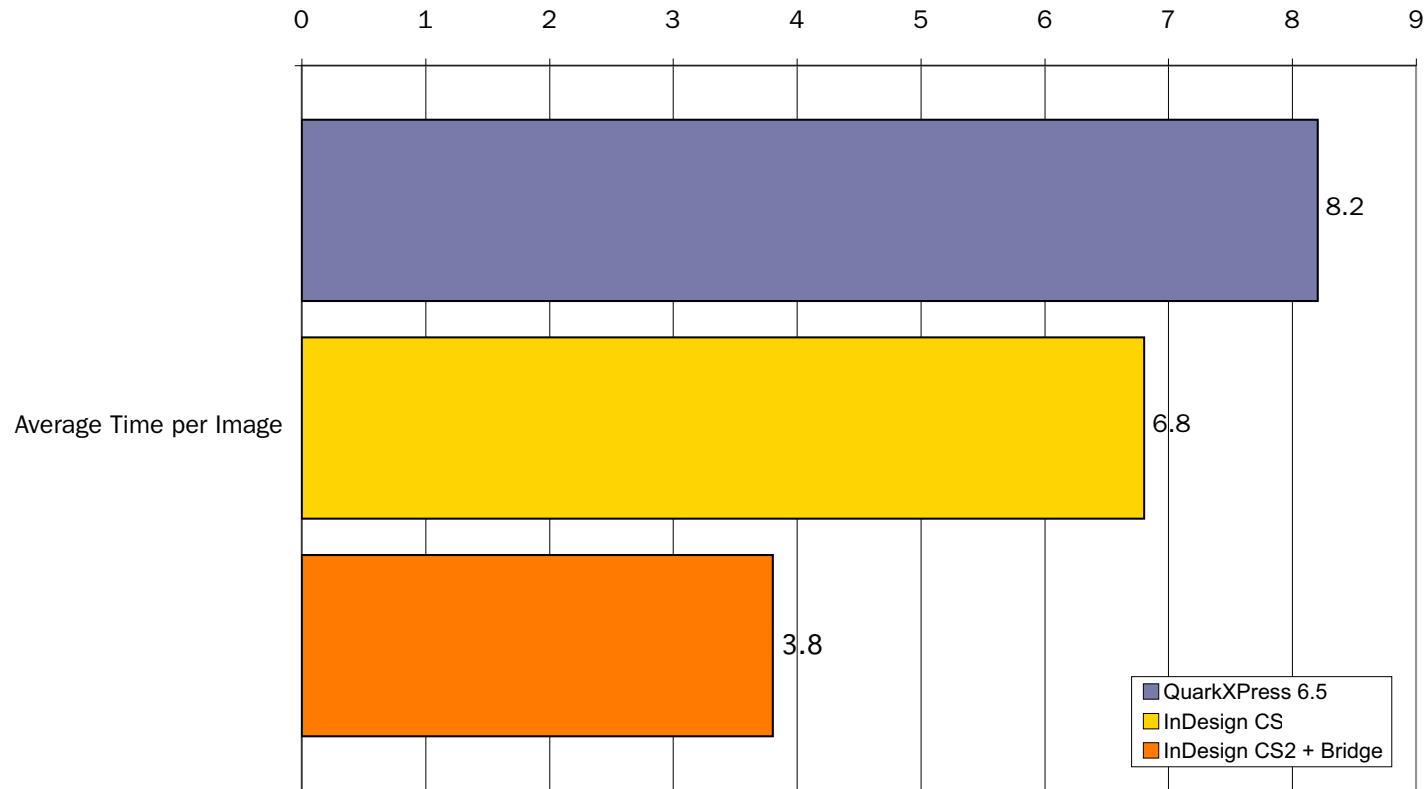
Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

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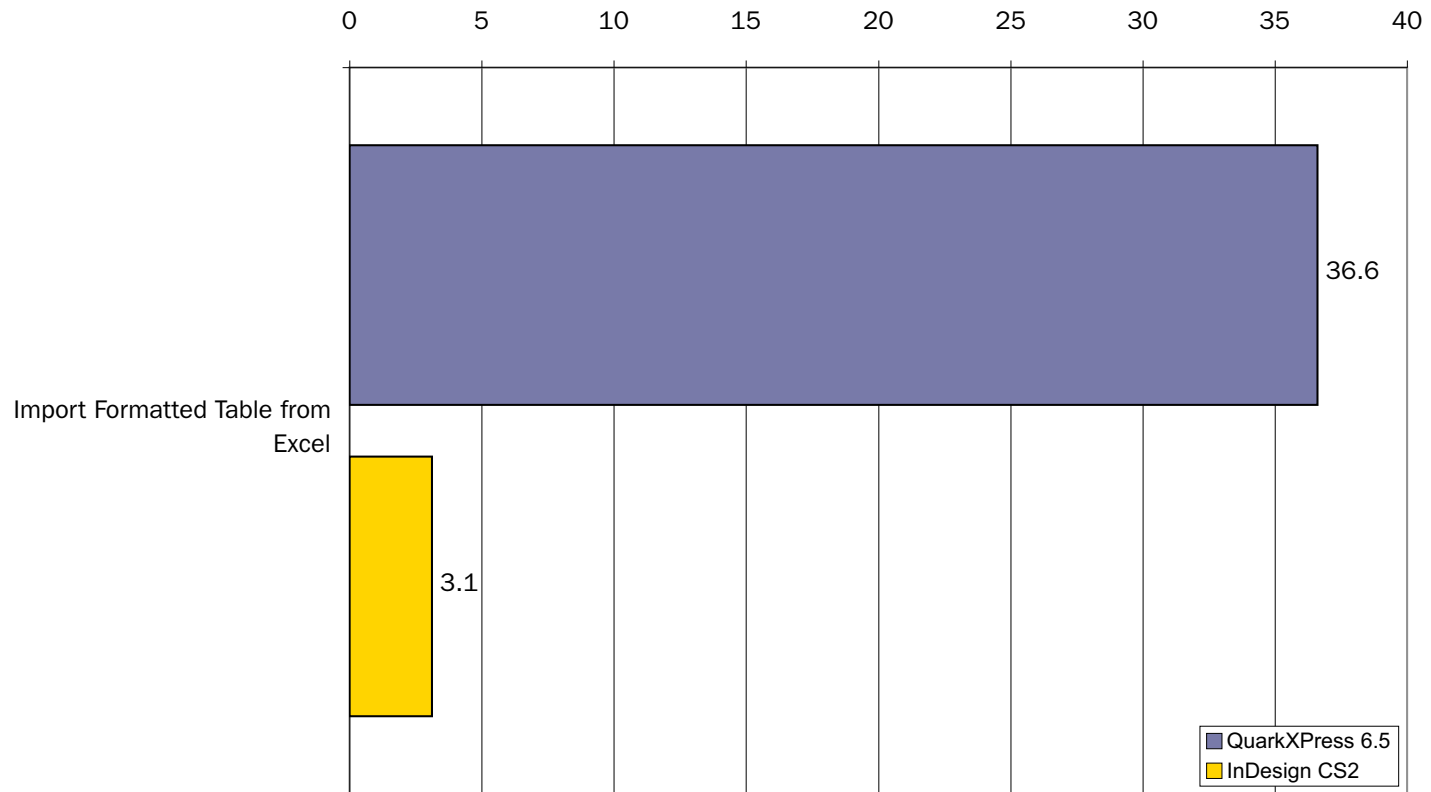
**Placing Picture Files**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

**Importing Formatted Tables**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

## Productivity Gains from Built-in Functionality

### Create Drop Shadow

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS2
Total	147.7	21.1

### Create Transparency

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS2
Total	188.8	27.4

### Formatting of Text with Nested Styles

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS2
Format 5 repetitive paragraphs	58.9	11.2

### Generate PDF File

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS2
Generate PDFX 1a (Acrobat Distiller)	26.7	6.7
Generate PDF 1.5 (Acrobat Distiller)	28.7	5.3
Generate PDF 1.3	17.1	6.5

Note: PDF 1.3 created with QuarkXPress' integrated PDF Export

### Formatting Multiple Paragraphs with "Apply Next Style"

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS	InDesign CS2
Simple Example	20.4	20.1	5.4
Complete Article	62.7	61.1	37.8

### Place Multipage PDF File

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS	InDesign CS2
Place 5 Page PDF File	74.6	68	21.7

### Sharing Parts of a Page Layout through "Snippets"

	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS	InDesign CS2
Share Parts of a Page Layout	37.1	33.8	13.4

### Formatting Multiple Objects with Object Styles

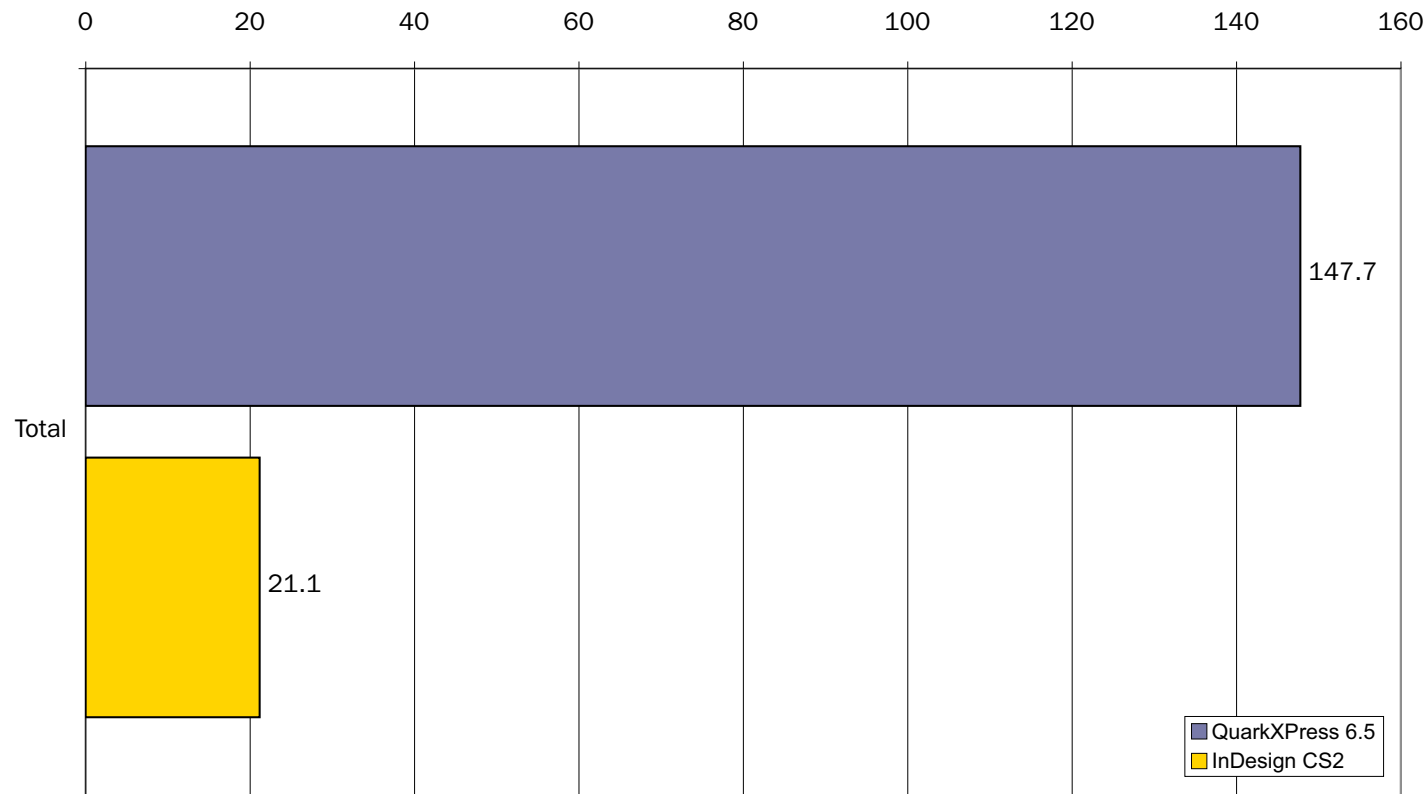
	QuarkXPress 6.5	InDesign CS	InDesign CS
Format Multiple Objects	61.4	56.9	14.3

Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

## Section: Results and Charts



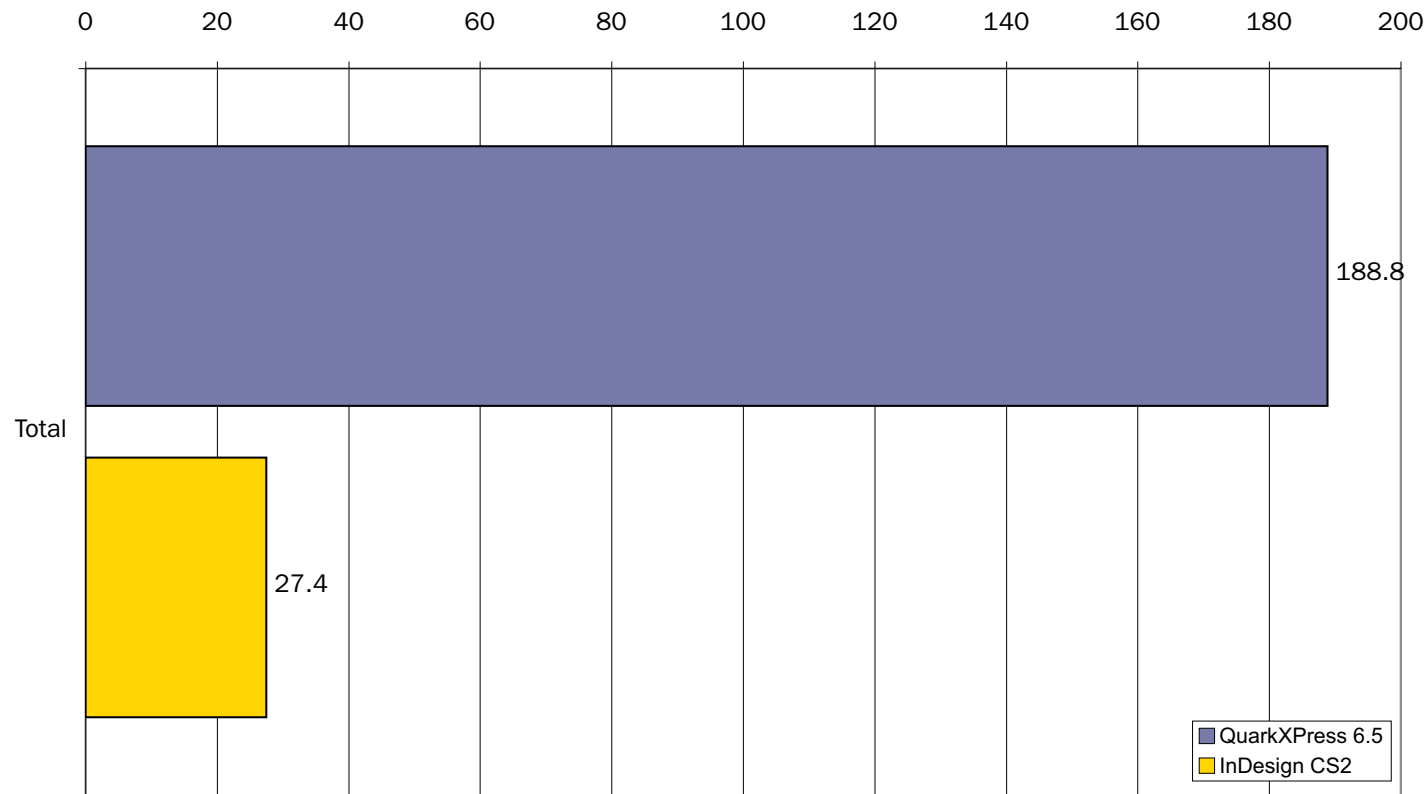
**Create Drop Shadow**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

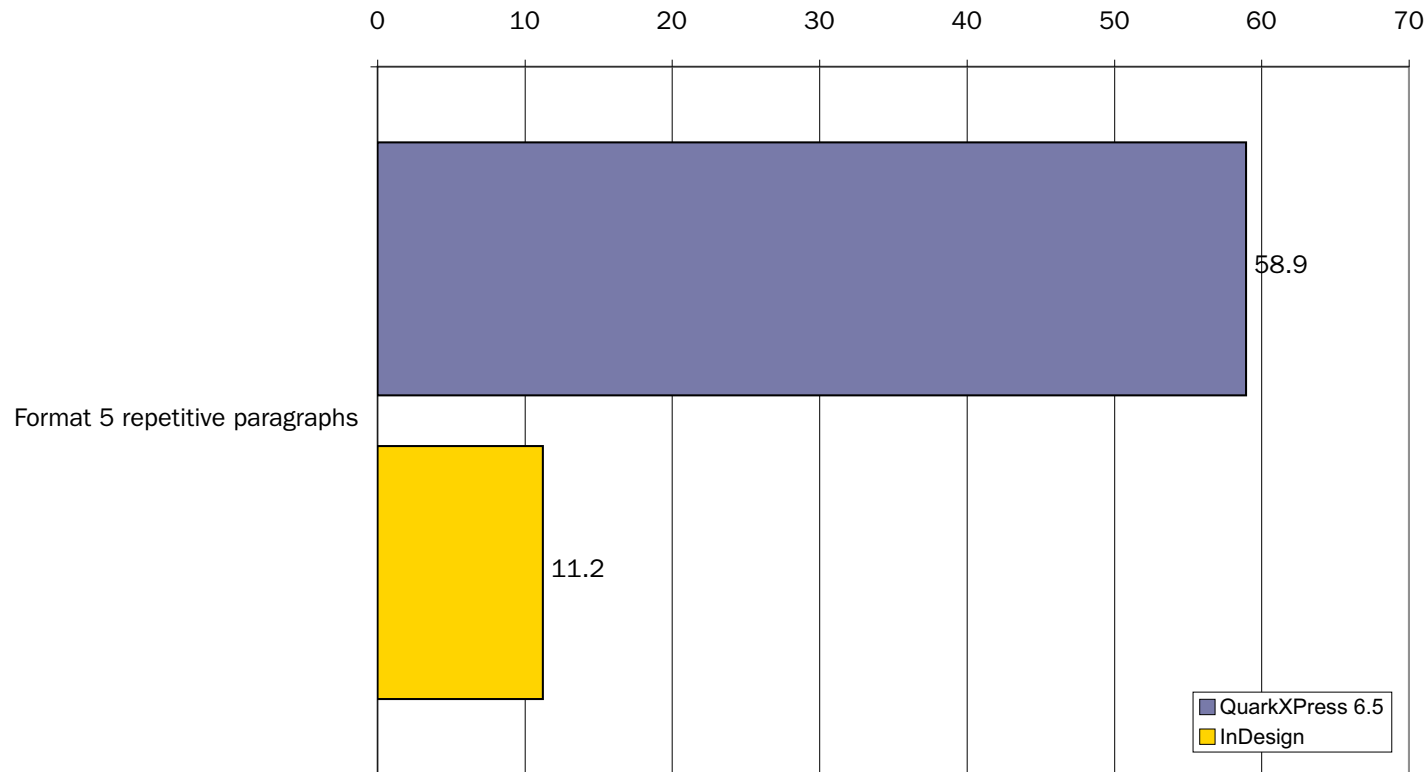
**Create Transparency Effect**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

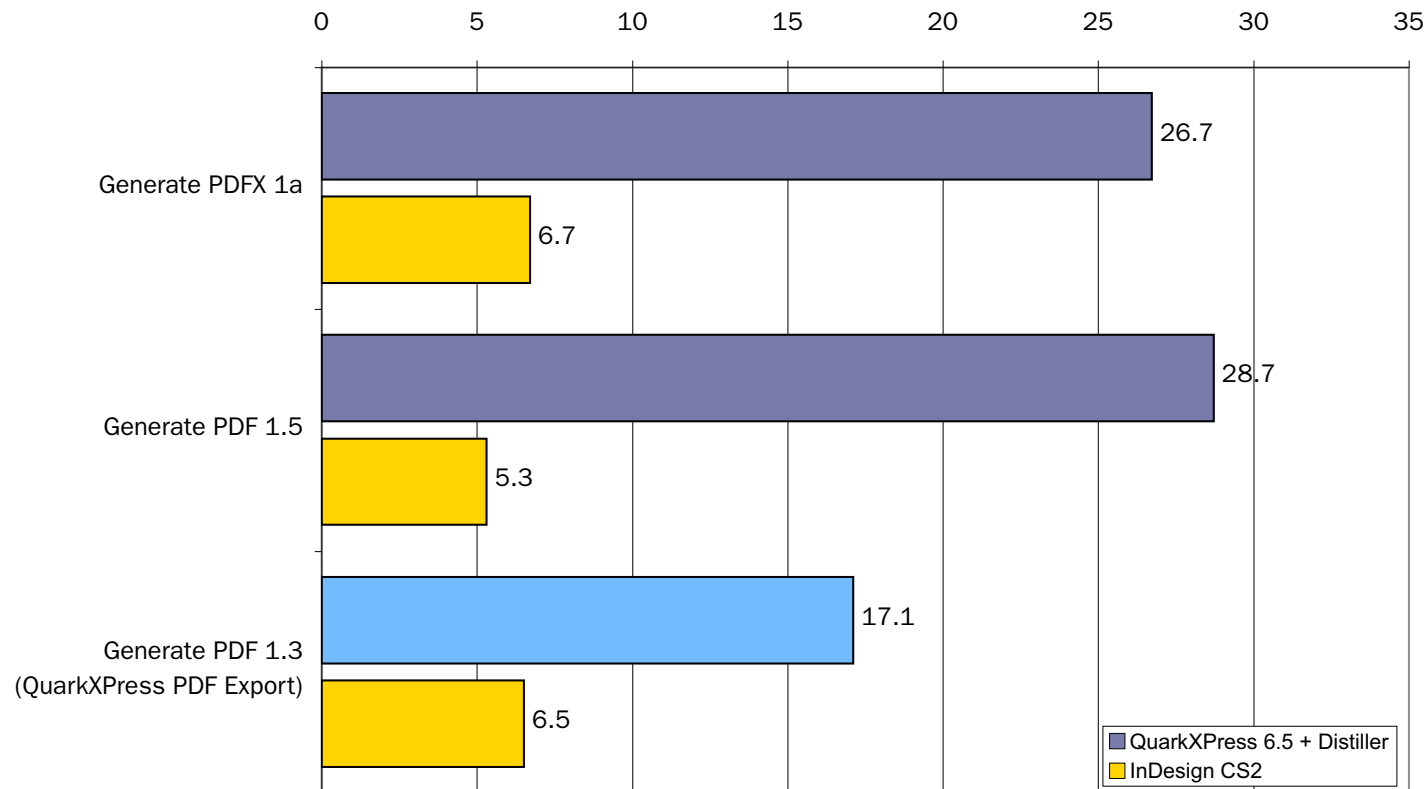
**Repetitive Text Formatting through Nested Styles**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

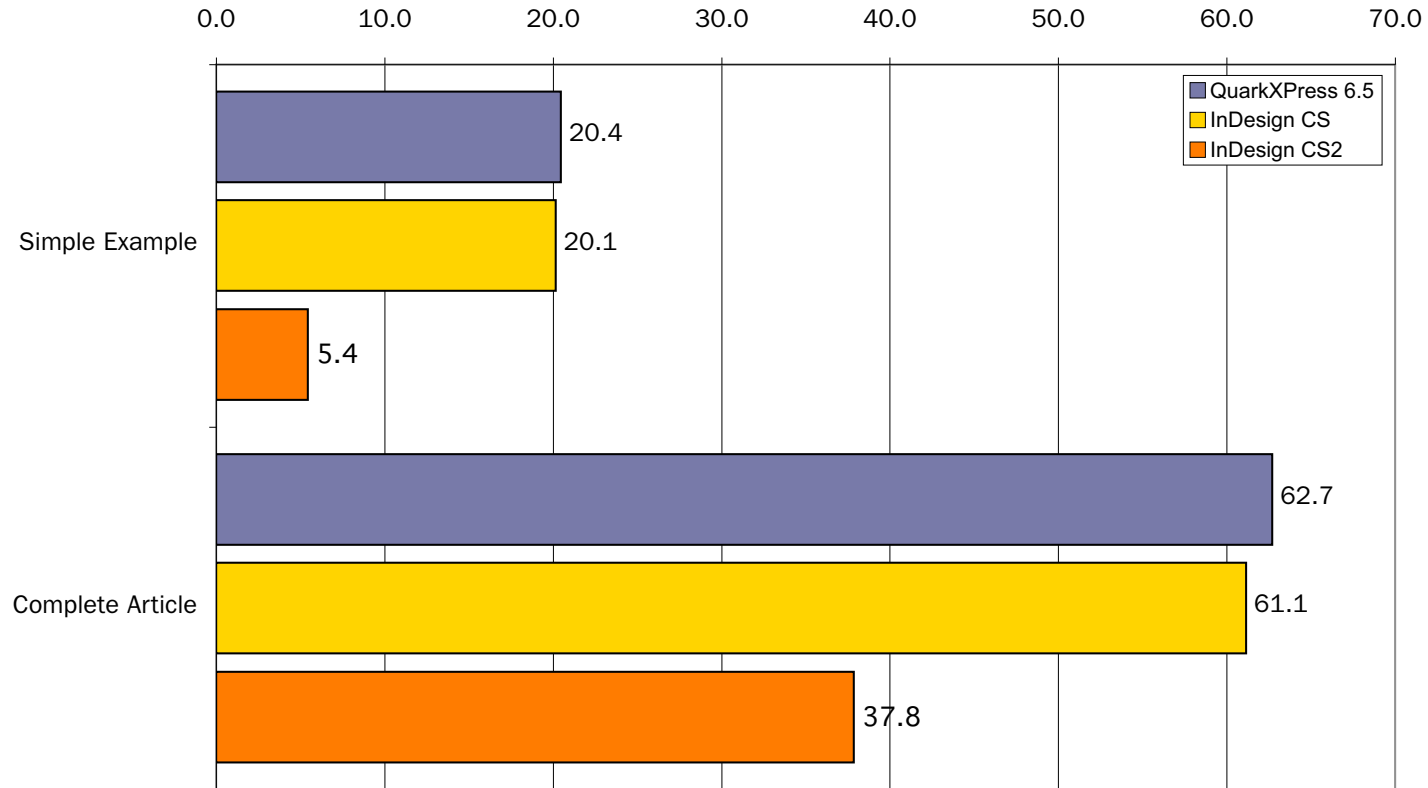
**Generate PDF File**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

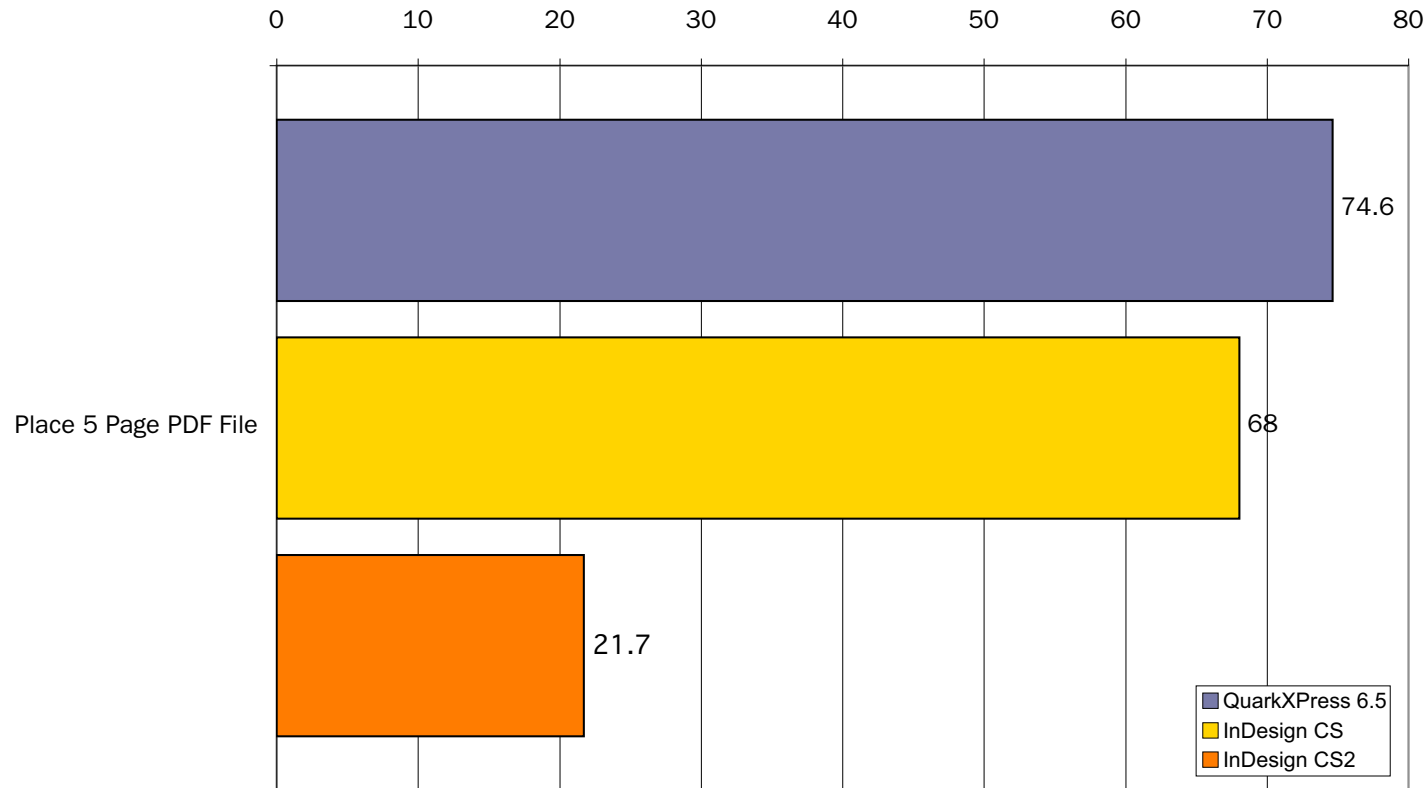
**Formatting Multiple Paragraphs with "Apply Next Style"**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

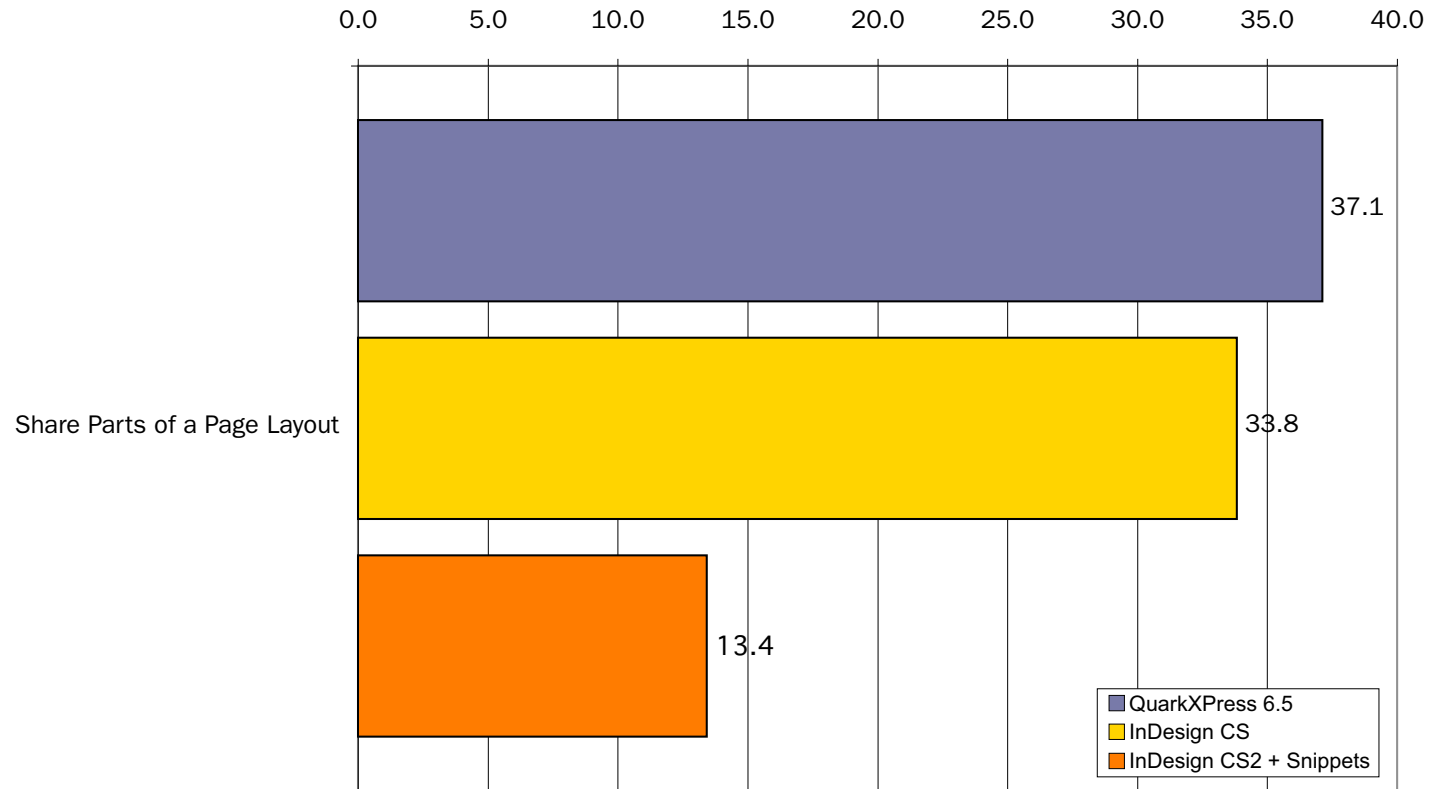
**Place Multi-page PDF File in Page Layout**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

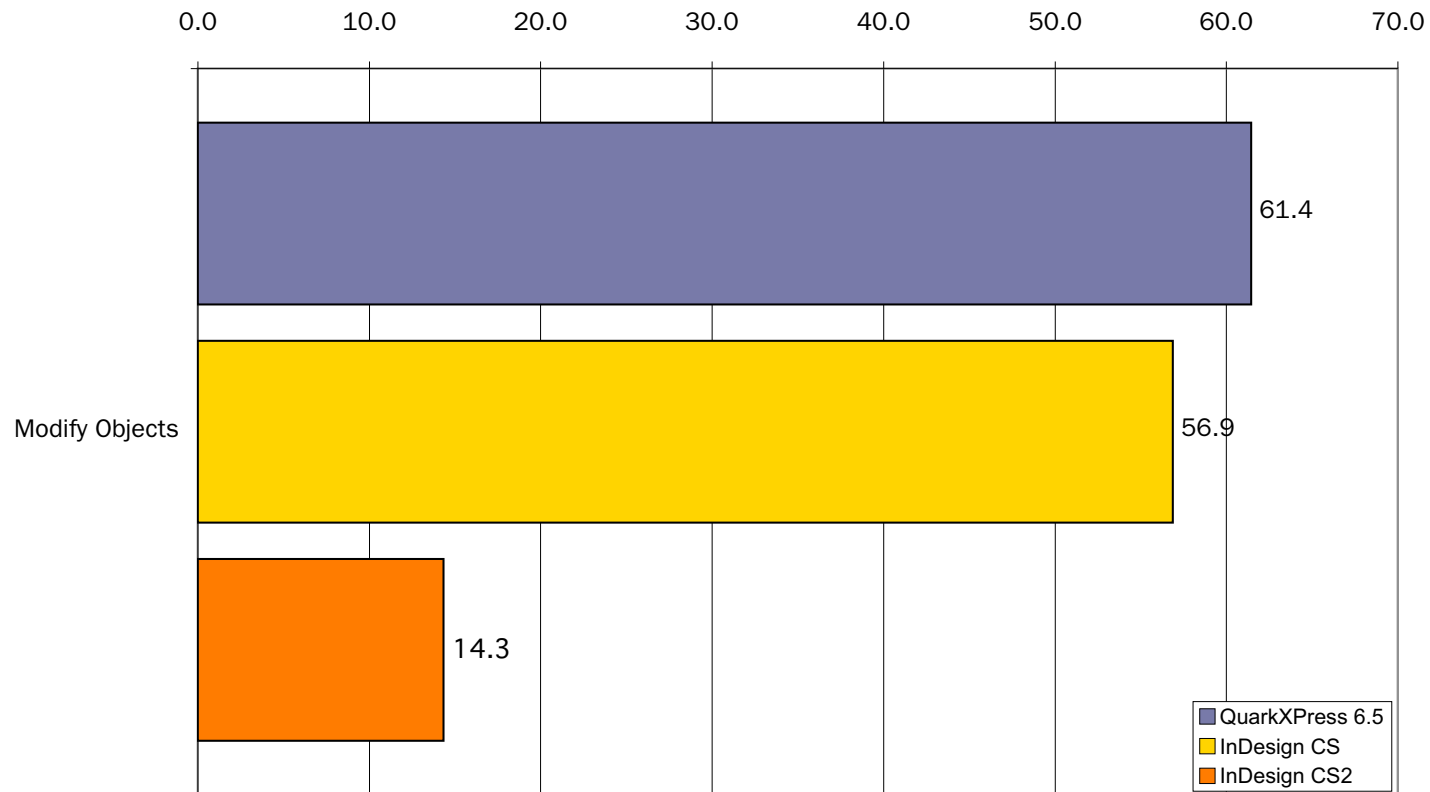
**Share Parts of a Page through "Snippets"**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**

**Formatting Multiple Objects with Object Styles**



Time in seconds. Shorter is better.

**Section: Results and Charts**