

Typing services offer key help for student papers

Different philosophies on editing characterize campus businesses

By Miriam Winston
Emerald Contributor

At 2 a.m. you begin to realize the futility of your index-finger typing method.

At 3 you run out of liquid paper and the question mark on your manual typewriter is stuck.

Could you have avoided this anguish? Would your professor appreciate a neater paper?

Who you gonna call? When your word processing needs exceed your typing abilities, your computer expertise or your available time, you have options.

Penny and Ken Allmet of Typos want to help.

Typos, 605 E. 13th Ave., advertises "quality word processing" and "complete hardware/software support."

Or you could turn to Cindy Routtu or Carolyn Sherrell, or a host of other services.

Typos is Greek for "to create an image." The Typos laser printers and resume services offer professional help to students and business people alike, Penny Allmet said.

The cost to students is \$2.25 a double-spaced page.

Or, for \$6 an hour, students

can do their own work in WordPerfect 5.1 or WordStar on IBM-compatible computers named Elvis and Jerry Lee, and receive lots of help and advice.

Advice about running the computers, that is.

"It's your grade, not mine," is Penny Allmet's firm answer to students who want editing services on papers she processes.

"I type fast," Allmet said, "and it slows me down to read a paper."

Allmet said she can often get the paper back to the student the same day.

"We get students in a jam, and I want to help," she said, "so I've had turnarounds of one day on 50-page papers."

This service creates loyal customers like Mary Webb, a University junior who frequents Typos. She was first faced with a 22-page paper," she said, "and I just can't type."

"I do my own rough drafts," said Don Mihaloew, a recent graduate, "but I'm a hunt-and-peck typist."

Mihaloew took his dissertation to Typos in June, and "Ken and Penny just went the extra mile for me," he said.



Penny Allmet, co-owner of Typos, works on processing a paper. She concentrates on speed and leaves the editing to the student.

Down the street wait the Kinko's computers, a strictly self-serve word-processing option. Kinko's has four Macintoshes that are equipped with MacWrite and MicroSoft Word word-processing programs.

Darren Cervantes, Kinko's

desktop publishing coordinator, said he would like to see more support services offered to students who use the \$8-an-hour computers.

"We do not tutor right now," he said, "but I'd like to get computer tutoring classes going."

One hour on the Macintosh is "long enough for most people to get the hang of the software," he said.

A lot of students come in to create, he said, but more come in with their work already done, so customers spend anywhere from five minutes to six hours on the computers.

Cindy Routtu of WordStyles and TypeScripts, 484-5454, said she believes in sitting down with students to go over papers that have consistent errors.

"There are certain courses we're not allowed to edit for," she said. In others, "professors even call or send students in" for the extra help they need on a paper, she said.

The issue of editing and tutoring is a somewhat gray area in word processing services, said Elaine Green of the office of the Dean of Students.

"If someone asks for help, pointing out problems is OK," she said, "but editor correcting is not OK."

Routtu finds this argument unfair.

"The University is not truly cognizant of what is out there" in terms of spell-check and grammar-check programs, she said.

"There is a difference in the final grades of students who have money," Routtu said, because they can afford the programs that do what she is not allowed to do.

Green said word-processing services charge money, too, and added she does not believe many students have sophisticated grammar-check programs.

"With spell-checker or grammar-checker," Green said, "students still have to correct their own mistakes" after the computer points them out.

Routtu said she has talked with several professors who agree with her that the guidelines in the Student Conduct Code are "vague and unfair."

The current interpretation of the code says plagiarism and academic dishonesty guidelines prohibit outright editing by word processing services.

In addition, it says that no one may edit or contribute to the meaning of another's work knowing that it is for academic credit.

In Routtu's mind, that puts the ball in the student's court.

"Sometimes," she said, "customers won't tell us" whether it's a journal article or an English paper.

Routtu and typist Carolyn Sherrell both charge \$15 an hour, and they advertise together as "Word Specialists," but the similarities stop there.

Carolyn's Specialties, 484-4177, has been in business for 23 years, and Sherrell has never edited student papers for grammar or content.

"I believe students learn through correcting their own errors," she said, "because that is part of the process."

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