



InDesign
MAGAZINE 31

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InDesign Effects that **WOW!**

PLUS:

- *Top-notch tools for free*
- *Collaboration without aggravation*
- *Manage InDesign's windows*
- *Review: CtrlChanges*

CtrlChanges

Ctrl Publisher

www.ctrl-ps.com/products/ctrlchanges

\$60 Light; \$229 Standard; \$549 Pro
Mac and Windows; InDesign and
InCopy CS3 and CS4

Rating: 🍌🍌🍌🍌

Ratings Key

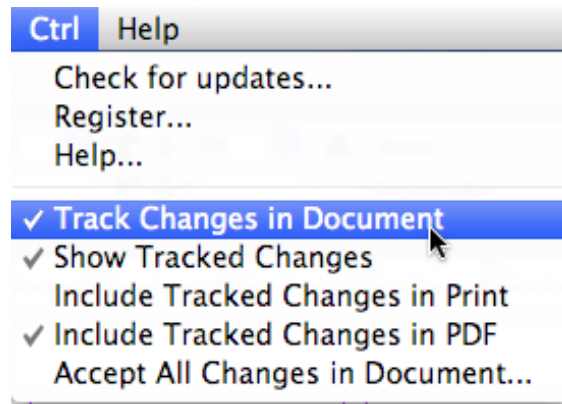
- 🍌 Not worth it even if it's free
- 🍌🍌 Not recommended
- 🍌🍌🍌 Average
- 🍌🍌🍌🍌 Exceptionally good
- 🍌🍌🍌🍌🍌 A must-have

By ANNE-MARIE CONCEPCIÓN

Adobe InCopy has a few nifty editorial features that are so useful, I've often wondered why Adobe didn't include them in InDesign. One that I've longed for in particular is InCopy's Track Changes, which shows you all the text edits (additions or deletions) that have been made to a story and allows someone reviewing the file to accept or reject each individual edit. Why doesn't InDesign have that feature? After all, a lot of text editing is done in InDesign! And knowing exactly which text has been changed can be invaluable in many publishing workflows.

There is a plug-in for InDesign CS3 called [Blacklining](#) that can accomplish this. It's been around

Figure 1. Turn Track Changes on and off by choosing the command in the Ctrl menu. When the Standard or Pro version of CtrlChanges is installed, the Ctrl menu also has commands that give you the ability to include tracked changes markup in printouts and PDFs.



for a while, but the problem is that the plug-in costs more than \$1,000 per seat. Ouch!

Recently, the Ctrl Publishing company came out with a track changes plug-in that is far more affordable. Called CtrlChanges, it's a plug-in for InDesign CS3 or CS4 that in some respects goes beyond InCopy's Track Changes feature, as you'll soon learn. In fact, the plug-in also works with InCopy CS3 or CS4 as a replacement or supplement to the program's own track changes features.

Tracking Changes in InDesign

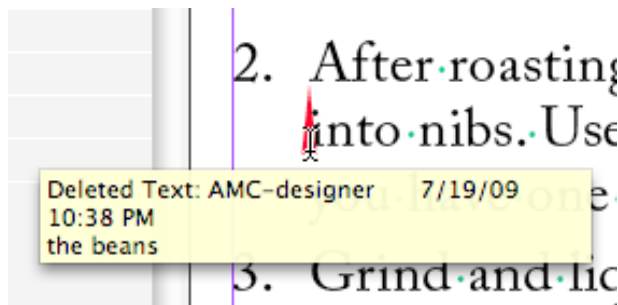
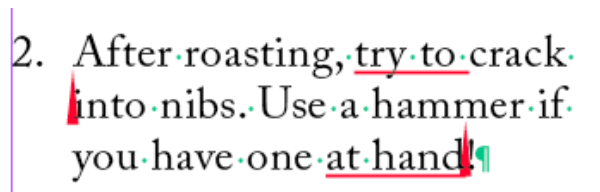
CtrlChanges is simple to use. After you run the installer, you'll see that a new menu, Ctrl, is available in InDesign's main menu bar. Open a layout and then choose the Track Changes in Document command from the Ctrl menu to toggle it on (Figure 1). As soon as you enable Track Changes, the plug-in goes to work, marking up your edits as you change text with the Type tool.

When you type or paste in text, the new text gets underlined in CtrlChange's special markup color. When you delete text, the text disappears and is replaced with a slim, 0-width triangle in the same markup color (Figure 2). The markup is similar to the Show Hidden Characters markup in that it doesn't affect pagination; and it can be shown or hidden from view from the Ctrl menu. If you have the Pro version of the plug-in, discussed later on, the markup color can be different for each user who edits the layout. Otherwise, the markup color is an unmodifiable red, regardless of who made the change.



If you change text—select a word and type a different word to take its place—you’ll see both the underlining and the triangle, since technically, you deleted text, and then added text. And if you move text, either by dragging and dropping or by cutting and pasting, CtrlChanges will insert its “deleted text” indicator triangle marking the text’s original location (if it was in the same document); and underline the text in the new location.

Figure 2. CtrlChanges adds a red underline to text that was added (first line), and inserts a zero-width red triangle icon where text was deleted (second line). If you select text and replace the selection with different text, you see the triangle at the right end of the underline (third line). Text that was deleted can be seen in the tooltip that appears when you hover your cursor over a triangle icon.



Not everyone in your workgroup needs the plug-in to get their changes tracked. Once you’ve turned on track changes from the Ctrl menu for an InDesign layout and saved it, changes are tracked in that layout, period, even if it’s subsequently opened by someone who doesn’t have the plug-in. (You’ll only be able to see the mark-up of their tracked changes, though, when you open the file on a workstation with CtrlChanges installed.) Also, CtrlChanges will markup tracked changes saved in a Word document that you place, if you turn on the “Include Track Changes” checkbox in the Word Import Options dialog box.

As you edit, you can see the markup appearing in real time, right in layout view (in Normal mode); which to InCopy veterans is a beautiful thing—no need to constantly switch to a text-only editing view to see what’s been changed.

But users pay a price for this convenience in CtrlChanges. What if you come across one of those “deleted text was here” indicator triangles in a story and want to see the text? Layout view can’t show it inline, because that would give you a false preview, changing a story’s copyfitting and linebreaks, perhaps even changing pagination. (Blacklining lets you choose to show the deleted text in the layout view anyway, pagination be damned, as a preference setting.)

I thought the Story Editor (Edit > Edit in Story Editor) would reveal the deleted text, as the analogous views in InCopy do, and as Microsoft Word’s tracked changes feature does. But surprisingly, Story Editor shows no Track Changes markup at all, not even the

Added Text underlines. (I asked the developer about this, and they said they were working on it.)

For now, the only way to see the deleted text in InDesign is to carefully position your cursor over the indicator triangle and wait for a tooltip to reveal it. That’s unfortunate because you can’t copy text out of a tooltip—if you find room for some of it elsewhere, you’ll have to retype it.

No tooltip appears when you hover over added text (text with the red underline). It makes sense at first: You can see the text for yourself in the layout, so why duplicate it in a tooltip?

But take another look at the tooltip that appears for deleted text (Figure 2). Notice the other information it has, specifically, the name of the person who deleted the text and a timestamp. With no tooltip, there’s no equivalent data available for added text. All you know is that the text was added by someone. (If you need to know who, CtrlChanges does have a way to tell in its Pro version, which I’ll discuss later on.)

By the way, InCopy has no problem showing tracked deletions from CtrlChanges in its Story or Galley view, where it appears with the same strikethrough markup as its own tracked changes feature (Figure 3, next page). Interesting!

As with InCopy and Blacklining, CtrlChanges only tracks changes to text strings (glyphs and some special characters) and nothing else. Layout-related actions like moving stories around, adding pages, deleting or adding text frames with the Selection tool, and updating images are all ignored. Changes to text

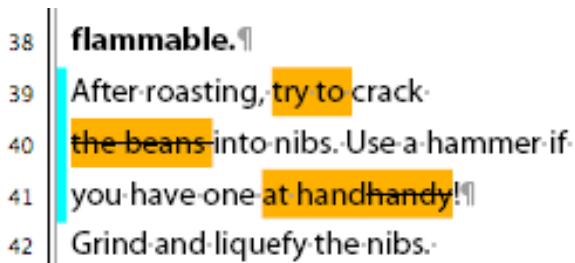
formatting are ignored as well. So if your colleague makes a word italic, or to tracks it in by -100, or applies No Break formatting to force a word to a new line, CtrlChanges won't flag it as a change. Microsoft Word, in contrast, lets users opt to track formatting changes as well, something I'd like to see added to both InCopy and CtrlChanges.

Changes Are Tracked, Now What?

The Ctrl menu has an "Accept All Changes in Document" command that you can use to sign off on the changes, removing all the mark-up. Oddly, there's no "Reject All Changes in Document" command. I suppose they're all optimists at Ctrl Publishing.

In addition to the menu, you have a CtrlChanges panel with additional features. Exactly which features, though, depends on the plug-in version you've

Figure 3. InCopy's Story or Galley view (shown here) shows CtrlChanges markup exactly as it shows its own track changes markup. Deleted text is indicated by the strikethrough formatting. All changes appear highlighted with the user's color. I wish CtrlChanges could show this in InDesign's Story Editor.



purchased. There are three to choose from: Light, Standard, and Pro.

If you have CtrlChanges Light (\$60 US), the panel only serves to provide access to its bottom button strip and panel commands. The buttons let you navigate to the next/previous tracked change, accepting and rejecting individual changes. The panel menu repeats most of the same commands as the Ctrl menu, and adds two more: Accept All (and Reject All) Changes in Story, as opposed to the entire document.

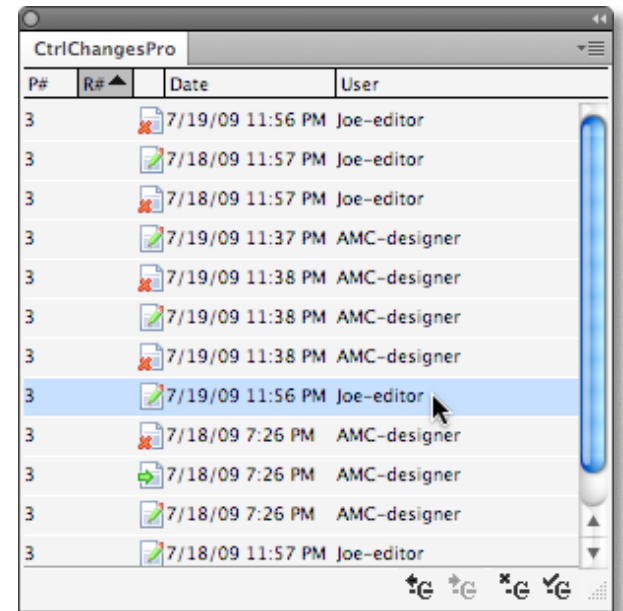
I'm not sure why Ctrl Publishing didn't add the navigation functions and additional panel menu items to the main Ctrl menu in the menu bar, and leave the CtrlChanges panel for the Pro version users, where it actually does something useful (more on that below). It feels weird to open an empty panel just to access its menu. It's like keeping a car in the garage just to store stuff in its trunk.

Nothing about the hobbled panel changes if you move up to CtrlChanges Standard, which at \$229 US is a big jump in price. The buttons and panel commands are exactly the same. So why buy the Standard version?

Because it adds two new, crucial commands to the Ctrl menu: Include Tracked Changes in Print and Include Tracked Changes in PDF. (In the Light version, all the markup is removed during output.)

This could be just the ticket for InDesign-less colleagues who need to quickly locate and review text changes in successive print proofs, or for companies that keep paper or electronic archives of changes before accepting them.

Figure 4. When you're using the Pro version, the CtrlChangesPro panel maintains an entry for every text edit. Deletions have a red X icon in the entry and additions have a green pencil icon. You can sort the panel's entries by any of the attributes in the column headers. Whether you're using the Light, Standard, or Pro version, the buttons at the bottom of the panel (which are the same ones InCopy uses) let you navigate to previous/next change, and to reject or accept the selected change(s)



A bonus awaits in the PDF output, by the way: CtrlChanges puts deleted text into an Acrobat "sticky note" comment, one comment per tracked text deletion. It's a lot easier to copy/paste text from a comment than to retype it from a tool tip!

The Pro version is an even bigger jump in price (\$549 US—still, only half the cost of Blacklining), but adds much more control: a fully-functional, populated CtrlChangesPro panel (Figure 4). The panel "tracks the

tracking” by adding an author and timestamp entry every time text is added (yay!) or deleted, as well as adding the usual markup to the layout. Double-clicking an entry in the panel jumps to that change in the layout; and clicking inside a tracked change in the layout highlights the corresponding entry in the panel.

Since you can identify all authors of any changes, the Pro version is the only practical choice when you have more than two or three users editing the same stories. Changes markup appears in the layout in the user’s own colors—which they choose in InDesign’s or InCopy’s **File > User** dialog box—and their name appears next to the change entry in the panel. You can sort the panel by clicking on a column header, meaning with CtrlChangesPro, you can quickly go all the edits made by one person, then all those made by someone else. (On my wish-list for the next version: a visibility column so we can show/hide changes by date or user.)

Should You Get It?

If you require text changes to be tracked in your InDesign files, CtrlChanges gets the job done. But because it’s so difficult to see the text in tracked

deletions, and because of the lack of user identification for tracked additions in all versions except CtrlChanges Pro, I’m giving the plug-in 3.5 butterflies out of 5. Nonetheless, I have a feeling there are many publications that will jump all over CtrlChanges. And it’s nice to finally a choice in track changes plug-ins!

■ **Anne-Marie “HerGeekness” Concepción** is a design studio owner and independent Adobe-certified software trainer, specializing in the Design Suite and the InCopy workflow. In addition to being the co-host of the [InDesignSecrets.com](#) blog and podcast with David Blatner, she also writes [DesignGeek](#), a free e-zine enjoyed by more than 8,000 creative professionals.

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