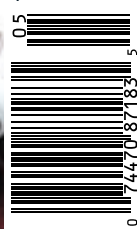


# GRAPHIC EXCHANGE

# WAYS

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# Photoshop attacks web page image creation with a vengeance

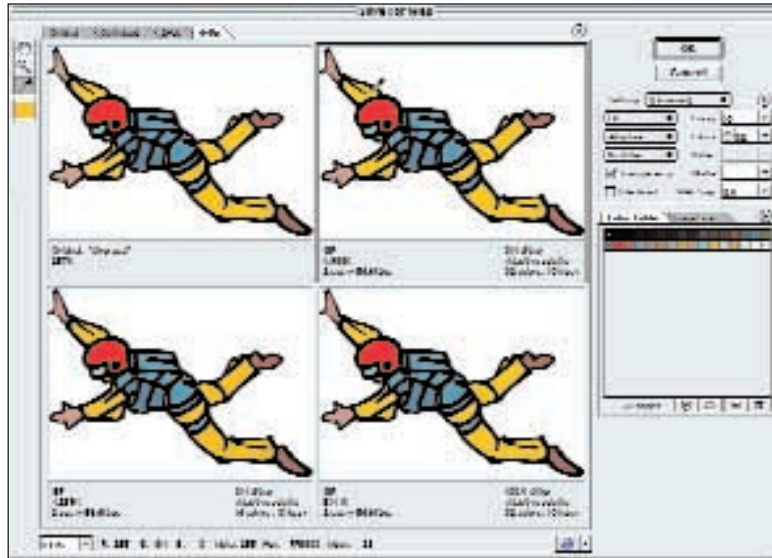
## Adobe Photoshop 5.5 with ImageReady 2.0

BY PETER DUDAR

ADOBE WANTS YOU TO USE ITS PRODUCTS FOR EVERYTHING YOU do, both on- and offline. The incorporation of Adobe *GoLive* into the product line, for instance, is part of the online strategy, but *Photoshop* is the linchpin, simply because everybody uses it. The thorn in the side of online designers has been Adobe's decision to develop *ImageReady* as a separate Web product, though it's dependent on *Photoshop*. Adobe

and active in both applications — and you can preserve all the layers and attributes in a file, even after successive jumps. Changes made in one application show up in the History palette of the other as an AutoUpdate state, so *ImageReady* can undo steps executed in *Photoshop*, and vice versa. Let's say you're working on an animation sequence in *ImageReady* (where layers are interpreted as frames) and transfer the image (with layers) to *Photoshop* to tweak an effect. If you don't like the results when you return to *ImageReady*, simply click the state that precedes the AutoUpdate in *ImageReady*'s History palette and start again from there. The fly in the ointment is that an AutoUpdate is a single entry in your History palette — *Photoshop* can't access individual steps in a series of *ImageReady* modifications, and vice versa. *Photoshop* and *ImageReady* can also be configured to jump to *Illustrator* or other graphics editing appli-

So which toolbox is ImageReady's and which is Photoshop's? The ImageReady toolbox (far right) has **rectangle and ellipse tools**. You can slip from one application to the other instantly while working on a file by just clicking the **Jump-To buttons** appended to the bottom of the toolboxes.



Photoshop's new **Save for Web dialog**. Pertinent info, such as file size, applied compression settings and projected download speed is displayed with each variation as you manipulate it. Photoshop also displays RGB and hexadecimal values for colors as your cursor rolls over them in images or their color tables. A pop-up menu previews Browser Dither. And its Standard Windows Color and Standard Macintosh Color commands simulate the resulting look of your images on both platforms by compensating for their differing system gamma values.



One file, two histories. Changes made in one application show up in the History palette of the other as an **AutoUpdate state**, so ImageReady can undo steps executed in Photoshop, and vice-versa. But the AutoUpdate is a single entry in your History palette — Photoshop can't access individual steps in a series of ImageReady modifications, and vice versa.

has now yanked the thorn by bundling the two applications. *ImageReady 2.0* takes care of advanced Web functions such as image slicing and dynamic animation, or creating JavaScript rollovers and image maps. Web optimization is duplicated in the two applications.

*Photoshop* and *ImageReady* have been made fairly interoperable. To slip from one to the other instantly while working on a file, just click the Jump-To buttons appended to their toolboxes. When you jump, the image stays open

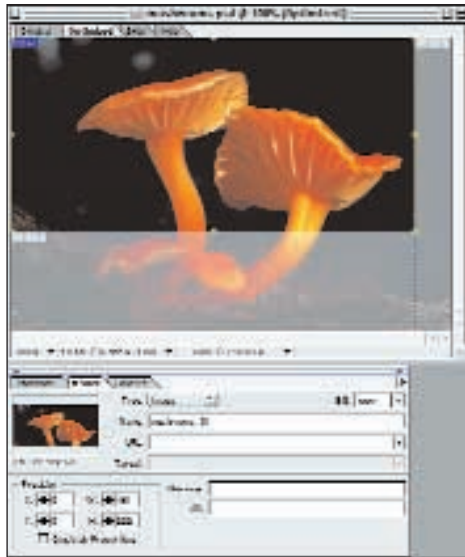
and HTML editors such as *GoLive*. To get a non-Adobe app into the Jump To menu, you toss an alias or shortcut into *Photoshop*'s Helpers folder.

Version 5.5 now opens *Acrobat 4.0* files (PDF 1.3). If the PDF has more than one page, a Parser dialog first prompts you to select just one before opening a Rasterize dialog.

### LIVE VIEW PANELS AND OPTIMIZATION

*Photoshop* has adopted *ImageReady 1*'s 2-up view (the original, plus optimized variation) as a tabbed option in its new Save for Web dialogue. And then, taking a cue from *Macromedia Fireworks*' much-lauded Export Preview dialog, *Photoshop* has added a four-up option. Initially, the first variation uses settings you've applied, while *Photoshop* generates alternatives in the other two views. After you've experimented with the variations, a Repopulate Command will auto-generate new alternatives, using your current selection as the starting point. Version 5.5 supports four formats: GIF, JPEG, PNG-8, and PNG-24. Pertinent info, such as the re-

You create **user-slices** by simply dragging a rectangle over the image and ImageReady then defines auto-slices as necessary to create the final HTML table. You can apply different optimization settings to individual user-slices (JPEG or GIF) and assign a file name to each slice, as well as parameters such as a link to a URL, an Alt tag, or a JavaScript message. Slices can be linked, so that applying optimization and other settings to one slice automatically updates the others.



vised file size, applied compression settings and projected download speed (at the selected modem rate) is displayed with each variation as you manipulate it. *Photoshop* also displays RGB and Hexadecimal values for colors as your cursor rolls over them in images or their color tables.

The dialog's Settings menu provides preset GIF combinations using 32, 64, or 128 colors with or without dither; JPEG low, medium, or high settings; PNG-8 128 dithered; and PNG-24; plus your saved settings. Besides the usual palette choices, version 5.5 provides: Perceptual, which favours colors to which the human eye is sensitive; Selective, which is similar to Perceptual, but preserves Web colors and broad areas of color; and custom palettes.

Adobe has also introduced a Lossy (GIF only) compression control that produces files 10 to 50% smaller "than previously possible" with minimal loss of image quality. Think of it as JPEG-type compression for GIFs; if you push it too far, you'll see similar artifacts. Lossy GIF compression is made to take advantage of graphics with repeating patterns, but is also somewhat effective with visuals employing distinct flat color areas. Soft, illustration-type transitions are iffy in GIFs anyway, so Lossy GIF does little for that type of graphic element.

Compression settings for JPEG files include: Image Quality Named (low, medium, high or maximum); Image Quality Numerical (1 to 100); Blur, to reduce compression artifacts; and Matte, to simulate transparency in your JPEG by filling transparent images in your original with the background color of your Web page. This being *Photoshop*, you can also embed an ICC Profile based on the application's settings. There's also an Optimize to File Size option for when you need to target a file size limit.

A convenient popup menu provides indicators of how your images will be seen in the real world. You can instantly view how badly Browser Dither will demolish your graphic (sigh). And the Standard Windows Color and Standard Mac-

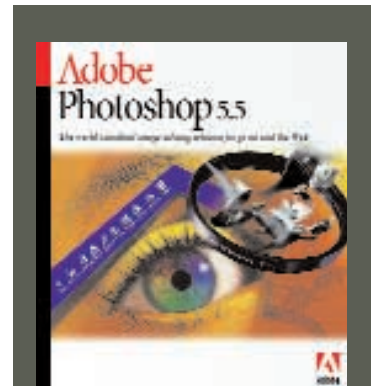
intosh Color commands simulate the resulting look of your images on both platforms, by compensating for their differing system gamma values.

The Color Table tab displays your image's palette. And clicking in an image with the dialog's eyedropper tool highlights the relevant color in the table. Colors can be added, deleted, edited, and locked; or sorted by hue, luminance or popularity. A popup menu provides commands for selecting all colors, all Web-safe colors, or all non-Web-safe colors — so you can do things like select a set of colors and then shift them automatically to Web-safe equivalents.

*ImageReady 2.0* has also gone 4-up, and though its controls are in floating palettes instead of a dialog, the two apps are functionally near-identical in this area. But if you want something equivalent to *Fireworks*' Export Wizard, use *ImageReady*: the Preferences>Optimization dialog lists an Auto Select GIF/JPEG default.

## IMAGEREADY INTERACTIVITY

Again confronting one of *Fireworks*' strengths, Image slicing has become more sophisticated in *Imageready 2.0*: among other things, slices can be divided, merged, duplicated, resized, aligned, deleted or stacked. They can also be designated "No Image", for use as solid color and text containers. You create user-slices by simply dragging a rectangle over the image and ImageReady then defines auto-slices as necessary to create the final HTML table. Otherwise, you can set up guides and use the Create Slices From Guides command. Subsequently, you can apply different optimization settings to individual user-slices (JPEG or GIF) and assign a file name to each slice, as well as parameters such as a link to a URL, an Alt tag, or a JavaScript message. Better still, version 2.0 provides the ability to link or unlink slices, so that applying optimization and other settings



## ADOBE PHOTOSHOP 5.5 WITH IMAGEREADY 2.0

### System Requirements

Power Macintosh processor or better  
Mac OS Software version 7.6 or later

Windows Intel Pentium or faster processor  
Microsoft Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows NT 4.0, or later

Combined Installation of Photoshop and ImageReady: 64 MB of RAM (96 MB of RAM recommended), 125 MB of available hard-disk space  
Photoshop Only Installation: 32 MB of RAM (64 MB or more recommended), 80 MB of available hard-disk space  
256-color (8-bit) display adapter required (24-bit, high-resolution display recommended)

Estimated street price \$610 (U.S.)  
Upgrade for registered users of Photoshop 5.0 and later and ImageReady \$129 (US); registered users of earlier versions of Photoshop \$199 (US)

Adobe Systems  
Telephone: 800-492-3623  
Web: [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)



(top) You generate effects via a **Rollover palette** by selecting predefined states or inputting your own JavaScript. Complex effects can also be created by using a combination of the Rollover, Layers, and Animation palettes to set up different states.  
 (bottom) The **Animation palette's** tween controls enable you to generate series of frames between two existing frames while varying layer attributes such as position, opacity, or layer effects. The palette also lets you preview your work-in-progress.

to one slice automatically updates the others; and linked slices share a dither pattern, to eliminate seamlines.

Slicing an image doesn't interfere with the Jump-To process; *ImageReady* embeds the relevant information in your *Photoshop* file. For export, *ImageReady* creates a set of named files and an HTML file with the table code necessary to reassemble the image in an HTML editor. Its HTML Preferences dialog lets you specify formatting and coding options to match your existing code styles. And if you alter an image, the Update HTML command can seek out the code that you previously pasted into an HTML file in order to automatically update it.

*ImageReady 1.0* provided no JavaScript support — but that's now been taken care of. In a way similar to *Fireworks* or an HTML editor like *GoLive*, you generate effects in version 2.0 using a Rollover palette (with static and pop-up menus) by selecting predefined states or inputting your own JavaScript. Besides straightforward mouse-action (over, click, down) effects, *ImageReady* enables secondary rollovers — like having a button-click in one area cause effects in another area of the graphic. You just make changes outside the selected slice as you set up the rollover — *ImageReady* detects the change and generates the secondary rollover state. Complex effects can also be created by using a combination of the Rollover, Layers, and Animation palettes to set up different states. And when you save an optimized file that has rollover effects, the application writes JavaScript code in the HTML table cells for each affected slice.

*ImageReady's* animation controls have been enhanced. Using multi-layered files from *Photoshop* or other sources, the Animation palette's tween controls enable you to generate series of frames between two existing frames while varying layer attributes such as position, opacity, or layer effects. And you can tween layers within existing frames to finesse their look. The palette also enables you to preview your work-in-progress and set playback options for the final animation. A pop-up lets you specify a delay (in seconds or fractions of a second) for single or multiple frames in play-

back. *ImageReady* imports frames from movies saved in *QuickTime*-supported formats (MOV, AVI, FLIC and PICT) and implements advanced compression options for animated GIFs.

*Imageready* has inherited layer effects from *Photoshop*, where they were first introduced in version 5.0 — that's nice enough in itself. But what's especially significant for online artists is that *ImageReady*, unlike *Photoshop*, now has a set of ellipse, rectangle, and rounded rectangle tools on its toolbar. And shape tools plus layer effects equals a fast means for creating and updating Web buttons. The tool options let you specify fixed sizes, opacity and anti-aliasing, plus instruct the application to create a new layer when you draw a shape. Drop shadows, bevels, inner and outer glows, and other enhancements can be added to layers in one step by using layer effects; and the effects stay live, so they update when the layers are edited. Effect options are accessed through a pop-



(above) The **Extract Image** command helps delete backgrounds around subjects with intricate or transparent edges. You highlight the subject's edges using a marker pen tool, then define its interior, and set other extraction parameters.

(right) By dragging the **Background Eraser**, you either erase all the pixels that you drag over, only those that match the first pixel sampled, or just those that match the current background color.



up menu in the Layers palette; the resulting effect then appears in the palette as a nested layer. Combinations of layer effects can be saved to the Styles palette, which comes prestocked with eighteen styles; to apply a style, just double-click, or drag it either to an image or the Layers palette.

## MASKING ENHANCEMENTS AND CONTACT SHEET AUTOMATION IN PHOTOSHOP

The new Extract Image command eases the pain of deleting backgrounds around subjects with intricate or transparent edges (think hair, for instance). Choosing Image>Extract produces a dialog, where you highlight the subject's edges using a marker pen tool, then define its interior, and set other extraction parameters. The extraction can be refined and previewed as many times as necessary, but there are awkwardnesses. For instance, there's no undo command inside the dialog; and edge highlighter mistakes have to be manually erased. But a fill made with the paint bucket can be undone by clicking it a second time. An eyedropper tool is available to extract monotone subjects with ill-defined interiors, and a Smooth slider helps remove stray artifacts. Once you commit, *Photoshop* erases the background to transparency; the command decontaminates the remaining

edge pixels, so the image can be placed on a new background with no haloing.

Version 5.5 has two new erasers. Some users find the new Background Eraser preferable to the Extract Image command for foreground masking. It's also a godsend with images that stymie the Extract Image dialog's more fully automated functions. The Eraser can be set for contiguous or noncontiguous selection. By dragging, you either erase all the pixels that you drag over, only those that match the first pixel sampled, or just those that match the current background color. The Background Eraser also decontaminates edge pixels. The Magic Eraser tool, on the other

hand, erases sections of a layer with a simple mouse click. It can be set to erase all pixels on a layer that are similar in value to the one you've clicked, or only similar pixels that are contiguous.

The painterly inclined may appreciate the new art history brush, which enables users to mimic brush strokes by targeting a specified state or snapshot on the History palette as source data. You can then paint on the specified image or set up a solid background color using version 5.5's layer fill capability. A paint style pop-up on the Art History Brush Options palette supplies strokes like Tight Short, Loose Medium, Dab and Tight Curl Long.

*Photoshop 5.5* includes automation plug-ins for creating several types of contact sheets, using the contents of a fold-

er. (Why did it take Adobe so long to come up with this?) The Contact Sheet II command lets you specify the number of columns and rows per sheet and label the resulting thumbnails with their source image file names. The Picture Package command places multiple copies of a single image on a page, based on preset layout options like, "(2) 4 x 5 & (4) 2.5 x 3.5". And the Web Photo Gallery command lets you export images as a Web site, with a thumbnails index page, individual JPEG image pages and navigable links.

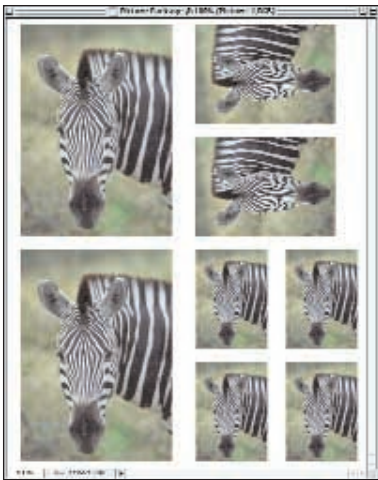
Typewise, *Photoshop 5.5* has new anti-aliasing options to improve onscreen legibility, especially at small sizes: Crisp, Strong and Smooth. You can also turn off fractional character widths, to prevent small type from running together when displayed online. And Adobe has re-introduced the ability to simulate bold, italic and underlined characters from standard fonts (a blasphemy among professionals). *ImageReady* has dispensed with the type dialog, letting you edit text directly within the image.

The first time you start version 5.5, it opens the Color Management Assistant, which was first introduced in the 5.0.2 update. Dialogues enable you to set up alternatives to the default color space, sRGB. These include: Optimise for Web use (which is really just sRGB again); Imitate *Photoshop 4*; and Customize for prepress and other uses.

In certain areas where *Photoshop* and *ImageReady* were previously outclassed by *Fireworks*, like Web optimization, image slicing and JavaScript rollovers, Adobe has now matched it feature-for-feature and thrown in some new twists. *Fireworks 2*'s key remaining uniqueness is its vector to bitmap interoperability. (*Fireworks 3*, which retains *Photoshop* layers, and a tightly integrated *Dreamweaver 3 Fireworks 3 Studio* are due in December.) *ImageReady 2.0*, on the other hand, now has an all-bitmap means for quickly creating editable Web buttons. And *Photoshop 5.5* provides the capability to do high-end image editing and then optimize your images for the Web within one application.

The co-existence of *Photoshop* and *ImageReady* in the current bundle seems transitional. Their interoperability is less than perfect — packing them into one application would make more sense. And there are redundancies in the two applications. But note the combined minimum memory requirements of the two apps: 64 MB (32 MB + 32 MB). Adobe actually recommends 96 MB for the two and 64 MB for *Photoshop* alone. Print oriented users aren't likely to relish carrying *ImageReady* functions as dead weight in a combined app. There's now a standalone version of *Photoshop LE* at the lower end; so maybe there's a fully Web-enabled version coming down the line. In any case, the cliché is truer than ever: you'll NEVER have enough RAM.

If you work solely in print, and you've got masking plug-ins installed, version 5.5 provides little incentive to upgrade. If your work ends up online, then the upgrade to *Photoshop 5.5* is pretty well mandatory. \*



**Photoshop 5.5 includes automation plug-ins for creating several types of contact sheets.** For instance, it outputs portrait studio type picture packages as shown above. And Photoshop can export images as a Web site, with a thumbnails index page, individual JPEG image pages and navigable links.