

THE DAWN OF A NEW STUDIO SYSTEM

MACROMEDIA'S TIGHTLY INTEGRATED DREAMWEAVER 3 FIREWORKS 3 STUDIO EMPHASIZES STREAMLINING, COLLABORATIVE FEATURES, AND CUSTOMIZATION

BY PETER DUDAR

IN THE BEGINNING THERE WAS THE VISUAL EDITOR MACROMEDIA *Dreamweaver*, which premiered Roundtrip HTML and high level control of source code. Then there was *Fireworks*, with its array of sophisticated vector and bitmap graphics tools. And now there's *Dreamweaver 3 Fireworks 3 Studio*. Web production is becoming increasingly mission-critical, with development going to progressively larger teams. So streamlining, collaboration, customization and extensibility enhancements are a big part of this release.

And Macromedia's been keeping an eye on the competition: Adobe recently intro'd a cross-platform version of their visual editor *GoLive*. And Web-enhanced *Adobe Photoshop 5.5*, which has subsumed *ImageReady*, has made a *Photoshop/GoLive* solution look appealing. So besides further integrating *D3* and *F3*, Macromedia needed to make *Dreamweaver 3 Fireworks 3 Studio* the most comprehensive solution available.

DREAMWEAVER 3 STREAMLINING

Dreamweaver 3 has enabled hand coding in the visual workspace — the Quick Tag Editor is a pop-up that you can access by simply pressing Control+T or Command+T in the Document window. Depending on your selection, the editor opens in one of three modes: Insert HTML for adding code, Edit Tag, or Wrap Tag to put a new tag around the selection. And if you pause while editing an attribute name, a drop-down hints menu appears, listing the valid attributes for the tag you're working on. You can also now deploy inline image maps.

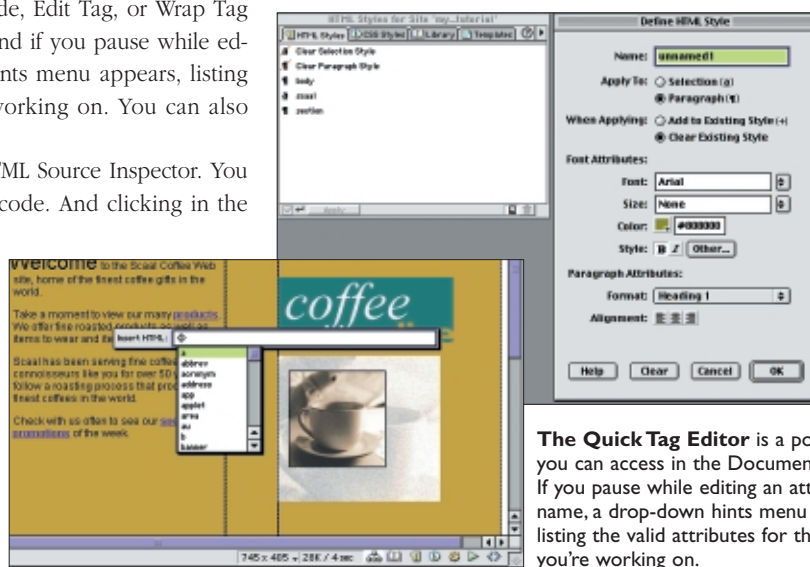
Macromedia has also tweaked the HTML Source Inspector. You can show line numbers alongside your code. And clicking in the margin selects entire lines of text (shift-click to grab wrapped lines.) Selections can be dragged and dropped. And the Inspector can be tabbed with other palettes. *D3* still supports *HomeSite* and *BBEdit*, but Mac users now get only the demo of *BBEdit* with *Dreamweaver* — so reload your full version from *Dreamweaver 2*.

Though the HTML 4.0 specification discourages the use of HTML for-

matting tags, differing browsers support Cascading Style Sheets inconsistently. So Macromedia has added an HTML Style palette to *Dreamweaver 3*: multiple attributes can be applied to a text selection in a single step using standard character markup (such as B, I, FONT and CENTER tags). As in print apps, styles are applied to paragraphs or selections and can be based on a selection. But unlike print styles or CSS, text formatted with an HTML style is not automatically updated if the style is revised. HTML styles can, however, be shared with other users, local sites or remote sites. The styles are stored in *D3*'s Library folder in a *styles.xml* file, and can be accessed through the Site window.

A perk for *Fireworks* users is the Insert Fireworks HTML command (Objects palette), which imports the HTML source code, images and any applicable JavaScripts that result from slicing an image in *Fireworks*. The image and code are added where appropriate and the original HTML file can be deleted afterward.

Other new command objects (Objects palette) enable fast insertion of navigation bars, jump menus, e-mail links, dates, and media from *Flash 4*, *Shockwave 7* and *Generator*. And there are entirely new Objects panels: a Character objects panel provides commonly used special characters and symbols (such as © ® and ™), and a



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The Quick Tag Editor is a pop-up that you can access in the Document window. If you pause while editing an attribute name, a drop-down hints menu appears, listing the valid attributes for the tag you're working on.

Frame objects panel provides eight predefined framesets ranging from two to four frames.

D3 also has a couple of *Flash* user perks: it now edits URLs in *Flash* movie files and shows *Flash* links in the site map.

A new Netscape 4 Compatibility option (Layers prefs) deals with the annoying way that *Netscape* demolishes CSS layers when the browser window is resized. *Dreamweaver 3* adds JavaScript that automatically reloads the page when the window is altered.

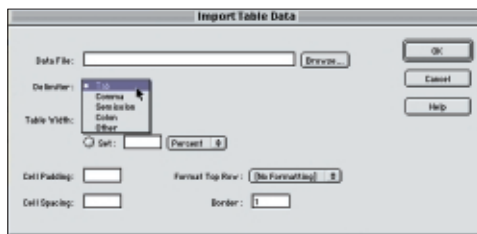
D3 COLLABORATION

External editor-wise, *Dreamweaver* works most seamlessly with *Fireworks* (surprise, surprise), since *Dreamweaver* recognizes *Fireworks* HTML and JavaScript as native *Dreamweaver* code. Accessing the context menu (right- or control-click) lets you directly launch and edit any *Fireworks 3* graphic. The menu also enables you to browse to another editor, but the *Fireworks* user is taken right to the PNG source graphic for editing. And you don't have to re-export the image — you find the updated version in place on returning to *Dreamweaver*. Also, you can launch your primary image editor, even if it's not *Fireworks*, by control- or command-double-clicking the image. *Dreamweaver's* Prefs enable you to define multiple editors for each file type (or dissociate one editor from a file type) — and you can now launch primary and secondary editors for any file in the Site window.

The Clean up Word HTML command removes irrelevant XML code, CSS and proprietary tags in HTML files exported by Word 97, 98 and 2000.



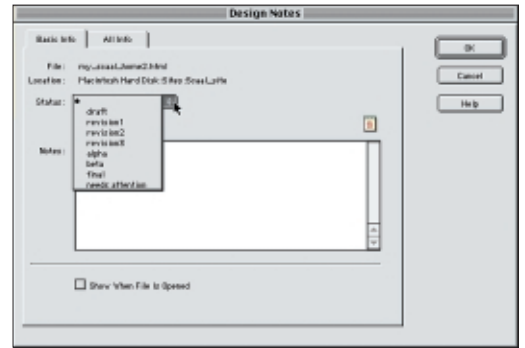
Import Table Data command enables you to automatically create tables out of delimited files from applications like Microsoft Excel or Access.



Using *Microsoft Word* a lot for source material? The Clean up Word HTML command removes irrelevant XML code, CSS and proprietary tags in HTML files exported by Word 97, 98 and 2000. And if you're working from data, an Import Table Data command enables you to automatically create tables out of delimited files from applications like *Microsoft Excel* or *Access*. In the dialog, you have to inform *Dreamweaver* about the delimiter used (tabs, commas, colons, etc.), so it can correctly format your table.

Site management-wise, D3 provides easy access to the Check In/Check Out system through the Site menu, so you can get, put, check in and check out files directly from the Document window.

Design Notes are a means of tracking file changes and communicating about ongoing issues with team members. They reside in an XML file that's attached to the original but doesn't add to its size.



And picking up on a *GoLive* precedent, *Dreamweaver* has installed a Site > Synchronize command for synchronizing your local copy of a site with the version on your server. The command can also delete extraneous files.

D3's Design Notes are a means of tracking file changes and communicating about ongoing issues with team members. Design Notes reside in an XML file that's attached to the original but doesn't add to its size. They can also be applied to applets, images, *Flash* movies, *Shockwave* objects, *ActiveX* controls and image fields in your files. *Fireworks 3* puts source info about exported formats, hotspots or rollovers into Design Notes to automatically accompany its graphics into *Dreamweaver*. And that's why *Dreamweaver* can take you directly to the PNG source file in *Fireworks* for external editing.

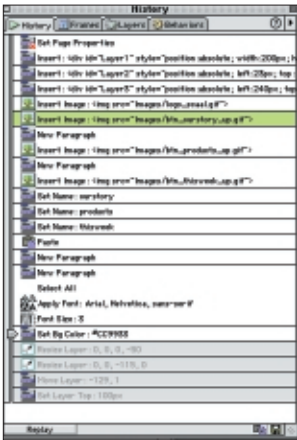
D3 CUSTOMIZATION AND EXTENSIBILITY

The new *Dreamweaver* DOM (document object model) gives JavaScript coders access to the structure of files at authoring time; and *Dreamweaver 3* provides more than 300 new API (application program interface) functions to facilitate scripting your own JavaScript extensions, including custom floating palettes and attribute translators. If you or your collaborators have the wherewithal, it's possible to automate complex tasks such as sorting tables, applying styles, and removing tags. And you can dramatically customize the environment, turning copies of *Dreamweaver* into project-specific and role-specific content editors.

Also, you can extend *Dreamweaver* to integrate with other applications. For instance, *Dreamweaver 3* provides a Create Web Photo Album command that works with *Fireworks* to duplicate *Photoshop 5.5's* Web Photo Gallery command. The script instructs *Fireworks* to create thumbnails and source images from a folder of images, then uses *Dreamweaver* to create a thumbnails page and linked pages containing the source images. Customizable menus and shortcuts are now defined in an XML file called *menus.xml*, that resides in the *Dreamweaver* application folder; and because it's JavaScript-based, the customization works across platforms.

Macromedia has also enhanced *Dreamweaver's* third-party tag model so that Active Server Page, Java Server Page, PHP and Cold Fusion Markup Language code are recognized in Roundtrip server-side markup.

Macromedia has implemented its own style of History palettes in *Dreamweaver 3* and *Fireworks 3*. As in *Photoshop*, *Dreamweaver's* palette shows all the steps you've performed in the active document since opening it, and they are undoable (the default is 50 undos). In *Dreamweaver's* palette you retreat to earlier steps —



History palette: You retreat to earlier steps using a slider thumb or clicking to the left of an entry; clicking on a step selects it. D3's version also provides a Replay button for re-applying procedures to any object on your page.

ing a slider thumb or clicking to the left of an entry; clicking on a step selects it. D3's version also provides a Replay button for re-applying procedures to any object on your page — just select a series of adjacent or non-adjacent steps and click. You can even use steps in another document, by clicking the palette's Copy selected steps button and pasting them into the other file's History palette. Clicking the palette's Save As Command button saves your selected steps as a JavaScript macro in the Command menu. Some mouse movements that you use to select,

alter or move elements can't be recorded — so do what you can using the keyboard when recording to save.

FIREWORKS 3 DESIGN ENHANCEMENTS

The *Fireworks 3* interface initially looks more *ImageReady*-like, mainly because of the newly tabbed workspace. But that impression rapidly fades as you clue into the myriad enhancements to its interface and functioning.

The 'sexiest' of these enhancements is the ability to preview optimization and rollover effects right in the workspace. Now you don't have to access the Export Preview dialog to verify how your graphic will optimize — just click the Preview, 2-Up, or 4-Up tab. To change export settings, use the floating Optimize and Color Table panels, which replicate the functions of the Export Preview dialog. The 2-up and 4-up windows let you compare two to four different optimized versions of a graphic, or compare the original to optimized versions. *Fireworks 3* has a big edge over *ImageReady* in its ability to preview rollover and navigation behaviors in the Preview view (previously, you had to go through an export procedure and test them in a browser.) As well, you can select and optimize slices in the Preview window. And frame controls enable you play or step through your animations frame-by-frame in either the Original or Preview views.

Finally, Macromedia has installed a Gamma preview command in *Fireworks*. Windows users can now get some idea how their graphics will display on Macs and vice versa. And another keeping-up-with-*Photoshop 5.5* feature is the Lossy GIF compressor located in the Optimize panel.

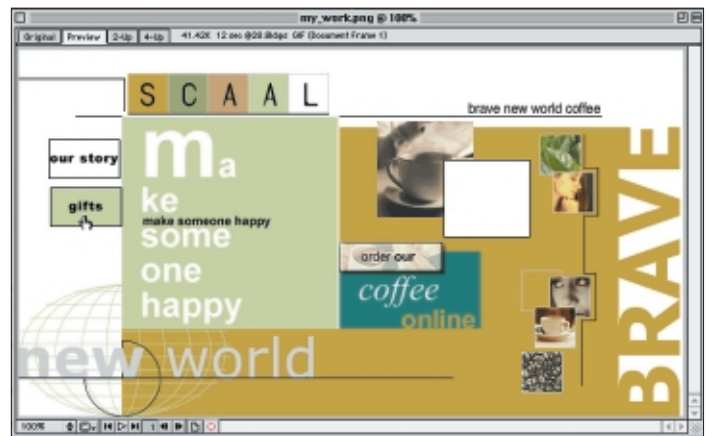
And finally, *finally*, *Fireworks* has enough decent built-in image editing filters that you don't have to resort to *Photoshop* for basic image correction. Now included on the Xtras menu are: Brightness and Contrast, Hue and Saturation, Levels, Auto Levels and Curves. (Blur and Sharpen filter sets were in version 2.) The dialogs basically follow *Photoshop's* precedent, so if you know how to use them there, then you know how to use them here.

Starting with version 2, you could also load up the Xtras menu with *Photoshop* plug-ins. Now, you can apply *Photoshop* and built-

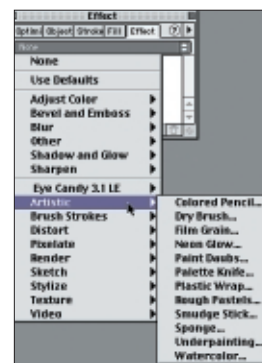
in Xtras filters to path objects as Live Effects. And as Live Effects, they're completely editable and redraw when you edit the objects they're applied to. But note that some *Photoshop* plug-ins don't work as Live Effects. And when sharing a *Fireworks* file with *Photoshop*-based Live Effects, the recipient must have the plug-in installed to view it. *Fireworks* also supports third-party plug-ins and filters such as *Alien Skin Eye Candy 3.1*.

Fireworks 3 now provides four scaling prefs that it can use to interpolate pixels when resampling: Bicubic, Bilinear, Soft (used by *Fireworks 1*) or Nearest Neighbor. Its current default, Bicubic, is the same as *Photoshop's*.

Fireworks 3's newly **tabbed workspace**. You can preview optimization and rollover effects right in the workspace. Now you don't have to access the Export Preview dialog to verify how your graphic will optimize — just click the Preview, 2-Up, or 4-Up tab.



There's now a Polygon Slice tool for creating rollovers using graphics that interlock. You click to plot points, drawing line segments as you would with the Pen tool. Note that Polygon slices require a fair bit of JavaScript code and can degrade download speeds if overused.



You can apply *Photoshop* and built-in Xtras filters to path objects as Live Effects. And as Live Effects, they're completely editable and redraw when you edit the objects they're applied to. *Fireworks* also supports third-party plug-ins and filters such as *Alien Skin's Eye Candy 3.1*.

Macromedia has tweaked *F3's* text functions — text boxes now auto-size, for instance. But you still can't work with text selections directly on the canvas, as in *ImageReady*.

F3 AUTOMATION

Just like *Dreamweaver 3*, the entirety of *Fireworks 3* is JavaScript-able.

And its History panel works pretty well the same as D3's. The default is 20 undos, so you may want to set it higher if you've got the RAM. And keep in mind that a history pertains only to the current workspace. For instance, if you go into the new Button Editor,

F3 records a separate history while you're there. When you return to the document workspace, the Button Editor history is irretrievable, and indicated in the current panel with a red "X".

In the revised Effect panel, single Live Effects are now applied through pop-ups, and each applied effect is listed in the panel. You can still save effects as styles, but the panel now enables you to save custom effect settings in its Options menu. Saved multiple effects can be applied in one step. And since they're stored with the application, the effects are available to subsequent documents.

F3's new Symbols library panel looks and behaves like a *Flash* library. It contains graphic symbols and button symbols, from which instances can be dragged and dropped on the page. And you can update a set of instances simultaneously by altering just the original symbol. Not sure what actions are attached to a symbol? Since the Library archives object components and states, they can be previewed with the Library's Play command.

The Button Editor takes you through a step-by-step process to create two-, three- or four-state JavaScript rollovers or navigation bars. Insert>New Button opens up a tabbed window: the first four tabs access work panels for each state, and the fifth opens up an Active Area panel, where you edit the slice and create hotspots for the button.

Preflighting software for high-end print applications searches out non-printable RGB colors; analogously, *Fireworks* now provides a Web preflighting color command in its Find and Replace dialog: Find Non-Websafe Colors.

F3 INTEGRATION

I covered D3-specific integration features when outlining *Dreamweaver*: for instance, *Fireworks 3*'s enhanced behaviors are recognized by *Dreamweaver* as native behaviors; *Dreamweaver* automatically accesses the PNG source file when you launch and optimize F3 graphics from *Dreamweaver*; the Insert Fire-

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works command in *Dreamweaver* automatically inserts sliced and assembled graphics plus associated HTML from *Fireworks* into *Dreamweaver*; and *Fireworks* can be scripted from *Dreamweaver* with JavaScript.

A fast way to place *Fireworks* images into HTML editors such as *Dreamweaver*, *GoLive*, or *FrontPage* is to cut and paste via the clipboard.

F3's Copy to Clipboard wizard gets your images, HTML and associated JavaScript to where they should be, with links updated. The easiest way to update *Fireworks* HTML code in another HTML file (on the same computer) is with the File >Update HTML command; *Fireworks* updates the HTML code and JavaScript, and also updates images referenced by that HTML.

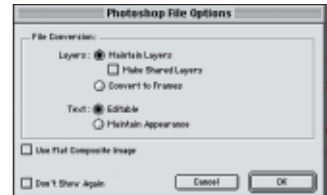
By enhancing its import/export file support, Macromedia has made *Fireworks 3* a somewhat viable repurposing tool. You can export vector paths to be opened in *Illustrator 7* or later, *Macromedia Freehand 8*, or *Flash 3* or later. But *Fireworks* features like Live Effects, slice objects and image maps, opacity and blending modes and so on are not supported by the other applications, so don't expect them to survive the transition. And too bad there's no support for PDF (Portable Document Format).

The bigger news in import/export is *Fireworks*' newfound support for native *Photoshop* files. The Photoshop File Options dialog enables you to maintain *Photoshop* layers, make them shared layers, convert layers to frames, or import a single flat composite image. Text can be brought in as editable text blocks or rasterized.

D3 F3 STUDIO

Macromedia has expanded *Fireworks*' capabilities and made it remarkably more proficient in this upgrade. With its vector/bitmap functionality, *Fireworks 3.0* is the most comprehensive Web-based graphics application available. *Dreamweaver* was conceived right, with Roundtrip capabilities, extensibility and customizability. And in version 3, Macromedia is still effectively refining and enhancing these same concepts, confirming their viability.

A lot has been done to meld these two applications, justifying their packaging as a studio. No other visual editor and graphics application have this close a fit. *



With *Fireworks 3*'s support for native Adobe *Photoshop* files, you can **maintain Photoshop layers**, make them shared layers, convert layers to frames, or import a single flat composite image. Text can be brought in as editable text blocks or rasterized.



MACROMEDIA DREAMWEAVER 3 FIREWORKS 3 STUDIO

System Requirements

Power Macintosh PowerPC processor (G3 or higher recommended)
Mac OS 8.1 or later
64MB RAM, 100MB Hard disk space
Adobe Type Manager Version 4 or later with Type 1 fonts

Intel Pentium processor (Pentium II or higher recommended)
Windows 95, 98 or NT (with Service Pack 3 or later)
64MB of available RAM, 100MB of free hard disk space
Adobe Type Manager Version 4 or later with Type 1 fonts

List price \$399 (U.S.)

Upgrade for owners of both *Dreamweaver* and *Fireworks* \$199 (US);
Upgrade for owners of either *Dreamweaver* or *Fireworks* \$299 (US);
Dreamweaver 3 alone \$299 (US);
Fireworks 3 alone \$199 (US)

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