

PHOTOSHOP MAGIC...



...THE COOL STUFF!

Photoshop is a direct conduit between that mess of concepts and visual imagery roiling around in your brain and the person you want to communicate those ideas to.

Pithy and Inthightful Introduction Metaphor

Have you ever seen a yoke? You see them in those idyllic turn of the century farm pictures. The yoke is usually fastened round the necks of a couple of oxen. It's a serious looking piece of lumber.

If you think the yoke is designed to increase the pulling power of the pullers, you haven't thought through the physics. The *purpose* of the yoke is simply to keep the two pullers pulling at the same speed. When one gets ahead of the other it unbalances things. So the two pullers pull together. It's a lot more comfortable and productive that way.

The two pullers in the case of this metaphor are *you* and Photoshop.

When one gets ahead of the other you wind up with a mess. But when BOTH focused on pulling in the same direction, amazing things start happening.

Think about it for a second: you are an intelligent person with a ton of different things firing and bouncing wildly through your mind. You need to distill those ideas down to something that will be coherent for someone else to understand.

Photoshop offers this HUGE vista of amazing options. Blendings of color, font, styles, filters, backgrounds are everywhere. It's safe to say that pretty much anything you can conceive of doing to a graphic can be done with Photoshop.

The whole trick to doing truly amazing things with your graphics is to twin the two. To yoke them (**you** and the **software**) so they are working at the same speed toward the same destination.

How's that for pithy wisdom?

Ever seen something like THAT in an introduction before? Kinda grabs you, huh?

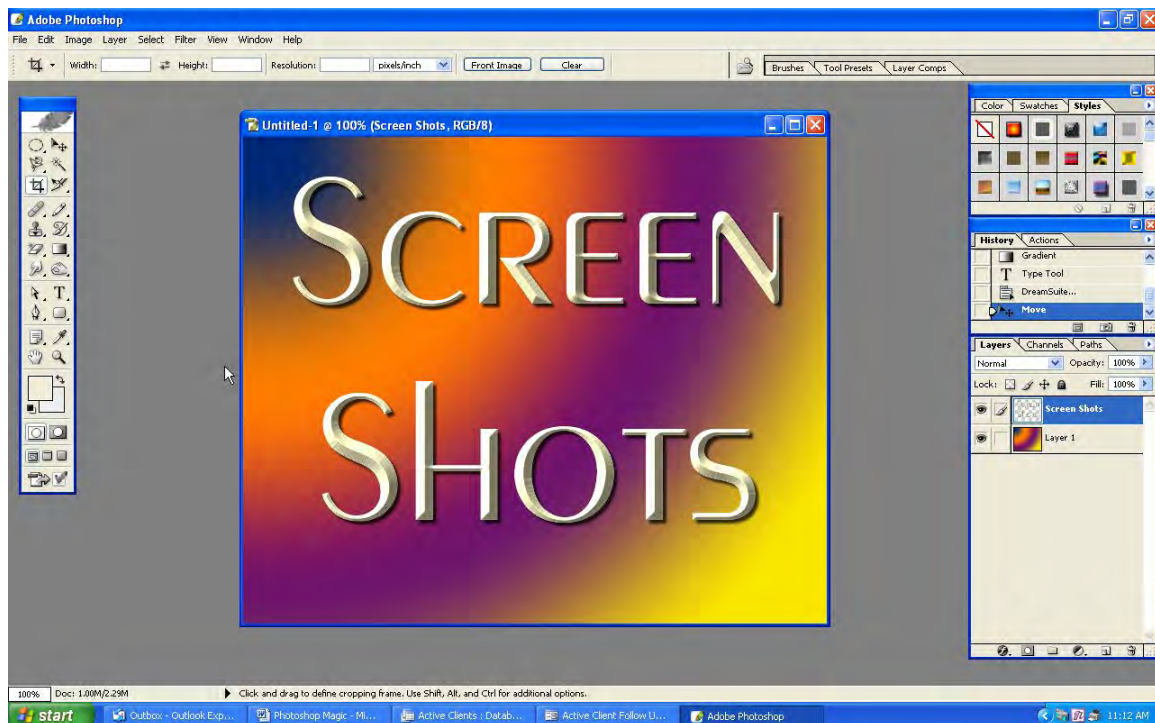
Aren't you GLAD you are reading this now?

This course is about having FUN with Photoshop...learning how to do some really cool stuff with it ...and just spending a few precious moments easing into that warm blue pool of creativity.

We've tried to please ALL the people ALL the time because in this course you will find

- ✚ **A Spiffy Manual** (like this) that discusses in clear and insightful detail all of the operations...as well as the philosophical implications for the world at large that goes hand in hand with each and *every* creative decision you make. No pressure though...
- ✚ **On Screen Tutorials** to guide you past the tough-to-understand-and-easier-to-show stuff. You'll see our graphic artist (i.e. ME) go through the steps and hear "live" narration. **When you need to see a tutorial it's highlighted like this.**

Our tutorials are in .avi format. Just locate the folder for the current topic and double click on the tutorial icon. It will auto play in Windows Media for you. **You may only watch each tutorial ONCE.** After that it is automatically deleted from your system.¹ So you will want to pay careful attention.



- ✚ **Screen Shots** that show you the way my Photoshop screen looks. Note: depending on the version of Photoshop or Photoshop Elements you are using, your screen may look a little different. Relax. It's okay. In with the peace. Out with the stress. With a few exceptions (some of the Elements versions) you will have pretty much the same stuff in your copy of Photoshop as I have in mine.
- ✚ **Lots of Progress Pictures** that show you the exact state of where we're at in our project development.

¹ Just kidding.

This course ISN'T about introducing you to the basics of Photoshop. We've assumed you have a working knowledge of where stuff is and the basic operations. If you are just getting started with Photoshop and don't really know anything about anything, don't despair. Cross our palm with silver (a wee little bitsy bit of silver) and you can get our **"Learn The Basics Of Photoshop in SIX HOURS"** course. It comes complete with a silver-back guarantee and the same sort of pithy wisdom and you no doubt already expect from us. It's available on-line or directly from me: davidthiel@shaw.ca

Finally: Let me point out that some of the tutorials and projects we are going to do have Third Party Plug-ins. (They come from other companies and you have to purchase them separately.) I do this because I get a HUGE kickback from the filter companies for mentioning them in these courses.

Just kidding. Again.

Photoshop is great software. But the shortest distance between Point A and Point B is often a filter or plug-in. I primarily use the products from two companies: Alien Skin (www.alienskin.com) and Auto FX (www.autofx.com). These guys make amazing software and you might want to check them out.

But you're not here to re-create someone else's work, right? Take the ideas and concepts I offer and make them your own. It's your creativity that is going to fuel the WHOLE ride.²

Okay. Are you ready to go?

Please ensure that your seatbelts are securely fastened and that your table trays are in a locked and upright position. Turn on all electronic equipment: laptops, Palm Pilots, stereos and Walkmans. Pour a generous portion of cola or coffee into your favorite container.

We are ready to depart.

Let's look FIRST at Graphic Pages.

(Does it get ANY better than this?)

² Well...that and lots of Jolt Cola and/or Pizza Pops. Just watch out because there is a very high risk of becoming a geek with the kind of information you're about to get. You may become a creature of the shadows, reaching a bony hand out of the darkness only to procure a fresh bag of Doritos as you mutter phrases like "elliptical marquee tool" under your (bad bad) breath and chuckle to yourself.....or not.

CREATING GRAPHIC PAGES

Everyone uses graphics pages...churches, businesses, retail stores and daycares. The list could go on and on and on – but believe me when I say that YOU have made hundreds, maybe thousands of Graphics Pages...even though that's not necessarily you call them.

What IS a graphics page?

Essentially, it's a package of information you have made designed to tell someone about something...show someone something...or get someone to DO something.

This whole book is one BIG graphics page.

There are three basic components to this undertaking. Oddly enough, they are the same three basic components in every other graphic design:

- 1) **The Background:** In the header above, the background is the brick wall. It is the largest thing on your graphics page because it IS the basis of your graphics page. You choose the background very carefully because the effect it has on the overall graphic is remarkable. In the header above, the brick wall dominates the whole *idea* of the graphic.
- 2) **The Copy:** Those things you have written that explain your idea. The key considerations here are what font you choose, the size of the font and the color. Obviously, the copy must be clearly written...but here is where you usually present your pitch to the viewer. Copy on a graphic page can be something as simple as one word...as complicated as a book.
- 3) **The Graphic:** This is the visual that serves to either draw in the eye or to increase the overall effectiveness of your graphics page. In simple terms, it is a picture.



Here's a great graphic page we see every day. The background is bright red, because they want to get your attention. They have decided to use red because, as every child knows...red means "STOP" or "DANGER."

The copy is one word. Very clear. You know exactly what the sign is communicating, right?

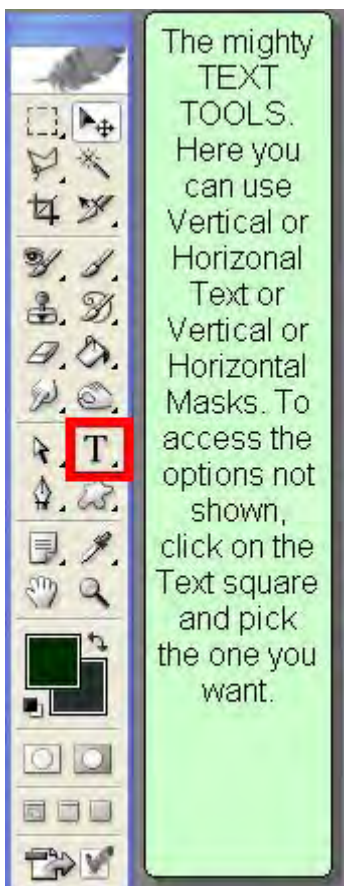
But where is the graphic? What aspect of the sign makes it different and draws the eye? The graphic in this case is the SHAPE. It's an octagon...and our eyes aren't used to seeing this shape, right? So we look.

Your graphics page is exactly the same undertaking. So, while **these steps are presented on the tutorial**, we're going to construct a graphics page I have designed for YOU.

- 1) Start off by creating a NEW document. Go with a width of 7 inches and a height of 5.5 inches. Set your resolution at 72 and the mode at RGB. Set your Background contents at Transparent.
- 2) When you hit OK your basic rectangle opens up.
- 3) Click on your Fill tool (it may be hiding under the gradient tool) and choose a rich tan color. We are going with a solid color for the same reason there's red on a stop sign. A gradient makes for a pretty visual...but this graphic is much more text and graphic heavy. We don't want there to be any distractions from the other two components. Pour the color onto your graphic and you will have this:



(Who says this manual isn't "profusely illustrated?" I just showed you what a rectangular tan box looks like for Pete's sake...)



- 4) Let's create a headline. Use the Text Tool for this. For this option, we have chosen to ask a question...and since the question format is frequently used, we have chosen to ask the question with a very funky font: Stylus at 72. Type "Maybe It's Time?" in the center of your rectangle.
- 5) We are going to apply TWO filters to the headline. First define the copy by staying on the Text layer and selecting the "move" tool in the upper right corner of the Tool box. Go to Filter>Stylize>Emboss. Set the height at about 5 and the amount at about 248% This will give the text a nice outline.

Next we add Filter>Texture>Grain. Choose a texture that you like. The graphic now looks like this:



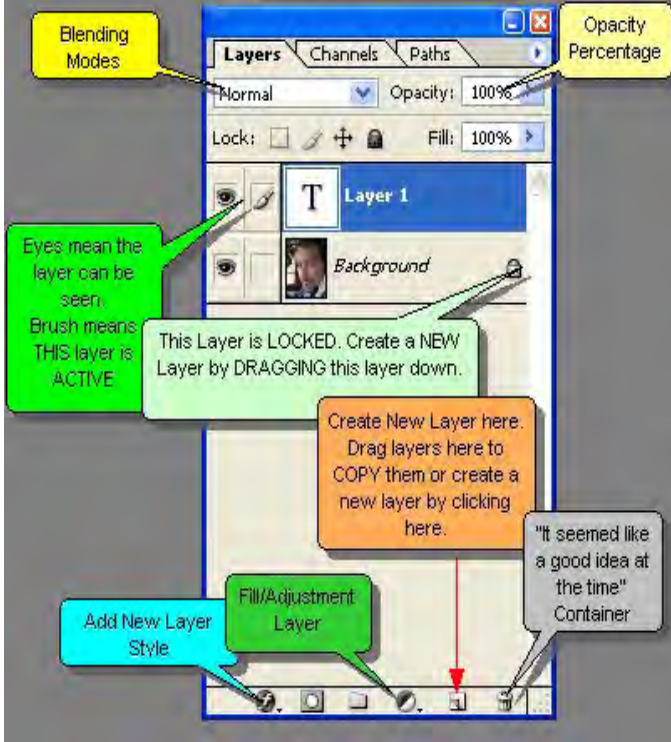
An alternative may have been to use the eyedropper on the tan background, go to the color picker and move to a color just a few shades darker. We could also add a drop shadow to the headline to increase effect. Overall, I have chosen to go with something that starkly asks a question.

- 6) The Copy for the sign has been saved as a Word Document and we are going to import it to our Graphic Page. So we open the page in Word, select the entire text and go to Edit> Copy.
- 7) Before importing the text to Photoshop, there are a couple of things we need to do. First we select the Text tool from the tool box and, holding down the left mouse button we make a large box from roughly the bottom of the "y" in "Maybe" to just above the lower right hand corner.

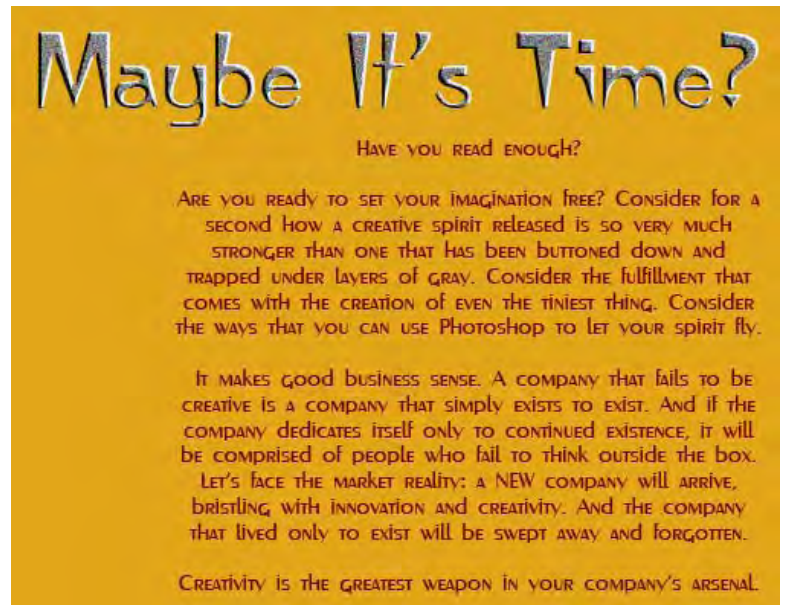
We ALSO need to consider that as the text is imported, it will default to the style, font and color that are showing on the Text Bar. Stylus is great for a short headline, but we need something that will be more readable. Redefine the Font to Metro, and the font size to 14. Choose a text color that is ALMOST white.

- 8) Go to Edit> Paste in the Photoshop main menu. The text will be imported.

Layers Pallet



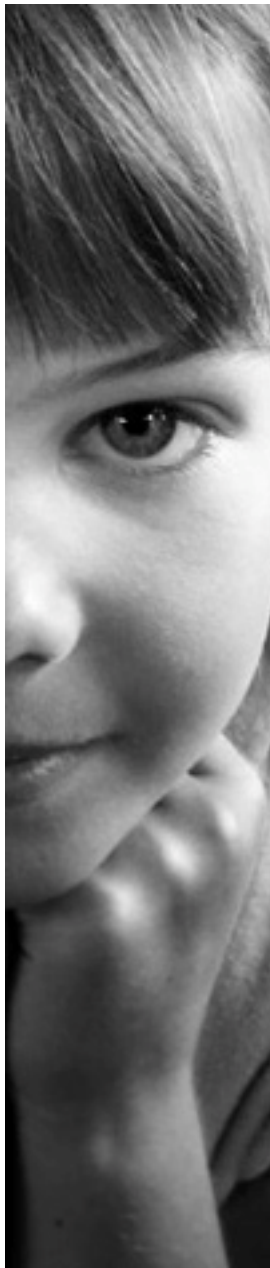
- 9) Resize the box until the copy fits easily inside it. From the "Add a Layer Style" at the bottom of your Layers Pallet (the odd looking "f" thingie) apply Stroke at a 3 Pixel size. Apply the Stroke to the INSIDE with Color Burn selected as the Blend Mode. This exercise has given us a clean font that reflects aspects of the background and the header. Your graphic should look something like this:



Now we are going to add the graphic. If you've just finished the Photoshop for Business course, this picture is familiar to you. It's the shot of a little girl looking directly into the camera. The picture has already been modified somewhat for another project: some of the color has been taken out of the lower portion of the photo and the eyes have been accented to stand out.

We are going to use only a strip of the photo and run it down the left side of the graphic page. First the photo has to be prepared.

- 1) Open the picture in Photoshop and go to Image> Adjustments> Hue/Saturation. We need to remove the color...so drag the Saturation slider all the way to the left. The color is removed from the photo. But we still have the catchlight in her eye. That's the look we're after. The whole picture would be distracting if we used it on our graphics page. Remember that the intent of this page is to get the viewer to make a decision...to have the idea of anticipation from the person doing the asking.



- 2) This is why we are going to use ONLY a strip of the picture. Using the Crop tool define a portion of the left side of her face. This is because we want to give the impression that the rest of her face is off the page. So you wind up with a column photo like the one to the left. There is considerably MORE to the column than we plan to use. We like the look of her eye and the top of her hand. This is the portion that will make it onto our final graphic.
- 3) Drag the column into the left side of the "Maybe It's Time?" graphic. You will need to re-order the selection so that the Headline "Maybe It's Time?" is DIRECTLY above the column picture. Flatten the layers, Save and you're done!

Maybe It's Time?

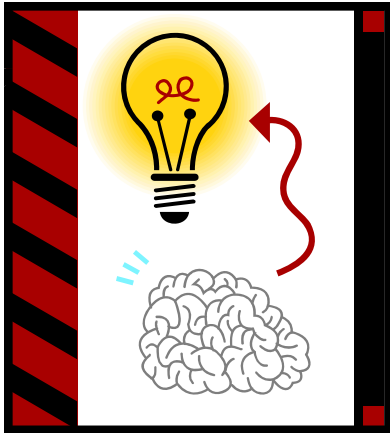
HAVE YOU READ ENOUGH?

ARE YOU READY TO SET YOUR IMAGINATION FREE? CONSIDER FOR A SECOND HOW A CREATIVE SPIRIT RELEASED IS SO VERY MUCH STRONGER THAN ONE THAT HAS BEEN BUTTONED DOWN AND TRAPPED UNDER LAYERS OF GRAY. CONSIDER THE FULFILLMENT THAT COMES WITH THE CREATION OF EVEN THE TINIEST THING. CONSIDER THE WAYS THAT YOU CAN USE PHOTOSHOP TO LET YOUR SPIRIT FLY.

IT MAKES GOOD BUSINESS SENSE. A COMPANY THAT FAILS TO BE CREATIVE IS A COMPANY THAT SIMPLY EXISTS TO EXIST. AND IF THE COMPANY DEDICATES ITSELF ONLY TO CONTINUED EXISTENCE, IT WILL BE COMPRISED OF PEOPLE WHO FAIL TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX.

LET'S FACE THE MARKET REALITY: A NEW COMPANY WILL ARRIVE, BRISTLING WITH INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY. AND THE COMPANY THAT LIVED ONLY TO EXIST WILL BE SWEEPED AWAY AND FORGOTTEN.

CREATIVITY IS THE GREATEST WEAPON IN YOUR COMPANY'S ARSENAL.



Out of the Box

The images in the graphic we just made are powerful. Each component was chosen to create the imperative for the viewer to make a decision.

This is why the question is highlighted so strongly.

There are a LOT of things you can do with this graphic as you re-design it on your own. Try using the girl's picture at a reduced opacity. You can even try putting it under the copy.

Why use a child's face?

The other day I was thinking back to the creative nature I had as a child. It DID seem that you could go through the back of a wardrobe and find an entirely new world. My mind was full of the possibilities that there really was a jolly fat man living at the North Pole with equally jolly elves, making toys...fairies and magic...interesting things stepping out of the mundane.

Was your childhood like that?

It seemed to me that the child I used to be was still there standing and waiting expectantly for me to wake up and start seeing wonderful things around me. So often we tend to shrug off a sweet scent in the air or forget that a bird is a miraculous creation.

That's why I have used a child's face.

Assignment Review

- 1) **FIRST:** Take the component pieces of the graphic we just made. Consider making your Graphics Page completely different from mine. Maybe you can apply a radial blur to the girl's picture? How about a different text treatment? Maybe you want to change the text? How about the opacity levels?
- 2) **SECOND:** Make your own graphics page that deals with *creativity*. Use any format you choose but you must include the following two elements:
 - a. A representation of something you found miraculous as a child
 - b. Your favorite color as an adult

It may be helpful to consider the answers to a couple of fill-in-the blanks questions first:

The Main Point of My Message is: _____

The Way I Want My Viewer To Feel is: _____

The COLOR or TEXTURE I think of when I consider the message is:

Visually: I think the Best Depiction of my message is: _____

In one sentence, this is what I want to say: _____

There are some other considerations as well: the always present question of what font to use...how large it needs to be. A critical issue is in figuring out how the Big Three are going to work together to serve the Main Point of Your Message. The Big Three, of course, are:

- Background
- Text
- Graphic

Then you just have to make it.

Have a good time with this one. You are making it just for yourself. It needs to be a Graphics Page you can enjoy again and again, so take your time!