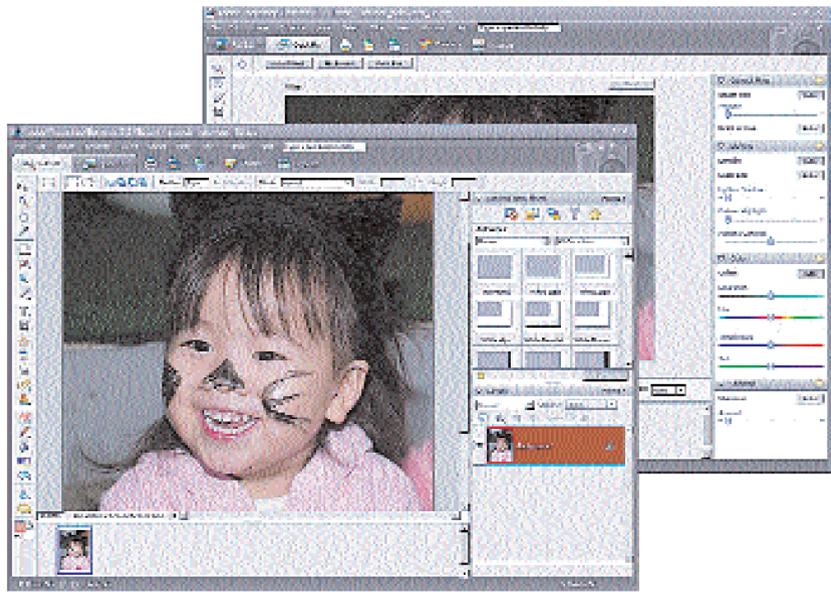# TECHNOLOGY

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Adobe

Photoshop vs. Elements

Whether you're a professional or a weekend shutterbug, Adobe has an image editor for you

WAYNE PALMER/For the Sun-Gazette

Photoshop Elements offers two different interfaces for editing images, a basic one called Quick Fix, seen in background, and a more advanced one called Full Edit, foreground, which reveals all the tools the program has to offer.
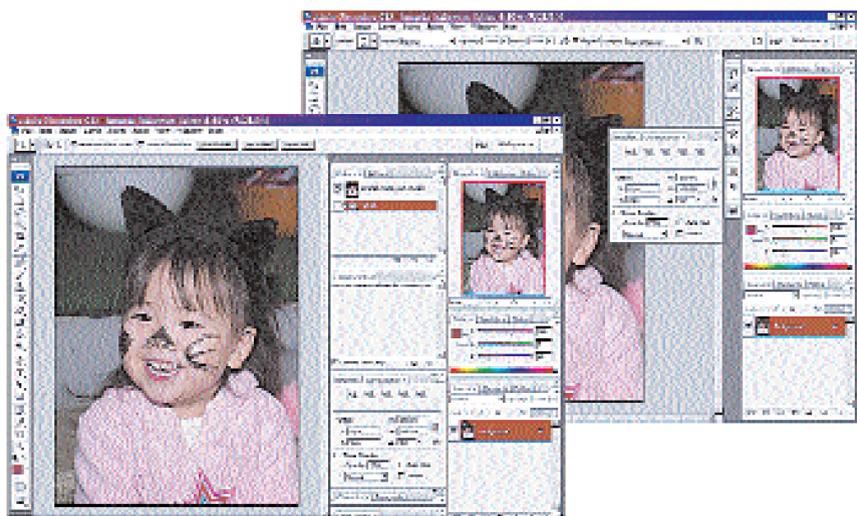
WAYNE PALMER/For the Sun-Gazette

Photoshop's interface has been redesigned to help manage the multiple tool palettes. Here are two views of the standard CS3 interface showing the new flyover menus for the tool palettes. The image on top shows more of the palettes revealed.

Photoshop Elements

Three quarters of the full program, 1/12th the price

Photoshop, the industry standard program for photo editing, is regarded as having one of the steepest learning curves of any computer program.

Along with that steep curve, comes a steep price tag. Because of this, Adobe the software manufacturer of Photoshop has made several entry-level programs for photo editing over the years.

They offered a stripped down version of Photoshop calling it Photoshop LE for "Light Edition" and they also produced a program aimed for the home user, called Photo Deluxe.

Several years ago both of these programs were retired and an entirely new program called Photoshop Elements was introduced.

In its first two versions, the interface closely resembled its big brother, which was probably its biggest criticism. In Photoshop Elements 3, Adobe radically changed the interface to make it very user friendly, including the choice of a quick fix or full edit mode depending upon the skill level of the user.

This program has been updating at a pace of almost one version per year, with version 5 released last fall.

With each new release, the interface is made easier to use along with the addition of more features.

I have been a fan of this program from the very beginning. often saying that it is about "75 percent of Photoshop for around $75."

The good news is that the program frequently often sells for much less and is often bundled with the purchase of digital imaging equipment. Overall, Photoshop Elements is such a great value that I like to call
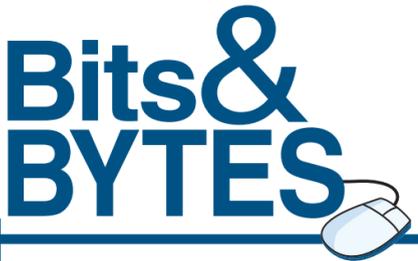
it "Photoshop for the rest of us."

One of the great things about Photoshop Elements is that it often becomes the testing ground for new features that Adobe later incorporates into Photoshop.

One of those features was the Red Eye Removal tool. With one quick click in each eye, red eye is removed.

It performs this task so well that there is no need to use the red eye reduction feature on your camera. Anyone who has tried the red eye reduction feature learns that the feature slows the shutter response time, increasing the chance of missing the shot.

Photomerge allows you automatically stitch images together to make beautiful panoramics. All you need is some overlapping material in each shot taken and the program can put them together seamlessly.

Another feature in Elements that just became part of Photoshop is called the Smart Selection tool.

Anyone who regularly edits images knows that you often want to change just a select area of a photo.

Making that selection can be one of the most time consuming tasks of the editing process.

The Smart Selection tool makes the process go faster.

By clicking on different areas of the picture you tell the tool what you do and don't want to select, and the tool makes the selection of the area based upon those choices.

With the renewed interest in black and white photography the past few years, Elements now offers many options for converting your color images to black and white including toning options such as sepia, for an old-fashioned look.

Curves, a tool used to make subtle midtone adjustments, was only found in the full version of Photoshop. Now Elements has a variant of that tool called Adjust Color Curves.

In addition to all the editing tools, there is a host of offerings to assist users with photo projects, slide shows, Web photo galleries, calendars, DVD covers and CD covers.

The number of improvements for each new version of Elements is not as dramatic as that of Photoshop, so if you have a recent version of Elements, you may want to evaluate the changes before rushing out to buy the latest edition of the program.

When you consider all the options this program encompasses and its price, Elements is hard to beat.

Bits&BYTES

WAYNE PALMER

Photoshop CS3

Beta version gives exciting glimpse of coming features

Photoshop users received a real Christmas treat when Adobe released the latest version as a free public beta download. it was an unprecedented move for Adobe, as prior beta releases were by invitation only.

If the term beta is unfamiliar to you, it means the program is still a work in progress and is in a testing phase. During the beta period, users get to try out the next version of a program and hopefully report back to the company any problems that were encountered.

Photoshop users have learned to expect an upgrade about every 18 months. However with Adobe's purchase of Macromedia, another software graphics company, this latest upgrade has taken a little longer.

In addition to new features and improvements, this new version was written to take advantage of Apple's switch to the Intel processor and Windows new operating system, Vista.

Photoshop 10 will be more commonly known as "CS3." The "CS" stands for "Creative Suite." To market more of Adobe's other graphics programs, the company bundles them together. The package price is very attractive compared to buying the programs separately.

Having worked with the beta version of CS3 for the past six weeks, I feel that this may be one of the most significant upgrades in years. Let's run down just a few of the new features.

Interface ñ Any user of the program knows that the Photoshop has many tools and many tool palettes, so many so that if they were all opened they would fill the entire monitor and cover the image file you were trying to edit.

With CS3 Adobe has set up the palettes to fly out when the mouse is scrolled over them and just as quickly disappear. The obvious reason for this change is to give users more screen real estate and save time moving palettes out of the way.

With more and more wide-screen monitors being made, this may also bring an end the practice of setting up computer with dual monitors.

Bridge, an application that comes with Photoshop and is designed to aid in quickly sorting images, has been improved. In addition to multiple interface improvements, the time it takes the program to draw thumbnails has been reduced.

The "Camera Raw" interface has been changed again, with more features for processing your "digital negatives." Notably, two new tools have been added, Recovery and Fill Light, which allow you to tweak your images to their optimum.

Smart Filters, similar in concept to Smart Objects introduced in CS2, allows you to apply just about any filter non-destructively. Gone are the days of backing up your file before applying destructive changes.

Frequently in photo editing you will want to apply a change to just part of an image. Making an accurate selection of that area can be one of the toughest and most time consuming parts of the task. Refine Edge is a new tool to modify selections and make your changes blend into your image.

The Clone Palette offers you the ability to preview the cloning effect in real time before actually applying it, allowing for precise alignment. A personal favorite for me is the option added to the

clone stamp tool and the healing brush that allow you to choose which layers are included in the computation of this tool. Before, you had to turn off unwanted layers before cloning.

Another new offering is a black and white conversion tool, which is also available as an adjustment layer. Photoshop has long offered multiple roundabout ways of converting color images to black and white. The new offering is much more straightforward and comes with many options, including saving your custom conversions as presets for later recall.

Many of the new features address the strategy of nondestructive editing, which allows the user to undo virtually any change made to the image, a method that I use and teach.

In order to take advantage of the free beta program and use it until the version is officially released, you must be a licensed user of Photoshop CS2. If you are not a Photoshop CS2 user, you can still try the program but it will expire in 48 hours.

So if you are adventurous, give the program a try. The beta period will end sometime this spring when the formalized version is released.

Keep in mind beta programs do have bugs and may suddenly crash or display aberrant behavior. Also the help menu has not been written, so you are pretty much on your own to learn how a new feature works.

Fortunately with a little Internet research, you can usually turn up plenty of sites that offer insight.

And rest assured, with all the new additions and refinements, Photoshop will continue to be the industry standard for photo editing.

Penn State researchers identify worms by speed

STATE COLLEGE (AP) — Penn State University scientists said they've devised new anti-worm technology that can identify and contain worms milliseconds after an attack by analyzing data packets' rate or frequency of connections, and their diversity of connections to other networks.

That allows the technology they

term "proactive worm containment" to react more quickly to security threats, university researchers said.

"A lot of worms need to spread quickly in order to do the most damage, so our software looks for anomalies in the rate and diversity of connection requests going out of hosts," Peng Liu, a Penn State information sciences and technology professor

and lead researcher on the project, said in a statement.

Researchers say that many current security methods focus on "signature or pattern identification" and cannot respond fast enough to prevent worms from exploiting networks. Those approaches, they say, often miss worms that mutate automatically, bypassing the existing

anti-worm controls.

Johannes Ullrich, chief research officer with the security research organization SANS Institute, cautioned that some home and small business networks might have too much innocent activity — such as instant messaging — that could be considered suspicious based on the speed of connections.