



Design a Web Page using Paint Shop Pro



We show you how to create an exciting Web page by using this month's featured software, Paint Shop Pro 5

So are you ready to do some designing with Paint Shop Pro? We've shown you the basics, but now we are going to sit down and put this newfound knowledge to the test.

The aim of this tutorial is to see just how easy it is to create a good-looking Web page with Paint Shop Pro. The first thing you

should do before designing anything on your computer is to come up with a basic concept. In our example we are going to create a logo for a fictional computer company, using a combination of clip art and lettering in Paint Shop Pro, and base our page around that.

The trick to make eye-catching designs is to keep it simple, keep it colourful and make

sure that the text is legible at all resolutions. It's really a bit like designing a box of cornflakes. It has to appeal to the casual viewer and make a subtle impression on them. Look at existing Web logos for inspiration (remembering that imitation is the highest form of flattery) and other designs that appeal to you.

Time taken...
30 minutes

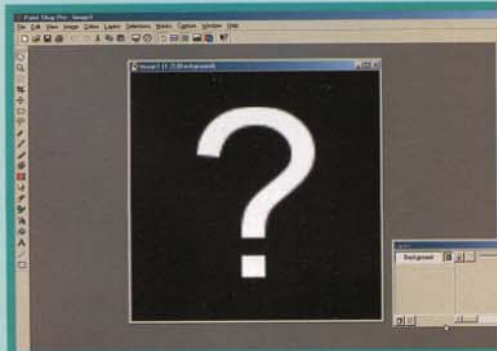
How to...
Design a simple eye-catching Web page

How does it work?

Special FX

Unlike top of the range applications like Photoshop, Paint Shop Pro doesn't come supplied with a vast range of plugins and special FX to use with your images.

However, the software does include a couple of effects that you can use to produce some interesting looks. For example, if you are working with lettering, you can add a drop shadow to your text to add some extra depth and make the text appear to lift from the page. Also, careful application of the chisel and cutout effects can produce some wild variations.



1 The concept

Before we are even going to fire up Paint Shop Pro 5, we are going to sit down and think about the design concept. For our example, we are creating a fictional company called 'Cheeky Monkey Computers'. We want to design a logo that features a monkey sitting atop a computer.



2 Getting inspiration

If like us, you are no good at drawing monkeys or computers, you can download image elements from the Web and use those. For inspiration, use Google (or any other popular search engine) to look for copyright free clip art. That's what we have done with our design.



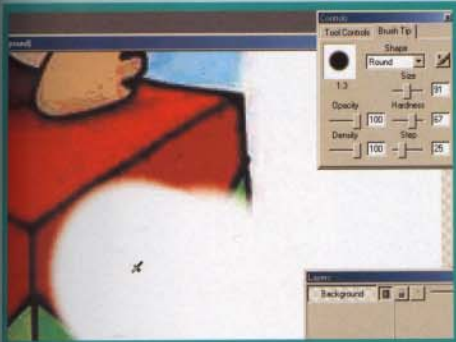
3 The first step

Having found some clipart for our monkey and our computer, we need to clean up the images we've found. Our monkey looks a little pixellated in places and so we need to clean him up and remove any blemished or unwanted elements.



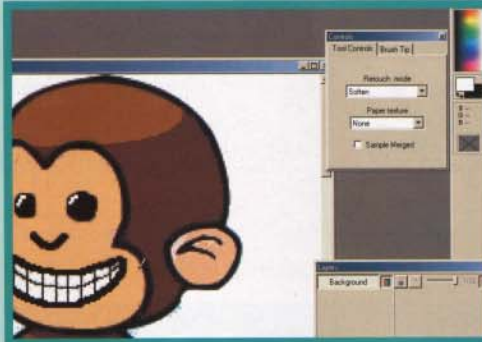
4 Cleaning up

To refresh the badly pixellated areas of solid colour, we've used the paint bucket tool and used the eye dropper to take a sample of that area's colour. We then use the paint bucket tool to fill those areas with a new lick of solid colour.



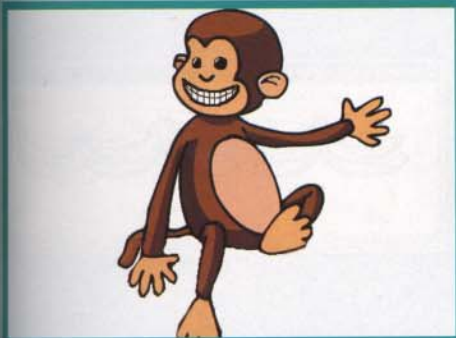
5 Removing elements

With our monkey cleaned up, we then used a white paint brush to paint out the areas that we no longer needed. We used a big brush to deal with large areas and a much smaller brush to handle all the nooks and crannies.



6 A nice smile

We now need to make our little friend look like a cheeky monkey, so using a fine black brush we drew a big smile on his face. Then we filled in the smile with a white paint fill and drew in his teeth. To make the smile match the rest of the image, we used the retouch tool.



7 The full monkey

With our little chap complete, we saved him to a Paint Shop Pro file for future reference. No resizing or other processing has happened at this time because you should always have your source graphics as large as they can possibly be to ensure good final resolution of your image.



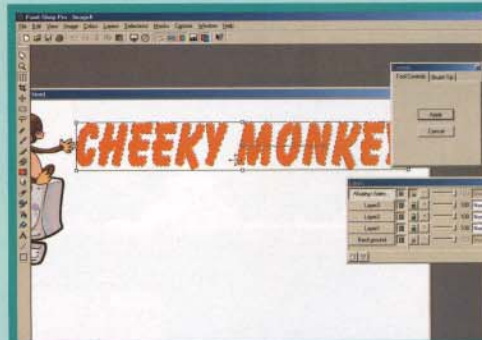
8 PC World

Now we turn our attentions to the computer clip art we've downloaded. Again, like the monkey, we worked our way through the image of our PC, cleaning up the colours as described above and removing any unwanted background elements.



9 Working on the design

With our elements ready, we are ready to work on the design. Using the Magic Wand element, we cut out the monkey clipart and pasted him as a transparent image over the computer and positioned him so that he was sitting on the PC.



10 Textual healing

Now we just need to add some text to our logo. Clicking on the Text tool opens up the text menu and it is from here you can select the style and size of the font you are going to use. We have used Balloonist, which is a humorous font, and set it to its maximum font size.

Jargon Buster

Resampling

This is the process of enlarging or reducing a bitmap image. When an image is reduced using resample, superfluous pixels are removed using a filter. When enlarging, pixels are added to the image.

Layers

Many image-editing applications give you the chance to work with layers. What this means is that each element of your image can have its own layer, which can be moved and manipulated independently of all the other elements to create a final composite image.

Tip!

You can resize, reshape and reposition any layer in your image using the deformation tool (it looks like a square with nine dots on it). When using this tool, you can alter the dimensions of the selected element and even rotate it. When you have finished making your adjustments, select another tool and you will be asked to confirm the deformations you just made.

Tip!

One of the most useful tools in Paint Shop Pro 5 is the Magic Wand tool. This handy little device allows the user to mark out a selection area without physically moving the mouse. This is great for cutting out elements and pasting them into new layers, like we did with our monkey and computer images.

continued...



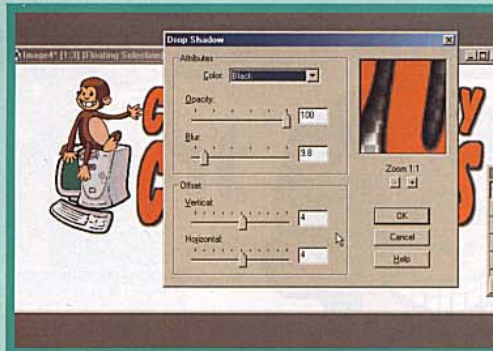
Jargon Buster

Drop shadow

This is a special effect available in many image editors that creates a shadow behind the selected image or text element. When used with text, it can add more definition and can make text appear to spring from the page.

Crop tool

This tool, which looks like a two L-shapes at a 90 degree angle is used in image editing to reduce the size of an image by discarding all the superfluous material left outside the crop mark area.



11 Adding character

While our lettering looks acceptable, we feel it needs some character. While still selected, we applied a Chisel effect to the lettering (by clicking 'Image', 'Effects', 'Chisel') and then added a drop shadow effect too, to give the lettering extra depth.



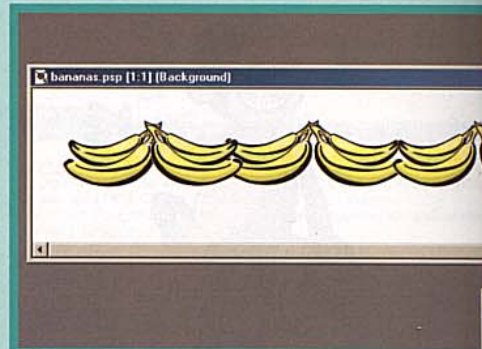
12 Navigation panel

Using our monkey graphic as a separate layer with its opacity set to 22 percent, we create a simple navigation panel using the 'Text' tool and the Balloonist font that we used for our original logo design. A cutout effect has been applied to the text to make it match the logo.



13 Cut to size

With the navigation panel designed, this is saved full-size as a PSP file for future reference and then we use this template to resize the panel to our own specification. This is then saved as a JPEG file with minimum compression to prevent pixilation.



14 Strange fruit

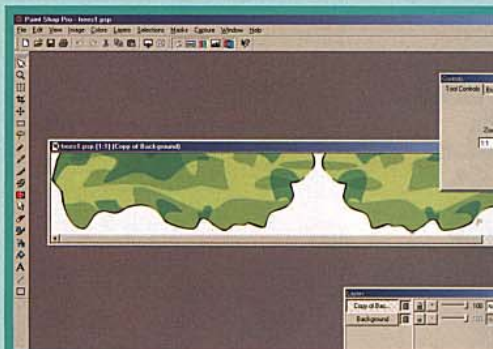
Because it is popular opinion that monkey's like bananas, we decided to give the placeholder bars a banana look. Again, using some clip art of a banana, we created all the bars but cutting and pasting the images together to create one long chain of bananas.

Tip!

When designing a graphic with layers, be aware of the Layers control panel. From here, you can easily drag and drop layers and reorder them without using the main menu. Also, you can adjust the opacity of each layer and blank out layers completely using the 'Layer Visibility Toggle'.

Tip!

The Clone Brush is another very important tool in Paint Shop Pro. In our example, we needed to move the monkey's tail so we cut and pasted the tail nearer the body, so it was visible and then repaired it with the Clone Brush. The tool works by replicating an area. You designate the area you want to use as your sample by pressing the right mouse button and then paint it with the left button.



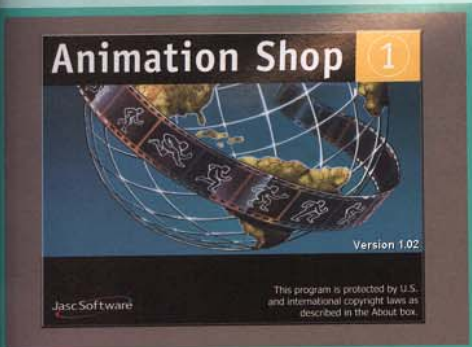
15 In the jungle

Of course, monkeys don't tend to live in the high street, so we've added some jungle type flora to our Web design. Again, downloading some clipart of a tree, we've cropped it to size and flipped and rotated the image to make it fit in with our design.



16 Special offer

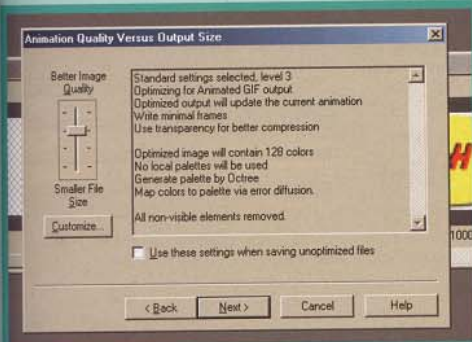
Of course, our computer shop will sometimes have special offers and promotions and so it requires a much more eye-catching design to draw the punters in. Using the drawing tools, we created an advert balloon with which to lure prospective shoppers.



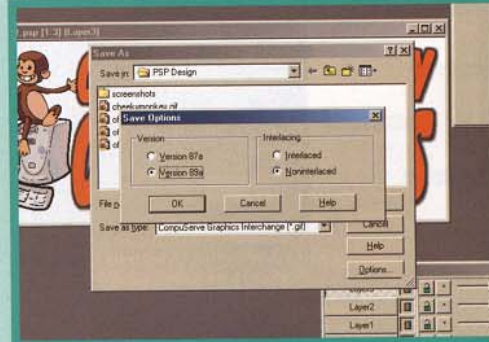
17 Adding movement
 Not content with creating a static special offer banner, we decided to make it more eye-catching by using Paint Shop Pro 5's Animation Shop application, to create an animated GIF file. The idea is to make our advert flash on and off.



18 Animation shop
 To create our simple animation, we've used the same template to create a couple of different frames, which are going to run in a cycle, creating this flashing advert box. It's a simple effect and very effective if you don't want to use Flash animation.



19 Getting animated
 Of course, there are many transitions and effects you can use in the Animation Shop to create your animated banners, but remember that animated GIF files can turn out rather large in terms of file size. To reduce the file size, use the file optimisation wizard in Animation Shop.



20 Which format?
 With all our images finished, you have to make an editorial decision as to which file format you are going to use. Because most of our graphics are simple line drawings with basic primary colours, we have used GIF files.



21 Putting it together
 With all our Web graphics finished and our Paint Shop Pro templates saved, ready for any alterations we may want to do in the future, all we have to do now is open up our Web editing software and drop the graphics onto the page with ape-like results.



22 The final Result
 As you can see in this final screenshot, Paint Shop Pro 5 is more than capable of helping design and deliver fantastic looking Web graphics for Web pages. Of course, this is just the tip of the iceberg and really you are only limited by your imagination.

Jargon Buster

PNG

Or Portable Network Graphics is a graphics format that was created to replace the GIF (Graphics Interchange File). Despite the fact that the PNG format is a very economical one in terms of file size, it has failed to capture Web designers' imaginations.

Colour Depth

This term is used to describe the amount of colours used in an image. For example, a JPG file has a colour depth of 16.1 million colours while a GIF file has a colour depth of 256 colours.

Tip!

Design a logo as if you were designing a box of cornflakes. Use bold primary colours, sans serif fonts that are legible and plenty of space. Cluttered, busy designs will confound and confuse the viewer.

The next step

The perfect logo

Of course, designing a logo can be quite tricky, especially if you have been left with the task of coming up with a corporate design or a logo that is going to be seen by many people. If you want to learn more about the concepts behind designing a great logo, check out this great tutorial at the Webreference site (<http://www.webreference.com/dlab/9701/>). It explains, in simple terms, how to brainstorm a new logo, the psychology behind the logo and how to actually put these ideas into practice with your image editor.