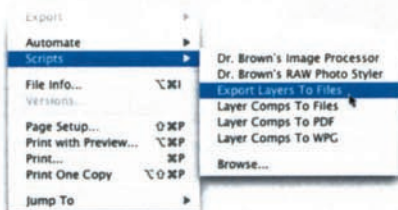




PHOTOSHOP CS

Photoshop CS offers several new additions that are well suited to a video pro's needs. Here are 11 things you should know about Photoshop CS that can make you more efficient.

By Richard Harrington



▲ Layered File Export

Have a PSD file you need to share with a video program that doesn't recognize layers? Choose File>Scripts>Export Layers to Files. Photoshop will write each layer out as a separate file. Choose the PSD format if your video application recognizes PSD transparency. Set a destination folder and let it fly.

Custom Pixel Aspect Ratio...
Delete Pixel Aspect Ratio...
Reset Pixel Aspect Ratios...

Square

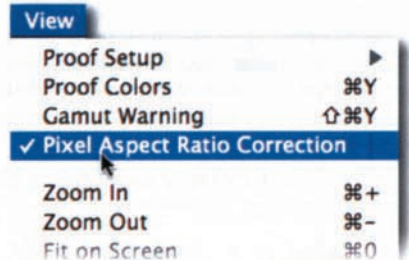
- ✓ D1/DV NTSC (0.9)
- D1/DV NTSC Widescreen (1.2)
- D1/DV PAL (1.066)
- D1/DV PAL Widescreen (1.42)
- Anamorphic 2:1 (2)

▲ Nonsquare Pixels

Video professionals have been celebrating Photoshop CS's support for nonsquare pixels (no more resizing your graphics as the last step). There are two gotchas, though.

First, you may open up a frame grab or an image exported from another application and Photoshop won't know it uses nonsquare pixels. Choose Image>Pixel Aspect Ratio, and change the PAR to match your source. However, don't keep changing the Pixel Aspect Ratio with the Image menu because it lowers image quality.

Second, to add a square-pixel image (from a scanner, digital camera, stock image collection, or a logo file), you can choose File>Place or Copy and Paste the image into your Photoshop document. All image resizing occurs in the background, as Photoshop accurately compensates for mixed Pixel Aspect Ratios.



▲ Pixel Aspect Ratio Correction

This one is not so much of a feature as it is a fix. If you're working with nonsquare pixels, Photoshop does a pretty accurate job of simulating them. Text work, however, can get difficult because of the antialiasing. Choose View>Pixel Aspect Ratio Correction to temporarily turn the preview off for maximum viewing quality.



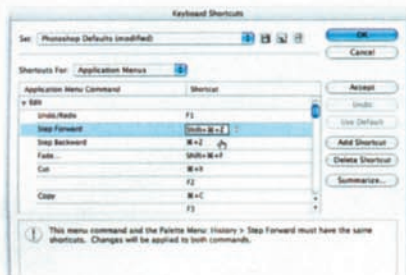
▲ Safe Title Templates

All video pros know you have to draw inside the lines (or at least keep text inside the safe title area). In the past, you may have used a template or had an action to create a title grid. Photoshop CS builds this right inside the application. Choose File>New and select one of the built-in templates from the preset list, and you'll see the new overlay to help you design.

▼ Keyboard Shortcuts

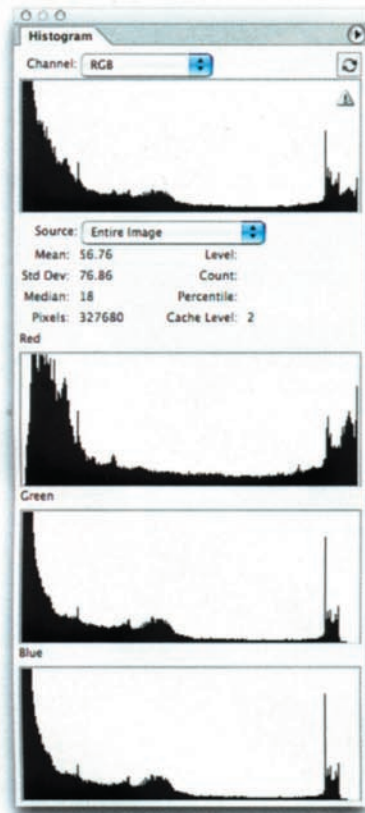
Editors know the benefits of customizing their keyboards. Now you can do the same in Photoshop. Choose Edit>Keyboard Shortcuts to remap menus and tools. While you're there, choose the Edit Category. Check Step Backward to Command+Z (Control+Z) and Step Forward to Shift+Command+Z (Shift+Control+Z), which makes Photoshop's Undo and Redo a little more useful and familiar.

FEATURE 11 Hot Tips: Photoshop CS



▼ Histogram Palette

Need to keep an eye on your levels while working? Photoshop doesn't come with a waveform monitor, but the Histogram palette can be pretty useful. You can leave it open to monitor your work by choosing Window>Histogram. Be sure to check out the palette's submenu for additional options (the All Channels View is a must for color-correction). Remember that you can add an adjustment layer at the top of your layer stack with output levels set to 16 and 235 to clamp your luminance to a broadcast safe range.



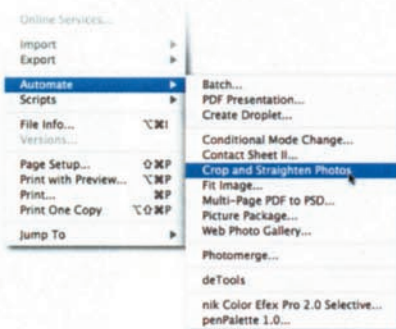
▼ Lens Blur Filter

The new Lens Blur filter can also be used for a depth-of-field blur. Add an alpha channel to your image to serve as a depth matte, such as a linear gradient to show distance. When you run the filter, you can use the channel to help Photoshop simulate the falloff as objects move farther away. This filter is great for modifying images for chroma key backdrops.



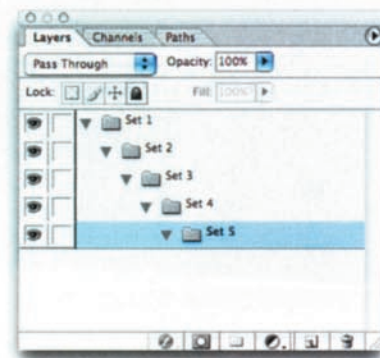
▼ Crop and Straighten Photos

This one is a blessing. Place multiple photos on your scanner, leaving some space between each, and let it rip. You can then choose File>Automate>Crop and Straighten Photos. Photoshop will move each photo to its own document and rotate them to compensate for alignment. It's a lot faster to scan five or six photos at once because your scanner has to warm and recalibrate with each scan.



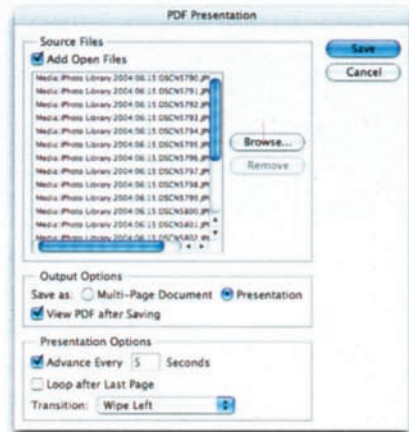
▼ Layer Sets

Layer Sets have always been a great way to organize your Layers palette. You can create folders to hold multiple layers and then add masks, blend modes, or opacity changes to them as a single group. This is similar to pre-composing in Adobe After Effects or nesting in a video editing application. The news is that you can now get more organized because Photoshop CS allows you to nest up to five Layer Sets together.



▼ PDF Presentation

Need to send multiple graphics to a client for approval? How about a small, portable



document they're almost guaranteed to be able to read? Choose File>Automate>PDF Presentation. You can add all of your open files or load ones from your hard drive, and Photoshop will create a PDF file (with transitions, if you like) that can be easily shared with your client. If you need to shrink the file, open it in Acrobat and choose Advanced>PDF optimizer.

▼ Web Photo Gallery with Feedback

Need to show your client a bunch of images to get comments? Choose File>Automate>Web Photo Gallery and pick one of the Feedback presets. Follow the onscreen instructions and you can create a custom light box that will not only show off the images, but also allow the client or producer to annotate each one with information for your edit. Post this folder on your Web site or just e-mail the whole thing as an attachment. If you know HTML or how to use GoLive or Dreamweaver, you can customize the templates. Just open up your Photoshop Application Folder>Presets>Web Photo Gallery and duplicate a template, then modify. ■



Richard Harrington is the owner of RHED Pixel, a visual communications company. He is also the author of *Photoshop CS for Nonlinear Editors, Second Edition* (CMP Books, 2004), the host of *Photoshop CS: Essentials for Digital Video*, and a speaker at DV Expo.