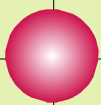




Tips and Tricks

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the digital doctor

By Helene DeLillo

ASK DR. HELENE

I want to start out by saying thank you to all the readers for your questions! I hope you are having an enjoyable summer. The Digital Doctor has a question for you. What is it that inspires you to create? Please e-mail your answers to helene@dancingicon.com, as I will include this in one of my upcoming columns. I was noticing how my environment, my friends and my morning walks to Starbucks inspire me. I see people and objects that spark ideas for new images and new digital imaging techniques. I thought this would make a great article!



How often do I need to back up my computer?

JD, freelance graphic artist

My question to you is: How important is your data? I recommend that you use a daily backup utility. You should also keep your backups in a location separate from your computer (commonly referred to as an offsite). This way, you will always have a copy somewhere else.

There are a few CDs that I always have in my emergency CD case: TechToolPro (www.micromat.com), DiskWarrior (www.alsoft.com), Adobe Photoshop and my original system CD that came with my computer.



I am very interested in pursuing a career in the photo retouching and restoration industry. How can I get started?

Stephanie G., student

Well, first of all, start by building a portfolio of images. Old family photos are great! Many of them are in really bad condition. We have received pieces in a bag that are like putting together a jigsaw puzzle. This is great practice, as it is some of the most challenging work to do well. Then, find a photographer in your area — I am certain they need assistants who know Photoshop. Always have copies of the before and afters. I had some really amazing jobs that I lost the originals for, and I regret it! The more you restore and retouch, the faster and better you get. There is also a really great book by Katrin Eismen called *Photoshop Restoration & Retouching* (QUE

Books), ISBN# 0789723182. I worked with Katrin on a few chapters and techniques in the book. She is a great writer and has some amazing tips and techniques for your profession.



What do you think about Adobe's InDesign and QuarkXPress? And, as a student studying design and production, what should I learn?

Peter H., student

Most art and design schools are teaching QuarkXPress because this is what the advertising agencies are currently using to design today. However, you should be aware that in the design and digital imaging field, technology constantly evolves. Most professional graphics software companies release a new version of their software once a year. So, it is important that you learn to be flexible and open to new technologies. Also, we know that there are many advertising agencies and design studios who are using InDesign today. My advice to you is to learn as much as you can about the software you are using in school. Master it. Learn everything you can about it. Then, you will be able to transition to whatever software the company that hires you is using. You can use Photoshop to create type that looks like it was created in Illustrator or Freehand.



You recently wrote about monitors that have built-in calibration

Helene DeLillo owns and manages Dancing Icon, Inc. in New York City. Specializing in digital imaging, Dancing Icon has designed some of the biggest digital photography studios in the city, including Sothebys.com and Pier 59 Studios. To reach her, call (800) 626-0817.

tools, and I don't have that. Have you tested or worked with the Spyder calibrator?

Jennifer G., assistant art director

ColorVision's Spyder calibrator is very easy to use and creates good color profiles. Just remember that color calibration requires you to educate yourself on the whole workflow process. Also, just like a good chef, every color expert has their own recipes for success.



What is the best size to design a Web page?

Sam P., photo assistant

The first thing you need to consider is your audience. Who will be looking at your pages? And how big are their monitors? Chances are that as a photographer, most of your audience is in the graphic arts industry, so they at least have a 17-inch monitor. Most of the people in the graphic arts industry set their monitors to at least 800x600 pixels, so to be safe when designing, use measurements of 750x425 pixels. If your clients are senior level creatives, they probably have their monitor set to 1,024x768 pixels. If your audience is consumer, you may want to consider a smaller dimension, as Web TV viewers can only see half of what the creatives can see. Think about who will be viewing and using the site.

There are many great books on designing for the Internet.

