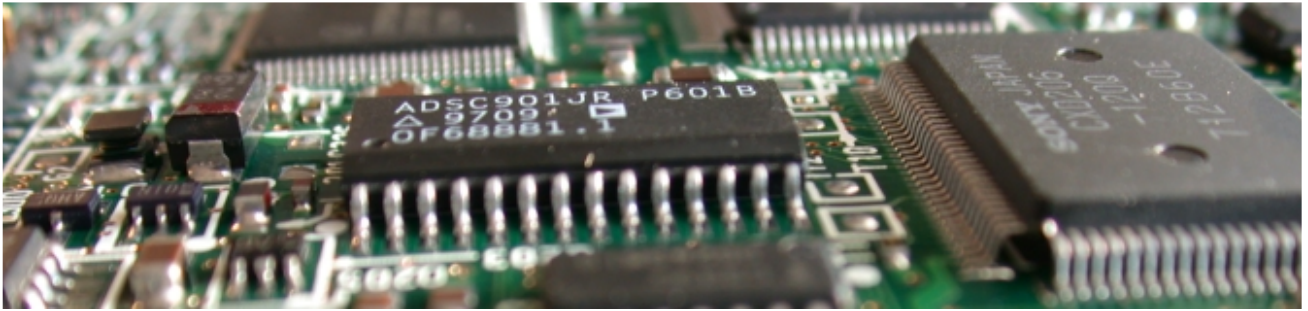


Digital Resource Development Team
November 2005



HI ALL,

You would almost think Saint Swithin's Day had been postponed till late October. Anyway, we're sure the odd ark has been cobbled together by a worried few. Besides, the lovely weather gave us an excuse to watch Les Parapluies de Cherbourg again (hums vaguely unfamiliar tune...). Judging by the last few days though we do hope those arks are built solidly enough to break through rapidly forming ice shelves.

SPELL CASTING

More and more of you are falling under our spell – we've continued initial training in Fife and West Lothian and have actually begun more in-depth work with a few of our partners. The feedback forms we've received so far (very subtle reminder) have been consistently very positive. They have also been quite constructive and led to a few worthwhile changes in our delivery methods - We must remember to write notes in English for a start.



HTML, CSS - RANDOM LETTERS?

We've been conducting training in the creation of HTML pages supplemented with Cascading Style Sheets –

the ease of changing fonts, colours and positioning was an obvious success with many participants racing ahead to give their html code a completely individual look.

GIMP PICTURES?

A second set of training covered the basics of image manipulation and colour management using both Photoshop Elements 3 and Gimp. Having Photoshop's healing tools in the cut-down version is an obvious selling point.



I asked Kye to find a picture of a bat but didn't specify it was to tie into a spell/halloween leftover theme.

GOING FOR A SONG

Our third group training sessions covered value for money software and hardware and included the participants getting up to their elbows inside a couple of desktop PCs. The participants also got a taster of Linux (both Knoppix and Suse) – a new operating system for most of you. We handed out a copies of Knoppix – a Linux OS which runs entirely in RAM directly from CD. Definitely worth a try

and not just because it includes the lovely (thankfully not a trademarked word courtesy of Sarah J.P. just yet...) desk top publishing package Scribus.

PUBLISH & BE DAMNED

Some of you have even attempted editing the website! If you haven't tried it yet don't be frightened – if you haven't received a username and password from us please contact us now – details on the last page.

CLOSE CONTACT

Registered users can now search for skills that other partners have been taught as details of training undergone by partner organisations have been added to the contacts list. This will hopefully encourage dialogue between you if you are seeking knowledge about specific subjects should the project officers be unavailable.

GO WITH THE FLOW

If you're reading this and haven't begun training yet, or even if you have, please feel free to contact us about any related work. We're here to give advice on all aspects of working with digital products – PCs, scanners, video/stills cameras, audio recording, and so on. Don't forget the advice

doesn't necessarily have to be about equipment or software – we're just as happy to answer queries on workflow as on RAM configuration.



TWISTED (NOT BITTER)

We're still as eager as ever to hear new suggestions for topics we can help you with. Recent suggestions we've been investigating for you have included adding downloadable audio to websites, video projection onto sides of buildings, complex virtual tours and online commerce. By the way we've been playing with a cheap and simple rig for shooting panoramas and we've been evaluating a mass of free software to simplify the construction process – details on your favourite site soon.



REALLY HUGE NEWS

The big and we mean really BIG news in this issue is our (managing to affect an excited Dale Winton impression) HUGE CASH GIVEAWAY...

You read correctly – we are giving partners an opportunity to apply to us for project funding. From the guidelines, "The fund will be able to support the creation and/or the delivery of digital resources, and any activities associated with the creation and/or the delivery of digital resources, by individual institutions and groups of institution that are signed-up partners in the Digital Resource Development Team Project."

The full guidelines are available in the Download section of our site which is where the actual application form will reside in the very, very near future.

CAC CAKE

The Challenge Fund was announced at our second full Management Committee meeting. This was held on the 11th of November at the City Arts Centre in Edinburgh and apart from letting everyone know of the progress we've been making we also brought along a small pile of toys to play with. Video conferencing, anyone? Panoramas of Dunbar harbour. Touch-screen jigsaws. Life size DVD photo slide-shows. Those who missed it most certainly

missed out (even lunch included a mighty fine chocolate.

TOP SITE

There really are quite a few to choose from, you know... However, we think you'll enjoy the Technical Advisory Service for Images (www.tasi.ac.uk) as much as us. It really is self explanatory. Suck it and see.

THIS MONTH'S SOFTWARE FAVOURITE

There really was only one convincing contender for the top title this month. You're seeing the results of it now.

Scribus.

We know it's a Linux application (which can run on Macs) but good grief is it good. Powerful, and a doddle to use - costing roughly £500 less than Pagemaker, £750 less than In-Design and a whopping £1000 less than my previous favourite DTP Package, Quark. It can even export page layouts directly as PDF files.

<http://www.scribus.org.uk>

Try it with Knoppix 4 along with our previous software favourites OpenOffice and Gimp.

Don't have broadband? Ask us for a CD - Knoppix runs on almost all Intel or AMD PCs.



RESULTS FOR THE DIGITAL PHOBIA SURVEY:

1. You're all afraid your Vampire roots are beginning to show.
2. You believe eight legs to be too many.
3. You think there are never enough buckets of water around.



It's purely an animation thing!

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED:

JUST WHAT IS A RAW FILE?

In a nutshell, something worth thinking about when purchasing and using digital stills cameras.

Essentially, when you take a photograph a camera's ccd captures a digital image from an analogue light source. This is then processed within the camera using very complex algorithms and saved as in a file format such as a compressed Jpeg or an uncompressed Tiff.

A Raw file is created prior to the in-camera processing. It allows full manual control of the photo (light balance, exposure, sharpening, etc.) within a suitable image manipulation package. This can be very useful for important images because although cameras are often very good at capturing images they can, sometimes, interpret images in a different way than they should.

This is a very in-depth topic and there are many pros and cons for using Raw files over Tifs or Jpegs. More in the next issue and perhaps on our website. If you can't wait please call.

More information at <http://ufraw.sourceforge.net>

We're off... burning rubber for your amusement.

"Factor umpteen sunblock for everyone!" - Catherine Deneuve

