

Digital Resource Development Team

JANUARY 2006



HI ALL,

A New Year and all those resolutions... We currently favour 1280 x 1024.

LOVELY LUMPS

Anyway, out with the de-icer and on with the snow shoes. As you know we've launched our Challenge Fund and we're looking forward to giving away vast lumps of cash to those with the best ideas encompassing our project's prime principles: increasing the creative digital capacity within our partner organisations.

POINTS MEAN PRIZES

You probably want to know who received funding in round one... Read on.

Please step forward and take a bow, Hopetoun House Preservation Trust, Linlithgow Union Canal Society and Remember When.

Congratulations to them all. We look forward to beginning



your specific training and eventually seeing the final project outcomes.

FORGET ME NOTS

We're here (or can come to you) to give advice on the purchase of equipment and help you ensure your application fits the guidelines.



We don't make the decisions on who receives the cash though – that's up to the executive committee – therefore you'll find our advice impartial. Our next deadline is Monday 17th April and don't forget subsequent rounds will take place on a quarterly basis (assuming we haven't given away all the money to worthy causes).

CALL OF THE WILD

We're now at the stage with most of you of individual training sessions. Once we've identified suitable project aims with you we should be able to provide all the training and advice you'll need to get you on your way. This will then be backed up by more training and advice whenever you require it – it's what we're here for.

GIVE THEM ENOUGH ROPE

We've decide to purchase some specialist equipment on your behalf: all our partners will soon be able to get extra

tuition on video and audio transfer, capture, editing and outputting as well as the creation of top-notch panoramas.

Should you need it the equipment will be lent to you for pre-determined lengths of time to enable you to complete your projects.

We've already had interest from a number of partners on these subjects including East Lothian who have already had training with similar equipment.

This has enabled a video element to be added to an educational outreach project relating to WWII experiences and also a number of panoramas have been created from an exhibition held within the Town House museum.

First come, first served – book us now!

TOP SITE

It amused us for days and has actually been doing so for months. Looking for educational activities to run within your organisations?

It's not so much the main site which is basically plugging for the Make magazine, it's the excellent weblogs section - truly inspiring.

<http://www.makezine.com>.

I particularly liked the crochet Yoda ears but still seek an understandable pattern and some crochet tuition...



The pictures in this issue all come from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. They were all going to be wolves as I've just been given a 70 year old Corsican beret instantly became hailed as a television icon... Couldn't resist the polar bears though.

THIS MONTH'S SOFTWARE FAVOURITE

It may not be big (in terms of download time) but there are few excuses not to use it if you're running Windows.

Why not give IE the heave-ho and use Firefox instead.

There are numerous security loopholes within the Microsoft product and we really couldn't live without tabbed browsing. Embedded, updateable search engine toolbars. Numerous useful add-ons such as the web-developer tool-kit. Even a portable version to run on your USB memory sticks. Splendid!

Version 1.5 free at <http://www.mozilla.org>.

If your in a downloading mood have a look at Thunderbird – an excellent and incredibly capable email application - available from the same location.

THIS MONTH'S SPECIAL OFFER

You want an excuse not to use Firefox? We're giving that away too! Opera. As good, safe and stable as Firefox and said to be quicker. It can even mimic IE for certain silly sites which are set up to operate solely with IE. It has one of the best kiosk-modes for a visitor display and you can even control the Opera browser through speech alone.

<http://www.opera.com>

TIPS TOO

White Balance is an important function found in most Digital Cameras and can mean the difference between a beautifully exposed and balanced digital portrait and a picture featuring a green and ghoulish apparition.

It all comes down to the concept of colour temperature. The colour temperature is a way of measuring the quality of a light source and is based on the ratio of the amount of blue light to red light.

For example lighting with a higher colour temperature such as daylight or fluorescent tubes has more blue light than lighting with a lower colour temperature such as standard light bulbs.



Before taking a critical shot, you can focus/zoom at an area in the scene which is white or neutral grey and allow the camera to calibrate it's settings from that. The camera will then use this reference when taking the shot.

Auto white balance is fine most of the time but for those occasions when you are not happy with the colour cast of your picture, choose one of the presets. If this still doesn't give acceptable colour rendition, and your camera has the functionality, try manually setting the white balance by using a white card or sheet of paper placed in the scene. For ultimate control over white balance, consider shooting in the RAW file format, and adjust the white balance afterwards.

The tips featured in this and previous newsletters are edited highlights from more detailed how-to articles which are already available within the Help section of our website. You will find articles including a detailed explanation of RAW files, some vaguely remembered tips on video editing and, of course, the full explanation of white balance.



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

Freedom for Tooting

