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Q: What's new in ProJPEG?

Version 5.0 adds the most significant advancements to ProJPEG ever, with improved memory handling to allow ProJPEG to work for Web graphics or hi-res JPEG images and advanced Photoshop actions support for batch processing and automated work flow, plus a new interface with resizable and zoomable image previews for better compression feedback and ergonomic work flow. Paint Shop Pro is also supported by ProJPEG now on Windows, in addition to Photoshop.

Version 5.1 for Windows adds resolution support, corrects a problem reading some truncated files, makes a few minor speed improvements, and corrects a problem with the ProJPEG installer under Windows ME.

Version 5.2 changes the default behavior of the ProJPEG options dialog, defaulting to full size previews as opposed to scaling to fit. The Macintosh update also makes additional Macintosh specific changes.

Q: What applications is ProJPEG 5.2 compatible with?

All versions of Adobe Photoshop from 3.0 to current on Macintosh and Windows (Including LE versions)
All versions of Adobe PhotoDelux
All versions of Jasc Paint Shop Pro from 5.0 to current on Windows

Corel PhotoPaint 8.0 to current for Macintosh and Windows also supports file format plugins and will recognize ProJPEG, but has not proven to be fully compatible with ProJPEG to date.

Q: Will ProJPEG work with system... ?

ProJPEG 5.2 will work with MacOS 7.0 or greater on all PowerPC based Macintoshes running PowerPC native installs of Photoshop.

ProJPEG 5.2 will work with Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows 2000 and Windows NT 4.0 or greater on all PCs capable of running Photoshop or Paint Shop Pro host applications.

Q: Are ProJPEG files compatible with ?

Yes. ProJPEG saves fully compliant JFIF JPEG files based on the public standard for the JFIF file format. ProJPEG is the name of a product, not a special variety of JPEG file.

JFIF is properly the name of the file format, JPEG is only a pervasive misnomer based on the compression method used in the JFIF format.

All browsers support JFIF JPEGs, though older browsers may not support all encoding options with the JFIF format. Progressive encoding should be avoided if compatibility with browsers older than Netscape 2.0 is required, and by default, not enabled in ProJPEG because of this.

There is some advantage to using progressive JPEG files because they appear to load faster to the viewer because of incremental display similar to interlaced GIFs and are usually smaller, but this has to be weighted against some slight compatibility concerns.

There is a second common format for JPEG called Adobe JPEG, which is the file format saved by Adobe

Photoshop when you save a JPEG through Photoshop. This format is almost as widely supported as the JFIF variety, but does pose more compatibility issues with browsers than JFIF. Adobe JPEG supports saving files in CMYK color mode, which are not viewable in most current browsers, not just incompatible with very old browsers. If using Adobe's JPEG module, be sure images have been converted from CMYK to RGB modes before saving them.

ProJPEG will read both JFIF and Adobe JPEG files for compatibility, but will only create the more compatible JFIF JPEG variety.

Q: Can I batch process with ProJPEG?

Yes. ProJPEG fully supports Photoshop Actions allowing batch processing and scripting to automate your work in Photoshop 4.0 and greater. Batch Processing is also possible in Paint Shop Pro 6.0 and greater but works through a different mechanism than Photoshop actions.

Q: Will ProJPEG files work with eBay?

Yes. This is a very frequent question, but one that is asked poorly. It isn't the real question. The real question is "Are ProJPEG files compatible with all browsers?"

The answer to that is definitely and resoundingly yes. ProJPEG saves fully compliant JFIF JPEG files based on the public standard for the JFIF file format. ProJPEG is the name of a product, not a special variety of JPEG file.

Some things that could be keeping your JPEG files from working on eBay auction pages are:

A) You saved a CMYK JPEG file. Most browsers do not support JPEG files in CMYK color mode. Adobe's JPEG module will save CMYK JPEG files. ProJPEG does not support saving files from CMYK color mode, though it will read CMYK JPEG files for compatibility purposes. You should make sure your image is in RGB mode before saving it as a JPEG.

B) When uploading your JPEG files, you did so using an improper encoding method corrupting the files in transit. JPEG files should be uploaded in binary mode using no encoding methods such as MacBinary or BinHex. This mistake is common to Macintosh because of the nature of the Macintosh file system.

Also, if on Macintosh and using Fetch to upload files, make sure you have the most current version of the application. In versions prior to Fetch 3.0.1 a bug could cause files to often become corrupted on upload.

You can find the current version of Fetch at:

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/pages/softdev/fetch.html>

C) Your HTML file paths are incorrect. This would be the "Why does ProJPEG make all my images little white boxes with crosses in them?" question, which is often asked, too.

One common reason for this is case sensitivity. The Macintosh file system is not case sensitive. "file.jpg" is the same as "FILE.JPG" and "File.JPG" locally on a Macintosh, and graphics referenced by any of those names would be found and load when previewing locally on your Macintosh, but not be found and not load once uploaded to a Web server. URLs are case sensitive. and are not equivalent.

D) The dimensions of your image are so large that the browser does not have enough memory available to decompress it. Overly large images are commonly used for action pages on eBay in our experience. Big photographs are good on eBay, but as with all things moderation is advised and cropping is the

photographer's friend.

A small compressed JPEG file of only 60K could take many megabytes of available RAM for the viewing browser to decompress it. When most browsers become low on memory, they will not render images, or worse - crash.

Photographs on eBay should really be scaled to no larger than 640 x 480, and extraneous areas cropped out of them, to avoid putting undue strain on viewing browsers. This will make better photographs that highlight the item for sale more than the background setting, and make more reasonable sized files that download faster and pose less risk of overloading browsers.

Q: Why did ProJPEG turn all my images into "little white boxes with crosses in them"?

The "little white boxes with crosses in them" are not your images. They are icons used by all browsers to represent missing images when rendering a Web page. The browser cannot find an image to display is the problem.

There are several things that commonly happen to cause missing or corrupt images that can't be displayed, none are because of ProJPEG, though.

A) Your file paths are incorrect in your HTML source. This most often happens because of case sensitivity in URLs and case insensitivity in the Macintosh file system. Previewing Web pages locally on a Macintosh, "File.JPG" and "file.jpg" would be equivalent.

Once uploaded to a Web server, "File.JPG" and "file.jpg" would be two distinctly different names and not reference the same file.

You should check capitalization in your URLs and confirm it is the same as your directory and file names.

B) Your files were uploaded improperly, causing them to become corrupted. JPEG files should be uploaded in "binary" mode using no encoding method. Uploading in ASCII text mode or using any encoding method such as MacBinary or BinHex will cause JPEG files to become corrupt.

C) If on Macintosh and using Fetch to upload files, make sure you have the most current version of the application. In versions prior to Fetch 3.0.1, a bug could cause JPEG files to become corrupted on upload.

You can find the current version of Fetch at:

<http://www.dartmouth.edu/pages/softdev/fetch.html>

Q: I installed ProJPEG, but I don't see it in my filters menu. What's up?

ProJPEG isn't a filter plug-in. It doesn't appear in your filters menu. ProJPEG is a file format plug-in. File format plug-ins add new opening and saving capabilities for files to Photoshop and appear as menu items in the formats menu in Photoshop's and Paint Shop Pro's dialogs for opening and saving files - not in the filters menu.

To access ProJPEG, you "Save as..." and select "BoxTop ProJPEG" as the file format from the format menu in the save file dialog.

Q: I was using ProJPEG and it said "The operation could not be completed because there was not enough memory." or "The operation could not be completed because of an unknown error. Error#:

1" What's wrong?

The first of those means exactly what it says. The second is almost positively going to be a memory related error as well. Neither should be encountered in normal usage of ProJPEG 5.0.

With the new memory management in ProJPEG 5.0, this should no longer be a frequently asked question. ProJPEG 5.0 is capable of saving extremely large images now, and not limited by the memory constraints present in previous versions.

Low memory conditions may still occur, and can still result in error messages or unexpected behavior, but there is no longer any upper limit to how large a file that can be saved, and the overall memory requirements of ProJPEG have been reduced several fold.

ProJPEG 5.0 can easily save 25MB or more original images now under default memory allocations for Photoshop.

If you encounter out of memory alerts using ProJPEG you should:

Ensure Photoshop has a reasonable memory allocation that leaves at least 20% of the system's memory free. ProJPEG 5.0 can use memory from Photoshop's internal allocation as well as any unused system memory now. Memory allocation is not an issue for Windows users. It is only an issue on Macintosh.

Quit other running applications to make more RAM available on both Macintosh and Windows. It will make more system memory available for ProJPEG to use.

Make sure Photoshop's scratch disk is enabled and ample hard drive space is available for use. ProJPEG 5.0 can now take advantage of Photoshop's scratch memory as well as physical RAM.

Q: When I go to save my document with ProJPEG, the option isn't available in Photoshop's format's menu or it's grayed out. Why?

To save an image with ProJPEG, it must be in RGB or Grayscale modes, must be flattened with no layers, and must not have more than one alpha channel. If these conditions aren't met, then Photoshop will disable ProJPEG as an option to save the image.

On Macintosh, the ProJPEG format menu will appear dimmed. On Windows, ProJPEG simply will not be an option at all in the format list, if attempting to saving images that use unsupported image features.

Instead of changing your image options by flattening it or removing extra alpha channels, you can use the "Save a Copy..." command in Photoshop with the "Flatten Image" and "Don't Include Alpha Channels" options selected to save with ProJPEG.

Paint Shop Pro behaves differently and will never disable ProJPEG because of image options. It will instead show a dialog warning that only a merged image will be saved and ask for you to confirm before continuing.

"Because of the limitations of the specified format (and possibly the save options you've selected), the saved file will be limited to a merged image. Would you like to continue?"

Confirming yes to this dialog will allow you to save through ProJPEG, but only merged image data - not working image options - will be saved.

Q: The size of the final file in ProJPEG's dialog isn't the same size as I see in the Finder. Which one is right and why are they different?

First, the final size shown in ProJPEG's dialog is the right one. That is exactly how big your JPEG file will be after you hit the OK button and ProJPEG writes the file to disk. It's already compressed it in RAM to know the exact final size, so it is accurate to the last byte.

That's only the JPEG file, though. It doesn't count any application and Mac specific resource information that Photoshop will save in the resource fork of your Macintosh "file" such as custom icons, previews, printer settings, etc.

For technical reference, the Macintosh file system uses two files, one called the data fork and one called the resource fork for every "file" you see on the desktop. Your JPEG file is the data fork of that Mac file, and whatever is in the resource fork of that Mac file is extra fluff that doesn't count as far as the Web or JPEGs are concerned. When you upload the file to your server the resource fork is never sent and even if your Web server happens to be a Mac, the resource fork is never sent in response to a request. It's just extra Mac info that other computers don't understand.

The difference comes in because the Finder shows the combined size of the data fork and the resource fork in the Get Info window, and there is no way from the Finder to just see the size of the data fork, which is what you want to know for GIF and JPEG file purposes.

You don't really need to worry about what the Finder says, as long as you're happy with the file sizes in ProJPEG. The extra information in the resource fork will take up a little extra room locally on your hard disk, but it won't effect your Web page at all. The custom icons and previews are worth keeping because they make sorting through images much easier.

However, if you want the size you see in ProJPEG to agree with the size you see in the Finder, you can use GIF Prep, included with the ProJPEG download and available separately from the BoxTop Software, Inc. Web site, to strip the resource forks from your GIF and JPEG files. GIF Prep is free. We pretty much wrote it to help answer this question that is asked too often.

Q: Why does ProJPEG say my original JPEG is so much bigger than it is when I am resaving?

The "Original" size shown in ProJPEG is not the original size of any file you may be resaving. It is the size of the original, uncompressed RGB image data.

This size is a very simple formula of width times height in pixels times three bytes, i.e. any 640 by 480 image would have an original size of 900K according to the following math:

640 x 480 = 307200 pixels
307200 x 3 = 921600 bytes
921600 / 1024 = 900 kilobytes

Q: Why do I get different file size depending on whether I set the foreground or background smoothing first?

The Fore and Back controls in ProJPEG only apply to the smoothing setting for the image that is being saved. Compression settings apply uniformly to the entire image area.

Smoothing can apply only to one area of the image in ProJPEG, it is an either or - not a both. If you toggle between fore and back radio buttons, you make new settings, smoothing either fore or back areas.

Masking off foreground areas of the image and applying very aggressive smoothing settings to the background areas is desirable for best image quality and compression.

Q: I opened a JPEG file saved with paths using ProJPEG and the paths were gone, is this a bug?

Nope. It's not a bug. Paths are proprietary to Photoshop, and ProJPEG simply doesn't support them. It won't save paths. It won't read paths. However, it will read JPEG files that have paths, and other kinds of application specific, proprietary information in them, it will just ignore the application specific data, such as paths, reading only the image information.

Should you need to open a JPEG file with paths, you should use the Open menu in Photoshop and select "JPEG" as the format to read the file.

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