Creative Suite 3 Integration

This publication throws practical learning into the digital mix

Manufacturer:	Focal Press, an imprint of Elsevier
Web:	http://books.elsevier.com/focalbooks
Price:	£24.99/$51.10
Spec:	Colourful, practical tutorials
	Troubleshooting organisation for cross-program issues
	Coverage of basics through to comprehensive information
	Practical project tasks
	Supplied CD-ROM with project resources
	Time-saving tips
	Platform shortcuts provided

Creative Suite 3 Integration is a publication that will help the digital creative understand the potential and true meaning of software integration.

This book offers readers the means to become more efficient when operating Adobe's Creative Suite 3. Now providing consumers with a number of different flavours, including Standard and Premium packages for both web and design, users have never been in more need of a choice resource that 'covers all bases'. Creative Suite 3 Integration sets out to do just this, highlighting the strides that Adobe has taken to integrate these genre-defining tools.

Along with the latest incorporated Macromedia functions, this is a title with a lot on its hands. Despite this, the book delivers – from Keith Martin's straightforward and comprehensive explanation of working practices to the analytical glossary of working terminology.

Once again colour coding is deployed to all sections, making for easy navigation of working practices. From the first few pages it's apparent that thoroughness is the name-of-the-game, with Keith Martin's explanation of specific software dynamics and purposes featured in Creative Suite 3.

Creative Suite 3 Integration also covers a majority of contemporary, professional working areas, such as Magazine Feature, Interactive Media and Designing for PDF Delivery. Couple this with the practical Project pages, accompanied by the supplied CD-ROM that includes resource imagery related to these assignments, and readers can experience sound working practices that will increase productivity when considering real-life circumstances.

The book also acknowledges what software will be utilised in each section through the appearance of Adobe software logos and the clear definition of platform shortcuts used. All-in-all, this title is an inclusive revision that will enhance efficiency as well as teach users new skills and tricks along the way. ■

'The approach of this book is great. Readers will become more efficient in their work ...and find new tips and tricks as well'
Ginna Baldassarre, Senior Product Manager, Adobe Creative Suite 3, Design Editions

Creative Suite 3 Integration

Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Dreamweaver, Flash Pro, Acrobat, Bridge and Version Cue

Keith Martin
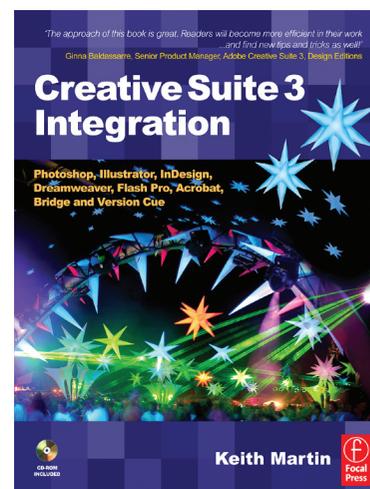
WHAT'S INSIDE?: *Pages two and three clearly explain what is and what's not covered. Adobe Creative Suite 3 Production Premium and Master collection have been left out*

Summary: This title offers a resource that will allow confident users the ability to achieve professional results through practical exercises.

Rating: **4/5**

The Designer's Desktop Manual

Have this title to hand to maximise understanding of essential practices

Manufacturer:	Rotovision SA
Web:	www.rotovision.com
Price:	£25.00/$30.00
Spec:	Flexibind
	256 pages
	Addresses type and typography, colour, imaging, layout and printing
	Step-by-step projects
	Up-to-date digital and handmade techniques

As soon as we laid eyes on *The Designer's Desktop Manual,* we fell in love with it. A new release from Rotovision, this title simply looks fun. Colourful, considerate in design and generally pleasing to the eye, this title has all the aesthetic ability to capture your attention. But what about its content?

Award-winning art director and designer Jason Simmons provides tutelage. His 15 years' experience, including lecturing and judging for the Association of Illustrators, goes some way to authenticating the aptitude of the topics in this manual. This title is punctual and to the point, covering all the main disciplines from type to colour, layout and print. It's all here and presented in a clear and concise way so enthusiasts and can

benefit from its teachings. Those users a bit more proficient may also learn a few new tricks as well.

Each section provides samples that can be applied to working projects, so you can learn practically as you go. Within each topic the spectrum is addressed, starting from the basic techniques and educating you through to more advanced options and actions. Colour coding of sections is used once again, like in the more user-friendly titles, for easy navigation.

The Designer's Desktop Manual features some innovative as well as essential practices. The techniques promote platform knowledge, so users of Macs can familiarise with a PC's functions and visa-versa. There are also some nice personalised practices on offer here. For example, the Folds and Bindings section provides examples showing you modes with which to promote and provide book and magazine design, as well as a two-page glossary covering all standard industry paper sizes, just in case you need to know. Nothing seems left to chance when considering production. ■

BUILDING A GRAPHICS LIBRARY

ESSENTIAL PRACTICE: *This manual tackles common technical problems and establishes best practices, with a wealth of hints and tips on offer*

Summary: This title, in its colourful and fun simplification, also manages to present a systematic and cohesive read that will surely evolve any reader's skills and understanding.

Rating: **4/5**

Adobe Creative Suite 3 Bible

A creative Holy Grail or more a red herring resource?

|	
Manufacturer:	Wiley Publishing Inc
Web:	http://eu.wiley.com
Price:	£23.99/$49.00
Spec:	Over 1,250 pages of comprehensive feature tutelage
	38 working chapters
	Thorough function and tool index
	Fully updated with CS3 functions
	Integrate and manage workflow

It's fair to say that Wiley Publishing Inc has a record of offering comprehensive titles that cover essential creative ground. So with that glowing reputation in mind, would one of its latest titles, *Adobe Creative Suite 3 Bible*, match previous set standards?

This title certainly seems to deliver. Covering practices that will inspire as well as suit both beginners and those more advanced users, it's stacked with over 1,257 pages of subject matter, including managing colour across all CS3 applications, applying effects to objects and layers and creating interactive documents. This information is accompanied by coherent illustration that helps those using the aforementioned software and tools to operate functions and tasks.

Like previous Bible books we've encountered, a brief chapter run-through boxout that labels what you'll find among the pages complements each section. The contributing creative authorities have again provided useful tool and application hints as well as cross referencing, which is punctual and easy to follow and find. Also present are the New Feature notes – these allow you to know which new feature mentioned in its pages is associated to which software and how it functions.

However, even though the topics are numerous and thorough, we still held slight reservations about this title. First of all, its black-and-white print left us feeling a little uninspired. This bland look also limits the possibilities for quick and simple navigation that has been experienced in more user-friendly titles, with colour-coded divisions. The issue of having to refer to the index at all times, in such a weighty publication, may be daunting for first-time users or beginning enthusiasts.

Setting this little niggle aside, this comprehensive title leaves little to the imagination. Throughout its many pages it offers an education that will teach users how to utilise the latest CS3 software features in a seamless, integrated workflow, just as they where designed to do. ▦

Covers the Design Premium edition

Ted Padova and Kelly L. Murdock

Adobe® **Creative Suite® 3** Bible

Set up your CS3 tools for efficient workflow

Manage color across all CS3 applications

Add interactivity and host documents on the Web

The book you need to succeed!
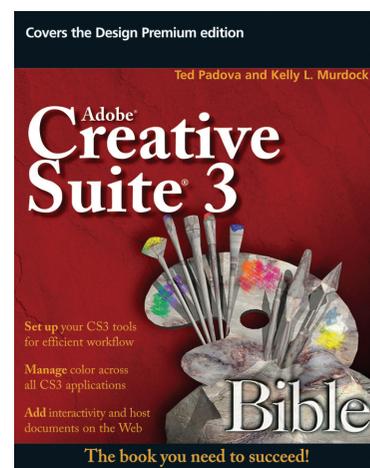
GET CREATIVE: *This title will offer advice on how to easily revisit earlier versions of files, set up efficient workflows for teams, studios and freelancers and even add interactivity on the web*

Summary: Once again a satisfying educational resource that is informative and concise in the examples it offers, if a little time-consuming and difficult to navigate at times.

Rating: **3/5**

Casio EX-Z1200

This compact from Casio certainly has the EX-factor

Manufacturer:	Casio
Web:	www.exilim.casio.com
Price:	£279 (SRP)
Spec:	4,000 x 3,000 maximum resolution
	3x optical zoom and 4x digital zoom
	2.8-inch wide format LCD display
	6cm minimum focus distance
	Dimensions = 93 x 51 x 22mm
	Weight = 152g (without batteries)
	34 scene modes and full manual control

Casio is calling the Exilim Zoom EX-Z1200 its current 'flagship model'. And we can see why. This sleek unit has an impressive 12.1 megapixels – a figure that can comfortably out-do certain entry-level DSLRs.

The EX-Z1200 design is pleasant, with smooth rounded corners and subtle ergonomic features. It fits comfortably into the palm of your hand, but still manages to pack in a wealth of features.

The menu interface is on the right-hand side of the clear, colourful 2.8-inch LCD. It's navigated via the small d-pad, Menu button and the tiny 'BS', or Best Shot, button. Best Shot is the EX-Z1200's name for a scene mode and it features an excellent range of presets, from Night, Sunset and Portrait to more specialised settings such as Flowing Water.

The 3x optical zoom isn't fabulous in scope, even though it combines with a 4x digital zoom to produce a 12x total. Sadly, some clarity is sacrificed at max zoom, although thanks to this camera's overwhelming megapixel count you can forego a little physical zoom and enlarge later.

This is a great camera for portrait shots, as it focuses on the human face. Its Auto Tracking (AF) function can track the faces of moving subjects, but most intriguingly, it offers a Family First mode, in which it gives priority to the faces of those it describes as 'recorded family members'. The only way that the EX-Z1200 lets itself down is with the fiddly size of its buttons, which your fingers can slide off of with ease. Image quality is outstanding, both in terms of the capture process itself and in its reproduction on the LCD. The camera offers a range of playback modes, from a menu of nine images at a time, to a slideshow, album function and favourites folder.

It's worth remembering while you're being wowed by its ease of use and great design, that the EX-Z1200 is not a professional-quality camera – it's a humble household camera. It just happens to be at the top of its range and the peak of functionality, too. ▦

SIMPLE CONTROL: *If you're not a photographer, but need reference shots, this camera has plenty of automated options for perfect shots every time*

Summary: The EX-Z1200 is a great all-round home and family camera and, despite a few minor quirks, delivers excellent results.

Rating: **4/5**

Urban Retro New Gelaskins

Why should the decorations stop at the tree this Christmas? Accessorise with a new Gelaskin

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Manufacturer:	Urban Retro
Web:	www.urbanretro.co.uk
Price:	Starting from £9.95/$20.26
Spec:	Design contributed including DAIM, Amy Sol, Aya Kato and more
	Available for the iPod, iPhone, MacBook and other laptops
	High-grade 3M vinyl
	Patented adhesive technology
	Scratch-resistant gloss coating

Urban Retro has recently announced the launch of its newest collection of designer art skins for iPod, iPhone, MacBooks and other laptops. Familiar with the first instalment of their fresh, contemporary designs, we were keen to test drive this product.

Urban Retro seems very excited about the Gelaskin, stating that the product "adds style, flair and creativity to the device of your choice." This is something we were certainly inclined to agree with, as it seems that this second generation of Gelaskins offer even more in the way of creative delight. As the popularity of the products it decorates soars, the artistic contributors for the Gelaskin project grow.

With an array of options displaying graphic design to illustration to fine art, the Gelaskin certainly isn't exclusive to any preferred consumer. From contributions from leading urban artists such as Dave White, to modern contemporary designers such as DAIM and classic masterpieces from Van Gough, Monet and MC Escher, there is quite literally something for every art lover. Considering the evolution of options available with an impressive depth of available designs, all should easily find something to suit.

Manufactured using a high-grade 3M-vinyl and patented adhesive technology, you find yourself with one attractive product on your hands. The Gelaskin also comes standard with a glossy coating that is clear and scratch-resistant, which proved to be the case in tests. This protective exterior obviously adds durability to the product, as well as presenting a quality finish.

Upon sticking down the Gelaskin on your device of choice, it's surprisingly easy to peel off again. This is contributed to the product's residue-free adhesion. We could only test this factor in a short space of time, however, so over a longer period this may perhaps be less responsive. That aside, we feel that the option for artistry within this product is its greatest virtue and makes it well worth sticking with. ▦
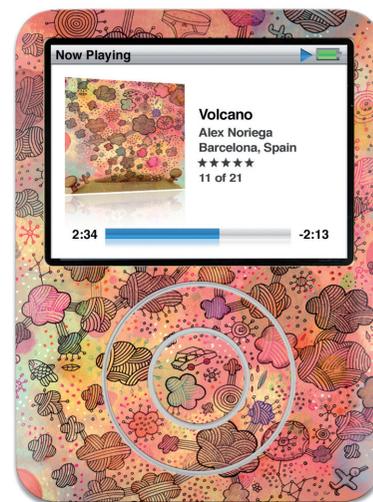
SKIN ON SKIN: *iPhone and iPod touch owners can also download free-of-charge designs to use as screensavers, accompanying the skin of their choice*

Summary: Gelaskins are a highly decorative and delightful design solution, offering fun and fresh ways to personalise and all at a competitive price. What more could you ask for?

Rating: **4/5**

Adobe Photoshop CS3 A-Z

This title helps users dodge the frustration than can occur when partaking in time-sensitive, quality working procedures

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Manufacturer:	Focal Press, an imprint of Elsevier
Web:	http://books.elsevier.com/focalbooks
Price:	£17.99/$36.79
Spec:	Covers Photoshop's mass of tools
	Intuitive and colourful presentation
	Step-by-step tutorials helping conquer key tasks
	Fully updated with CS3 functions
	Feature Summary boxouts
	Colour-coded edge tabs

"This dictionary of Photoshop terms wrangles complex concepts and offers intuitive solutions making it an invaluable title for digital imagers." This is *Adobe Photoshop CS3 A-Z* described by Bryan O'Neil Hughes, Photoshop product manager at Adobe.

At first glance this A-Z doesn't look daunting. Comparatively slender in comparison to other titles we have reviewed, perhaps meaning that this title isn't as thorough as you'd expect. This would probably have something to do with this title being focused upon a specific aspect of Photoshop usage. Printed by Focal Press Books, this is a title for photographers, by photographers.

As you'd expect, *Adobe Photoshop CS3 A-Z* covers all of Photoshop's mass tools and makes reference to and explains almost every action you are likely to encounter or use as a photographer. From the virtues of palette stacks to using Photoshop Filters and even Variable preferences such as Data Sets, it all seems to be in here, presented in an informed and punctual manner using best practices.

But it's not just the depth of information that sets this publication apart but the way it is possible to locate it promptly. Acting as an all-you-need-to-know, easy-to-navigate encyclopaedia *Adobe Photoshop CS3 A-Z* offers cohesive edge tabs, colour coded, changing for each section so you can easily thumb through to locate particular entries.

But this title also includes handy Feature Summaries. These include details on where features can be found, keyboard shortcuts associated to tools and which Photoshop versions include the functions in question. New and revamped functions within the recent CS3 version are highlighted in red to easily recognise. Also the encyclopaedia features a step-by-step section, which provides a basic run through of preferential tools so users can familiarise before partaking in more elaborate exercises. In all, a title that should evolve learning and help users conquer key tasks at every level. ▦
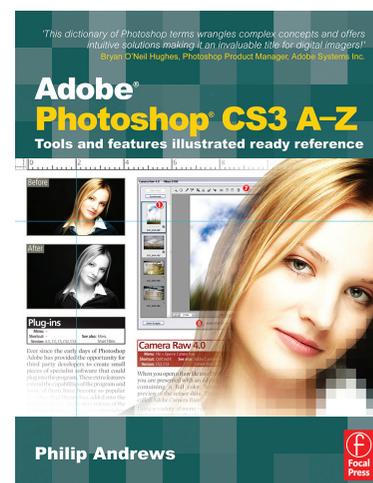
SIMPLE GUIDE: *This title helps users dodge the frustration that can occur when partaking in time-sensitive, quality working procedures*

Summary: This title shepherds Photoshop users in the right direction. Colour-coded tabs, Feature Summary boxouts and tips and reminders of important techniques provide a practical publication.

Rating: **3/5**