5 Editing images

Using PhotoImpact SE

While some people are content to use clip-art and other free images available all over the Internet, others want to add a personal touch, or even design all of the images for their Web site themselves. HoTMetaL PRO comes with Ulead's PhotoImpact SE image editing tools, which make it possible to do the following (and much more) quickly and easily:

- Adding text to images.
- Creating buttons.
- Creating shadows and frames.
- Adding transparency to images.
- Optimizing image colors for the Web.

If you didn't install PhotoImpact SE when you installed HoTMetaL PRO, you can do so now from the HoTMetaL PRO CD.

HoTMetaL PRO comes with a rich collection of image editing tools in Ulead's PhotoImpact SE. This powerful graphics program makes it easy for you to customize and create professional looking graphics for your Web pages. This manual does not cover all of the functionality of PhotoImpact SE; full documentation is available from PhotoImpact SE's online help.

Choosing an image editor/ viewer

PhotoImpact SE is the default image editor for HoTMetaL PRO, but you can change the default editor and viewer for a particular image type from the HoTMetaL PRO Editor Options dialog. These applications will be launched instead of the default for a file of that type when you click on the image and choose Edit Image File or View Image File from the pop-up menu.

- Choose Options... from the HoTMetaL PRO Editor Tools menu.
- Click on the Helper Apps tab.
- Enter the file extension for the image type in the File Extension text box. If files of that type could have more than one extension (for example, *.jpg* and *.jpeg*), you will have to make a separate entry for each.
- Click on Add New Type .
- You can choose an editor, viewer, or both. Enter the locations and filenames of of the desired applications in the Viewer and Editor text boxes (you can use the Choose... button to select them).
- Click on OK .

Web image basics

While you don't need to be a graphics wizard to insert an image into your page, before you begin it's a good idea to understand a bit about how images are displayed in the HoTMetaL PRO Editor and in Web browsers. If you're already familiar with using images on the Web, you can skip this section.

Images can enhance the appearance of your page and make it easier to communicate your ideas, but they also increase the time it takes for someone to load your page over the Internet. Here are some guidelines for using images in your Web pages:

- Try to keep your file sizes small. You can achieve this by keeping the actual dimensions of the image small, and also by reducing the number of colors that are stored in the file. You can use graphics software such as PhotoImpact SE to reduce the number of colors in individual image files.
- Don't rely exclusively on images to convey your information For example, using only a logo image to give the name of your company means that not everyone will get that important information.
- Use alternate text for images. Providing a short text description of the image in its ALT attribute makes your page accessible to more people. Not only do some Web surfers still use text-based browsers like *Lynx*, or surf with images turned off in their browsers to speed up download time, but also people with visual impairments use voice synthesis technology to surf the Web. By taking the time to enter a meaningful description of your image you don't exclude these people from sharing your Web page.
- Don't use background images that make it difficult to read the text of the page.

Available image formats

HoTMetaL PRO can display many different image formats (for example, BMP, TIFF, JPEG, PNG, GIF) in the document window. Not all of these image formats are available to Web browsers, however, so you should convert the images before you upload them to the Internet or an intranet. The most common image format on the web is GIF.

All browsers that are capable of displaying images can display GIF files. Most newer browsers can also display JPEG images, and some browsers can display other platform-specific image types. If you want your Web pages to be viewed by the broadest possible audience, however, make sure that your images are in GIF or JPEG format.

> **Note** The HoTMetaL PRO Editor also supports the PNG image format (portable network graphic), which is a standard file format endorsed by the World Wide Web Consortium. While few browsers currently display this graphics format inline, future releases of Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator will support PNG graphics.

GIF or JPEG?

While GIF files were once the standard image format on the Web, most browsers now support JPEG files as well, and many people are confused about which file format is 'better' for their Web images.

In fact, the two file formats are both good at specific tasks. The GIF format uses a maximum of 256 colors, and uses combinations of these to create colors beyond that number. The GIF format is better for displaying images that have been designed using a graphics program, like logos, icons, and buttons. JPEG files can contain millions of colors, and are much better for photographic images.

GIF images come in two different versions and have some extra functionality that JPEGs do not. You can save GIF images in GIF 87 or GIF 89a format. GIF 89a is newer and has the following features that GIF 87 and JPEG files do not:

- *Interlacing* – if you save a GIF 89a image as *interlaced*, the browser will be able to display the image as it loads, getting gradually crisper and clearer until it is finished. Interlaced GIFs have slightly larger file sizes than non-interlaced GIFs, so you will have to decide whether the interlacing effect is worth the extra download time for your images.

- *Transparency* – with GIF 89a format images you can set a single color to be *transparent*, that is, it will allow the background color or image to show through it. Transparency is most commonly used to make the rectangular background canvas of an image invisible; this feature can be very effective in Web page design. The image editing software included with HoTMetaL PRO, Ulead PhotoImpact SE, makes it easy to save transparent GIFs (see page 49).
- *Animated* GIFS – GIF 89a images can also be *animated* using special software. Animated GIF images are simply a number of GIF images saved into a single file and looped. Netscape Navigator and Microsoft Internet Explorer can both display animated GIFs, but many other browsers cannot, and may not be able to display even the first image in the loop. Use animated GIFs with caution. HoTMetaL PRO includes Ulead's GIF Animator software so you can create your own animated GIF images.

JPEG images don't give you the option of including transparency or of interlacing images, but they do allow you to specify the degree of file compression so that you can create a balance between image quality and file size. To learn more about how to do this using Ulead's PhotoImpact SE, see page 42.

Image color

One of the most difficult aspects of working with computer images—especially over the Internet—is color. Good Web designers must always keep in mind that the images they put on the Web may look different on different machines depending on the user's display capabilities. This section gives a general overview of some image color issues. The Ulead PhotoImpact SE online help contains a detailed discussion of image colors.

Image dithering

Keep in mind that, while your images may look fine on *your* computer, they may not look as good on other computers that may have fewer colors in their displays. Many users will have computers that have 8 bit displays, that is, they can display a maximum of 256 colors. This means that if a user loads a true-color (millions of colors) JPEG image, the browser has to use two pixels of different colors in combination to create colors above the 256 colors available. This process is called *dithering*. Because dithering uses two pixels to create a single color, it reduces the image quality.

Browser palettes

In addition, Web browsers use their own internal color palettes (tables of pre-defined colors available to create color images) to display images, which can sometimes result in your true-color images looking different in your browser. Many of the images provided with HoTMetaL PRO are true-color images, and may lose some of their quality on some systems and in some browsers.

Multiple palette problems

If you have a number of GIFs that will appear in a single browser window, you should take steps to maintain the image quality by making sure that their color palettes are compatible. For example, if you have two images, one with 200 shades of red and one with 150 shades of green, your total number of colors is more than 256. On systems that can display only 256 different colors, the browser will have to combine the palettes of each of these images and then dither both images to use the custom color palette. This results in lower image quality for both images. It's best to use a 'browser safe' palette for all of your GIF images. See page 50 for instructions on how to use PhotoImpact SE to save GIF images with a color palette optimized for the Web.

Introducing PhotoImpact SE

PhotoImpact SE consists of five main components:

1. PhotoImpact SE Editor, for editing and creating images (this is the default image editor for HoTMetaL PRO).
2. PhotoImpact SE Explorer, for browsing image thumbnails (this is launched when you choose Image Explorer from the HoTMetaL PRO Tools menu).
3. PhotoImpact Album SE, for organizing and grouping images.
4. PhotoImpact Viewer SE, an image viewer (this is the default image viewer for HoTMetaL PRO).
5. PhotoImpact GIF Animator, the default editor and viewer for animated GIFs.

This manual covers only certain aspects of the PhotoImpact SE Editor. You can learn about the other PhotoImpact applications from the PhotoImpact online help.

The PhotoImpact SE editor

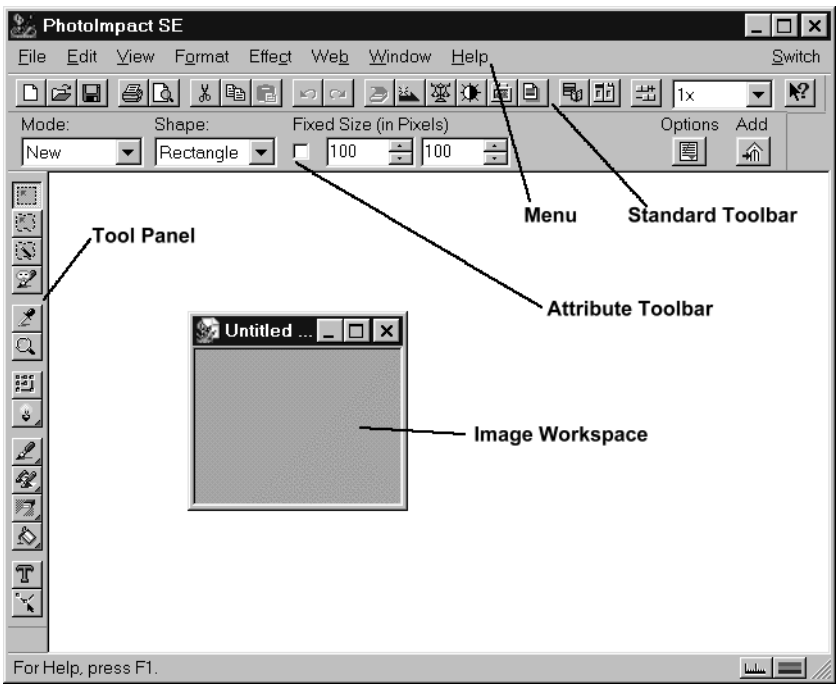
The following is a basic introduction to the PhotoImpact SE editor interface.

To open an image file with PhotoImpact SE Editor from HoTMetaL PRO:

- Right-click on the image in the HoTMetaL PRO Editor window and choose Edit Image File from the pop-up menu; this will start PhotoImpact SE and load the image file for editing.

You can also start PhotoImpact SE from the Windows Start menu, or by choosing Image Editor from the HoTMetaL PRO Tools menu, and then open the image file using the Open... command in the PhotoImpact SE File menu.

The main tools for using PhotoImpact SE are the menus, the Standard toolbar, the Tool Panel, and each tool's Attributes toolbar. All of the toolbars and panels can be moved around the screen as floating toolbars, or anchored to any part of the PhotoImpact SE window.



To configure PhotoImpact SE to display these toolbars:

- Choose Toolbars & Panels from the View menu.
- Select the toolbars you want to display; we recommend that you show the Standard Toolbar, the Attribute Toolbars, and the Tool Panel.

From this dialog, you can also set the size of the buttons and determine whether or not to show tool tips.

The Switch menu command

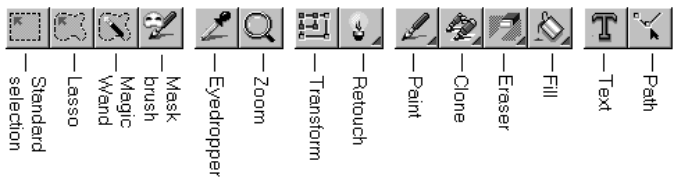
The Switch menu at the right-hand end of the menu bar of each PhotoImpact SE component gives you to access the PhotoImpact SE Editor, Viewer, Explorer, and Album. If you choose a PhotoImpact SE component from the Switch menu, that component will start, or, if it is already open, will come to the foreground.

Standard Toolbar

The Standard toolbar gives quick access to frequently needed tools and menu items.

Tool Panel

The Tool Panel provides all the editing tools you need to work on images. By selecting the appropriate tool, you can select, draw, transform, and touch up images. Each tool has its own Attribute toolbar. Some of the tools, such as the Paint tool, have different modes that you can select by clicking on the small triangle in the bottom right corner of the tool button.



Attribute Toolbars

When you select a tool in the Tool Panel, all of the attributes that you can configure for that tool appear in the Attribute toolbar. *Note*: some options may be grayed-out; typically, these options are not available in PhotoImpact SE, but are available in the full version of PhotoImpact.

Working with files

To open an image file with PhotoImpact SE Editor from HoTMetaL PRO, right-click on the image in the HoTMetaL PRO window and choose Edit Image File from the pop-up menu. This will start PhotoImpact SE Editor or PhotoImpact GIF Animator, as appropriate, and load the image file for editing.

There are two other ways to launch PhotoImpact SE:

- Choose Image Editor from the Tools menu.
- Start PhotoImpact SE from the Windows Start menu

You can then open the image file using the Open... command in the PhotoImpact SE File menu.

Using PhotoImpact SE tools on GIF image files

Most of the image filters and advanced image editing features work only in true color 24-bit images (millions of colors). If you are editing GIF files for your Web pages, they will be 256 or fewer color images. To maximize the number of features you can use when editing the image, you should increase the number of colors while you work on the image in PhotoImpact SE, then reduce the colors to save it as a GIF file again.

> **Note** The PhotoImpact SE online help has a detailed section on color, color palettes, and color depth.

To work on a GIF file in true color 24-bit mode:

- Open the GIF file in PhotoImpact SE.
- Choose Data Type in the Format menu or click on the image type button in the bottom right corner of the PhotoImpact SE window.
- If Create a New Image is checked in the fly-out menu, deselect it by clicking on it with the mouse.
- Choose true color (24-bit) from the Data Type menu; the image is converted to true color and all the image processing tools will be available.

To resave the image as a GIF file:

- Choose Data Type in the Format menu or click on the image type button in the bottom right corner of the PhotoImpact SE window.
- Choose a color depth of 256 colors or fewer.

- Click on the or choose Save from the File menu to save your changes to the GIF file at the proper color depth.

PhotoImpact SE gives you several options for color palettes, including optimizing for the WWW (see page 50).

You can also use this process to reduce the colors of high color images such as BMP and JPEG files before saving them as GIF files.

> **Note** If the file originally had only a 16 color palette, save it as a 16 color file so that you don't unnecessarily increase the file size.

Using Smart Savers to set image options

Because both GIF and JPEG files can be saved with several customizable settings, PhotoImpact SE includes *Smart Savers* for GIF and JPEG files. These make it easy to optimize your images for the Web. You can access the Smart Savers by choosing Export... from the File menu, or by choosing either the GIF or JPEG Smart Saver from the Web menu.

The GIF Smart Savers make it easy to set:

- Transparency
- Color reduction
- Color palette
- Interlacing on or off

The JPEG Smart Savers let you balance file size with image quality by setting:

- File compression
- Smoothing
- Mode
- Subsampling

You can also run batch image processes from the Smart Savers. See PhotoImpact SE's online help for more information.

Adding text to an image

With Ulead PhotoImpact SE you can easily add text to images to personalize buttons, logos, and other customized Web graphics.

To add text to an image:

- Click on the text tool icon; the mouse pointer becomes an I-bar and the text tool settings toolbar appears below the main toolbar.
- Click in the image window; this brings up the Text Entry Box dialog.
- Type the text you want to place on your graphic. To put a line break type Ctrl+Enter .
- Click on OK ; this inserts the text into the graphic.

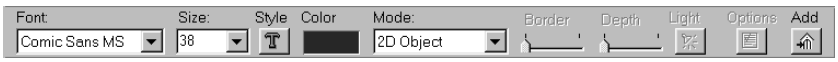
Click and drag the text to the desired location in the image.

Modifying image text

You can change the properties of the text using the PhotoImpact SE Text toolbar:

- Click on the (text) toolbar button in the Tool Panel.
- Put the pointer over the text you want to change; the pointer arrow will have a small 'T' inside it: .
- Click on the text; it will have a dotted line around it, which means it can be moved or changed.

You can now use the text Attributes toolbar to change the font, color, style, size, and other options as described in the Ulead PhotoImpact SE online help.



To edit the text:

- Click on the (text) toolbar button in the Tool Panel.
- Put the pointer over the text you want to change; the pointer arrow will have a small 'T' inside it: .
- Double-click on the text; this brings up the Text Entry Box with the current text in the editing box.
- Edit the text.

- Click on Update ; the text will be updated in the image.

Adding text shadows

A popular effect to use for creating text images is a drop-shadow beneath the text. Ulead PhotoImpact SE makes creating shadowed text easy:

- Using the text tool, move the pointer over the text until the pointer arrow has a small a small 'T' inside it: ; the text will be surrounded by a moving dotted-line *marquee*.
- Click on the text you want to shadow; it should have dotted lines around it.
- Click on the (Style) button in the Attributes Toolbar; this brings up a menu of styles.
- Choose Shadow from the style menu.

This creates a drop shadow of the text. You can change the appearance of the shadow (position, distance from the original, color, etc.) by clicking the styles button, and choosing Options from the menu.

Saving an image with text

When you add text to an image, PhotoImpact SE regards the text as a separate *object* that can be manipulated (for example, moved around or deleted) independently of the image. Most image formats—for example, GIF and JPG—do not support objects, so if you save the image in one of these formats, you will get a warning message informing you of this. In this situation the text will be 'merged' into the image, which simply means that it will become part of the image rather than residing on top of the image. You can turn this warning message off for future saves.

Web image tricks

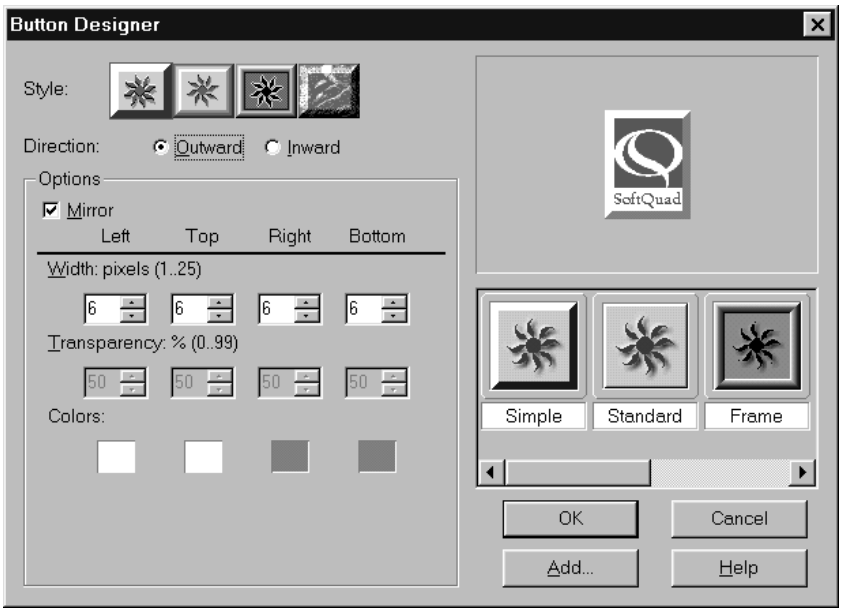
PhotoImpact SE provides tools for easily creating images suitable for Web pages. All of these tools are available from the Web menu. We have provided information on only a few of the available tools in PhotoImpact SE; you can learn about the others from the PhotoImpact SE online help.

Creating buttons

Adding graphical buttons to act as hypertext links is an easy way to give your page a sense of style. PhotoImpact SE can take a regular image and add a variety of beveled-edge button styles. While buttons tend to look better in GIF format, the greatest range of button types is available if you are working in 24-bit color; see the section on working with GIF files (page 41) for more about changing the Data Type.

To create a button effect for the image:

- Open the image in PhotoImpact SE.
- If the image has less than 24-bit color, increase the color depth using the Data Type command in the Format menu.
- Choose Button Designer... from the Web menu.



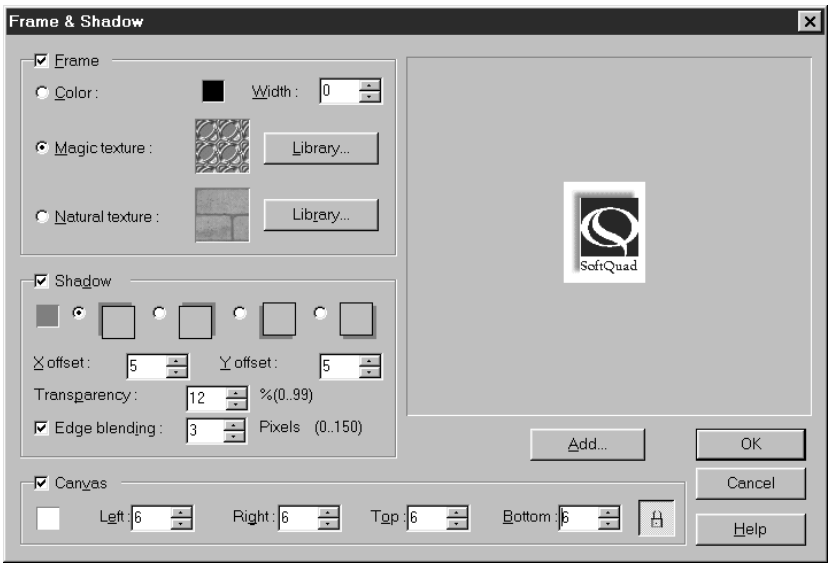
The easiest way to work with the Button Designer is to experiment until you get the effect that you want. The following options are available:

- Style – Click the style of button you want to create. The preview window will immediately display a preview of your image with that style applied.
- Direction – If you choose Outward, the button border will be added to the outside of the current image, changing its size. If you choose Inward, the button border will remain within the original borders of the image, covering part of it.
- Options – Specify the size, color, and other attributes for the button border.
- Mirror – Turn on Mirror to keep the top and left edge and the right and bottom edge sizes synchronized with each other. Turn off Mirror to set the size of each edge independently.
- Width – Set the width of the selected edge.
- Transparency – Set how much of the original image should show through the button border.

- Colors – Depending on the type of button, choose the colors to use for button borders or adjust other color attributes.
- Quick samples – The buttons in the lower panel on the right-hand side of the Button Designer are preset button settings. You can use them to create a button with a single click; then fine tune the settings if you wish.

Adding image frames and shadows

You can quickly create frames (borders) and shadows for entire images by choosing Frame Designer... from the PhotoImpact SE Web menu.



This dialog gives a number of options:

- Frame – Choose the width and color or pattern for the border; the result is displayed in the preview image. You may choose any of these types of borders for the image:
  - Color – A single color border matching that of the color square. To choose a different color, right-click on the color square and choose the desired command for selecting a new color.
  - Magic texture – Create a multi-color border matching that of the texture square. To change textures, click on Library... and choose from the samples in the Magic Texture dialog box.
  - Natural texture – Create a natural looking multi-color border matching that of the texture square. To change textures, click on Library... and choose from the samples in the Texture Library dialog box.
- Shadow – Choose the size and color of a shadow to go around the border.
  - Color and Direction – The shadow color will match that of the color square. To choose a different color, right-click on the color square and choose the desired command for selecting a new color. Then select the option that shows a shadow in the direction you want.
  - X offset, Y offset – Set the size, in pixels, of the shadow. (X is the distance of the shadow from either side, Y is the distance of the shadow from the top or bottom.)
  - Transparency – Set a higher value to allow more of the underlying image to appear through the shadow.
  - Edge blending – Set a higher value to have the shadow blend into the background more smoothly.
- Canvas – Set the size and color for the background.
  - Color – Choose a color for the background. To choose a different color, right-click on the color square and choose the desired command for selecting a new color.
  - Direction – Set the size for the background. Click on the Lock button to set the sizes individually.

Creating seamless backgrounds

Using the Shift Image... command in the PhotoImpact SE Web menu, you can adjust images so that they will tile seamlessly as a background image in your page. The Shift Image dialog displays the image as your browser would. Simply use the mouse to shift the preview image until the tiling looks right. If you need to adjust the offset more precisely than you can with the mouse, you can use the Horizontal Offset and Vertical Offset spin boxes to choose precise values.

Creating transparent GIFs

A transparent GIF is a GIF image in which one color is designated as transparent, that is, it allows background images or colors to show through. You can create transparent GIF images using the PhotoImpact SE GIF SmartSaver....

To create a transparent area in a GIF image:

- Choose GIF SmartSaver... from the Web menu, or choose Export... from the File menu and choose GIF SmartSaver... from the pop-up menu.
- In the GIF SmartSaver dialog, choose Pick Color from the Transparency pull-down menu.
- Click on the Transparent Area Preview Color square to choose a color that will represent the transparent color.
- Move the mouse pointer over the image on the left (the original image) and hold down the Ctrl key; the pointer will turn into an eyedropper tool. (If the image already contains a transparent color you can make it solid by holding down the Alt key and clicking the mouse button.)
- Click on the color you want to make transparent; any part of the image that contains that color will now take on the preview color you chose, and this will be displayed in both the uncompressed and compressed preview images.
- Click on the Save As... button to save the image with the transparency information.

Using Web-safe colors

PhotoImpact SE gives you the option of saving GIF images with a color palette optimized for Web browsers. If you save your images using this palette, you will ensure that browsers on all platforms will be able to display your images with the best quality available to the user's computer. To save your images using the color palette optimized for the Web:

- Choose Data Type from the Format menu; (if you turn on Create a New Image, a new copy of your image will be created, leaving your original image intact).
- Choose WWW Browser Optimized from the palette choices.

The image now has a color palette that is most suited to Web browsers.

PhotoImpact SE tricks

- *Animating images* – Animated GIF files have become a popular feature of the Web. HoTMetaL PRO includes the PhotoImpact GIF Animator for creating animated GIF images. *Please note:* if you open an animated GIF in the PhotoImpact SE editor and save it again, the image file will no longer be an animated GIF; the first image of the animation will be saved and the others will be lost. Neither the PhotoImpact SE Editor, Viewer, or Explorer display GIF animations. If you're unsure whether a file is an animation, view it in an animations-capable viewer (such as a Web browser or the PhotoImpact GIF Animator) to verify its format. To learn how to create animated GIFs, consult the PhotoImpact GIF Animator online help.
- *Making basic shapes* – Rectangles, squares, ellipses, circles, and polygons are easy to make with PhotoImpact SE once you know the tricks. PhotoImpact SE does not have a specific tool for creating these shapes, so it requires an extra step.

  To create an outlined rectangle, square, ellipse, or circle:

  - Click on the (Standard Selection) toolbar button in the Tool Panel.
  - Choose the shape you want to create from the Attributes toolbar.

- Drag the mouse in the editing window to produce a selection area, defined by a dotted line. To make the selection a specific size, check the Fixed size checkbox in the Attributes toolbar, and set the size of the area.
- Right-click on the area and choose Border from the pop-up menu; this brings up a dialog box.
- Choose the thickness of the border.
- Click on OK . The selection will now be surrounded by a double dotted line.
- Click on the Fill tool icon.
- Choose a fill color for the box outline from the Attributes toolbar.
- Apply the fill between the selection outlines (use the Zoom tool to do this if you have made a narrow border).

To create an irregular polygon:

- Click on the (Lasso) toolbar button in the Tool Panel.
- Click in the editing window to start drawing the figure.
- Move the mouse to the second point in your drawing; a line will follow the pointer from the location where you clicked the mouse. Click the mouse again, the pointer will now be connected to both points where you clicked before, creating a three-pointed shape.
- If you click and drag the mouse, you will draw a freehand line rather than a series of connected points.
- Continue clicking and moving the pointer until you have the shape you like.
- Double-click the mouse to stop drawing; this creates a selection area surrounded by dashed lines.
- Right-click on the area and choose Border from the pop-up menu; this brings up a dialog box.
- Choose the thickness of the border.
- Click on OK . The selection will now be surrounded by a double dotted line.
- Click on the Fill tool icon.

- Choose a fill color for the box outline from the Attributes toolbar.
- Apply the fill between the selection outlines (use the Zoom tool to do this if you have made a narrow border).

- **Right-click color choosing** – When you right-click on a color box in dialog boxes or the Attributes toolbar, a pop-up menu appears giving you a choice of color choosers. The eyedropper tool allows you to choose a color from the current image so that you can be sure of a match.