



News

This Month in the News

Another beautiful month gone. This month AH Digital FX Studios released its HTML version of AHFX.net. This upcoming month will be focused around getting the Flash version up and running. This month we cover professional tips on how to take great pictures, and for all of you non-photographers in the group, we will cover basic design composition elements to help you create amazing graphics and designs.

Contest Winners

We had two winners for our Logo Contest. Their work is shown below.



Rolling Hills — James Hackworth - Graphic Designer

jim@hackworthdesign.com

Hackworth Design - Specializing in logo design and web graphics <http://www.hackworthdesign.com>



Stacy Law Firm — Monika Anderson - Graphic Designer / Illustrator

visualizegraphics@yahoo.com

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

Writers

AH Digital FX Studios is looking for Actionscript 2.0 coders to support the Flash Community and submit tutorials on Actionscript 2.0. All submissions may be sent to info@ahfx.net.

We are also looking for graphic designers that would like to be published in our monthly e-list. We are looking for designers to teach solid principles that everyone can practice and use in their designs. All submissions may be sent to info@ahfx.net

Unique Artwork

AH Digital FX Studios is calling to the graphic designers out there. We are looking for unique artwork to be displayed in subsequent editions of the E-list. All artwork submitted needs to be in jpg format and should include all pertinent contact information, so that we can give credit to the correct

individual. Owners of artwork chosen for the E-list will be notified via e-mail of the edition that will contain their artwork. Send submissions to info@ahfx.net. *Not all entries will be placed in the E-list. Void where prohibited. Contact AH Digital FX Studios for more information.*



Toolbox

Photography - Take your best shot

There is a great difference between taking pictures and capturing that perfect moment that will forever be cherished thanks to your foresight. All great images play on our emotions. This month we will try to help you learn to identify how to create the greatest emotional impact through your photographs and designs and how to tell what stock image is the “best” shot.

8 tips to never forget

1. **Steady as she goes** — Avoid “camera shake” by resting your elbows on your chest or using a wall to balance yourself. If you have a big problem, consider a tripod.
2. **Never shoot into the Sun** — Place the sun behind you and off to one side. This will give you subtle shadows for depth and brighter colors.
3. **Keep it Simple** — Minimize the clutter in your pictures. Focus on the object you want to shoot and frame the shot around that object. Zoom in to get just what you want.
4. **Vantage Point** — Carefully choose the position of your shot. The optimal height isn’t always eye level. Scout out the area. Take a different perspective. Photographers see the world in a different way. Why not show other people a perspective they’ve never seen before? If it is worth the time to take one picture, it is worth the time to take three.
5. **Include People** — Many people like the “human” aspect of many photographs. It helps us pick up on the emotion the picture is trying to produce.
6. **Variety is the Spice of Life** — Shoot many different “types” of shots: close-ups, landscapes, macro shots, portraits, etc. You can still keep the same “look and feel” to your shots and not have them look all exactly the same.
7. **Add Depth** — Although printed in 2D, give the viewers cues to the relative size of things to add depth. Place people, trees, etc. in the foreground to give the viewer an idea of the size of the subject.
8. **Rule of Thirds** — How many pictures have you seen where the subject is smack dab in the middle of the picture. Try splitting the image into thirds vertically and horizontally. Now place your subject on one of those thirds lines.

Toolbox (cont.)

Breaking the Rules

The trick to breaking the rules is by first living by them. As you follow the tips above, you will see where you could bend or break the rule to get an even better shot. Learn the principles first, then learn the exceptions. With the use of digital cameras becoming so prevalent, taking extra pictures has increasingly easier.



Try this: Shoot your pictures using the tips above. When you are finished, shoot 5 pictures that breaks at least one of the rules above. Compare the pictures side by side and see which ones have a great emotional impact. If you continually take an extra 5 pictures of a subject by breaking the rules above, you will begin to see where it is appropriate to break the rules.

Design Concepts

Back to the basics. Many times we get so caught up in the moment that we can't look past the project in front of us to see what we need to do to make this good design great. I was always taught that practice doesn't make perfect. Perfect practice makes perfect. Here are some basic design concepts to remind us of what we should always remember.

Line

The line is the simplest design concept. Line directions are very important. Lines that are horizontal imply rest or tranquility. Vertical lines show power and respect. Diagonal lines suggest action. Think of it like a tree. You see a tree standing up, tall and strong, dominating the world around it. If a tree is tipping over, you expect it to continue moving until it hits the ground (motion). A tree that has fallen down is not as forboding as the one standing up. Here is a fun test for you. The next time you are in the supermarket look at which ways the lights run compared to the isles. I'd bet that most of them run perpendicular to the isles. It has been proven that the lines of lights running across the isle instead of with the isle actually make people walk slower and spend more time in the store.

Design Concepts (cont.)

Space

Space is the area possessed by connected lines. There is positive or foreground space, where the main object resides. There is also negative space or background space. Each of these must be taken into consideration when designing. Is the positive space outweighing the negative space? How does the negative space help draw the eye to the main object?

Color

Thousands of hours of research has gone into how color affects people. Each color has a meaning associated with it and it varies from culture to culture. Blue has been used for many years to show stability. Warm colors (yellows, reds, oranges) are opposed to cool colors (purples, blues, greens). We associated our previous experiences with these colors and thus can call up specific emotions with different colors.

Balance

Every design needs some type of balance. Whether using positive and negative space or coordinating images to “balance out a page, balance can be achieved through text and images.

Try this: Do a basic design in all black and white. Next add one small color graphic to the one side of the design. Notice how much the “small” color image outweighs the rest of the design. Color is extremely powerful and must be carefully balanced out when laying out your designs.

Large objects normally weigh more than smaller objects (except as noted above). Darker objects are heavier than lighter objects. Thicker lines imply more weight than thinner lines. Carefully “weigh” out all of your designs.

Alignment

Alignment is something most of us do subconsciously. We are always placing things in lines, whether it is left, right, or center aligned. Center alignment implies more formality than a left aligned design. (Go look at your diploma. Bet it is center aligned). Be careful with right aligned blocks of text. These are difficult to read and slow down the speed at which a person can move through your text.

Repetition

Because humans are always looking for patterns, we love repetition. Everything from poles



Toolbox (cont.)

on a fence to windows on a skyscraper, people love repetition. Repetition can help a company with branding. One of the great uses of repetition is in layouts. Use a grid to create your layouts and stick to it. People will start to understand and expect a certain object in a certain place. For example, ever notice where the “check out” button is on most web sites. Most people have come to expect that the purchase or check out button will be placed on the right hand side of the web site.

Contest

Best 7 Tip Picture

The rules for this contest are as follows:

1. The photo must be 500 K or smaller.
2. The photo must follow at least 7 of the tips.
3. The photo must be your original work.
4. You must agree to let AHFX publish the work in the e-list
5. The top two photographs will be included in the next E-list.
6. We will only accept images in .jpg format.
7. All entries must come from e-list subscribers. (You may subscribe and enter the contest on the same day.)
8. All entries must be received by October 23rd, 2004.



Contact

Contact Information

Thank you for joining AH Digital FX Studios' E-list. If you would like AH Digital FX Studios to do an in-depth evaluation of your current web site, email us at info@ahfx.net. If you have any questions, require our services, or know of someone that might need our services please contact us with the information below.



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