

TX Unlimited, Inc.

Adobe Illustrator for Sun Adds Speed and Convenience for High-End Photo Retoucher

Adobe Illustrator™ for Sun™ *In Image Editing Service Bureaus*



**Jeff Raby, chief artist, and Matt Keefe, president,
TX Unlimited, Inc.**

Key Benefits Summary

- Adobe Illustrator software for Sun interfaces easily with Adobe Photoshop™ software.
- New Adobe Type Installer software gives UNIX® system users easy access to the Adobe Type Library and the thousands of typefaces available in the Type 1 format.
- Because Adobe Illustrator has a consistent user interface in the Macintosh®, Windows® and UNIX environments, artists can change stations with no loss in productivity.
- Adobe Illustrator on Sun systems takes advantage of the superior networking capabilities of the UNIX system, providing file transfer rates of six to ten megabytes per second.

“An 8 x 10-inch color transparency at our typical resolution—1270 pixels per inch—is a 350-megabyte file,” says Matt Keefe, president of TX Unlimited. “It’s just not possible to do production work on a file that large on a Macintosh system. That’s why we handle those files on the UNIX platform and use Adobe Illustrator to add text and effects to continuous-tone images.”

TX Unlimited specializes in image editing and manipulation, including photo retouching, color correction and compositing. Located in San Francisco, the three-year-old company has seven artists using Adobe Illustrator on projects for advertising agencies, magazine publishers and commercial photographers; and such high-profile clients as Levi Strauss & Co., Citibank and Dreyer’s Ice Cream.

The Right Tool for High-Volume, High-Quality Production

TX Unlimited receives files created on Apple® Macintosh, Windows and UNIX platforms. The company uses all three platforms and needs cross-platform applications so it can assign a job to the platform best suited to getting the work done quickly and correctly. Because so many jobs involve adding type to photographs, TX needed an application with excellent type-handling capabilities, that was platform independent and had an easy interface with Adobe Photoshop digital image editing software, the company’s key production application.

“With Adobe Illustrator 5.5 running on our fastest platform, we can create imagery and

add type in less time, and that’s critical for a high-volume, high-quality service bureau like ours,” says Jeff Raby, chief artist at TX. “Now we can work on any file on any platform and transfer the most complex files to the Sun systems.”

Having Adobe Illustrator on Sun systems allows TX to take advantage of the superior networking capabilities of UNIX workstations. “We often send files from one place to another, because one system may be scheduled for a big job or because we want to preview an image for a client on a specific monitor,” says Keefe. “In a production environment, the speed at which you can transfer files is money, and with our Ethernet 10T network, we get a sustained transfer rate of six to ten megabytes per second retrieving files from the server and sending them to a UNIX workstation. That’s a rate most Macintosh and PC systems can’t match.”

TX’s final product is typically an RGB—rather than CMYK—transparency. “With Adobe Illustrator for Sun, we can convince even more clients to send us files in Adobe Illustrator format rather than in the format of a page layout program,” says Keefe. “Adobe Illustrator is a much better tool for RGB output.”

Receiving files in Adobe Illustrator format saves TX from having to convert them from other formats less well suited to the company’s workflow. “We often create trade show images, which may be backlit 16 x 20-inch or 30 x 40-inch Duratrans or C-prints,” says Raby. “Creating those



images is all done photographically—there's no dot pattern—so all the type must be integrated into the image. When we receive an image that's been created on a UNIX machine we can immediately place it into Adobe Illustrator and enhance it by adding graphical effects or banner type. Adobe Illustrator is perfect for that job.”

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—Jeff Raby, Chief Artist, TX Unlimited.

Working Productively in a Multiplatform Environment

“Our artists are all cross-platform trained and all bounce back and forth among platforms,” says Keefe. “Because Adobe Illustrator runs in Macintosh, Windows and UNIX environments and has a consistent user interface everywhere, the artists can change stations with no loss in productivity.”

Adobe Illustrator 5.5 for Sun makes the UNIX platform more attractive for yet another reason: New Adobe Type Installer software, which ships with the application, gives UNIX users easy access to the Adobe Type Library and the thousands of typefaces available in the Type 1 format. “Even though our UNIX systems are faster, we preferred the Macintosh when a file required working with a number of fonts,” says Keefe. “That's because managing fonts in UNIX was so much trouble. But version 5.5 changes all that. Now we can work with the fonts our clients want us to without having to jump through hoops. Adobe has solved another major problem for multiplatform shops like ours.”

TX Unlimited, Inc. Systems at-a-Glance

Hardware

Sun SPARCstation® 1
Sun SPARCstation 2
Sun SPARCstation 10
Macintosh Quadra® 950
ScanMate 5000 RGB drum scanner
Intel486™ PCs
Kodak® XL7700 dye-sublimation proofers
CSI fire 1000 8 x 10-inch transparency film recorder

Software

Adobe Illustrator
Adobe Photoshop
Adobe Premiere™
EDR
Infini-D
Autodesk® 3D Studio

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