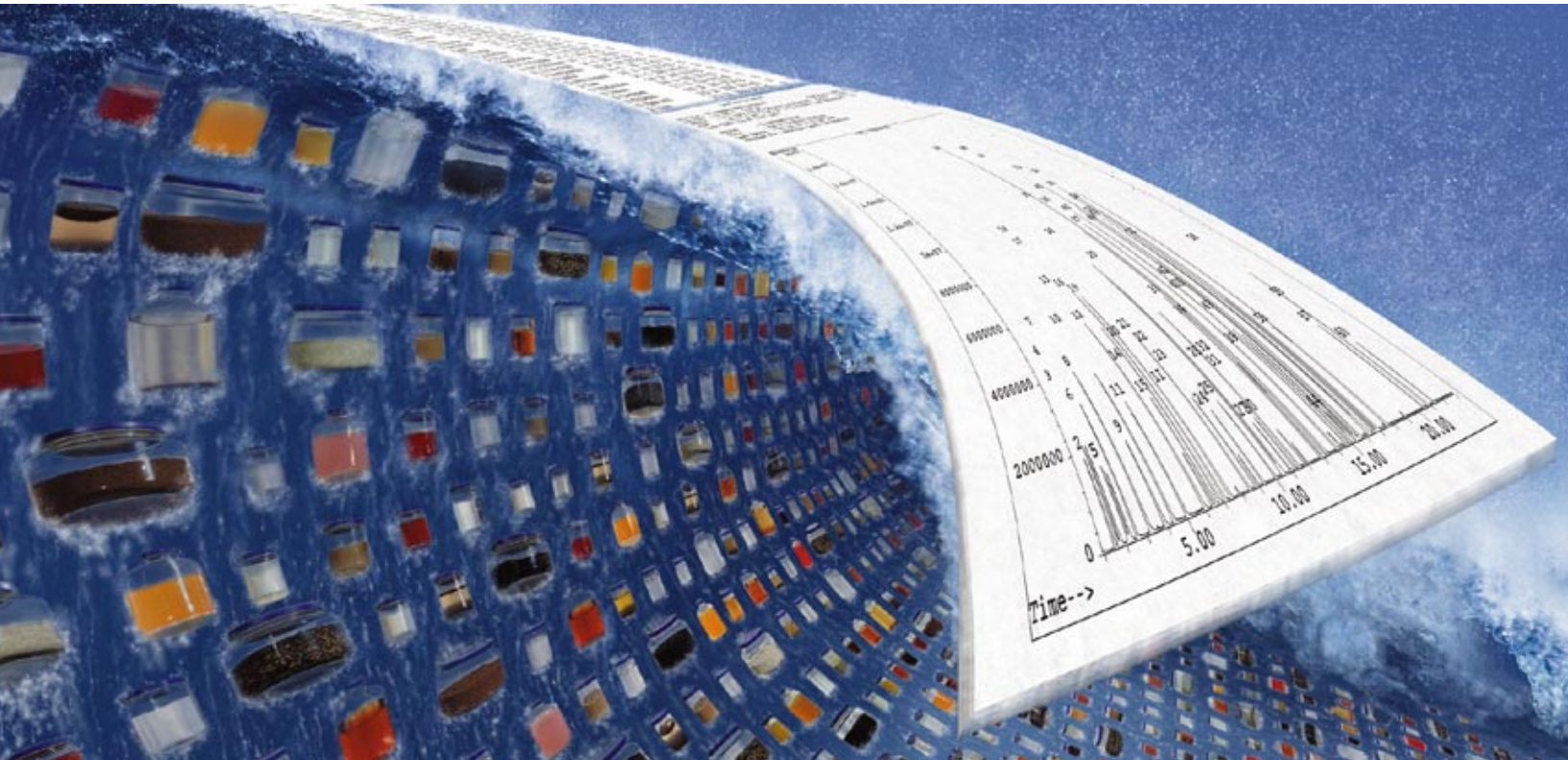


Adobe Photoshop™

for Macintosh® and Windows™



TX Unlimited, Inc.



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

The artists at San Francisco-based TX Unlimited can't leave "good enough" alone. Specializing in image editing and manipulation, from photo retouching to color correction to compositing, this 14-person operation has a reputation for perfection. In just three years, TX Unlimited has built a client roster that includes corporations such as Levi Strauss, Citibank, Wells Fargo and Dreyer's Ice Cream, as well as several advertising agencies, book publishers and commercial photographers.

Multiplatform Options

Unlike many image-editing and manipulation shops that standardize on a single computing platform, TX Unlimited offers cross-platform services for Windows, Macintosh and UNIX® users. Adobe

Photoshop digital image-processing software is at the core of the operation, running on all three platforms.

"Photo manipulation is our focus," says TX Unlimited President Matt Keefe. "Adobe Photoshop is the most powerful program out there, and its cross-platform compatibility is crucial to the way we work. Using a platform that's compatible with the client's is important when we are working on several iterations of a project."

The ease with which Adobe Photoshop files can be moved from one platform to another is valuable to TX Unlimited and its clients. "For example, if all our Windows PCs are busy, we can do a Windows-based job on a Mac® and then move the file to a PC, or vice versa," says Keefe.



TX Unlimited uses Adobe Photoshop for Macintosh or Windows to manipulate sections of images and then moves the sections to a Sun™ workstation for completion.

“We use the UNIX-based Sun workstations for preparing and manipulating large Adobe Photoshop files, generally about 350 megabytes for a high-resolution 8- by 10-inch transparency. The UNIX systems have adjunct processors and striped disk arrays that are ideal for handling large files.”

Serving a Variety of Clients

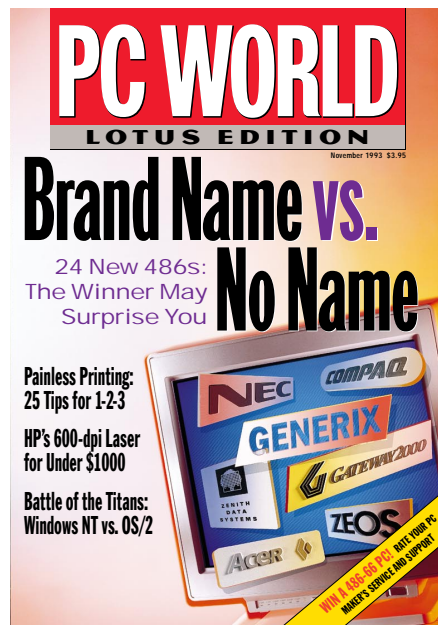
Preparing images for a wide range of printed pieces such as magazine covers, advertisements, brochures and corporate collateral, every image that comes into TX Unlimited passes through Adobe Photoshop at some point. For example, TX Unlimited prepares the cover for *PC World* magazine. “They send us a low-resolution comp of what they want, and we do the color correction, special effects and compositing to produce a final high-resolution transparency that goes right to the separator,” says Keefe.

TX Unlimited chief artist Jeff Raby describes the process. “Typically, a cover will combine elements created in Adobe Illustrator™, such as type treatments, with scanned imagery and gradations. For a recent issue, we wanted a 3-D effect. The image showed a computer monitor in a corner, with manufacturers’ logos ‘exploding’ out of the screen. Some of the logos were in Adobe Illustrator format, some were scanned-in line art, and others had to be taken out of another image.

“We cleaned up the logos, brought them into Adobe Photoshop and started adding perspective to give the flat rectangles dimension,” he says. “We added lighting effects, orange from one side and yellow from the other, with cooler lighting applied from top center. Treating each logo separately, I used the large brush and applied gradations to the sides for perspective. The client

was present, so we did a lot of ‘tilt this more, rotate that’ sorts of variations.”

The retouching capabilities of Adobe Photoshop were invaluable in restoring 62 Ansel Adams color photographs.



Cover prepared for *PC World* magazine using Adobe Photoshop software.

“With those masterpieces, we felt a responsibility to serve the photographer’s vision,” says Keefe. “Over decades, colors had leached out of the original transparencies, and we didn’t have any exact guidelines to follow. Luckily, Adams made meticulous notes on his work, and they were helpful in understanding his intentions.

“We made subtle and controlled color adjustments with the Adobe Photoshop tools,” he says, “working at lower resolutions, making color moves, adjusting hue and saturation, and adjusting tonal curves and histograms. On some of the images, the Dodge and Burn tools saved us literally hours of work.” The results of the painstaking effort by the TX Unlimited team can be seen in the stunning book *Ansel in Color*, published by Little, Brown & Co.

Adobe Photoshop Enhancements

Keefe has quickly developed an appreciation for some of the new features in Adobe Photoshop 3.0. “The Layers feature is going to make a huge difference in our compositing, not only when we assemble an image the first time, but also when we need to go back and change an element. I can’t imagine a user who wouldn’t welcome such freedom to experiment creatively.”

Keefe also cites other tools in version 3.0 that will help TX Unlimited retouchers work more effectively. “I like how easily you can do interactive color adjustments with the Sponge tool; it could have saved us a lot of time on the Ansel Adams project,” he says. “And we’re looking forward to using the Filter Factory plug-in to create custom filters for corporate and advertising clients.

“Adobe Photoshop is so central to our business that we take a real interest in the features added with each release,” Keefe concludes. “It’s encouraging that Adobe listens to users and continues to improve the software. With our need for cross-platform compatibility, there’s really no alternative.”

TX Unlimited, Inc. Systems at-a-Glance

Hardware

Intel®-based 486 PCs, 128 MB of RAM
Macintosh Quadra® 900 and 950, each with 256 MB of RAM
Macintosh IIci with Radius™ Rocket card
128 MB of RAM
Sun SPARCstation® workstations with 64 to 256 MB of RAM
ScanMate 5000 RGB drum scanner, 5000 dpi
Kodak® XL7700 dye subproofers
CSI Fire 1000 8- by 10-inch transparency film recorder

Key Software

Adobe Photoshop
EDR
Kodak Premier
Adobe Illustrator
Adobe Premiere™
Infini-D
Autodesk® 3D Studio®
Retrospect Archive

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