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Product Review: Paint Shop Pro

By Richard Lowe

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Many years ago I needed to create some graphics. Nothing fancy, just some images for documentation at work. I had used several graphics programs in the past, none of which really did the job that I needed. I wanted a simple interface, a lot of power, and most important of all, I didn't want to spend half the day waiting for the graphics program to catch up to me.

I considered Adobe Photoshop, but soon realized it was priced way over my budget. So I kept looking, and before long found a great product called Paint Shop Pro. I downloaded the evaluation version, and quickly realized that I had found a gem.

Paint Shop Pro supported everything that I needed, including layers, vector and bit editing modes, a magic wand, and dozens of other functions. The program also supports Photoshop filters, brushes, patterns and far more other things than I have even bothered to explore.

What I like about Paint Shop Pro is simple: the program is very fast (even on a relatively slow machine) and it's inexpensive (less than a hundred bucks). It also has some very nice features, and I believe that PSP (as it is affectionately known by many of it's users) has a larger user base than Adobe Photoshop (this is at least true among the webmasters with whom I communicate).

Now, keep in mind that I've never really used Adobe Photoshop much. Just a one week training class and half a dozen graphics for a manual that I had to work on (at one of my consulting jobs many years ago.) So I cannot say that Paint Shop Pro is better or

worse than the Adobe product.

What I do know is Paint Shop Pro will easily meet the graphics needs of virtually all webmasters. I've found that it will do everything that I've demanded, every single thing without fail.

I am especially fond of a unique feature (at least I think it's unique) known as tubes. In the words of the vendor (Jasc Software), "The Picture Tube Brush allows you to paint with a variety of objects without having to draw them. With a tree and foliage tube, you could paint a forest with just a few brush strokes. You can also create, collect, or share tubes with your

friends and colleagues."

For example, there is a tube with a dozen different leaves in different shapes and positions. As you use the tube, the leaves get scattered at different angles where you place the brush. This way you can draw a really nice looking tree without having to position and draw every leaf yourself.

I would recommend this product without hesitation to any webmaster who needs to create graphics of any kind (including animation, since Paint Shop Pro comes with another product called Animation Shop).

Richard Lowe Jr. is the webmaster of Internet Tips And Secrets at <http://www.internet-tips.net> – Visit our website any time to read over 1,000 complete FREE articles about how to improve your internet profits, enjoyment and knowledge.

Paint Shop Pro 9 Named PC Magazine's 'Best of the Year'

By Julian Frnandez

Paint Shop Pro 9 Named PC Magazine's 'Best of the Year' by Julian Frnandez

Congratulations! You really deserve the award. With your unique and innovative addition to Paint Shop Pro 9, it is indeed an award-winning quality.

I am also a witness to the things Paint Shop Pro 9 can do. Different from the previous versions, PSP 9 offers a brand new twist to my printing experience. These are the addition of a number of new enhancement filters like Digital Camera Noise Removal, Chromatic Aberration Removal, Fill Flash, and Backlighting. These additions made my photo editing as well as my photo painting more fun and the result more professional.

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PSP 9 also helps me to enhance existing photos. I also love the new Symmetric Shape tool. It helps me to design and add customizable polygon and star shapes, and new Text tool options gave me the freedom to produce vertical text and improve the rendering of smaller font sizes.

Another great and very useful addition with the PSP 9 is its amazingly impressive drawing capabilities. It adds completely new art-based painting functionality clearly inspired by the market leader, Corel Painter. Additional feature that version 8 does not have, is the new Art Media layers on which you can paint with a range of new natural media tools - Oil, Chalk, Palette Knife, Pastel, Crayon, Colored Pencil, and Marker – each designed to closely mimic its real world counterpart. Using the Oil Brush tool, for example, as you drag onscreen the multi-bristled brush lays down multiple pigments that interact with both the underlying paint and canvas texture until the brush stroke realistically runs out of paint.

With that, I personally acclaim PSP 9 because from a simple shareware bitmap editor it evolved to become a professional photo editor.

Once again congratulations!

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