

Feature Article: Making Better Web Graphics that grab your attention and load FAST.

Is it possible to create quality web graphics that grabs attention and load fast at the same time? Take a look at the illustration samples at our site and see what I talking about

Understanding the basics of GIF and JPEG compression will not only help you choose the best format for your Web graphics but will also enable you to create graphics that look better and load faster. Many graphics programs and compression utilities allow you to compare an image in different formats with various palette and compression settings before you actually save the file. While this takes much of the guess work out of choosing the best format for an image, it's still a good idea to have a basic understanding of how each type of compression works. With that knowledge, you can make changes to the graphic before compression takes place, creating an image that compresses to a smaller file size and looks better, too.

Optimize for Best Images

Q. I was asked a question by one of my customer's earlier this year. How do I put together a quality web site with great pictures that don't take a long time to load on older equipment or just in general?

As a general rule, the following guideline will give you the best quality images with the smallest file sizes: GIF: images with large areas of solid color, such as vector clip art. JPEG: images with many shaded or gradient colors, such as photos. GIF Compression & Optimization GIF compression is lossless. This means that there is no loss of information when the file is compressed. When decompressed the image will be the same as before compression. Use this file format to save line drawings, text, or even small photos.

The compression scheme for GIF format works by identifying repetitions or runs of color within the image and identifying these repetitions with an algorithm. The more repetition and the longer the color runs are, the smaller the image will be after compression. To better understand how this works:

JPEG Compression & Optimization

The JPEG format is most often used for photographs. When decompressed, the image will not be the same as before compression. It will have lost some of the information contained in the original file. Each time you save a JPEG image it will lose more information. For this reason, it is best to save an original of your image in a lossless format (such as TIF, PSD, etc.), and work from that file when making changes. JPEG compression does not work with runs of color, like GIF compression. Instead it breaks the image into zones and throws away subtle color differences. When saving an image in JPEG format, you can select how much compression to use and, therefore, how much information will be lost. The

more the image is compressed, the more the quality is reduced but the smaller the file size becomes. This format has overhead, so it is not necessarily a good format for small photos. Generally images that are smaller than 100 x 100 pixels should be saved in GIF format. Sometimes experimenting is the only way to determine which format will give you the smallest file size with the best quality.

W3C - World Wide Web Consortium

One of the most popular and mind bending questions I get is. Where do I find all those nifty web tools and solutions for graphic tools code validation?

The W3C writes the standards for the Web. HTML, XHTML, CSS, XML, DOM and many more are all produced and maintained by them. This site is not for the faint of heart but contains everything you need to know about the standards and much more.

<http://www.w3.org/> and also take a look at Macromedia MX web site for great development software.

Now if you're looking for a site that will give you all the tools and a whole lot more. Here is a link that will knock your socks off it's web reference at <http://www.webreference.com/> this site has Java Scripts, news letters, code tools, services, references, database, how to articles and a the list goes on.

Where do I go from here?

As we discussed in this article there are a lot of ways to find resources and to create great graphics. Now I can not tell a lie you will have to do some work. But don't get stressed if you need help contact Albany Graphics Design Studio NOW.

Contact Information info@albanygraphics.com

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A SPECIAL REQUEST: You're not the only one awake at 3 o'clock this morning. Please forward Ag Graphics to those friends, family and business associates who may be walking the floors too!!