

What Have They Done To My InDesign?

by Kevin Slimp, April 2007

Holy Moly! I'm speechless. And if you know me, that's a rare happening. I just installed the prerelease of **Creative Suite 3** and I'm blown away by the speed, special effects and added features available in the latest rendition of Adobe's masterpiece.

With new versions of Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, Dreamweaver and Flash, among others, CS3 is the most anticipated upgrade since Apple's move to OS X. There's no way I could adequately review all the applications available in CS3 in one column, so I've decided to begin by taking a quick look at InDesign.

Upon opening InDesign CS3 for the first time, the user is immediately drawn to a sleeker desktop, with tools and panels (palettes are so five minutes ago) reminiscent of Macromedia's desktops. And I thought Adobe's purchase ... er, I mean merger ... with Macromedia was just about Flash and Dreamweaver. Where palettes once existed, now the user finds panels, which are more easily accessible and less intrusive than the palettes of previous versions.

And what's this? The **Effects** panel looks eerily similar to Layer Styles in Photoshop.

OK. I can't wait any longer. I began my journey through the new InDesign by creating some text on the page. I had to see what these effects were all about. Just as I had hoped, they're very similar to Layer Styles in Photoshop. Sure enough, with the tap of a button, I was creating special effects like shadows, bevels, embosses, inner glows, outer glows, and feathers within seconds. And they look just as clean as the effects I've been creating in Photoshop.

One feature which has been mentioned on several blogs concerning InDesign CS3 seemed too good to be true. Last year, word leaked out that InDesign CS3 would include the ability to place multiple photos at once. This, I had to see.

So without peeking at the manual (prerelease software doesn't come with manuals), I created nine frames on a page. I set each frame to fit the content proportionately to the frame. Next, I selected File>Place and used my command (control on the PC) key to select several photos at once. Someone wake me up. I couldn't believe what happened next.

A small thumbnail of one of the photos appeared next to my pointer on the InDesign page. I clicked on one of the frames and, viola, the photo was placed perfectly into the frame. Then, without any prompting, a thumbnail of another photo appeared. I clicked on another frame and it, too, filled with the photo. I continued this till I had placed all nine photos. Total time to place all the photos? Less than ten seconds! This tool worked better than I even imagined it could.

What impressed me most during my initial stroll through InDesign CS3? Speed. That's right. *Speed*. I still can't get over how much faster InDesign runs on my Intel-based Mac. I haven't run any time tests, but it seems at least four times as fast as InDesign CS2 on the same machine. Gone is the spinning wheel that was so common - and painful - in the previous version. I feel like nothing is holding me back as I move through a document, making changes and creating special effects almost effortlessly.

There are so many different ways to purchase CS3 products - and you will want to purchase them - that it's probably best that you go to Adobe's Website and see the options for yourself. I installed the Design Premium Suite which includes Dreamweaver, Flash, Acrobat Professional, InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator and Version Cue, among others. The cost for this massive version ranges from \$440 (US) for folks who own Creative Suite 2.3 to \$1,799 (US) for folks who don't own a copy of Photoshop, InDesign or any previous CS title.

CS3 is an incredible upgrade. Don't walk. Run to your nearest software dealer to get your copy. For more information, visit adobe.com.



Special Effects

