Module 1

An Introduction to Fireworks MX

The Goals of This Module

- Understand Fireworks’ unique capabilities as applied to web design
- Learn the new features found in Fireworks MX
- Explore the Fireworks interface
- Understand vector and bitmap image types
- Understand the functions of Fireworks tools
- Preview Fireworks panels and tools
In these days the Internet has reached a certain level of maturity, so almost all of us expect to see visually appealing graphics that reach out from a web page and grab our attention. It’s hard to believe that less than ten years ago, the Web was almost entirely text based, with little room (or need) for graphics of any kind. The Web was originally designed as a way for scientists to share data between one research facility and another; it’s doubtful that the original architects of the system that would lead to the modern Internet could have envisioned what the Web would become.

Much of the credit for making the Web more visually appealing goes to those pioneers who developed software programs that would allow images to be reduced in size in such a way that they could be easily transmitted across the Net. Prior to the arrival of file formats that allowed for effective image compression, it was common for the World Wide Web to become the World Wide Wait. Foremost among those programs is the graphics tool developed by Macromedia—Fireworks.

The goal of this book is to teach you the many ways that Fireworks MX can be used to create visually appealing web pages while avoiding excessively large file sizes. This book introduces you to the fundamental concepts that you will need to master in order to work effectively with Fireworks, and it teaches some terrific creative techniques for using this outstanding software product along the way. From creating simple objects to working with existing images to applying sophisticated JavaScript behaviors to making animations that allow your graphics to come to life, all the tools are right at your fingertips with Fireworks. Not only is the program a powerful creative and production tool, but it also is great fun to use and surprisingly easy to learn. So, enjoy the ride, relax, and prepare to learn the power of Fireworks.

What Is Fireworks MX?

In 1998, Macromedia released the first version of a revolutionary new program known as Fireworks, creating a fundamental change in the way that web designers produced graphics for the Web. Prior to the release of Fireworks, it was a common part of a designer’s work flow to bounce from program to program to produce graphics for web sites—one program in order to work with images created with bitmaps, another to do drawings, a third to produce animations, and even a fourth for optimizing images and preparing them for final inclusion in a web page. Needless to say, all that bouncing around produced some very
frustrated designers. Seeing the need for one software title that would handle all of the tasks common to graphic creation and optimization specifically for use on the Web, Macromedia responded with Fireworks.

Created from the beginning as a web design tool, Fireworks has enjoyed outstanding success, and each new version of the program has grown more and more sophisticated. Now, with the release of Fireworks MX, the program has matured into an extremely robust tool for completing all of the tasks common to the design and use of graphics for the Web. The new version introduces some exciting new features and, perhaps more importantly, is now firmly entrenched as part of Macromedia's stable of web design tools, sharing a common interface with its siblings. Combined with Dreamweaver MX and the other web design titles from Macromedia, such as Flash MX, Freehand, and Director, Fireworks is now an indispensable part of working in the common Macromedia web design environment.

What Does Fireworks Do?
At its core, Fireworks is a web design tool that allows designers to produce high-quality graphics that maintain the smallest file weight possible. In addition to its basic function as a drawing program, Fireworks also includes numerous tools for generating the kinds of sophisticated graphics that today's Internet audience expects to see. From simple graphics to button rollovers to entire navigational interfaces, Fireworks places all the tools that web designers need right at their fingertips.

Drawing Tools
Fireworks makes it possible to draw, manipulate, and change almost any type of image a designer can imagine. Unique to the program is its use of vector images for the core of all the graphics it produces. Vector images are created using mathematical equations, making it exceptionally easy to modify, move, change, arrange, and composite images in almost limitless combinations. Through the use of vectors, images created in Fireworks are always editable, allowing the designer to experiment with different settings and effects to achieve just the right look for their designs. Module 2 covers Fireworks' drawing tools.
Bitmap Editing
Not every image that a designer needs is one that they produce from scratch. In addition to the original artwork that Fireworks creates, it also provides sophisticated tools for modifying images derived from clip art or photographs. Images found in the most common web formats—GIF and JPEG—can be cropped, resized, recolored, and even combined with other objects to create entirely new works of art. Module 3 discusses the tools that Fireworks provides for working with bitmap images.

Text Creation and Manipulation
As a communication medium, the Internet still depends on text for conveying ideas and information. From labels for buttons to company logos, Fireworks provides all the tools needed to work with text in exciting new ways. In addition to the simple inclusion of text as a graphic, the program makes it possible to convert text to vector-based objects, to attach text to drawings, and to modify text as you would any other drawing. Module 4 explains how Fireworks is used for creating and modifying text objects.

Vector Drawings with Bitmap Effects
Fireworks uses a unique combination of vector drawing tools with the ability to define an object in limitless ways with the application of bitmap-based fills and strokes. By using vectors to define an image’s basic characteristics, the graphics produced in Fireworks can be modified at will, without losing the basic integrity of the image. Through the manipulation of the bitmap-based fills and strokes that Fireworks allows, including a new transparent gradient feature, designers can modify that basic shape into countless new creations. Module 5 teaches you how fills and strokes are applied and modified in Fireworks.

Working with Complex Images
As web pages and the Internet audience have become more sophisticated, so, too, have the images that make up a large part of those pages. Often these images require that multiple objects be combined to produce new artwork that includes photographs, text, and even interactive regions of an image. Fireworks uses several tools to make the organization of images easier for designers and allows for the inclusion of interactive regions on any image. Module 6 introduces the use of layers and web objects.
Module 1: An Introduction to Fireworks MX

Production Tools
Web sites can become incredibly complex in very little time, often including thousands of images that must be created, managed, maintained, and edited. A software program designed as a production tool for web designers, Fireworks makes the type of operations essential in the world of web design—such as maintaining a consistent style throughout the site—as easy as possible. It uses tools that allow designers to save and apply their own Styles and Commands by allowing for the creation and use of repeatable symbols and now, in Fireworks MX, even allowing for the use of special commands known as extensions. Module 7 discusses the types of tools that Fireworks includes for creating consistent content.

Creating Animations
Prior to the introduction of Fireworks, designers often had to produce an image in one program and then move to a second one to create animations. Once again, Fireworks has taken the tools necessary for producing images that move, sparkle, rotate, fade, or glow, and combined them with their other production tools to make the process accessible in one package. Module 8 explains how to create and manipulate animated images.

Creative Effects
Even though Fireworks is thought of as a production tool, that doesn’t mean that it lacks the ability to produce striking creative effects. From creating text that has a brushed metal look to adding 3-D fills and shadows to generating animated text that fades or even rotates around a sphere, Fireworks provides some outstanding resources for generating complex and striking visual effects. Module 9 introduces you to some tips and tricks for creating special effects with Fireworks.

Optimizing and Converting Images
Creating fascinating graphics for the Web is only the first step in the creative process. Designers must also be concerned with the speed at which their web pages will load on the viewer’s computer. With Fireworks, the process of optimizing images for the most efficient download times is handled in a number of ways. Fireworks allows designers the ultimate in flexibility when balancing the often tricky process of creating images with superior quality while maintaining optimal file weight. File optimization and exporting to web-standard formats is the topic of Module 10.
Interactive Images
In addition to offering the tools for generating basic images, Fireworks also makes it possible to do all the JavaScript coding necessary for creating such interactive effects as rollovers, navigation bars, pop-up menus, and even disjointed rollovers. Once again, Fireworks excels at creating the types of interactive images that today’s Internet audience has come to expect. Both Modules 11 and 12 cover the creation of interactive images in the Fireworks environment.

Integration with Dreamweaver
Fireworks’ sibling program, Dreamweaver, has a well-earned reputation for allowing web designers to both design and manage their sites in a dynamic “What You See Is What You Get” (WYSIWYG) environment while providing the ultimate in design flexibility. Fireworks is the perfect companion to Dreamweaver due to the tight integration of the two programs, including a common user interface and the ability to switch seamlessly between programs to add or edit graphics. Module 13 covers the integration of Fireworks and Dreamweaver.

Integration with Other Programs
In addition to working with Dreamweaver, Fireworks also makes it possible to import files from other graphics programs, such as Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, as well as other titles from Macromedia such as Flash and FreeHand. In addition, Fireworks makes it possible to design an image using its superior drawing tools and export the completed graphic for use in Flash. Module 14 covers the integration of Fireworks and other programs.

What’s New in Fireworks MX?
Two significant changes to Fireworks make the MX version of the software worthy of the change from numbered versions to the new designation—the completely revised user interface, pictured in Figure 1-1 (which you’ll learn more about in a few minutes), and the completion of the software’s conversion to one compatible with Windows XP and Macintosh OS X. Macromedia did not stop there, and in Fireworks MX a number of other important changes have been made to the software.
Module 1: An Introduction to Fireworks MX

The latest version of Fireworks features a totally reworked user interface, including both a Property Inspector for access to the most commonly applied effects and settings and a new grouping arrangement for Fireworks’ panels that make it far easier to manage your workflow. In the past, Fireworks panels in particular were difficult to manage, often requiring a fair amount of moving, resizing, and juggling just to get at all the features you might need for managing an image. The new docking system greatly simplifies common tasks that require the use of panels. Coupled with the Property Inspector, a feature very familiar to users of Dreamweaver, the new interface makes significant improvements to the way that Fireworks allows images to be modified.

Figure 1-1 Fireworks MX features an evolutionary look to the user interface as well as compatibility with both Windows XP and Macintosh OS X.
Enhanced User Interface
In addition to the obvious additions of the Property Inspector and the panel docking area, numerous changes have been made to other areas of the user interface in Fireworks MX. These include the ability to selectively zoom in on a portion of a document with the Magnifying Glass, the reorganization of commands in the menu bar, and enhancements to contextual menus that appear when a user right-clicks or CTRL-clicks on an object.

Tools Panel Enhancements
The tools located in the Tools panel have been reorganized to make the function of each tool easier to find and understand. Tools are now grouped by their type of operation; the groups are Select, Bitmap, Vector, Web, Color, and View. In addition, new touch-up tools, such as the Dodge, Blur, and Sharpen tools, have been added to give you greater creative control over bitmap images.

Improved Text Features
Much work has been done to make the creation of text objects in Fireworks easier and more intuitive. Text is now entered directly onto the canvas, and Fireworks now features a spell check feature as well as the ability to indent lines and more easily control the appearance of text. Additionally, Fireworks makes it easier to work with keyboard layouts other than English by offering full support for the UTF-8 character formatting encoding method.

Improved Layout Tools
Laying out complicated images in Fireworks in the past has been difficult at times, even with the enhancements to the Layers panel made in version 4. Fireworks MX makes the Layers panel more functional by allowing users to auto-scroll when selecting and moving objects in the panel. Additionally, laying out slices for creating web objects has become much easier through the use of new controls for modifying slice borders that automatically resize adjacent slices when one object is changed. Other enhancements include the ability to hold down the Spacebar while drawing an object and move it even as it is being drawn on the screen.

Improved Web Functionality
As a design tool created specifically for use with graphics intended for output to the Web, Fireworks has always excelled in creating images with web functionality. In Fireworks MX those already formidable tools are further refined, providing
Module 1: An Introduction to Fireworks MX

much greater control over the appearance of pop-up menus, the ability to export directly to Macromedia Homesite for hand-coding, and even the ability to open Fireworks source files from within Microsoft FrontPage. Other web-related improvements include an enhanced Button Editor that allows for the modification of an instance of a button without changing the source symbol, and full support for XHTML when exporting files to Dreamweaver. Fireworks is now even able to import a table created in HTML from another source, including any attached JavaScript behaviors, and reconstitute the table as a native Fireworks file.

Additional Creative Features
Much of the effort to provide new creative features centers around enhancements to the way that Fireworks users can utilize and modify gradients to create new designs. Included in these improvements are transparent gradients, new features for applying gradient masks, and the ability to apply a gradient as a fill directly from the Property Inspector.

Fireworks Extensions
One of the really exciting new features found in Fireworks is one that benefits the entire Fireworks and Macromedia community—the ability to create custom commands, known as extensions, that allows Fireworks to automatically apply effects, control appearance, and provide additional web functionality directly from within the Fireworks environment. As Fireworks MX becomes widely available, you can expect to see developers offering free and commercial extensions that will greatly expand the capabilities of this already worthy program. Figure 1-2 shows just one of the ways that this new extensibility can be applied—a custom Align panel designed within Flash that makes it easier to align objects.

Improved Bitmap Rendering
Fireworks MX features a leaner “engine” for the handling of bitmap effects and images, allowing it to open those files and apply bitmap effects in a manner that makes better use of your computer’s memory.

Compatibility with Other Programs
As Macromedia continues to integrate its programs, additional functionality allows Fireworks to serve as a platform for launching and even editing graphics in other Macromedia programs. The new Quick Export button found in the
Fireworks MX: A Beginner’s Guide

The document window allows users to work directly in Dreamweaver, Freehand, Flash, or Director, or to export images directly to those programs while setting the export options in one easy-to-access panel. The same functionality is provided for exporting to other programs as well, including Photoshop, Illustrator, GoLive, and FrontPage. Additionally, Fireworks will feature the ability to edit text created in Photoshop 6.

Figure 1-2 The Align panel designed by Kleanthis Economou allows users to align objects to each other or to the canvas.
Macintosh Improvements
In addition to the incredibly gorgeous OS X interface that Fireworks has achieved, Macintosh users are now able to access recently opened documents directly from the File menu.

Tip
You’ll find additional information about the new features found in Fireworks MX at the companion website for this book at www.dw-fw-beginners.com.

Working with Bitmaps and Vectors
No other graphics program takes the same approach as Fireworks does to the creation and manipulation of graphics. In Fireworks, a unique combination of the two types of graphic formats enables designers to produce images that are always editable and also easily transferred to a format suitable for the Web.

At the core of every new image created in Fireworks is a mathematical definition of the image that allows its size, orientation, and shape to be manipulated in unlimited ways. Vector images are those that use this mathematical process for defining the basic shape, position, and even color of all the images displayed on the canvas.

Fireworks performs a very interesting trick, though. On top of those mathematical vectors, it allows users to apply the second type of image created on a computer—bitmaps. Bitmaps are defined by first describing a grid and then filling that grid with color points, known as pixels, that when blended together create the kinds of images we are used to seeing on our computer screens.

The end result of this combination is the ability to create and maintain images that can be changed at any time. Buttons, for instance, can be changed from one color to another, have drop shadows applied, and even have text applied and changed at any time. As you can see in the next illustration, even
simple shapes such as a line can take on various appearances when effects and other properties are applied to them.

Exploring the Fireworks Interface

In Fireworks MX, the software designers at Macromedia have taken another huge step toward creating an interface that more closely aligns the different programs available in their product line. Just as in Dreamweaver MX, Fireworks uses an integrated desktop environment, seen in Figure 1-3, that allows the panels needed to apply effects or manipulate images to be opened or closed within their docking area as needed. The addition of the Property Inspector has also more closely aligned Fireworks functionality with that of its siblings, and it should be very helpful to those working with the different Macromedia products.

Note that Fireworks has no Document window present when you first open the program. Your first step, then, is to choose File | New to create a new document and follow along with the descriptions of the different features that will be summarized here. Accept the default settings for this first file and click OK to open your first file in the new working environment seen in Figure 1-3.
Module 1: An Introduction to Fireworks MX

Fireworks MX now features an Integrated Desktop Environment in both Windows and Macintosh operating systems.

Figure 1-3
The Tools Panel

As in any drawing program, the tools that are used to create different objects on a canvas are at the heart of the software. Fireworks uses a special panel with an arrangement of tools, found on the left side of your screen. To save screen real estate, many of the primary tools have additional functions that are accessed by a flyout menu, represented by a small triangle to the right of the tool icon. To access the flyout menu, simply click and hold on top of the primary icon until the additional tools appear, as you see here.

![Tool Icon Screenshot](image)

Otherwise, if you have used any type of drawing or painting program in the past, you will recognize many of the icons that are located in the Tools panel. Figure 1-4 shows the Tools panel and the names of the primary tools that are found there. Note that the tools are grouped together based on how they are used and that you can float your mouse over each tool to see a label of the tool’s name. Additionally, at the bottom of the panel, extra buttons have been added to allow for a quick change to how you see your document.

Note that the icons have been grouped into different categories, are separated by a gray line that divides the Tools panel, and labeled according to their function. This feature is helpful as you start working with the program and as you follow this discussion of how the different tools are put into action.

Tip

As you float your mouse over a tool in the panel, a description of its function appears next to the cursor. Once a tool is selected, you see a description of its function in the bottom of the Document window.

Selection Tools

At the top of the panel are the four icons that represent selection tools, used for choosing an object on your canvas so it can be modified, copied, deleted, or...
Module 1: An Introduction to Fireworks MX

Figure 1-4 Fireworks Tools panel and icons
moved. In addition to the three primary icons that are represented by default, three of these objects also have flyouts that will lead you to additional tools.

**Note**

As you read through this section, feel free to try the tools in the blank document you created earlier. You can also find a Fireworks PNG file for practicing in vector mode (5_lines.png) and a GIF file for practicing in bitmap mode (5_lines.gif) in the exercise files for this module at www.osborne.com or at www.dw-fw-beginners.com. Module 2 covers file formats, but for now spend some time trying out the tools as they’re described.

Table 1-1 provides a summary of the primary tools available in the Select group. Those tools marked with an asterisk are available through flyouts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection Tool</th>
<th>Appearance</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pointer</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Pointer" /></td>
<td>Selects an entire object on the canvas so that it can be modified or moved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Select Behind*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Select Behind" /></td>
<td>Selects an object that is behind another object on the canvas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subselection</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Subselection" /></td>
<td>Allows the selection of individual points along a vector path and selection of an individual item within a group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Scale" /></td>
<td>Makes an object or a portion of an image larger or smaller, rotates it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skew*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Skew" /></td>
<td>Stretches or shrinks an object along a plane.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distort*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Distort" /></td>
<td>Distorts an object by dragging handles in different ways.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1-1** Selection Tools in the Fireworks Tools Panel
Bitmap Tools

Below the Select group is the Bitmap group, which consists of the primary tools for working with images created using bitmaps. Because bitmaps fundamentally differ from drawings produced in Fireworks using vector-based images, Macromedia has wisely divided these tools into their own group, including some new tools available for the first time in Fireworks MX.

Once again, flyouts (marked by an asterisk) provide access to additional tools for four of these objects. Table 1-2 summarizes the appearance and functions of the tools in the Bitmap group.

### Selection Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Appearance</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crop</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Crop Icon" /></td>
<td>Selects a portion of an image that will remain when the unneeded area of the image is cropped (deleted) in vector mode.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Export Area*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Export Area Icon" /></td>
<td>Chooses an area of an image for export to GIF or JPEG format.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1-1 Selection Tools in the Fireworks Tools Panel (continued)
### Table 1-2 Bitmap Tools in the Fireworks Tools Panel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bitmap Tool</th>
<th>Appearance</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marquee</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Marquee" /></td>
<td>Selects a rectangular area in a bitmap image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oval Marquee*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Oval Marquee" /></td>
<td>Selects an oval area in a bitmap image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lasso</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Lasso" /></td>
<td>Selects an irregular area in a bitmap image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polygon Lasso*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Polygon Lasso" /></td>
<td>Selects an irregular area in a bitmap image using straight lines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic Wand</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Magic Wand" /></td>
<td>Automatically selects an area of a bitmap image based on similar color properties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brush</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Brush" /></td>
<td>Draws a free-form line with attributes that can be changed in the Stroke portion of the Property Inspector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pencil</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Pencil" /></td>
<td>Draws a free-form line that is 1 pixel wide by default.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eraser</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Eraser" /></td>
<td>Removes pixels from a bitmap image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blur</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Blur" /></td>
<td>Blurs a region of a bitmap image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharpen*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Sharpen" /></td>
<td>Sharpens a region of a bitmap image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodge*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Dodge" /></td>
<td>Lightens portions of a bitmap image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burn*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Burn" /></td>
<td>Darkens portions of a bitmap image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smudge*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Smudge" /></td>
<td>Smudges portions of a bitmap image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubber Stamp</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Rubber Stamp" /></td>
<td>Duplicates one area of a bitmap image onto another area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eyedropper</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Eyedropper" /></td>
<td>“Grabs” color from anywhere on the screen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint Bucket</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Paint Bucket" /></td>
<td>Fills a selected area with the color currently selected in the fill portion of the Property Inspector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gradient*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Gradient" /></td>
<td>Fills a selected area with the gradient currently selected in the gradient portion of the Property Inspector.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vector Tools

Tools that enable you to create and modify vector-based objects are grouped below the Bitmap tools.

Table 1-3 summarizes these tools that are used for drawing new images and for modifying existing vectors. Notice that three of the tool icons include flyouts for accessing additional tools, listed here with asterisks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vector Tool</th>
<th>Appearance</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Line</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draws a straight line between two points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pen</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draws a series of points and connects the points with a straight or curved line.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vector Path *</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draws a free-form vector line with attributes that can be changed in the Stroke portion of the Property Inspector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redraw Path *</td>
<td></td>
<td>Adds to or modifies a vector path created with any vector drawing tool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rectangle</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draws a rectangle with a filled center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rounded Rectangle*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draws a rectangle with rounded corners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellipse*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draws a round object.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polygon*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draws a polygon or star based on options set for the tool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
<td></td>
<td>Creates an area on the document for entering text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1-3 Vector Tools in the Fireworks Tools Panel
Below the Vector tool group is a set of tools specifically designed for web-related tasks—hotspots and slices.

### Table 1-3 Vector Tools in the Fireworks Tools Panel (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vector Tool</th>
<th>Appearance</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freeform</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Freeform" /></td>
<td>Reshapes paths in an image by pushing or pulling the points defining the path.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reshape Area *</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Reshape Area" /></td>
<td>Reshapes an area of an image created using vector drawing tools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Path Scrubber–additive*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Path Scrubber–additive" /></td>
<td>Adds additional points to a path created with a pressure-sensitive tool such as a digital tablet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Path Scrubber–subtractive*</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Path Scrubber–subtractive" /></td>
<td>Removes points from a path created with a pressure-sensitive tool.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knife</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Knife" /></td>
<td>Slices a single path into two or more paths.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Web Tools

Below the Vector tool group is a set of tools specifically designed for web-related tasks—hotspots and slices.

**Hotspots** are areas of an image that can have a URL assigned to them for use as links in a web page. An image that contains hotspots is known as an **image map**. While the hotspot itself is invisible to the viewer of the web page, Fireworks applies a special overlay that allows you to track and modify its location. **Slices** are used to divide a large object into multiple smaller objects that assist in creating faster downloads when inserted into a web page and which can allow special JavaScript behaviors to be attached. These tools are summarized in Table 1-4. Both have flyout options indicated by an asterisk. Two additional buttons below the primary Web tools allow you to turn off or turn on the web object overlays.
Module 1: An Introduction to Fireworks MX

Color Tools
As you would expect, Fireworks has a huge number of options available for adjusting the color and color properties of images. Still, the controls that access the color options are neatly arranged into a nice tight area of the Tools panel. Rather than use flyout arrows, additional color options are accessed by clicking an expansion arrow that leads to dialog boxes, allowing for a number of choices in specifying stroke or fill colors. With these options, you can choose from the standard palette of web-safe colors that is presented by default, or open your system Color Chooser and use a custom color that you specify.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Web Tool</th>
<th>Appearance</th>
<th>Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotspot</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draws a rectangular hotspot on an image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circular Hotspot*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draws a circular hotspot on an image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polygon Hotspot*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Draws an irregularly shaped hotspot on an image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rectangle Slice</td>
<td></td>
<td>Divides an image into rectangular slices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polygon Slice*</td>
<td></td>
<td>Divides an image into irregular slices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hide Web Objects</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hides hotspot and slice overlays.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show Web Objects</td>
<td></td>
<td>Shows hotspot and slice overlays.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1-4 Web Tools in the Fireworks Tools Panel

The most commonly used items are easily accessed from the Colors group on the Tools panel, summarized here in Table 1-5.
The final group of tools is used for changing how you view the image you are working with.

While they are not used for adding or changing anything in the document, you'll find these tools, summarized in Table 1-6, to be handy features when you need to change how you look at an object on your canvas.

While the possible options available on the Tools panel may seem a bit daunting, not every tool is something that you will use in everyday practice. The cleanly organized interface is something that you'll come to appreciate, though, and with practice, you will quickly find yourself confidently reaching for just the right tool when you need to get a particular job done. You'll learn how to use all of the tools in the panel during the course of this book.
Module 1: An Introduction to Fireworks MX

**View Tools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Screen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Function</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Displays the working window in the standard mode.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Screen with Menus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Function</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fills the computer monitor to its largest size. Retains the menu bar.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Full Screen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Function</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fills the computer monitor to its largest size while hiding the menu bar.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Function</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Grabs” the canvas and allows for its movement within the Document window.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zoom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Function</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes the magnification of an image either larger or smaller.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1-6** View Tools in the Fireworks Tools Panel

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**Ask the Expert**

**Question:** I've used Photoshop (or FreeHand, or CorelDRAW, or Illustrator) in the past, and Fireworks doesn't seem to have as many drawing options available. Why is that?

**Answer:** Macromedia never set out to create the most sophisticated drawing and image-manipulation tool possible when Fireworks was designed. Remember that Fireworks has one mission—to produce the best (and smallest) images possible for use on the Web. While other programs may have some more sophisticated features available, Fireworks excels at the task it was designed to do—create and optimize graphics for use in web pages. Meanwhile, if you're more comfortable working in other drawing and painting programs, Fireworks makes it easy to import those graphics and then optimize them for the Web.

**Question:** Will I be able to do all of my design work in Fireworks, or will I need other programs as well?

**Answer:** Many professionals report that they use Fireworks without the support of any other graphics programs at all. Although it is true that Photoshop at one time was a much better tool for working with
Fireworks MX: A Beginner’s Guide

Photographs, Fireworks has taken great strides in closing the gap with its competition with this release. Although you may need the advanced drawing and color support you would get from programs such as Illustrator or FreeHand if you anticipate any print work, there simply is no better production graphics tool than Fireworks if your final output is destined for the Web.

1-Minute Drill

- What tool is used for selecting objects in a document?
- How does Fireworks make it possible to access additional tools that are grouped together with a particular icon?
- What is a hotspot?

The Document Window

The Document window contains the canvas on which all work is performed in Fireworks, plus some specialized options along the bottom of the window that allow you to jump to the modification panels and change the magnification of the image. You will spend time modifying documents, canvas size, and canvas colors in succeeding modules, so Figure 1-5 just serves as an overview of the different components of the Document window.

Three components of the Document window bear emphasis at this point. Notice in Figure 1-5 that a circle with an X appears in the bottom of the window. This is your visual clue that this image is a bitmap and that Fireworks is editing in that mode.

Also notice a series of tabs across the top of the document that allow you to see different previews of how an exported document would appear when optimized and converted to a JPEG or GIF file. You learn about using these features in Module 10.

- The Pointer (selection) tool is used to select a single object on the canvas.
- Fireworks uses flyout arrows to indicate the presence of additional tools available behind the icon on the Tools panel. Clicking the flyout arrow makes the additional tools accessible.
- A hotspot is an area of an image that can have a URL assigned to it for use as a link in a web page.
Finally, the Quick Export feature found in Fireworks MX is an addition that allows for the quick export of an image from the Fireworks working environment to other programs. As you see here, this feature allows you to send images quickly to other programs or even launch those programs to preview or work with your graphic.
Fireworks Integrated Desktop Environment

As you saw in Figure 1-3, Fireworks now includes what Macromedia calls the “Integrated Desktop Environment,” an arrangement that locks the separate elements of the program into place and allows for more efficient control of the tools that you need to modify and work with your graphics. Two improvements have significantly changed the way that work is done in the Fireworks environment, making the entire process more streamlined and logical.

Introducing the Property Inspector

One of the most exciting new features of Fireworks MX is the addition of the Property Inspector. With this new tool, many of the panels that were required in previous versions of Fireworks have been eliminated, and finding and changing image features have been made much simpler. Instead of hunting and searching for just the right panel to apply fill or stroke settings, change tool options, or apply effects to an image, all of those features and more have now been included in one easy-to-access inspector that changes based on the object selected on the canvas.

If you’ve used Dreamweaver in the past, the Property Inspector is nothing new; it has been present in that program since the beginning. For Fireworks users, though, the addition of the Property Inspector is a big leap forward in allowing you to quickly see the settings that are currently applied to any object and modify them as you wish.

The Property Inspector is contextual in that its appearance changes based on the object selected. Figure 1-6 shows the Property Inspector when a vector object and a text object are selected.

Because you’ll be spending considerable time with the Property Inspector throughout the course of this book, and because each object selected generates its own unique look for the inspector, the features of this tool will be summarized as you put it into play during upcoming projects.

Introducing the Panel Docking Area

Probably the most frustrating part of using Fireworks in the past for many people has been the management of floating panels. As more panels needed to be accessed, it was frequently difficult to find and arrange those critical tools...
Module 1: An Introduction to Fireworks MX

into just the right placement to make them easy to use. Now, in Fireworks MX, an entirely new arrangement has been devised that locks those panels into one unified section of the working environment, allowing them to open or close with the simple click of an expansion button that slides the panels into view, as seen in Figure 1-7. As with the Property Inspector, these various panels are covered as you work through the exercises in this book. For those of us who have used Fireworks in the past, this new docking environment is already greatly appreciated.

Additional Options

You have now been introduced to the three most frequently used components of the Fireworks work environment—the Tools panel, the Document window, and the Property Inspector. The great majority of your tasks will be accomplished while working between these three areas of the Fireworks interface, but, as you’d expect, a significant number of additional options are available.

The Menu Bar

Like almost every other computer application, Fireworks includes the usual menu bar across the top of your screen, with the usual array of tools—Print, Save, Save As, Copy, Cut, and Paste. Rather than go into a detailed description of the commands and options available in the menu bar, you will have the opportunity to employ these tools in upcoming exercises. A whole host of
additional options are available through the menu bar that relate to the primary mission of Fireworks, creating graphics for the Web. By completing hands-on projects, you'll quickly become comfortable with these tools. Note that in Fireworks MX many of these options have been reorganized, so if you've used Fireworks in the past, it might take a little while to become comfortable with their new locations.

**Figure 1-7**  The Panel Docking Area makes access to the panels you need for applying styles, arranging objects, and applying behaviors much more efficient.
Main and Modify Toolbars (Windows Only)

In the Windows OS version of Fireworks, two toolbars are available directly below the menu bar—the Main toolbar and the Modify toolbar. The Macintosh version does not include these features. If these toolbars are not visible in your program, choose Window | Toolbars to display or hide these features.

In the Main toolbar, you will find buttons common to most programs available in a Windows format—Open, New, Save, Print, and Undo functions can all be found in this area. On the Modify toolbar, you’ll find options that are useful when working with a variety of objects on your canvas, including tools to combine (group) and arrange objects in a variety of ways.

Context Menu

As with most programs, additional options can be accessed by right-clicking (CONTROL-clicking with a Macintosh) a selected option in the Document window. Many of these features mirror those found on the menu bar and include commands to magnify, hide, arrange, animate, and convert objects on the canvas.

Whether you choose to access the commands available from the menu bar, from one of the toolbars, or from the Context menu will ultimately be based on your preferred method for working. Exercises in upcoming modules detail different choices.

1-Minute Drill

- What is the name of the work area in the Document window?
- What is the function of the tabs across the top of the Document window?
- How is the Context menu accessed?

- The work area in the Document window is known as the canvas.
- The tabs across the top of the Document window allow you to see different previews of how an exported document would appear when optimized and converted to a JPEG or GIF file.
- The Context menu is accessed by right-clicking (CONTROL-clicking with a Macintosh) a selected object in the Document window.
What to Take Away

Fireworks is the first image-creation application built from the ground up with the goal of preparing and optimizing graphics for the Web. With an impressive array of tools for creating and manipulating images and then exporting them to web-safe graphics formats, Fireworks makes it possible to create sophisticated images, all while keeping in mind the simple fact that every image needs to be as small as possible to keep download time to a minimum.

In addition to the basic drawing and optimizing tools you have been introduced to in this module, Fireworks also provides the capability to create HTML documents and images enhanced with JavaScript, as well as tools for authoring web-specific images such as animations, buttons, and drop-down menus.

Projects in upcoming modules introduce many of these advanced features as well as all of the tools you need to be a confident user of the program. Fireworks makes the life of a web designer easier by making it possible to create and optimize graphics, animations, image maps, and other images that can make your web pages more useful and interesting for your viewers. Combine its ease of use with the excellent integration Fireworks has with Dreamweaver, and you'll quickly come to appreciate why the program has become one of the favorites of web developers everywhere.
Module 1: An Introduction to Fireworks MX

Mastery Check

1. What is the primary function of Fireworks?

2. Why are files created in Fireworks exported to another image format?

3. How are the different tools in the Tools panel organized?

4. What is the primary tool used for selecting and moving objects on the canvas?

5. Why should caution be exercised when selecting colors from your system Color Chooser options?

6. What is the function of the Property Inspector?

7. How are panels and inspectors grouped in Fireworks MX?

8. Where are common commands for operations such as saving, printing, modifying, copying, and pasting found?
9. What is the purpose of “slicing” an image?

10. What types of commands are available through the Context Menu, accessed by right-clicking (CONTROL-clicking with a Macintosh) an object?