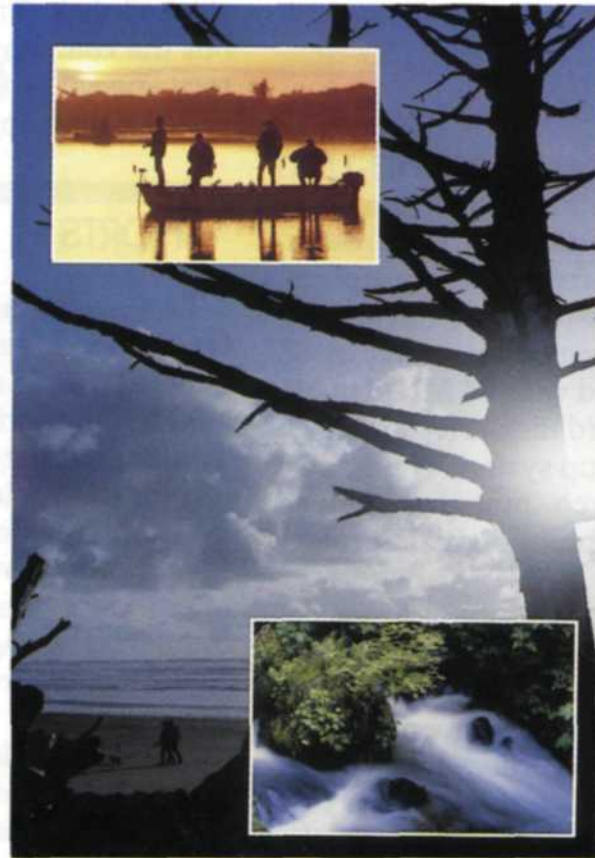
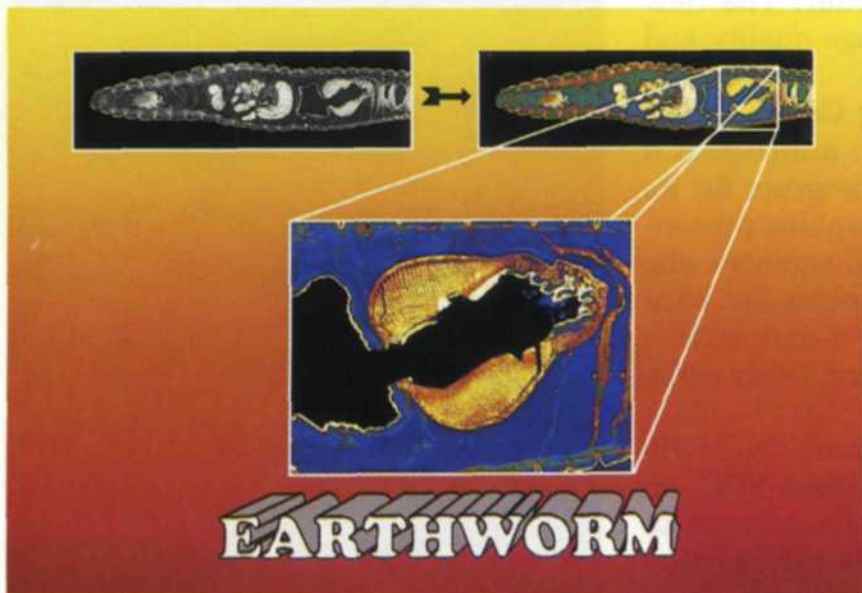


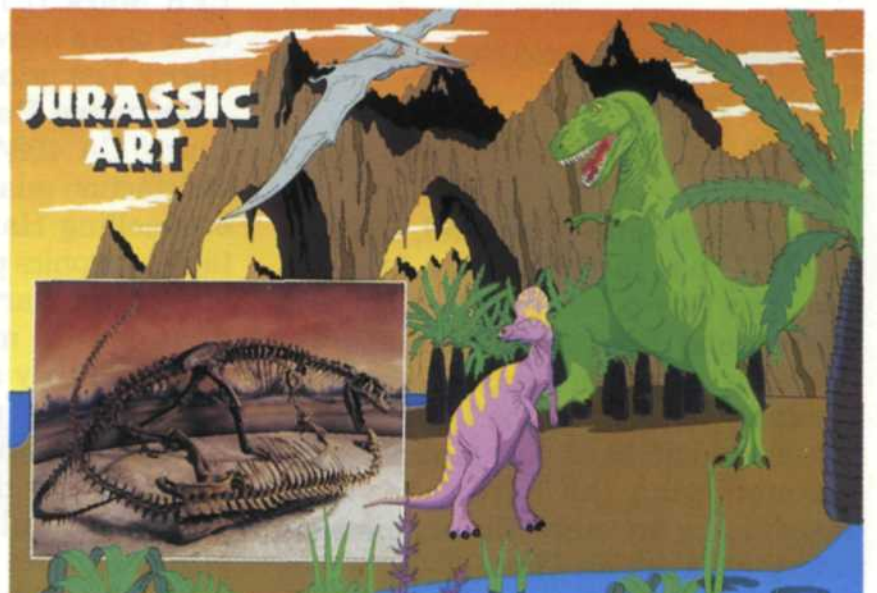
Learn to Use Photo Windows



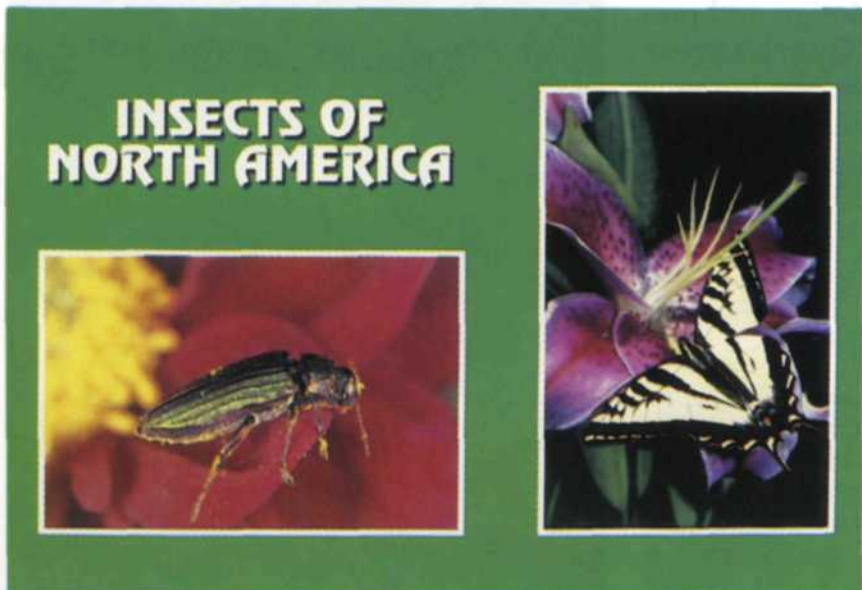
Adobe Photoshop/
Aldus Photostyler



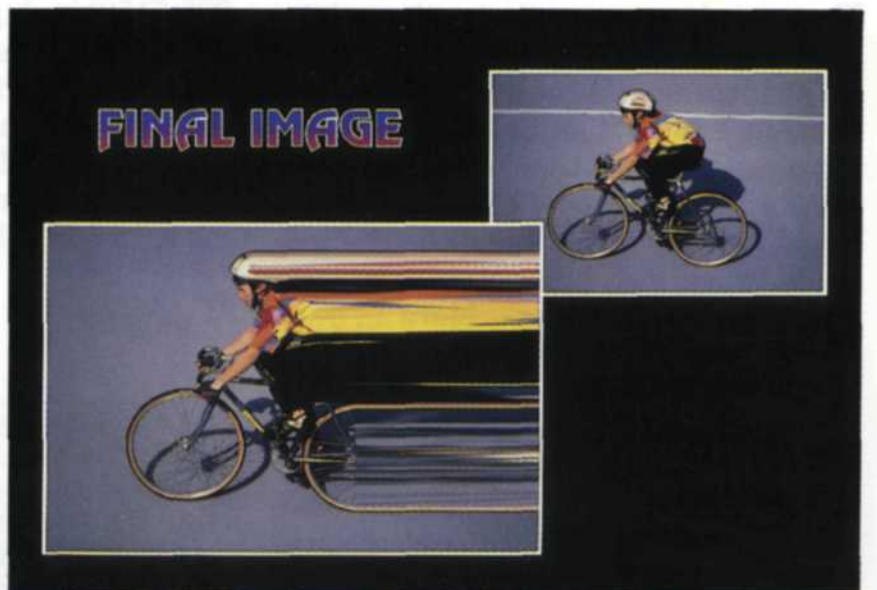
Aldus Photostyler/Microsoft Powerpoint



Computer Support Scenerio



Micrographix/Picture Publisher Designer



Aldus Photostyler/Software Publishing Harvard Graphics

Jack and Sue Drafahl

TRADITIONAL photo methods are still very viable, but sometimes a job arrives in the lab that demands change. Such is the case with "Photo Windows." This is where a photo is incorporated with text and output as a slide or negative. In past years these images were created on slide duplicators, optical stands, and in the darkroom, requiring a lot of time and effort. In this article we will show you how you can easily provide this service to your customers.

Back to Basics

The old adage that a photo is worth a thousand words is not always true. Sometimes a photo requires words to help illustrate the message and vice versa. Photo Windows are used any time a photo has a written message to convey. Generally these are basic text slides or illustrations with a window containing a full color image. This color photo could be anything from a portrait of a board member to a wide angle photo of a manufacturing plant.

To really help you understand why this service should be generated electronically, we need to re-acquaint you with the traditional method of making these slides.

The text portion of the image would be made using high contrast film, colored gels, and a slide duplicator. A mask and a reverse mask of the window would then be created in register with the text portion of the slide. The full color image would then be placed on top of one of the open masks and exposed onto a new piece of film. Additional exposures would then be made of the text and the color gels.

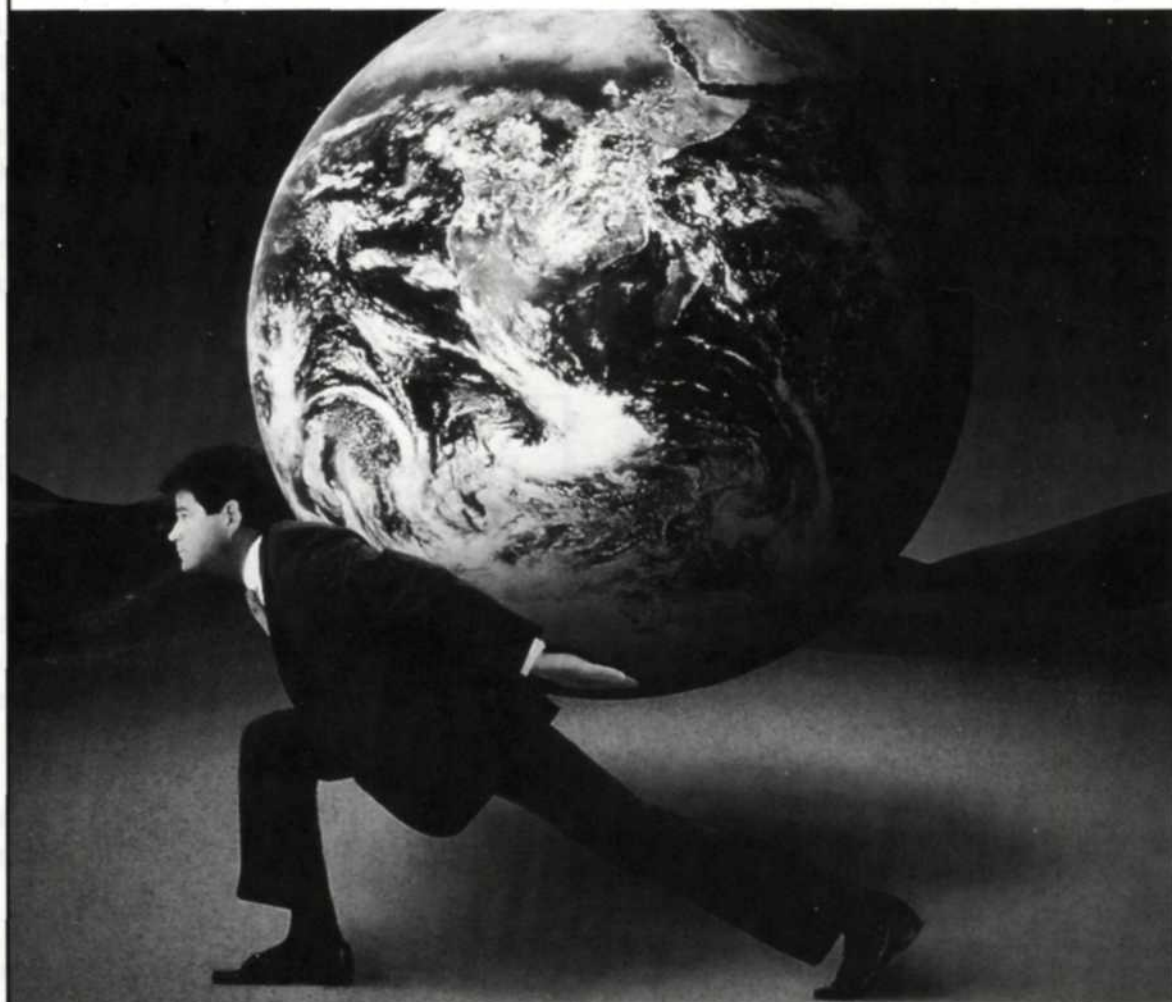
Each additional copy of the slide required the same process. Once the job was delivered to the customer, the various parts that were used to create the image were destroyed. The time and expense involved in this production forced labs to put a premium price on the end product.

Photo Windows in the Photo Lab

In today's electronic lab the process is entirely different. First, a color image from a slide, negative, or print is scanned into the computer via a scanner. The image is adjusted for color and exposure, cropped if necessary and then saved as a

(Continued on page 28)

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Learn to Use Photo Windows

(Continued from page 27)

bitmap file. In most cases this file format is called a TIFF file.

Next, a text image is created in one of many business graphics software programs. These programs allow the slide maker to select from hundreds of fonts, styles, bullets, symbols and background colors.

If you want to create a Photo Window in one of these text slides, go to the file manager and import the bitmap into the presentation slide. At this point you can move the bitmap, size it and add a colorful border. When you are satisfied that the bitmap is placed correctly, you paste it into the final image.

Variations can include the use of a drop shadow under the window, adding arrows and text inside the window or the creation of irregular shaped windows. In some of the programs, you can even layer text and symbols over the bitmap so that it no longer looks pasted on top. The final composite image is then sent out to a film recorder.

Resolution Can Equal Profit or Loss

In order for your lab to make a reasonable profit on each window image, you must consider the time vs. quality vs. resolution aspect of this lab service. As the resolution increases, so does the time and expense. The trick is to achieve an ideal balance between the quality needed in the final product and the resolution of the scanned bitmap. In our lab we have found that bitmaps which are 25% of the overall image do not require higher than 1200 x 800 pixel resolution. When they encompass 50% of the overall image, we try to keep the resolution around 1800 x 1200 pixel resolution. This way the resolution of the scan closely matches the resolution of the end product.

Equipment Required

The basic setup for creating Photo Windows should include a high-end PC or Macintosh, a 24-bit color monitor and at least 16 megabytes of RAM. If you plan on scanning images you will need a flatbed scanner for artwork or photographic prints, and a film scanner for slides and negatives. You will need a medium-to-high-quality film recorder for the final output image.

In our lab we use a Nikon LS 35-10 scanner for slides and negatives, an Arcus flatbed scanner for flat art and large format film, and an Agfa Forte film recorder for output to 35mm film, 4x5 transparencies, and 8x10 overheads. We use a 486-66 PC with a 380 megabyte hard disk and 64 megabytes of RAM. Computer speed and maximum RAM is the critical difference between profit and loss.

Software Programs

Several companies offer software packages for creating high quality lecture slides. It is crucial that the software have the ability to import a 24 bit color bitmap such as a TIFF, Targa, or BMP and move, size and mask each before sending the composite image out to a film recorder. The following software

PROGRAM	TYPE OF PROGRAM	PLATFORM
ALDUS		
PageMaker	DeskTop Publishing	MAC/PC
FreeHand	Illustration	MAC/PC
Persuasion	Business Graphics	MAC/PC
PhotoStyler	Bitmap-Scanning	PC
ADOBE		
Illustrator	Illustration	MAC/PC
PhotoShop	Bitmap-Scanning	MAC/PC
COMPUTER SUPPORT		
Arts & Letters	Illustration	PC
Apprentice	Illustration	PC
Wizard	Illustration	PC
Scenario	Illustration	PC
CORELDRAW		
Draw	Illustration Business Graphics Bitmap-Scanning Batch Processing Bitmap Tracing	PC
MCLAIN IMAGING		
Image Assist	Film Recorder Output Bitmap	PC
MICROGRAFIX		
Designer	Illustration	PC
Picture Publisher	Bitmap- Scanning	PC
MICROSOFT		
PowerPoint	Business Graphics	MAC/PC
SOFTWARE PUBLISHING		
Harvard Graphics	Business Graphics	PC
Harvard Draw	Illustration	PC
ZENOGRAPHICS		
	Film Recorder Output Vector &Bitmap	PC

programs are a few that we have tested in our electronic imaging lab and found to perform well.

Multi Image Customers

If you have clients who use a variety of composite images for multi-projector shows, you can expand your electronic imaging services even more. Many Audio-Visual producers work on tight deadlines and often require last minute changes. With traditional optical systems, these multi-image effects are time-consuming and expensive, and the final product often ends up on dupe film. When producers use glass mounts for their visuals, they are restricted to certain window formats that are available from slide mount manufacturers.

With electronic imaging, you merely scan in the various images, place them in window positions and image them on original film stock in a pin-registered film recorder. Windows no longer have to conform to certain slide mounts as producers can create their own unique windows. Other benefits include fast turn-around, retouching capability, original film stock, and permanent image storage for exact duplication. The customer can preview the effect before the final image is sent to the film recorder.

There are many lab services where traditional photo methods are still better than electronic imaging. We offer no argument there. But, there are some applications where electronic imaging leaves the traditional methods far behind in speed, quality and profit margin. "Photo Windows" is just one example. We will continue to bring you ideas and directions to help you make a smooth transition into electronic imaging in your photo lab.

Editor's note: All images output through Zenographics SuperPrint to the Agfa Forte film recorder: 4k resolution.

Jack and Sue Drafaht own and operate a "transitioning" photo lab in Portland, OR.

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