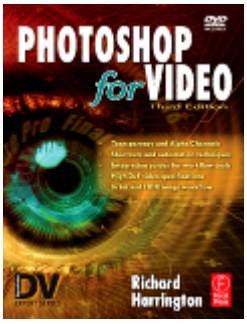
Salvaging web images for use in video

Adapted from: *Photoshop for Video, 3rd Edition* By Richard Harrington



One of the worst things to happen to graphic artists was the proliferation of Web pages for corporate clients and associations. Firms are moving virtually all of their assets on to the Internet and have placed such emphasis on their Web sites that they have abandoned or lost track of traditional assets. It used to be far easier to get a high-quality, “camera-ready” ad slick with logos on it. Annual reports or brochures could always be found and scanned as well.

These days you ask for a logo and you get a 200x200 pixel GIF from the client’s Web site. These images should be avoided at all costs. No matter what your client says, the logo exists as a higher-quality file. If they have a business card, it exists. There are several approaches you can try before accepting Garbage In.

• **Ask if there’s an in-house Web department or printer.** Call these people and ask for a better logo. While you’re at it, ask for astyle guide.

• **Search the Web site for a press area.** Many times high-quality logos are available for download to the media.

• **Download an annual report or brochure as a PDF.** Often times these are saved at 150 dpi or better (or even as vector files!). A PDF file can be opened and converted in Photoshop.

• **Ask for the business card and scan it at as high a setting as you can.** If you scanner has a de-screen filter, use it.

So how do you salvage these images? I have seen editors and art departments spend days recreating logos. In larger facilities, this ordeal is often repeated due to poor communication and archives. So always ask anyone remotely experienced in using a computer if they have ever done work for the client before. But if you must “salvage” a Web logo, remember this: Garbage In = Garbage Out. Vector programs as such as Adobe Illustrator—using its Live Trace feature—can help here, but it is very hard to pull something from a 50x50 pixel source. The results you get will be mediocre at best.

The fastest solution involves “up-rezzing” via the image size command (Image>Image size). Computers are good at duplication, so blow the logo up 200% and choose Nearest Neighbor as the Interpolation method. The resulting image is soft, but may pass quality control. Some adventurous souls attempt to rebuild the text by font matching. If you know the name of the font used, this is a fair approach. If you are hunting, you will need a huge font collection and chances are you will get close, but not exactly right. You do not want to be to blamed when the “logo police” arrive.