

Bonus Chapter 3: Other Sources of Information

In This Chapter

- ✓ Adding notes and annotations
- ✓ Examining metadata in Adobe Bridge
- ✓ Finding out information about Photoshop and your computer

Photoshop offers all sorts of ways to find and add information about your images: The Info palette keeps data about X and Y coordinates or color information at the ready, depending on what tools you're using. At the bottom of the image window, the status bar shows your file's size and dimensions. The keyword feature in Adobe Bridge enables you to add keywords that help categorize images.

In this chapter, I cover other ways to find information about files or Photoshop itself. These methods may not be for everybody, but if you do need them, they're handy to have. The notes and annotations feature lets you add comments for colleagues, or lets others leave comments for you. In Adobe Bridge, photographers, journalists, and others who need to use Photoshop files for specific applications will want to know about the Metadata tab, which enables you to view IPTC data, Camera Raw data, and more. And if you're looking for information about Photoshop or your computer, the Help menu offers a hodgepodge of information that you'd never think you need but can help when you're trying to troubleshoot patches, updates, plug-ins, and other system information.

Applying Annotations and Notes

Everybody's a critic! That's especially true when you're using Photoshop in a work environment — or in any scenario that involves anything but 100 percent freedom to perform your Photoshop magic as you want.



Sometimes, you want to collect comments from your colleagues, approvals from your supervisors, ideas from your friends, or nit-picks from your clients. Photoshop lets everyone have his or her say by using annotations, notes, and audio comments. You can use these clever feedback tools without worrying about physically modifying the work that you've carefully done. Imagine sticky notes that you can move around your screen, and you'll see what Photoshop's Annotations feature can do for you.

Text documents are often distributed for approval in a Portable Document Format (PDF) by using Adobe Acrobat Reader, and comments are added by using either the full Acrobat application or Acrobat Reader. Photoshop is compatible with Acrobat, too, so you can save your Photoshop files in the PDF format. For more detailed information on the PDF format, see *Adobe Acrobat 8 PDF Bible*, by Ted Padova (published by Wiley Publishing, Inc.).

Text annotations, which Photoshop calls *notes*, are text comments that appear as icons within an image document when you choose to make them visible.

If you're reviewing someone else's notes, you simply double-click the note to view it or to modify the text it contains.

You can do lots of things with notes:

- ✓ **Show or hide all the notes:** Choose View⇨Show⇨Annotations.
- ✓ **Expand any note from its icon:** Double-click the icon.
- ✓ **Edit a note:** Expand the note and revise the text by using standard editing commands.
- ✓ **Delete a note:** Select the note and press Delete.
- ✓ **Remove all closed notes:** Right-click any note (Ctrl+click on the Mac) and choose Delete All Annotations from the context menu that pops up. You can also select a note and click Clear All on the Options bar.
- ✓ **Move a note's icon:** Drag the icon. (The note still pops up in its original location, however.)
- ✓ **Relocate a note's window:** Open the note and drag its title bar to the new location. It then pops up in the new location.

Creating a text annotation

To create a text annotation, follow these steps:

- 1. Select the Notes tool in the Tool palette (or just press N).**
- 2. If necessary, change the name in the Author text box on the Options bar.**

Just click inside the Author text box and start typing.

By default, when you create a note, the name you entered when you installed Photoshop appears as the author of the note. However, you may be working on an image with someone else's computer, or you may be on the lam and using an assumed name.

Be sure that everyone looking at the file uses a unique name so that you can sort out the various notes and, perhaps, give all of them their proper weight (that is, always do what the boss says, but take Seymour the intern's comments with a grain of salt).

- 3. Choose a type size from the Size drop-down list on the Options bar.**

Choose font sizes in relative sizes from Smallest to Medium to Largest so Photoshop can adjust the notes to be readable on monitors set for different resolutions.

- 4. Click the Color box on the Options bar and, in the Color Picker, select a color for the title bar of each note and the color of its icon when you minimize the note.**

Color-coding is a good way to differentiate authors, as well as priorities. For example, you can use Red, Yellow, and Green to indicate relative status of a particular suggestion, or select a color to represent a particular author.

- 5. Click in the note's window and type the text you want to enter (as shown in Figure 3-1).**

You can use traditional editing commands, such as the Backspace key, Ctrl+X, Ctrl+C, and Ctrl+V (⌘+X, ⌘+C, and ⌘+V on the Mac) to edit the text.

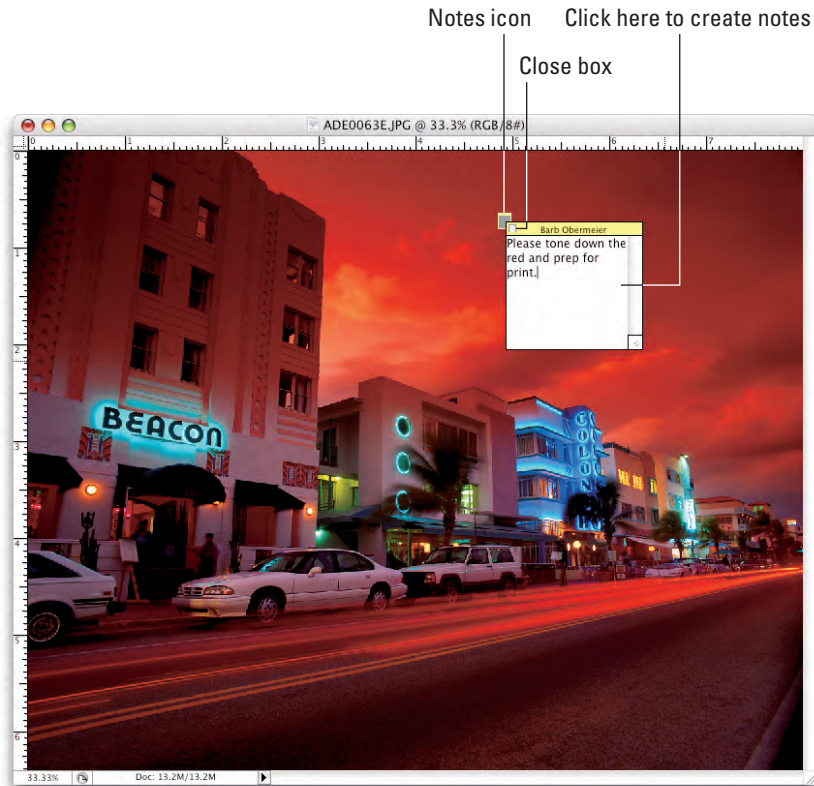
- 6. When you finish entering a note, click the note's Close box on the right (Windows) or the left (Mac OS) end of the title bar.**

Photoshop minimizes the note to an icon.

Creating an audio note

If you have a microphone connected to your computer, you can add audio notes to your image files. Audio notes are great for adding annotations that take a long time to type or that are better explained through audio.

Audio annotations can bloat your file size, so unless using audio annotations is really more advantageous, stick with text notes.



PhotoDisc/Getty Images

Figure 3-1: Use the Notes tool to leave friendly comments to yourself or others.

To add an audio message to your file, just follow these steps:

1. Select the Audio Annotation tool.

Press N to activate the Notes tool and then Shift+N to choose the Audio Annotation tool.

2. If necessary, change the author name or note color on the Options bar.

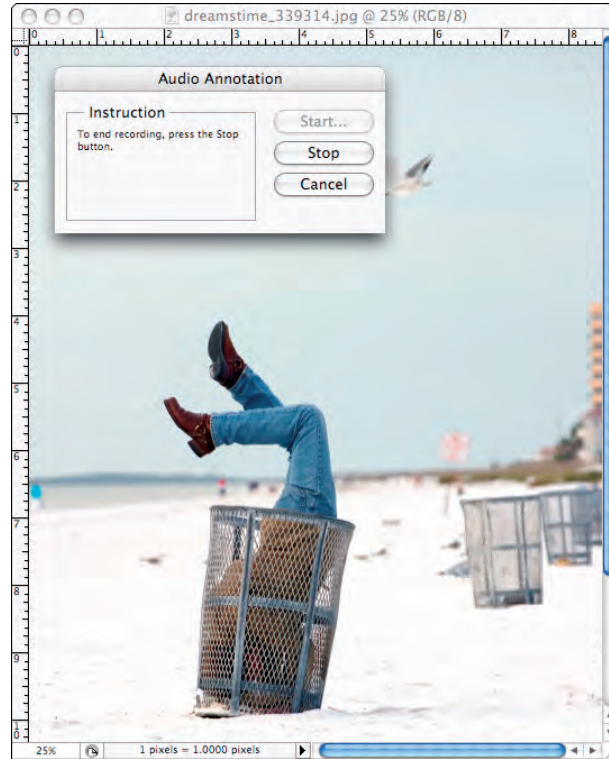
Figure 3-2 shows the Options bar with the Audio Annotation tool activated.



Figure 3-2: The Audio Annotations settings on the Options bar.

3. Click in the image where you want to include the audio annotation.

The Audio Annotation dialog box, shown in Figure 3-3, pops up.



Corbis Digital Stock

Figure 3-3: Audio annotations are a handy way to add long or complex notes to your file.

4. Click the Start button and begin speaking into the microphone.

5. Click Stop when you finish talking.

To play the audio annotation, double-click its icon.

Importing and exporting PDF files with annotations

You can view PDF or FDF (*Forms Data Format*) documents that contain annotations, review the annotations, and make new notes of your own.

If you want to send an image file to a friend or colleague who doesn't have Photoshop, you can still get input. You can even include notes of your own. To export your file (and its annotations) for review in Adobe Acrobat, just save the document and choose Photoshop PDF as the format. Be sure to check the Annotations option at the bottom of the Save dialog box.

Then when your Acrobat-using friend sends the file back to you, just follow these steps to access his or her input:

1. Choose **File** → **Import** → **Annotations**.
2. **Navigate to the PDF or FDF file you want to open.**
3. **Click the Load button.**

Photoshop imports the file with the annotations intact.

Working with Metadata

When working in Adobe Bridge, when you select an image, you can view its metadata. *Metadata* is just a fancy name for information that is embedded in your image file, as shown in Figure 3-4. In fact, Photoshop allows an image to have so much attached information, the only thing you won't know is your image's favorite color and hobbies. The metadata categories include the default categories of File Properties, IPTC (International Press Telecommunications Council), and Camera Data (EXIF or Extended Information File). You can also choose to display additional categories, such as GPS (Global Positioning System), Camera Raw (a digital camera file format), and Edit History. Choose Preferences from the Metadata panel pop-up menu. Choose the Metadata category from the left side of the Preferences window. In the following sections, you can find a brief description of some of the more frequently used categories.

File Properties

The fields in the File Properties category include common vitals, such as filename, size, format, color mode, and so on. This data cannot be edited.

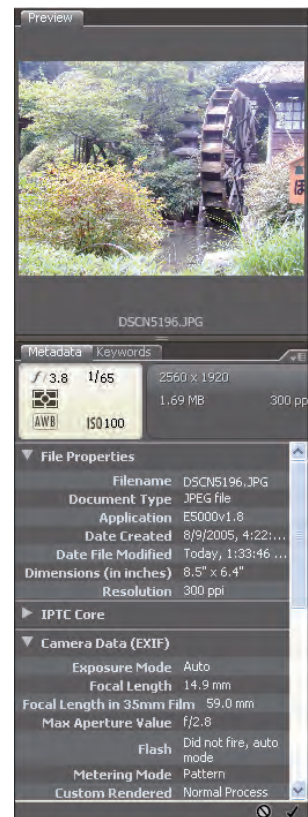


Figure 3-4: Use Bridge to attach metadata to image files.

Choose View⇨As Details to display the file properties data next to the image thumbnail. This option allows you to collapse the left side of the Bridge without sacrificing the display of important metadata.

IPTC Core

This data includes info commonly used in the media and press industry. Fields such as headline, credit, source, and copyright are available for input via File⇨File Info. Or make it easy: Select an image, or several images, and simply click the field in the Bridge and type your entry. If you select more than one image, Photoshop asks whether you want the change to apply to all selected images. If so, click Yes. All fields are later editable as well.

The File Info dialog box is extensible, which means that users can create custom panels with fields specifically tailored to business needs or personal interests.

Because Bridge is a feature that is used across all Creative Suite applications, including illustration and page layout programs, fonts and swatches are part of the metadata that can be reflected.

Camera Data (EXIF)

EXIF data is information that is attached to an image created from a digital camera. It includes data such as make and model of camera, exposure, and f-stop settings. If a digital camera didn't capture the image, it doesn't have any EXIF data, although some scanners attach EXIF data, such as date, time, pixel dimensions, and resolution. Camera Data is not editable.

GPS

Some files, such as images captured by satellites and a few digital cameras, may contain GPS, or *Global Positioning System*, data. This data may contain information on latitude, longitude, altitude, direction, speed, and so on. However, this data is not shown in the Metadata panel by default.

Camera Raw

Camera Raw is a file format used to capture images by a lot of different digital cameras. The image information is captured directly from the camera's sensors and is not adulterated by filters or adjustments made by the camera. This enables photographers to read the image data and make their own controlled adjustments. Camera Raw data includes settings such as white balance, temperature, exposure, color saturation, and so on. Like GPS data, the Camera Raw data is not shown in the Metadata panel by default.



Audio

With the explosion of digital music it's no wonder this new category was added. Here you can enter data regarding your sound files, such as the name of the artist, album, and track.



Video

For all you videographers out there, this new category enables you to enter data about your video files, such as the pixel aspect ratio, tape name, scene, date, and so on.

Edit History

The Edit History option records all the edits (image enhancements, retouches, and so on) made on an image in an edit log that you can save as a text file or as attached metadata. Choose the File Handling panel in the Preferences dialog box to establish your desired settings for your editing history. See Book I, Chapter 5 for details.

The Metadata panel offers some options via the Palette pop-up menu:

- ✓ **Find:** Select Find to locate images by various metadata fields. For details on searching, see the next section.
- ✓ **Increase/Decrease Font Size:** Choose these options to enlarge or decrease the font size in set increments.
- ✓ **Show Metadata Placard:** Choose this option to display the new mini panel with your camera (exif) and file data. You will be able to view data such as camera exposure, file dimensions, file resolution, and color mode.
- ✓ **Preferences:** Choose the Metadata category on the left side of the Preferences window. Choose the fields displayed in each of the metadata categories. Keep your palette lean and mean by choosing the Hide Empty Fields option to hide metadata items that are set to display, but do not contain any data.
- ✓ **Create/Edit Metadata:** This command enables you to create (you can also choose Tools⇨Create Metadata Template) and edit your own metadata templates. Remember, you can create a customized template that contains only the pertinent data you want about your media assets.



Accessing Help When You Need It

To access the Photoshop Help system, plus some other useful information, look no further than the handy-dandy Help menu, as shown in Figure 3-5.

You'll be happy to know that in CS3, Adobe put some effort into improving the Help system. Just to mention a few improvements, the Help system now contains lots of embedded cross-reference links that allow you to fully explore the scope of a feature or command. It also offers direct links to other resources such as tips, tutorials, user forums, and online support.

If you're using the Mac OS, the Help menu also lets you turn Balloon Help on and off.

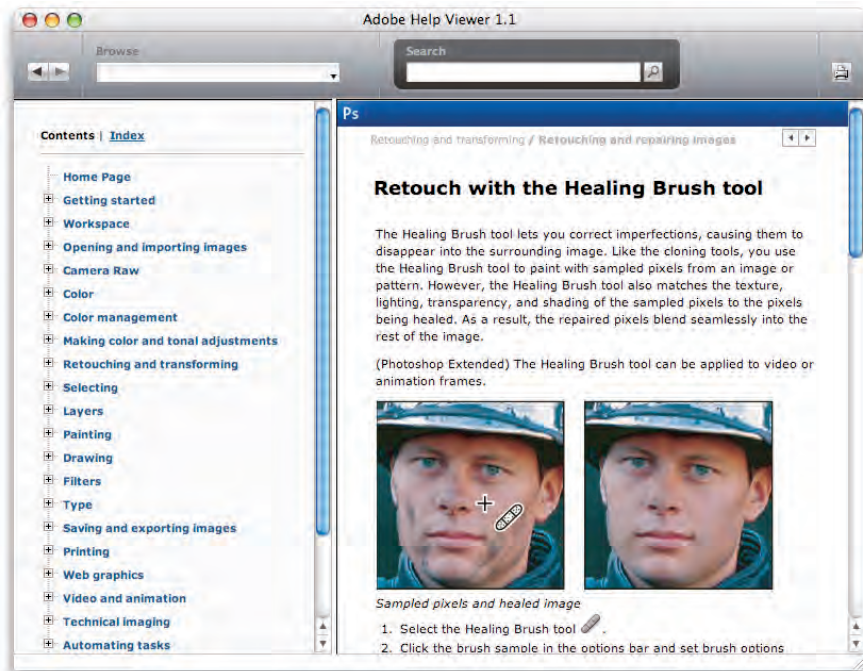


Figure 3-5: Photoshop's Adobe Help Center provides tons of handy, quick-access help.

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Because you can view the Help screens (they pop up in a Web browser window) simply by pressing F1 (or ⌘+? on the Mac), you might not visit the Help menu very often, but if you ever want to find all your help resources in one location, this place is it. Here are some other help sources:

- ✓ The About Photoshop splash screen displays the version number of your Photoshop program. That way you always know whether you've installed the latest patches and updates to Photoshop CS3.

- ✓ The About Plug-In entry displays a list of all the plug-ins you've installed for Photoshop. Selecting an item in the list shows an About screen of version information for that plug-in.

On a Mac, both the About Photoshop splash screen and About Plug-In menu are on the Photoshop menu.

- ✓ The System Info entry displays information about your computer, its operating system, and available memory, plus Photoshop-specific data such as the location you set for your Plug-Ins folder. If you like, you can click the Copy button to copy this information to the clipboard, and then paste it in a text document and print it out.

- ✓ The Updates, Registration, Activation, and Photoshop Online choices access Internet resources for Photoshop.

- ✓ The How To options are quick shortcuts to popular image-editing tasks. Select one, and Photoshop takes you to the explanation of that topic in the Help system.