

On Computers

By Bob and Joy Schwabach

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January 2004, Week 4 -- **Read All About It**

There's romance in the words "Front Page." They conjure images of the Broadway hit by Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur (later made into at least three movies) and, of course, every reporter's desire to have the hottest story.

This FrontPage is from Microsoft, however, and it dominates the creation of Web sites. We used FrontPage to create our own Web site, for example, and it wasn't because we didn't try other programs. We must have had a dozen of them at one time or another, most of them easier to use than FrontPage and with better graphics.



The deciding factor for us was that FrontPage had its own built-in search function. No other Web page creation program had a search function; if your site was more than a couple of pages, the viewer got lost. (Our Web site, www.oncomp.com, has more than 500 pages.) Over time, the program also got easier to use.

The latest version, FrontPage 2003, has some really nice tricks and kicks, but one of the best is a split screen. You can have a Web page on one half of the screen, and show the display codes on the other half. The ability to show codes is critical for many editing tasks.

It often happens that you can't get the spacing right, or you'll have a blue line around a photo, or can't keep a table straight. Seeing the code makes it much easier to fix these problems. If it still doesn't look right, you can try a different code. Once you have the look the way you want it, you can do a global "find and replace" for every instance of the code you want changed.

FrontPage 2003 requires Windows XP or 2000. The list price is \$199 from Microsoft, but we found it for \$85 at www.cnet.com. There's a 30-day trial version available for a shipping cost of \$8 from www.microsoft.com/frontpage. That also includes a trial of the server editor of Windows 2003, Enterprise. (Enterprise means it's designed for business rather than home use.)

Speaking of Split Screen...

^^^One of the neatest display features on the market is seeing a single image or two associated images spread across two monitors. A little startup company called DoubleSight (www.doublesight.com) has combined two 15-



inch LCD monitors (flat monitors) in one unit for a list price of \$799. That's about the same as purchasing two separate high-quality 15-inch flat-screen monitors, but more handy.

The dual monitor can work with either Windows or Macintosh to display an extended image of the computer screen or show two different screens. It's in the latter mode that we see the most potential.

Researchers can look at their article on one monitor and their notes on another. You could also watch the stock market on one screen while working on the other screen. Designers and architects can have a diagram or floor plan on one screen, and drawing tools on the other. Windows 98, 2000 and XP have built-in routines for displaying images on two monitors, but you need a card with two video output sockets.

Small is Good

Some programs are small and don't do much, and that's the best reason for getting them. We looked at a recent example called "PhoTags," from IMSI, and what it does is let you type right on the photos in your computer.

That's not all it does, but that's the main thing. While you can type on pictures with any of several digital photo editors generally available, this one requires no learning. That's what's nice about small programs designed to do one thing in particular. And captions and comments you write on a photo can be moved around and edited. An interesting sidelight on being able to type dates, photographer's name and other comments on pictures is you can then search through them using key words.

PhoTags is \$40, which seems a little high, from www.photags.com. We found it for \$25 by searching on Froogle (www.froogle.com).

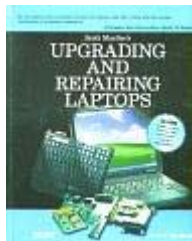
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- www.wholesomeharvest.com: Having a safe-meat scare? Here is a coalition of small farmers, mostly in Iowa, who raise organic meats. They sell under the Wholesome Harvest brand and are glad to sell to individuals.
- www.lulu.com: This one is a lulu. It's a collection of books that apparently have been published only online, not necessarily on this site first. Readers who have been caught up by the current best seller "The Da Vinci Code," can download a \$2 book discussing all of the symbology and artwork that forms the dramatic background of the story. The book also provides pictures of the places and artworks essential to the story's momentum. You can also upload and sell your own literary efforts, including calendars.

Books

- "Upgrading and Repairing PCs," \$60.
- "Upgrading and Repairing Laptops," \$50.
- "Upgrading and Repairing Networks," \$60.

Think of them as the computer tinkerer's library. They're also good references for repair technicians. All three are by Scott Mueller, and published by Que Publishing (www.quepublishing.com).



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