

## Web Site Image Help *continued....*

<http://www.netmechanic.com/accelerate>. This site has a free service that will allow you to upload an image to their site and they will make you a new image in several compression levels and let you choose the one you want. Once you have your picture resized to meet the dimension requirements, visit the site and let them do the compression work for you. It's free and it gives good results.

The other approach is to buy some software that will let you do it yourself. Software that can help you do this ranges in prices from ridiculously expensive (Adobe Photoshop \$600) to really reasonable (JASC Paint Shop Pro \$99) to free (The GIMP). Unless you make your living manipulating images, I think the best choice is Paint Shop Pro. You can probably do everything you will ever need to do and it's fairly easy to use. (Photoshop is a more powerful tool, but the learning curve is noticeable, to say the least, and the price is an eye-opener.) Plus, you can download a free, fully-functional version that will work for thirty days from their web site <http://www.jasc.com>. There are also lots of tutorials available on the web that will help you learn to use the software. I have seen this software at Best Buy for \$69 after a \$30 rebate. I have used all these tools and use Photoshop for most of my work. I also use Paint Shop Pro. It just depends on what I'm trying to do.

One of the most attractive features of Paint Shop Pro is a feature that will take an image that you are working on and export it for web use. You can see

the effect that different compression levels have on the image and then choose the one that gives the best picture quality while still keeping a reasonable file size. It's also real easy to use.

If you take many pictures with your digital camera, or scan in pictures from your standard camera, I think you would find that investing in some good software will pay off in the long run. The software can help you save pictures that would otherwise be unusable and it can also help you enhance pictures that are just a little "out of whack." Whichever software you choose, you will need to spend at least a little time learning how to use it. Although most contemporary imaging software is pretty easy to use, it's kind of like your Miata. You get the best results through education and practice.

If you have any general imaging questions, just drop me a note at [rick@dustbunny.com](mailto:rick@dustbunny.com) and I'll try to answer them.

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