

Crafting interesting and effective custom projection presentations may take time, but the results can justify your investment.

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Emotions

PRESENTATION SOFTWARE on display

Presentations have always been effective sales and marketing tools for professional photographers. With the array of presentation software out there, the secret is to find a package that matches your business branding.

Almost all presentation applications can generate output for the Web, multimedia devices, CD and DVD, and personal presentations. Image resolution, transition style, and optimal presentation length varies, depending on how the presentation will be viewed.

Personal presentations look best with the

maximum image resolution recommended for your display system, and can include complex transitions. For viewing with clients, it's ideal to have live control to pace the show to suit the mood and the sales presentation. It makes all the difference to speed through images that aren't getting the client's attention, or slow down a sequence the client responds to emotionally.

With many applications, you can't select images on the fly or change the sequence during the show, but there are workarounds. You

can create smaller presentation segments, perhaps making the first one an overview, then follow with the segments that most engage the client.

With simple installation, a straightforward interface and output options, WnSoft **PICTURESTOEXE** for Windows has been popular with professional photographers for years, for its speed and the ease of show production. The opening screen has a two-panel file explorer window and a proxy window. To create a slideshow, highlight an image directory, select the images to include, and hit Create Slideshow. It's that simple.

From there, the application's executable file presentations can run automatically, or with user input to meet specific customer requirements. You can change the pace and direction of the slides, using the right and left arrow keys to move forward or back.

New options in the Deluxe 5.0 version, a significant upgrade, include smooth pan/zoom/rotate commands in the visual editor, drop shadows and glows for objects, perspective correction for the zoom command, and true camera movement simulation. The Projects Options menu has tools to define an audio track with a configurable timeline, set the image aspect ratio and configure transitional effects, also guided by a timeline. Virtually all aspects of the slideshow are configured through this menu, including how the slideshow is output (as an executable .exe file or .ser screen saver). You can password protect the entire presentation. PicturesToExe Deluxe 5.0 lists for \$59. (www.wnsoft.com)

Anix Software **MYSLIDESHOW GOLD** is another comprehensive package that stream-



PicturesToExe's Objects and Animation menu supports extensive imaging tools, including a drop-shadow utility that's as full-featured as some Photoshop plug-ins.

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MySlideShow Gold presentations are easily configured using the Settings and Sound options at screen right.

lines the process. Drag and drop images into the slide list window to create a new show. All characteristics of the show are set through the Settings and Sound options. Click the Setting icon to control font styles, transitional effects, zooms and pans; click Sound to add or modify background audio tracks. Although the slideshows work as AutoRun CDs, the presentations include 10 different commands accessed by right-clicking the screen. The commands include navigation forward, backward, or to a specific frame, starts and pauses, image data and image rotation. Viewers can also copy and save individual images.

MySlideShow gives you the option to generate executable files, screen savers, Web galleries, albums, auto-run CDs, MPG movies or video CD/DVDs. Windows-only MySlideShow Gold

For ease of use, ProSelect's Working with Images menu offers a number of one-click tools on the right side of the screen, including no-configuration color to sepia and color to black-and-white conversions.

lists from \$39 to \$75, depending on the number of licensed users. (www.anixsoft.com)

PROSELECT 3.3 by Time Exposure is designed to produce personal presentations. A panel on the left side of the interface



displays thumbnails of the selected images; the much larger right panel can be used to display thumbnails of the entire screen show or individual images. Tools for composite layouts, cropping, color effects, notes and more line the right side of the interface. To create a slideshow, click on the slideshow icon. The Preferences interface defines virtually every aspect of the presentation, and calibration for actual image size projection. For comparing images, you can display up to ten photos on screen at once.

ProSelect's print pricing and ordering system sets it apart from the pack. For ordering during the presentation, the software supports multiple user-configurable price lists, print sizes and special product options. A single computer license for ProSelect costs \$342; the High-Resolution Production option costs an additional \$225. (timeexposure.com)

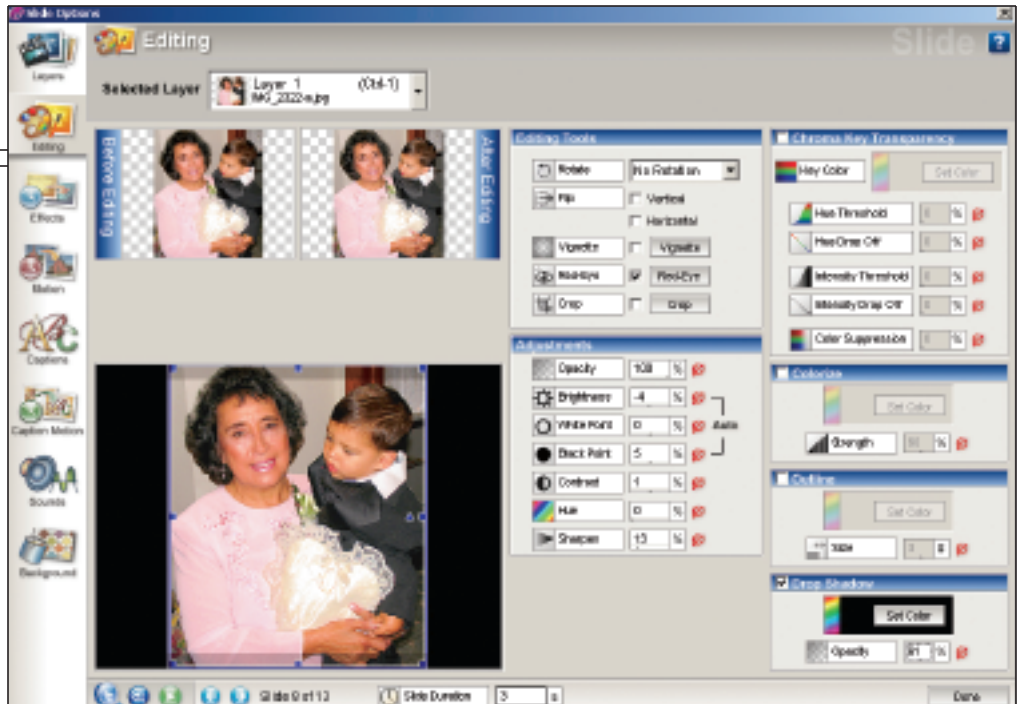
Developed by wedding photographer turned entrepreneur David Jay, **SHOWIT WEB** software comes in Lite and Pro versions. Designed to create a Flash presentation for Web viewing, it opens with a numbered, step-

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Pro Show Producer's Slide Options menu includes an Editing window (shown) that has as many image optimization tools as some basic image editing applications.

by-step interface. Choose a folder of images and the specifications for the show, then let the software use its own compression engine to format the images. Next, use the tabs to customize such elements as titles, hot links, image arrangement, and zoom points. The Pro version allows more customization of timing, transitions, timed templates and gallery views. When you're ready to publish the show, the files are organized in a single folder that you upload to your Web host. Short online video tutorials walk you through the process.

ShowIt Web includes a selection of royalty-free music from T.J. Hill Music and Triple Scoop Music, and allows you to choose custom MP3 music. There's no option to export your show directly to a QuickTime or AVI movie file. If you want to deliver a DVD presentation for you client, you create an account with ShowIt-dvd.com, where you can have a DVD



show created, set your own price for first and additional copies, design the look of the disk and stylish DVD case, and allow clients to order it directly with a button in the show, or purchase it yourself at cost to deliver as part of your package.

ShowIt Web is a standalone application for Mac or Windows and sells for \$99 for the Lite version, \$199 for the Pro. Effects and Borders add-ons are also available. Mac owners should download the software, including the fully functional demo, through Safari rather than Firefox. (www.showitfast.com)

Photodex **PROSHOW PRODUCER** generates high-end-production value slideshows. The Producer interface looks somewhat like Adobe Bridge, with folder navigation and thumbnail file display on the left, and a large preview panel. There are tools along the top, and a filmstrip along the bottom shows the images that have been imported into the presentation.

The user drags and drops images, audio tracks and transitions from an extensive transition menu onto the filmstrip. ProShow Producer supports more than 280



ShowIt Web takes the user through a simple, straightforward, step-by-step process that creates a Web presentation.

transitions and a range of image motions.

Executable ProShow Producer slide-shows run within the Photodex Presenter ProShow Web plug-in. Right-clicking the screen brings up a short menu of commands, including pause, next, previous, full screen, mute and volume.

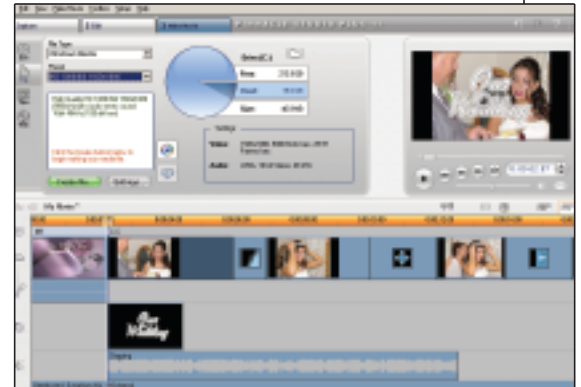
ProShow Producer creates output in an array of formats, including Web shows, CD/DVD videos, screensavers, PC Autorun, EXE, MOV, WMV, AVI, HD-video, and Flash presentations. Producer requires Windows Vista, XP or 2000 and lists for \$249.95. Royalty-free music from Triple Scoop Music is available for purchase from ProShow MediaSource. (www.photodex.com)

Pinnacle **STUDIO PLUS 11** can incorporate still images, video clips and audio tracks into a single presentation

generated as a video file. Drag-and-drop multimedia assets into sequence to get started. Studio includes tools to capture video from a variety of sources.

Studio Plus includes proprietary DVD burning drives, as does ProShow Producer. Studio Plus gives you extensive video and audio editing capabilities, various titling options, and hundreds of transitions. The transitions library includes a proxy screen to preview each transition.

Studio Plus is a good choice for photographers who want to make high-end video presentations that run on computers as well as an iPod and Sony PSP. It can output various video file formats, including AVI, WMV, DivX, iPod, MPEG formats and Real Video. It carries a \$99 list price. Requires Windows XP with SP2 or Vista. (www.pinnaclesys.com)



Pinnacle Studio Plus features everything needed to create sophisticated video presentations for a wide variety of devices, including HD output, the Internet or an iPod.

All of these programs are relatively easy to install and simple to use. Creating interesting and effective custom presentations takes a bit of time, but the results can justify your investment. ■