Keyboard Shortcuts in Dan's Book

Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 09:43:37 EDT
From: Dan Margulis
Subject: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

I am encountering the following problem in my writing and, inasmuch as I have to make a change by the middle of next week and have already screwed up once, I throw this out in case anyone can make me a better suggestion.

Photoshop runs basically identically on Mac and PC. It uses the same shortcuts, except that the Command (Apple) key on a Mac corresponds to the Ctrl key on a PC, and the Option on a Mac is the Alt on a PC.

When my column began in 1993, 99% of its readership used Macs. Therefore, when referring to keyboard shortcuts, which are often essential in the things I write about, I would use the Mac keyboard terms.

As PCs became more popular I did not change. Every now and then some PC chauvinist would demand equal time for keyboard shortcuts. I had a form letter with a snippy response saying that in a column aimed at professional or aspiring professional users the author does not have to waste time explaining what the function of the mouse is or how to launch Photoshop or what Mac keys correspond to what PC keys.

The political pressure finally became too much, so for my forthcoming book, I decided to change policies in spite of the waste of space. So, instead of "Cmd-Opt-1 loads the red channel as a selection", which is how I used to write it, I changed over to the impossibly tiresome "Command/Ctrl-Option/Alt-1 loads the red channel as a selection." This policy went into effect with my last column.

The problem: you guessed it. The Mac also has a Ctrl key, one that does not correspond to the Ctrl key on a PC keyboard. So, I get angry emails from Mac readers saying that my keyboard shortcuts don't work. Whaddaya mean, Command PLUS Ctrl-1 gets me the red channel???

So, now I have to change everything again. One publisher's helpful suggestion is that such sentences should read: "Command-Option-1 (Mac), Ctrl-Alt-1 (PC) loads the red channel as a selection." When I heard that, I made a suggestion of my own as to what they could do with their PC keyboard. Also, I indicated that I would sooner tell the readers to open the bleeping Channels palette and Option-click on the bleeping red channel icon, until I realized I would also have to tell PC users to Alt-click.

My current thoughts are: for columns, I will stick to Mac terms and the PC users can lump it. For the book, I will put one mention in the introduction and one box the first time a keyboard shortcut appears discussing the problem and stating that as a compromise between platforms I will use "Cmd" to refer to either the Command or Control key, and "Alt" to refer to either the Option or Alt. Thus, "Cmd-Alt-1 loads the red channel as a selection."

Very frustrated and very open to better ideas.

Dan Margulis

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Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 10:01:39 -0500
From: Jim Bean
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

hello dan, glad to hear that something frustrates you.. (just kidding).. I only use mac during your classes and occasionally at customer's locations.. When I read anyone's 'how-to' summaries my eyes simply disregard the mac shortcuts and I interpret for myself the pc equivalents.. not a real issue.. wasting time/ink/resources to continually restate the obvious is not necessary.. a simple one-time statement, during your introduction should be enough.. your previous efforts have caused no one any real grief or distracted from your tutorials... including your more recent lab adventures... do you ever sleep?
all the best, jim bean

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Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 11:53:10 -0400
From: Ray Van Dusen
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

Dan

I've run into the very same problem myself over the years in creating Photoshop notes for my own students. The "solution" I've adopted uses the simple expedient of adding PC keys in italicized text (in brackets) following the Mac shortcut keys. I also use abbreviations both to save space as well as believing that they'll eventually "get" Cmd, Ctrl, Opt [Ctrl, Alt] if I explain it and they see it enough.

The only ones who don't seem to "get it" are certain stubborn luddites (mostly crusty colleagues) who cling to the belief that you don't need keyboard shortcuts in the first place. While that's true for many functions (and I do encourage relative beginners to use only a basic set of shortcuts and not get overwhelmed by the rest) there are some essential functions that you just can't do if you don't know the shortcuts because they aren't palette, menu or tool bar features. The ones who I feel really sorry for are my francaphone colleagues whose french keyboards deny them some of the best shortcuts.

FWIW, I justify biasing Mac as the (non bracketed) default shortcut language because I still find PC Photoshoppers to be well in the minority in my classes (never more than 25%, usually much less).

Ctrl/Opt/Cmd + eject.

Ray Van Dusen

+--------------------------------+
faculty
Professional Photography Dept.
Dawson College
Montreal

_____

Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 09:12:21 -0700
From: Stephen Ramirez
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

I think you should explain the difference between the two keyboards in the introduction to the book, and stay with Mac terms in the body of the text. You can let the readers know that you have been using a Mac for your entire professional computing career and listing only one flavor of keyboard combination is simply more concise as as there is less clutter from redundant information. There is a wealth of technical information in your books and if a reader cannot comprehend how to translate two keys on a keyboard they are not going to have a particularly easy time with the concepts and methods described in the book either. If this was the Photoshop Made Simple or Photoshop for Dummies book it would be a different story but a person who needs that type of book is not your target readership. Your publisher and any disgruntled PC using readers should understand that.

Steve

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Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 11:43:59 -0500
From: "R. Lutz"
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

On Apr 16, 2005, at 11:12 AM, Stephen Ramirez wrote:

> I think you should explain the difference between the two keyboards
> in the introduction to the book, and stay with Mac terms in the body
> of the text. ...

This would be my preference as well. I work with both formats.

Dick

_____

Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 17:46:00 +0100
From: "Bob Armstrong"
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

Dan, my view is that it would be better to use the shortcuts of one platform rather than risk the potential for confussion by going to a politically correct halfway house. I'll go further and say that I believe you should use the Mac shortcuts; your readers are familiar with them.

Cmd-Option = Ctrl-Alt

with one off explanatory text should be clear, whereas

Cmd-Alt or Ctrl-Option

doesn't 'actually' work on either platform.

Regards

Bob

_____

Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 13:02:17 -0400
From: Gene Palmiter
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

> Dan, my view is that it would be better to use the shortcuts of one platform
> rather than risk the potential for confussion by going to a politically
> correct halfway house. I'll go further and say that I believe you should
> use the Mac shortcuts; your readers are familiar with them.

I take an opposing view. The dominance of the Mac in the graphics arts industries has passed. The ratio of PC to Mac users exceeds 90 to 10. I agree, go with one platform, but go with the majority. Not only will you be addressing the majority of the professional users, but you will be addressing the vast majority of casual users.

The Mac users will adjust...they do this sort of thing daily as required by their choice of platforms.

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Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 12:22:21 -0700
From: Jono Moore
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

On 4/16/05, Dan Margulis wrote:

> My current thoughts are: for columns, I will stick to Mac terms and the PC
> users can lump it. For the book, I will put one mention in the introduction and
> one box the first time a keyboard shortcut appears discussing the problem and
> stating that as a compromise between platforms I will use "Cmd" to refer to
> either the Command or Control key, and "Alt" to refer to either the Option or
> Alt. Thus, "Cmd-Alt-1 loads the red channel as a selection."

This would be the best, I think. A "notes on keyboard usage" page at the beginning of the book explaining that Cmd=Ctrl and Opt=Alt, or vice versa.

_____

Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 16:34:13 -0300
From: Paul Marriner
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

I'm a PC-using non-expert. IMO no one who is prepared to purchase a book on L*A*B* could be even slightly perturbed by the shortcut terminology provided it's simple and consistent. Dual terminology makes reading irritating. Furthermore, I'd give a shortcut once and thereafter ignore them. To me, seeing a page littered with [cmd/opt/T:ctrl/alt/T]s makes me shudder.
--
Paul Marriner
Outdoor Writing & Photography. Owner: Gale's End Press. Member: OWAA & OWC.

_____

Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 16:37:20 -0500
From: "Mike Wickham"
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

> I will use "Cmd" to refer to either the Command or Control key, and "Alt"
> to refer to either the Option or Alt. Thus, "Cmd-Alt-1 loads the red channel
> as a selection."

You know, I think that's a very elegant solution. It eliminates the clumsiness of putting both a Mac and PC shortcut, and it eliminates the favoritism of picking one platform over the other.

But if you were to pick one platform over another, I'd try to find out which platform is used by the majority of your book's readers, and make it more convenient for them. I suspect, with the popularity of digital cameras, that most Photoshop users these days are PC users. While PC users may not be well represented in the readership of your columns, they may be more than well represented when it comes to buying your books. I notice that the local Barnes and Noble store has two full racks of Photoshop books, and Mac users are rare around here. That may say something.

Mike Wickham
Pleco Press
"Aquarium books endorsed by fish!"
_____

Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 17:57:47 -0400
From: todie
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

> The Mac users will adjust...they do this sort of thing daily as required by
> their choice of platforms.

Mac users don't make such ridiculous statements (though they sometimes outdo PC users with their response to "such" :)

Here's a survey that may not be perfect but greatly favors the Mac:

http://www.rit.edu/~survey03/compare.html

Laurentiu Todie
_____

Date: Sat, 16 Apr 2005 15:26:50 -0700 (PDT)
From: Horacio Peña"
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

I'm a heavy PC and Photoshop user. Some months ago I had to work with Macs for a couple of weeks and had to struggle with keyboard's differences. From that experience, what I learned most was... cursing!

What I find most disturbing with Macs is the mouse (I'm a "wheel-adict") and not really the key-

board... so IMHO, write a little explanation at the beginning and then just stick to the Mac keyboard. One keyboard is enough!

Best regards
Horacio

_____

Date: Sun, 17 Apr 2005 11:53:41 +0100
From: "Keith Dixon"
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

I'm sure I read a book once where they used the form of (option button) instead of apple key or ctrl. I don't remember having any problems understanding it although as a PC user I'm used to reading it all in mac forms anyway. It's never caused me much of a problem.

_____

Date: Sun, 17 Apr 2005 11:05:01 -0500
From: Howard Smith
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

   If I was a Mac user then I would be uncomfortable with the idea that I was a member of a minority group being patronized to help make up for what must be perceived to be an inherent inability to grasp the difference between Mac and Pc commands. As a Pc user, it has never been a problem for me to automatically translate Mac commands into Pc commands as I read. For awhile I even caught myself automatically translating newscasters' mention of the words "command" and "options" into "Ctrl" and "Alt".

   Now, considering how much help has been given to me by forum contributors who are probably in the Mac majority, I don't want to alienate anyone. But from a practical standpoint, what difference does it make what set of commands are used as long as we know (or can easily learn) the difference? Anyone who can't pick this up from reading a quick introduction at the beginning of a Photoshop textbook is not a likely candidate for learning anything useful.

Howard Smith

_____

Date: Sun, 17 Apr 2005 11:07:41 -0500
From: Howard Smith
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

You may notice that the Take Home Salary has dropped as the preference for the Mac has increased.

Surveys are beautiful! They can tell you anything you want to know.

Howard Smith

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Date: Sun, 17 Apr 2005 11:36:37 -0500
From: Ron Bean
Subject: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

My vote would be to leave the shortcuts out of the text completely, and just let people refer to a chart in the front of the book (or a box at the end of the magazine columns). I think the text is easier to read when it's not cluttered with keyboard references, and people can look them up when they need them.

If you want some kind of reference in the text, number the lines in the chart and use some kind of symbol that refers to the line number, so [3] would refer to line 3 of the chart (which would include both Mac and PC versions).

Another option would be to include the shortcuts as footnotes, but that would make the layout more complicated, given that you already have graphics on every page.

The problem: you guessed it. The Mac also has a Ctrl key, one that does not correspond to the Ctrl key on a PC keyboard.

I don't know why Apple needs a Control key when they already have two modifier keys-- it doesn't matter what you label them, as long as there are two of them. Maybe someone should start a business selling aftermarket keycaps that label them "up" and "down", or "Yin" and "Yang", or whatever. It's the function that counts, not the label.

In the early days, some companies labeled their floppy disk drives "A" and "B", while others labeled them "0" and "1". Third party documents tended to call them the "first" and "second" drives. People managed to figure out what they meant without starting holy wars about it.

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Date: Sun, 17 Apr 2005 09:48:28 -0700 (PDT)
From: Ben Kriete
Subject: Re: Keyboard Shortcuts

As a PC user and relative newcomer to the field of Photoshop, I think your readers might best be served by adding a table to either the frontpapers or endpapers (not hidden in an appendix) that gives:

Action [Mac command] [PC equivalent]

Within the text you could use whatever you felt most appropriate (probably Mac commands), and it would be reasonably simple to flip back and forth while trying to figure things out at the computer. In fact, one could even photocopy such a table and tack it up behind one's monitor.

Hope this is a useful suggestion;

Ben

_____

Date: Sun, 17 Apr 2005 10:26:40 -0700
From: David Creamer
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

The dominance of the Mac in the graphics arts

Interesting. Do you have websites that did surveys to support this statement?

I believe this ratio is for overall users (a majority of whom use only MS Office), not in the graphics vertical market.

David Creamer
I.D.E.A.S. - Results-Oriented Training
http://www.IDEAStraining.com
Adobe Certified (since 1995) for ALL Print and Web
   Publishing-related software
Authorized Quark Consultant (since 1988)
Markzware, Enfocus, FileMaker Certified
Apple Certified Consultant (since 1990)

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Date: Sun, 17 Apr 2005 11:10:10 -0700
From: "John Feld"
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

Mainly I write specifically for the PC market on using graphics software, but about 30% of our readers are cross platform, or solely Mac users. I get around this one by just eliminating keyboard shortcuts.

I figure if you want to know about color management, applying trapping, and making separations, you were already able to find, or work out, the keyboard shortcuts are.

We get letters occasionally, usually from users complaining that we are
1. ignoring beginners
ii. slaves to Bill Gates
iii. doomed to burn in hell

But we have yet to receive a complaint about the lack of keyboard shortcuts. Thankfully with the exception of the location of the Preferences menus are nearly always identical.

John

_____

John Feld
PC Graphics Report
Design Graphics
www.pcgraphicsreport.com
www.designgraphics.com.au

_____

Date: Sun, 17 Apr 2005 20:02:46 +0000
From: "Aaron Hill"
Subject: Keyboard Shortcuts

You really have to include both the PC and Mac worlds. I use both almost daily.

Aaron

_____

Date: Sun, 17 Apr 2005 13:39:58 -0700
From: Paul D. DeRocco
Subject: RE: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

The problem is that there are some very useful keyboard shortcuts that aren't self-advertising. They may be somewhere in the help file, but I generally only find those shortcuts that announce themselves in the menus or pop-up tool tips, or that I read about in an article describing some particular workflow. For instance, [and] for changing brush size was something I only learned fairly recently.

Ciao,   Paul D. DeRocco

_____

Date: Sun, 17 Apr 2005 19:58:44 +0000
From: "Aaron Hill"
Subject: Keyboard Shortcuts

I like the idea of a simple chart for keyboard shortcuts at the end or beginning of the book.

Aaron Hill

_____

Date: Sun, 17 Apr 2005 22:04:14 -0000
From: "jrswebhome"
Subject: re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

Dan,

16 year Mac user (I think that's right), and Photoshop since v2.5.

I do not mind dual key strokes in text. Been reading them for a long time. Since you ask:

Cmd-Opt-1 (Cntrl-Alt-1) to select the Cmd-Opt-Shift-Drag (Cntrl-Alt-Shift-Drag) to reposition

Maybe I didn't get the above right, but mjust an example.

I am sorry that it is a hassle for a writer. It is a hassle. But I think to be as accessible a text as possible I would include it.

My eyes from reading it over the years just ignore the parenthesis text. I would not smash it all together, but add the space between, and no slashes.

Just my 2 cents, Oh, Great One. Blessings.

John Robinson

_____

OK here's my 2 cents. for what's it worth...

In this day and age of on demand printing, ebooks and such why can't publish books that are aimed at a certain crowd? Have the PC short cuts in a PC version and Mac Short cuts in a Mac version. Or am I 5 to 10 years to early again...

Tim Watson

_____

Or am I 5 to 10 years to early again...

Err, afraid so Tim....

Regards

Bob

_____

Todie,

I apologize for having made light of the survey to which you referred. My reply was intended as a light joke, but it was unnecessary. I always appreciate the opportunity to learn new things, and certainly encourage everyone to post whatever Dan allows on this forum. I'll try to be more careful in the future.

Howard Smith

_____

Hi Dan,

There is an excellent compilation of PS keyboard shortcuts created by Trevor Morris. It can be downloaded here:

http://user.fundy.net/morris/redirect.html?photoshop01.shtml

The advantage over other PS keyboard shortcuts tables is that this one is organized by functions and by modifier keys.

As a Portuguese speaker I have to toggle between Portuguese and English keyboard settings every time I use the text tool. In Windows this can be done in the language settings. It is possible to configure combinations of hotkeys to change languages without having to access the Windows menus.

An additional issue is that Portuguese keyboards, even if configured for English, doesn't show the proper localization of the keys. The virtual keyboard, a Windows feature found in Accessories/Accessibility can be helpful in finding hidden symbols.

Good look,

Cícero Rodrigues Fotografia
Tel 55 (21) 2557-5896
www.cicerorodrigues.com.br

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> ... I changed over to the impossibly tiresome "Command/Ctrl-Option/Alt-1 loads
> the red channel as a selection."

Yes, that IS impossibly tiresome, as much to read as it must have been to write. Most magazines and books that I've read that handle cross-platform key commands normally include both, formatted something like this:

 "Cmd-Opt-1 [Ctrl-Alt-1] loads the red channel as a selection"

with an explaination in the beginning that the Windows commands are in brackets. (Or vice versa, if the subject matter is more Windows-leaning.) This approach seems to work the best and results in the most readable instructions for users of both platforms.

One thing I would definitely *not* do is include a single explaination of how to translate the Mac key commands to their Windows equivalent and then only include Mac key commands throughout the text, as it makes it much harder to read and digest when you're constantly having to make translations in your head as you go along. (Yes, I know the reader would get used to it eventually, but why make them go through that in the first place unless your intention is to make the book far less accessible than it could, dare I say should, be.)

> Very frustrated and very open to better ideas.

Why are you frustrated? Photoshop is a cross-platform application that has attained more of a mass-market appeal than at any point in its history (the digital camera revolution, among other

things, has been very kind to Photoshop). This just needs to be accepted and accounted for, regardless of your personal platform preference (which I share, no doubt!). Telling a large-and-growing-larger segment of the market to "lump it" is not only very close-minded and old-fashioned-Mac-elitism, but potentially alienating to many folks who have been recommended to purchase your books. (I recommend them all the time, to Mac and Windows users alike.)

Given the subject matter I would assume that many of your readers are more advanced users, and it is likely that a higher percentage of them are using a Mac, but that is certainly not all of your readers and the percentage of both novice users as well as Windows users of all levels is almost certain to rise in the future.

My .02,

BRIAN PYLANT
Manager, Electronic Prepress

::

Disc Makers
7905 North Route 130 * Pennsauken NJ * 08110-1402
Toll free: 1-800-468-9353 ext. 5539

_____

Date: Mon, 18 Apr 2005 10:32:20 -0400
From: todie
Subject: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

On Apr 18, 2005, at 8:30 AM, drhobbes wrote:

Todie,

I apologize for having made light of the survey to which you referred.
My reply was intended as a light joke, but it was unnecessary. I always appreciate the opportunity to learn new things, and certainly encourage everyone to post whatever Dan allows on this forum. I'll try to be more careful in the future.

No offense taken.

…but if you still feel guilty, buy some Apple shares :)

Laurentiu Todie

_____

Date: Mon, 18 Apr 2005 12:20:27 EDT
From: Paul Harding
Subject: Re: Re: How to Refer to Keyboard Shortcuts

the ***** windows key is the worst!!! I've been on the Mac since the Apple II e .. taught one of the

original CAD programs (ROBOCAD - anyone remember) and still have PS 1 on a floppy.

Paul Harding
JIT Graphics

_____

Date: Mon, 18 Apr 2005 11:41:42 EDT
From: Dan Margulis
Subject: Re: CS2 and Activation

Andrew Rodney writes,

> Vanishing Point. Amazingly cool and useful not that it got a mention in the
> original 3review2.

Since that is the second time you have asserted that I didn't mention Vanishing Point, may I respectfully suggest that you reread the section entitled "TWO BIG IMPROVEMENTS, TWO DISAPPOINTMENTS," and see what I stated was the first "Big Improvement" in Photoshop CS2.

Dan Margulis

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Date: Mon, 18 Apr 2005 11:50:33 EDT
From: Dan Margulis
Subject: Re: CS2 and Activation

Peter Stema writes,

> I played with cs2 (photoshop and ill) this weekend
> the coolest things I saw were the interface to clone on a perspective grid
> and they seemed to have added streamline to Illustrator

Correct on both counts.

> I wonder if you can instal to a fire wire drive and move it between computers
> this should be with in their lincense as it would only be running on one
> machine at a time...

Unfortunately, no. You have to both *install* and *activate* Photoshop on every machine on which it runs; a portable disk wouldn't help. While activation is fast, *installation* is very, very slow. I'd estimate it takes 20 minutes. So, it isn't practical for you to drag a hard drive around with the Photoshop CS2 installer and do it on every machine you might sit down at.

You get two activations, so you can always install and activate on two different computers. If you want to work on three or more different computers, then you can install the software on as many as you like, but you won't be able to launch Photoshop. You'd have to boot up Photoshop on machines 1 or 2, de-activate it, then go to machine 3, activate it, finish your work on machine 3, de-activate it, and go back to machine 1 or 2 and re-activate it.

Dan Margulis

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Date: Tue, 19 Apr 2005 01:01:23 +0000
From: "Aaron Hill"
Subject: Keyboard Shortcuts

From: Timothy L. Watson

In this day and age of on demand printing, ebooks and such why can't
publish books that are aimed at a certain crowd? Have the PC short cuts
in a PC version and Mac Short cuts in a Mac version. Or am I 5 to 10
years to early again...

That means I'd have to buy two books or copy one and put in the book myself. Doesn't make much
sense to me. And it would add to the publishing, marketing and shipping costs.

Aaron

_____

Date: Tue, 19 Apr 2005 14:59:22 EDT
From: Dan Margulis
Subject: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

I really wasn't expecting 40 responses to the question about how to refer to keyboard shortcuts in
a book. Evidently it's a hot-button issue with some people.

Anyhow, thanks. The responses revealed certain stupidities in my own thinking, and have caused
me to change my opinion as to how to handle it. That way, if people object, I will plead innocent
and blame the list.

As most of us know, certain parts of LAB are fairly accessible and can give the casual user spec-
tacular results. Other parts are excruciatingly difficult. Some members of the beta-reading team re-
port that the first reading gave them fits and they had to re- and re-re-read certain chapters to fig-
ure out what I was talking about, because certain concepts are quite foreign.

The structure of the book reflects this split. In the first half, each chapter is divided into two parts.
The first is supposed to be accessible to anyone. All commands are clearly explained. When I say
that a certain LAB maneuver is better than doing it in RGB I don't back it up.

The second parts of these chapters appeal to more experienced users. In these, I explain how
LAB compares to the RGB alternative. I assume a certain level of knowledge and don't bother to
explain how certain commands work.

The entire second half of the book is not beginner-friendly, to put it mildly.

Since I've already decided on a two-tier approach, it's incredible that I forgot to take a two-tier ap-
proach to keyboard shortcuts. Obviously, in the beginner-friendly parts I need to use both. If I have
to explain what a selection is or what a mask is then I certainly need to put the Mac and PC short-
cuts side by side.

For the rest of the book, however, where there are ample warnings in the text that beginners need

not enter, I now agree with the sentiments expressed by the group. Anybody who has trouble translating the keyboard shortcuts is in the wrong area of the wrong book. There is no need for me to go Command-Alt-1 as a compromise, as I originally suggested.

For the reasons suggested by Gene Palmiter, I believe that using the PC commands is in principle better, on the grounds that the PC may be the majority platform. This is in line with the book's philosophy. Given that it's about LAB, I sometimes have to disccuss RGB and CMYK, and in doing so I need to suggest a standard for both. So, holding my nose all the way (and explaining to the readers *why* I'm holding my nose) I state that unless otherwise specified "RGB" means "sRGB" and "CMYK" means "SWOP v.2", because I believe that these are the settings that the majority of users employ.

There is just one problem. The PC commands use the Ctrl key, equivalent to the Apple Command. Unfortunately, the Mac also has a Control key, which does different things. Therefore, talking about Ctrl-Alt-1 may possibly confuse some Mac users, wherease Command-Option-1 simply alerts PC users that they need to translate from Mac commands.

Therefore, the final decision is: in the "beginner" sections, commands listed separately both ways; in the advanced sections, Macintosh keyboard shortcuts with a note at the beginning explaining why that decision was reached.

My thanks to the group for helping point out the right way to do this.

Dan Margulis

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Date: Tue, 19 Apr 2005 16:27:35 -0400
From: todie
Subject: Re: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

On Apr 19, 2005, at 2:59 PM, Dan Margulis wrote:

Anybody who has trouble translating the keyboard shortcuts is in the wrong area of the wrong book.

Two negatives should make a positive, but in this case it doesn't work, so don't call the book wrong, just the "area".

(Ha! I'm defending a book I have not seen… against the… author :)

Laurentiu Todie

_____

Date: Wed, 20 Apr 2005 07:47:11 -0700 (PDT)
From: Diane Gutierrez
Subject: Keyboard shortcuts

Really! As a professional user of graphics programs on both the Mac and PC (I have both side by side) it would be far simpler to include a sticker sheet in your book. One could then apply stickers [CTRL] [OPTION] [ALT] and so on wherever appropriate and merrily follow the book.

Write on!
Diane
DPG Desktop Publishing & Graphics
Rochester, NY

_____

Date: Wed, 20 Apr 2005 13:57:45 -0400
From: Henry
Subject: Re: Keyboard shortcuts

Being a contrarian on this issue, I do not prefer the inclusion of keyboard shortcuts in text where an idea or technique is being described. A sidebar glossary of shortcuts is my personal choice. I'm past being wowed at how fast something can be done. I find myself losing the point of an explanation because I get lost in all of the shortcut clutter. When procedures containing shortcut clutter are visually isolated or printed differently from the paragraphs that explain what the technique is about, It is easier for me to grasp the idea behind the technique.   Anyway, if there is a shortcut available, the lazy in us will find it.

Just my opinion, such that it is.

Henry Davis

_____

Date: Wed, 20 Apr 2005 15:28:19 -0400
From: "Pylant, Brian"
Subject: RE: Keyboard shortcuts

> Being a contrarian on this issue, I do not prefer the inclusion of
> keyboard shortcuts in text where an idea or technique is being
> described. A sidebar glossary of shortcuts is my personal
> choice.

That is actually not a bad idea at all! Have the body copy describe the task at hand ("Load the red channel as a selection, switch to Quick Mask mode and open the Curves dialog box to adjust..." or whatever) and then have a callout, sidebar or "bubble" that lists the relevant keystrokes in one concise, non-intrusive place.

BRIAN PYLANT
Manager, Electronic Prepress

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Date: Thu, 21 Apr 2005 03:07:42 -0000
From: "colorman042000"
Subject: Re: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

Dan,

Shortcuts interupt the mental process (comprehension) and are visually distracting, making it more difficult to follow the complexities of the subject at hand. It may be impossible to do away with shortcuts but IMO they should be used sparingly. When you read ex.1- there is an interuption which does not exist in ex.3- , ex.2- is a good example of what we often see in Photoshop books and which should never be used.

Ex. 1- Select the layer, create a clipping mask (Cmd + G) [Ctrl + G], choose a wide brush …

EX. 2- Select the layer, then (Cmd + G) [Ctrl + G], choose a wide brush …

Ex. 3- Select the layer, then Layer > Create Clipping Mask, choose a wide brush…

André Dumas
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Date: Thu, 21 Apr 2005 08:01:05 -0400
From: Josh Hope
Subject: Re: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

One more thought...

Seeing as there is the confusion of Ctrl and Control, what if you just used a color code for the shortcuts? Say a Red square for CTRL and Command, a Green square for ALT and Option and a Blue Square for Control. People could then just associate the color with the appropriate key for their system.

So instead of Command-Option-1 you would have [red]-[green]-1

This came to me in a dream last night, so please let me know if I need to Trademark it, or stop eating spicy foods before bed.

Josh
_____

Date: Thu, 21 Apr 2005 08:27:06 -0400
From: "Pylant, Brian"
Subject: RE: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

   So instead of Command-Option-1 you would have [red]-[green]-1

Way too much rethinking there, interrupting the reading process.

Why does everyone find it so difficult to simply write "Cmd-Opt-1 [Ctrl-Alt-1] to select the red channel"?

And, note to Dan, I'm not trying to beat what might be a dead horse in your eyes but IMO it makes no sense to include the Windows shortcuts in one part of the book and not in another. Sorry, I find

that to be a shortcut at best and the reasoning very flimsy. You will have Windows readers who move on to the second part of the book who deserve to have the shortcuts listed just like the Mac users, advanced or not. If you're not going to list one set of shortcuts simply because it's only more advanced users that get that far in the book then why list any at all? They're all advanced users, no one should need them spelled out for them anymore, right?

BRIAN PYLANT
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Date: Thu, 21 Apr 2005 06:17:01 -0700
From: David Creamer
Subject: Re: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

How about using footnotes for the shortcuts?

Example:
Select the layer, then Layer > Create Clipping Mask^1, ...

1] Macintosh: Command-G; Windows: Control-G

It keeps them out of the text but handy for quick reference.

Dave Creamer
I.D.E.A.S.
http://www.IDEAStraining.com

_____

Date: Thu, 21 Apr 2005 09:14:57 EDT
From: Dan Margulis
Subject: Re: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

The level of interest in this topic continues to amaze.

I agree with André that keyboard shortcuts are typographically distracting and that they detract from the legibility of the words when they are intermingled with other text as opposed to being placed in a reference box somewhere.

Therefore, I strongly disagree with those who would make them even more distracting by the use of special symbols or color. I try to avoid the use of color elements in any event because they can distract from the images being printed.

Now that I've painted myself into a position where I have to search for and manually correct every occurrence of the word "Command" with a capital letter, I'm going to seize the opportunity to do

what Andre suggests and re-evaluate whether the shortcut even belongs there in the first place.

For example, in my first chapter I have exactly one keyboard shortcut. Inasmuch as there are four chapters on LAB curves, I think it is entirely appropriate to mention one time that there exists a keyboard shortcut to bring up the curves dialog box, namely, Command-M (Mac) Ctrl-M (PC), which is how I intend to write it.

Also, I disagree that advanced users don't need keyboard shortcuts. The people who show up for my small group classes are by and large fairly serious users and I'd be surprised if as many as 10% of them know how to load a luminosity mask.

For example, many images obviously work much better in LAB than elsewhere. But to adopt a policy that *every* image should be corrected in LAB would be almost as stupid as saying that every image should be worked in RGB or every image should be worked in CMYK. There's one exception, though. If you are severely pressed for time, like you have 30 minutes to do 30 images, *then* an all-LAB workflow makes a lot of sense. It can make the dramatic changes quickly that will get you to 80% of where you might be if you had a more reasonable amount of time to fix the image.

The only problem is, if you do that you occasionally have to correct through masks. If the image has a bad cast in the shadows but is correct in the highlights, that can't be corrected globally in LAB like it can in RGB or CMYK. So if time is really that short, you load an inverted luminosity mask and *then* you can correct in LAB and save the damn file and move on to the next one.

Under those circumstances, where I'm recommending a substandard workflow ONLY because it saves time, I'll be dipped if I intend to tell people, Image: Duplicate; Mode: Grayscale; Image: Adjustments>Invert, return to original image, Select: Load Selection (or whatever the menu bar syntax is.)

While in the two cases above the keyboard shortcuts are IMHO important to include in the text, I will definitely, thanks to this thread, look at every occurrence to see whether the keyboard shortcut is really necessary to mention at all.

Dan Margulis

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Date: Thu, 21 Apr 2005 09:42:39 -0400
From: Gene Palmiter
Subject: Re: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

> And, note to Dan, I'm not trying to beat what might be a dead horse in
> your eyes but IMO it makes no sense to include the Windows shortcuts in one
> part of the book and not in another. Sorry, I find that to be a shortcut at
> best and the reasoning very flimsy.

I have to go with Dan this time. It will be easier for PC to think Ctrl when he writes Cmd than the other way around. Partly because PC users are smarter and more creative, but mostly because from the discussions here I have learned that the Macs have three such keys and one is a Ctr and its not the same as the PC Ctrl.

Maybe keyboard stickers could be included in the book! Maybe a program that drills us on key-

board shortcuts.

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Date: Thu, 21 Apr 2005 09:34:10 -0400
From: "Pylant, Brian"
Subject: RE: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

> Also, I disagree that advanced users don't need keyboard shortcuts. The people who show
> up for my small group classes are by and large fairly serious users and I'd be surprised if as
> many as 10% of them know how to load a luminosity mask.

Just to be clear I wasn't saying that at all; rather, I was (sarcastically) making the point that there is no good reason to only include Mac shortcuts in the advanced section.

I do, however, agree with the latest suggestions that sometimes not including the commands at all might be a better option in regards to the readability of the text at hand. As always, I look forward to reading the new book, and I know the overall point of all of this is simply to make sure that everything is as clear and concise as it can be.

BRIAN PYLANT
Manager, Electronic Prepress

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Date: Thu, 21 Apr 2005 10:02:57 -0400
From: "Pylant, Brian"
Subject: RE: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

> I have to go with Dan this time. It will be easier for PC to
> think Ctrl when
> he writes Cmd than the other way around.

Why not include both, all the time, so *no one* has to make a mental translation as they're reading? I don't understand this deliberate desire to not include both.

BRIAN PYLANT
Manager, Electronic Prepress

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Date: Thu, 21 Apr 2005 09:10:54 -0600

From: "Les De Moss"
Subject: Re: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

One thing is certain about Dan's forthcoming book on LAB. The concern over readability and some of the associated minutiae, will be as thorough and thoughtful as his previous publications.

The message, insights, and practical application will not be diminished in any way regardless of how some of these 'presentation' issues are addressed. Dan's concern over fine-tuning and presenting certain instructions in an understandable, and sometimes politically correct, manner speak volumes about the seriousness with which he undertakes this work.

I am positive that the guts of the book will be most informative and entertaining, as he has so aptly demonstrated in the past.

Les De Moss
DigiGraphics llc

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Date: Thu, 21 Apr 2005 08:26:06 -0600
From: Scott Larsen
Subject: Re: Keyboard Shortcuts: The Final Decision

Dan Remaley wrote:

> That is actually not a bad idea at all! Have the body copy describe the task at hand ("Load the red channel as a selection, switch to Quick Mask mode and open the Curves dialog box to adjust..." or whatever) and then have a callout, sidebar or "bubble" that lists the relevant keystrokes in one concise, non-intrusive place.

Well that sure made my pulse quicken. I agree completely. The readability of difficult passages is made more difficult when peppered with key commands.

In the instances where a method is being introduced for the first time, the Menu navigation should be used instead [Image/Adjustments/Shadow-Highlight] and thereafter be left to the reader to remember, with small callouts for the forgetful.

Andre Dumas wrote that referring to [Fig. 1] in the text can be hard to follow, too, and I agree. I don't have a solution there, except to say that maybe just referring to "The Lime" might be enough.

Oh, wait, Dan. Did you say you'd made a "final" decision? Sorry. ;-)
--
Scott Larsen
Eastmans' Hunting Journal