

Making Modern Stereo Cards

Preparing the Image

By

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My goal in making cards

- Card and image is attractive when viewed “flat”
- The back of the card is attractive and informative
- The card itself has esthetic appeal aside from the image
- Easy to produce

Traditional card design

- Images, “chips”, trimmed by hand
- Glued to front of card
- Simple label on back of card
- The image is everything



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Problems

- Time consuming
- Hard to do
- Gluing each chip is precision work
- Adding design elements makes for even more work
- While the end product may be nice, it's a lot of effort

Using the computer

- Entire front of card is one digitally prepared image
- Much easier to do
- Less time consuming
- Precision work is done before the image is printed

Tools you can use

- Dedicated program
 - ◆ StereoPhoto Maker
 - ◆ PokeScope Pro
- Generic graphics program
 - ◆ Photoshop
 - ◆ Paint Shop Pro
- Combination of the above

StereoPhoto Maker

- Good for setting the “window” and cropping
- Wide range of output formats but limited design options
- Use to make simple cards
- Use to prepare images for cards
- Free download!

PokeScope Professional

- Great for cropping and setting the “window”
- Decent output options
- Use to prepare images or make simple cards
- Costs about \$80

Photoshop

- Extremely powerful but costs \$\$\$
- Good for card design and printout
- Hard to use for cropping and “window” adjustments
- Really good color control
- Photoshop Elements has most features

Paint Shop Pro

- Reasonable price and almost as powerful as Photoshop
- Hard to crop / set “window”
- Good for design and print out

Card format

- Stay with standard size cards
- Holmes format or 3.5 x 7 inches
- “Digital” format or 4 x 6 inches
- Holmes format is more interesting and allows for more creativity

Print size

- 4 x 6 are simple standard one sided prints
- Use “APS” or 4 x 7 inch prints for Holmes format cards
- Use glossy prints not mat
- Eckerd's, CVS, web companies provide the service for 12 to 29 cents a print

Example of a 4x6 digital card

Driftwood on Fernandina, Galápagos Islands

©2004 Suzanne Hughes | *Lens-in-a-Cap on the Nikon D100*



Design elements – card front

- Background color
 - ◆ Take a color out of the image if possible
 - ◆ Color should complement the image
- Image borders
 - ◆ Use borders when you need a background color that clashes with the image
 - ◆ Highlight colors in the image
- Text and logos
 - ◆ Use simple type and small images
 - ◆ Keep the type out of the image
 - ◆ Don't compete with the image

Design elements – card front

- Card stock should not clash with the background colors
- Round corners to give a finished look
- If printing images on an ink jet printer, use paper with a nice “feel”

Design elements – card back

- Background color
 - ◆ Should harmonize with the front and the card stock edge color
 - ◆ Choose a color that type will be readable on
- Type
 - ◆ Use the same type “family” as the front text
 - ◆ Big enough to be readable
- Images should be related to the image on the front of the card

Design elements – card back

- Add informative text about the card image or the place it was taken
- Don't forget to add a credit line and a copyright notice
- The back and front of the card should look good when seen together

Preparing the image

- Use StereoPhoto Maker to crop and set the “window”
- Save the images as two TIF files



Set the window

Create the card

- Use Photoshop
- Create a card background
- Import and place the images
- Add text
- Add design elements
- “Flatten” the image and save or print

Create a blank card

- Should be 4 x 7 inches or “APS” format
- Use 320 dpi for Noritsu or 300 dpi for Frontier machines

Import and size the image

- Make images the same dpi as the card blank
- Each image should be no more than 3 inches high and no more than 3 inches wide
- The “near points” in the images should be no more than 3 inches apart
- Center the images vertically on the blank
- A wide space between the images is OK

Spacing the images

- The space between the images changes for different viewers
- The images should be centered in the viewer lenses
- Design for the viewer you will be using or use 3 inches as a default

Set the background color

- Pick a color out of the image
- Don't worry too much about it, it's easy to change later

Set background color



History Actions

- Delete Guide
- Delete Guide
- Merge Down
- Move**

Layers Channels Paths

Normal Opacity: 100%

Lock: Fill: 100%

- Layer 1**
- Background

Round the image corners

- Rounding the corners of the images gives them a finished look
- Use a small radius corner between 10 and 40 pixels

Round Image Corners



Layers Channels Paths

Normal Opacity: 100%

Lock: Fill: 100%

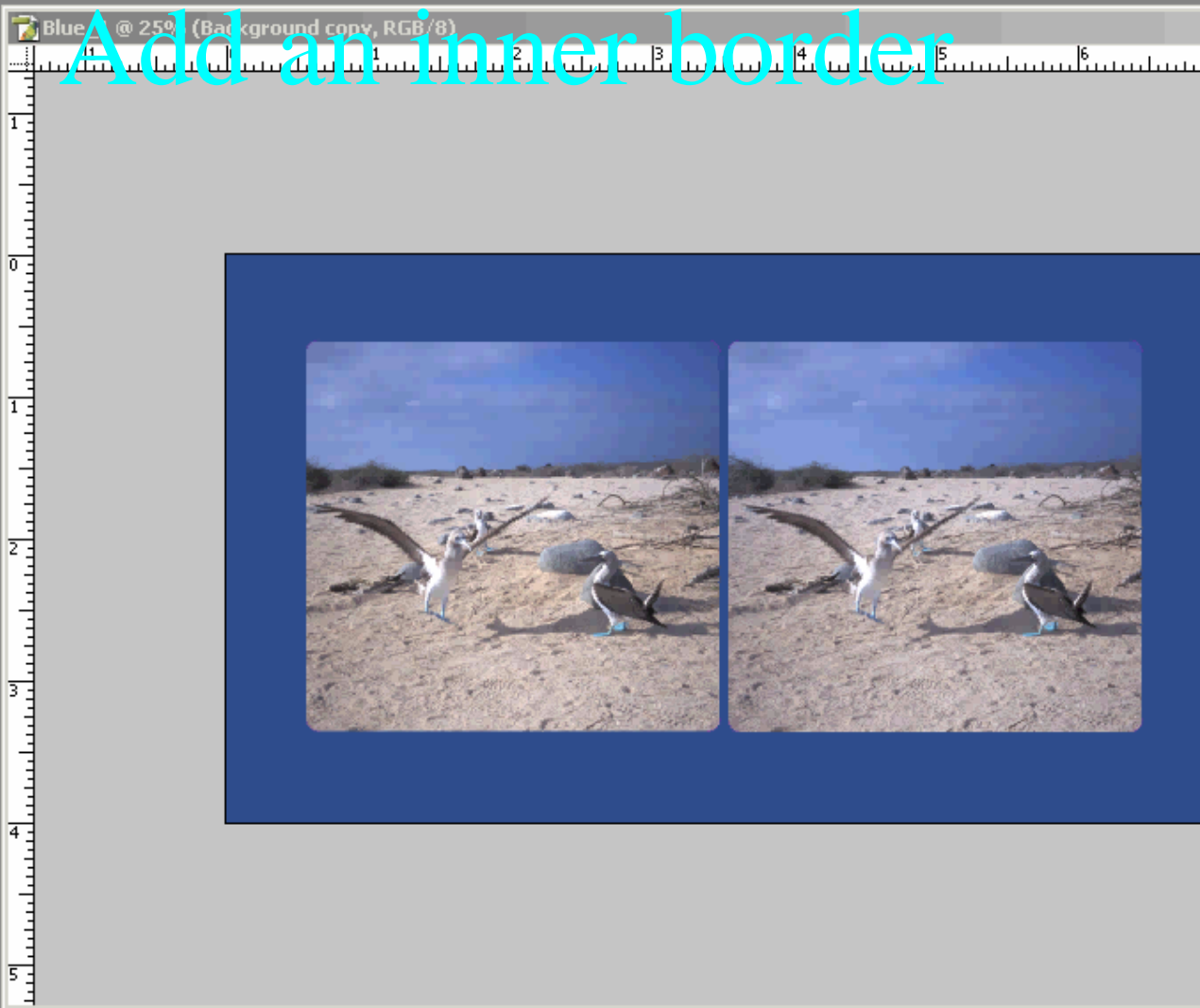
Layer 1

Background

Add an inner border

- Keep the border thin
- Use a contrasting color
- Round the corners with the same radius as the images

Add an inner border

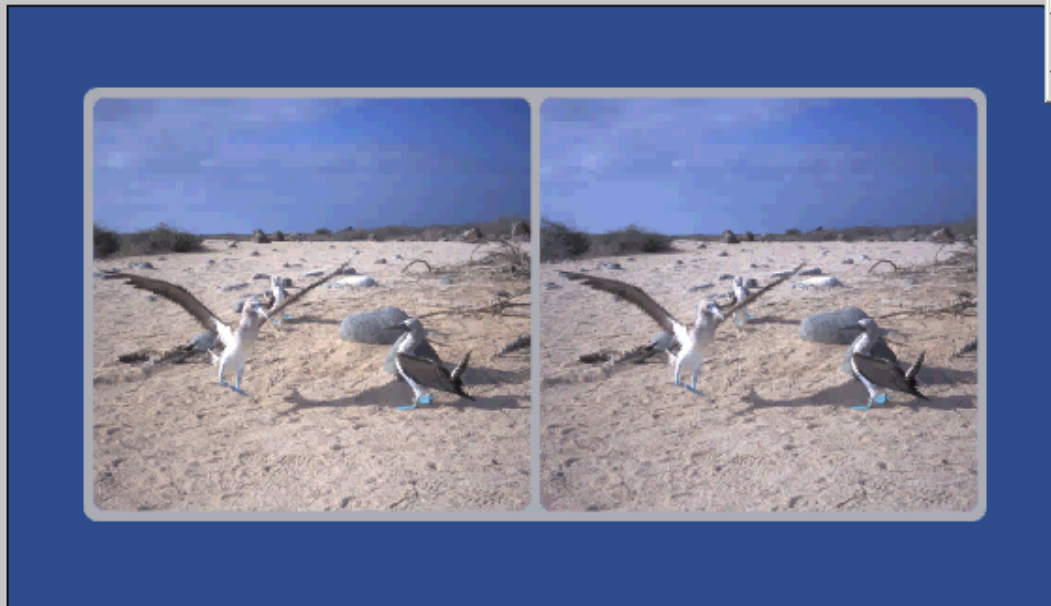


Add text

- Keep it simple
- Use a simple font
- Use an easy to read color
- Less is better!

Add Text

Blue @ 25% (Layer 1, R 8/8)



Layers Channels Paths

Normal Opacity: 100%

Lock: Fill: 100%

Layer 1

Shape 1

Background

Save image for printing

- Output as “TIF” for Noritsu at 320 dpi
- Output as “JPEG” for Frontier at 2x finished dpi so use 600 dpi
- Always save original in native format

Save Image



Layers Channels Paths

Normal Opacity: 100%

Lock: Fill: 100%

- T Exploring the ...
- T Blue-footed Boob...
- Layer 1
- Shape 1

Finishing the card

- We now have an image that can be printed or sent to a photo printer
- We can easily make changes to the card image
- Part two of this workshop will address what to do with the print to make it a card

But is there an easier way?

- Of course, do the whole thing in StereoPhoto Maker or PokeScope
- Let's look at how fast we can make a basic card



Quick card

Why not just do it that way?

- Limited design options
- Color control problems
- Files may need to be resized before sending them out for printing
- It's a good way to quickly make a simple card

Last thoughts

- With digital, design options are almost endless
- Experiment!
- Join DSEC or APEC and share your work
- Remember it's supposed to be fun!