



Do the site thing

Ken McMahon takes you on a trawl of some of the best **free software** on the web.

Now is a good time to think about getting your hands on lots of lovely software to keep you occupied between Christmas and the last New Year's Eve we'll be able to enjoy without the threat of "millennium armageddon" hanging over our heads. As you will be completely skint, having spent all your money on presents for relatives and bottles of Baileys, I have trawled the web searching out free demo applications, beta versions, plug-ins, extensions, fonts and other graphics-related free stuff for you to enjoy.

Check 'em out

➔ www.microsoft.com/typography/fontpack/default.htm

Microsoft is encouraging developers to use these fonts on their web sites. You install these, and when you visit web sites that incorporate them, you will see them exactly as they were meant to look. They are a nice collection to have along with typefaces such as Impact, webdings, Monotype.com, Trebuchet, Georgia, Verdana and comic Sans. And, check out Microsoft's links at www.microsoft.com/typography/links/ to people who give fonts away. You will find font foundries as well as shareware fonts [Fig 1].

➔ www.microsoft.com/typography/grayscale/smoothing.htm

Still at the MS web site, if you have not yet upgraded to Windows 98 and cannot afford a copy of Adobe Type Manager Deluxe, download the Windows 95 font-



▲ **Fig 2** A DEMO VERSION, AND FREE XTENSIONS, OF THE WORLD'S FAVOURITE PAGE LAYOUT PACKAGE ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE QUARK WEB SITE

smoother which will anti-alias your screen fonts making their jaggy edges appear oh-so-smooth. You can, of course, achieve the same effect by drinking an entire bottle of that Baileys!

➔ www.mindworkshop.com/alchemy/gifcon.html

That's enough Microsoft. Time to head to a shareware demo version of Alchemy's excellent gif construction set. It allows you to create and manipulate transparent gifs and animated gifs using animation wizard.

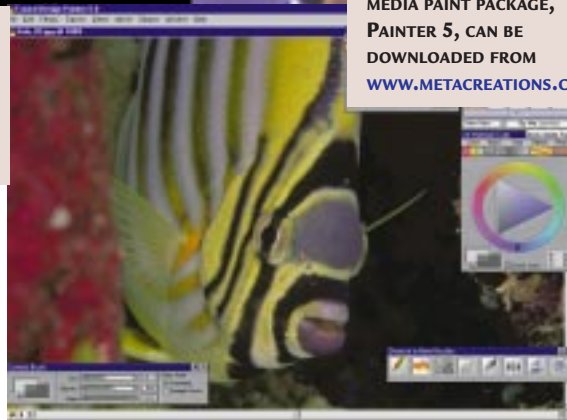
➔ www.equilibrium.com/ProductInfo/DBLite/DBLite.html

Here you will discover a free download of DeBabelizer Lite LE. DeBabelizer Lite is good for simple image translation and slideshow functions. For RGB, bitmap, scan or paint files it offers a translation capability which is similar to DeBabelizer

◀ **Fig 1** AS WELL AS PLENTY OF TYPOGRAPHY NEWS AND LINKS, YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THESE FREE TYPEFACES AND OTHERS FROM THE MICROSOFT WEB SITE

Comic Sans
Georgia
Impact
Trebuchet

▼ **Fig 3** IF PAINTING IN OILS SUITS YOUR PALETTE, METACREATIONS' NATURAL MEDIA PAINT PACKAGE, PAINTER 5, CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM WWW.METACREATIONS.COM



palette manipulation. Slideshows can be used to create and translate on-screen thumbnails of images in a folder.

➔ www.adobe.com/news/features/tryadobe/main.html

This is the place where you can try out most of Adobe's products including Photoshop, Illustrator, PageMaker, Pagemill, Premier, Streamline and After Effects. All these versions are "save disabled" which is not as good as a 30-day trial, but I guess that's why they're called tryouts. Who knows? You might like the software so much you'll want to pay for it.

➔ www.livepix.com/download/index.htm

Pick up a 30-day trial version of LivePix 2.0, the image-editing package that uses the flashPix file format to keep things fairly zipping along. This version has the same features as the fully-licensed version of LivePix 2.0 Deluxe but without the

Q I have a P133 with 16Mb of RAM, with MagnaRam installed taking me up to 20Mb. I was trying to piece together a picture taken from two shots using a camcorder. First, I fired up Adobe PhotoDeluxe, which crashed and burned after the splash screen. Then I tried Adobe Photoshop, which broke down trying to paste a picture. I tried this with all my graphics programs and they all died on me. In the end, I managed to piece together the photo using Microsoft Paint. Why is this happening? And would the result be any better in Photoshop or PhotoDeluxe?

a The problem is almost certainly that you do not have enough RAM – real RAM that is, as opposed to the virtual kind provided by MagnaRam. The 4Mb additional virtual RAM you are getting with MagnaRam is hardly worth the bother. You do not say which version of Photoshop you are using, but as 4.0 needs a minimum of 16Mb RAM and 3.05 needs 10Mb, you're sailing pretty close to the wind anyhow. With the price of RAM now at around £1 per megabyte, there is really no excuse not to upgrade. So go out and buy a couple of 32Mb modules and you will enjoy faster, more reliable performance with all your applications. In answer to your second question, yes, it would look better and the

Q I have a TV card which will only save captured single frames in the Microsoft Windows DIB format. I can't find an application that will allow me to view this. Is it possible to convert the file to a different format?

a *It's Paintshop Pro 5.01 to the rescue once again. It will open and convert your DIB file to pretty much any other format. It's on our cover CD, or you can get it from www.jasc.com.*

In September's Q&A, reader Alex Pounds was looking for a way to get a GIF out of Internet Explorer in another format. Ben Curthoys suggests setting the GIF as wallpaper: right-click the GIF and select "set as wallpaper". This creates a file called "Internet Explorer wallpaper.bmp" in the Windows folder. You can open this in MS Paint or any other image-editing package that supports the bmp file format.

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