Chapter 1: Introducing Fireworks CS4

In This Chapter

✔ **Understanding when you should use Fireworks**

✔ **Discovering the workspace**

✔ **Finding out about the tools**

✔ **Looking into the views**

✔ **Using the basic selection tools**

*A*dobe Fireworks is an incredible application with specific solutions to meet online designers' needs. With Fireworks, you have the freedom to create test Web sites, experiment with advanced scripting features, and come up with compelling graphics that look good and work well on Web pages.

In this chapter, you encounter the software and its workspace. You also discover how to use selection tools so that you can start to manipulate graphics in Fireworks right away.

Why Use Fireworks?

With all the applications included in the Creative Suite, why do you need one more? The reason is mostly because after CS2 (and the removal of ImageReady), the Creative Suite provided no easy way to create interesting Web graphics. Sure, you can save images for online use in Photoshop and Illustrator using the Save for Web & Devices feature, but what about rollovers, easy image maps, and interactive wireframes? (A *wireframe* is a low-fidelity mock-up, page-schematic rough draft. In Web design, wireframes are basic visual guides used to suggest the layout and placement of fundamental design elements.)

With Fireworks, you can work intuitively by taking advantage of the logical interface. This interface provides panels and features that relate to the Web and that offer you the easiest way to *optimize* (make Web-ready) your graphics.

Jumping Right into the Interface

So what's the big deal about Fireworks being built specifically for Web graphics? Well, first of all, you are working strictly with pixels — no messy *dpi* (dots per inch) or *lpi* (lines per inch), which are typical printing terms.

Figure 1-1 shows the dialog box that appears when you choose File➪Open to open a vector graphic from Illustrator. The dialog box offers conversion choices but emphasizes pixel dimensions.

Figure 1-1:
Pixel dimensions play an important role in Fireworks.
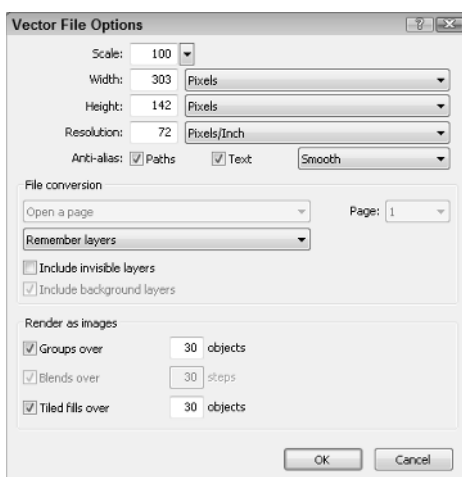
When you're working with Web images, it's a good idea to know the approximate width, in pixels, of your final page. Typical Web pages range all the way from 650 to 1,000 pixels wide, but most designers stick with a page built to span approximately 800 pixels. When you create images, you must think about how they will fit within the context of your total page. An image 600 pixels wide would take up most of your page, whereas one that's 1,200 pixels wide would force the viewer to scroll to see the entire image.

Touring the workspace

Upon launching Fireworks CS4, you notice right away that its workspace is similar to the workspaces in the other CS4 applications. Adobe has done a good job of organizing each application so that the learning curve is quick and integration is easy.

You shouldn't be surprised to find a toolbox to the left of the workspace and panels to the right. The tools even look very much like the tools you may already be familiar with from working in other CS4 applications.

Using the tools

The Tools panel is broken into six categories: Select, Bitmap, Vector, Web, Colors, and View. Table 1-1 lists the tools by category and the keys you can press to access them easily.

Table 1-1		Fireworks Tools	
Icon	*Tool*	*Purpose*	*Keyboard Shortcut*
Selection tools			
	Pointer	Selects paths and objects	V+0
	Subselection	Adjusts paths, much like the Direct Select tool in Illustrator and Photoshop.	A+1
	Scale	Scales objects or selections	Q
	Crop	Crops images	C
Bitmap tools			
	Marquee	Makes rectangular selections	M
	Lasso	Makes freeform selections	L
	Magic Wand	Selects similar colors	W
	Brush	Paints on image	B (toggles with Pencil)
	Pencil	Draws bitmap paths	B (toggles with Brush)
	Eraser	Erases bitmap data	E

Book VIII Chapter 1

Introducing Fireworks CS4

Table 1-1 *(continued)*

Icon	Tool	Purpose	Keyboard Shortcut
Bitmap tools			
	Blur	Blurs image	R
	Rubber Stamp	Clones image data	S
Vector tools			
	Line	Creates vector lines	N
	Pen	Creates Bezier paths	P
	Rectangle	Creates vector shapes	U
	Type	Creates text	T
	Freeform	Creates freeform paths	0
	Knife	Cuts paths	Y
Web tools			
	Rectangle Hotspot	Creates image map hotspots	J
	Slice	Creates slices for tables or CSS	K
	Hide Slices and Hotspots	Hides slices and image map hotspots	2
	Show Slices and Hotspots	Displays slices and image map hotspots	2

Icon	Tool	Purpose	Keyboard Shortcut
Color tools			
	Eyedropper	Samples color	I
	Paint Bucket	Fills color	G
View tools			
	Hand	Pans the artboard	
	Zoom	Zooms in and out of artboard	x

As you select each tool, notice that the Properties panel displays additional options. (If your Properties panel isn't visible, choose Window⇨Properties.)

Understanding the views

The tabs at the top of an image give you the opportunity to view it in four ways:

✦ **Original** displays your image as it appears before being optimized for the Web.

✦ **Preview** displays the image as it will appear when it's saved for the Web, based on your current settings. (You find out more about those settings in Chapter 5 of this minibook.)

✦ **2-Up** offers the opportunity to see your image in two windows, with different settings applied in each window. Most users tend to compare the original and optimized images in this view (see Figure 1-2).

✦ **4-Up** is for those who are never quite sure which is the best way to optimize an image. You don't necessarily need to compare different formats when you use this view; you can experiment with different options for one format, such as pushing the limit with the amount of colors you want to keep in a GIF, as shown in Figure 1-3.

**Book VIII
Chapter 1**

**Introducing
Fireworks CS4**

Figure 1-2: Compare original (left) and optimized image (right) in 2-Up view.

Figure 1-3: In 4-Up view, you can experiment with ways to optimize an image.
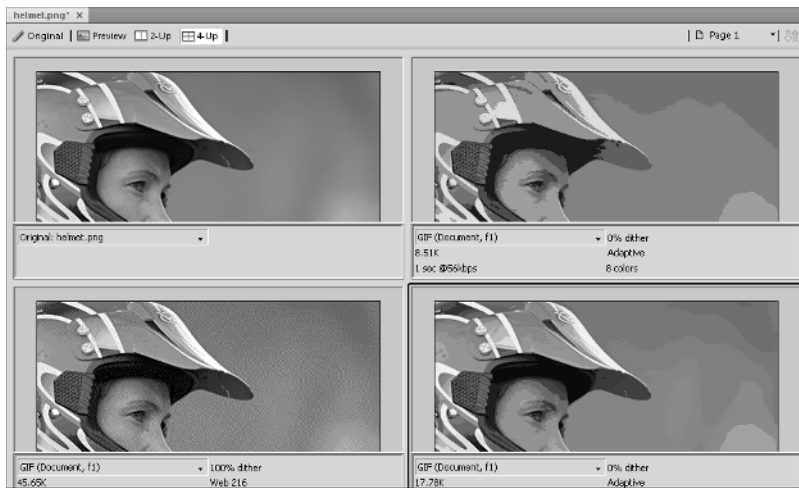
Investigating the panels

Not unlike the other CS4 applications, Fireworks lets you detach panels from the docking area on the right side of the workspace. Because this procedure is so similar to the methods you use to dock and undock panels in other CS4 applications, we won't bore you with the details here.

If you can't locate a panel, choose its name from the Window menu.

Working with basic selection tools

You can work in Fireworks using the same selection tools for both vector and bitmap images.

Making a selection with the Marquee and Lasso tools

If you are familiar with Photoshop selection techniques, you will have no problem using the same tools in Fireworks.

To make a selection with the Marquee tool, simply select the tool from the Tools panel, and then click and drag to surround the area that you want to select.

You can add to the selection by holding down the Shift key and dragging another marquee region, or deselect some of the active selection by holding down the Alt (Windows) or Option (Mac) key while dragging with the Marquee tool.

To use the Lasso tool, select the Lasso tool from the Tools panel and click and drag to create a path that will then become your selection. As mentioned in the Marquee tool, you can add to the selection by holding down the Shift key and creating another selection region, or subtract from the selection by holding down the Alt (Windows) or Option (Mac) key while dragging a selection region with the Lasso tool.

TIP

You can use both the Marquee and Lasso tools interchangeably when making a selection.

By making a selection with the Marquee or Lasso tool and then clicking and dragging with the Pointer tool, you can move one part of an image to another, as shown in Figure 1-4. If you make no selection before you drag, everything on the existing layer is moved.

Figure 1-4:
Drag a
selection
to move it.
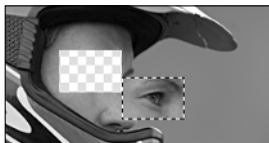
Switch to the Subselection tool, and notice that if you have an existing selection, the pointer changes to a double arrow. This double arrow indicates that you will *clone* (copy) the selection when you click and drag it.

**Book VIII
Chapter 1**

**Introducing
Fireworks CS4**

Making a selection in a vector image

With the same tools you use to select bitmap images, you can adjust vector paths. Use the Pointer tool to move an entire vector shape, as shown in Figure 1-5.

Figure 1-5:
The Pointer tool lets you move a vector shape.
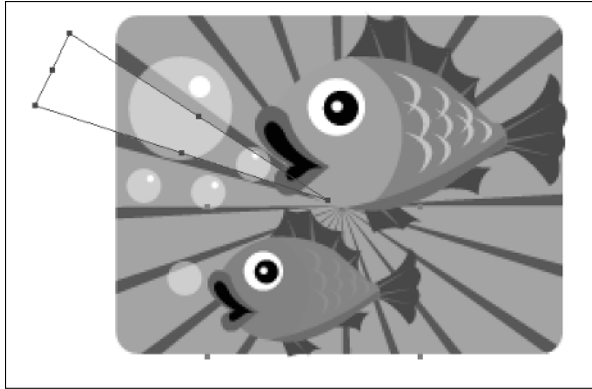
Use the Subselection tool to move the individual points on the path.