

Chapter 1: Creating Elements Projects

In This Chapter

- ✓ Understanding creations
- ✓ Creating photo books, greeting cards, and photo calendars
- ✓ Creating photo collages and slide shows
- ✓ Ordering prints
- ✓ Making photo stamps and CD/DVD labels
- ✓ Constructing VCDs with menus
- ✓ Making flipbooks
- ✓ Sharing creations

Adobe Photoshop Elements offers a number of creations that you can share onscreen or in print. From both the Create and Share panels in the Task Pane in the Organizer and from within both editing modes in the Panel Bin, you have menu choices for producing creations designed for sharing.

In Chapter 3 of this minibook, we look at sharing files for screen and web viewing. In this chapter, we talk about creations designed for print and sharing.

Getting a Handle on Creations

In Chapter 3 of this minibook, we talk about online albums, attaching files to e-mail, using photo mail, and using online sharing services. All these creations offer different output options, such as e-mailing, burning files to a disc, creating HTML or PDF documents, as well as printing. You create them all using the Share panel.



The remaining creations — photo books, photo collages, photo calendars, greeting cards, print labels, and photo stamps — you create via the Create panel, shown in Figure 1-1. All these creations are designed for output to your printer or for sending files to an online printing service or to friends and family.



When you make a creation that will ultimately be sent to an online service or shared with other users, keep in mind that you first must select the photos you want in your creation. For example, before you create a photo book by clicking the Photo Book button in the Create panel, you need to select photos for your book. If you happen to click the Photo Book button and nothing happens, more than likely you haven't selected any photos.

You can select photos in either the Organizer or the Project Bin in Full Photo Edit mode.

After selecting photos, click the Create button. Elements then opens a window respective to the type of creation you want to make. The options for Photo Book, Greeting Card, Photo Calendar, and Photo Collage all use the same window when you click one of the respective buttons in the Create panel. The remaining options, Photo Prints, Slide Show, and PhotoStamps, use different windows where options are selected.

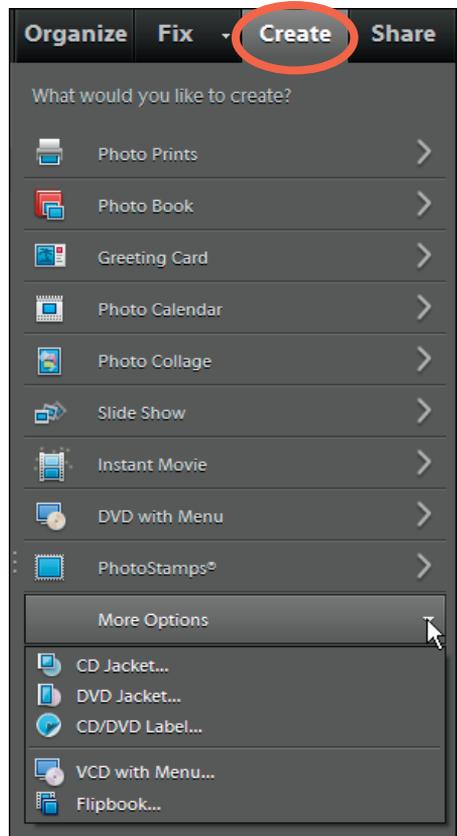


Figure 1-1: The Create panel.

Elements offers you some consistency when creating photo books, greeting cards, photo calendars, and photo collages. If you know how to set attributes for one of these creations, you can easily work with any of the other creation types.



The Instant Movie button in the Create panel requires Adobe Premiere Elements. If you click this button without having Premiere Elements installed, a dialog box opens and gives you the choice to download a trial version of Premiere Elements. We encourage you to use the trial version to judge for yourself whether the application might work well for the type of creations you want to make.

After you make a creation, you can save it as a project that can also be added to the Organizer window. Photoshop Elements projects are saved as Photo Project Format with a `.pse` extension. If you want to return to a project and make more edits, you can open the `.pse` file and edit your project. You can add `.pse` files to the Organizer and view them in the Media Browser so they're easily accessible if you choose to open a project and perform more edits.

Creating a Photo Book

You can design the creations you make for printing locally to your desktop printer or for uploading to a professional print service. The professional services offer you choices for covers, assembly, paper stocks, and so on, as well as opportunities to distribute the printed material to friends and family.

Photo books follow a sequence of steps that are the same for other creations you make in Elements. To describe completely the process for making a creation, we start by showing you how to create a photo book.

Follow these steps to create a photo book:

- 1. Select files in the Organizer and click the Create tab or open several photos in Full Photo Edit mode, select the open files in the Project Bin and click the Create tab.**

The procedure for all creations is the same. You first select files in the Organizer or photos in the Project Bin in Full Photo Edit mode and then click the Create tab in the Organizer Task Pane or Full Photo Edit Panel Bin. Ideally, you might start with an album containing the photos you want to use for your Photo Book. (See Book II, Chapter 3 for more on creating albums.) You can then just click the album to display the album photos in the Organizer window and easily select all the photos or select an Album directly in the Project Bin in Full Photo Edit mode.



To select all photos shown in an Organizer window, press Ctrl+A (⌘+A on the Mac).

2. Click the Photo Book option in the Create panel.

Regardless of whether you're working in the Organizer or an editing mode, the Photo Book option is available in the same Create panel. When you click the Photo Book option, a window opens, and you can make choices for the output and the design of your creation. The same window opens for other creations such as greeting cards, photo calendars, and photo collages.

3. Choose an option for outputting your creation.

In the left pane shown in Figure 1-2, you make a choice for using professional online services such as Kodak Gallery or Shutterfly. The other option you can choose is to Print Locally, meaning you print the photo book to your desktop printer.

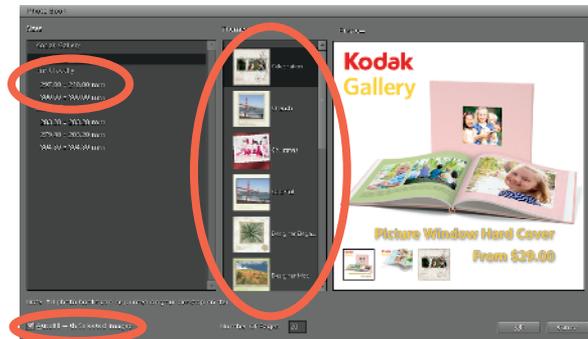


Figure 1-2: Select photos and click the Photo Book option to open the Photo Book window.

4. Select a theme.

In the middle column, choose a theme for the photo book design. When you click a theme, the preview pane on the right side of the window displays a preview of the selected theme. Elements uses an Adobe Flash interface where you see photo book pages automatically scroll using the selected theme.

At this point, click different themes and observe the Preview window for a dynamic display of the respective theme. Take a little time to look over all the wonderful options you have for a photo book design.

5. Click OK and then examine the pages.

When you click OK, the Create panel changes and displays four tabs at the top of the panel. As shown in Figure 1-3, the tabs are Pages, Layouts, Artwork, and Text. On each tab, you can make additional edits. On the Pages tab, look over the total number of pages for your photo book. If you want to add more pages, click the + (plus) icon at the top of the panel. To delete pages, click the – (minus) icon.

When you add new pages to a creation, you'll want to add more photos to the pages. Each new page contains placeholders for images. To add more photos, double-click a placeholder and a Choose Photo dialog box opens. Navigate your hard drive and locate additional photos you want to include in your photo book. When you see a photo in the Choose Photo dialog box, select the photo and click the Place button.



Figure 1-3: The Create panel has four tabs that are used for additional editing.

6. Click the Layouts tab and choose a layout.

On the Layouts tab, you find many choices for different layouts. At the top of the panel, a display of different layouts appears as shown in Figure 1-4. Scroll down the panel to find additional layouts for One, Two, and Three photos per page.

To change a layout, double-click the layout choice in the Create panel. When you change layouts, you need to populate the placeholders. Drag photos from the Project Bin to a placeholder, and Elements fits the photo in the placeholder frame.

7. Adjust a photo in a frame.

If you change a layout or add more photos to placeholders, or even if you let Elements populate a layout, you may want to make adjustments for individual photos within placeholders.

To edit a photo within a placeholder, double-click the photo. A toolbar appears above the photo, as shown in Figure 1-5. From left to right on the toolbar, you can

- Zoom in or out of the photo by dragging the slider left and right.
- Rotate the photo by clicking the blue icon. (Each mouse click rotates the photo 90 degrees.)
- Get a new photo to place in the frame represented by the folder icon.



Figure 1-4: The Layout tab offers many choices for changing the layout design.

When you finish your edits, click the green check mark. If you want to dismiss all edits and return to the original photo within the frame, click the circle icon.

You can also size a photo within a frame by clicking one of the handles on the selected image and dragging in to reduce size or out to size up. Move the cursor just outside a corner handle on a selected frame, and you can rotate the image and frame together.

If you double-click a photo in a frame, you can open a context menu (right-click or Control+click a one-button mouse on a Macintosh) and choose from some transformation options that include scaling, perspective, and distorting the photo. Choose a menu command and drag a handle to perform the operation. In Figure 1-6, we skewed and distorted the photo.



You can skew an image by pressing Ctrl/Option and dragging a corner handle.

8. Click the Artwork tab and use artwork.

Click the Artwork tab, shown in Figure 1-7. On the Artwork tab, you can change the background design, frames, and add graphics.

To change the background or frames, double-click a background and/or frame on the Artwork tab. To add a graphic, click and drag the graphic to the Image Window where a photo is displayed.

9. Click the Text tab and add some text.

The last tab in the Create panel is the Text tab shown in Figure 1-8.



Figure 1-5: Double-click an image to open a toolbar.



Figure 1-6: A distorted image as it appears within a frame.



Figure 1-7: Scroll the Artwork tab to find options for Backgrounds, Frames, and Graphics.

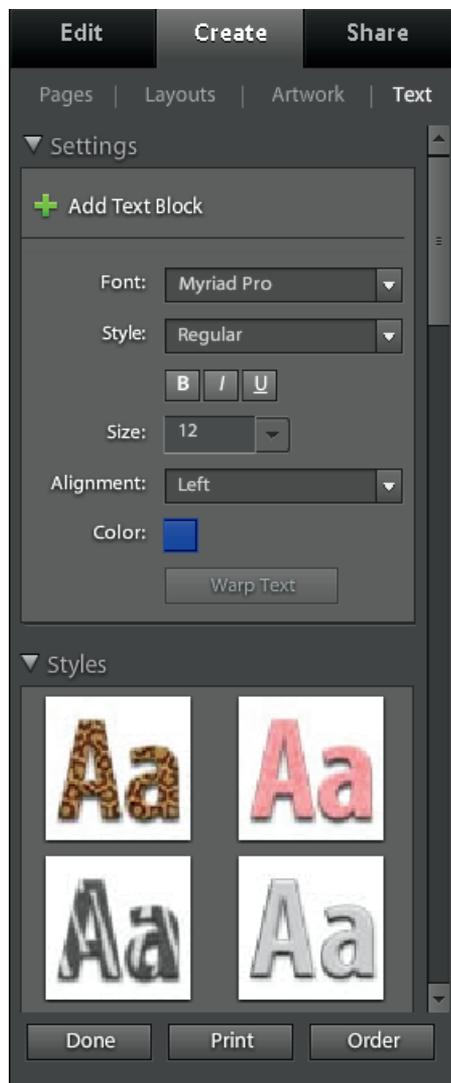


Figure 1-8: Click the Text tab to add text to pages.

On this tab, you click the + (plus) icon and choose options for a font, font style, size, alignment, and color. You can also warp text. When a text object is selected, click the Warp Text button, and the dialog box that opens allows you to set attributes for warping the text.

Scroll the panel and you find a number of different styles you can apply to a text object. Select text after you add it to a page and double-click one of the style items to apply a style to the selected text.

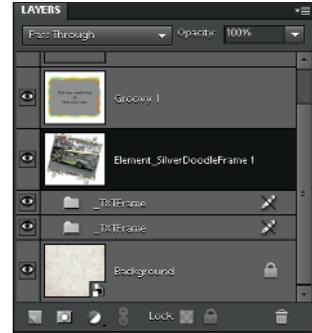


Figure 1-9: Click Switch to Advanced Mode to gain access to layers used in the project.

10. (Optional) Switch to Advanced mode to edit the layers.

Click the Switch to Advanced Mode button in the Organizer (look ahead to Figure 1-10) to see a breakdown of the layers and effects Elements applied to your design, as shown in Figure 1-9. You can edit the layers for further customization of your photo book. To do so, you need to know a lot about working with layers, layer styles, and layer effects as we explain throughout Book VI.

11. Click the Switch to Basic Mode button if you're in Advanced mode and look over the project.

Now you're ready to take the last steps to finish the project.

12. Toggle the item denoted as Show Safe Zone, as shown in Figure 1-10.

This item displays a blue guideline on the pages that are marked as the safe zone when the item is checked. Be certain graphics and text appear within the safe zone before outputting the photo book.

13. When your project is complete, decide what you want to do with it:

- *Click the Print button* to print the file to your desktop printer.
- *Click the Order button* if you want to place an order with Kodak EasyShare or Shutterbug.
- *Click the Done button* to save the project so that you can later return to it for further editing.

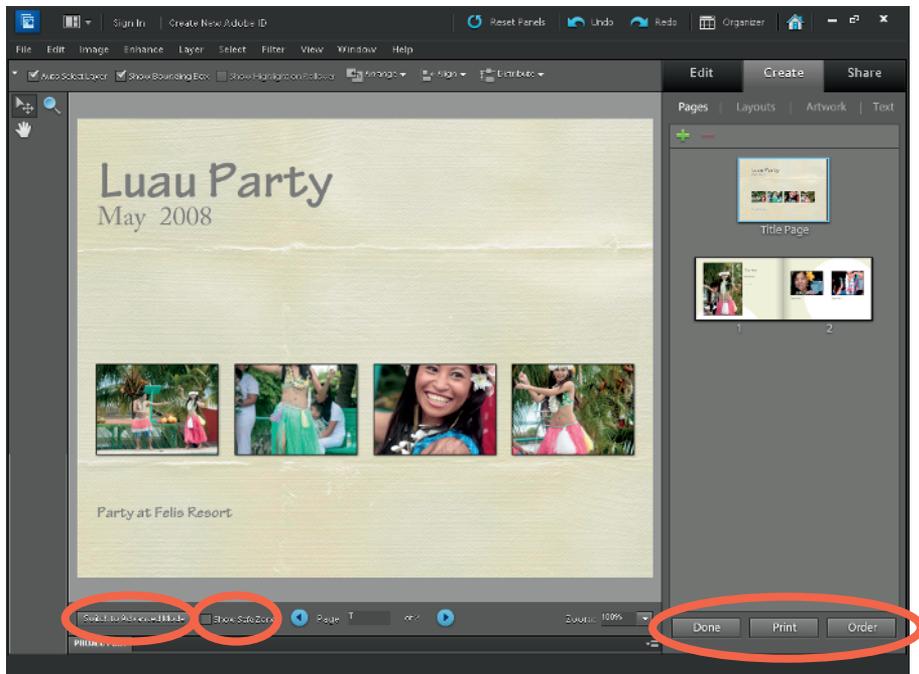


Figure 1-10: Click Done to save the project, Print to print to a desktop printer, or Order to place an online order.

All the steps outlined in this section are the exact same steps you use for making greeting cards, photo calendars, and photo collages.

Getting in Touch with Greeting Cards

You can create greeting cards, as shown in Figure 1-11, in a snap in Photoshop Elements by using the Greeting Card panel. Here's how to do it:

- 1. Open the Organizer and select a photo or open a photo in Full Photo Edit mode.**
- 2. Click the Create tab in the Panel Bin.**
- 3. Click the Greeting Card option to open the Greeting Card panel.**

4. Follow the same steps as you do with creating photo books that we cover earlier in the section “Creating a Photo Book.”



Figure 1-11: Use the same steps for greeting cards as you do for creating photo books.

Making a Photo Calendar

Are you ready to design a personal calendar using your favorite photos? Elements helps you design an attractive calendar of the kids, the girls’ soccer team, the Bullhead Moose fraternity, or any other type of activity or event you want to work with. Elements makes it easy to create professional-looking calendars.

Here’s how you create a calendar that can be professionally printed and ordered via an online service:

1. **Select photos in the Organizer. Alternately you can open images in Full Photo Edit mode and select the open photos in the Photo Bin.**

For calendars, you might want to select 13 photos — 1 photo for the calendar cover and 1 photo for each month. You can also choose 12 photos and use one of the calendar months for the cover photo.

2. **Open the Create panel and click the Photo Calendar option.**
3. **Choose an output source the same as when choosing a source for photo books.**
4. **Follow the same steps as we outline in the section “Creating a Photo Book.”**



Figure 1-12: Photo calendars are edited the same way you edit photo books.

Assembling a Photo Collage

To put together a photo collage (see Figure 1-13), you first need to select a few photos in the Organizer or the Project Bin and then click the Photo Collage option in the Create panel.

The Photo Collage Wizard opens, and you follow the same steps we covered in the section “Creating a Photo Book.”



Figure 1-13: Photo collages are a snap to create in Elements.

Creating a Slide Show (Windows Only)

We have to make some choices for the amount of coverage we can devote to each feature in Photoshop Elements. Sometimes it involves some tradeoffs. Because the process for making creations we've discussed so far in this chapter is vitally important to four creation types, we feel it's more valuable to most readers than a thorough coverage of slide shows, especially because Macintosh users can't use this feature.

That said, this section includes a brief description for many of the toggles, switches, and commands available for producing slide shows. Most of what you find in the Slide Show window is straightforward and intuitive. In addition, we address many options from the Slide Show Editor (shown a little later in Figure 1-15) in other chapters throughout this book.

If creating slide shows is important to you and you need more details on some of the options available, search through the Elements Help system to fill in the gaps.

Creating slide shows follows the same initial steps as you find with other creations. To create a slide show using the Create panel, follow these steps:

- 1. Select the images you want in the Organizer or Project Bin, click the Create tab, and then click the Slide Show option.**

The first thing you see is the Slide Show Preferences dialog box, as shown in Figure 1-14.

- 2. You make choices in this dialog box for setting up your slide show — stuff such as setting transition type, adjusting transition duration, adding music, and adding background color. Click OK when you're done.**

The Slide Show Editor opens, as shown in Figure 1-15.

- 3. Define the attributes such as transitions, artwork from the Extras panel, and zooms and time codes.**

To add transitions, click the right-pointing arrow adjacent to the transition icon appearing between a slide and choose from the pop-up menu the transition effect you want.

Other choices you have for creating slide shows include adding graphics by dragging items from the Artwork panel and adding text by clicking the *T* tab in the Extras panel and then double-clicking one of the type styles in the Extras panel.

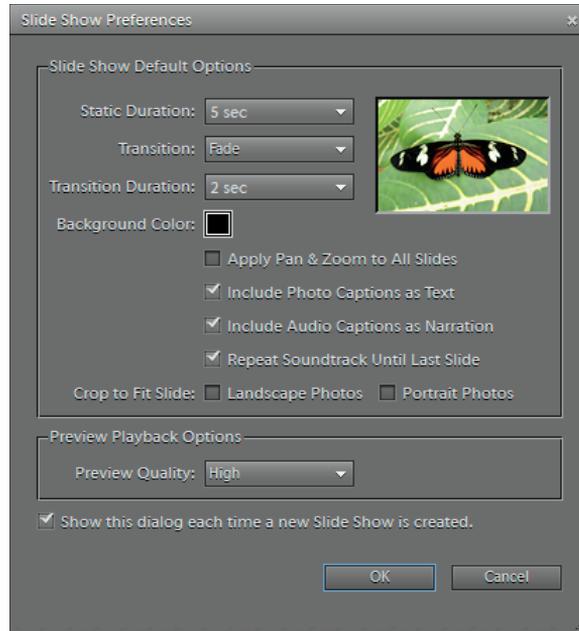


Figure 1-14: The Slide Show Preferences dialog box.

4. Size, rotate, and perform image editing in the Properties panel.

The Properties panel offers you editing options that we discuss throughout this book.

5. (Optional) Add audio by opening the Add Media menu and choosing Audio from Elements Organizer or Audio from Folder.

You can have Elements fit the slide duration to the audio duration. Add the audio and click the Fit Slides to Audio button.

6. Choose an output option.

Click the Output button (refer to Figure 1-15), and the Slide Show Output dialog box opens, as shown in Figure 1-16.

In the dialog box, you have several options from which to choose. These include

- *Save As a File:* Click Save As a File, and in the right pane, you can select from two options:



Figure 1-15: The Slide Show Editor.

Movie File: Select Movie File to export the file as a video in WMV (Windows) or QuickTime (Macintosh) format.

PDF File: Select PDF File to export the file as an Adobe PDF document.

- *Burn to Disc:* Click Burn to Disc to write a self-running VCD (Video CD). Note that if you choose to write a VCD, the image resolution is much lower than writing slide shows to DVDs.
- *Edit with Premiere Elements Editor:* This option works only if you have Adobe Premiere Elements installed on your computer. If you do have Premiere Elements, clicking this option opens the slide show in Premiere Elements.

7. Click OK in the dialog box after making the output choice.

Elements outputs your slide show using the settings you applied.

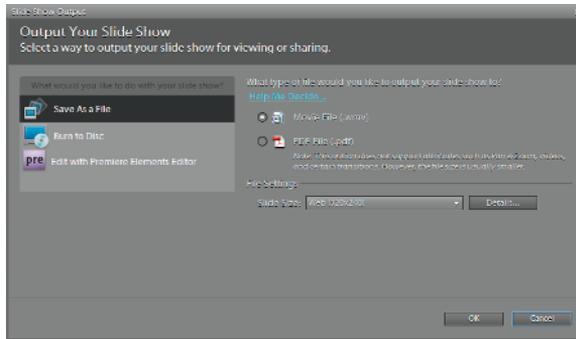


Figure 1-16: The Slide Show Output dialog box.

Working with Photo Prints

When you open the Create panel and click the Photo Prints option, you find options for printing files locally on your desktop printer and ordering prints from online services.

Printing to your desktop printer

When you click Photo Prints in the Create panel, the panel displays options for printing to your local printer or ordering online prints with a professional print service. (See Figure 1-17 later in this chapter.)

Click the Print with Local Printer item in the Create panel and the Print dialog box opens. This action is no different than choosing File⇨Print from the Organizer or when in Full Photo Edit mode. In all cases, the Print dialog box opens where you set attributes for the print output.

The other options you have for local printing are Print Picture Package and Print Contact Sheet. These options are also available in the Print dialog box.

For local printing and the options you can use, see Chapter 2 of this mini-book, where we thoroughly discuss local printing of individual photos, picture packages, and contact sheets.

Ordering prints online

You can order prints online by using one of a few online print service providers. Select the photos in the Organizer or Project Bin in Full Photo Edit mode and then click Photo Prints in the Create panel. The panel displays all your Photo Print Options for both local and online printing. When you mouse over one of the online services, a pop-up provides some information about the service, as shown in Figure 1-17.

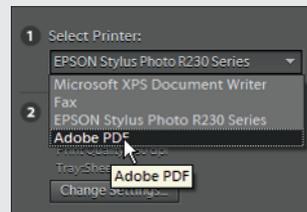
Printing to Adobe PDF

All the print options you have in Elements can be saved as PDF documents. Rather than collect printed paper documents for items such as calendars, greeting cards, and photo collages, you can make your creations and save to PDF files. You can then share these files on your social network connections.

To output a creation to PDF, you need a little help from another application. You have two choices:

- ✓ **Purchase Adobe Acrobat Standard or Pro and use the Adobe PDF printer driver that's installed with your program installation.** Simply choose the Adobe PDF printer in the upper-right corner of the Print dialog box and click OK, and your file is then printed to disk as a PDF file.
- ✓ **Download a free PDF printer driver, such as pdf995.** You can find several PDF printer drivers available for free download by searching the Internet. After a driver is

installed, it appears as a printer. You follow the same steps as for printing to Adobe PDF. Select the printer driver in the Print dialog box and click OK, and the file is then printed as a PDF.



Macintosh users don't need to be concerned with any printer drivers. Output to PDF is built into Mac OS X. When you choose File⇨Print, click the PDF drop-down list and select Save As PDF. Your file is saved as a PDF document that can be viewed in the free Adobe Reader software.

When you click a print service, a wizard opens and walks you through the steps for setting up an account and ordering prints. You also find options for choosing the address or addresses where you want your prints shipped. You can have one set of prints sent to your address and duplicate prints sent to family and friends.

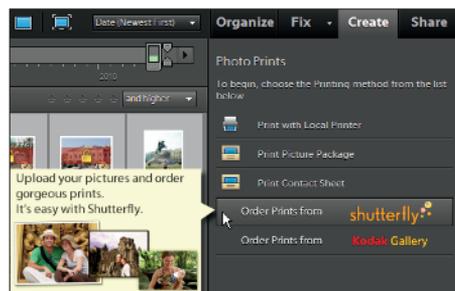


Figure 1-17: The Photo Prints panel.



Online print services were once the cat's meow for photo distribution. However, in recent years, sharing photos via social services such as Facebook, Flickr, MySpace, and Photoshop.com has proven to be much faster and much more efficient — and more environmentally conscious. Unless you have a good reason for having photo prints,

join us in using one of the many social service networks we explain in Chapter 3 of this minibook. The social networks are much more efficient and less costly than using a print service.

Making Photo Stamps

Another online creation feature in Elements is the option to create your own postage stamps. Yes, they're real stamps that you can use for mailing through the post office.

Here's the simple, easy way to use Elements to place an order for your very own personal postage stamps:

1. Select an image in the Organizer.

Your file needs to be less than 5MB. (See Book III, Chapter 1 for more on resizing images.)

2. Click the Create tab in the Panel Bin and then choose the PhotoStamps option.

The PhotoStamps dialog box opens.

3. Click the Upload My Photos button in the dialog box. (See Figure 1-18.)

Your photo is uploaded to the PhotoStamps.com website.

4. Place your order.

The PhotoStamps.com website provides an easy-to-use interface for ordering stamps. After you fill out the order and provide billing information, your stamps are mailed to you.

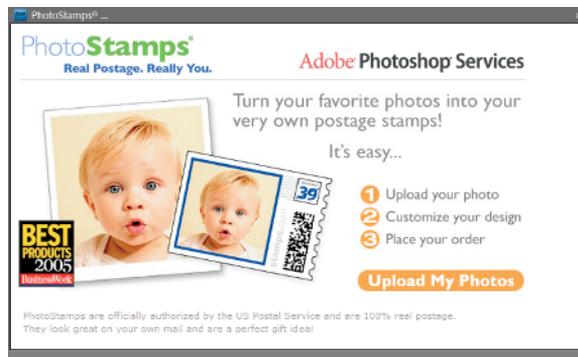


Figure 1-18: Click PhotoStamps in the Create panel to open this dialog box.

Getting Organized with CD/DVD Labels

Another creation option in Elements is a simple, easy way to create CD and DVD labels. From the Create panel, choose a menu item for CD Jacket, DVD Jacket, or CD/DVD Label from the More Options drop-down list. From templates provided in the panel, Elements offers you an easy method for printing your personalized labels and jackets for CDs and DVDs.



This feature for printing CD/DVD labels is a bit weak in Elements. You may need to fiddle around quite a bit to get the images to fit a label. Using some templates provided by the label developers is often a much better method for printing labels.

Creating a VCD with Menu (Windows)

Select a slide show project and open the Create panel. From the More Options drop-down menu, choose VCD with Menu. The Create a VCD with Menu dialog box opens, as shown in Figure 1-19. Select a project, make a choice for NTSC or PAL format, and click the Burn button. The file created is a Video CD with a menu you can control with your DVD player's remote control device.

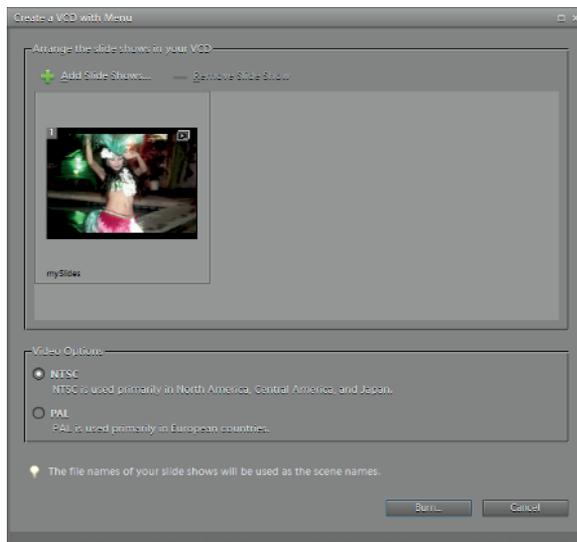


Figure 1-19: The Create a VCD with Menu dialog box.



You need to use an Elements Slide Show Project or a .wmv file. You can't use a PDF Slide Show to create a VCD with Menu.

Making a Flipbook (Windows)

At the bottom of the More Options drop-down menu in the Create panel, you can find a Flipbook command. If you want to create a quick little video that shows off your photos by flashing stills on your screen or your TV set, you can quickly create a flipbook. Here's how you do it:

- 1. Open the Organizer and select the files you want to use.**

Note that you must select at least two files in order to create the flipbook.

- 2. Click the Create tab in the Panel Bin and choose Flipbook from the More Options drop-down menu.**

The Elements Organizer Flipbook dialog box opens, as shown in Figure 1-20.

- 3. Set the playback speed by typing a value in the Speed text box or moving the slider to the desired speed.**

Note that flipping through photos looks best at low speeds, such as one or two frames per second (fps). Also, you can select the size for your video file from options on the Movie Size drop-down menu. When sharing files on the Internet, the download speeds increase as file sizes are increased. To get familiar with the file size that works best for you, experiment a little by saving files with different output settings.



Figure 1-20: The Elements Organizer Flipbook dialog box permits you to select a speed and movie file size.

4. Click the Output button.

The Save Video Flipbook dialog box opens.

5. Type a filename and click Save.

Your file is written as a `.wmv` file. You can use Microsoft Movie Maker to write the file to a CD or DVD.



The WMV and QuickTime formats aren't recognized by many DVD players. You may need to convert the file format to a format recognized by your DVD player. Do an Internet search and explore websites that offer freeware or shareware conversion utilities to find out more about video file formats acceptable to DVD players.

Sharing Creations

We cover several creations in this chapter, and we emphasize how you can target the final output format for your creations for your desktop or an online service printer. Inasmuch as we talk about sharing creations via online services, we limit our coverage to print output.

For both consumers and professionals, print is giving way to more online services, which enable you to view photos onscreen on a number of different display devices, such as desktop, laptop, notebook, and netbook computers; tablets such as the Apple iPad, or Android-based products; and mobile devices. You need to understand many issues for preparing files in Elements and using appropriate export formats to serve the vast number of applications and services that display and host your pictures.

For a thorough discussion on viewing photo creations onscreen using many different devices, look over Chapter 3 of this minibook, where we leave the world of print and talk about sharing your creations for online viewing.

