

Blessed with access to this technology, many of us have experimented and played with the software and tools available, becoming comfortable with the process of capturing and manipulating images. OSAPAC funding of software has provided the gift of powerful applications like Adobe's Photoshop Elements. In Elements, simplified 'recipes' and online guides make it easy to scan, crop, adjust and fix most photos. You can get almost smug with your ability to use the technology and work magic! Thus it was a humbling experience recently, to realize just how much we've taken this easy access for granted.

A SIMPLE IDEA

It all started with a simple idea: to put on a little demonstration for the local community. It grew into a community-building public service event covered by the media, with rave demands for a repeat session!

What did we do? The initial plan was for a simple 'back to school' activity to showcase the ease of using the scanning and image editing technology, and the aim was to get people to try it for themselves. The equipment needs were not demanding. The Resource Centre provided two iMacs, a basic scanner, a CD burner and a simple point-n-click 1.2 megapixel digital camera. In partnership with the local computer club (which brought a couple more computers, scanners and cameras) we all picked a common Saturday to come together and make images for anyone who wanted them.

'GET YOUR MUG SHOT!' IS BORN

Although we'd planned to hold this in the local community centre where the computer club met monthly, a chance dialogue with the Head of Technology at the public library changed that. We received her blessing to go downtown and set up in the main branch of the public library. From there it mushroomed...

- ethernet access and IP addresses were arranged with the public library's IT staff
- public e-mail accounts were established so the images could be immediately sent as requested
- the front two sections of the main circulation counter were made available for the scanning stations
- media releases to the community TV, radio and news channels were drafted, flyers and handouts about the editing process were designed.



Soon we had volunteers lining up who were willing to staff the equipment and share their knowledge of digital photography and scanning. From high school students to senior citizens, everyone had some expertise to share! Apple Canada, through the local users' group (AppleSPICE), donated matching T-shirts for all the volunteers and 'Get Your Mug Shot!' was born.

"Two photos? Not a problem! Is that e-mail or print quality?"

For five hours we took over the foyer of the main branch. The public was warmly welcomed and invited to have a favourite picture scanned or pose on the spot for a digital photo. Then they were invited to participate in the process of editing the image and preparing it for sharing: 72 dpi and 500 pixel width for e-mailing, 72 dpi and 800 pixel width for screen shots, or 300 dpi and 4 X 6 sizing for printout purposes.

We encouraged them to e-mail the pictures to anyone they wanted and had three e-mail stations live to help them do so immediately. Additionally, for the donation of \$1 to cover the cost of a blank CD-R, we offered to burn all their pictures to a keepsake CD.

A HEARTFELT SUCCESS STORY

We'd expected the day to have some public interest and to provide the students and volunteers with a chance to shine – but what happened was truly