

Bringing Illustrator files into Photoshop

by Dsign, October 2007

Newfangled works with a lot of [advertising and marketing agencies](#) and we love to provide their clients with well-designed, highly-functional web sites. However, in the instances when the agency supplies the web page layouts, we've experienced some challenges.

We create web page layouts exclusively in Photoshop. There are many advantages to this, one of which is the ability to create a layout that is a 1:1 representation of what the final product will look like, right down to the individual pixels. Many agencies use Adobe Illustrator to create client artwork, including building web page layouts.

The difficulty in translating a file from Illustrator to Photoshop lies in how the two programs render artwork. Illustrator is a [vector-based](#) program and Photoshop is a [bitmap-based](#) program. If you open an Illustrator file (.ai) in Photoshop, it attempts to translate the vector artwork into a bitmap image. This can create certain problems such as blurred edges on hard-edged shapes which can make slicing up the image accurately for web application difficult.

We've encouraged our agency partners to provide us with layered Photoshop files whenever possible but that's not always feasible. Fortunately, there is a reasonable solution. A recent [MacWorld article by James Dempsey](#) explains the best way to bring Illustrator files into Photoshop.

Update (August, 2008) Mr. Dempsey's solution for bringing an Illustrator file into Photoshop works great for maintaining your artwork layers. However, there is still the issue of rasterizing vector shapes with straight edges. The sharp edges are softened in the process and you wind up with a blurred edge that has to be manually cleaned up in Photoshop. See this [post](#) for more details.