PRINT*info*

INFORMATION FOR THE GRAPHIC ARTS PROFESSIONAL

It's Your Move

Strategizing with Leopard

Checking File Formats

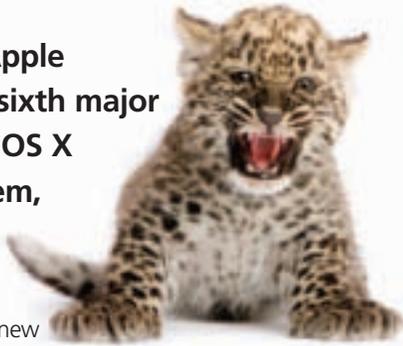*Brand Identity Fit for a King*

QUALITY
PRINTING
COMPANY

It's what we do!

CATFIGHT

Last October, Apple unleashed the sixth major overhaul of its OS X operating system, version 10.5, or "Leopard."

Like all upgrades, the new operating system (OS) contains a host of new features and enhancements (more than 300, we're told). Apple has addressed many inconsistencies and frustrations in the Finder and has simplified menus, file management, networking and Spotlight, the file-searching utility which, in Tiger, was a great idea marred by less-than-great execution. New features include Time Machine, a backup system; Quick Look, a brilliant and soon-to-become-indispensable file content preview feature; and Spaces, a tool for creating multiple customized workspaces.

There is much more to Leopard. You can find a wealth of information on Apple's site at www.apple.com/macosx.

The new OS also includes new potential workflow and productivity pitfalls. Since all systems are different, some early adopters have reported no difficulties, while others have reported problems ranging from the merely annoying to the utterly devastating.

Like any graphic designer, you can't afford workflow slowdowns caused by potential incompatibilities, particularly where the OS is concerned. Graphic designers are thus advised to wait a few revisions before upgrading to Leopard.

The primary reason is that a major OS upgrade will not always work properly (or at all) with older hardware and software. It's often left to individual vendors to write new hardware drivers or software revisions, and not all of them do so in a timely manner.

Some specific trouble areas include the following:

- **The Classic interface will not work in Leopard.** If you use Classic to work with applications or fonts that predate OS X, Leopard is not for you.

- **Users have reported font issues**, especially with those that predate OS X. Font suitcases that contain both TrueType and bitmapped fonts have been known to cause problems. Other older font types have been known to not work at all.

- **Leopard includes updated drivers and PostScript Printer Descriptions (PPDs) for many popular printers, but inevitably Apple will forget some**. You can find a list of printer drivers included in Leopard at **http://tinyurl.com/2wzwv6**.

- **Scanners might need an updated driver** in order to work in Leopard. Check your manufacturer's Web site to ensure that there is a 10.5-compatible driver.

- **Adobe is releasing a free update to add Leopard compatibility to certain Creative Suite 3 applications.** Adobe's Leopard compatibility chart is available at **http://tinyurl.com/32tvdr**. Creative Suite 2 and earlier might not run well—if at all—in Leopard. Quark has released a free update for QuarkXPress (version 7.31), optimized for Leopard. It's available at **http://tinyurl.com/2tbfsm**.

Even though Apple has released the OS X 10.5.1 upgrade to fix many reported problems and compatibility issues, some issues remain.

It's always a good idea to check online user forums to see how your peers and other users have found the upgrade experience. And, as always, consult with us before choosing to use Leopard-based applications. This is not just for compatibility's sake, but also because we've already put a lot of work into finding and fixing Leopard-related problems unique to graphic arts workflows.
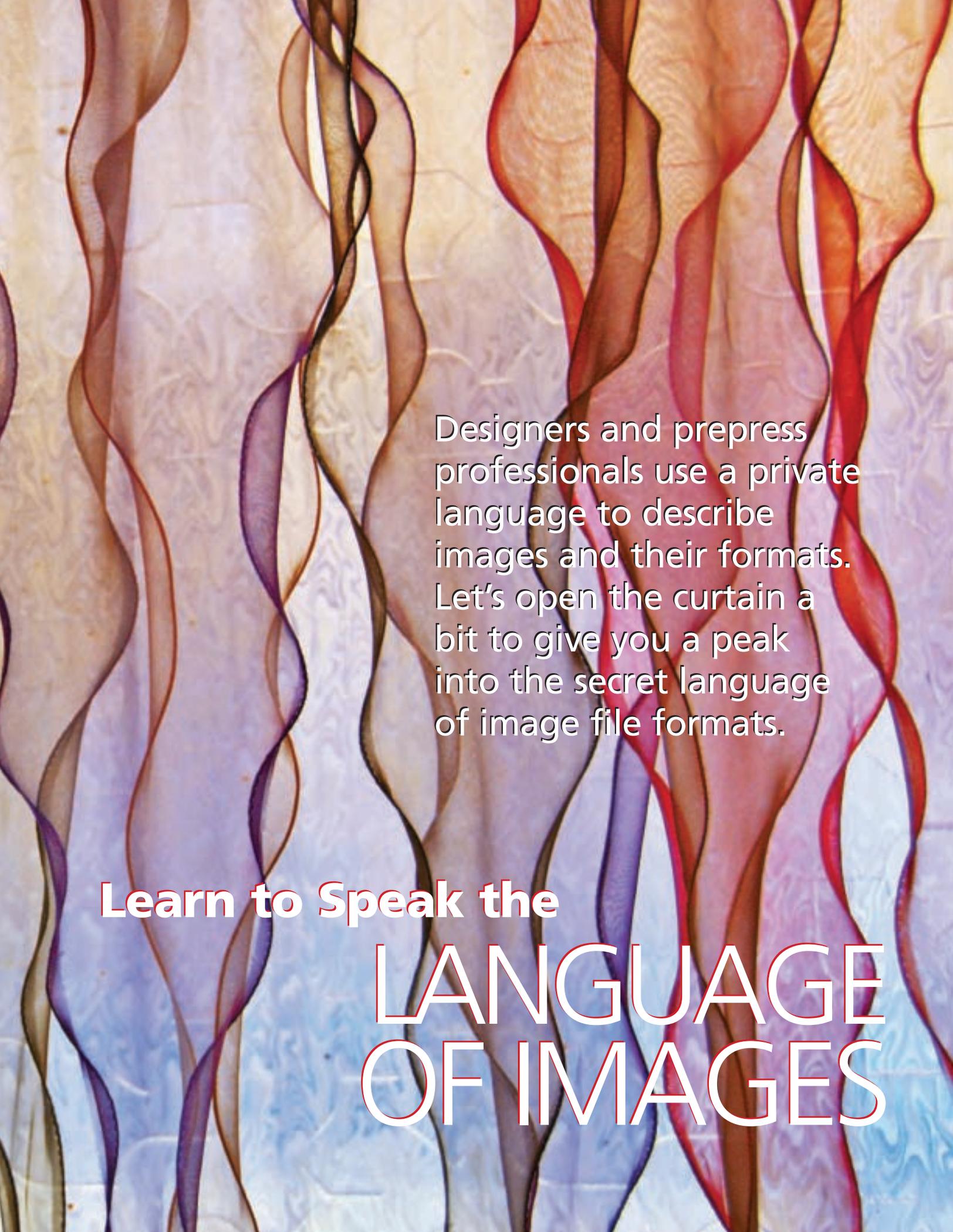
Designers and prepress
professionals use a private
language to describe
images and their formats.
Let's open the curtain a
bit to give you a peak
into the secret language
of image file formats.

Learn to Speak the

LANGUAGE
OF IMAGES

Why So Many File Formats?

When it comes to bitmapped (scanned) images, we have to deal with a series of compromises between quality, features and file size. Different file formats are better, or work at all, for different uses. We have three basic uses for an image (if we agree not to talk about video): the Web, business use and four-color printing.

One of the reasons to learn our secret language is this: you can successfully save a high-quality scanned image in many formats, so you have to know which one to use for which purpose. Once we scan an image, we bring it into Adobe Photoshop for color correction and manipulation and to save it for different uses. This brings us to our first image file format: PSD, which is Photoshop's native file format. This format is only good for use in Photoshop and other image processing programs. You would never use a PSD file as the final or output format.

Web Image Formats

There are three image file formats that work well on the Web: GIF, JPEG and PNG. Because the Web is all about speed, everything on the Web must be as small as possible. Therefore these formats use some sort of image compression to make them appear in your browser as quickly as possible. There are two kinds of compression, lossless and lossy. Lossless does not remove image information, lossy does.

- Designers use **GIF files**, a format created by CompuServe, for icons and other Web graphics because of its wide Web browser support. Designers don't usually use the GIF format for scanned photographs because it only supports 256 "indexed" colors per image.

- **JPEG** is a lossy compression scheme that also has wide support. The more compression one dials up with JPEG, the smaller it gets but the more visual artifacts appear in the image.

- **PNG** files are relatively new, but all major browsers now support them. They are great for the Web, but because they are lossless, they don't compress as small as JPEG images.

Business Printing Image Formats

For business use (laser printing, Microsoft PowerPoint and so on), all of the above image file formats work, as well as many formats native to either business programs or operating systems. For instance, the **Windows BMP** and the **Mac PICT** are common business image formats, and they can support full-color RGB images. However, they don't support CMYK printing or any kind of compression. Therefore designers don't use most formats in this category for four-color printing.

Four-Color Printing Image Formats
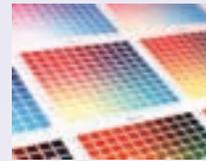
There are three common image formats for four-color printing: TIFF, EPS and JPEG. All three work well, and all three support different features and different kinds of compression:

- **TIFF** supports "clipping paths," which are layers that control which part of the image prints. Designers often use clipping paths to hide the background of product shots. Designers compress TIFF images with a lossless image compression scheme called LZW.

- **EPS** supports JPEG compression and clipping paths.

- **JPEG** also supports JPEG compression and clipping paths.

We hope you enjoyed this glimpse into the secret world of image file formats. Should you have further questions about which file format to use, please don't hesitate to call us.
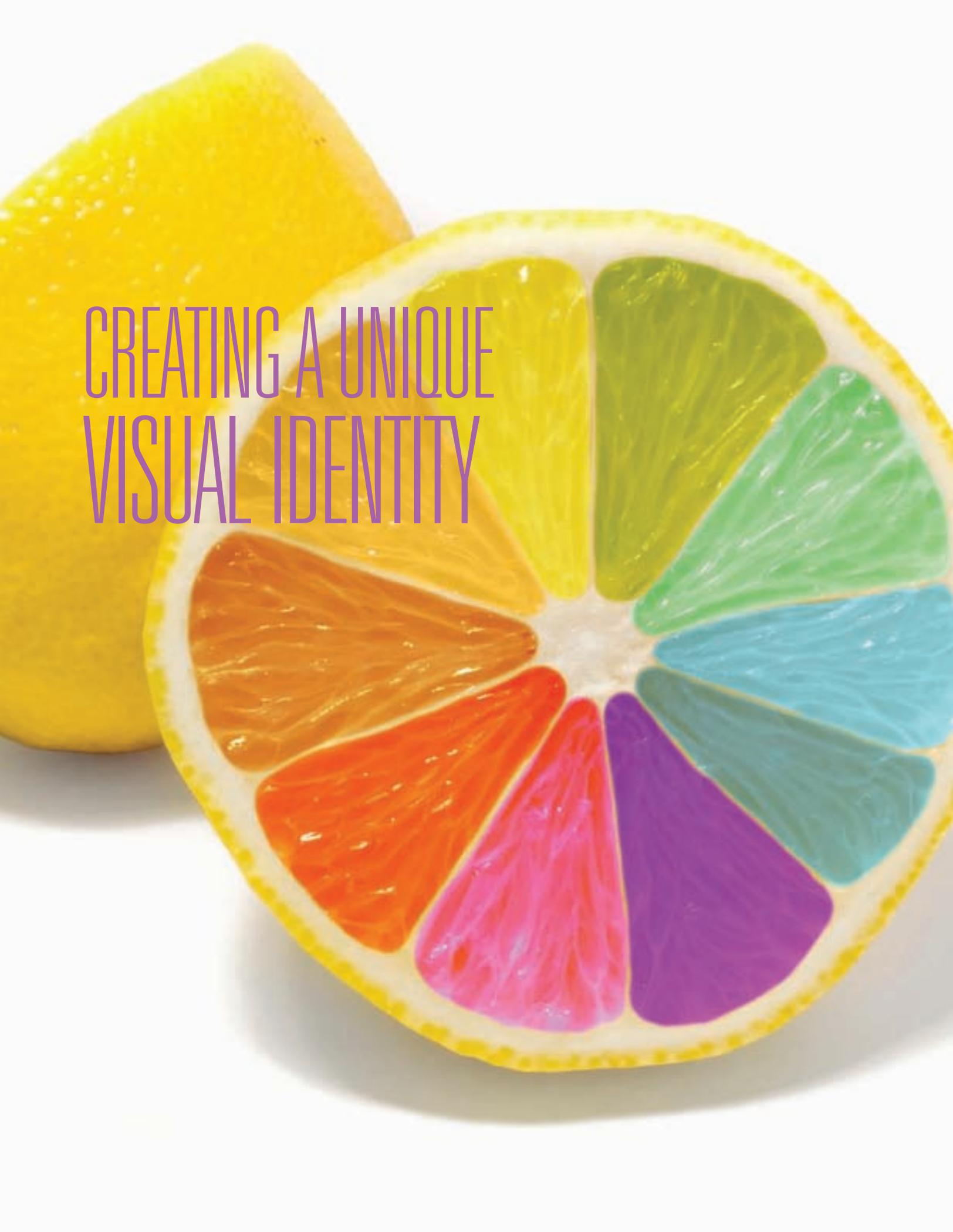
CREATING A UNIQUE
VISUAL IDENTITY

Your customers receive a sea of conventional, redundant and uninteresting printed materials every day. Elevate your marketing collateral by creating a unique visual identity with simple design changes, no matter what your budget. The reward? Raised brand awareness and a favorable sales curve.

Being unique doesn't mean throwing out the basic tenets of marketing and design. You must preserve a high level of continuity in presentation and message to create the perception of stability, strength and style. Yet you can avoid being stagnant with a dash of purposeful discontinuity, incorporating innovative copy, out-of-the-box typography, unexpected use of color and differentiating photography or illustration.

- **Your message.** There are two extremes to messaging, ranging from "all flash and no substance" to overly complex language designed to inflate the importance of a company's products and services. Communicating with clarity, humility and brevity, and even lightness and humor if appropriate for your audience, will set your company apart. If you are writing copy in-house, hire someone from outside the company to proofread and edit the copy to make sure your message is understandable and free of jargon.

- **Typography**. Consider typography as a key design element. You can use different fonts and selective kerning to convey a specific image and tone, from classic to professional to playful to edgy.

Beware of common techniques that make copy difficult to read, such as over-hyphenating, using too many windows, and filling every space with text. Make sure to include all special fonts in the files you send to us. Skipping this step can lead to printing delays.

- **Imagery.** Images should be consistent with the content and tone of your message. While stock imagery is readily available and affordable, it is simply not possible to stand out from the crowd if the same doe-eyed model staring with conviction from the pages of your marketing piece is doing the same for your competitor. Make the investment in customized photography and illustration if your time and budget allow. We can help you determine what file formats and resolution you should use to produce your project.

   The placement and color of images is equally as important as the actual photos or illustrations. An image that is tightly cropped or bleeds off the page in an unexpected way will capture the reader's interest. A black-and-white, selectively colored or sepia-toned photo might add far more drama than a four-color image. Sometimes less is more.

- **The finishing touches.** Carefully select papers and finishes to further set your piece apart, taking into consideration textures, coatings, varnishes and unusual shapes and sizes. If you are concerned that a particular effect will be costly, such as a die-cut section, just ask. We can offer alternative approaches to achieve a similar effect in a more economical way.

The adage "everything old is new again" applies to differentiating yourself from the vanilla marketing approaches of your competitors. Keep an ongoing file of images, papers and copy that appeal to you as inspiration for your next marketing campaign. This takes time, but it could make your next campaign your most exciting ever!

QUALITY PRINTING **WORKSHOPS**

Quality Printing Company continues its commitment to bringing relevant, useful communications information to customers, designers and other interested parties.

AUGUST 14

InDesign CS3 (8am–Noon)

Learn 5 reasons to choose InDesign CS3, great tips for making the switch to InDesign CS3 and updating your legacy documents, the basics and more about: New Document Setup, Colors & Swatches, Layers & Links, Text & Tables, Colors & Graphics, InDesign & PDF, Getting Ready for Press, and Variable Data Printing.

Acrobat 8 (1pm–5 pm)

Learn how to create and export PDFs, combine multiple file formats into a single PDF, collaborate using Acrobat 8's review and commenting functions, use Acrobat 8's form creation tools to collect information, control your PDFs with editing and security tools and create compelling interactive documents with links, bookmarks, movies & sounds.

ABOUT OUR PRESENTER

Clint Funk *has over 20 years experience in the graphic arts industry. From a newspaper production manager in the pre-computer era, to commercial photographer, to desktop publisher, to consultant and trainer, his wide-ranging experience puts technology in a real world context. Since 1993 he has worked with printers and their customers to teach them to work smarter, not harder with technology. For the past 5 years he has worked as an Adobe consultant at hundreds of events including seminars, eSeminars, trade shows, conferences and customer training events. His lively and entertaining presentations make him a favorite with Adobe and audiences internationally. The focus of his presentations remains to increase efficiency and reducing costs using technology to work smarter, not harder.*

Quality Printing Company is hosting these workshops free of charge at the Indianapolis Art Center, 820 E. 67th Street. Lunch will be provided (a great time for questions, answers and networking).

8 A.M.— 5 P.M.
INDIANAPOLIS ART CENTER

RSVP

To register for these workshops, email: events@quality-printing.com or call 800.771.1142, ext. 21

QUALITY
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It's what we do!

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