▻ Adobe CS6: Real-World Productivity for Web Professionals

Pfeiffer Consulting
01001011

The Adobe CS6 Performance and Efficiency Benchmarks

▷ Adobe CS6: Real-World Productivity for Web Professionals

Introduction

This document presents key findings of a benchmarking project designed to assess the impact of the Adobe CS6 applications on the productivity of designers and creative professionals.

Benchmarks were designed to measure how specific functions speed up everyday tasks. For details on the methodology used to conduct these benchmarks, check out “About the Benchmarks” at the end of this report.

This report focuses specifically on features and functionality geared towards the web professional. Design, digital imaging, and video production are covered in separate reports.

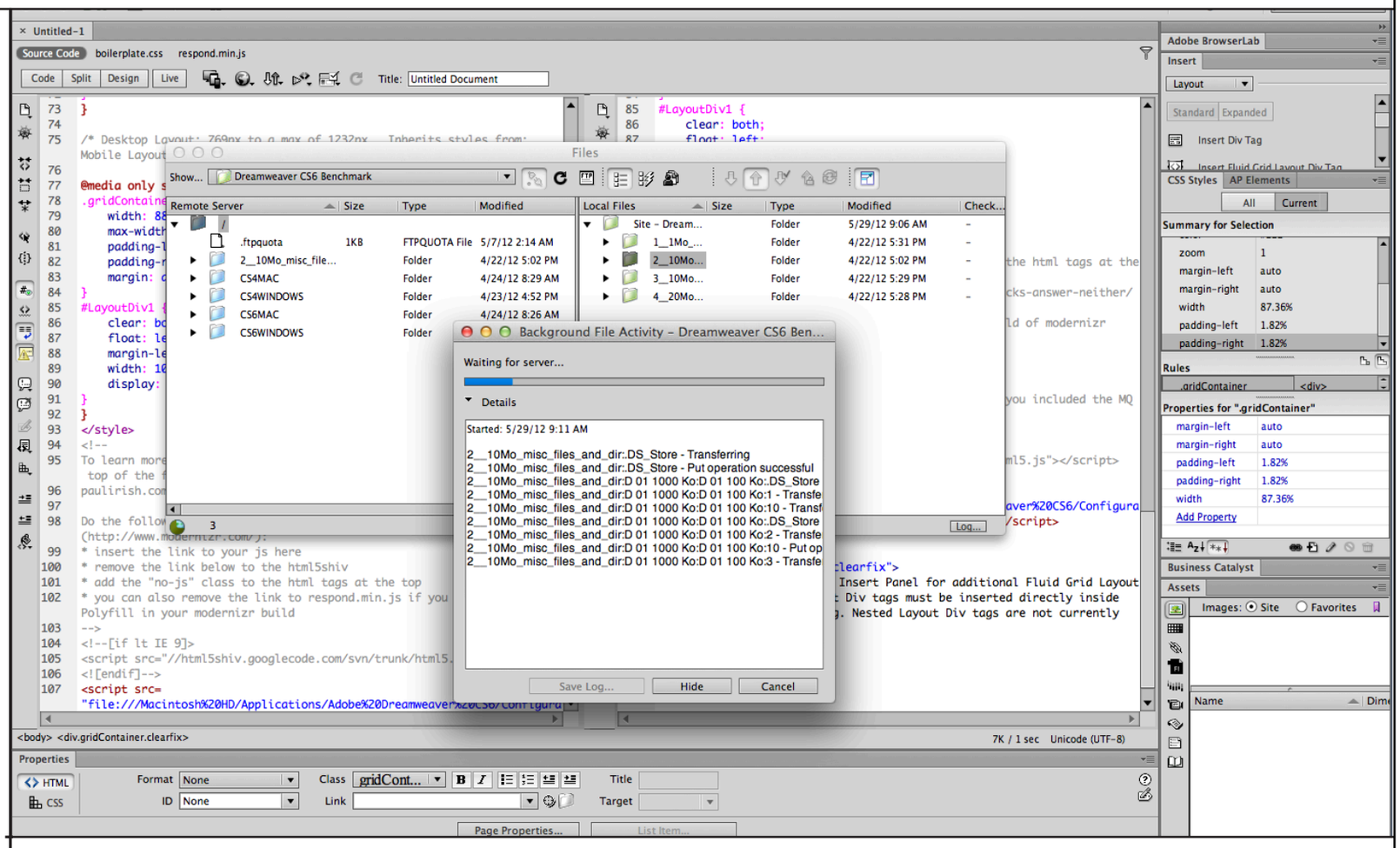
Dreamweaver CS6

How Dreamweaver CS6 accelerates FTP Transfers

What is it all about?

Adobe Dreamweaver® CS6 provides an essential under-the-hood improvement over previous releases of the program: the speed at which FTP uploads are performed.

This is particularly noticeable in transfers of folders containing a large number of small files: in our benchmarks, Dreamweaver CS6 was over 30% faster than the CS5.5 release in uploading files.



About the Benchmarks

We benchmarked FTP performance in a real-world situation, uploading folders of different sizes, each containing a large number of files to our web server.

Dreamweaver CS6: **2 min. 41 sec**. Dreamweaver CS5.5: **4 min. 10 sec.** **Shorter is better.**

Average of 12 individual benchmarks, conducted on both Mac and Windows platforms, measuring the time necessary to upload folders containing 1MB and 10MB of small files to a remote FTP server.

Dreamweaver CS6

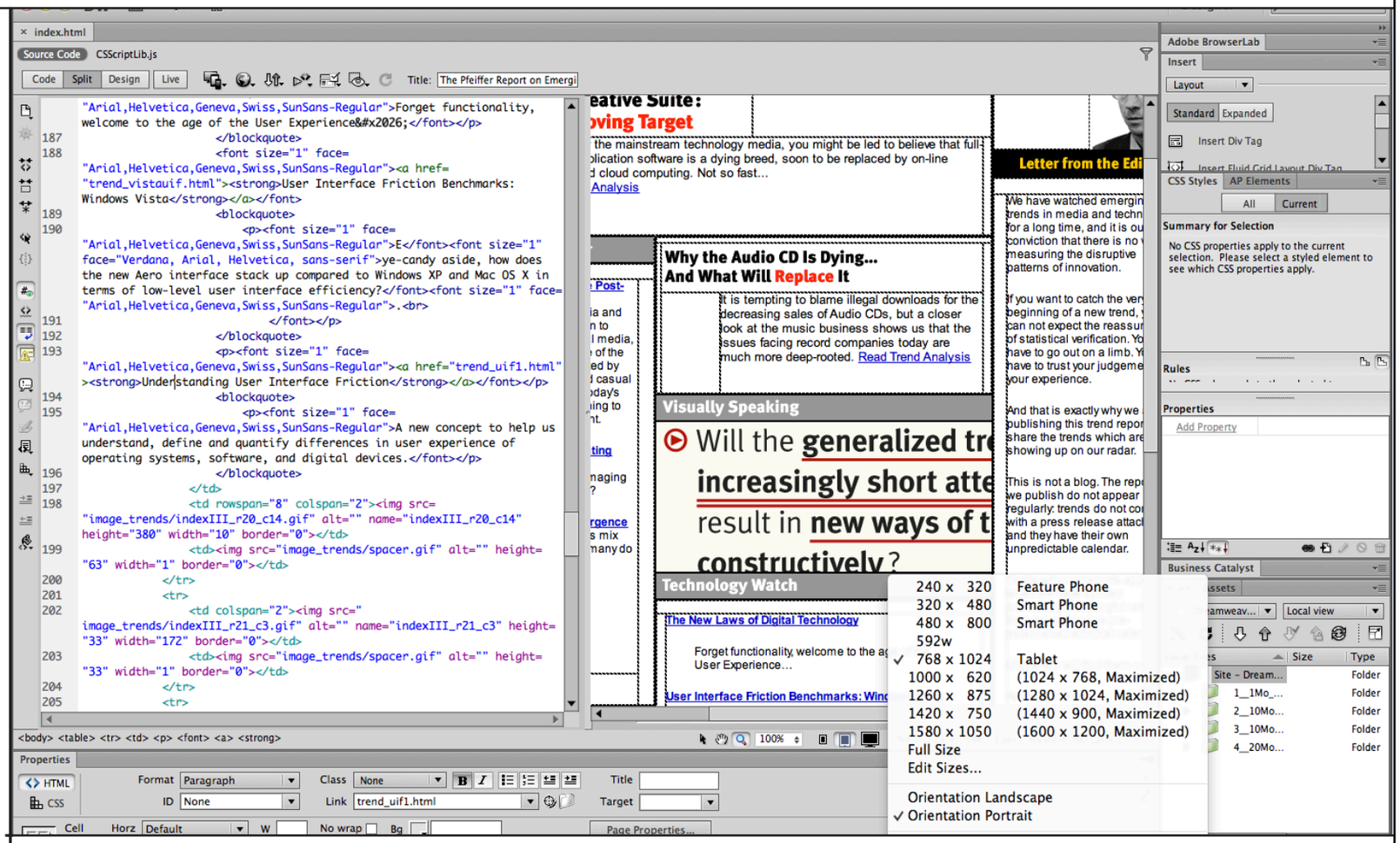
▷ Multiple-Device Preview Made Easy

What is it all about?

Dreamweaver CS6 eases the process of previewing a web-page on different devices by providing presets for common device resolutions (web-page, iPad, smart-phone...).

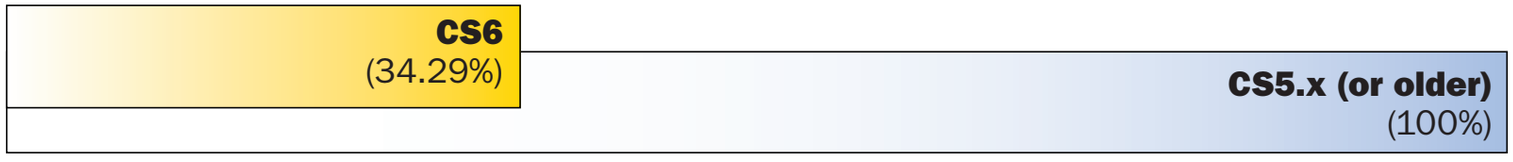
Switching between resolutions only requires to select the desired resolution from a pop-up menu; previous releases of Dreamweaver required several additional steps to preview on multiple devices.

This is a particularly important efficiency improvement, since previewing is an operation that will be repeated dozens of times during a work day.



About the Benchmarks

Dreamweaver CS6 was significantly faster than Dreamweaver CS5.5 in displaying a web-page on 3 different device resolutions.



Dreamweaver CS6: **3.95 sec**. Dreamweaver CS5.5: **11.51 sec.** **Shorter is better.**

Average of three benchmarks measuring the time necessary to preview a web-page using 3 different device resolutions in succession. Device resolutions emulated were standard web-page, tablet device and smart-phone.

Flash CS6

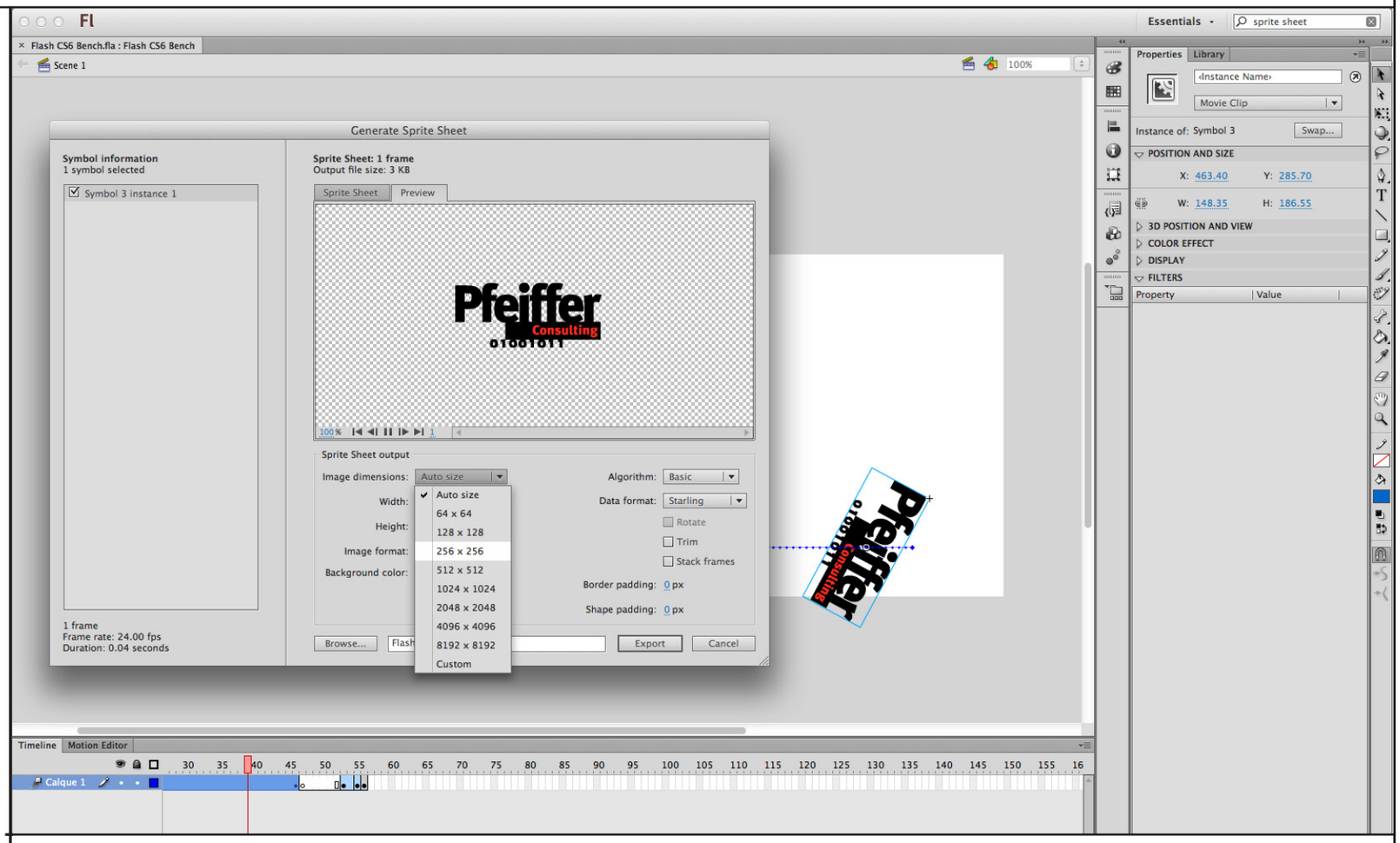
Application Area:
Animation

One-Click Sprite Sheet Generation

What is it all about?

Adobe Flash® CS6 is the first version of the program to allow the direct export of an animation sequence as a sprite sheet, resulting in considerable productivity gains.

With previous releases of Flash, users had to export an animation as an image sequence; creating the sprite sheet required manually creating the grid and placing the individual images one by one in Photoshop.



About the Benchmarks

Our benchmark consisted in the creation of a sprite sheet for a 10-frame animation; productivity gains for longer animations are likely to be significantly greater.

CS6
(7.80%)

CS5.x (or older)
(100%)

Flash CS6: **14 sec**. Flash/Photoshop CS5.1: **3 min. 5 sec.** **Shorter is better.**

Average result for three individual benchmarks comparing the time necessary to create a sprite sheet for animation with Flash CS6, using the Export as Sprite Sheet feature, with the manual, multi-step process required in a legacy workflow.

Application Area:
Creative Potential

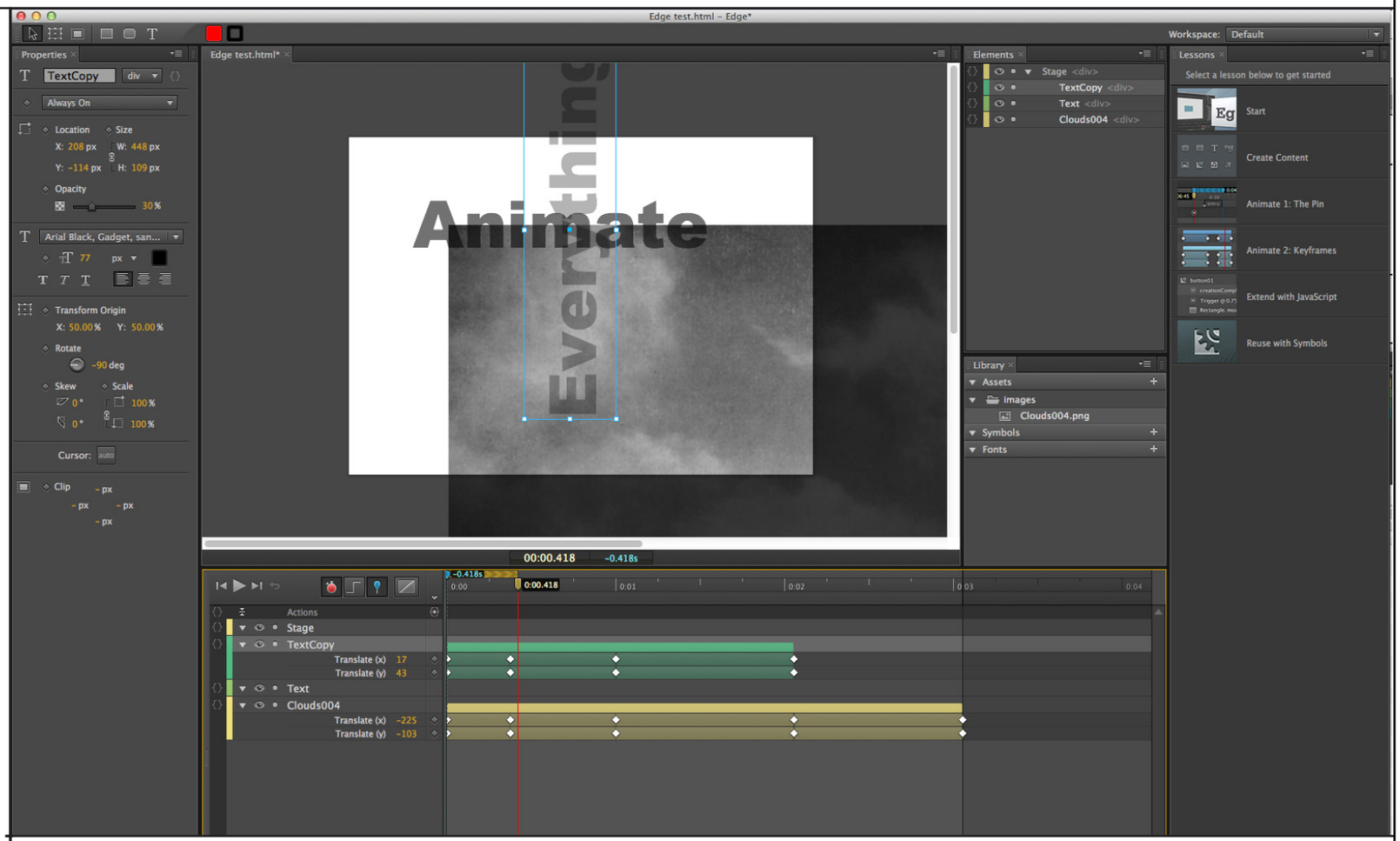
▶ No Coding Required: Animated Banners for Designers

What is it all about?

Adobe Edge is the first Adobe program dedicated to creating animated content such as animated banners or web-pages for HTML5 interactively.

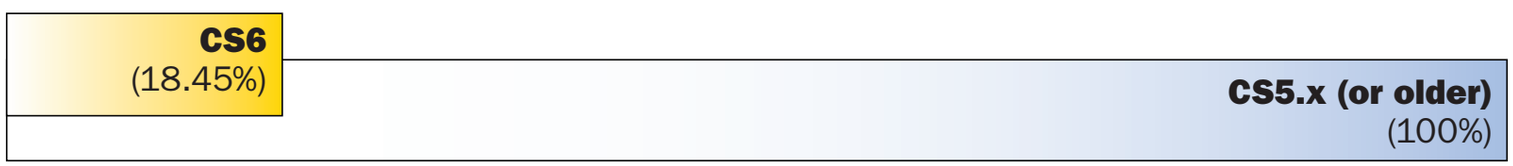
Edge does not require any coding, nor does the user have to be used to manage CSS style sheets.

For designers who have no experience with coding, Edge opens up a completely new area of creative potential. But even for somebody completely at ease with coding, Edge is much more efficient, as these benchmarks show.



About the Benchmarks

Our benchmarks measured the creation of a very simple animated banner. More important, however, is the creative potential Edge provides. In a few minutes, designers can create sophisticated animations that would take hours to code.



Edge: **1 min. 40 sec**. Dreamweaver CS5.5: **9 min. 2 sec.** **Shorter is better.**

Benchmark comparing the time necessary to create a simple animated banner using Edge without any coding, to the time a seasoned Javascript programmer took to create an identical banner with Dreamweaver CS5.1, using CSS and Javascript.

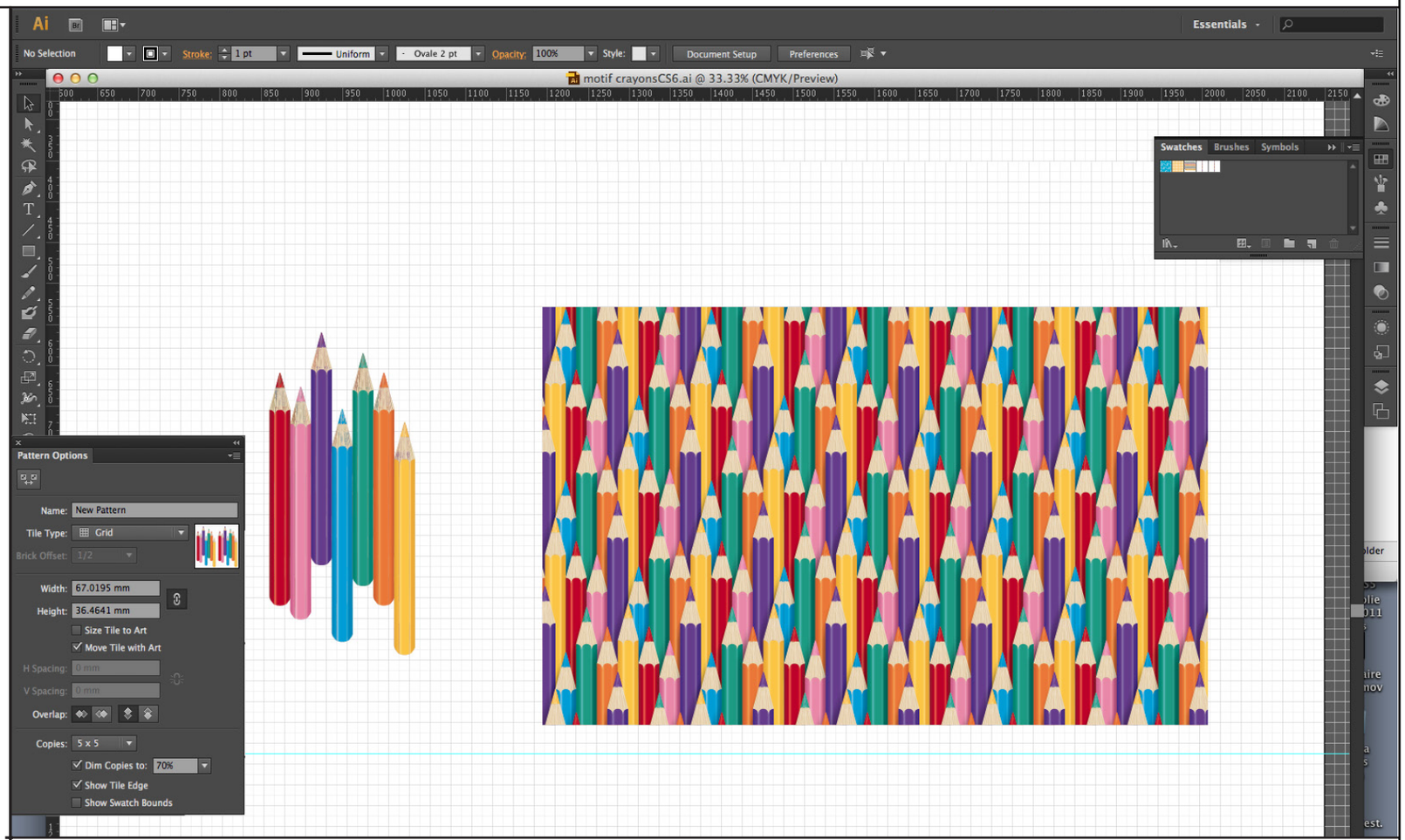
Application Area:
Pattern Creation

How Illustrator CS6 Re-Invents Pattern Creation

What is it all about?

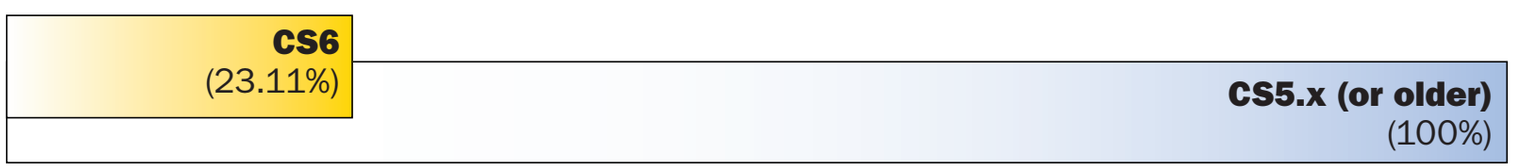
Illustrator CS6 provides a pattern creation feature that not only makes pattern creation much more efficient than in the past, it also allows tiling and other options unavailable before.

The new Pattern Options panel makes it very easy to experiment with variations and spacing of elements. As a result, the sort of complex pattern such as the one in our illustration, common when creating fabric designs, for instance, have been almost impossible in the past. In any case, the productivity gains are very significant.



About the Benchmarks

Illustrator CS6 took less than a quarter of the time to create simple patterns. Time savings with more complex examples would be even more significant.



Illustrator CS6: **7.64 sec**. Illustrator CS5.1: **33.04 sec.** **Shorter is better.**

Average of 18 individual benchmarks, covering creation, modification and fine-tuning of simple monochrome and multi-color patterns. (*Note: Elaborate patterns, easy to create with the new pattern tool but very hard in older releases have not been covered.)*

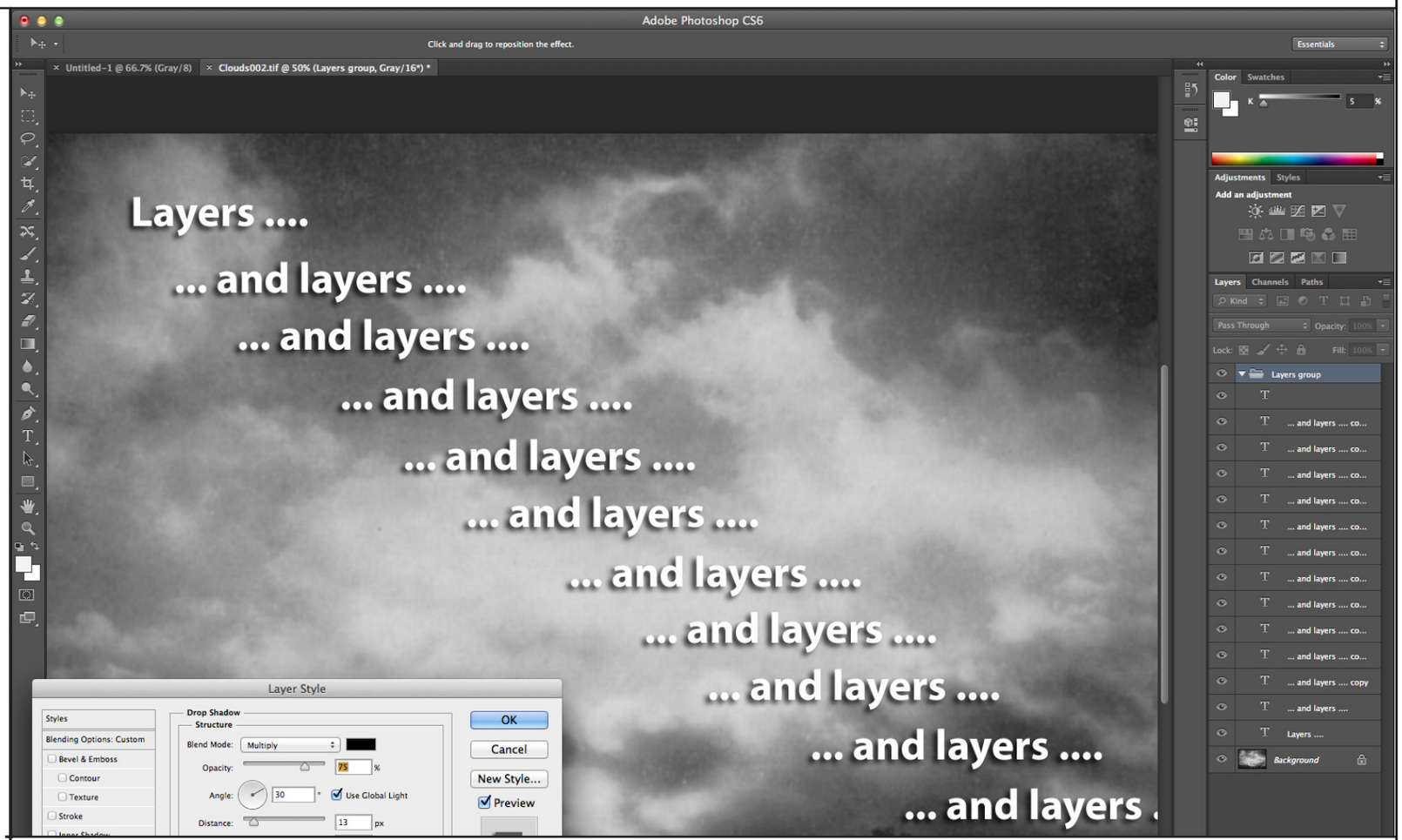
Application Area:
Working with Layers

▷ Photoshop Layers: A New Level of Efficiency

What is it all about?

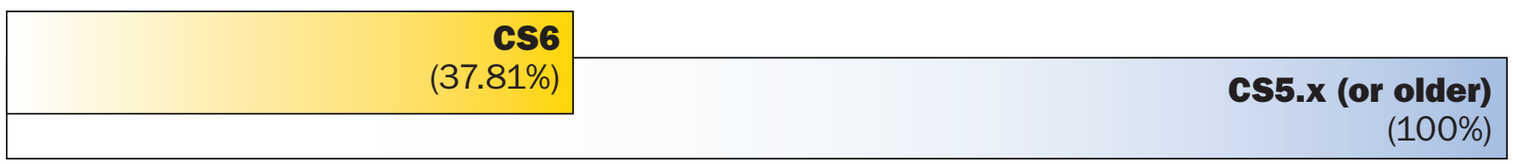
Layers have been an essential feature of Adobe Photoshop® for many years. Photoshop CS6 adds several essential options: Layer Styles can now be applied not only to individual layers, but to groups (as in our illustration).

Other productivity enhancements include a sophisticated search function, that can help locate layers by name or type, speeding up work with complex documents significantly.



About the Benchmarks

Our benchmarks covered the key productivity enhancements to the layer architecture in Photoshop CS6.



Photoshop CS6: **11.53 sec**. Photoshop CS5.1: **30.50 sec.** **Shorter is better.**

Average results from 12 individual benchmarks, executing a selection of layer-related operations, including applying effects to multiple layers, locating a specific layer in complex file by name or by type, and renaming multiple layers.

▻ About the Benchmarks: How We Measure Productivity

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About the Adobe CS6 Productivity Benchmarks

The productivity figures in this report are part of an extensive productivity benchmarking project commissioned by Adobe, in order to independently assess the productivity gains that CS6 applications can provide creative professionals.

Pfeiffer Consulting independently developed and executed the benchmarks presented here. The benchmarks were designed and executed by creative professionals.

How we design the benchmarks

The basic approach is simple: in order to assess productivity gains that a new release or a different product may (or may not) bring, we start by analyzing the minimum number of steps necessary to achieve a given result in each of the applications that have to be compared.

Once this list of actions has been clearly established, we start to execute the operation or workflow in each program, with the help of seasoned professionals who have long-standing experience in the field and with the programs that are tested.

In order to be certain that no lag or operator-induced delays are included in the productivity measures, each benchmarked example is cut down into small segments of three or four steps each. After an initial training phase, each segment is executed three times, and the average time is used as a result. The cumulative times for all segments that form a complete workflow example are then used as benchmark results.

How we prepare hardware for testing

We use factory-standard configuration hardware, that has been completely re-initialized prior to benchmarking. Only the system software and application software necessary for tests, as well as all required updates at the time of testing, are installed on the benchmark system. No peripherals other than the ones required for the benchmarks are connected.

Hardware

Benchmarks for this document were conducted on several different Mac and Windows workstations and notebook computers with 8-16 GB of RAM (see complete benchmark report for details.)

About Pfeiffer Consulting

Pfeiffer Consulting is an independent technology research institute and benchmarking operation focused on the needs of publishing, digital content production, and new media professionals.

Download the full Adobe CS6 Productivity Benchmark Report, as well as other benchmark reports and research studies at www.pfeifferreport.com.