



## Teaching and Working in a Multimedia World

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### Using Flash to Create a Photo Slideshow

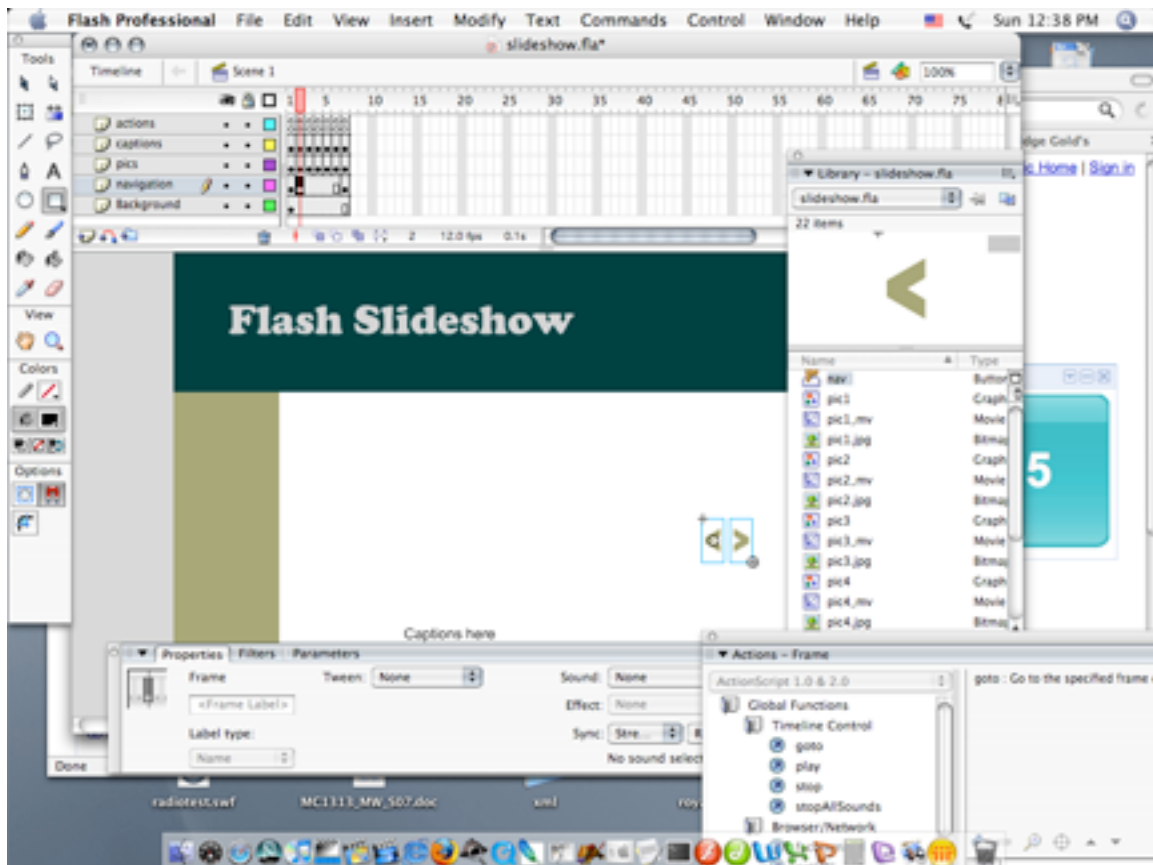
#### Objectives:

- Flash basics in creating a simple slideshow
- Understanding layers
- Importing images
- Creating animate with tweens
- Creating buttons
- Basic ActionScript concepts
- Publishing the slideshow

Other resources available on the Flash drive provided to you for participating in the workshop:

- slideshow.fla – native Flash file template
- slideshow.html and slideshow.swf – example files that can be launched to the Web
- flash\_slideshow.mov – video tutorial

Flash is a vector-based animation environment that allows you to add animation to your Web site or to create an entire site in Flash. It uses a movie metaphor for most of its elements.



When you enter Flash, it opens in a new Document. Elements of the screen include the Stage, Timeline, Toolbars, and Palettes.

**Stage:** Where the action of the Flash movie takes place. It is the area in which you create all your symbols, animations, and text.

**Timeline:** The area at the top of the screen that represents the passage of time during a Flash Movie. The timeline is organized into individual Frames.

**Layers:** Within the timeline, you can create layers to organize your images and to isolate symbols for animation.

**Keyframe:** A frame in which an object or action is located. Nothing exists in Flash, until it is in a keyframe. Multiple keyframes can be used to include different instances of the same symbol.

**Symbols:** In Flash, you create symbols based on the functions you want to perform. Graphic symbols allow you to change features for transparency and color and to tween between frames. Button symbols can hold event-driven action script that create interactivity with the user. Movie clip symbols can movies inside of movies, giving you access to timelines outside of the main one.

**Instance:** Once a symbol is created, it is included in the library. When you use a symbol in the movie, you are using an instance of the symbol. This allows you to reuse multiple instances of the same symbol and to animate via tweening.

**Tween:** An automated action between frames. You establish two keyframes, creating the beginning and ending animations states. By putting a tween on the first keyframe, the computer will create all the movements in between it and the last keyframe. Flash can create motion tweens (movement between instances of the same symbol) or shape tweens (morphing effect between objects, non-symbols).

### Using the slideshow.fla template

This basic template allows you to import photos into the library, replacing the originals. You can modify the page heading and captions to customize the slideshow for your own images.

1. Select the photos you want to include. The original slideshow.fla file allows for 7 images, but you can modify that once you understand how the Flash document works. Use Photoshop to edit the photos to the proper size and format. Use File, Save for Web, in Photoshop to save in the .jpg format. Name your files using this convention:

pic1.jpg, pic2.jpg...

This will allow your photos to directly overwrite the ones in the template when you import.

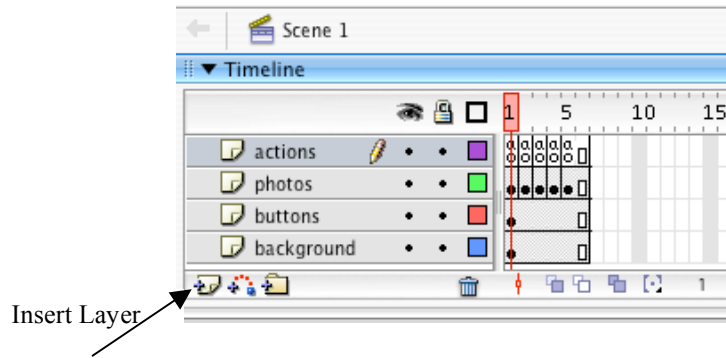
2. Import the photos into the Flash document. Choose File, Import, Import to Library. Browse for the files you just saved with the proper name and format. Hold the shift key down to select multiple images. When you receive the Resolve Library Conflict dialog

box, choose to Replace files in Library. Your files will replace the original files in the respective Graphic and Movie Clip Symbols. Make sure you save the file. Use a different name, so you can return to the original file if necessary. Make a note of the folder in which you saved the file.

3. At this point, you can choose Control, Test Movie, to see the result of your photos as imported into the movie.
4. You may need to modify the size of the files that you have imported into the movie. If so, use modify the files in the Graphic symbols (i.e. pic1, pic2, etc.). This will allow the images to be modified each time an instance of that symbol is used.
5. Change the text on the Headline that is in the first frame of the background layer. Use the text tool from the toolbar.
6. In each frame, choose the caption box to make the change associated with each particular photo.
7. When you have finished making your adjustments to the file, make sure you Save it in the .fla format. Then, use Publish Settings to create an html page and an swf file. These are the files that you will launch to your Web site. You can modify the html file to include a meaningful title and other relevant content, if necessary.

**To create a photo slideshow from scratch.** The timeframe for the AEJMC Workshop does not permit for in-depth Flash instruction. However, you can follow the instructions below to create your own Flash slideshows and further your knowledge of the application.

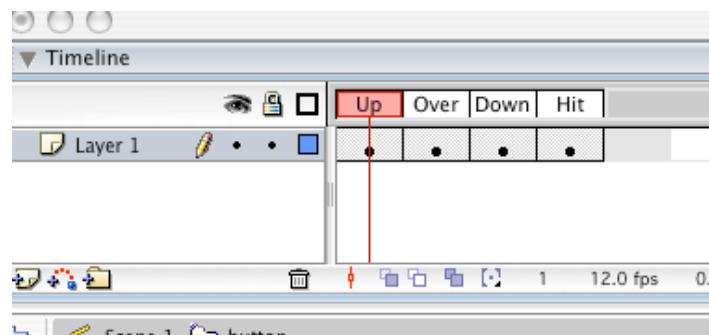
1. First, you will need to identify which images you will be using, and optimize them for the Web in Photoshop (Save For Web) in the jpg file format. You should also size the photos to consistent dimensions before bringing them into Flash.
2. Open a new document in Flash. It is best to Save at this point and to Save frequently while you are working in Flash. File, Save As.. Name the file slideshow.fla. The native file format for Flash is .fla. This format retains all your layers, frames, and scenes and allows you to edit those items. Later, we will be publishing in the .swf format for the Web.
3. Choose Modify, Document and set the dimensions of the movie and the background color.
4. **Using Layers** – you will notice that there is one layer in the timeline. You can use multiple layers to organize your objects in the movie, stacking on top of each other just as layers do in Photoshop. You add layers, by clicking on the insert layer button under the layers panel. You can name a layer by double-clicking on it.



5. Name the first layer “background”. In this layer, you can draw any items that will be on the stage throughout the entire slideshow. You can add title, text, or any other background elements.
6. Add a layer and name it “pics”. In this layer, we will import our images that we prepared in advance. If your images are named in a series, you can import them at once into each frame of the layer. Select the first frame in the “pics” layer and choose File, Import. Flash will recognize the series and ask if you want to import all images. Choose Yes. Flash inserts the photos in individual keyframes in the photo layer.
7. Move the image in the first keyframe to the desired location. Make a note of the exact X/Y coordinate in the properties inspector, so you can move each one to precisely the same location. Continue for each photo.
8. Since we are working with five photos, we can extend all layers to six frames (this will allow the slideshow to start over when we get to the end). Simply insert new frames at frame 6 (F5) for all layers.
9. Add a new layer and name it “buttons”.
10. **Creating Symbols** – to add navigational buttons to the slideshow, we must create a button symbol. Choose Insert, New Symbol, Button, and give it a name. We will be using the same button throughout, so name it “button”.

Buttons have four states that need to be created:

- Up – when it is not being hovered over
- Over – when it is being hovered over
- Down – while it is being clicked on
- Hit – the active area of the button



You can create unique states for the button so that the user experiences an interactive effect. Put a keyframe (F6) in each state and create a simple small, square button in different colors in each state, with a small arrow on it (right angle bracket).

## Remember to Save frequently.

11. The button will appear in the Library (Window, Library if it is not open). Drag it onto the button layer in the first frame. This will be the next button. If you also want to make a previous button, you can use an instance of the same button from the library and just rotate it. Go to the 5<sup>th</sup> frame and choose F5 to add frames to the layer so the buttons will be on the stage for the entire slideshow.
12. **Actions** – Flash requires Actions to tell it specifically when to start and stop. In this case, we are using the next arrow to scroll through the images. We need to Stop the Action on each frame, so the user can look at the image. Add a new layer and name it “actions”. Open the Actions panel (Window, Actions) and Choose a stop action to put in the 1<sup>st</sup> keyframe in the actions layer. You do this by opening up the Actions, Movie Control panel at the side of the Actions panel, and double-clicking on the stop action. Add keyframes to each frame and put a stop action in each one. You will see tiny “a’s” in each keyframe indicating that there is an action on these frames.
13. The final thing we have to do is add functionality to our next and previous buttons. We do this by selecting the button, and with the Actions panel, creating the following script:

```
on (release) {  
    nextFrame();  
    play();  
}
```

14. Do the same for the previous button except for the Type, Choose Previous Frame:

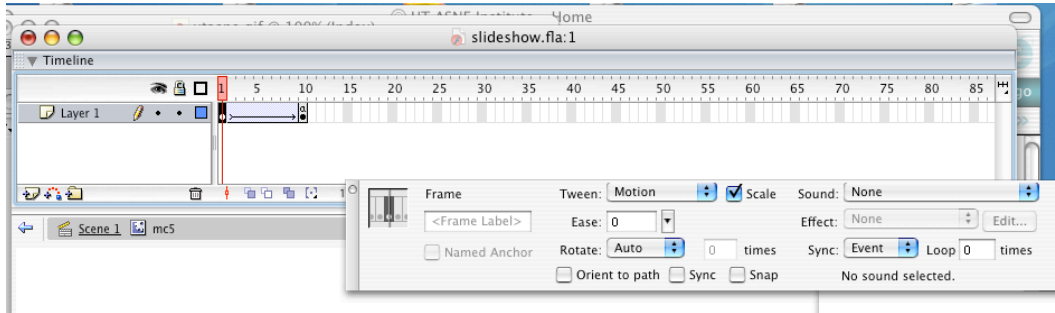
```
on (release) {  
    prevFrame();  
}
```

15. The slideshow will scroll backward and forward through the photos.
16. Your simple slideshow is completed. Now, you must publish it in swf format to check its functionality on the Web (File, Publish Settings). You can also use Control, Test Movie, while you are working on it to see it in action.

## To add a fade in feature to the photos:

1. The previous example was a slideshow that scrolled through photos, but did not use any tweening effects to present the images. You can add a fade in effect on each photo by converting each image first to a Graphic Symbol, then a Movie Clip.
2. Click on the photo in the first frame. Make sure the photo is selected. Choose Insert, Convert to Symbol, choose Graphic, and give the symbol a name, like “Photo 1”. This will allow the image to take on the special Graphic properties to change the Alpha of the instance.
3. Choose Insert, Convert to Symbol, choose Movie Clip, give it a name like “MC 1”. This will allow you to create a tween in each movie clip.
4. From the Library, Select the movie clip. Put a keyframe (F6) at frame 10. Go back to Frame 1. In the Properties panel, with the frame selected, choose Tween, Motion.

Then select the Symbol in Frame 1 and choose Color, Alpha. It should reduce it to 0. If not, use the slider to take the Alpha all the way down to 0.



5. To stop the movie clip from continuing the tween, choose the final keyframe in the movie clip and put a stop action.
6. Do this for the images in each frame.
7. Test the movie to see your tween effect.

Flash is now owned by Adobe (it was formerly part of the Macromedia product family). The current version is CS3, but this exercise shows screenshots using the previous version, Flash 8.

Current uses of Flash include the addition of audio and video in integrated multimedia packages. Examples of professional packages can be found at:

- CNN Special Reports: <http://www.cnn.com/topics/>
- NY Times Multimedia - <http://www.nytimes.com/pages/multimedia/index.html>
- Washington Post Photos and Video: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/photo/?hpid=mmindex>
- Cyberjournalist.net Great Work Gallery: [http://www.cyberjournalist.net/great\\_work\\_gallery/](http://www.cyberjournalist.net/great_work_gallery/)