

# Cut, Copy, Paste... Ole!

## (Getting stuff into and out of Draw and Photo-Paint)

### Why this topic?

We spend a lot of time learning the intricacies of CorelDraw and Photo-Paint. This is great, but a lot of us need to pass artwork between Draw and Paint, or into other applications. Even if you don't do much of that now, it would be nice to know that it can be done and how to go about doing it.

I also felt it would be a good time to talk about the general principles of OLE (Object Linking and Embedding), which is so highly touted by MicroSoft. The principles we'll discuss are applicable not only for Corel products, but apply to most Windows applications.

### Going from Photo-Paint to Draw

You've scanned a photo into Photo-Paint, because you want to use some of the fancy features found there to edit it. Now, you want to place it into a Draw file. The first question is why? Here are a few reasons:

- ◆ If you need to work with text, Draw is far more powerful and flexible. The same holds true for other basic geometric elements.
- ◆ Text and other basic objects are stored far more efficiently as vector objects (Draw), keeping file size down, and allowing you to print at any size without any degradation of quality



There are a number of ways to get Photo-Paint bitmaps into Draw, all of which are fairly easy.

**Importing:** Simply save your Photo-Paint file (.CPT) and then use the import function in Draw to bring it in. A couple things to note about version 8:

- ◆ In prior versions, importing a CPT file brought it into the drawing at the same size it was created in Paint and centered on the page.
- ◆ In version 8 you are presented with a new cursor, that allows you to marquee the area where you want the bitmap placed. If you still want it centered and placed at the original size, just press the space bar when the import cursor appears.
- ◆ If the CPT file has multiple objects, these are maintained when imported. The status bar will read "Group of X Objects." You can ungroup them, and manipulate each individual bitmap.

**Copying and Pasting:** When you have a lot of scans, other bitmaps, or portions of bitmaps that you need to get quickly from Photo-Paint to Draw, the Windows clipboard might be a good choice. This probably isn't a good idea, however, if you are working with really large bitmaps. This can require a huge amount of memory.

- ◆ **Copying:** This is the easy part. Select what you want to copy (a flat image, one or more objects in an image, or a masked portion of an image) and select Edit/Copy or [ctrl]+c keyboard shortcut.
- ◆ **Pasting:** This is also easy, but not necessarily the best choice! Simply activate the drawing, and select Edit/Paste or press [ctrl]+v. Why isn't this always such a hot idea? When you do this, it is **not** the equivalent of importing a bitmap. It creates an embedded object instead. What this means, is the Draw file keeps track of what application created the object. If you double click on it, you will be able to edit it *in-place* using the Paint menus and tools. This can be useful, but carries with it a big penalty. Files are much larger and slower to respond. I did one comparison, and a large embedded bitmap resulted in a file that was 3 times larger than one with the same bitmap imported. Another down-side, is that you can only edit it via Paint. You can't treat it like you would an ordinary bitmap imported into Draw.
- ◆ **Paste Special:** If you want to use the clipboard as a means to quickly move bitmaps from Paint to Draw, without all the overhead of embedding, **Paste Special: Device Independent Bitmap**, is the method to choose. This creates the equivalent of an imported bitmap.
- ◆ **Paste Special with link:** This is similar to embedding, and can be edited the same way. The difference is, that the original named Photo-Paint file is linked to it, so that any changes made in Photo-Paint will be reflected in and Draw files with this linked object. This can be useful, when you have a bitmap that will be used in a lot of drawings (like a logo element). If you change it in Photo-Paint, all the linked versions will be automatically updated.

## Going from Draw to Photo-Paint

There are different considerations, when going the opposite direction. Keep in mind that Drawings can contain bitmaps, but the converse is not true. A Paint image is a bitmap, no ifs ands or buts. So, when a Draw file is brought into Paint, it must be converted to a bitmap.

**Opening:** There is no function to import a CDR file into a Paint image. However, you can “Open” a CDR file in Paint. When you do this, you are presented with the “Import into Bitmap” dialog. Here, you can specify the resolution and color depth for the resulting conversion. Note, that if the CDR file is multi-page, only the first page will be converted.

**Copy and Paste:** If you use the clipboard to go from Draw to Paint, the vector objects will be converted to a bitmap:

- ◆ **Paste as New Document:** A new image is created, which is always RGB *and always 72dpi*. This last aspect is unfortunate, and I don’t know why it still works this way. If you want higher effective resolutions in Paint, you must make the object larger before copying.
- ◆ **Paste as New Object:** If you choose this option, you will paste into an existing image. The object will be converted to whatever color depth the existing image is and whatever resolution the image has. (Size is properly maintained for all units except pixels, which is a major improvement over earlier versions of Draw/Paint!)
- ◆ **Working in Pixels:** If you set your rulers to pixels in both Draw and Paint (as in web design work), you must also make sure the “pixel resolution” for the Draw rulers matches the resolution of the images you are pasting into in Paint.
- ◆ **What, no Import?** That’s right, there is no import function in the File menu of Paint. Instead, there is a “Paste from File” function found on the Edit menu.

**Exporting:** If you have a CDR file with multiple pages, or a lot of individual elements that you want converted to bitmaps, you can use the export feature.

- ◆ **Bitmaps for the Web:** The two formats to use are GIF and JPG. GIF is limited to 256 colors, but has the advantage of being able to define certain colors as transparent for web browsers. JPG is full RGB color, and can be set to fairly high levels of compression, but cannot have transparent backgrounds.
- ◆ **Resolution:** When creating any format bitmap, it is important to remember to set the resolution properly, based on the end use of the image. Set it too high, and your file will be unnecessarily large; set it too low and the output quality will not be satisfactory. Note, that if you are designing web graphics, you can ignore the resolution value and simply adjust a custom pixel size. Make sure to turn on maintain aspect ratio (a new feature in 8), so that the object does not become distorted.

## Other Applications:

Some applications support older versions of CDR and CPT files, but seldom support the most current (version 8 at the moment). But there are still plenty of ways to get your graphics into these apps, using the same techniques we’ve discussed. The particular method will depend on how you want to work with this graphic in the future and how quickly you need to work.

**My PowerPoint presentation:** As an example, when I created the slide show for my parent’s anniversary, I had to consider how to get the images into PowerPoint.

- ◆ I could have done copy/paste, if I wanted to embed the graphics and have the ability to edit in place. I tried this for a few scanned photos, and found it was too resource intensive and too slow.
- ◆ I could have saved all the images in a format recognized by PowerPoint (TIF, GIF, JPG, BMP, etc.) This would have been useful, if I needed the images in the same form for other projects. But, I didn’t. I wanted to save color images in color and grayscale as grayscale. For the slideshow, I mainly wanted a sepia toned look. So...
- ◆ I relied on **Paste Special: Device Independent Bitmap**. This was by far the fastest way to work. I could scan the image in Photo-Paint, do any enhancements and editing needed. Apply my duotone coloring, copy to the clipboard and quickly paste special into PowerPoint. The copy/paste special goes much faster than paste (embedding) and the resulting file size was smaller.

This was the best way to work for this particular project, because I was pretty sure of how the images should look, before I brought them into PowerPoint. On the other hand, if I expected to do a lot of experimenting, embedding (copy/paste) might have been a better choice.

Or in a completely different scenario: If I was creating a major business proposal in Word, and wanted to include a portion of a complex Excel spreadsheet in it, linking and/or embedding might be the way to go. In this instance, the difference between embedding and linking becomes even more significant. Embedding places a duplicate copy of the spreadsheet into your document. Linking places a view of a portion of the spreadsheet in the document, but the changes are always made to the original.