

**INTEGRATING ADOBE CREATIVE SUITE TO MAXIMIZE  
E-LEARNING DEVELOPMENT**

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# GET A TASTE OF ACTIONSCRIPT 3.0 HANDS ON!

### **Module 1: What Kinds of Software Do You Need?**

This module takes a high level view of the types of software developers need to create online learning. Categories and roles of software will be discussed and explained

### **Module 2: Adobe Creative Suite Overview**

How does the Adobe Creative Suite of products fall into the categories discussed in the previous module? This section will look at each software program and discuss the pros and cons of the individual elements of the package.

### **Module 3: Adobe Creative Suite Demo**

Enough talk! This section will be a demo of how to use Adobe CS4 to build eLearning

## About the Author

Thomas Toth, based in the Denver, Colorado area, is a Certified Developer with over a decade of training, management and design experience in the computer and technical education industries. Thomas has designed and programmed several hundred web sites and on-line training courses using Adobe software products for national and international corporate clients. He is the President of dWeb Studios, Inc., a web and eLearning design and development firm in Parker, Colorado.

In his professional life Thomas wears the hat of Web Master, Instructional Designer, Leadership Consultant, Project Manager, HTML Programmer, Graphic Designer, Flash Programmer, Executive Coach and Stand-Up Trainer. Thomas teaches Dreamweaver, Fireworks, Flash, Photoshop, and InDesign at local area training centers, bringing his students real-world knowledge and experience on how to use these products.

Thomas is the author of the book Technology for Trainers, published by ASTD in April 2003. Technology for Trainers is an eLearning primer, written for the Learning and Development professional who is faced with the task of developing eLearning for their organization. He is also a contributing author to the ASTD Handbook for Workplace Learning Professionals, published in 2007.

Thomas has his B.A. in Human Communication, his M.A. Ed with a focus on Educational Technology, and belongs to several professional organizations such as ASTD, the American Marketing Association, eLearning Guild, Toastmasters and the HTML Writers Guild. Thomas is also a published and performing magician, a trained chef and musician.

## Module 1: What Kinds of Software Do You Need?

Building an eLearning project from scratch can seem like a daunting task. There are so many moving parts that it can be difficult to know where to begin. This module will help you break down the elements into easily digestible chunks.

Let's take a look at each type of software and their role in programming online learning.

### Graphic Design and Photo Editing Software

#### Essential Role

Create and edit graphic elements

- Buttons
- Navigation elements
- Interface design
- Pictures and graphic art

Create and edit photos

- From digital camera
- From web sites

Optimize photos and graphics

- Bring them down to web safe format
- Import and export all types of graphics

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## Audio Recording Software

Create and edit audio elements

- Voice overs
- Audio loops
- Edit music files

Optimize audio files

- Bring them down in quality to web safe format
- Import and export all types of graphics  
.wav to .mp3  
.aiff

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## Video Editing Software

Create and edit video elements

- Import video from the web
- Import video from a digital camera

Optimize video files

- Bring them down in quality to web safe format

Import and export to all different formats

.mov  
.mpg  
.avi  
.mp4

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## Screen Capture Software

Capture still screen shots or recorded interactive mouse movements

Great for software training/demos

Some software allows for complete immersion in the recording

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## Animation Creation Software

Create moving images or complete graphical interfaces

- Becomes the entire platform for eLearning
- Used to create spot animation/subtle elements

Usually exports to a .swf file

- Small Web File

Has an internal programming language to allow for interactivity

- ActionScript
- Scripting Editors

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## HTML/XHTML Writing Software

Write the “engine” code for your eLearning program

If its on the web, it needs to use HTML/XHTML

### Popular User Interface Elements

- WYSIWYG
- Hand Code
- Snippets
- Code coloring and tag assistance

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## Do You Need to Learn All of This?

Yes?

No?

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## Two Strategies

### Individual Software Elements

Create your own “suite” of best of breed tools  
May be less expensive – you buy only what you need  
May be easier to learn – only learn what you need to know

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### Web Development Suites

Integrated set of tools  
Similar look and feel  
Lots of development options

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## What about eLearning Software Development Suites?

Articulate?  
Lectora?  
Toolbook?  
LandmarkASP?

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These tools do a great job of creating learning quickly, but they require graphics, audio and Flash elements to go from the mundane to the robust. On their own, they do a good job, but to take your eLearning to the next level, you will need additional software.

## Module 2: The Adobe Creative Suite

Adobe's latest Creative Suite (CS4) is by far the most popular suite of web and print development software available today. The package comes with all the software you need to create dynamic, interactive online learning.

We are only going to review the Adobe Creative Suite 4 Web Premium package. It contains:

Dreamweaver CS4  
Flash CS4 Professional  
Photoshop CS4 Extended  
Illustrator CS4  
Fireworks CS4  
Acrobat 9 Professional  
Soundbooth CS4  
Contribute CS4

Let's look at each of these packages individually.

### Dreamweaver CS4

- HTML/XHTML Writing
- WYSIWYG as well as code view
- All the code that the browser uses to display content is done here
- "Big Pot" software - everything created everywhere else comes into Dreamweaver
- Has lots of sample code, code hinting and Spry coding samples (AJAX)

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## Flash CS4 Professional

- Animation creation
- Interface creation
- Powerful multimedia elements - video and audio editing and manipulation
- Powerful coding language - ActionScript
- Great for interactions, gaming and graphic intensive experiences

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## Photoshop CS4 Extended

- Graphics creation
- Photo editing and manipulation
- 3D Object creation and painting
- Video and multimedia savvy - you can create elements to use in your video projects
- Great for both print and online elements

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## Fireworks CS4

- Graphics creation
- Web site prototype creation
- Creates code and graphics simultaneously - buttons, fly-out menus and disjointed roll-overs are easy to create
- Strong optimization tools
- Photoshop's "Little Buddy"

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## Illustrator CS4

- Clip art and illustration creation - great for logos
- All vector graphic creation
- Strong drawing tools

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## Soundbooth CS4

- Create audio tracks for use in voice over work
- Create and edit music files
- Multiple tracks
- Exports to all audio formats

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## Contribute CS4

- Allows non-programmers to edit web pages
- Simple interface - like MS Word
- Edit pages within the browser
- Works with Dreamweaver Templates

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## Acrobat 9 Professional

- Create PDF files from multiple image and document sources
- Security features to protect your documents
- Import and use Flash files inside the PDF
- Collaboration tools

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## Summary

The Adobe Creative Suite is a powerful set of software tools to enable you to create beautiful, impressive, impactful online learning projects. Each tool works well with the other tools in the suite, allowing you quickly learn all the tools.

Although the learning curve can be daunting, diving in with a project in mind can be a way to get started quickly. For additional help, try these sites below.

## Recommended Web Sites and Reading

### Flashkit

A fantastic web site dedicated to all things Flash. If you want to start learning Flash, or just want to download and use some animations in your sites, this is **the** place on the web for Flash stuff.

<http://www.flashkit.com>

### Friends of Ed

Friends of Ed is a publishing group out of the UK that has a fantastic set of books on Flash and Dreamweaver, from version MX to the current version CS4. They are a “developer to developer” group of authors that really give you good, usable information on the product. I recommend starting with the Fundamental books and then move through their other books. You can find their stuff on-line or wherever you buy your computer books.

<http://www.friendsofed.com>

### Adobe Web Site

Adobe has a very good web site that can give you more information about Flash. You can also download a fully functional version of Flash CS4 to try for 30 days. It is the perfect way to immerse yourself in the product before deciding to spend the money to purchase it.

<http://www.adobe.com>

### Thomas Talks Tech

This is my blog and pod-casting site that looks at technology and works out how to utilize it in your online learning projects. I am an Adobe guy, so much of the content is Adobe focused.

<http://www.thomastalkstech.com>

### Layers Magazine Online

If you don't subscribe to Layers Magazine, then you can take advantage of articles and tutorials on all things Adobe. This is a great location to learn.

<http://www.layersmagazine.com/>