



## Website Images

If you are selling products on the web, the images you have of your products online becomes very important. Low quality images will affect whether or not a potential customer buys anything. Getting good quality images can be a bit of a minefield, especially if you are not experienced in graphical manipulation.

### Flat Screens vs. Old Style Monitors

The first issue which is only just starting to come to light is that the quality of a flat screen monitor (TFT) is not the same as an old tube monitor (CRT). CRT monitors show true accurate colour, and are used by most graphics companies, TFT monitors (unless they are very high end) do not show true accurate colour. Most images that are produced on a CRT monitor will look good on a TFT (although sometimes can look a little faded) however if you product images on a TFT monitor, you will find that the images lack contrast, depth and colour on a CRT to the point where you might not be able to tell what colour the items is! The way to tell if your TFT quality is not great is to create a graphic on a CRT monitor with different shades of light grey. If you then look on your TFT monitor you will probably find that the image simply looks white, or only shows the darkest of greys. Make sure that if possible, you can produce your images on a CRT monitor, to ensure you don't isolate any potential customers.

### File Size

Another issue with images on the Internet is size, file size and physical size are two different things, but are related. File size is the image in Kilo Bytes (e.g. 30Kb), physical size is the image in pixels (e.g. 150 x150 pix). The larger the physical size the larger the file size will probably be. All images on the Internet only need to be 72dpi (Dots per Inch). This allows the file size to be quite small, so you should try to ensure your photos are no larger than 50kb. To do this, you will need to use compression, there are two main types used on the Internet, .jpg and .gif. Jpg's are best for photos, Gif's are best for graphics (such as a button or where there is large areas of the same colour). Jpg's, can have different levels of quality, most photos do not need to be the best quality, mid to high quality is perfectly adequate.

### Software

Although the main professional product for image manipulation is Adobe Photoshop, it is expensive, but there are many cheaper versions that can achieve the same thing such as Adobe Elements, Paint Shop Pro etc, all these packages come with the tools you need to ensure your images are resized, cropped, cut out, and laid out in a nice manner to ensure your customer can see the quality of the goods.