Photo Organization Tools

Why use photo organizing software?

- **Organize** – With a capable organizing program you can arrange your images by the date, month or year they were taken, occasion, file or image size, file type, rating or just about any way you want. You can also sort them ascending, descending or by dates, subject, folders or tags.
- **Archive** – After arranging your images, you can print them or burn them onto a CD for long–term storage.
- **Edit** – Most organizers include a good set of editing and enhancing tools. So within the program you can perform basic edits like crop, re-size, add flash, change to B/W or sepia and so on. The best edit features of any organizing tool are non-destructive edits meaning they preserve the integrity of your original photo. Be sure to look for this feature.
- **Share** – What's the fun in having great looking pics if you can't share them? With a flexible program, you can create slide shows, emails, galleries, greeting cards, album pages, prints, calendars or burn onto a gift CD.

What to Look For in Photo Organizing Software

- How you want to use the product?
- Importance of organizing tools versus editing tools versus online image publishing capability.

Criteria used to evaluate Photo Organizing Software:

- **Feature Set** - The best programs include customizable ways to organize and view your images as well as a good set of editing/enhancing tools and creative ways to share your pictures.
- **Ease of Use** - Functions and features should be easy to figure out the first time.
- **Ease of Installation** - A good program will load quickly and not cause errors or problems with your computer.
- **Help/Support** - Product and technical help are important. Good help includes inter–program help pages and tutorials as well as online FAQs, a searchable knowledge base, user forums and email and telephone technical support.

Recommendations

High End Professional Tools that can handle thousands of photos

- Adobe Photoshop Lightroom
  - Cost: $299
  - Runs on Mac or Windows platforms
- Apple Aperture
  - Cost: $199
  - Runs on Mac only

Aperture vs Lightroom - The New Digital Darkroom

This review was done by **Macworld** so you would expect it to be biased towards Apple. Overall though it appears to be a fairly good review of the two programs. Where the programs are both very

powerful and built for photographers, they take two different approaches to how to work with your photos.

"Apple clearly believes that inspiration can strike at any point in the process, and Aperture refuses to get in your way. Its process is seamless. If you want to remove dust spots while ranking images, you can.

Adobe, on the other hand, takes a structured approach to working with files. Lightroom has five modules—Library, Develop, Print, Slideshow, and Web—each of which plays a specific role in the workflow process. When you're in a module, you have access only to the tools and operations deemed relevant to that part of the pro-cess. Although moving between modules is easy, the experience can be frustrating—especially since some of the limitations on what you can and can't do in each module seem arbitrary. Having to stop and switch to another module (sometimes even a different view within a module) can pull you out of what you were working on.

Lightroom's modal structure will seem most comfortable to photographers who prefer to accomplish one task before starting another. If, like me, you prefer to jump around, you'll likely find Aperture's free-form approach more intuitive and less constricting."

If you work on strictly a Windows platform or if you work in both Windows and Mac then your clear choice of the two of these programs will be Adobe Lightroom as Apple Aperture ONLY works on the Apple Mac platform.

My choice was Aperture and I currently use Aperture version 3. However, when I first started with Aperture, Lightroom was just getting started and my tests showed that I preferred Aperture both on ease of use and price ($299 for Lightroom vs $199 for Aperture). However, if the tables were turned and I was just choosing now, I might decide on Lightroom if for no other reason than the combined pricing advantage you can get when you use the Adobe Suite of products. It's powerful editing features have greatly improved since the days when I looked at the beta of Lightroom 1.0. So, my suggestion is that if you need to make the choice, download the free demo of both programs (if on a Mac) and test for yourself. If on a windows only platform, you can download free demo versions of Lightroom versus Google Picasa or others and see what might work best for you.

CAUTION: If you get your photos all organized with one tool, the organizational library does not generally transfer to a different product if you change your mind. This means that if I switch from Aperture to Lightroom at this time, my library structure is useless to me. In testing though, many of my keywords and ratings may transfer since they are based on changes to the basic metadata of the file itself. This means that once you make your choice, it is best to stick with it unless you are willing to put in the effort again on getting it all set up the way you like.

The Rest - meant more for your typical hobbyist

These selections were made based on ranking on the website TopTenReviews.com. Much of the material for this presentation was also obtained from this website. These are listed by 'best' to 'worst'. I'm not sure how they determined which products should be included in this list. My recommended products from at least 2-3 years ago, when I last presented this topic, were Google Picasa (Free program that runs on Mac or Windows) or ACDSee which is included in the list below. Where they have the top 10 products in their review, I am only including the top 5 here.

Photo Organization Tools

Review of The Rest

1. **Ulead Photo Explorer 8.5**
   1. Standout features:
      1. Supports image imports from multiple sources (i.e. digital camera, scanner, removable media, camcorder, web page)
      2. Comprehensive photo editing package
      3. Multiple photo-sharing options
   2. Platform: Microsoft® Windows® 98SE, 2000, Me and XP
   3. Price: $29.99
   4. Summary: Ulead Photo Explorer 8.5 is a comprehensive media organizing tool.
2. **Corel Photo Album 7**
   1. Standout features:
      1. Extensive photo editing and effects packages
      2. Comprehensive photo-sharing options
   2. Platform: Windows Vista® or Windows® XP (with latest service packs installed)
   3. Price: $29.99
   4. Summary: Corel has created an easy to use program that provides a long list organizing, editing and sharing functions. It's fast, fun and friendly, making it a top choice for amateur photographers.
3. ** **ACDSee 2009** **(also have ACDSee Pro 2.5 version) -** *Note: this is my husband's selection of photo organizing and editing software and my past winner in the last time I did this presentation based on it's power and ease of use-Jean*
   1. Standout features
      1. Substantial photo editing and effects packages
      2. Multiple photo-sharing options
   2. Platform: Microsoft® Windows® XP with Service Pack 2, Windows Vista® or Windows® 7 operating system.
   3. Price: $49.99
   4. Summary: ACDSee is for those familiar with the technical aspects of organizing and editing photos. If you regularly work with Zip files, create PowerPoint presentations, and upload to popular photo sharing sites, you will use this software to its full capacity.
4. **CompuPic Pro** **(made by Photodex)**
   1. Platform: Windows 98 or better, Pentium II CPU.
   2. Price: $49.95
   3. Summary: For the price, CompuPic provides a solid photo organizing tool. It has many good features, and we can't say enough good things about their help and support system. However, CompuPic's navigation and image search may be challenging.
5. **Imatch 3.6**
   1. Platform: Microsoft Windows 2000, Windows XP, Windows 2003, 64-Bit Windows, Windows Vista and Windows Vista 64 Bit (IMatch 3.6 and higher), Windows 7
   2. Price: $64.95
   3. Summary: This product is for those that need to manage thousands of images—not your typical family photographer. However, if you want a professional grade product and can digest technical instructions, you will not find a better priced product on the market.
6. ** **Google Picasa 3.0** - I'm adding this updated one from my previous presentation (Jean)
   1. Platform: Mac OS X 10.4.9+ or Microsoft® Windows XP, Microsoft® Windows Vista, Microsoft® Windows 7, or Linux

2. Price: FREE
3. Summary: For a basic organizing and editing package, Picasa is a great tool. And, it's free … we like that, and so will you.

7. ** **Adobe Bridge CS4** - I'm adding in this one (CS5 is available now) for those people who are using Photoshop. The use of this program would not have to spend any additional money or install any new software. Since this already installs when you install Photoshop CS4 (other versions support related version of Bridge), then no extra work is needed to use it.

   1. Platform: Mac or Windows - same requirements as Adobe Photoshop.
   2. Price: FREE with Adobe Photoshop (any Creative Suite version at least)
   3. Summary: (These comments are made based on a **MacWorld review** I found on the internet.) With the workspace overhaul and speed increase, Bridge is a real joy to use. The ability to quickly zip through the images on your hard drive is very satisfying, especially for those who have a lot of imagery in their lives. The new Output module is handy for exporting PDFs and Web galleries, but the inability to save your settings as a preset is bone-jarring. After all, the module feels air-lifted right out of Adobe Lightroom where the ability to save presets does exist.

Photo Organization Tools

Note: All these are verbatim (with minor exceptions) from the TopTenReview.com website.

1) Ulead Photo Explorer 8.5 Review

Ulead Photo Explorer 8.5 is the easiest photo organizing software to use with features for all types of media: photos, videos and music. Functions have intuitive, friendly labels, and many sharing methods are available including email, print projects and the Web. Ulead is on the forefront of video organizing, seamlessly integrating video into the photo organizing process.

Standout Features
• Supports image imports from multiple sources (i.e. digital camera, scanner, removable media, camcorder, web page)
• Comprehensive photo editing package
• Multiple photo-sharing options

Feature Set: ■■■■

Organization
• Album Creation lets you add images, video and music clips into a central album for easier access.
• View by date with Album Calendar, by descriptive text or your own rating (A, B, C, or unrated).
• Zip and unzip files without the need for a separate Zip program.

Edit & Enhance
Ulead Photo Explorer has all of the basic editing functions and some interesting effects to enhance photos. Use Auto-Fix to repair common photo problems automatically: one photo at a time or as a specified group. Apply special effects such as charcoal, emboss, mosaic, noise, oil paint, pinch, ripple, tile, colored pen, watercolor, whirlpool, or wind for artistic flourishes. Batch-enhance functionality lets you apply these enhancements singly or to a group of images. You can also add text or stamps to images—you control font, size, style, and color.

Share
Ulead Photo Explorer allows you to share both in print and electronically. Print full-sized images, image thumbnails, greeting cards, CD labels, and calendars in various sizes and layouts. Create slideshows that include photos, video, music, voiceover narration, captions, and transition effects. Burn slideshows to CD for viewing on PCs or create Video CD's (VCD) for TV viewing. You can also publish your slideshows to the Web. Photo Explorer will automatically optimize your images when you send media to email recipients.

Bonus Features
• Scan Internet for Images enables you to easily download Web page images at one time and eliminates the tedious process of saving each image separately.
• Trim video clips to remove unwanted segments from videos or commercials from recorded TV shows.
• Export slideshows as a video file.

Help/Support: ■■■□
In addition to The Easy Access Window, you'll find an integrated help function, user guide, user forums, tutorials, and email support.

Summary:
Ulead Photo Explorer 8.5 is a comprehensive media organizing tool. Even if you're just organizing photos today, it won't be long until you'll be shooting video too. Be prepared, choose **Ulead Photo Explorer**.

If you are looking for a new digital camera to capture those great images, click over to our Digital Camera reviews to see which one is best for you.

Photo Organization Tools

2) [Corel Photo Album 7 Review](#)

Corel Photo Album 7 has a broad range of features and is easy to use. Download, view and organize your photos "your way" quickly and easily. Correct and enhance photos with a click or two. Create more projects with included templates and share with others by email and cell phone. And, easily back-up and protect your images with this [photo organizing software](#).

Standout Features
- Extensive photo editing and effects packages
- Comprehensive photo-sharing options

Feature Set: ■■■■
Corel Photo Album 7 contains a long list of organizing abilities, one–click editing features, sharing methods, and back up features. In fact, this product includes more editing and enhancing features than any of the other products we compared for this review. Here are the highlights:
- Photo Finder searches your computer for photos and automatically organizes them by the date they were taken.
- Photo Downloader gives you an instant slide show of your newly downloaded photos. Photos are automatically rotated.
- PhotoRecovery restores accidentally deleted (from the memory card) photos from your camera.
- Organize images by date, keywords, favorites folder, collections, or by recent downloads. Tag photos with a gold star to quickly find them for later use.
- Use Photo-Trays to mark your photos and remind yourself, which ones you need to e-mail, upload, or print.
- Edits include Quick Fix for color and contrast, Adjust Wizard for common corrections, Sharpen Tool to go from fuzzy to clear, Add Flash to bring out detail, red eye removal, and crop. Enhance with black and white and sepia conversions, frames, edges, borders, and custom panorama composites.
- PhotoSafe™ Backup System lets you back up your entire collection with just a few clicks.

Bonus Features
- Thinify™: Automatically reduce your photo subject by 10 pounds … we love this.
- Use QuickCD™ to burn 100s photos on a CD with two clicks. Create a CD label by dragging a photo onto the template.
- Use Quick-Email to automatically resize photos and send via email to a computer or to a cell phone.

Corel Photo Album 7 includes 40 print templates, 1000s of templates for album pages, collage templates, and Web Gallery templates for uploading. Send photos to friends and family with Quick E-mail, which works on cell phones as well.

Ease of Use: ■■■□
Corel Photo Album 7 has a short learning curve; we rarely had to refer to the help section. We tried every feature; easily navigated through the program, and you will too.

Help/Support: ■■■■
Corel Photo Album 7 has an inter–program help section for quick reference, a Getting Started Guide, searchable knowledge base, email, and telephone support.

Summary:
Corel has created an easy to use program that provides a long list organizing, editing and sharing functions. It's fast, fun and friendly, making it a top choice for amateur photographers.

If you are looking for a new digital camera or a photo printer to capture and print those great images, click over to our [Digital Camera](#) or [Photo Only Printer](#) reviews to see which one is best for you.

3) [ACDSee 2009 Review](#)   *(Note: this is my husband's selection of photo organizing and editing software based on it's power and ease of use-Jean)*

Photo Organization Tools

ACDSee is easy to use [photo organizing software](#) and has a wide range of organizing options. Importing, organizing, searching, editing, and sharing functions are well designed in this program. ACDSee has added new features to meet demand for online photo sharing sites. A progressive product with a technical interface, it ranks third behind its more user friendly competitors.

Standout Features
- Substantial photo editing and effects packages
- Multiple photo-sharing options

Feature Set: ■■■■
ACDSee offers one of the most efficient and quick organizing tools. Import photos from your digital camera or other device, and preview, sort or filter files in a simple drag–and–drop interface. Mouse over thumbnails for instant previews. Organize images by category or keyword; store and search by image captions, author information and notes.This product has batch processing to make sorting faster. Once organized, create slide shows, screensavers, and online photo galleries. ACDSee includes 30 preset edits and filters so images can be perfected before they are stored or published. Easily burn CDs or DVDs of your images for sharing and backup.

Bonus Features
1. Multi-word keywords make finding images easier
2. Apply effects like borders, frames and drop shadows to your photos
3. Integrated uploading to photo sharing sites like Flickr and Smugmug
4. Post a photo widget on your website or blog powered by free ACDSee Sendpix online album
5. Create PowerPoint presentations from inside ACDSee
6. Unzip files and start viewing and organizing archived items right away without leaving ADCSee

Ease of Use: ■■■□
ACDSee is a technical program and a good one for people that are working with online media. However, the typical user will spend more time learning to use this software than other photo organizing programs.

Help/Support: ■■■□
ACDSee offers an adequate searchable help section built into the program along with online FAQs, user forum, online form and phone support. Email questions were answered in minutes.

Summary:
ACDSee is for those familiar with the technical aspects of organizing and editing photos. If you regularly work with Zip files, create PowerPoint presentations, and upload to popular photo sharing sites, you will use this software to its full capacity. Would you like something a little more friendly? Try our #1 and #2 rated products. If you're a professional photographer or just want a package with more horsepower, you may be interested in [ACDSee Pro 2.5](#).

If you are looking for a new digital camera or a photo printer to capture and print those great images, click over to our [Digital Camera](#) or [Photo Only Printer](#) reviews to see which one is best for you.

4) [CompuPic Pro Review](#)

CompuPic Pro can work with a large variety of file formats and can write over 20, including most of the popular formats. CompuPic also has many of the features we'd expect out of a quality photo organizing software including some advanced slide show features and the ability to manage large collections of images. However, this product is more difficult to use than some of the higher ranked products.

Feature Set: ■■■□
CompuPic Pro recently added 20 plus new slide show transition effects and fixed many of the small bugs which plagued the previous versions. They've also added drastically to their image editing arsenal, however, it is still not quite as advanced as our top rated products.

Photo Organization Tools

CompuPic allows you to download images directly from a scanner or camera as well as browse files on your computer visually. Thumbnails are larger than average. This product has the ability to manage hundreds of thousands of images and can organize them by category or keywords. It can also cut, copy and paste as well as duplicate, rename or delete files quickly.

CompuPic can read over 100 different file formats including Adobe Illustrator, Sun Rastor, Corel Photo Paint, JFIF, and JPEG. And, CompuPic can write over 20 formats. Images can be edited, enhanced, and shared by email, slide show or uploaded to a web gallery. The slide show feature has over 100 transitions, can include more than one photo per view, and has the ability to add audio.

Ease of Use: ■■■☐
CompuPic is easier to use than equally sophisticated organizing programs, but might not be the best fit for beginners. The main interface may be difficult to navigate, but experienced users will be able to locate folders and images easily.

Help/Support: ■■■■
CompuPic offers a built-in searchable help section with well organized information. Look online for FAQs, phone support and email support. They even have online manuals for all of their products and an extensive reference section.

Summary:
For the price, CompuPic provides a solid photo organizing tool. It has many good features, and we can't say enough good things about their help and support system. However, CompuPic's navigation and image search may be challenging. If you'd like a more intuitive and user-friendly program, try Corel's Photo Album 7 or Ulead Photo Explorer.

Looking for a new digital camera or a photo printer to capture and print those great images? Click over to our Digital Camera or Photo Only Printer reviews to see which one is best for you.

5) Imatch 3.6 Review

IMatch is a photo management tool for professional photographers, stock photography agencies, journalists, libraries, or serious and prolific amateur photographers – not casual photographers.

Feature Set: ■■■■
This product can help manage huge image databases and IMatch contains a script that allows you to create web pages from your images. Using this script, you can create simple slide shows, category based image galleries and galleries where users can use IPTC keywords for navigation. A search feature allows you to search the database by File Names, Text in Properties, Images in Specific File Formats, Date & Time Ranges, Images having Specific Dimensions and File Size. IMatch not only has all the basic editing and enhancing features found in other programs such as red eye removal and color management tools, but many others such as: Add/Remove Noise, Mosaic, Oil Painting Effect, Aging Effect, Invert Image, Posterize, Solarize, Adjust, Channel Split, and Channel Combine.

Help/Support: ■■■■
IMatch includes a set up wizard to guide you through the process of creating your database step–by–step. There is good inter–program help, although it tends to be technical. There is also a tutorial, an online user forum and FAQs.

Summary:
This product is for those that need to manage thousands of images—not your typical family photographer. However, if you want a professional grade product and can digest technical instructions, you will not find a better priced product on the market. Need something more user-friendly? Look to TopTenREVIEWS' side-by-side comparison chart for options.

Photo Organization Tools

6) [Picasa 3 Review](#)

Picasa by Google is one of the easiest programs we reviewed: it's intuitive and well designed. Picasa also has the best price tag: FREE. Simple edits and convenient upload to Picasa Albums, makes this an efficient way to organize and share your photos.

Feature Set: ■■■□

Organizing
   Assign keywords to your photos and then use Albums to organize just the way you want to. Albums are virtual groupings of photos that only exist in the Picasa software. Like a playlist, you can create combinations of any photos in an album or use a single image in multiple albums without taking up extra space on your hard drive. If you delete photos in albums, or whole albums, the original picture files will be untouched.

Editing
   There are three convenient tabs for editing:
   1. Basic Fixes: These are buttons that work in one to two clicks to remove red-eye, crop, auto color, auto contrast, straighten and fill light photos.
   2. Effects: Designed to help you turn a gray sky blue, brighten colors and add photographic filters. There are 12 effects to choose from in Picasa including Sharpen, Sepia, Black and White, Warmify, Film Grain, Tint, Saturation, Soft Focus, Glow, Filtered B&W, Focal B&W, and Graduated Tint.
   3. Tuning: Here are the most advanced editing features to fix contrast and remove color cast. Select from Fill Light, Highlight, Shadows, Color Temperature, and the Neutral Color Picker

Bonus Features
   • "I'm Feeling Lucky": Takes the guesswork out and enhances photos automatically.
   • Geotagging: Tell Picasa where you shot each photo, and view them on a 3-D globe in Google Earth.
   • Use of Picasa Web Albums to share your photo albums with family and friends - for FREE (I added this one from original review-Jean)

Ease of Installation: ■■■■
No problems with installation.

Help/Support: ■■□□
Picasa has a brief online tutorial, an online user forum, and technical support by email.

Summary:
For a basic organizing and editing package, Picasa is a great tool. And, it's free … we like that, and so will you.

7) [Adobe Bridge CS4](#) by [Lesa Snider King](#), [Macworld.com](#)

Adobe Bridge is an organizational and image-browsing powerhouse that's been shipping with Photoshop since the inception of the creative suite. However, in previous versions it was sometimes painfully slow and the workspace wasn't friendly as it could have been. That's all changed in [Photoshop CS4](#) ()—Bridge got a makeover, a speed boost, and a new Review Mode that'll make photographers squeal with joy.
PEOPLE WHO READ THIS ALSO READ:

Interface lift

Photo Organization Tools

When you launch Bridge a friendly, light- gray window containing a slew of resizable and movable panels greets you. Using the familiar Folders panel, you can navigate through your hard drive and view files as scalable thumbnails. To see larger previews, click an image and it'll appear in the Preview panel (or just press your keyboard's spacebar for a full-screen preview). At the top of the window lie several new navigational aids including Forward and Back arrow buttons that let you move through recently viewed folders, a "Go to parent or Favorites" menu (it looks like a down arrow) that lets you move up a folder in your directory or access folders you've added as Favorites, and the "Go to recent file" menu lets you see all the files and folders you've recently viewed. One of the most useful additions is the Path Bar, which serves as a clickable trail of breadcrumbs that keeps you spatially oriented within your file system (if you don't see it, choose Window: Path Bar).

You can use Bridge to browse all the images on your hard drive; not just the ones you import with it. The new interface design lets you move through your hard drive with ease and gives you easier access to workspaces. After you've arranged and resized the panels the way you like them, you can save the workspace so you can return to it later.

Also new is a search bar complete with Spotlight integration. If you don't know where a file lives, type its name (or the first few letters) into the search field and press Return, and Bridge will instantly launch a search party throughout your hard drive. Workspaces also receive top billing in the new Bridge window, making them a lot easier to find. They're not new—they were previously stuffed at the bottom right of the window with a cryptic 1, 2, 3 label. If the pre-configured workspaces don't float your boat, you can always make your own. Importing photos

Using Bridge to import your photos (done seamlessly via a separate app called Adobe Photo Downloader) can be a huge timesaver as you can make it do all kinds of housekeeping chores for you. For example, you can set it up to automatically rename your photos, add keywords, a description, and copyright info to each and every one. It can perform a backup as part of the import process and burn a DVD for off-site storage. This valuable function of Bridge has been carried over from the previous version.

Review Mode
After importing your images, the new Review Mode lets you see them in a giant, floating carousel. It's a quick and easy way to view your images full-screen, mark rejections, and apply a handy star-rating system. To use Review Mode, select a folder or multiple images, click the Refine icon at the top of the Bridge window and choose Review Mode (or press Command+B). By using the left and right arrow keys, you can sift through your images very quickly. To exit Review Mode, click the X at the bottom right corner or press Escape.

If you want to take a closer look at part of your image, click the Loupe button at the bottom right or click the image itself. You can also rotate your images in Review Mode.

Sorting and filtering
Bridge gives you a lot of flexibility when it comes to viewing your image collection. For example, you can use the Sort menu at the top of the window to arrange your images by name, date modified, size, and so on.
The Filter panel, on the other hand, lets you weed out images by displaying those that match a certain criteria, like star-rating, rejections, and so on. If you didn't rate your images when you imported them using Review Mode, you might want to take the time to do it now. That way you can quickly view your Crème de la Crop images on the fly when the opportunity arises. If you're shooting for HDR (High Dynamic Range) or for panoramas (and you're running Photoshop CS4 Extended), you've got a couple of new automation tools to speed your workflow. You can make Bridge collect your panorama or HDR images for you (by looking at their metadata) by choosing Stacks: Auto-Stack Panorama/HDR. Next, you can send them off to Photoshop to create, save, and show you a preview of the finished panorama or HDR file by choosing Tools: Process Collections. If you want to open several images in a multi-layered document, you can choose Bridge: Tools: Load Files. However, in testing, this feature worked less well with HDR sets than with panoramas, and we've noted that Bridge tries to process HDR sets as panos. Moreover, in testing we find that small quantities of photos work better than large quantities.

Among other improvements are a new Collections pane, which, expanding on the existing collections feature, gives you the ability to group your images into virtual albums. You can build Collections manually or have

Photo Organization Tools

Bridge do it for you by selecting certain criteria like star-rating, name, keywords, and so on. These Smart Collections will grow over time as new photos with matching criteria are added to the collection automatically. They take Bridge beyond being a mere browser, by giving it some powerful library functionality.

Hotline to Camera Raw
One of the many benefits of organizing and browsing images in Bridge is its integration with the Camera Raw plug-in. There are a half-dozen ways to open your images in Camera Raw from within Bridge with the simplest being to just double-click the file, or Control-click it and choose Open in Camera Raw.

If you've got several images that could use the same edits, you can copy the settings from one and apply them to others right in Bridge. All you have to do is Control-click the image in the Content panel and choose Develop Settings:Copy Settings from the resulting shortcut menu. Select the images you want to apply the settings to, Control-click them, and choose Develop Settings:Paste Settings. Now that's working smarter instead of harder. This feature, too, has been retained from previous versions.

Adobe Output Module
Bridge can also create an instant slideshow of your work, and generate PDFs or a Web gallery. The new Adobe Output Module handles the latter two options through an interface almost identical to the Print and Web modules in Adobe Lightroom. It's extremely intuitive; just select the images you want to export and click the Output workspace button at the top of the Bridge window. In the Output panel, you'll see a Template pop-up with paltry few presets (though they're fairly customizable) and you have to click the Output Preview tab to see a preview. The galactic bummer is that you can't save any of the options you've painstakingly entered—though it does remember the last settings you used.

Final word
The pickins' in the Template menu are shockingly slim and unfortunately, you can't add your own. Plus, as you make changes in the Output panel, you have to click the Refresh Preview button to get Bridge to update the preview.

With the workspace overhaul and speed increase, Bridge is a real joy to use. The ability to quickly zip through the images on your hard drive is very satisfying, especially for those who have a lot of imagery in their lives. The new Output module is handy for exporting PDFs and Web galleries, but the inability to save your settings as a preset is bone-jarring. After all, the module feels air-lifted right out of Adobe Lightroom where the ability to save presets does exist. For those mourning the loss of Contact Sheets and Picture Packages over in Photoshop CS4, a little customization in the Output module would have been placating. Though if the public outcry is fierce enough, perhaps we'll see significant improvements in this module in future versions.

[Lesa Snider King, founder of GraphicReporter.com, is the chief evangelist of iStockphoto.com, author of Photoshop CS4: The Missing Manual (Pogue Press/O'Reilly), From Photo to Graphic Art (KelbyTraining.com), Graphic Secrets for Business Professionals (Lynda.com), and co-host of YourMacLifeShow.com.]