

Flash: Creating a Web Slide Show

Objectives

Using Flash, create a slide show animation for your web page.

1. Define the essential Flash terms including: **layers**, **keyframe** and **motion tween**.
2. Define and identify the Flash **Timeline**.
3. List the three steps used to create an animation.
4. Explain the process used to import a bitmap image.
5. Demonstrate the steps used to add a motion tween animation.

Introduction

Flash is an authoring tool for creating multimedia web sites. Flash uses a plug-in to embed its content into a web page. According to Macromedia, 98 percent of web users can receive Flash content. This makes it a popular application for creating rich web content.

A favorite Flash animation includes a sequence of photographs. In this session, we will use the Flash **Timeline** to create such a slide show, add appealing effects to the animation and create a link to more information.

Animation

Flash uses two animation methods: frame-by-frame and tween. We will focus on tween animation. In **tween animation**, you create starting and ending frames and Flash creates the frames in-between.

Terms to know

Timeline – The Timeline shows layers and frames. This is where content is organized and animation happens.

Stage – Workspace for creating and placing all movie content.

Frame – A cell on the Timeline that represents a still image.

Layers – Rows on the Timeline that organize and allow stacking of items on the stage.

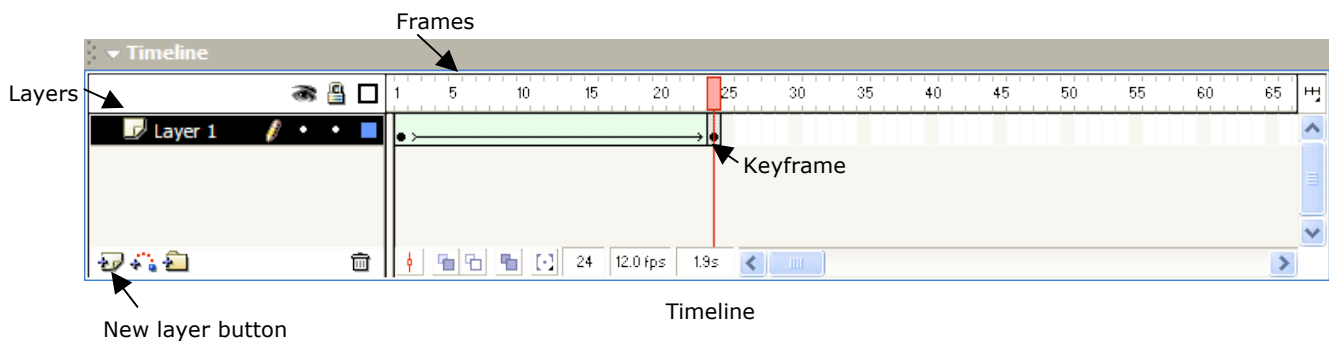
FPS – The number of frames played per second.

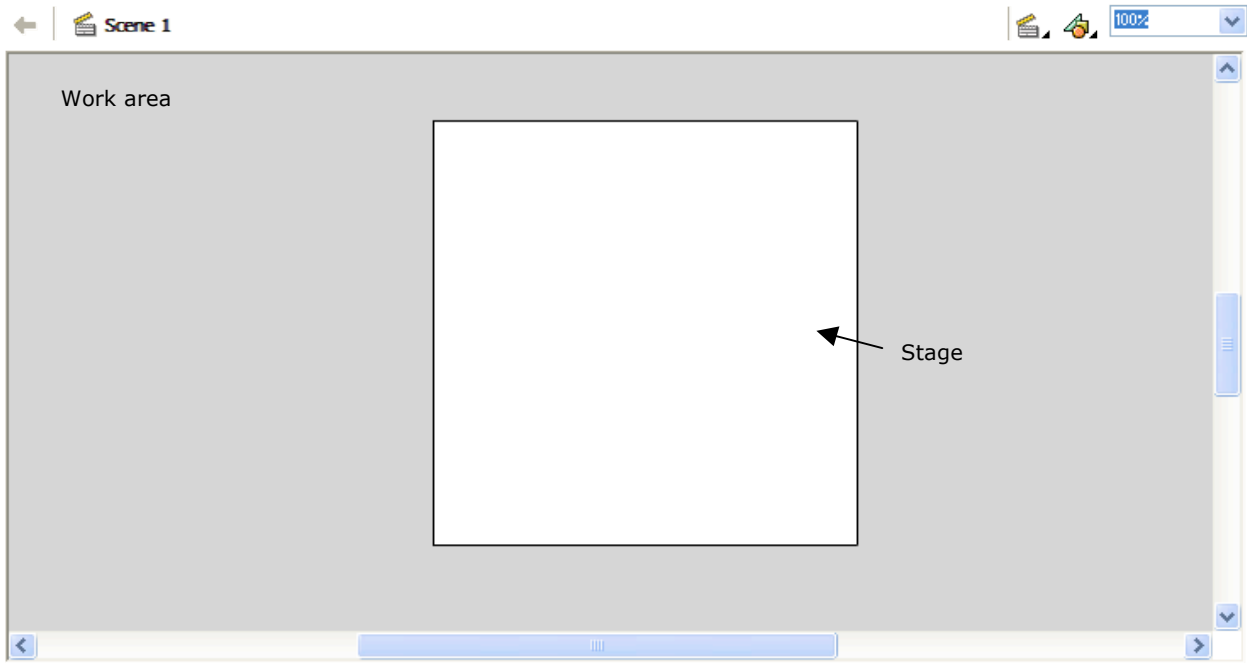
Keyframe – A frame that defines a change in animation.

Blank keyframe – An empty keyframe.

Motion tween – An animation that gives the appearance of objects in motion.

Movie clip symbol – A reusable animation that is stored in the Library panel.





Flash Workspace



Notes

Using tween animation

Animation in Flash consists of **three** steps:

1. Draw an object or import an image to animate.
2. Add keyframes or blank keyframes and adjust position, scale OR rotate.
3. Add more frames to adjust the timing.



Creating a slide show animation

To start creating the slide show animation, import photographs or bitmap images, into Flash. A **bitmap image** is composed of pixels.

1. With Flash open, create a new document (**File > New > Flash Document**). Set the stage background color and dimensions. This example uses the photograph size:

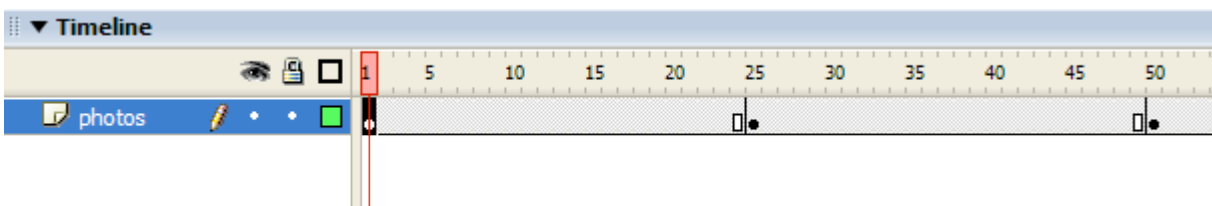
Size: 502 x 335 pixels
Background: white

2. Choose **File > Import > Import to Stage** to locate the image you want to use.
3. In the **Timeline**, insert a keyframe at 25 (**Insert > Timeline > Blank Keyframe**).



Note: Using the default **12 fps**, a movie with 24 frames will last two seconds.

4. Select frame 25 and import another photograph.
5. In the **Timeline**, insert a keyframe at 50.
6. Repeat steps **2-3** until all the photographs have been imported. Place the keyframes every 25 frames.




Timeline after photographs and keyframes have been added.

7. To view the animation, select **Control > Play**. Add more frames (**Insert > Timeline > Frame**) and adjust the timing, if necessary.



Adding a fade transition

To make the slide show more interesting, we will create a fading transition effect and save it as a reusable movie clip symbol.

1. In the **Timeline**, add a new layer by selecting the **new layer** button. 
2. Label the layer *fader*.



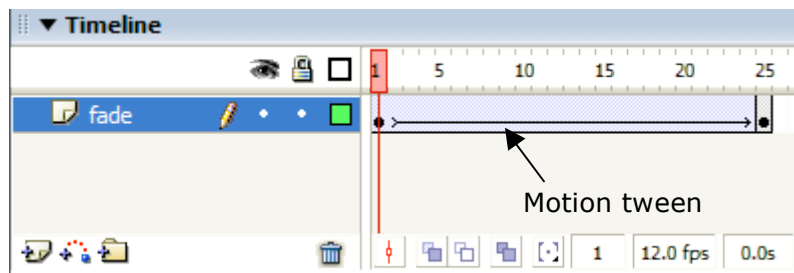
Timeline with layer added.

3. Choose **Insert > New Symbol** to create the movie clip symbol. In the **Name** field type *fader* and choose **Movie Clip** for **Behavior**. A new Timeline appears.
4. Select the **rectangle** tool.  In the **Properties** panel, choose a fill color and set the stroke to none. 
5. At frame 1, draw a rectangle the same size as the photographs. In this example the rectangle is 502 x 335 pixels and centered on the stage.
6. Select the rectangle. Choose **Modify > Convert to Symbol** to convert the rectangle into a symbol.



Note: Converting an image to a graphic symbol allows you to use a motion tween.

7. In the **Name** field type *faderectangle* and choose **graphic** for **Behavior**.
8. In the **Timeline**, insert a keyframe at 25. (**Insert > Timeline > Keyframe**)
9. Select frame 1 and choose **Insert > Timeline > Create Motion Tween**. The motion tween will permit the rectangle to fade.

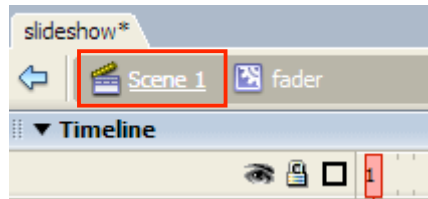


10. Choose frame 1. On the **Stage**, select the rectangle. In the **Properties** panel, choose **Alpha** from the **Color** drop-down menu. Set the **Alpha Amount** to **0** percent.



11. Choose frame 25. Then, select the rectangle. In the **Properties** panel, choose **Alpha** from the **Color** drop-down menu. Set the **Alpha Amount** to **100** percent.

12. Above the **Timeline**, choose **Scene 1** to return to the slide show animation.



13. Open the Library panel. (**Window > Library**)

14. Choose frame 1 of the fader layer. Drag the fader movie clip symbol onto the stage.


15. To view the animation with the fade effect, select **Control > Test Movie**. Add more frames (**Insert > Frame**) and adjust the timing, if necessary.

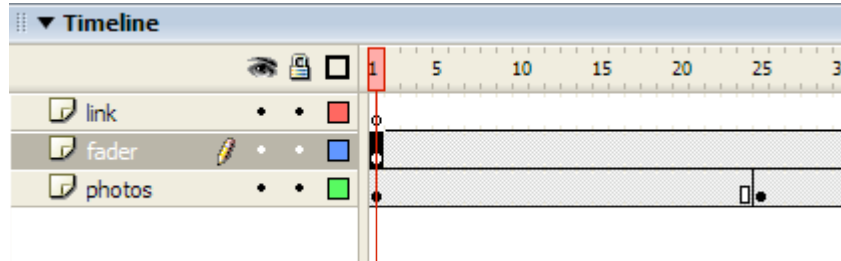


Notes


Add a link

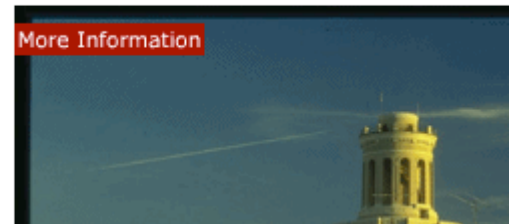
To give visitors more information about the photos, we will now add a text link to the slide show.

1. In the **Timeline**, add a new layer by selecting the **new layer** button. 
2. Label the layer *link*.

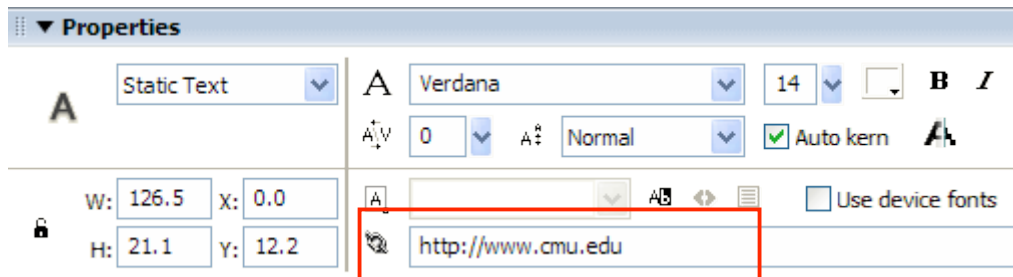


Timeline with link layer added.

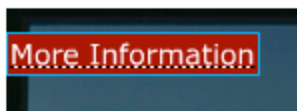
3. Choose frame 1 of the link layer. Select the **text** tool. **A** In the **Properties** panel, choose the text color, style and size.
4. Click on the **Stage** and begin typing your text. This example uses "More Information" as the text. A rectangle has also been added to make the text more noticeable.
5. Use the pointer tool  to select the text. In **Properties** panel, add the URL to the **Link** field.



Text example.



The text will appear with a dashed line underneath.





Publish your animation

For your Flash animation to be incorporated into a web page, you **MUST** publish it. The **Publish** command will create all the files you need. By default, a swf file and an html file are created. Upload both files to your web server.



Note: Visitors to your site will need to install the **Flash Player** to view the movie.

1. Save your animation (**File > Save**).
2. Choose **File > Publish** to publish the animation for the web. Flash will create an .html file and a Flash movie file .swf in the location where you saved the original Flash file.



Notes

Summary

In this session, we discussed importing images into Flash, creating symbols and creating a fade effect with a motion tween. We also added a text link and published the movie for the web. Although several aspects of Flash animation were covered, Flash has many more features. Here are some resources to help you continue the learning.

Flash in Action

www.homestarrunner.com

Macromedia Showcase

www.macromedia.com/showcase

Macromedia

www.macromedia.com/support/flash

Flash Tutorials

www.w3schools.com/flash/default.asp



Notes
