Photos Matter: PaintShop Pro at Work

Two jobs, one photo-editor. How PaintShop Pro supports Mike Harris in his Repairs and Service business and in his role as City Alderman - Utility, Building Code and Zoning.

Mike applies his knowledge of engineering and photo documentation across two highly specialized professions. In his Service and Repairs business, he performs repairs to electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and conducts general maintenance. His specialty is inspecting and investigating dwellings with problem areas that others fail to solve. In his role with the City of Ridgetop, he conducts investigations pertaining to complaints, Code and Ordinance. He also works closely with engineering documents, developer plans, plats, topographic maps and more. Photo-documentation is key component of both jobs. And PaintShop Pro is Mike's go-to software to fulfill the photo-editing and annotation needs of both positions.

Mike told Corel how he uses PaintShop Pro in his two distinct roles for photo-documentation purposes.

NAME:
Mike Harris

JOB TITLE:
Owner/Operator
Mike Harris Repairs
and Service

Alderman
(Utility, Building Code and Zoning)
City of Ridgetop

LOCATION:
Ridgetop, Tennessee

INDUSTRY:
Investigative Inspections

PRODUCT:
Corel® PaintShop® Pro X9

PROJECT SUMMARY:
Mike Harris uses PaintShop Pro in his Service and Repairs business to edit and annotate images of building interiors, exteriors and construction – to point to problem areas under investigation. Similarly, he uses it to mark up developer plans, plats, topographic and utility maps for the City of Ridgetop, where he lives.

Interview with Mike Harris: PaintShop Pro's role in investigative photo documentation

Q: What does a usual day at work look like for you?
A: Every single day is different. I am always on the go during the day conducting repairs and service, and in the evenings I reserve time for compiling investigation reports.

Q: Can you tell us more about your documentation workflow?
A: Photo documentation is the key to my business and my work with the City. I document everything. The phrase, 'a picture is worth a thousand words' is an understatement in my work life. Pictures tell a story that words cannot, and have the ability to capture 'the facts' at a particular moment in time.

I store original photos I take on site of building interiors and exteriors, aerial views of land, etc, whether for my business or for the City, in separate digital project folders. I then use PaintShop Pro to mark up the photos, pointing out areas of concern. This helps convey what I have seen to colleagues and clients, accurately and effectively so there is little room for miscommunication. Once I have applied all my annotations, I save full size PSPimage files to a folder so I can always revisit my edits at a later date. Then I resize the photos, save them as jpegs, and place them into reports.

Q: What do you use PaintShop Pro for at work?

A: PaintShop Pro is primarily used to annotate my Service and Repair business's images, using arrows and text to point out and describe defects in workmanship, materials used, or leak areas, for example. In my work with the City, I use PaintShop Pro's arrows to create water flow patterns on images. Across both jobs, I apply numbering to photos with the Text tool, to insert measurements, addresses, unit numbers, and more.

PaintShop Pro's brushes come in handy to blacken out personal belongings I might accidentally capture within a home, and layers are crucial to my workflow, to separate photo adjustments and fixes from the annotations I apply.

Q: What PaintShop Pro annotation tools do you use most often?

A: I regularly use the Pen Tool together with the Preset Shape Tool to apply different color lines and arrows to show the direction of travel or flow of water, air or electricity. The Draw Freehand mode of the Pen Tool is especially handy for topography mapping or underground utility mapping.

As you can imagine, I spend a lot of time working with the Materials Palette to color code my annotations. The Text toolbar also gets a lot of use, as I apply different fonts to text on images depending on whether it is going in a legal report or a technical report.

Q: What do you love about PaintShop Pro?

A: I really like PaintShop Pro's ability to enhance poor lighting in a photo, such as in dark attics and crawlspaces where the flash only reaches so far. The Levels and Curves tools help me highlight mold and mildew on dark backgrounds, like lumber for example. I find the sharpening tool very helpful for the same reasons.

Best of all, I love that I own my PaintShop Pro software, and do not have to maintain a subscription just to access my files!

Q: Is PaintShop Pro the only photo-editing software you use at work?

A: Yes it is. I've used many other photo-editing programs—both free and for purchase—in the past. In my opinion, PaintShop Pro trumps all the others. That's why you'll only find PaintShop Pro on my computer these days. It works perfectly well for editing and annotating photos for my business and for the City of Ridgetop.

> " *Photo documentation is the key to my business and my work with the City. I document everything. The phrase, 'a picture is worth a thousand words' is an understatement in my work life. Pictures tell a story that words cannot, and have the ability to capture 'the facts' at a particular moment in time.* "

Q: How did you learn to use PaintShop Pro?

A: I started learning PaintShop Pro mostly by trial and error, until I discovered forums where PaintShop Pro users share their experiences, provide helpful information and happily answer your questions. They'll even walk you through the steps to achieve what it is you want to accomplish with PaintShop Pro. When I'm stumped on anything PaintShop Pro related, I generally seek advice in a forum as a first point of call.

Q: Why did you decide to purchase PaintShop Pro for use at work?

A: That's simple—ease of use! PaintShop Pro cuts my editing time drastically. When I produced my first ever investigative report and submitted it, I started getting calls from companies that saw the report, asking me to do work for them as well. PaintShop Pro has large part to do with that.

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add about PaintShop Pro?

A: PaintShop Pro is must-have software for any type of inspection, investigative, or photo-documentation work. I use it daily and could not imagine even one day, in either of my roles, without it. Whether I'm sharpening a blurry image, using Levels and Curves to lighten, darken or shift colors, or using text, shapes and drawing tools to communicate problem areas, PaintShop Pro is quick, efficient and lacking nothing I need to get my jobs done!

Q: Would you recommend PaintShop Pro?

A: Absolutely. In fact, I've recommended PaintShop Pro many times to colleagues, competitors and friends. This great piece of software has created business for my business!

Put your photos and creativity to work for your business

PaintShop Pro is affordable, subscription-free and easy to deploy across your business, whether you are running an SMB or a large corporation. Comprehensive photo-editing, graphic design, screen capture and annotation tools makes PaintShop Pro the perfect fit for any organization.

Try a risk-free trial today
Visit **paintshoppro.com/business**
and call **1-877-682-6735** for a quote.