

## tech note: compositing graphics in FCE

Following are instructions for compositing graphics in FCE. This can be useful for creating titles or introducing other special effects in your project. **Compositing** is the process of layering footage – either video or graphics – with transparent areas. These transparent areas are called **alpha channels**.

### CREATING GRAPHICS WITH ALPHA CHANNELS

- 1) Create a new file in Photoshop (File → New)
- 2) Set the size to 720 pixels x 540 pixels.
- 3) Color should be set to **RGB/8** and Background Contents should be **Transparent**. Create a New Layer (or Layers) for your graphics.
- 4) When you're finished, save the file as in PNG format (File → Save As...) and choose PNG from the Format dropdown menu.

### ADDING GRAPHICS TO FCE

- 1) Import the image into your FCE project and drag it to the Timeline – the transparency is preserved.
- 2) Edit the duration of the graphic as necessary. You can also add and animate motion effects to the graphic (refer to the tech note: using motion effects with FCE)

You can also change the layer's composite mode (**Modify** → **Composite Mode**) to create different effects. Experiment to get the desired effect. 'Normal' will display the footage layered at full opacity.

You can also reverse a clip's alpha channel, which will make the transparent areas opaque, and the opaque transparent. To reverse a clip's alpha channel, click **Modify** → **Reverse Alpha**.