Spreading the word about Photoshop

One look at Julieanne Kost’s Adobe seminar and you will recognize that she has the ability to click with her audience with humour and skill, which reassures why Adobe Systems Inc invites evangelists like her to demonstrate the abilities of the company’s software throughout the world.

An experienced photographer, Kost has this to say to her audience at a recent seminar in Singapore: “Photoshop is not an excuse for bad photography. There’s a lot of room for photographers...”
to feel complacent when they see how a photo can be greatly improved with Photoshop. Some think that since Photoshop can do all that, anybody can do the same (make the photos look good)." Banking on her experience with Photoshop, Kost acknowledges that one can do much more with Photoshop than with photography, but the photo has to come first. "Photoshop doesn't come up with the idea of the picture. It is a person who does it. The photographer must find the most interesting angle of a shot."

Unfortunately, she adds, people can get complacent when they see the good features of the software. "They might say, "Oh, I can fix that with Photoshop," says Kost, who spent 15 years as a graphics designer and technical support specialist at Adobe.

"I know of people at my age or older who find technology intimidating. However, there are so many people out there who can do incredible things with graphics tools," she says.

Kost's passion for creating that perfect image began at childhood in the darkroom of her home in Los Altos, Northern California. Her father, a part-time photographer and her mother who created Kodachrome silk screens for artwork, provided the setting environment to cultivate creativity.

She recalls the fascination she had when watching her father develop
pictures in the darkroom, which used to be the laundry room. "It was a neat process watching a photograph come to life in the developer tray."

As a teenager, she fought for her own individuality by taking pictures of natural environment. "I purposely took pictures that my father didn’t," she says. The first roll of film that she used captured shots in a ghost town in Nevada.

Subsequently, Kost became very good at photography, but it was time for her to decide how she should pursue her higher education.

Besides snapping good pictures during high school, this tall and lanky woman was also a volleyball player. "There were so many options as I thought I wanted to be a sports therapist." In the end, it was her parents who, despite being in the art business, geared her towards psychology.

"They told me that I could always get a job in psychology but things were not assured with arts. All they wanted was for me to go towards a more solid ground," she says.

As it turned out, Kost did enjoy the psychology course. "It was fascinating trying to understand what makes people tick and to understand how society influences people," she recalls.

It is obvious, watching her seminars that she uses psychology as an added tool to hold the audience’s attention. Experience in presenting seminars like the Photoshop World Asia 2007, tells her that it is important to have interaction with the crowd.

Kost has also used her graphics skills to indulge in her other interest - fine arts. By the way, she also has an Associate Art degree in Fine Art Photography from Foothill College in California.

"I used to be interested in taking the perfect image and now I have branched out taking photos that emotionally stir me," she says, reaffirming her belief that mastering technology empowers creative freedom within a person, as long as one keeps true to his or her vision.