Tools for Creating Graphic Enhancements

Creating graphics for audit reports can be a little time consuming, though with the right tools and a routine it is possible to generate most graphic enhancements in just a few minutes.

Preview (Mac)

If you are using a Mac, you have the built in Preview application available for grabbing quick screenshots. Open Preview alongside your browser window and in Preview's File menu choose Take Screenshot>From Selection, then drag the mouse cursor to select the area of the screen you want to copy. This creates the image which you would then save locally. Then in Microsoft Word where you have you report template open, click on the Insert menu and choose Photo>Picture From File to select the image and copy it into the report. Then use the "Text Box" feature the create the boxes and text explanations, and the Shapes feature to add the arrows. These Word features are highlighted in the figure below.
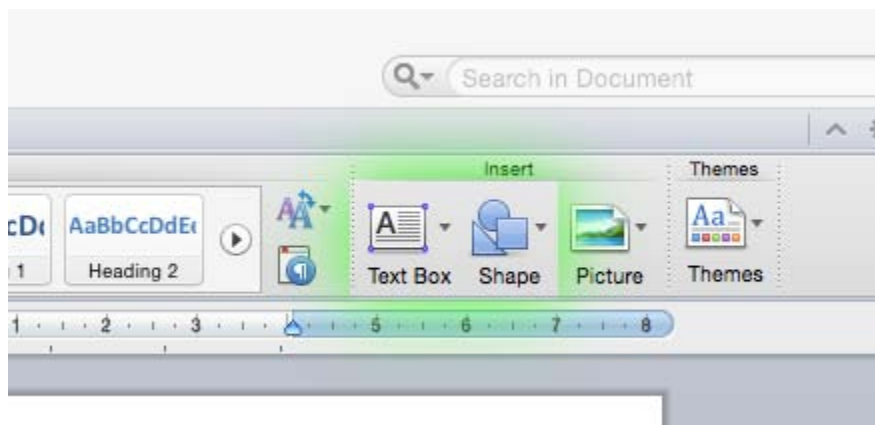

Figure: The Text Box and Shapes tools in the Microsoft Word toolbar.

One advantage of using the MSWord Text Box feature to add comments to graphics, is that the text of the boxes created this way, will be accessible to screen readers.

FireShot

One tool that works well for Windows users is the FireShot browser plugin. The plugin will work with Firefox, Chrome, and Internet Explorer. Selecting an area of the screen is much like that described above, for Preview, by choosing "Capture Selected area and…". In the menu that opens, you can "Save" as is, and Insert that image into your report tempate using Word's Insert>Photo feature, then markup the image with text boxes and arrows. Or, you may choose "Edit" which opens an editor that allows you to add boxes and arrows directly to the image. Note, however, that the text you type into the image will not be accessible to screen readers, so you will either need to add appropriate alt text to the image, or ensure what gets described in the image, also gets described in the text surrounding the image.

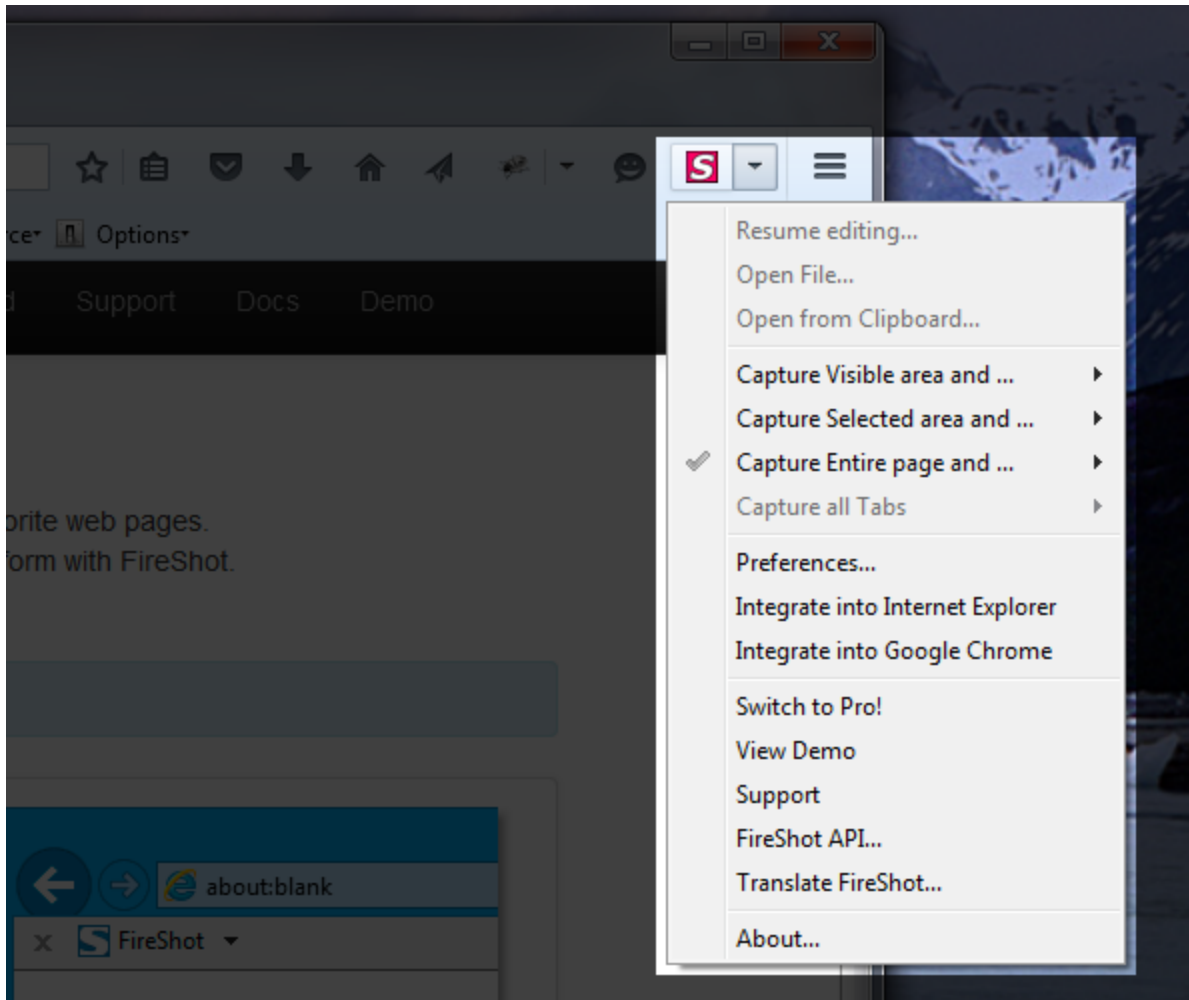The figure below shows the FireShot plugin menu opened using the FireFox web browser.

Figure: The FireShot menu opened from the FireFox toolbar.