



**For
ProShow Enthusiasts**

**Edited by:
Barbara Coultrey**

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Major Contributors

Barbara Coultrey – writing, editing, and compiling

Marie – layout and printing

Iris – templates and techniques

Anna – captions

Ken – music

Diana – links

Forum Members – all kinds of inspiration

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—Barbara Coultry, Editor

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Section I

Beginnings

Thoughts on Making a Good Show

by Dick Knisely

Using PSG or PSP to build a slideshow is pretty straightforward—maybe not easy, but not difficult once you’ve learned the tools. But no matter how good you get with the tools, there’s no guarantee that will lead to a really good show. The first issue is what I mean by “good.” For me, a good show tells a story that engages me somehow and that I want to remember. I’ve tried to identify the characteristics I think make a show a “good” one.

Has a Story and Sticks to it

Someone once wrote, “I didn’t have time to write you a short letter, so I wrote a long one instead.” Slideshows are like that, too. It’s a lot harder to create a short one than a long one, but it’s important that you make it as short as possible—but no shorter. That’s what *stick to the story* is about. Short isn’t an end of itself; it’s a means to the end of telling a story well. In the well-told story, you’ve eliminated all the extraneous stuff and the distractions.

Know your story and aggressively remove anything that doesn’t support the show’s story. This is hard! It’s natural to want the audience to see all the wonderful pictures you took, but no matter how fantastic the picture, if it isn’t needed to tell the story, then it doesn’t belong in the show. Likewise, no matter how good they are, it’s rare that two similar pictures are better than one in telling a single story point. Did I mention it? This is hard! But be ruthless, and you’ll have a better presentation.

And you can’t stick to it if you don’t know what your story is—a collection of pictures will tell a story, but is it the story you wanted to tell?

Is Easy on the Eye & Ear

This is hard to explain, easy to recognize. Partly, it’s mechanics: overuse of zooms, pans, and other motion are the second most common characteristics detracting from a show. Unless you’re making a demo for Photodex or telling the story of how much you’ve learned about the software, be wary of fancy effects. If you can’t give a specific reason for it, then you’re probably better off leaving it out. In any case, effects should be used lightly.

Likewise, music is crucial to a really good show. It’s a powerful tool for setting and reinforcing the mood and pace of both the individual pictures and the whole show, but if used poorly, that power will damage your show badly. For most shows, the music isn’t the story, so unless you’ve got a very good reason, don’t let it grab the lime-light away from the pictures.

Contains Good Photography

A good slide show needs good pictures, but great photography won’t necessarily result in a great slideshow. In a slideshow the audience typically gets only a few seconds with each picture, and thus many flaws might not be noticed. At the very least, you want shots that are in focus and certainly well composed.

Those few seconds, being all the viewer gets to see what’s there and understand it, means that a busy or poorly composed shot may confuse that viewer. Therefore, it’s important to ensure they’ll get the point. After all, the picture does have a point to make or it wouldn’t be there. Crop to reduce visual clutter and/or zoom in to force the focus point onto what you want them to see.

Good Pacing in the Show

This one is all about “feel,” which is another hard-to-define but easy-to-recognize characteristic. Good pacing is, for me, keeping things moving, giving me enough time to appreciate the pictures but not enough to get bored. Across a typical show, pacing may vary, though not dramatically, because it needs to match that elusive “feel” for the overall storyline. A show about a sports team is likely to

require a very different pace from one showing the wide-open landscapes of the Grand Canyon. Even within the overall pace of the show, I think the pacing needs to be tweaked to suit specific scenes and sometimes even individual pictures.

NOTE: These are my thoughts, and I make no claim that everyone should agree with them or that a show matching these ideas is necessarily a good one in everyone’s eyes, but I believe that thinking about these things will help.

Good Design Has...

by Barbara Coultry

Balance

A large photo above a small one is like a giant sitting on a tiny toadstool. Imagine that each photo and each graphic element has weight, and then decide if it can support what's above it. Think also of the weight of colors. Doesn't a brilliant, saturated color "weigh more" than a muted one? Imagine an old photo in soft sepia tint laid on a background of emerald green. The eye will go to the green because it has more weight—a stronger visual attraction—than the sepia tint. The photo is the subject, not the background, and so using a brilliant green throws off the balance.

Balance can be very subjective, but when a slide layout "just doesn't look right," try considering the placement of pictures and lines as if they all had weight. Also, pay attention to where the eye goes first and if that's really where you want it going.

If you're interested in learning about composition, look for books about Web or advertising design since they're closest to what we do.

Contrast

We're constantly choosing black backgrounds to contrast with our images, but black isn't always the best choice. Sometimes a complementary color works better or picking up a color from within the image works both as contrast and as a way of drawing the eye to that same color within the picture. Contrast in design doesn't necessarily equate to opposition. If you lay a white object on a white background, the shadows contrast with the object and so define its form.

Economy

Nothing beyond what's needed to convey an idea should exist in a slide. This doesn't mean that decorative elements can't be used; they are extraneous only when they don't help define the subject of the slide. Thus, if a show is about modern steel skyscrapers in the city, it's likely to call for little or no décor, but if it's about a Victorian ancestor, a bit of lace could help define the person.

Unity

Create a theme and stick to it. For instance, don't suddenly change the background from pure black to a texture and then to a gradient. To do this risks turning your show into a circus. There should be a consistent element throughout, something that works to tie everything together. It could be as noticeable as a frame, or as basic as using the same background throughout. Background elements can change, but they still need consistency. For instance, a single flower might be placed in the background, the type of flower changing periodically, but because it's always a flower, consistency remains.

Keep your images in tune with the theme, sticking to the subject, not tossing in a perfectly lovely photo only because it's lovely. It could be the greatest darned picture you've ever taken, but you should still save it for another show.

Finding a Theme

by Barbara Coultrey

To explain how to find a theme, it's easier to use examples...

(1) You have a heap of family photos going back an entire century, and you want to build a show from those pictures. For this hypothetical family, it's your family knowledge that grows the theme. If, for instance, the earliest ones in this country were immigrants, you could focus on the hardships of leaving kith and kin behind in search of a better life, perhaps adding photos of the town they left and then of the port or train station where they began their journey, doing the same for the end of that journey. Then again, you could focus on style of dress down through the years, or if you have a lot of wedding portraits, you might concentrate on marriage. Whatever you choose as the subtext for the show, this will be the glue that holds it all together.

(2) Shows about inanimate objects can be tough because we humans are more interested in things that move, or at the very least, breathe. So for the heck of it, let's look at doors:

You love doors. You have hundreds of door pictures, but who, besides you, of course, is interested in doors? Explain to yourself what you like about doors. Is it a philosophical notion about life's doorways? Or maybe it's the concept of concealing and revealing. Neither rings a bell.

You try a different tactic, shuffling the pictures, pairing them according to shape, then

color, then style. By shifting the pictures' positions, your thoughts also shift. There's that crooked old door with peeling paint next to the state capitol's massive doors. What if the show begins with that arthritic door, progresses through ever-fancier doors, and then finally reaches the ornate capitol beauties? And what if the show ends with those beautiful doors dissolving down into the old, decrepit door? You've created a metaphor for life's stages and you've got your show.

(3) Travel shows always threaten to be deadly. It takes a bit of devilish plotting to deal with photographs from State Whoop-De-Doo Park. Once again, you start shuffling and talking to yourself, this time questioning why you took this picture or that one. While looking for similarities, you notice how you kept dipping the camera down toward flowers. Mixed in was periodic hocus-pocus with focus in an effort to grab animal portraits. What if, you ask yourself, the flowers are matched up with the animals? What if the flowers are dreaming of animals? It's kind of nutty, but it might work as a theme: the connection between wildlife and its environment.

These have been examples of shows you will never do, but the methods for finding a theme are in the descriptions. Here's the short version plus a couple of extra ideas thrown in:

- Use free association, letting your mind wander where it will.
- Ask yourself why you took these pictures and not others.

- Look in the dictionary for definitions of your subject matter. It can spark an idea.
- Think of your photographic subjects as symbols of something else.
- Shuffle the photos and reshuffle them, watching for similarities.
- If all else fails, pick the music. Music can sometimes bring in a theme where none existed before.

Commercial Mining

by Barbara Coultry

When the commercials arrive and everyone moseys on out to the kitchen or bathroom, keep your seat. In as little as fifteen seconds, an ad must present a product, tell you why you need that product, and convince you to buy it. Just fifteen seconds. If a big corporation produces it, the ad might run for an eternity of thirty seconds. It's amazing just how much information and allure can be packed into a half minute or less.

Ads go for high impact, but because you have the luxury of time, you need not (nor should you) try for high impact in every slide. Often enough, it can be one image, one style of motion, one caption, or a simple geometric in a commercial that will set you off in a new direction or supply the missing link in a show you're working on.

Beyond bright ideas are the lessons we can learn from the talented people who create television commercials.

Paying attention to specifics:

Captions

- **We expect pictures, not text, on a screen.** It's more difficult to read words on a glowing screen than on a piece of paper, and because of this, advertisers are excellent at saying as much as they can in as few words as possible—three words instead of six, one word instead of two. Because our situation is similar, it pays to watch commercials, studying how they manage to say so much with so few words.

- **Captions are pictures**, often reflecting the entire point of a commercial. Words climb stairs, drip from bottles, lie down,

and essentially do all the things that life in motion can do plus a few things life can't do. TV ads are a huge resource for such ideas.

- **Colored text** isn't the rule. Black or white is. Therefore, watch when color is used. Decide whether or not you like it, and then figure out why. Green captions might say it's an eco-friendly product, but what does it say about a mattress? When the text is black or white, consider why one was chosen over the other. Sometimes it's just a matter of contrasting with the background, but it isn't always. White signifies purity, airiness, and maybe even elegance. Black is bolder, more down-to-earth. Analyze the color choices, learn from them, and bring this knowledge back to slide show production.

- **The shape of a letter speaks.** Commercials use fonts to further the message. The big sale at a local car dealer requires large, bold, sans-serif lettering; the ad for a group of lawyers will use a font that speaks of reliability, strength, and stability; and the commercial touting expensive perfume might use a light, feminine font with flourishes. Your wedding show will not use Arial and your child's birthday show won't use a formal script. Watching commercials broadens our awareness of fonts.

Pictures

We aren't all professional photographers, but we can educate ourselves on how to present pictures by watching commercials.

- **Applied effects** are a constant. It isn't true that every picture is supposed to be tack sharp. In thirty seconds or less, commercials want to convince you that a lotion will make you look twenty years younger, that a car is powerful and fast, or that a specific liqueur leads to romantic, moonlit nights. We read pictures on an emotional level. If an image is lightened to a tint, it can indicate delicate youth. If a "wind" effect is added, we have a sense of speed. If a spotlight effect is applied, a boring evening scene becomes an intimate moonlit evening.

- **Framed pictures** are often used in commercials, though you might not at first recognize them as frames. Watch for static or moving lines, drop shadows that work as a dark border, scrollwork, color swatches in the background, and text designed as a framework.

- **Motion** in commercials isn't always done with a video camera. Some of the ads are actually slideshows, and when they are, watch every last detail of motion and you'll see there's more to it than panning, zooming, and rotating. Not only will colors change, but so will depth and opacity. When it's the kind of motion we're used to—pan, zoom, and rotation—watch for speed, angle, and the mix of motion and other effects.

- **Positioning** of photos in commercials might be an eye-opener. After a while, you'll notice that the photo isn't necessarily centered. Watch for the amount of space allotted to a photo. A small picture sitting alone on a field of white snaps us to attention, but that same picture in a row of photos might never be noticed.

Background

We start out slideshow life using black

backgrounds. It's the default, after all, and it does provide the necessary depth and high contrast, but is it always the best choice? Watch how backgrounds are used in commercials: color, pattern, image, and motion.

Sound

- **Music is as vital** in commercials as it is in slide shows. Listen and watch, analyzing the reasons for the music chosen. Like text and pictures, music speaks, and in a commercial, it speaks in under a minute. We're now hearing a lot popular music, particularly in car commercials. If it's music with vocals, you can bet those lyrics are vital; if it's an instrumental, then it's the aura of the music. Where and why is hard rock used? Romantic vocals? Single instruments versus whole orchestras? The music isn't chosen because it's Joe Executive's favorite; it's chosen because it enhances the image of a product. We use music for the same reason, though our product is a story or a theme.

- **The part of the song chosen** follows the same logic as above, but it gets right down into the details of which verse best matches the product or which part of the instrumental has the highest impact or best reflects the aura of the product. Studying this can give a deeper understanding of music selection.

- **Making fifteen seconds feel complete** requires a good ear along with sound-editing software. What you'll notice when parts of known songs are used is that the fade-out isn't used. Trailing off sounds incomplete. Studying the parts of songs chosen furthers your sense of how the heart of a song can be made to sound as if that's all there ever was.

- **Voice-over** is an art form, and if you intend to use it in your slide shows, there's

no better place to learn than from the masters. Listening to the spoken word without seeing the speaker means that the normal visual cues are absent—no raised eyebrows, no little smiles, no hand gestures. Pay attention to inflection, emphasis, timing, pronunciation, pattern, and tonal

quality. Imitate what you hear. Practice by recording short stretches as you read from books, newspapers, and magazines. Listen to yourself and compare what you're hearing with the voice-over experts used in commercials. Unless you were born with a natural gift for animated speech, it'll take practice.

Section II

Image

Taking Photos with Shows in Mind

by Barbara Coultrey

Volume

No matter where you take your camera, whether it's for a walk down the street or to China, fill those memory cards. If you think a professional photographer takes all the right photos, not a clincker in the bunch, then think again. Would you proudly display your clinkers?

Take photos of everything, not just what you think the subject is supposed to be. On that walk, take a picture of your foot, a blade of grass, the neighbor walking in his door, the long view of the street and the short view, a car with a flat tire. A walk isn't just one step after another; it's an entire experience involving the things you see even when you don't know you're seeing them. Use your camera to comment on them. Pay attention to yourself and to what's around you.

Loosen up

Composition is important, but sometimes for a slideshow, variety may be more so. Stop thinking about what makes a good picture according to all the rules. There's a lot more than classic composition, tack-sharp focus, and white balance. Think about the what-if's. "What if I sit on the ground and shoot upward?" "What if I go behind, not in front of, that building?" "What if I take lots of pictures of blurry motion?" "What if I photograph the spaces between stuff instead of the stuff itself?" "What if...?"

Go back to your childhood. Wasn't it a time when the world constantly amazed you? Let it amaze you again, all the way from that funny-shaped cloud over there between the hills down to the ant on a daisy. Watch people as if you were a kid puzzled by all those really strange grownups.

Stop trying to impress everyone, including yourself, and take pictures as if you were a child.

Story

This isn't the same kind of story as what you find in a novel or biography. It's used for lack of a better term. You want a progression in your show, a feeling that an idea is expressed with a sense of beginning, middle, and end. It doesn't have to be a big idea, and anyway, how many big ideas would fit into a slideshow?

For instance, Uncle Joe invited you and the rest of your oddball family to a backyard barbecue. You'd rather clean the bathroom than go, but you just can't get out of this one, so you take your camera with the thought that at least you'll have something to do other than listen to Aunt Henrietta go on at length about her bursitis. Is there a story here? No? What about the food? Can you capture preparations in the kitchen? Can your camera watch salads being arranged on the plastic tablecloth? Are hamburgers smoking on the grill? Can you see Rover wagging and waiting for food to drop from the sky? How about sticky kid fingers? How about...? In any case, you can collect enough photos to tell the story of Uncle Joe's barbecue, and it's likely to be a funny story.

Slideshows are waiting for you wherever you go, even in annoying situations. Bring your camera and keep your sense of humor.

Theme

This is different from "story." The theme of a show isn't about who did what and when; it's more

the glue that holds a show together. It's the thought behind the story, and in terms of a slideshow, it can be as complicated as the idea of the devotion between two people married for half a century or as simple as the color red.

Going back to Uncle Joe's awful barbecue, the story is about the food, but what's the theme? That's up to you, of course, but if you focus more on the food that gets dropped or left sitting on paper plates, if you point your camera at the inevitable garbage produced at such an affair, your theme might be wastefulness.

You don't have to have a theme, but when it shows up, run with it. It can make a truly good slideshow into a memorable one.

Weeding the Picture Garden

You've gone to a carnival, and you've remembered to take pictures of absolutely everything, no holds barred. You load all 300 shots onto your computer, and you trash the junk photos right away, but you're still left holding a bag of 200 photos. You can't use every last blasted one of them in a show.

If you don't have viewing software for seeing multiple photos simultaneously on the screen, down-

load the free IrfanView. You'll need something like this to do proper weeding.

Looking at pictures in large groups, patterns tend to emerge, and with patterns come slideshows. If you'd been looking at your pictures merely one by one, would you have noticed that thirty of them happen to be of workers behind the scenes or of lovers both young and old? Two sets, two slideshows.

Once you have a set, make sure you aren't duplicating a scene unless there's good reason. If you decide to include both pictures because they're both good photos—don't. You're immediately introducing the boredom factor into a show. Choose just one and be done with it.

Here's something to watch out for: the beautiful photograph, the one where you did absolutely everything right, what you might call "the little darling." It doesn't matter how perfectly beautiful that picture is. If it doesn't fit the story or the theme, save it for another show.

Conclusion

Think about everything you see, keep your camera busy, be a child, think weird thoughts, and laugh.

Continuity in Grouped Photos

by Barbara Coultry

When placed one after another, photographs become parts in a larger composition where unforeseen problems can develop in their relationships with one other.

Horizon Lines

Let's say you've vacationed at the shore where you've taken a three-picture set: one with your child standing at the edge of the water, one standing knee-deep, and one turned back toward you and waving. Unless you were using a tripod, slight alterations in your position will change where sea meets the sky. Viewed one after the other, the horizon line makes small, distracting jumps, which will, in turn, take attention away from your child and maybe even the

show. You can fix this in your image editor, or in ProShow, you can use a frame over the three photos, which allows you to adjust the photos so their horizon lines match. If you don't want an obvious frame, hide it by making it match the background.

Exposure

Variations in exposure can happen because of nothing greater than a cloud briefly covering the sun. Though this is a fix-up best done in an image editor, it's possible to use the Edit Options screen to make slight alterations. Once the exposure is the same in all the photos in a group, there won't be a feeling that something is slightly "off."

A Few Camera Tricks

by Barbara Coultrey

There's nothing new here unless it's new to you:

Stationary Object Appears in Motion

If your camera is an SLR, place it on a tripod, use exposure compensation to underexpose, and start with a slow shutter speed of 2 or 3 seconds. Focus on the subject, and when the shutter opens, hold for a heartbeat and then zoom the lens in or out. You'll end up with lines radiating outward from the subject. If it's overexposed and you've maxed out your exposure compensation, a neutral density filter can help alleviate the problem. This little maneuver takes practice getting the zoom correct along with exposure and shutter speed, but it's worth the effort for that single surprising photograph. A variation on this effect is to pan the camera horizontally or vertically instead of zooming.

Vignette

Cut a small shape in black construction paper and hold the paper in front of the lens, framing the scene with the hole in the paper. The closer to the lens you hold the paper, the softer the edges will be, and the vignette will be wider. These shapes need be no larger than an inch or so, and they can be quite a bit smaller. Experimentation is needed since camera lens diameters vary. The shape can be anything you choose such as a circle, square, diamond, heart, cross, or irregular shape. Let imagination guide you.

Dreamy Light

Smear a plain piece of thin window glass with

petroleum jelly. The amount you smear on should be very slight—often, no more than a dot of it will do. Rubbing with your finger, create streaks, circles, waves, starbursts, etc. in the jelly. Hold the glass—smeared side away—against the rim of the camera lens, and while looking through the viewfinder, watch how the jelly makes the light streak across the scene. Move the glass until you like what you see and then take the picture. You can leave a very small area clear somewhere near the center of the glass so that your subject is in sharp focus.

Falling Leaves

Prop a whistle-clean piece of window glass between bricks, books, or whatever else will hold it in an upright position. Using anything sticky that comes to hand (a glue stick, Scotch tape, glycerin, etc.), adhere a leaf or two or even three to the glass. Using your smallest aperture, photograph a scene through the glass. The small aperture is for creating as large a depth of field as possible so the leaves aren't completely blurred. You can also focus fully on the leaves, allowing the background scene to go out of focus. Variations are created by using items other than leaves. You can create surreal scenes by cutting out objects or people from photos in magazines or catalogs and sticking them to the glass.

Soft Photo

This is possibly the oldest trick in the book, and it requires nothing more than a scrap of nylon stocking, preferably black. Stretch the stocking over your lens and secure it with a rubber band. It will soften the image like many professional portraits,

particularly of women, because it softens flaws in the complexion. The reason for black stocking material, not beige, is that beige is likely to reflect and bounce light, which can cause splotches of light in your photo.

Double Exposure (slide-show style)

This is best described by using an example. With the camera on a tripod, take a picture of an open doorway. Without moving the camera, take a

second picture of the doorway with someone standing in it. In ProShow, put the empty doorway in the first slide and the filled doorway in the second. Cross-fade from the first picture into the second. The longer the transition, the longer it takes for the person to come into full view. To turn the person into a ghost, have both pictures as layers in the second slide, the top layer being the one with the person in it. Lower the opacity of this layer so that even after this slide has transitioned in fully, the person appears translucent. Of course, this is just an example. Let your imagination fly.

Stock Photos, Your Own

by Barbara Coultrey

How often do you scour the Internet for photos of items you'd never think to take a picture of? How many items are all around you that might work their way into your shows if only you had the pictures handy?

Take your own stock photographs. Do them as if you were photographing rare beauties—lighting, exposure, and composition all top-notch. Don't forget that your scanner is also at your beck and call.

Try to have nothing blocking your subject so

that if you want, you can extract it for use on a transparent layer. If you know you're likely to want to extract the subject, use a contrasting color beneath and behind the subject to make extraction easier. For small objects, have poster board handy in a small selection of bright colors plus black and white. Curve the board so it forms a seamless backdrop.

What follows isn't a complete list, but it should give you some ideas for your own stock photos.

<u>Texture</u>	<u>Plants</u>	<u>Landscape</u>	<u>Workshop</u>
Cloth	Flower	Beach	Drill
Fur	Fruit	Cliff	Hammer
Leather	Leaf	Moon	Saw
Sand	Moss	Sky	Utility Knife
Stone	Mushroom	Snow	Vise
Wood	Tree	Water	
	Vegetable	Woods	

<u>Art</u>	<u>Gardening</u>	<u>Music</u>	<u>People</u>
Canvas	Clay Pot	Instruments	Bikers
Crayon	Clippers	Microphone	Crowd
Easel	Hoe	Music Stand	Farmer
Paint Tube	Rake	Sheet Music	Firemen
Paint Brush	Seed Packet		Police
Palette	Trowel		Worker, any kind
	Watering Can		

Party

Balloon
Blank invitation
Champagne glass
Confetti
Ornament
Streamer

Sports

Ball
Bat
Boxing glove
Canoe
Karate belt
Off-road-bike
Racket
Skateboard

Time

Clock
Hourglass
Pendulum
Sundial
Watch

Children

Bib
Chalk on sidewalk
High chair
Mobile
Playground
Stroller
Toy

Bootie
Child's art
Kite
Pacifier
Rattle
Stuffed animal

Vehicles

Boat
Bus
Car
Tractor
Train
Truck
Wagon
Plane

Miscellaneous

Basket
Book
Candle
Coffee Cup
Cross

Eyeglasses
Flag
Hand
Hat
Heart

Mask
Park Bench
Pearl
Pen/Pencil
Pin Cushion

Door
Kitchen Items
Road Sign
Stairway

Frame Settings & Image Size

Fit to Frame—fills the frame fully either horizontally or vertically while maintaining the aspect ratio of the slide. You may have black bars top/bottom or sides.

Fill Frame—fills the frame both horizontally and vertically while maintaining the aspect ratio of the slide, but cropping may (and is likely to) occur to maintain that ratio.

Stretch to Frame—fills the frame by stretching the picture if necessary, which can and often does involve image distortion. Best used only for backgrounds and geometrics where distortion will not adversely affect it.

Fit to Safe Zone—the same as Fit to Frame, but in this case, it's fitting the image to the smaller Safe Zone area.

Fill Safe Zone—the same as Fill Frame, but in this case, it's filling just the Safe Zone.

Change all slides from “Fit to Frame” to “Fit to Safe Zone”—Right-click on the first slide and choose Select All, then right-click on the first slide again and choose Scale Image > Fit to Safe Zone. All slides will be changed.

Image size: To maintain quality of photos for any output option, use uncompressed files (such as PSD and TIF), downsizing them in an image editor. Several recommendations for exact size exist, but one that seems to work well is 1280 x <height> or <width> x 1280. If using Photoshop, resize using the bi-cubic method.

Zooming: If you plan to zoom in on an image—say to 300%—the image size you use should be a minimum of 3 times the output resolution. If, for instance, you're outputting to DVD and the resolution is 720x480, multiply that resolution by three.

Fill TV Screen

You'll get a black framework around your show on the TV screen when you use Fit to Safe Zone, but if you use Fit to Frame, making sure only non-essential parts of a picture spill past the safe zone, you can reduce the black areas or even get rid of them altogether. Just make sure the important parts

of pictures remain inside the safe zone. Important parts include captions—make sure you keep them inside the safe zone.

Add Border & Drop Shadow to All Photos

1. In Slide Options put a check mark in the boxes for drop shadow and borders.
2. Right-click on each of the boxes and you will see the option to “copy to all slides” or “copy to selected slides.”

Change Background Color for Selected Slides

1. Click to select the slides while holding the Ctrl key.
2. Right-click to open Slide Options > Background. (Right-click required to preserve selections.)
3. Choose the background color you want.
4. Right-click on the option to override the default and choose Apply to Selected Slides.
5. Right-click on the color you selected, and again, choose Apply to Selected Slides.

B&W into Color Without a Mask

1. Set up two slides next to each other with the same image in each. For the first slide, set it to Colorize, which will turn it to b&w.

3. Between the two slides, use a very slow fade, or try one of the wipes such as a paintbrush or radar.

Vignettes

1. On the “Editing” screen, select the layer you want vignettted.
2. Check the box next to Vignette
3. Click “Configure”
4. Select a Shape and Type for the Vignette. The checkerboard behind the image shows the area that will be transparent when the vignette is applied.
5. Adjust the Size, Border Size and Corner Size.
6. For right-angle corners, check Fill Corners. For a solid, picture-frame border, check Solid Borders.
7. If you are using Solid Color or Gradient as the vignette type, set the colors and options for those features.

Capture the Preview Screen

When previewing a show full-screen, right-click and choose “Capture frame(s).” You can save a single frame or a series of them as JPG’s. If you prefer an uncompressed format, press the Print Screen key to capture the current screen to the Clipboard. Use your image editor to create a new document, and then press Ctrl+V to insert the image in the new document. Edit the image as you like, and then save it in the format of your choice.

One of the uses for this is to capture text and

turn it into an image file to gain the ability to use certain effects not available to captions. Another use is to turn the text into a mask.

Create Clouds (Photoshop®)

1. Create a plain white background.
2. Set foreground and background colors—typically a shade of gray and a shade of blue.
3. Apply Filter > Render > Clouds.
4. Apply the filter repeatedly (Ctrl-F) to get variations.
5. You can also transform the width for distortion.
6. Duplicate the background layer.
7. Delete the original background layer.
8. Feather the lower edge to transparent for a better composite in Proshow.

Use an Animated GIF (Photoshop®)

1. Open the GIF in Photoshop.
2. Open the layer palette where you’ll see that the motion has been broken up into layers.
3. Save the layers as separate files using Scripts > Export Layers to Files.
4. Resave these files in PNG format if you wish.

5. In ProShow, place each PNG in order of its movement and in its own slide, using a Cut transition between slides.

6. On average, each slide should last about .5 seconds, though you may have to adjust this depending on the action.

Because each image has a transparent background, you can layer the images on top of any background or picture.

Talk Bubbles (Photoshop®)

Basic

1. Create a new document approximately 300 x 300 pixels with a transparent background.

2. Make an oval selection and fill it with white.

3. Being sure you use an add-to selection tool, create a triangle selection at the bottom either toward the right or the left and that's connected to the previous selection. This will be the pointer.

4. Fill the pointer with white.

5. De-select and save.

6. Flip the image horizontally so the pointer is on the other side, and save this as a separate file.

Slightly Fancier (edge in black)

1. Do steps 1 through 4 above, and then invert the selection.

2. Fill the outside space with black.

3. Invert the selection so it's once again surrounding just the bubble.

4. Increase the size of the selection by small increments—1 pixel at a time—until you can see that a small amount of the surrounding black is included in the selection.

5. Invert the selection and delete the black.

6. De-select and save.

7. Flip the image horizontally so the pointer is on the other side, and save this as a separate file.

Really Fancy

1. Complete steps 1 through 5 in “Slightly Fancier.”

2. De-select, and then apply both an inner bevel and a drop shadow.

3. Save, then flip the image horizontally and save again as a separate file.

Add the bubbles as layers to the slides, inserting the captions so they fit within the bounds of the bubble.

Because you saved two versions of the bubble—both right and left—you can choose which ever is a better fit for the slide.

Candle-Flame Video

(thanks to Debbie Green)

1. Use a tripod.
2. Use the highest resolution you can.
3. Use either macro or manual focus.
4. Use a black background that's set far enough behind the flame to keep it from being lit by the flame. Black cloth, mat board, and foam-core board are some of the possibilities.
5. Trim the top of the candle so it tapers toward the wick.
6. Have just the flame in the frame, keeping the wax candle beneath out of the picture.
7. A good-sized wick, perhaps a half-inch, produces a healthy-sized flame.
8. Occasionally fan the flame very gently with a piece of cardboard to create movement.
9. Start the video while the candle is still and end shooting with it still once more.
10. For insurance, shoot four or five instances of the video, making each 10 to 20 seconds long. This gives you the ability to choose the best.
11. If the video is longer than you need, cut and splice it at a point where the flame is still.
12. Import the clip into your video editor. (Windows Movie Maker will work.)
13. Mute the audio when editing. To do this in Windows Movie Maker, choose Clip > Audio > Mute.
14. Save the file and insert it into your show.
15. If necessary, play with the chroma-key feature in Producer to remove the background and the possibility of an ugly blue line (Key Color Black, Intensity Threshold 33%, Intensity Drop Off 20%), and set the opacity to 85% so it doesn't look cartoonish when layered on the top of a candle.

This will allow looping if it becomes necessary.

Section III

Sound

ProShow Sound Tutorial

by K. E. Hockenberry

Inserting music into your video slide show will transform a seemingly ordinary show into something awe-inspiring. In every instance, choosing the correct song can evoke feelings of laughter, love, romance, loneliness, sadness, or even spiritual awakening. You already know from watching movies just how important music is in interpreting what you're seeing on the screen. It's just as important to have the right music for your video slide show.

Inserting Music

Double-click on the "Soundtrack" located at the bottom of the screen below the slide time-line. The Show Soundtrack window will open, and in it are various settings and adjustments (see *Figure 01*).

You can also open the show's soundtrack window by clicking the music icon located in the tool bar at the top of the main screen.

For those who like keyboard shortcuts, press Ctrl+F4.

In the large window to the left marked "Tracks,"

there are five buttons: Add, Del, Play, Up, and Down (see *Figure 02*).

The first button adds music to the soundtrack. You can insert as many songs as you like by clicking the add button and then browsing to where you store music on your computer or CD.

To delete a song, select it, then click the second button, which is the delete button.

The third button will play or preview the song, but only after you've added it to the tracks window.

Use the fourth and fifth buttons when you have inserted more than one song into the tracks window. When clicked, they will move a selected song up or down, changing the selected song's position from, say, first to second place, or from second to first place, depending on which button you click.

Adding a Song from Your Computer

ProShow will only allow you to insert .MP3, .OGG and .WAV file extensions into your show.



Figure 01.



Figure 02.

Note: MP3 is the file extension given to audio files usually ripped from CD's. WAV is the extension for files in Microsoft's audio file format. The term 'OGG' is commonly used to refer to an audio file format that is Vorbis-encoded audio in the OGG container.

Note: Uncompressed .WAV files are quite large. If possible, use MP3 or OGG files, which are compressed.

Click on the Add button, and then click on "Add Sound File." A window will pop up allowing you to browse for music on your computer. Select the song you want to use, and then click the Open button (see *Figure 03*).

You can click the Play button to preview the song. A song preview window will appear and your selected song will begin playing. Click the Close button and the song preview box will close (see *Figure 04*).

At this point, the song will load into the "sound track" at the bottom of ProShow's main screen.

If you want to add another song to the sound track, click the add button again and follow the same procedure previously outlined.

Notice that there are more choices in the "Show Soundtrack" window such as Master Volume, Defaults for Other Sounds, and Soundtrack during Other Sounds. When you use more than one song, ProShow gives you control of the time between song tracks. ProShow has an internal music editor, but it also allows you to use an external music editor.

Usually, nothing else needs adjusting. The volume levels are pretty much set to the correct levels.

Click the "Done" button (see *Figure 05*).

At this point, the selected song will appear in the soundtrack (see *Figure 06*).

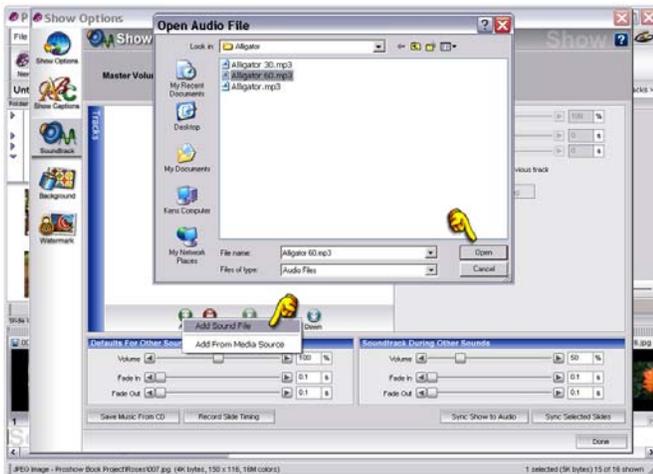


Figure 03.

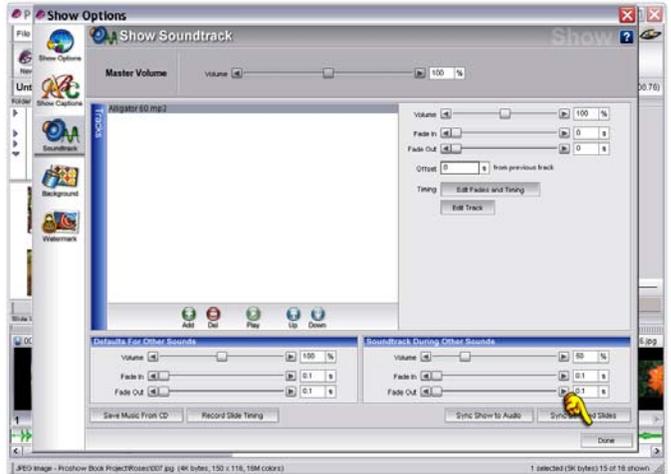


Figure 05.

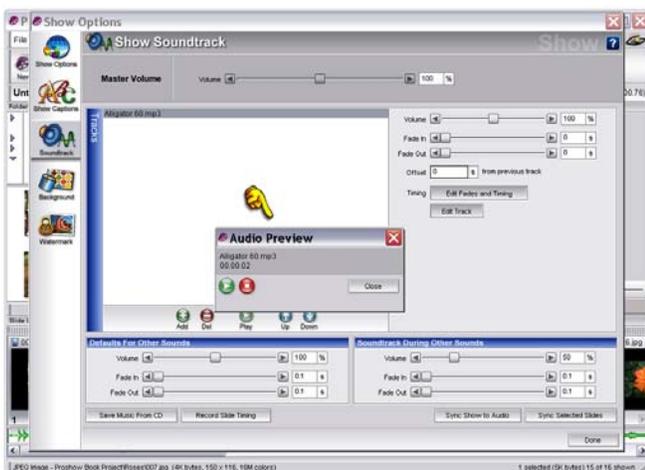


Figure 04.



Figure 06.

Adding a Song from a CD

You can add music from a CD from within ProShow. It uses the terms “Save Audio Track” to pull music from a CD, but you might call this process “ripping”.

To save a song from a CD, insert a music CD into your CD-ROM, and then click on the “Audio” tab in the upper tool bar and choose “Save Music from CD.” The “Save Audio Track” window will open (see *Figure 07*). If you have more than one drive on your computer, you may need to use the drop-down box to select the drive that holds the CD.



Figure 07.

Place a checkmark in the box next to “Retrieve artist/track info from the Internet.” This will add the CD’s info such as time, artist, album, and song title to all the songs on the CD.

Select a song you want to “rip” from the CD by clicking on the song to highlight it. You can select only one song at a time.

If you want to add the song to your show, place a checkmark in the box next to “Add to Soundtrack” located in the lower left-hand corner of the “Save Audio Track” box.

Next, choose the format in which you want to save the song. You can choose the popular MP3 or .OGG by checking the box labeled “Format”.

The last button to click is the “Save Track” button. This will open up another box called “Save

CD Audio Track”.

Now, browse to where you store your music and click the “Save” button.

If you’ve chosen to add the song to your show, the song will appear in the soundtrack at the bottom of the screen (see *Figure 08*).

Syncing to a Single Music Track

Synchronizing to a single music track is what you’ll be doing in a majority of your shows.

To synchronize all the slides to one track, go to “Audio” in the menu bar located at the top of the screen.

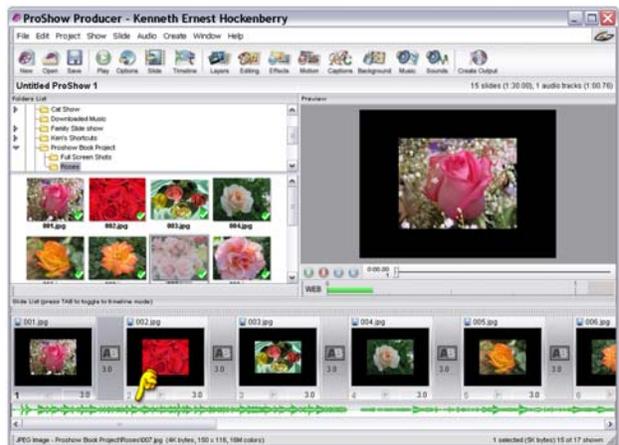


Figure 08.

Select “Sync Show to Audio” (or press Alt+Y), and ProShow will automatically divide all the slides and transitions into equal amounts of time. As a result, the length of your show will match the length of the music.

Syncing to Multiple Tracks

You can also synchronize your show to multiple tracks. First, select and insert an additional song into the soundtrack. Follow the “inserting a song” instructions outlined earlier. In the soundtrack, the first song’s waveform is colored green, and the second is blue (see *Figure 09*).

Next, double-click on the soundtrack to bring up the “Show Soundtrack” window. On the right-hand side is a box titled “Offset from previous track.” If you want a time separation between the two tracks, enter that amount here (see *Figure 10*).

Select all the slides you’d like to synchronize with the first music track.

To choose multiple slides, click on the first slide, and then while holding down the shift key, click on the last slide to be synced to the track.

All the selected slides will turn dark gray (see *Figure 11*).

Next, click on “Audio” in the menu bar located at the top of the screen and choose “Sync Selected Slides to Track” (see *Figure 12*).

The “Sync Slides to Track” box will open with a list of all the music tracks in your show.

Choose the track you want to use and then click the “Sync” button (see *Figure 13*).

Follow the same procedure to synchronize the second sound track.

You’ll see that the music tracks and slides are now in sync.



Figure 09.

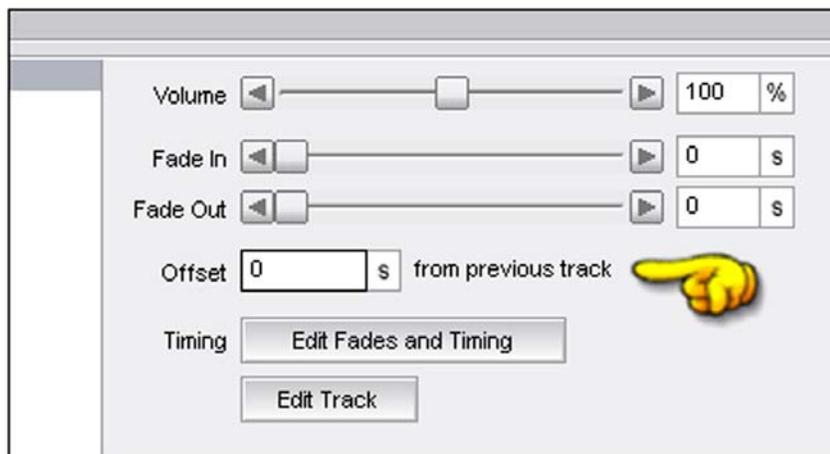


Figure 10.



Figure 11.



Figure 12.

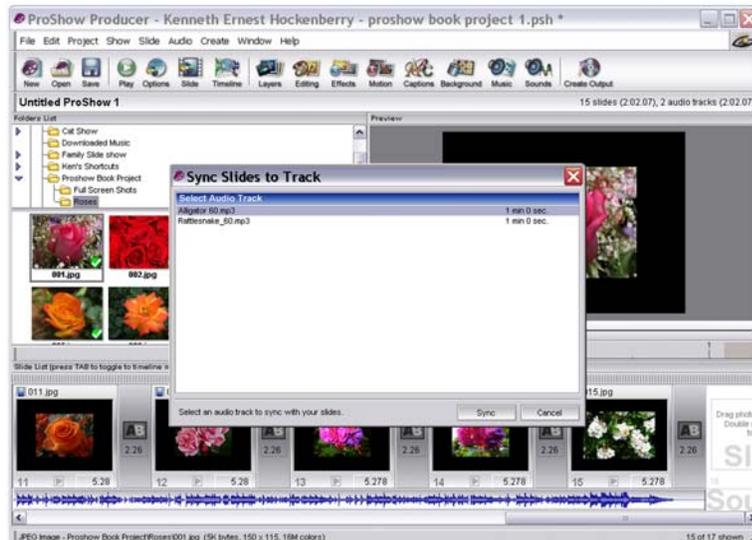


Figure 13.

Basic Music Editing with Audacity

by K. E. Hockenberry

A third-party music editor is necessary because, at some point, you'll want to do something unique to a music track.

We'll be using Audacity (a free audio editor and recorder) to show the basics of editing any music track for use in ProShow. You can download Audacity at <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>

You will also need to download and place a "LAME" MP3 encoder in the audacity folder so you can export your songs as MP3's. Follow the install instructions on the Audacity website.

Editing the Ends

Often, the beginnings and the endings of songs are extended three or four seconds of silence, which can cause timing problems.

First, load a music track into Audacity by clicking on "File" in the menu bar (*see Figure 01*).



Figure 01.

Next, click "Open," browse to the song you want to edit, and click on it to open it in Audacity's work area, which will display the waveforms of both the left and right channels of a stereo song (*see Figure 02*).

The flat lines at both ends indicate unwanted silence (*see Figure 03*).

Place your cursor at the beginning of the song. You'll know you are at the beginning when the cursor changes from an arrow to an "I" bar. Next, hold the left mouse button while dragging across to where you want to trim your song. Release the mouse button (*see Figure 04*).



Figure 02.



Figure 03.



Figure 04.

Now, this is the easy part: press the delete key. You've just trimmed the beginning of the song (*see Figure 05*).

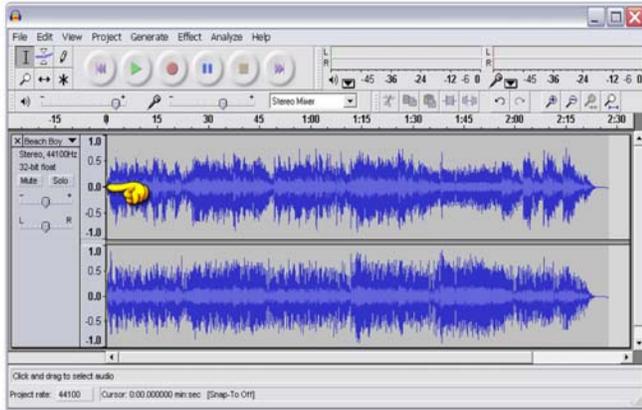


Figure 05.

Follow the same procedure when trimming the song's ending (*see Figure 06*).



Figure 06.

Save the song by clicking on "File" in the menu bar, and then click on "Export as MP3." If you prefer, you can export your song as a .WAV or .OGG file instead.

Next, a "Save As" window appears that will allow you to either keep the current file name or to rename it.

After saving the song, an "Edit ID3" window will appear that allows you to edit the song's information details. Click the "OK" button and save the edited file to your hard drive.

Fading Out Your Song

Many songs are already already include a slight fade-out, but suppose you wanted to play just the first verse of the song during your show. You need to fade it out so it doesn't end abruptly.

The procedure for fading out a song is in part the same as trimming a song. First, highlight the unwanted portion of your song by holding down the left mouse button and dragging close to the section of the song you want to fade out (*see Figure 07*).



Figure 07.

Then hit the delete button (*see Figure 08*).



Figure 08.

Next, highlight the section you want to fade out. While holding the left mouse button, drag across the waveform to highlight the section to fade out (*see Figure 09*).



Figure 09.

Choose the “Effect” menu, and then “Fade Out.”
(See Figure 10.)

Notice the song’s ending is now faded out (See Figure 11.).

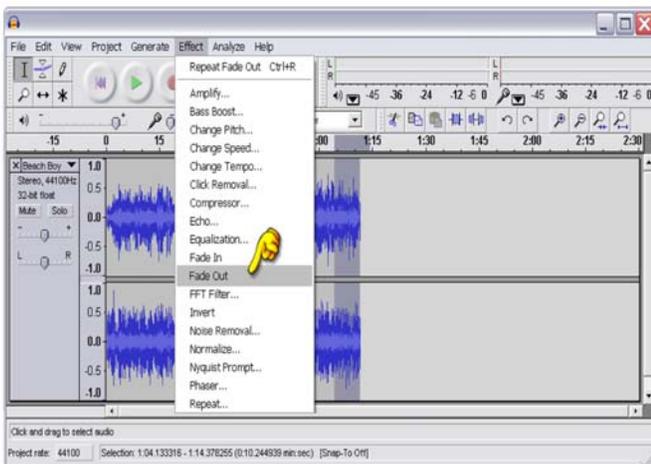


Figure 10.



Figure 11.

Fading out a song can be a lot of trial and error, so be patient. Use the undo feature located in the “Edit” tab (or Ctrl+Z) to revert to the previous state if necessary. You can use the undo feature as many times as needed.

Fading In Your Song

Fading in a song is identical to fading out a song. Highlight the section you want to fade in, and then choose “Fade In” located in the “Effect” menu (see Figure 12).

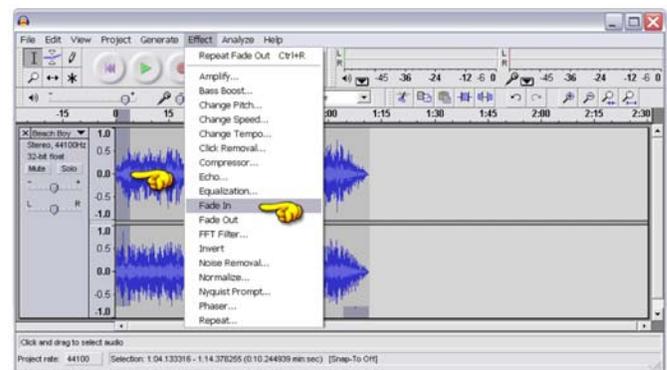


Figure 12.

Cross Fading

The art of splicing two songs together is called cross fading. In other words, the end of one song is merged into the beginning of the second song.

Load up two songs. Go to “Project” and then to “Import Audio.” (Shortcut is Ctrl+I)

Next, click on the “Time Shift Tool” located in the top left corner of the tool bar (see Figure 13).

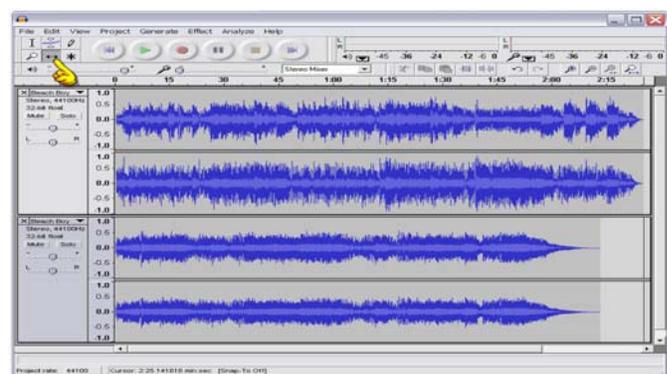


Figure 13.

The time shift tool allows you to move a waveform to the left or right.

If you were to preview it as the waveform appears now, you would hear both songs simultaneously.

Use the time shift tool to move the bottom song to the right until it overlaps the top song's ending.

To make it easier to work with, move the top song to the left, and then move the bottom song to the right, overlapping the two songs (see *Figure 14*).



Figure 14.

Using click-and-drag with the mouse and starting with the top song, highlight the ending portion that you want to cross fade.

Next, since this is the ending of the song, you'll want to cross fade out the song. Click "Effect" on the menu bar and then on "Cross Fade Out." (See *Figure 15*.)

Since this is the beginning of the song, you'll want to cross fade in the song. Highlight the beginning portion of the bottom song and then click "Effect" on the menu bar, choosing "Cross Fade In." (See *Figure 16*.)

Click the play icon to test how well you've cross faded your songs.

You may not like your first, second, or even your third attempt to cross fade two songs together. This is a true trail-and-error process.

To render your cross-faded song, export it as an MP3. Both songs will merge into one during the export process. Remember to save your song with an appropriate title, reflecting the new version of the song.

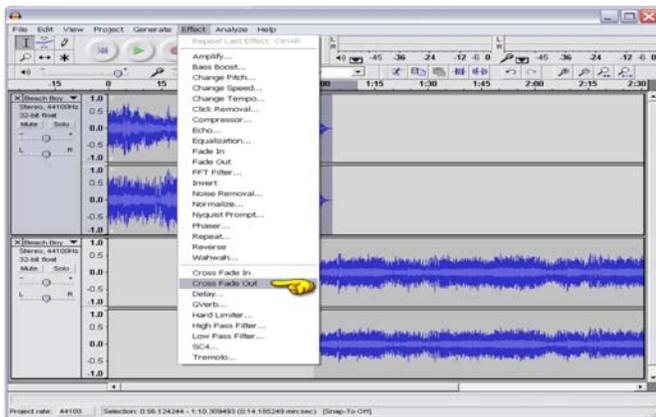


Figure 15.

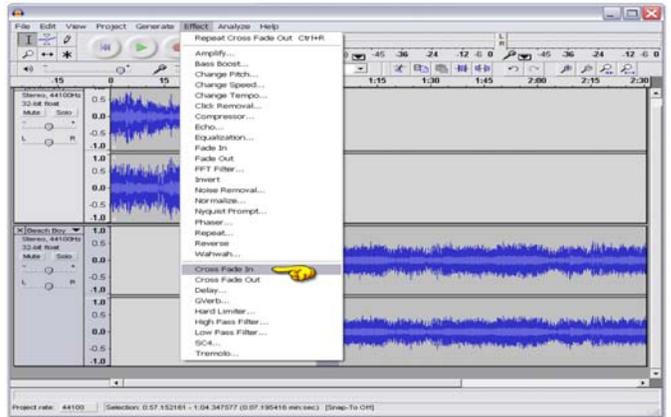


Figure 16.

Fixing Audio “Pop”

by Barbara Coultrey and Ben Coultrey

What follows is for those familiar with a sound editor, its basic tools, and what they’re used for. You don’t have to be a whiz kid, but basic familiarity is necessary. The terms we’re using aren’t specific to any particular editor; they’re standard terms, and all serious editors will use the same names for the same processes.

It helps if you have a good ear for music, but understand that this isn’t something you have to be born with. You can teach yourself to listen for rhythm and the way instruments (including voice) work with one another by playing the music in your sound editor, quite literally watching the music as you listen to it.

Fix “pop”: While listening to the music, watch the bar as it moves across the waveform. When the popping sound occurs, mark the spot. (See *Figure 01.*)

Zoom in on the waveform until the spike that indicates the pop is relatively huge. (See *Figure 02.*)

Select from the exact beginning of the spike to the exact end of it, and then delete it. It may not be completely evident in the illustration below, but the beginning and end of the selection were positioned so that, when the pop was deleted, the parts on either side of it came together so the lines met. (See *Figure 03.*)

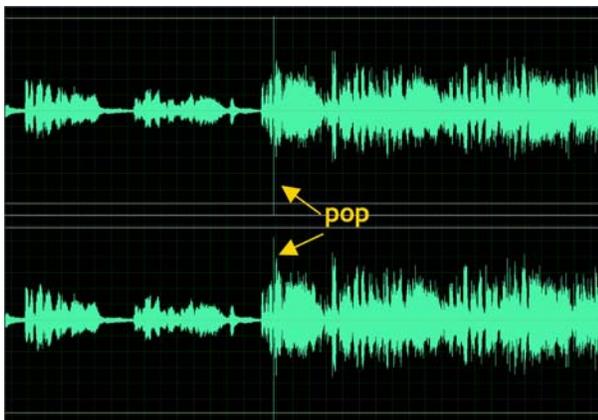


Figure 01.

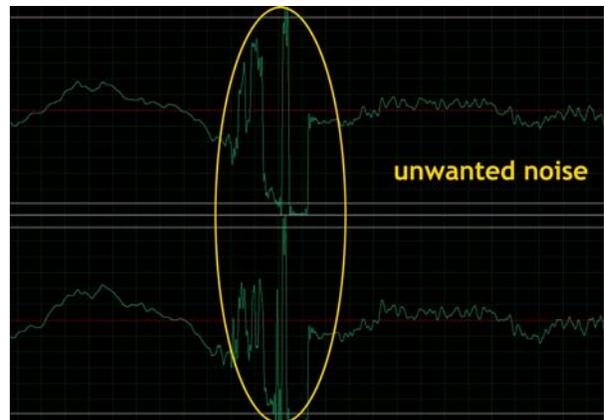


Figure 02.

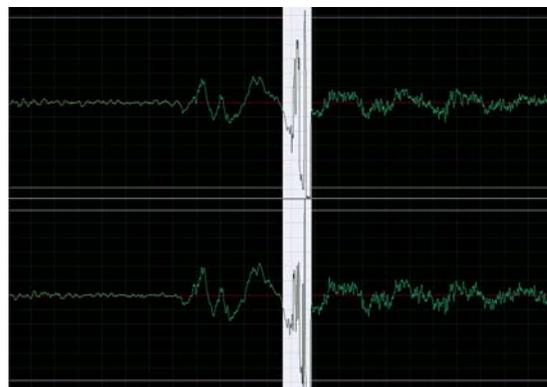


Figure 03.

Below is an illustration of doing it the wrong way and the right way: (*See Figure 04.*)

Next, zoom out just a little so you can play the section where you deleted the pop, listening care-

fully as the bar passes through where the spike had been. It's possible for it to still sound a little rough. If it does, select only the rough spot and try reducing the amplitude slightly. Often, it'll require less than even 3 decibels.



Figure 04.

Create a Loop for Your Menu

by Barbara Coultrey & Ben Coultrey

Because a custom-designed loop is taken directly from the music in your show, you end up with menu music that matches perfectly.

This isn't for the complete beginner, but it also doesn't require a doctorate. If you've been editing sound for a while and you know your way around the basic parts of your sound editor, give looping a try.

Make sure to save the original song to a new name so no harm is done, and then play like mad. If you end up without a loop, you've lost nothing but a bit of time, and in spite of the seeming failure, you will have become more alert to the kind of music that lends itself to looping. Next time, you'll do better.

If you've ever gotten a melody stuck in your head (oh, the misery!), you'll know that it doesn't always begin its wretched existence at the true beginning of the song, but it does start at a place that *sounds* like a beginning. Usually, a stuck-in-the-head song ends a short time later at a perfectly legitimate ending place. That, my friends, is a loop. You've been spontaneously creating loops for years.

Creating a loop requires that you train yourself to listen very closely:

- Notice distinct patterns such as verse-chorus-verse-chorus or any repeated sections.
- Focus on the rhythm, whether it's being spelled out by drums, bass guitar, or any other instrument. Tap your foot, nod your head, make audible sounds, or whatever else helps you pick out the beat.
- Keep alert for short sections that could be tiny songs all on their own.
- Separate out the instruments, paying attention to just one, then another, and still another.

The quick method: Find a 15- to 30-second section of a song that sounds complete in itself. The most obvious spot is the chorus, but not all songs have a chorus. In your sound editor, select this section, saving it as a separate file. Fade out the end and then add a very slight fade-in to the beginning. This is the method most often encountered on DVD collections of TV series. You'll hear part of or even the show's entire theme with the aforementioned fades, and then it'll repeat endlessly until a sub-menu is chosen.

Looping a sound effect: This is suitable when a sound effect illustrates the idea of the show. For instance, if the show is about a trip to the shore, the sound of waves during the menu might work. You'll still want to edit the sound clip to make it loop seamlessly.

Not-so quick method: Begin with the song's waveform in front of you. Listen while also watching as the bar glides across the waveform. Listen and watch for the patterns, getting a solid sense of the rhythm while trying to spot telltale repetitions. Then listen again, this time trying to pick out short sections that could be mini-songs all by themselves.

Once you locate a section that sounds right, select it, including a little extra space at the end. Below is an example where the "mini-song" was right at the beginning. The selection's right-hand side is situated a little beyond what sounded like a good end point (*see Figure 01*).

Invert the selection, deleting everything but the part you want to loop. Save as a new file in .WAV format, adding LOOP to the end of the file name.

Select all (Ctrl + A) of the waveform, and listen to it in looping mode (usually indicated by the infinity symbol), adjusting the end position of the selection until the end blends into the beginning as perfectly as you can make it. Reverse the selection so only the unwanted part is selected. Delete the selection.

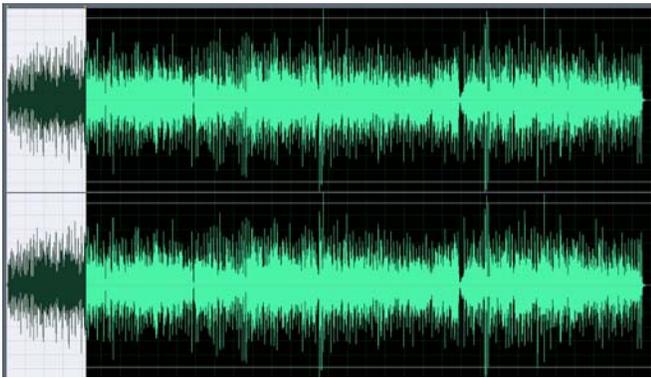


Figure 01.

Unwanted section at end marked for deletion (*see Figure 02*):

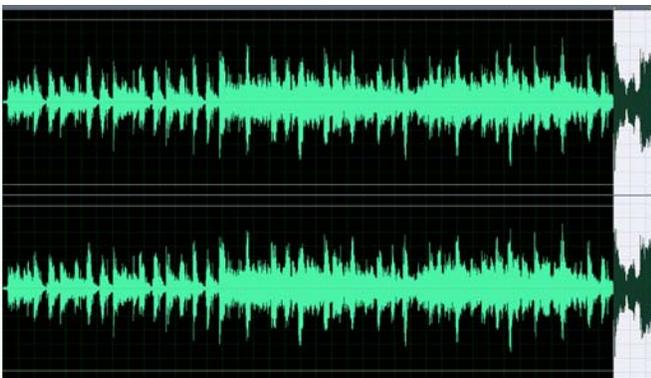


Figure 02.

Listen to the music in looping mode again. Unless you've an angel sitting on your shoulder, it won't be perfect. Timing is usually the problem, and there are multiple cures that depend on the instruments, the style of song, and what instrument in particular is spelling out the rhythm.

Sometimes all that's needed is to add a very short amount of silence (*see Figure 03*), then select

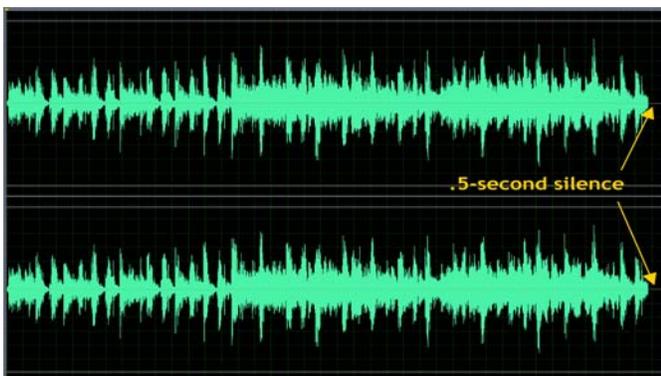


Figure 03.

the very last bit of sound along with the added silence (*see Figure 4*), finishing up by fading the selection. If the rhythm needs repair, you can use "stretch" instead of fade.



Figure 04.

Then again, it might require serious surgery where an extra beat is needed at the tail end before looping back to the beginning. In the illustration below, the perfect sound from another spot in the waveform was selected (*see Figure 05*).



Figure 05.

Then it was copied and pasted at the end of the waveform. It added back in a beat that had been lost during the cutting process. The lost beat couldn't be helped because including any more would have also included a note from another instrument, and the loop would have then ended poorly.

You have to listen in looping mode over and over again, getting the transition from the end back to the beginning as smooth as possible. Sometimes it only requires lowering the volume at the very end, sometimes it's a matter of playing with the equalizer. It could be that the "stretch" tool will do the trick. There's no formula for this because it all depends on the individual piece of music. Try one thing

after another, undoing each in turn until something works.

No rules and lots of practice: All kinds of tools in your sound editor can help blend the end back into the beginning. Don't hesitate to try every tool or effect. You can stretch a tone to keep the rhythm, you can borrow parts from elsewhere, and you can even lower the pitch of a note so it creates a bridge back to the beginning. There's no right or wrong way. This is one of those cases where the end justifies the means.

Handy Audio Editing Techniques

by Barbara Coultrey and Ben Coultrey

Long Fade

Though you can create a long fade-out in ProShow, it requires fading out sections of the song you may not want faded out. What if, for instance, you just want to fade the last note? In a sound editor, select that last note (it will be more than a single peak), and then “stretch” it without changing the pitch so it’s as if the note had been held for a good amount of time in the original piece. Next, apply fade to that single, stretched-out note. Depending on how it sounds, you may want to add silence at the end of the note before doing the fade-out. This is something you can determine only by listening carefully to tests done with and without the added silence.

Blend Two Songs with an Interim Sound File

Simple cross-fades don’t always work well. When you have songs with different tempos, rhythms, styles, or keys, the effect can be jarring. Create a “bridge” between the two songs by inserting a sound file and then cross-fading its two ends. The sound file itself will depend on the slide show. For instance, if it’s a show about the ocean, you might insert the sound of surf, cross-fade the begin-

ning of the sound with the end of the first song and then do the same with the end of the sound and the beginning of the second song. It’s easier to do this in a sound editor than in ProShow because of the ability to apply multiple effects: fade, volume change, reverb, echo, stretch, and so forth.

Shorten a Song by Cutting its End

Random amputation doesn’t work, and a fade-out can sound just like what it is: you ran out of show before you ran out of sound. Not every song is amenable to having its end lopped off, but if it is, it’s likely to be because it has a place near the end that *could* be the end. This requires the ability to listen to each musical phrase while asking yourself, “Does this sound like a natural end?” If it does, then “slice” the song at the spot where you want to end it, effectively creating two sound files. Slide the to-be-deleted section off to the right in case you need it. Now listen to the spot leading up to your new end and to the end itself. If you’re lucky, it’ll sound natural. Often, though, it’ll require stretching and adding a touch of reverb or echo along with a short fade. Another trick is to grab the last note from the section you just lopped off, adding it to the new end, and blending it in. If you do decide to use that last note, zoom in on it first, listening to it and watching to see exactly where it begins. You’d be surprised how often it begins before you think it does. **Hint:** a single note is often a group of peaks and valleys.

Choosing Music

by Barbara Coultrey

(with input from Ken Hockenberry)

Music is a form of communication, and this means that our musical choices are vital. Watch any movie or television show, keeping an ear to the music that's inevitably there. What's playing in the background when the characters are flying a plane, walking in the woods, or just contemplating the moon? The music is an ongoing dialogue, telling the story without words.

Consider this: You've visited Mount St. Helens. You've photographed it from every angle, trying to show the remnants of an eruption and the rebirth of land. What do you want to say about this volcano? That the land is beautiful? That here lies a sleeping dragon? The music you choose will tell the story for you. Pick a delicate, melodic piece, and you're emphasizing the beauty; pick a darker piece, and you're describing a dragon.

First, think about the show. What's your message in it? Is it comic, happy, sentimental, thoughtful, melancholy, mysterious, majestic, peaceful, silly, dramatic, frenetic, or any of a number of other descriptions? You want to find the same message in the music.

We don't need a degree in music to understand the message in music. We're human and we "get it." However, it helps to be alert to things in music that help convey a message:

Instrument: Does anyone exist who wasn't exposed as a child to Prokofiev's "Peter and the Wolf"? In case you're one of the few, here's a heads-up: The main characters are a bird (flute), a duck (oboe), a cat (clarinet), the grandfather (bassoon), the wolf (French horn), hunters (woodwind and drum), and Peter (string). Each of these instruments has a characteristic sound, a "flavor" that's reminiscent of the character. Imagine using a tuba for a bird, and you'll understand what we mean here.

We can use this same kind of thinking by equating sound with an idea or a person. A daisy is light

and airy—piccolo?—while a lily is slightly heavier—flute or clarinet? Mountains might prefer a full orchestra, a child's antics ragtime piano, a walk along the river an acoustic guitar. If you were going to paint a particular scene in notes rather than color, which instrument would be your paintbrush?

Tempo: Though it's the most obvious part of music next to melody, tempo can still trip us up. Our intuition usually works just fine, telling us how slow or fast the music should be for a particular show, but now and then a show just doesn't "feel" right. We may look all over for the problem with the show, never realizing the problem is the music's tempo. It might have too rapid a tempo, leading us into switching out the pictures too quickly, or it might be the reverse where a slow tempo is forcing the show to drag.

Rhythm: This is the pattern of stressed and unstressed beats, and it's one of the major qualities that differentiate the styles of music. You aren't about to confuse a waltz and a blues tune even if you don't know any of the technicalities of what makes one a waltz and the other the blues. How the beats are stressed is what you want to pay attention to, and for this very simple reason: we use stressed beats for our transition points. You may love a particular tune, and it may seem perfect for your show, but if the stressed beats make you cut short the duration of one picture while making another too long, you should look for a different song.

Genre: We should never, not ever, refuse to consider every style of music. If we do, we're foolishly restricting ourselves. We've all heard statements such as that country music is whiny, heavy-metal bands are noisy, classical music is complicated, and opera is quite simply beyond the pale. Don't believe a word of it. Country star Shania Twain doesn't whine. The self-described funky metal band, Extreme, hit number one on the charts

with the incredibly sweet “More Than Words.” And is Mendelssohn’s “Wedding March” all that complicated? Just because “Porgy and Bess” was written in English doesn’t mean it’s fake opera. Again, drop any prejudices you have. Listen to everything.

Lyrics: Don’t ever use a song you haven’t paid extremely close attention to. If you can’t quite understand all the words, look up the song on the Internet. Enough sites post lyrics that you’re sure to find the one you’re considering. A prime example of why this is necessary comes from both my and another member’s experience. The song was “The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face.” I thought it would be perfect for a wedding show, but then I paid attention to a particular verse, which turned out to be not quite suitable for straight-laced sorts. The other member in question used the song for a show about a child, failing to notice that particular verse. He ended up with very mixed reviews.

The problem is that we’re often listening to the melody, humming along with it, while not paying attention to the verses. Without meaning to, we can inject comedy into a serious show, we can speak of lost love in a wedding show, we can willy-nilly mismatch a song with a woman when it should be a man, or we can find any number of better ways to embarrass ourselves.

Searching For a Specific Subject: Go to www.allmusic.com and type into the search box a word that describes your show. For instance, if it’s a birthday show, type “birthday,” or if it’s a show about family, type “family” into the search box. A long list of songs and albums is likely to result. Clicking on any of the choices brings you to a sub-listing with speaker icons scattered throughout, the icons indicating that you can listen to a piece of the song. The subject you search on can be an idea, an emotion, a color, an object, etc.

Voice-over

by Barbara Coutry & Ben Coutry

Anyone can narrate a slide show, right? All you need is a microphone, and you're good to go. So let's start with that: the microphone.

You need a decent microphone, one that works well with the human voice. You'll be happy to know that good microphones for the speaking voice are cheap. There's no need for an expensive contraption. Go to a place like Radio Shack and pick up a headset microphone, either the kind designed specifically for hooking up to the computer or the kind meant for hands-free telephone talk. These are directional microphones, which means that when pointed at your mouth, they pick up your voice, not the birds twittering outside the window. You may have to buy an adaptor for the telephone mic, so pay attention to that end of things.

There's another reason for a headset microphone: it allows you to relax. You can turn your head, lean back in your chair, or pull up your socks without altering the sound at all.

Make sure the microphone isn't right in front of your mouth. If it is, it'll pick up the "P pops" which are caused by the hard little puffs of air created by pronouncing the letter P. There are also other little mouth sounds we don't want the mic picking up, so if the mic has a flexible wand, bend it so the mic is to the side of your mouth.

The real instrument in this process is, of course, your voice.

Do you:

- ...speak in patterns?
- ...swallow words at the end of sentences?
- ...go without moments of silence?
- ...remember to breathe?

If you answered "no" to all the above questions, you're lying. Grab a book or magazine, pick out a long paragraph, and then record yourself reading aloud. Play it back and then answer those questions again. Be honest.

Pattern

Listen again to your brief narration, this time for pitch changes in your voice. Did you begin a sentence with a mid-tone, raise the tone up as you headed into the middle of the sentence, and then drop back down toward the end, perhaps going to the lowest note when you hit the period? Did you do this consistently? That's a pattern. It's a song that repeats the same four or five notes throughout, and it can irritate the listener. You probably don't speak like this when talking over the fence with your neighbor, so why are you doing it when recording?

For practice, say just the word "what" as a question, then as if you're annoyed by an interruption, and finally as if you're surprised. It sounded different in each instance, didn't it? You were using various pitches and inflections to get the point across. In a sense, you were singing.

If you don't have patterned speech when chatting with the neighbor, why is it there when you read a paragraph? It's because: (1) the paragraph wasn't composed of your words; and (2) you weren't talking to anyone. It's also possible you were traumatized like every other school kid by being forced to recite aloud. (May that teacher rot wherever.)

The cure: Make sure you're all alone (no need for people thinking you've gone nuts), and then imagine someone is right there with you, the two of you having a normal conversation. Try that paragraph again, this time pretending the words are your very own. You're telling your friend something, and

it's really interesting. If this doesn't work at first, don't give up. It's not a natural thing for everyone to do. If you're having a lot of trouble with it, then pretend you're an actor in a movie bound for an Oscar for your outstanding performance. Don't deny it—you had such daydreams while growing up. Say hello to the child lurking within.

But not a complete cure: Unless you're a total natural, the above exercise will improve your speech a lot, but a great orator you're not. If you were, you wouldn't be reading this, so here's one more exercise:

Repeat "First, do no harm," each time stressing a different word. **FIRST** do no harm. First **DO** no harm. First do **NO** harm. First do no **HARM**. Two things are altered in each example. One is the pattern. The other is an alteration in meaning.

Eating Your Words

This is an obvious problem and so easily remedied. Don't lower your pitch and volume so much at the end of each sentence that the last few words get lost in a low mumble. You may not realize you've been doing this, but you'll spot it immediately when you listen back to what you've recorded. If you have this problem, it'll take conscious effort to raise the pitch a bit and to keep the volume up, but soon enough, the proper way will become natural.

Pause for Refreshment

If your voice-over runs on and on, you'll sound like a bad poet at the microphone in a coffeehouse. Well-placed pauses in speech can create both drama and comedy. Comedians are masters of the pause.

Sometimes it's just for a tick, sometimes it's for quite a while, and then they deliver the punchline. Don't use exactly the same length of pause throughout your voice-over. If you do, you'll be creating a pattern. So, don't rush through your voice-over and please don't be afraid of silence.

Don't Forget to Breathe

When you're narrating, you need the breath to carry you through an entire sentence, so take a nice, deep breath, and then don't spend that whole breath during the first half of the sentence. If you spend it too quickly, you'll sound like Marilyn Monroe, which was fine for Marilyn but probably not for you. Additionally, this can lead to having to take a breath in the middle of a sentence, creating an odd pause.

Stop Paper Rustling

You'll need a script, and since a script will be on paper, the result can be paper rustlings on the recording. To avoid this, put your script pages into plastic page protectors. You won't get the rustling sound (but you may have to ad lib while you're picking the slippery devils up off the floor).

And so...

You aren't trying to be a professional voice-over actor, but this doesn't mean you can't improve your narrative abilities. It takes practice and listening to yourself. It also helps to listen to others. When watching television, listen to the professional voice-overs in commercials.

Organize Your Music

by Barbara Coultrey

Your music folder is a wreck or it will be soon. We're necessarily collectors of music files, which leads to such a mess that we can spend an hour, maybe two, searching for just the right tune to go with a show. We may eventually find we have nothing that will suit, and if we'd known sooner, we wouldn't have wasted so much time poking through endless files.

The solution is simple-minded, and simpler still if we do it earlier rather than later. It involves setting up a system of folders custom-designed for how we think and how we pick our music.

For me, the first cut is according to **duration**. Why look at 5-minute songs for a 3-minute show? Though I don't bother with it, you may find **style** is important. A standard oldie might be good for Granny, but it's not so hot for Bobby's fifth birthday. **Tempo** is vital to me. Some shows are fast-paced, others are slow, and still more are in between.

I store all **royalty-free** and **Creative Commons** pieces separately but nevertheless using the same system. I add in text files with all necessary information about how the rights are to be handled. Each text file is given the same name as the music file so it can't get misplaced.

Every important characteristic can be assigned using Windows' advanced properties pop-up screen for file attributes, but categorizing with folders is

far faster, simpler, and more sensible for the way we use music.

Here's an illustration of my folder system:

 0 – 1 Minutes

 1 – 2 Minutes

 2 – 3 Minutes

 Fast

 Medium

 Slow

 Artist – Song Title

 Artist – Song Title

 4 – 5 Minutes

 6 – 7 Minutes

Suit the system to your own needs, not mine. The time spent creating such a system will pay off in the long run because you'll no longer plow through hundreds (eventually thousands) of unsuitable songs.

Ripping in Windows Media Player

Don't use ProShow to rip music from CD's.

The reason is that it rips at a low bit rate, which you cannot change and which translates to lower quality.

One of the easier programs to use for ripping is Windows Media Player where you can set the bit rate for MP3's to 320 and where you can also choose other formats, in particular the lossless WAV format. Best of all, Windows comes with the program.

1. On the full screen in Media Player, go to Tools > Options > Rip Music.
2. Choose the format to rip to, which will usually be MP3, but if you're ripping a song for editing in your sound editor, choose WAV.
3. Move the slider all the way to the right for the highest quality.
4. Choose a folder where you'll consistently save all music files. You can move them to other folders where you have the

rest of your music organized, but this single folder works as an easily found holding tank.

5. Click "Apply" when you've finished setting everything as you want it. Media Player will remember these settings the next time you rip music, so if you want a different format at any time, you'll have to reset this option.
6. After placing a CD in your drive, click on Rip.
7. You'll go to a screen where every track on the CD is listed, each with a checkmark in a small box on the left indicating that all the songs will be ripped (Media Player's default).
8. If you want fewer songs, uncheck the ones you don't want.
9. Click "Rip Music," and the chosen songs will be ripped to the folder you've chosen.

How to Shorten a Song

by Barbara Coultrey

Up-front warning: Do not edit an MP3 file. Before you touch that music, convert it to a WAV file. Otherwise, you risk lowering the quality.

Required software: A sound editor. You can only do the most rudimentary editing in ProShow.

Reason for shortening: You've found the perfect song, but your show is, say, three minutes long and the song is four minutes. Fading it out at the end sounds just like what it is—you ran out of pictures before you ran out of melody. The alternative is to do some cutting and splicing, and for many songs, it's not too difficult a job.

Good candidates: The easiest songs to shorten have a built-in repetition where verse and chorus alternate. You'll find examples of this in everything from hymns to rock. The lyrics change in each verse, but in between each verse is the chorus where the lyrics stay the same. Each of the two sections has its own consistent and distinct melody.

The method: Pick a verse and chorus you feel can be cut from the song without doing harm. Watch out for the very beginning of a song because it can often be slightly different from the rest, working as a kind of lead-in to the music. You may want to retain this part. Look in the middle of the song, trying to judge what could be left out without ruining the message or the flow of the music.

Technique: You'll break the music at two points and then eliminate the section that sits between those two points. The concept is the same as in editing an audio tape where a chunk of tape is removed, the ends lined up, and those ends are then attached with splicing tape. Our stickum is digital, which is ten tons easier to use.

Starting

- Bring the song into your audio editor, and as mentioned above, if it's an MP3, save it as a WAV file.
- Next, do nothing other than start the song playing while watching the bar move across the waveform.
- You're listening for the repetitions and simultaneously watching for the graphic representation of them in the waveform.
- It can take several runs through a song before the patterns become fully apparent, so don't jump right in the first time through.

Cutting and Splicing

1. Place your cursor just a little before the place where you believe the repetition begins, hold down the shift key, and then click just a little after where you believe the repetition ends. This creates a selection.
2. Zoom in on the selection and focus on the beginning of it.
3. Play the selection, starting and stopping it, listening and watching at the same time so you can fine-tune the selection by moving it to the precise beginning of the repetition.

4. Repeat the fine-tuning process for the end of the repetition.

5. Place a cut at the beginning of the selection and at the end.

6. Slide the section that's been cut either to the end of the track or to a separate track, keeping it there just in case you need it later.

7. Drag the second section of the waveform to the left until the parts meet perfectly.

8. Select from a few seconds before to a few seconds after the cut and listen with your ears wide open. If it's a perfect match, do a "mixdown" to create a single song that's minus the part you extracted. You're done. If it's not perfect, don't mix down quite yet.

If the match isn't perfect: When things aren't quite right, you may hear a tiny pop or a jump in the music. There are several methods for fixing this. Sometimes it requires just one of the methods, sometimes a combination. First, zoom in on the cut spot in the waveform, then try one or a combination of the following:

- If the lines don't meet at the same spot, try cutting off just enough so they're at least really close to meeting.

- Try a tiny fade-out at the end of the first part and an equally tiny fade-in at the beginning of the second part. Start with no more than a split-second fade.

- Try running the end or the beginning through the equalizer, working the controls to tone down treble or bass. This may get the mismatched ends closer to meeting.

- Use the pitch control to raise or lower one part in an effort to get them to meet.

Once the song plays through without a hiccup at the spot where the section was extracted, do your mixdown and save it as a WAV file before you save it as an MP3. This is a safety precaution in case you find out later that a little more editing is required.

If it looks as if this is going to take a half day to do, find a different song.

A note about number of instruments: The more instruments used in a piece, the more difficult it can be to shorten. This is because there are likely to be no silent spots in the music where natural-sounding cuts can be made.

Sound Edits in ProShow

Three Sound Clips on One Slide

Only one sound effect can be assigned to each slide, but you can use the slide before and the slide after to trick the middle slide into playing three sounds.

1. Write down the precise duration for each sound clip and then total the amount of time.
2. Give the slide the required duration for it to stay on screen long enough for all three clips to play.
3. Place the first sound clip on the slide previous to the one where you want the sounds to play.
4. Place the second sound clip on the slide where you want the sounds to play.
5. Place the third sound clip on the slide immediately following.
6. Offset the sound in the first slide just enough to push it into the second slide.
7. Offset the sound in the second slide so it doesn't overlap the first.
8. Give a minus value to the offset for the sound in the third slide so that it backs up into the second slide.

Another method is to combine all 3 sounds in an audio editing program, making them a single sound clip that can be dropped into just one slide.

Silence Between Songs

Offsetting one song from another can lead to popping sounds at the end or beginning of the tracks. To eliminate this, bring a short sound file into your sound editor, lower its volume down to nothing, then save it to another file name such as Silence.wav or Silence.mp3. Whenever you want silence between two songs, insert this file, overlapping the tracks slightly. This will get rid of the unwanted pop.

Even when one song begins immediately after another with no time in between, you can get a small popping sound when one song ends and the next begins. To eliminate this, set the delay of the second song to -1 second. The negative number creates a slight overlap so that the popping sound is eliminated.

Trim Silence from Songs Quickly

1. In Soundtrack options, click on the track you want to edit, then click Edit Fades and Timing.
2. Zoom in on the track. Where you see a flat line at the beginning or end is where there's silence.
3. At the beginning of the track, click as close to the point where the silence ends as you can.
4. Click "Start Here" to set this as the starting point for the track.

5. At the end of the track, locate the point where the actual music ends and the waveform becomes a flat line. Click in the waveform as close to the end of the actual music as you can.

6. Click “End Here” to set the ending point for the track.

7. If there’s more than one music track, and after you’ve eliminated the areas of silence, click on the second track and make the offset a negative value of approximately -1.0 to -1.5 to create a cross-fade. (While one track is fading out, the next is fading in.)

Move Soundtrack in Slide Timeline

Press TAB to switch to timeline mode. Hold down the Control key while dragging your mouse over the waveform to move it.

Zoom in on Waveform for Easier Syncing

Press the TAB key to go into timeline mode. You’ll see two buttons at the bottom right of the screen, one with a plus sign and one with a minus sign. Click on the plus button to enlarge the view. Continuing to click the button will slowly stretch out the waveform so you can see the precise spots where, for instance, there’s a hard drumbeat.

Mute Video Clip Sound

1. Double-click on the slide with the video clip.

2. Go to Layers in Options.

3. On the right-hand side you’ll see “Video Clip Settings” where you can slide the volume control to zero.

Section IV

Motion

All Motion Is Relative

Op-Ed by Barbara Coultry

Comments often seen in the forum can be boiled down to some version of one of these three:

“Tone down the motion – there’s too much.”

“You could use a little more motion.”

“Don’t use the same motion throughout.”

What’s a body to do? How are we supposed to know when we have too much or too little? The answer is complicated by the fact that the amount of motion we use is relative to what we’re trying to say or accomplish. Though what follows is based on a lot of reading and studying and practicing, it is, nevertheless, opinion.

Motion should match the image: Mountains don’t move much, and so a rotating landscape is inherently disturbing and reminiscent of the vertigo one might feel before passing out. Unless you have good reason to twirl that mountain, please don’t. Rotate a ball, bounce a puppy, whiz a car across the screen, but please don’t rotate the scenery. Things being relative, what you do with the scenery does depend on the show’s mission and flavor. A fast-moving show, an upbeat show, a comic show, or a downright weird show might like an unruly mountain here or there.

Panning needs good reason: The classic place for pan is in panoramas. There just isn’t enough screen real estate for a picture that’s extremely wide or tall, and a pan helps overcome the shortfall. The problem I see quite often is that people use pan instead of zoom. For instance, say you’ve a wide photo of the Class of ’49. It’s unlikely that the show is about all seventy graduates, but you want to give the audience a glimpse of Uncle Harold’s entire class, so you pan and then stop at the young Harold, maybe highlighting his face. No one cares about the rest of the people in that photo, so why should you?

Bring the photo onto the screen in full view, then zoom in on your uncle. Quite often, this same ploy works well with landscapes: fit the entire picture onto the screen and then zoom in on the center of interest.

Panning really comes into its own when you want to sneak up on the center of interest. Imagine a panoramic seascape in December. It’s desolate except at the far right where a lonely figure stands, gazing out to sea. Sliding from left to right and stopping when the figure finally comes onto the scene makes that pan earn its keep.

I find that landscape is generally more amenable to panning than people pictures. Humans are innately interested in how other humans look, and to have images of people floating past is irritating...usually. As I said, motion is relative. Folks can go barreling past if the key idea is frenetic activity, but please don’t send the bride flying because I, for one, will stop the show and go elsewhere.

Zoom also needs a good reason: I absolutely loathe watching shows where photos zoom in and out for no reason I can fathom. Usually it’s because the builder thinks it will make the show more interesting. It won’t. If you’re going to zoom in on something, do it because there’s a focal point you want to emphasize; if you’re going to zoom out, do it because you want to go from the center of interest to what’s surrounding that center of interest. Otherwise, what’s the point?

Well, sure, there can be a point, and once again, it depends on the intent of the show. If the photo is less important than what you’re trying to say, zoom can be used for emphasis, to match musical rhythm, or to create either drama or comedy.

Pause your pan or zoom: A slide show is all about the pictures, not about how well you can make things dance around the screen. In most cases, it’s

best to start a pan or zoom *after* the picture has come into view and then stop it *before* it goes out of view. If you don't believe me, pay attention to pan and zoom in the movies. Give people a chance to actually see the picture, for goodness' sake, rather than forcing them to continuously refocus their eyes because of unending motion. Pan to something, zoom

to something. If you don't, no one will know what the heck they're supposed to be looking at.

Negative comments are born mostly of misplaced motion. DO NOT use motion to add interest to a show that you think is boring. It'll still be boring. DO add motion when it enhances the story, the theme, or a photo.

Key Frame Basics

by Barbara Coultrey

Key frames are rooted in the past when cartoon artists drew the individual pictures by hand—frame by frame by frame. Studios such as Disney hired a main or *key* animator whose job was to create the frame that began a motion and also the frame that ended the motion. These two frames were called key frames. All the frames in between, the ones that went from the beginning to the end of the motion, were drawn by assistants (called “betweeners”).

In Producer, you are the key animator, and the software is the betweener.

New Producer users commonly believe that the space between two markers on the timeline is the key frame. It isn't. The markers point to the key frames. Here's what's really behind the timeline (see *Figure 01*):

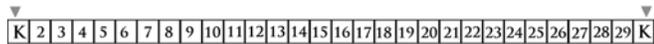


Figure 01.

All those numbered squares are not slides; they're the in-between frames that Producer builds and that create the appearance of motion. Here's how we see the timeline (see *Figure 02*):



Figure 02.

Notice the two circled markers. They are each pointing to a single key frame: Marker #1 = key frame 1 and marker #2 = key frame 2. Your responsibility as the key animator is to design key frame 1 for the beginning position and key frame 2 for the ending position.

If you want a small red box to start out at the bottom-left corner of the screen and rise diagonally up to the top-right corner, you'll need only two key frames to accomplish it. You'll position the box in key frame 1, showing where you want the box to start out, and then you'll position the box in key frame 2, showing its final resting place. Producer then takes over behind the scenes, doing all the in-between frames for you (see *Figure 03*):

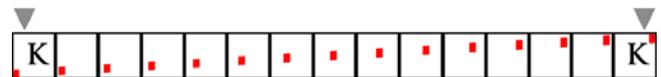


Figure 03.

In the Motion Options screen, there are two windows. The window on the left shows the beginning of an action, and the window on the right shows the end of that action. As key animator, all you need do is set those two key frames (see *Figure 04*).

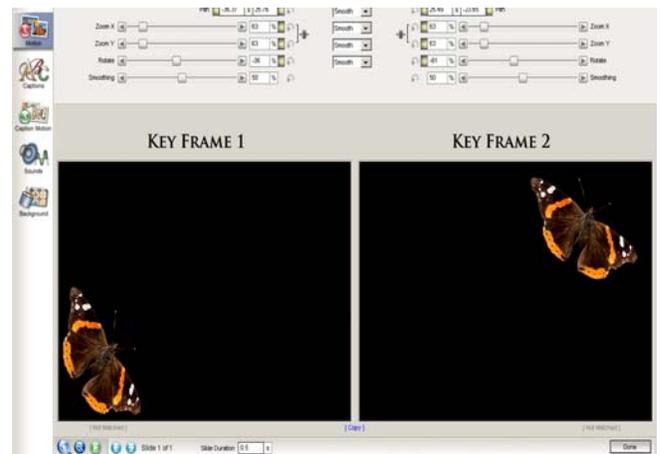


Figure 04.

In the illustration above (*Figure 04*) and in key frame 1, the butterfly is sitting at the bottom-left. In the window on the right (key frame 2), the butterfly

has been moved to its end position at the upper-right. Producer, being the diligent assistant you’ve hired, will do all the in-between frames for you, making it appear that the butterfly has floated up on the wind.

A lot more could be done with just those two key frames, including a reduction in opacity, a change from one color to another, and even an alteration in size so the butterfly appears to get smaller as it flies away, but no matter what effect you choose, you’ll be controlling it by setting the beginning of the effect in the left-hand window, and the end of the effect in the right-hand window.

Producer’s timeline defaults to just two key frames, but you’re at liberty to add more key frames, which you’d absolutely have to do if you wanted the butterfly to change direction. Producer can do a lot of things, but it can’t read your mind. So, if you want the butterfly to move up and then to the right, you have to tell Producer this is what you want. That’s what key frames are—they’re instructions telling Producer where to go, how to go, and when to go.

To make the butterfly go from the lower left of the screen to the middle top, then turn and go back down to exit on the right side of the screen, you need three key frames. The simplest way to add a key frame is by clicking the “+” button to the left of the timeline (see *Figure 05*).

In the illustration below (see *Figure 06*), a key frame was added in the middle of the timeline. Notice the shaded bar between key frames 1 and 2. This indicates you’re working on those two key frames. In key frame 1, the butterfly is placed in its start position, and in key frame 2, it’s placed at the top center. Rotation was added so the butterfly will be pointed in the correct direction when it flies back down.

To move to the next set of key frames—key frame 2 and key frame 3—either click the blue button with the right-pointing arrow just to the left of the timeline, or click in the gray section of the timeline between markers 2 and 3. Notice that the window on the left now shows the butterfly’s position in key frame 2 (see *Figure 07*). That’s the beginning key frame for the next action. All we need do now is go to the right-hand window and position the butterfly for key frame 3.

When you preview the slide, you’ll see that the butterfly floats from the bottom left up to the middle top, then descends to the bottom right and nearly off the screen.

Once you understand the basics of key frames—what they really are and how to control what happens using those two windows in the Motion screen—you’re on your way.



Figure 05.

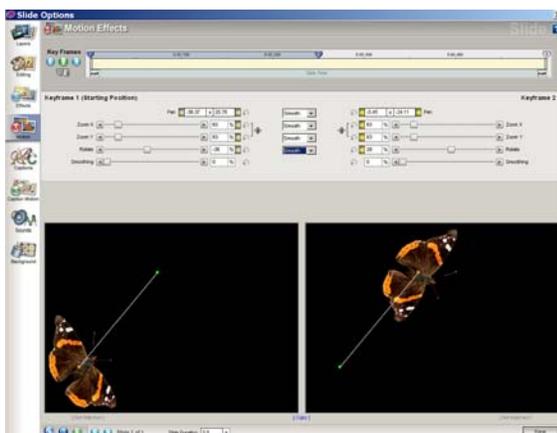


Figure 06.

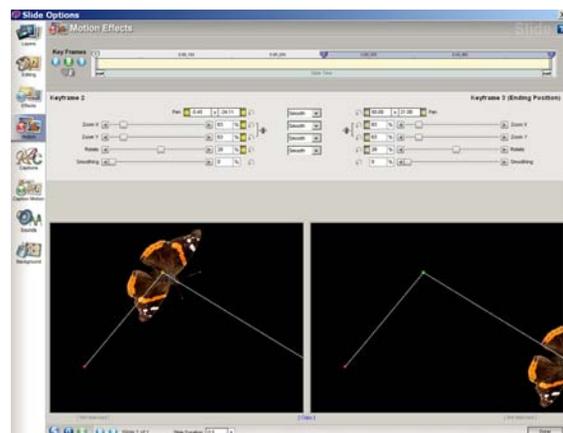


Figure 07.

Revolving-Door Effect

Two images appear interlinked and revolving.

1. Drop two pictures into a slide.
2. Go to the Layers screen and set the zoom for each layer to 50%.
3. Right-click on each layer and duplicate.
4. Make sure the layers are as follows:

Layer 1 = Photo A

Layer 2 = Photo B

Layer 3 = Photo B

Layer 4 = Photo A

5. Turn off Layers 2 and 3 for now.
6. Go to the Editing screen and select layer 1.
7. Choose the Crop button and change the width (left-hand number) to half its original size, rounding down to the nearest whole number if necessary. Click OK.
8. Select layer 4 and crop as you did in step #7, this time rounding up to the nearest whole number if necessary.
9. Slide the crop outline as far right as it will go and then click OK.
10. In the Motions screen, move the two halves (layer 1 and layer 4) until they match up without a gap.
11. Pan values on the left should be the same for layer 1 and layer 4, but layer 1 will be a negative number while layer 4 will be a positive number.
12. Click “Copy Start to End” for both layers.

13. Go to the Layers screen, turn off layers 1 and 4, and turn on layers 2 and 3.

14. Go to the Editing screen and repeat steps 7 through 12, but for layers 2 and 3.

15. Select layer 2 in the Motions screen, and change the pan for the ending position to 0 x 0.

16. Unlock the x/y axis on both the beginning and the ending positions.

17. Change the ending zoom for x to 0, leaving the zoom for y at 50.

18. Switch to layer 3 and change the ending pan to 0 x 0.

19. Unlock the x/y axis on both the beginning and ending zoom, and change the end zoom for x to 0.

20. Review the slide. Photo B should appear to rotate.

21. Go to the Layers screen and turn off layers 2 and 3 while turning on layers 1 and 4.

22. In the Motion screen, select layer 1.

23. Change the pan for the *beginning* position screen to 0/0.

24. Unlock the x/y axis on both sides.

25. Change the *beginning* zoom for x to 0, leaving y at 50.

26. Select layer 4 and repeat this process (steps 23 through 25).

27. Go to the Layers screen, turn on all layers, and preview the slide.

28. If you see a line where layers 1 and 4 are at the beginning of the slide, add an extremely short fade-in (.03 seconds) to both layers.

Puzzle Technique

By Mike Gregg

In Photoshop®

1. Download the free Puzzle Effects action: (*See Puzzle Effects Link, pg 59.*)

2. Open the photo you want to use, and run it through the action

3. The photo will be cut up into 20, 30 or 56 pieces depending on how many you choose.

4. The photo will be placed on a background image which you should remove by going back seven steps in history, leaving only the photo cut up into pieces.

5. In the Layers palette, each puzzle piece is in its own layer and is labeled a1, a2, a3, a4, etc.

6. Delete the background layer.

7. Unclick the little eyeball in the palette next to each layer to turn off all the individual layers.

8. Turn on each layer one at a time and save it as a PNG file. (See end NOTE if you use CS.) After each layer is saved, turn it off, turn on the next one, and save it. Do this until each layer is saved as a separate file.

9. Turn off all the layers again so nothing is showing.

10. Time to start assembling the puzzle: Whatever order you choose to put the pieces together is up to you, but choose the first piece/layer you want to start with and turn on that layer.

11. Save the file as puzzle01.png.

12. Keep that layer turned on and turn on the second layer, saving it as puzzle02.png.

13. Be sure to write down the order of the pieces you are choosing because you'll have to create your show in this same order.

14. Repeat this process until you have turned on all the layers and saved each step as a new PNG file.

In ProShow

1. Create a new show and choose a solid background color. (Don't use an image file for the background.)
2. Set it up so all images and background are set to "Fit to Safe Zone." This is very important!
3. Start by dropping in the first image file for the first puzzle piece you selected to rebuild the puzzle with. (This is why you wrote down the file names in the order you saved them.)
4. Copy and paste this slide so you have three consecutive slides with the same file.
5. In the first slide, move the image around to a different location, making sure the starting and ending position of the image is the same.
6. In the second slide, make sure the beginning position matches the previous slide, and the ending position is set to 0,0 at 100%.
7. The third slide should be set to match the end position of the second slide. Make

sure the beginning and ending positions for the image in this slide are set to 0,0 100%.

8. Immediately after the third slide, insert a blank slide using the file puzzle01.png as a background image. Make sure you have this set to "Fit to Safe Zone." This completes the placement of the first puzzle piece.

9. Repeat steps 3 through 8 for each of the remaining puzzle pieces: three consecutive slides for each piece separated by a background slide in sequence. Make sure you follow the order you wrote down.

10. Timing the slides: I chose 3 seconds for the second slide in each set (the one with motion), and 0 seconds for the first and third slides.

11. Make sure you use 0 set for the transition time.

12. For the background image I chose a duration of .5 seconds with a .5 transition afterward. Change to suit your taste.

NOTE: If you have Photoshop® CS, go to file > scripts > export layers to files. This automates the process of saving each layer as a separate file.

Puzzle Effects Link:

http://www.panosfx.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=17&Itemid=27

Moving Lines

(as per Mona)

1. Generate a solid-color image in Producer in the Options screen and in Layers by pressing + and then choosing Add Solid Color.
2. In Motion Options, unlock the x/y axes on the left so you can adjust y axis to squeeze the block of color down to a line.
3. You can shorten the line by adjusting the x axis.
4. When the line is as you want it, press Copy, and then Copy to End.
5. To move the line—for instance to the left—start it at the far right in key frame 1.
6. Take it to where you want it to end in key frame2.
7. Use additional key frames if you want the line to pause or change direction.

In the illustration, you can see that the same process might be used for any shape, such as the rectangle (see *Figure 01*).

A Possibility for Moving Lines

By using more than one line, you can create a grid. If you combine this grid with photos of varying sizes beneath it, then adjust the grid so it sits on the edges where the photos meet, you can create an effect where, first, the grid moves into place, and next, the photos show up at varying times in the blocks created by the grid. This is done by adjusting the position of key frame 1 in each of the photos so they show up at different times.

Different Kinds of Lines

The lines need not be composed of simple colors. By reducing the X or Y axis of images, you can use those as your lines.

Something to Try

Reduce the x/y axes to zero, then depending on which direction you're going in, increase the x or y axis to a thin line, then increase the other axis up to or beyond 100% so the line appears to expand outward in opposite directions from the center.

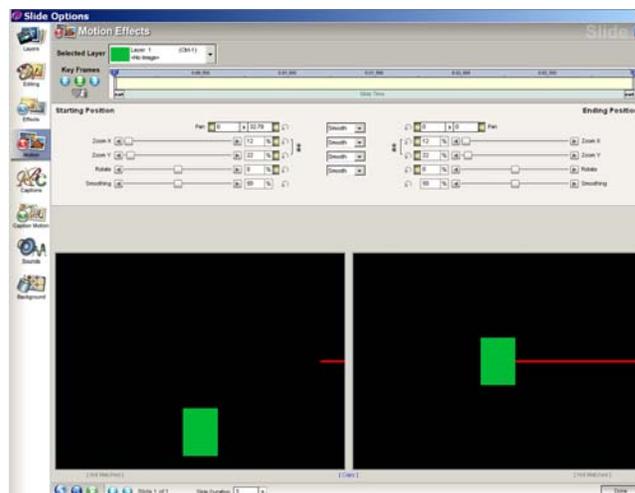


Figure 01.

Out-of-Bounds Technique

It starts here (*see Figure 01*):



Figure 01.

And it ends here (*see Figure 02*):



Figure 02.

This entire effect requires only three layers:

- Layer 1: Cutout from the original image.

- Layer 2: Frame on a background large enough to conceal layer 3 even when this third layer is at full zoom (*see Figure 03*).

- Layer 3: Original image (*see Figure 04*).

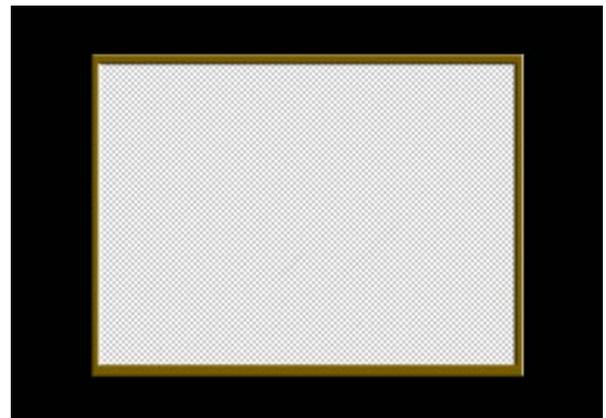


Figure 03.

A suitable image for this technique has the subject in full view, no small part of it hidden by any other object in the scene (*see Figure 04*):



Figure 04.

The only part of the cutout that needs to be cut with extreme care is the section that will appear in front of the frame. The rest need only be erased close to the cutout portion (*see Figure 05*):



Figure 05.

Producer Instructions for OOB

Leave the picture frame as is and then set up four identical key frames for layers 1 and 3 as below:

1. Key frames 1 and 2: both layers start and end in their original positions
2. Key frame 3: Set layer 1's zoom so the object appears to have slipped forward and out of the frame. It's possible you might have to pan a bit to get everything looking correct. Copy all settings to layer 3.

3. Key frame 4: Copy the settings from key frame 3 to key frame 4 for both layers so that the image stops outside the frame border, lingering for however long you want it to linger—perhaps a second or so.

Gold Instructions for OOB

Slide One:

1. Layers are set up so it appears to be a simple, framed photograph.
2. Copy and paste this slide to the next one.

Slide Two:

1. Zoom (and pan if necessary) layer 1 in the right-hand window until it appears that the object has slipped beyond the bounds of the frame.
2. Apply the identical settings to layer 3.
3. Copy the end positions of the three layers to the next slide.

Slide Three:

Give it 1 or 2 seconds to remain on screen before transitioning out.

Screen Coordinates

Everything from the center of the screen up is a negative number.

Everything from the center of the screen left is a negative number.

Everything from the center of the screen down is a positive number.

Everything from the center of the screen right is a positive number.

In the position boxes:

The left-hand box is the horizontal axis

The right-hand box is the vertical axis

If you can't, like most of us, remember which box is which, draw a picture of the boxes, insert the directional arrows in their respective spots, and then tape the picture to the bottom of your monitor.

Motion Style Controls

- **Linear:** the object proceeds at a steady pace, starting and ending at the same speed.

- **Accelerate:** the object begins slower and picks up speed as it goes, coming to a screeching halt at its destination.

- **Decelerate:** the object starts off at a good clip, then slows down as the destination is approached.

- **Smooth:** the object starts off a bit slower, speeds up as it moves toward its destination, then slows back down as it nears its destination.

Note: If the duration of motion is short, you may see little difference amongst the settings.

Zoom Beyond 500%

Though the slider for setting zoom indicates that 500% is the top limit, it isn't. You can type in a larger percentage, but you should remain alert to possible quality loss. Solid blocks of color and images used as masks aren't as prone to damage.

Twinkling Star

1. In a photo editing program, create a star shape (white or perhaps yellow) on a transparent background.
2. In ProShow, place the star as a layer over the picture where you want the star.
3. Zoom it in and out very quickly for a duration of what might be no more than .1 seconds. (Producer: use key frames. Gold: use separate slides of short duration.)
4. If you like, you can overlay the star with a much smaller one that's slightly offset, doing the same thing with zoom, possibly getting more of the twinkle effect.

NOTE: This often works better with a star like that seen on Christmas cards where a vertical line and a horizontal line form a cross, and then there's an "X" at the intersection of the vertical and horizontal lines.

Moving Road on a Map

1. Layer 1: A copy of the original map with the road deleted, leaving a transparent line instead.
2. Layer 2: A large rectangle of whatever solid color you'd like for the line.
3. Layer 3: The original map.
4. In Motions, start the color layer (layer 2) at the beginning of the "road," and then pan it so it slowly fills the entire road from beginning to end.

Note: The map in layer 3 fills in the transparent area so the original road is visible until the colored “line” starts moving beneath layer 1.

Flipping Pictures

A picture appears to flip, either to a reversed version of itself or to a different picture as if a card was being flipped over.

1. Use 3 key frames per picture.
2. Set the zoom to manual and unlock the x/y axis.
3. Set the “x” zoom value to 0 for key frame 1 and key frame 3
4. Set the “x” zoom value to 100 for key frame 2
5. Copy this slide to the next slide
6. Set the transition between the two slides to 0 seconds.
7. In Editing Options for the second slide, click the “flip horizontal” box.

Handwriting Effect

1. In an image editor, start with either a scanned image of handwriting or something done with one of the many fonts that simulate handwriting.
2. Erase little bits of the text at a time, going from the end to the beginning and saving each tiny increment as a separately named file.
3. To make sure the files are organized in a series, give each a number such as Writing001, Writing002, etc.

4. When you bring them into ProShow, you’ll have to put them in reverse order so the very first picture has the highest number, and the very last has the lowest number such as Writing001 in the example above.

5. Use a cut for all transitions and set slide durations to 0.033.

6. If desired, save the series as an AVI so you can drop it into any show.

(OR)

Try Dave Fitzpatrick’s VisiSketch, which comes in two flavors. You can download the “Lite” version for free in “Member Created Files” on the forum, and then if you like what it does and want a whole lot more, you can purchase the “Pro” version.

Morph a Face

Most commonly used for a series of pictures taken through the years of one person

Method #1

1. First, insert all of the pictures you want to use in the progression.
2. Go to Captions for the first slide.
3. Type two O’s (upper or lower case depending on size needed), putting a space between them.
4. Click on Captions Motion and move the O’s until each is in the center of an eye.
5. You may need to change the size of the picture or the font a bit.

Method #2

1. Insert all pictures you plan to use in the slides.
2. Copy the first picture to the next slide.
3. With “darken inactive layers” turned on, click on the picture just beneath the one you copied to the slide, and line up the eyes.
4. Once the pictures are properly aligned, delete layer 1, which is the image you copied to this slide.
5. Repeat from Steps 2 through 4 for each slide, getting the eyes in each image aligned with the eyes in the image previous to it.
6. Try a slide time of 1 second with a fade of 1 second.

Moving Clouds

1. Using a picture of clouds and in your image editor, erase everything but the clouds, giving the edges of the clouds a slight feathering so they won’t look pasted on.
2. Make sure the clouds are on a transparent background. (The method for doing this depends on the image editor you use, so the process isn’t described here.)

3. Save as a PNG to preserve transparency.
4. In ProShow, layer the cloud image over the original.
5. Reduce the opacity of the cloud layer until it looks realistic.
6. Pan the cloud layer from left to right or vice versa.

NOTE: You can use the same process to create moving water.

Shake Effect

Using multiple slides of the same photo, move every other photo to a very slightly different position. Use no transitions and a slide duration of about .05 seconds.

Set Same Zoom to All Slides

1. Add all the photos first.
2. Choosing any slide, and in Layers, select one of the layers, setting it to the zoom you want.
3. Right-click the zoom number and choose “Copy zoom to all layers on all slides.”

Section V

Captions

Type Basics

by Barbara Coultrey

Most important to keep in mind when using type is that it's not there to be admired. It should be easy to read and should never draw undue attention to itself.

Caps vs. Lowercase: All caps should be reserved for titles, but use lowercase for lines of text because it's much easier to read.

Serif vs. Sans Serif: Sans serif is good for titles, but be careful using it for anything more than a small amount of text. People read serif fonts with far more ease.

Black-on-White vs. White-on-Black: The greater the amount of text, the better off you are with dark lettering on a light background. A large amount of white text on a black background strains the eyes.

Bold vs. Regular: Bold is fine for titles but not so fine for lines of text. This is because bolding fills in the spaces between the letters, crowding them and reducing readability.

I hate Arial, but this will show what happens when it's bold.

I hate Arial, but this will show what happens when it's bold.

Justified: This is most often reserved for large blocks of text such as you find in books.

This is justified text, which is what you'll commonly encounter in full-length books. Though very readable in that context, the odd spacing that can occur in short amounts of text can drive you nuts.

Unjustified – flush left, ragged right: Perhaps the easiest to read, though do watch that the right side doesn't become so ragged that it creates a distracting visual design:

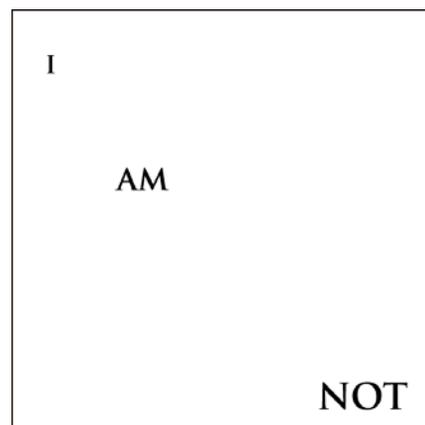
If you're not careful, the ragged right can end up making unfortunate shapes that distract people from your sentences.

Unjustified – flush right, ragged left: Reserve this for very short bits of text or avoid it altogether. Though interesting to look at, it puts high demand on the reader because it's unnatural. For example...

How easy is it to read ragged-left text with the left side jutting out over there and poking in here?

Centered: Good only for small amounts of text because it can be difficult to read. It's perfect for titles and invitations such as you might find in a wedding show, and can work with poetry.

Asymmetrical: This is text with no consistent positioning and is used when the text works as if it were an image such as seen below.



Decorative Fonts: They tend to be difficult to read and can quickly draw attention away from an image. For these two reasons, reserve them for emphasis in titles, which is what they were really designed for in the first place.

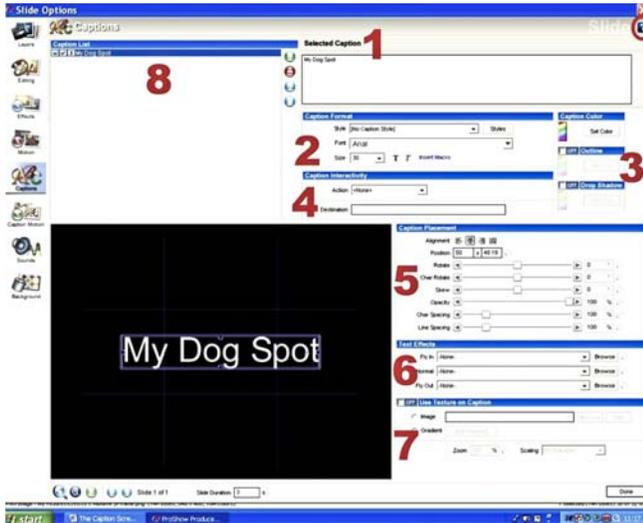
Choosing a Font: Ask yourself what you're trying to say in your show and then choose a font that reflects the idea. You wouldn't use the very casual Comic Sans for a show about a gothic cathedral,

nor would you use an elegant font such as TRAJAN PRO for a child's birthday. Look at a font. What does it remind you of? How does it feel? Is it friendly? Authoritative? Classy? Silly? Loud? You want the font to say the same thing your show is saying.

Color: Tread carefully with bold colors. If the color isn't repeated elsewhere in the slide such as in a frame, it can draw attention to how the text looks rather than to what the text says.

The Caption Screen

by Anna



(The above illustration is numbered to identify the areas of the screen described below.)

1. Selected Caption: Type captions here.

2. Caption Format: Here you can choose multiple settings for your caption such as font, size, and **bold/italics**.

- Select a font size from one of the pre-sets or type in the size you want.
- Insert Macros: Macros allow you to insert specific information (i.e. slide number) into your slide.
- The Style menu offers several pre-set caption/font options you can apply to your caption once it's typed.

The Style menu also provides a place to save templates for special captions you've created. To create a caption template:

- A. Type your caption and choose all settings such as color, font, size, fly-ins, texture, etc.
- B. Click on the word "Styles" to the right of the Style menu. You'll see an option to add a new style based on the current caption.
- C. Click "Add" and select the caption features you want included in the template.

3. Caption Color: Set colors for the font, outline, and drop shadow.

4. Caption Interactivity: These options are only available for shows played on a PC. Consult the Photodex manual or the Help menu for more information.

5. Caption Placement:

- **Alignment:** align text to the left, center, right, or justified
- **Position:** sets the starting point on the screen for the caption. This position can be changed by typing in new numbers or by clicking and dragging the caption on the preview screen. Position points set here can be over-riden by position points set on the Caption Motion

screen. (To reset positions to default, click the curved arrow to the right of the position bar.)

- **Rotate:** Rotates the entire caption up to 360%.
- **Character rotation:** Rotates the individual characters in the caption.
- **Skew:** Slants all characters in the caption to the left or right.
- **Opacity:** Can be set from 0% to 100%.
- **Character Spacing:** Sets the amount of space between the individual characters in a caption.
- **Line Spacing:** Sets the amount of space between the individual lines in a multi-line caption.

All settings are over-ridden by any adjustments made in the Caption Motion screen. Right-click on any setting to see options for applying these settings to the captions on this or other slides.

6. Text Effects: Determines how the caption will enter the slide, behave while onscreen, and exit the slide. Click the down arrow at the end of the selection bar to see a list of pre-set motions. Click the Browse bar to see a preview screen. Right-click any setting to see options for applying these settings to the captions on this or other slides.

7. Use Texture on Caption: To activate this feature, click the box to the left, then click either “Image” or “Gradient.”

- Image allows you to set an image as the “color” of your caption. Fat fonts work best for this option. Choose the image by clicking the Browse button. Clicking the Edit button will open up your image editor if you want to edit the image.

- Gradient will fill the font characters with gradient color. Click Edit Gradient to change the type of gradient and the colors.

- Zoom increases or decreases the size of the image or gradient being used to fill the caption. To discard changes you don’t want, click the curved arrow to go back to the default size.

- Scaling offers three options for sizing the image or gradient: Fill character is the lowest zoom and will show the most pattern. Fill caption is the middle zoom, followed by Fill Frame, the largest zoom.

8. Caption List: Displays all your captions. Clicking once on a caption will select the caption for editing.

To the left of each caption on the Caption List are three square toggle buttons:

- Far-left box: This is for “Global” captions. This is off by default, displaying one square in the box. When clicked to turn it on, 3 overlapping squares are displayed indicating that caption will appear on all slides.

If you want this caption to appear on every slide, turn on global captions for it. Then, if you want to remove the caption from any particular slide, go to that slide’s Caption screen and click the middle box, which is the “Hide/Show” option.

- Middle box: This is the “Hide/Show” option, which is turned on by default and shows a checkmark. The check mark isn’t there in the OFF position.

- Right-hand box: This is the “Caption Above/Below Transition.” In the ON position (default), the complete “T” will be visible, and the caption won’t display until the slide completely transitions in from the previous slide. When turned

OFF, only half the “T” is visible, and the caption will display during the transition.

If you want your caption to serve as an introduction to the slide, set the toggle to off and set a long transition-out time on the previous slide.

These choices and several more are available by right-clicking the caption in the Caption List:

- **Enable Caption** - same as the Hide/Show box.
- **Above Slide Transition** - same as the Caption Above/Below Transition box.
- **Global Show Caption.** When in the On position, a fly-out menu gives you the option to display or hide the Global caption on all slides or on just selected slides.
- **Copy To** lets you copy this caption to all slides or just selected slides.
- **Duplicate Caption** will make an exact duplicate of the caption on the slide.

- **Remove Caption** will permanently delete the caption..

To the right of the Caption List are four buttons:

- **Green “plus” button** – add more captions to the slide.
- **Red “minus” button** – deletes the selected caption.
- **Blue up/down arrow buttons** – move the selected caption to a higher or lower position in the Caption List.

The Preview area will display the captions as you’ve designed them. You can reposition captions in here by clicking and dragging them. Right-clicking in the Preview area will display a list of additional options.

Below the Preview area are buttons to enlarge or reduce the preview screen, to preview the slide, to jump to the previous or next slide, and to set the slide time.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Right-clicking on many settings gives you the option to copy that setting to all captions on selected slides, all slides, or all captions on this slide.

Macros

For adding slide numbers or file names to all or selected slides in a show.

1. Go to Show > Show Captions from the menu at the top of the screen
2. On the “Show Options” screen, select “Captions”
3. Type the phrase you want to precede the Macro (i.e. “Wedding #”)
4. In the lower right corner of the area for entering text, selecting fonts etc, there is a “Macro” button.
5. Click on it, look at the “Predefined Macros” from the pull-down list, and select the macro you want.
6. Place the caption where you want it to be on all slides. The macro will be inserted automatically after your caption.
7. Each slide in the show will have the word or phrase you’ve typed along with the selected macro.

If there is a particular slide on which you don’t want the caption displayed:

1. Choose to “Show Macro” so it is visible on all slides.
2. Open the slide where you don’t want the macro caption.
3. Click on Captions.
4. You will see the show caption you specified listed in the captions list for that slide.
5. Uncheck the box for that caption so it won’t show when the slide is played.

Notes

- If Macros are used to number slides, you can move the slides around, and the macros will automatically renumber.
- Macros are handy if you are presenting a client with a slideshow. The client can select pictures by file name.
- You can use macros at both the slide level and the show level. At show level, the captions will appear on all slides.

Global Captions on Selected Slides

1. Add your caption to the first slide, choosing font, size, etc. and including any effects.
2. Position the caption on the slide.
3. Click the little box at the far left of the caption in the caption list to turn it into a global caption and then click Done.
4. Select all the slides where you *don’t* want the caption to appear.
5. Go back to the Captions screen and right-click the Global State icon.
6. Choose Hide Global Caption on Selected Slides.

Vertical Captions

If you want to line up captions as in this example...

V
E
R
T
I
C
A
L

1. Type the caption as usual.
2. Change settings to rotate the characters -90 degrees.
3. Rotate the caption 90 degrees.

If you want three such vertical captions on the screen side-by-side and at the same height...

1. Type in the three captions.
2. Specify the exact placement with the position settings just as you would with an image.
3. Make sure all the captions have identical settings in the “Y” position so they’ll all start at the same height.

For instance and in the case of three vertical captions, if you have them positioned at 40/50 , 50/50 and 60/50, they will have space between them.

Caption On Just One of Multiple Layers

You can make a caption display on only one particular layer by using the caption key frames. Set the caption’s transition in and transition out key frame times to coincide with the transition in and out of the layer you want the caption to display on.

Fly-in, Fly-out Captions for ProShow Gold

Make the text an image with a transparent background in any editor, then handle it as you would any other image where you’ve got all the transitions and motion available to you.

Initial Letter Different from Rest

1. Divide the caption word into two separate captions, the first caption being just

the first letter of the first word.

2. Set that single letter to the font, size, and color you want.
3. The second caption is the rest of the word plus any additional words
4. Line the two captions up side-by-side on the Caption Motion screen.
5. Make sure all movement—fly-in/fly-out, etc.—is the same for both captions

Backward Fold In/Out Effect

1. For example purposes, use a 6-second slide with 3-second transitions in and out.
2. Construct a caption.
3. Set the fly-in to “Fade Fold In”
4. Set Normal to “None”
5. Set the fly-out to “Fade Fold Out”
6. Right-click this caption in the Slide List and click Duplicate to get two identical captions
7. Click to select caption #1. This will be the “backward” caption.
8. Set the caption rotation to -180
9. Set the character rotation to +180.
10. Go to Caption Motion and for caption #1:
 - a. Set start point to 2.250 seconds
 - b. Set end point to 6.0 seconds
11. Select caption #2. This will be the “normal” caption.
12. Set the caption rotation to 0

13. Set the character rotation to 0
14. For caption #2:
 - a. Set start point to 4.500 seconds
 - b. Set end point to 9.75 seconds

Notes:

- You might find that, though the second caption was created by duplicating the first, they appear out of alignment. Make adjustments to caption positioning to remedy this.
- The length of your caption might require altering the start and end points of each caption to give the desired effect.
- You can play with the length of the fly-in and fly-out settings by clicking and dragging the double-headed arrow that appears when you hover over it with the mouse.

Color Changes as Caption Moves

1. Type in the caption.
2. Go to Caption Motion screen.
3. Add two key frames.
4. In the middle of the Caption Motion screen, you will see two boxes: “Color Start” and “Color End.”
5. Select key frame 1 and set both the color start and color end to white.
6. Select key frame 2 and set both the color start and color end to yellow.
7. Select key frame 3 and set both the color start and color end to white.

The color of the caption will change in conjunction with the movement you have assigned to each key frame.

Multiple Lines Fade in One at a Time

1. Choose a slide time more than long enough to read every line—at least 1 to 2 seconds per line.
2. Choose “Fade Down” for the fly-in
3. Pull the fly-in transition bar well over to the right, leaving about 3 or 4 seconds at the end of the keyframe for the entire caption to remain on screen.
4. Choose a simple fade for the fly-out.

Multi-colored Letters in Single Caption

(Thanks to Joe aka “Heckydogg”)

Applying a separate color to each letter in a caption usually involves placing each of those letters in a separate caption, but the advantage to doing it this way is that it allows the caption to remain whole, thus making it much easier to manipulate. If you move the caption, it moves as a single unit where no tedious fiddling is required, particularly when using key framing.

1. Type in the caption.
2. Choose a gradient with the desired colors.
3. Add extra markers to the gradient where each color meets to turn the gradient into color bars.
4. Adjust the added markers so they’re a portion of 100% using this formula: 100% divided by the number of letters in the caption. Thus, if it’s 3 letters, the extra markers are placed at the 33% and 67% points, resulting in 3 colored bars. If it’s 4 letters, the markers are at 25%, 50%, and 75%, resulting in 4 colored bars.
5. Adjust the angle to 0° to get vertical stripes.

6. Adjust the zoom.
7. Set the Scaling to “Fill Caption.”

Just the First Letter

If you want only the first letter a different color, count the number of letters, use the same formula, and then place just the first extra marker in the gradient. For instance, if the title is “The Rockies,” there’s a total of 10 letters plus one space, bringing the count to 11. Dividing 100% by 11 results in approximately 9%, which is where you should place the marker.

Picture Inside Text

Easy way:

1. Create caption.
2. Choose “Use Texture on Caption” and select “Image.”
3. Browse for the image you want to show through the letters.
4. You have a choice to Fill Character, Caption, or Frame. Try each to see which you like.

More involved but has more possibilities:

1. Add a blank slide.
2. Go to Captions screen.
3. Add the word(s) in a large, fat white font and exit the screen.
4. Select the caption slide, and if necessary, manually play the slide until the caption is on the preview screen.
5. Right-click the preview screen.
6. Choose to Capture Frame and save it as a file.

7. Drag the newly made file into a new slide.
8. Go to Layers in the Options screen.
9. Select the text picture and choose to make it a mask (Grayscale).
10. Add a photograph as a second layer beneath the mask.

Rolling Credits

1. Read the text out loud while timing yourself to see how long the slide should run.
2. Type the caption to fit on the screen, using the return key to control the length of each line. (Pay attention to the safe zone if it’s to be shown on TV.)
3. In the Caption Motion window, start the caption at the bottom of the screen and end it at the top. (You can also start it just below the screen and end it just above.)
4. Use a fade-in and fade-out.
5. Use the slider to adjust the space between each line. It’s possible that a setting of 125 or more will make the text easier to read.
6. Speed is controlled with slide duration.

Caption Changes Color While Scrolling:

Example:

1. In the Captions window, type your caption.
2. In the Caption Motion window, add two more key frames, spacing all key frames equally.

3. Key frames #1 to #2: Set the color on the left to blue and the color on the right to green.

4. In the screen on the right, move the caption up.

5. Key frames #2 to #3: Set the color on the right to yellow.

6. In the screen on the right, move the caption farther up than it is on the left.

7. Key frames #3 to #4: Set the color on the right to orange.

8. In the screen on the right, move the caption up off the screen.

Timing for a slide with scrolling captions is very dependent on the amount of text. You should err on the side of too much time allowed rather than too little.

Transparent Caption Pans & Fades

Example setup:

1. Add a photo plus a solid black image to a slide.

2. Set the solid black image as layer 1 and the photo as layer 2.

3. Insert the caption using a large, thick font.

4. Set slide time to 18 seconds.

5. Set transitions in and out to 1 second each.

6. For layer 1 (solid black layer) create 5 key frames:

- Key frame 1 = 0
- Key frame 2 = 5
- Key frame 3 = 12
- Key frame 4 = 17
- Key frame 5 = 20

7. Go to the Effects screen and set the opacity for each set of key frames as follows:

- Key frames 1 and 2 = 100%
- Key frame 3 = 18%
- Key frames 4 and 5 = 0%

8. Go to the Caption screen and choose texture for the Caption > Image, selecting the same image that was used for layer 2. Choose to “fill frame.”

9. In Caption Motion, set the caption to pan from the right side of the screen to the left.

All timing and panning can be changed to suit.

Slow Curling Effect

Captions appear as letters scattered randomly across the screen, and then they slowly twirl and drift until they settle into place so the captions are readable.

1. Allot a relatively large amount of time for the slide (at least 20 seconds.)

2. Type up your caption lines (the more the merrier.)

3. Use the “Curling” fly-in for each caption, sliding the timing bar over close to the end of the keyframe but leaving a few seconds for the captions to remain in position so they can be read before fading out.

4. If you like, use any of your favorite text effects such as a gradient or picture background.

Example for a More Complicated Setup

1. Open a blank slide.

2. Set slide time to 38 seconds and a fade-in transition if desired.

3. Go to Caption screen.
4. Type a 3-line caption.
5. Select “Curling” for fly-in and a .5 fade for fly-out.
6. Duplicate this caption by right clicking on it.
7. Go to Caption Motion screen.
8. Set opacity for caption 1 at 100% from start to finish.
9. Set opacity for caption 2 to go from 100% to 0% start to finish.
10. Set three key frames for each caption:
 - Key frame 1 = 0.00
 - Key frame 2 = 35
 - Key frame 3 = 38
11. Set fly-in time for both captions to about 35 seconds.

12. At key frame 1, position the first caption to begin in the upper left-hand corner of the screen and the second caption to begin in the lower right-hand corner of the screen. Set key frame 2 for both captions at position 50 x 50.

13. Set key frame 3 for both captions at position 50 x 50.

Wingding as a Picture

Insert a shape from the Wingding font (or any other picture font), increase its point size, fill it with an image or gradient, and add any other text effects you like including fly-in and fly-out. For instance, you can use a circle to insert the photo of a daisy, a diamond for a violet, and a square for a tulip. Each flies in separately. This is only a simple example, but with a little thought, some interesting effects can be accomplished.

Alternatively and once the shape and its fill have been inserted, the frame can be captured, saved, and then used as an ordinary image layer.

Section VI

Masks

Elementary Masking

by Barbara Coultrey

The masks we use in Producer do what a real-life mask does: hide some things while revealing others. A Halloween mask might hide a person's nose, cheeks, and forehead while revealing the eyes and mouth. A mask in Producer can be used to do exactly the same thing. And more.

Frames and masks are often confused at first. A frame will, in its most common form, be a picture with a transparent area that we can see through to the layer beneath (*see Figure 01*).



Figure 01.

A mask is fancier than a frame, can do quite a bit more, and it can do it without ever being visible.

Grayscale Masking

Basic Mask #1

1. In your image editor, create a picture that's totally black.
2. In the middle of all that blackness, place a circle, square, or anything else of your choosing, filling this shape with white.

3. Save this picture and go into Producer.
4. Drag any photo of your choosing onto a slide.
5. Now drag the black-and-white picture you created on top of that photo. (Ctrl-click while dragging.)
6. Go into Layer Options, and with the b&w image selected (it should be layer one), put a checkmark into the box to indicate that this layer is a mask.
7. Make sure the drop-down box says "Grayscale (Intensity)"
8. Look at the preview pane.

You've just created a mask. Wherever the mask is white, the picture immediately below shows through, and wherever it's black, the third layer shows through. Because there's no actual third layer, the background (working essentially as if it were a layer) shows where the mask is black (*see Figure 02*).

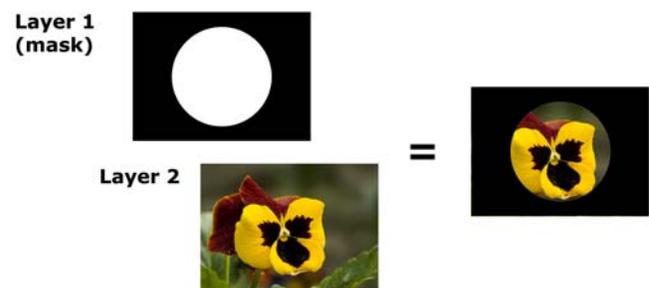


Figure 02.

Basic Mask #2

1. Go to Background Options and choose to “Override background color.”
2. Pick any color other than black—say, red.
3. Look at the preview. What was black is now red (see *Figure 03*).

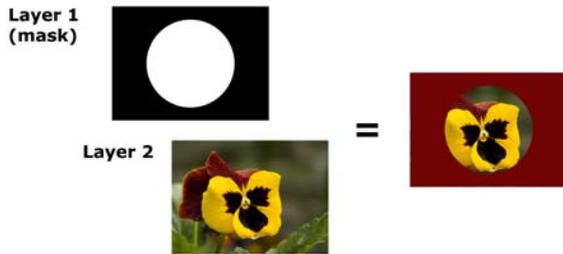


Figure 03.

Basic Mask #3

1. Bring another photo into the slide.
2. In Layer Options, select this new photo, and using the down-arrow button, place it in the Layer 3 position.
3. Look at the preview. You should see the third layer appearing wherever the mask is black (see *Figure 04*).

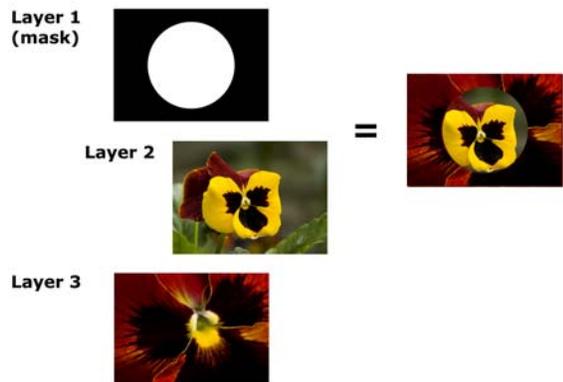


Figure 04.

Basic Mask #4:

1. Using the same setup as in Basic Mask #3, add one more photograph.

2. Using the “down” button, move that photograph until it’s positioned as layer 3.
3. Click the right-arrow button, which will add it as one of the masked layers.
4. Now look at the preview.

As shown in *Figure 05*, nothing has happened because Layer 2 is covering up Layer 3. You can remedy this with a single change in keyframing.

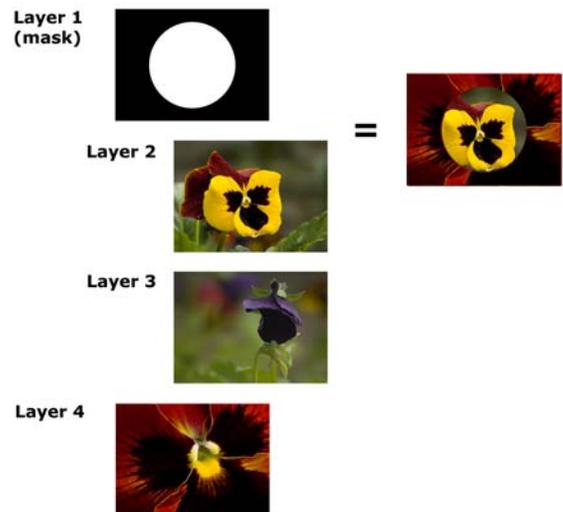


Figure 05.

In Motion Options with Layer 2 selected, slide the second (last) marker to the left so it’s positioned at approximately the halfway point in the timeline. Figure 6 shows what happens in a six-second slide (see *Figure 06*).

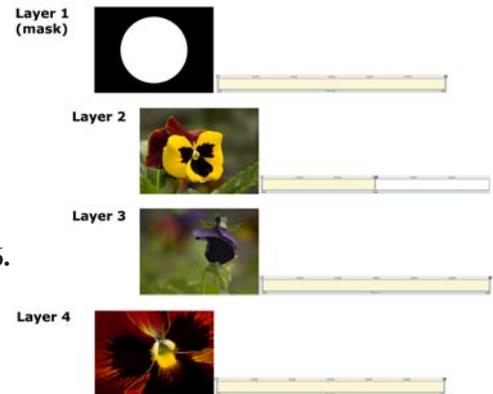


Figure 06.



When gray is used—Gray is neither black nor white, but a mixture of the two. This means there will also be a mixture of the masked layer and the first layer outside the mask. A lighter gray shows more of the masked layer, and a darker gray shows less of the masked layer and more of the first layer outside the mask. Thus, if the circle used in the above examples doesn't have a hard, well-defined edge but instead has a feathered edge where the white blends slowly down into black, the masked layer along that edge will slowly blend down into the first layer outside the mask, creating a much softer edge.

Alpha Masking

An alpha mask works *exactly* the same way as a grayscale mask except that where the alpha mask is opaque (color doesn't matter), the layer being masked shows through, and where the alpha mask is transparent, the first layer outside the mask shows through. In other words:

Grayscale	Alpha
White	Opaque
Black	Transparent
Gray	Translucent

Alpha Masking Practice

(suggested by Dale)

Create a four-paned “window” using 8 layers and 4 masks.

1. Take any image and duplicate it seven times for a total of 8 layers.
2. Set all odd-numbered layers as alpha masks.
3. Change all masks (layers 1,3,5, and 7) to 25% zoom (beginning and end)
4. Set the pan coordinates of mask 1 to 25, 25
5. Set the pan coordinates of mask 2 to -25,-25
6. Set the pan coordinates of mask 3 to -25, 25
7. Set the pan coordinates of mask 4 to 25, -25
8. Set the slide time to 3 seconds with a crossfade transition at the end.

Try changing the ending zoom from 25 to 50% on all four mask layers so they'll expand until the entire photo is revealed. If you increase the ending zoom to 100% on all four mask layers, the windows will close faster.

Four Ways to Create Masks Inside Producer

1. In Editing Options use “colorize” to convert a picture to grayscale. Adjust white and black points along with contrast to get the proportions and intensity desired in the mask. Set as a grayscale mask.
2. Add a “Solid Color” layer, sizing it by using the x/y coordinates, and then turn it into an alpha mask.
3. Add a gradient layer with transparency, choosing its style and adjusting the sliders to get the shape and transparency desired. Use as an alpha mask.
4. Do the same as above with the gradient layer, but choose one without transparency, and set as a grayscale mask. (It might be easier to visualize if just black and white components are used.)

NOTE: Any mask created as above can be saved to your masks folder by previewing the mask full-screen, right-clicking, and choosing to capture the screen. Alternatively, use the Print Screen key to copy the image to the Clipboard. Open your image editor, create a new document, paste the picture, flatten the layers, and then save it in whatever resolution and file format you wish.

Circle Spotlight

A spotlight moves over a picture, lighting parts of the picture as it moves. What isn't in the spotlight is dimmed.

Setup

Layer 1 – The mask, which is a white circle with soft edges on black. Set to grayscale.

Layer 2 – A photo set at 100% opacity and masked by Layer 1.

Layer 3 – Duplicate of the above photo, set to 40% opacity, and placed outside the mask.

Set movements as desired to spotlight different areas of the photograph.

Word Masks

1. Add a blank slide.
2. Double-click on the blank slide and go to Captions.
3. Add your word in a large and fat white font. Click Done.
4. Click on the newly made word slide and then manually play the slide in the timeline until you see the word show up.
5. Right-click in the preview area.
6. Choose “capture frame” and save it to a file (remembering where you placed it).
7. Go back to the folders list, find the file you just saved, and pull it into your show as a new slide.
8. Double-click the new slide and choose Layers.
9. Highlight the layer with your caption and set it as a mask.
10. Add your photograph behind it to show through.

Example #1

These instructions demonstrate how to achieve a foreground with a see-through caption that slowly changes opacity to reveal the underlying image.

1. Drag an image into a slide.
2. Set the slide time to 18 seconds with a 1-second transition in and out.
3. Double-click to open Slide Options and go to Layers.

4. Click “Add Another Layer” and select “Add Solid Color” (black).
5. Go to Captions and create a caption using a large, thick font.
6. Set “Text Effects” to None in all three options.
7. Go to Effects.
8. For Layer One (the black layer), set 5 key frames:

Key frame 1 = 0.00

Key frame 2 = 5.00

Key frame 3 = 12.00

Key frame 4 = 17.00

Key frame 5 = 20.00

11. Set the beginning and ending opacity for Layer One as follows:

Key frame 1-2 = 100/100

Key frame 2-3 = 100/18

Key frame 3-4 = 18/0

Key frame 4-5 = 0/0

12. Go to Captions and click “Use Texture on Caption.”

14. Select “Image” and insert the same image file as used in Layer 2.

15. Select “Fill Frame” and click Done.

Example #2 (Moving Word Mask Using 2 Images)

1. Use the method above or an image editor to create a word mask with a transparent background.

2. Put 3 layers on a slide:
 - a. Layer 1 = the word mask
 - b. Layer 2 = image A
 - c. Layer 3 = image B
3. On Layer 1, check “This Layer Is A Mask,” choosing Alpha Transparency.
4. Go to the Motion screen and set any movement you like for Layer 1. In this effect, Layer 2 will display as the word-fill against the backdrop of Layer 3.

[or]

Follow the same steps as in Example #1 but check the Invert box. This time, Layer 3 will display as the word fill against the backdrop of Layer 2.

Example #3 (Captions can normally display only on top of all layers, but...)

1. Create a caption in the center of a blank black slide and then save it as a JPG.
2. Drag the JPG caption image into a new slide. (This will end up as Layer 3.)
3. Go to Layers and add an image. (This will end up as Layer 2.)
4. Add a gradient linear mask, which will be Layer 1.

Once the layers are in place, add desired motion to Layer 3.

Rolling Ball with Shading

If a ball rolls in front of you from left to right, the shading on the lower part of the ball remains the same because the light hasn't changed. To create this same effect in Producer, a mask with the proper shading is used. Because the ball image rotates but the mask doesn't, the shadowed area remains as it should at the bottom of the ball (*see Figure 01*).

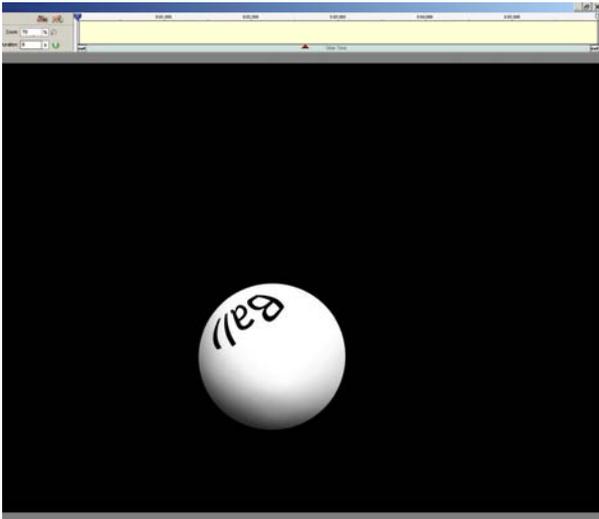


Figure 01.

In Image Editor

1. Either do a cutout of a real ball (no shading) or create a simple ball shape on a transparent background, adding any decoration you wish to the ball. Save. (*See Figure 02.*)
2. Do a “Save As” on the same image, adding the word “Mask” to its name.
3. Paint or fill the ball with white.
4. Fill the transparent area with black.
5. Flatten.

6. To create the shadowed area, use a gradient—

- a. Select the white area with a feather setting of at least 50.
- b. Invert the selection and move it so the area of the ball you want shaded is inside the selection.
- c. It's best to build up the gradient, so set it at around 40% opacity, then do a number of passes with it from different angles.

7. Save (*see Figure 03*).

The ball (*Figure 02*):



Figure 02.

The mask (*Figure 03*):

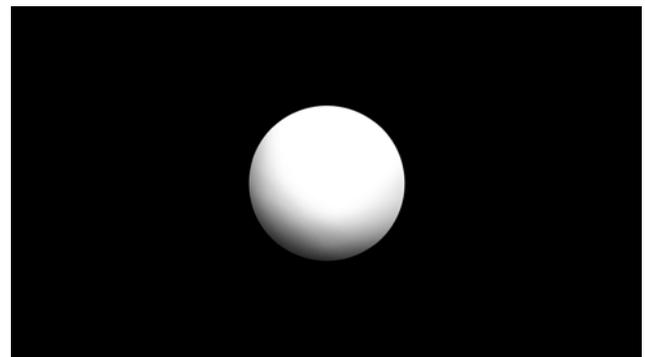


Figure 03.

In Producer

1. Add the ball image to a slide.
2. Set up the ball's rotation and its pan across the screen.

- Rotation: If moving from left to right, start with a rotation of -360 degrees at keyframe 1. If moving from right to left, start with a rotation of $+360$ degrees.

- Pan: Keep the vertical pan (right-side box in settings) identical in the first and second key frames.

3. Duplicate the ball.
4. Remove the rotation for Layer 1.
5. Replace Layer 1 with the mask image.
6. Set Layer 1 as a grayscale mask.

Set the duration of the slide according to how fast you want the ball to roll. A few tests with various durations will help you figure it out.

Motion screen (*see Figure 04*):

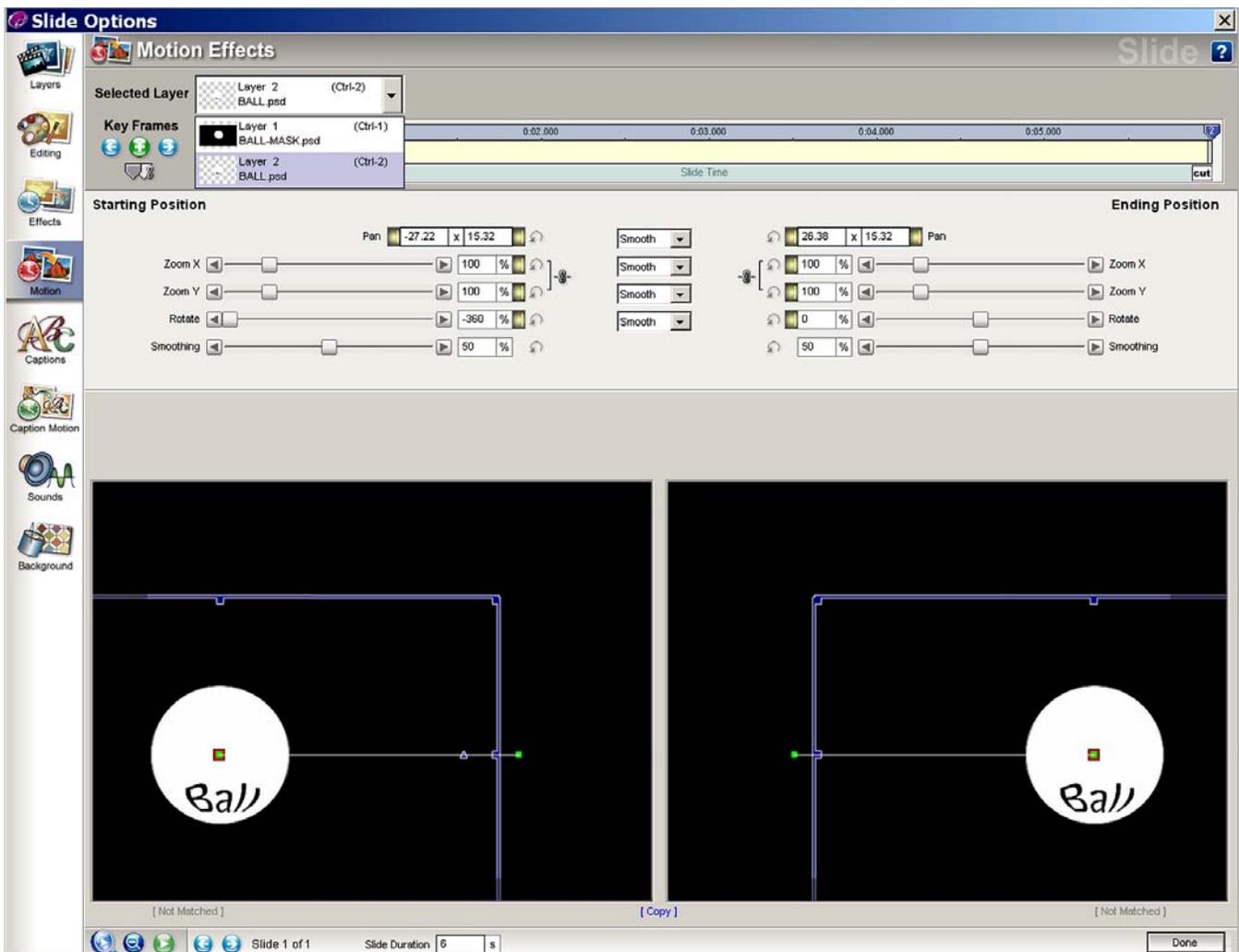


Figure 04.

Magnifying Glass Effect (demystified by Iris and Barbara)

1. Find or take a photo of a magnifying glass.

a. To photograph it, make sure it's on a background of strongly contrasting color.

b. In your image editor, create a cutout of the magnifying glass, leaving just the framework. Even the glass portion should be removed.

c. Leaving the cutout on a transparent background, save it as a PNG file (*see Figure 01*).



Figure 01.

2. Still in your image editor, create a mask that's just the circular glass portion of the magnifying glass.

a. Before you do this, choose to "Save As" so you don't inadvertently save what you're about to do over your cut-out image.

b. Select just the circular area where the glass was and fill it with white.

c. Invert the selection and paint all that area with black.

d. Flatten the image and convert it to grayscale (smaller file size).

e. Do not crop this image! It needs to be the same dimensions as those of the magnifying glass image.

f. Save as a PNG file (*see Figure 02*).



Figure 02.

3. In Producer, drag the photo you want to magnify into a slide that's at least 20 seconds long.

4. Duplicate the image and zoom this duplicate to approximately 200%.

5. Add the mask you created.

6. Current layer order:

a. Layer 1 – Mask

b. Layer 2 – Enlarged image

c. Layer 3 – Original image

7. Select Layer 1 and make it a grayscale mask.

8. Using however many key frames are required, move the mask around the image just as you'll want it to move in the final slide, remembering to pause it whenever you want the magnified image to remain for a moment onscreen.

9. Once you have all the movement set, right-click the mask layer and choose to duplicate it.

10. Right-click the duplicate (Layer 1) and use "Select" to replace it with the cutout image of the magnifying glass. This does two things:

- a. It places the cutout in the Layer 1 position where it needs to be.
- b. It contains the exact key-framed motions you set for the mask so you don't have to manually set everything.

11. Preview the slide and tweak timing and fades if necessary.

The image below shows the setup (see **Figure 03**). (The preview does not represent the final effect.)

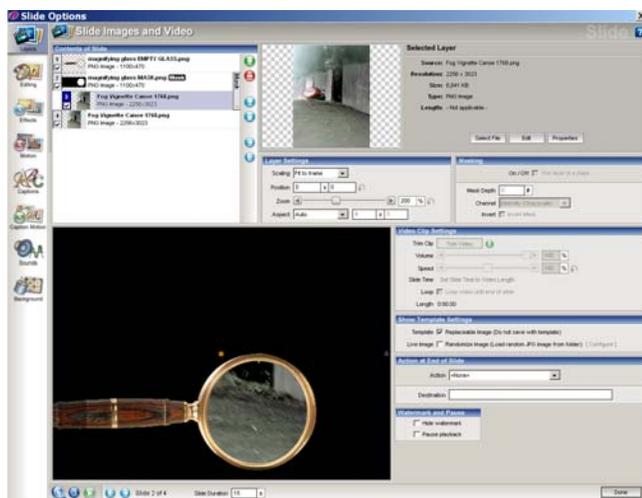


Figure 03.

Example image used (**Figure 04**):



Figure 04.

Result with applied effect (**Figure.05**):



Figure 05.

Variations: You don't have to use a magnifying glass. It could just as well be a picture frame, eyeglasses, a monocle, or whatever else you care to dream up.

Notes

- No two images are alike, which means you'll have to make adjustments in magnification and motion. For this reason, the instructions can be no more than a general guideline.
- You may find you have to add small amounts of motion to the magnified layer, particularly when using the photograph of a group of people such as a school class picture. This is because you need the blowup of a face positioned exactly as it would appear if a real magnifying glass were used to view the image.
- You can add a shadow beneath the magnifying glass that travels along with it.

Section VII

Transitions

Survey of Transitions

By Barbara Coutry

Standards



Figure 01. Cut, crossfade, and random.

Cut

Is there a strong beat?

If so, we might want to use the cut, which forces a photo to pop onto the screen in perfect sync with the beat. The cut is good for cheerful shows, for making strong statements with specific pictures, and for creating a sense of activity.



The cut is often ignored, perhaps because ProShow installs with one of the crossfades as the default or because we think transitions are the rule. The software shouldn't make decisions for us, and there are no rules.

Crossfade

It comes in two flavors...

Crossfade

(Blend): The transition begins slowly, picks up speed, and then slows back down.



Crossfade (Blend) – Linear: The transition goes at a constant rate of speed.

...which means that, if the transition is set to

20 seconds, less of the incoming slide will have faded in by the 5-second mark using Crossfade (Blend) than when using the Linear version. For short transitions, the difference is negligible. It may come in handy, however, if the fade is part of a special effect where a monumentally long transition is required.

It's easier to say how not to use a crossfade than how to use it. In film, the crossfade indicates either a distinct shift in time or place, and it's sometimes used to open the first scene and close the last, but where does that leave us? Below are a few things to consider:

- Shorten the transition time. Slow fades serve no purpose when simply going from one picture to the next.
- If the outgoing and incoming slides have motion, stop the motion just prior to and just after the transition. The reason is that a transition is itself a type of motion. When you blend two slides in motion, you can easily end up with a swirling mess. (Gold users: try static duplicates of the two slides in between the two in motion—Motion Slide A to Static Slide A to Static Slide B to Motion Slide B.)
- Because music has its own transitions—most noticeable when going from verse to chorus—a longer fade matching the musical transition's length can be effective.
- Even if you've decided to use the crossfade exclusively in your show, watch out for using identical timing throughout. A consistent two-second crossfade

throughout a show coupled with five-second slides can turn hypnotic, which results in a sleeping audience.

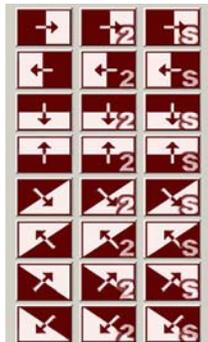
Random

Choosing to randomize transitions means you're relying on ProShow's artistic abilities, of which it has none. A chisel can't create a marble sculpture, and ProShow can't create slideshows. Only you can do that.



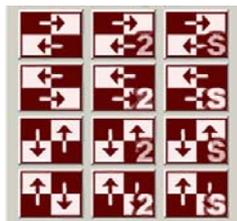
Basic Wipes

The basic wipe is... Well, it's basic. One thing to pay attention to is the direction of movement. For instance, if you have a portrait of Granny whose head is slowly lopped off by a wipe going from the top to bottom, she'll be less than pleased. Choosing a soft-edged wipe that goes left or right might be less traumatic. Save the diagonal wipes for photographs where the composition is diagonal such as a coastline that's running from the bottom left of the photo to the top right. Go with the flow of the picture, not against it.



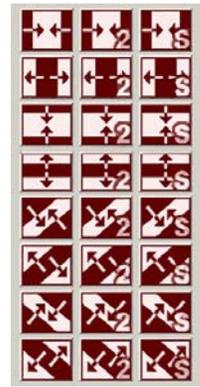
Double Wipe

It goes in two directions at once. It splits the incoming slide in half, then has those halves come at each other from opposite sides of the screen. Because it has the potential to split photographs at peculiar points, watch the effect it has on a set of pictures very closely.



Door

After the top two rows in this set, ProShow has uses names other than "door," calling them double wipes, but they're really still just doors. The door wipes, particularly those in the first four rows, are an excellent way to go between photos because they have a natural feel rather like opening a door or a window onto a scene.



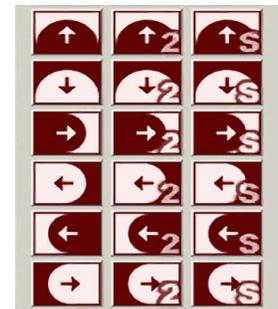
Fan

This transition is another with a natural feel to it, perhaps because it's reminiscent of curtains being drawn back manually or of a spotlight expanding.



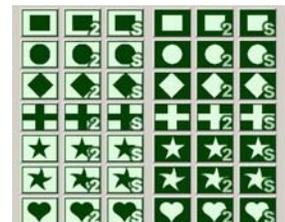
Circular Wipes

Though you may gravitate toward the soft-edged variants of the circular wipe, test the hard-edged style because it has a strong graphic quality to it that might work better in your situation.



Center Wipes

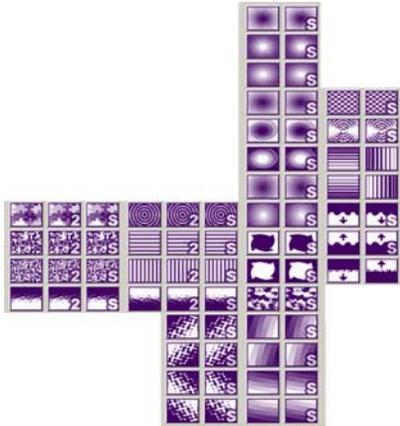
Though all the above transitions have names specific to their shapes, we can group them according to their direction of movement,



which is to either spread out from or go in toward the center. The top three rows use sedate shapes—rectangle, circle, diamond—and are, perhaps, the better choices when doing a serious show. Once you get down to stars and hearts, use caution. Their shapes should match the both photo content and overall flavor of the show.

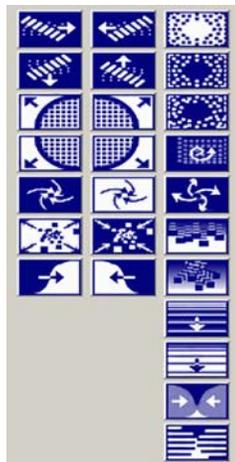
Pattern Wipes

Like the center wipe, these transitions go by various descriptive names, but they all have one thing in common—patterns. Often, they don't work well for deeply serious shows because they draw so much attention to themselves with their dots and stripes and swirls. They're happy little transitions, and so they've no place in a memorial show, for instance, but a birthday or vacation show might welcome them.



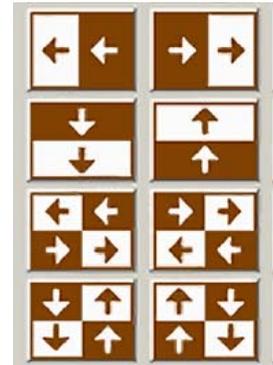
Block Wipes

Again, each of these transitions bears a descriptive name, but what they all have in common is rectangles or blocks. More than any of the other transitions, good judgement is required for their use. They're best for an upbeat, quick-moving show with equally upbeat, quick-moving music. That said, if the transition time is stretched way out, watch for interesting effects!



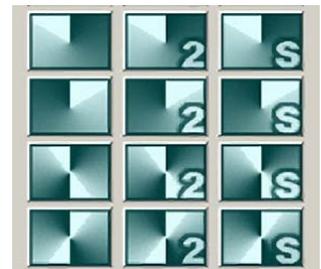
Push Wipes

The incoming slide appears to push the outgoing slide off the screen. The top two behave like a slide projector does and are, therefore, natural-feeling transitions. The two immediately beneath aren't quite as natural, but they do work well for landscape-mode pictures. The bottom four split the outgoing and incoming slides, and should be used with caution, paying close attention to how they're splitting the pictures. Some photos can be split at unfortunate points.



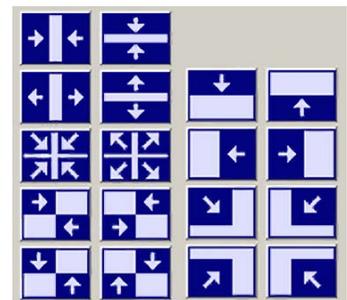
Radar Wipes

This is an interesting transition if not over-used, and ought to be matched with the idea of the image (a clock, for instance), or with the idea of the show. It has a special use in making a border travel around a picture. (See "Moving Border" pgs. 97–98.)



Slide Wipes

The second slide comes in over the first (as opposed to the push wipe where the second slide pushes the first slide out of the way). For those who use Producer and have key frames, this transition can create the effect of one picture sliding out from within another. (See "Picture Emerges from Another" pg. 95.)



A Few Transitional Thoughts

by Barbara Coultrey

- Keep the variety of transitions down to a minimum. Constantly changing transitions can distract the audience, leading them to wonder what special effect will come next instead of wondering what picture will come next.
- Try to match the transition style to the show: sedate transitions for sedate shows, funky transitions for funky shows.
- Match the motion and idea of the transition to the picture. For instance, a photo of the sun is amenable to the starburst transition. That same sun followed by a setting sun and combined with horizontal window blinds could be like watching through a window as the sun sets. Think of the connotation of the transition, what it looks like, what it reminds you of. Have a solid reason for choosing one transition over another.
- Fades can create extremely unfortunate mixtures. Think about the effect of a photograph of your mother-in-law fading into one of the family dog. Probably not a good idea.
- Transitions add motion to a show. It's possible to never rotate, pan, or zoom a single photo but still have a dynamic show because of transition. Imagine three photos on three separate slides. Photo A is placed to the left of the screen, Photo B in the center, and Photo C at the right of the screen. Using a cut between the photos, you can make the photos blink on and off, thus creating a sense of motion without ever literally applying motion. By having a long series of such photos with cuts, you can easily synchronize the quickly appearing pictures to upbeat music.
- Suggestion: In Preferences, change the default transition to a cut. When you've added the soundtrack, watch and listen. The cut gives you a clean slate, allowing you to consider if you even want a transition, and then if you do, what sort of transition you should use. Otherwise, the standard crossfade is pushed onto you.
- Those who use Producer have the ability design their own transitions with masks and key frames. If the transition doesn't exist, design it.

The Cut – What It Can Accomplish

- Create a sense of motion in a series of nearly identical pictures.
- Create motion by “popping” a series of pictures onto various parts of the screen.
- Surprise the viewer.
- Emphasize an image, particularly when coupled with a hard beat in the music.

Picture Emerges from “Slot” in Another Image

This is a simple trick using one of four similar transitions: Slide Left to Right, Slide Right to Left, Slide Top to Bottom, or Slide Bottom to Top.

There are two layers—Image One and Image Two.

1. Layer 1: Image One, which slides out from the “slot”

- Reduce size to 50% or less
- Add an outline and drop shadow if desired to give it a look of depth

2. Layer 2: Image Two, kept full-sized

3. For layer 1, move key frame 1 to the point where you want the picture to start sliding out of the cut and into view.

4. Again for layer 1, choose one of the four transitions listed above. The choice depends on the direction in which you want the image to move.



Figure 01. Slide begins.

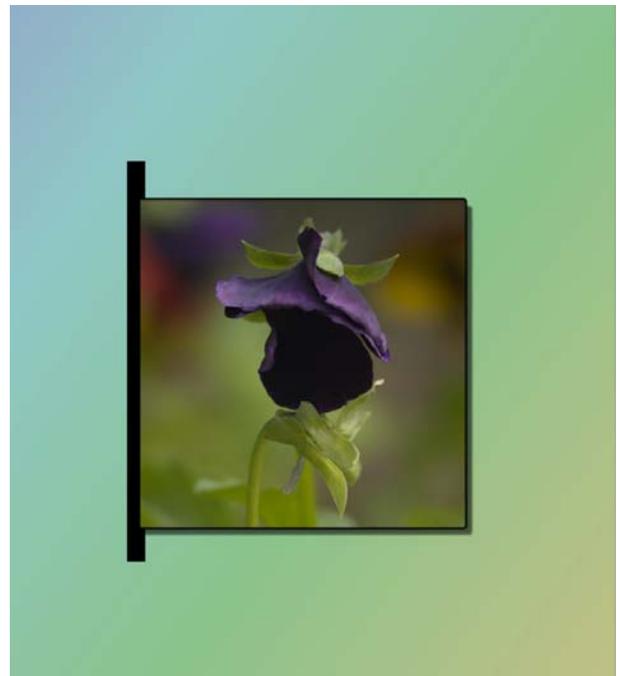


Figure 02. Slide continues.

Coming-into-focus Effect

A blurred photo is brought into focus, simulating the way a camera focuses.

(These directions are for Photoshop, but equivalents should be available in a number of image editors.)

1. Using a sharp photo, apply a Gaussian Blur of 40.
2. Make sure to use “Save As” when saving the file so you don’t overwrite the original.
3. Place the blurred image in the first slide and set its timing to .6 seconds.
4. Place the sharp image in the second slide, setting its timing to 2 seconds or for however long you want it to remain onscreen.
5. Between the two slides, use the Crossfade (Blend) transition with a timing of 5 seconds.

Camera/Lightning Flash

Camera

1. Selecting the slide where you want the effect to begin, give it a starburst-out transition of 0.1 second. (The actual effect begins *following* this slide.)
2. Insert a blank slide immediately after the above slide.

3. Override the background color on the blank slide, making it white (on the Background tab)

4. Set the duration of the white slide to 0.1 second and the transition to Cut

5. Add the flash sound effect to the white slide.

6. Locate the image that you want to appear after the “flash” occurs, and drag it into a new slide immediately following the blank white slide.

7. The easiest way to set up a series of such flashes is to copy the white slide and the image slide, then paste them immediately following the previous set, replacing the image with the one you actually want.

Lightning

1. Insert a white slide between two copies of the slide where you want the effect. Alternatively, use another copy of the photo processed so it’s extremely light and faded.

2. Use a fade transition of extremely short duration (fraction of a second) on both sides of the white slide.

3. By duplicating the second two slides, you can create a double-lightning effect.



Figure 01. Camera flash.

Moving Border Effect for Gold

Method One:

1. Drag your selected photo into a slide.
2. Double-click the slide and go to the Motions tab, setting the zoom to 50%.
3. Click on “Copy All to Next” to place an exact copy in the next slide. Click “Done.”
4. Drag the same photo to the second slide while holding down the control key as you drag.
5. Double-click this second slide and go to the Layers tab.
6. Select Layer One and click on the down-arrow to change its position to Layer 2.
7. Go to the Motions tab, select Layer 2, and set the zoom at 51%.
8. Click on Copy to End.
9. Click on the Edit tab, select the outline box, and then click on Select Color.
10. Choose white or any other color you want and then click “Done.”
11. For the transition, choose Radar-Clockwise.
12. Set the timing for whatever speed you like.

Method Two:

1. Place the chosen image in slide 1.
2. Adjust the zoom to what pleases you.
3. Using “Copy All to Next,” place the same image in slide 2.

4. Add a border to the image in slide 2.
5. Use the Radar-Clockwise transition.
6. Set the slide time to 0 seconds and transition time to around 6 seconds.

Note: Border width isn’t adjustable in Gold, so if you want a different width, use your image editor to add a border, using a copy of the image. Put the border *inside* the photo to avoid a mismatch of sizes and thus having to adjust the zoom in PSG.

Method Three:

1. In the second slide, add a solid color as the second layer.
2. Adjust the zoom of the color layer to get the desired border size.
3. Use a radar transition.

NOTE: Try other transitions to alter the effect.

Moving Border Effect for Producer

1. Add an image to a slide.
2. Set the slide time to about 5 seconds.
3. In Layer Options, reduce the image size to about 60 or 70%.
4. Duplicate the layer.
5. In Editing Options, add an outline in the color of your choice, setting the outline’s size from a fine line up to a thick one. (The maximum size is 5.)
6. In Motion Options and with Layer 1 selected, change the transition-in to “Circular Wipe - Right to Left - Soft edge”
7. Drag the transition time all the way to the end of the timeline.

Variations:

- Instead of the circular wipe, try...
 - Radar-Clockwise-Soft edge
 - Wipe-Top to Bottom-Soft edge
 - Doors-Open-Soft edge
 - Fan-Close from Top-Soft edge
 - Wipe-Upper Left to Lower Right-Soft edge
- To lower the opacity of the outline, lower the opacity of layer 1 in Editing Options.
- Colorize layer 2 in keyframe 1 so it starts out as black-and-white and turns into full color as the outline develops.
- Vary the slide time and the image size to suit you.

Custom-colored Transitions

ProShow does not offer the ability to change the color of transitions, but this workaround enables you to change their color.

1. Insert a blank slide between two image slides.

2. Open the blank slide and click on “Background.”

3. Change the background to the color you want your transition to be.

4. Set the *transition* time for the first image slide to 0.

5. Set the blank slide’s *duration* to 0.

6. Select a transition for the blank slide. You can set this transition to last as long as you want, but short times of .5 to 1.0 may look best.

Variation:

Instead of setting the background to a flat color, use a gradient or an image.

Transition Through Black

One image fades out to black and the next comes up through black.

1. Insert a blank black slide between the two images

2. Set the blank slide’s time to zero.

3. Pick transitions on either side, using duration to control the length of the entire transition.

Section VIII

Templates

Template Tutorial

by Iris Cooper

What a Template is

A template is a detailed outline of all the settings and effects in a particular show. By default, it contains none of the media (images, videos, soundtracks) from the original show.

A Template's Purpose

1. A template saves time. Simply add pictures, and they'll automatically take on the movement, key framing, rotation, opacity, size, etc. that were applied in the original show from which the template was made.
2. A template aids learning. Shared templates give people the opportunity to study intricate settings or movements such as key framing attached to images and captions.

What a Template isn't

Sometimes people share their actual slide shows—the .PSH files—and call them template, which they aren't. They are regular show files and nothing more.

Template facts:

- It has a .PST extension added to the file name
- It can only be opened via the “Show> Show Templates” menu.
- Once opened, it immediately becomes a new show in its own right but without images unless those images were deliberately saved as part of the template.

- In place of the images, there are gray placeholders ready to accept new images.

- If you choose “Show > Show Templates > Save” to turn a show into a template, you must manually choose to save images from the original show for them to become part of the template.

- A show's sounds are automatically saved in the template.

- If you choose “Show > Show Templates > Export” to save a show as a template (usually done for the purpose of sharing a template with others), all images and all sounds from the original show are removed. The end user will be presented with a “File Not Found” warning, and prompted to search for the files. To share music and images along with a template made by the Export method, you must collect them separately, uploading them along with the template.

- When you Import a template created on another machine (by you or someone else), even if sounds or images were originally attached, they won't be included in the import. You'll get a “File not Found” warning with a prompt to search for the files. If you happen to have the files available, you can opt to search, pointing Producer to the correct location.

- Producer's ready-made templates are stored in the following directory:

- Program Files/Photodex/Producer/templates
- Templates you've created are stored in the following directory: Documents and Settings/<username>/Application Data/Photodex/Proshow Producer/Templates

Opening a Ready-Made Producer Template

Producer comes with a few packaged templates. For instance, there are “3_Minute Show,” “5_Minute Show,” and “10_Minute Show.” To access them...

- Open Producer
- Go to “Show > Show Templates > Open Template”
- The “Load Show Template” dialogue box appears
- Available templates are listed to the left of the dialogue box
- Click to highlight a template in the list
- The show name and description will display to the right of the box
- Click “Load” to open the template
- Add your images to the gray placeholders, the method for doing so described in “Placing Images in a Template.”

Placing Images in a Template

Depending upon the complexity of the template, getting your own pictures inside the correct placeholders can, at times, be difficult. Learn by using one of Photodex's simple templates such as “3_Minute Show.” Proceed as follows:

- Open Producer and go to “Show> Show

Templates> Open Template”

- Select the template named 3_Minute Show and click “Load”
- Working in Slide List view with the Folders List visible on your workspace, select the folder containing the pictures you want to use.
- When learning, it can be easier if you set the folder list to display as thumbnails.
- Click the first image you want to use, and drag it to the placeholder visible in slide #2. When the picture appears inside the placeholder, release the mouse button (Drag-and-Drop Method).
- Slide #3 has two placeholders. Double-click the slide to bring up “Slide Options.”
- Go to the Layers tab and look at the Contents of Slide section
- Click to select layer 2 <No Image>
- To the right of the screen you'll see the Selected Layer controls. Click “Select File” and navigate to the file you want.
- Repeat for layer 3 on this slide
- Double-click slide #6 in the timeline to open Slide Options.
- Select a blank image layer.
- Right-click the blank image layer and choose “Select File” from the menu that appears (Right-Click Method).
- Navigate to the image file you want to use.

As shown above, there are two ways to get your own images into a template's placeholders. When trying to populate a busy template with your own images, it's easier to use the right-click method,

particularly in a multi-layered slide where the drag-and-drop method is tedious because of overlapping placeholders.

NOTE: Not all templates are created equal. Some templates are easier to use than others. In a few, you may even find that inserting an image at the start of a sequence results in the image being magically copied over to other slides. It means a lot of the hard work has been done for you, and you can rejoice.

However, you can also find templates with particularly fascinating sequences demonstrated in a sample show, but you'll end up having no idea what image goes where in the template. No rejoicing here. It's up to you to figure it all out.

Create and Save Your Own Templates

- Open or create the show you want to base your template on. If you've just created a show from scratch, make sure you save it first; otherwise, you risk losing the original show.
- If you want to retain some of the images such as a title slide or frames, go to "Slide Options > Layers" and locate the "Show Template Settings" box for the image layer you want to keep. By default, the box is checked, indicating that the image will be removed if the show is saved as a template.
- Uncheck the Template/Replaceable image box for each and every image you want to retain.
- When you're done, go to "Show > Show Templates > Save as Template."
- A dialogue box appears reminding you that all content (apart from what you have chosen to retain) will be removed. Click OK.
- When the "Save as Template" dialogue

box appears, type a name for your template in the box provided.

- Add a description to remind you and anyone else of what the template contains.
- Click Save.
- The template retains the images you specified along with any music that was part of the original show.
- When the dialogue box disappears, you'll immediately see a difference. Any images you didn't choose to retain will have been replaced by gray placeholders in the show. Your original show will have been closed when the template was saved. The current show you are viewing is a new show. (Check the title bar at the top of the screen where you'll see "Untitled Proshow.")
- Trying to close Producer at this point will bring up a prompt for you to Save or Don't Save this New Show. If you haven't made any additions or changes since you opened the template, it's safe to close without saving. However, if you've added any images to the Slide List or made any other changes, this new show must be saved in the usual way or you'll lose it.

Template File Directories

Though you may have read instructions about copying and pasting downloaded template files into a specific location so they'll appear in your available templates list, this isn't necessary. Producer's Import and Export features are simple to use and get the job done. If you use the Import feature effectively, the list of available templates you see whenever you access the "Show > Show Templates" menu will display in a relatively organized manner. Photodex's own templates will always appear at the

top of the list, and then any templates you've saved or imported will be beneath and in alphabetical order.

The Two Directories for Templates:

- Templates that are built-in to the software and those that are inserted by way of downloading extras from the Photodex site are placed here: *Local Disk(C:)Program Files/Photodex/Producer/templates*

- Templates you've created (on your machine) or those created on another machine and imported using Producer's Import feature are placed here: *Local Disk(C:)Documents and Settings/*username*/Application Data/Photodex/Proshow Producer/Templates*

Photodex's stated reason for having two separate directories is that a user's own templates are saved to the Windows Profile so that, if you back up your system, the settings will "probably be included," depending on which version of Windows you use and the kind of backup method you employ.

How to Use the Import Feature Effectively

Producer will accept a show template created and saved on a different machine. You may have downloaded a zipped file from the Forum that contains the template (and any images, etc) that you extracted to a convenient location such as your Desktop, or you might have your own template that you perhaps created on a 2nd machine and saved to removable media. In either case, proceed as follows:

- Open Producer and go to "Show > Show Templates > Import Template"
- The "Template File Name" dialogue box appears
- Navigate to the location or drive where you have the template file. For instance,

if the template is on your Desktop, then the word Desktop needs to be showing in the "Look in:" window, or if it's on a removable disk, then the appropriate drive letter and/or folder must be displayed in the window.

- With the correct location specified, locate the template name in the main window, click it to select it, and then click "Open." You can also simply double-click the template name.

- Producer confirms the template has been imported by way of a small dialogue box. Click OK when you see it.

- With the template imported to its default location, you can now open it by going to "Show > Show Templates > Open Template." As you can see, there's really no need to go poking around in the system folders at all.

Important Reminders on Opening Imported Templates

Templates from others come from shows originally containing images and music on other machines. More often than not when opening a template, Producer will announce that some files are missing. Unless you've downloaded a corresponding batch of files to use with the template, just select NO when prompted to locate them. The template will load and the empty placeholders will display the following text: FILE NOT FOUND. On the other hand, if you have the accompanying image/music files saved to your PC, select YES and point Producer to their location.

Of course, if you do have the accompanying image/music files saved to your PC, then select YES and just point Producer to their location, but note that the next time you open the imported template, you may be again prompted to search for the files even though the source files are in exactly the same location you last pointed Producer toward. If this happens, save the template again, overwriting the template as follows:

1. Open the template, follow the prompt and locate the files.
2. When the template/show fully opens in the Slide List view, go to Show > Template > Save as Template.
3. Enter the existing name for the template and click Save.
4. When Producer asks if you want to overwrite the existing file, click OK.
5. Producer will open the full template from then on, but as with any show, you must not move or delete the source files or you will be back to square one.

As soon as a template is opened it becomes a new show. It displays in the Slide List view and is ready to accept your images. When you next close the software, you'll be prompted to save the show. Proceed as you would with any show. The template itself will *not* be altered.

How to Use the Export Feature Effectively

You've created a show containing movement and sequences you're proud of, and you want to export it to use on your 2nd machine, or your fellow Enthusiasts are keen to have it as a template. First, here's how to create a *basic template*, meaning it has no retained music or images. This basic template is user-friendly—it won't display those irritating File Not Found labels at the other end of the user chain:

- Open the show, go to Show > Soundtrack, and remove any music
- Next, remove any sounds you may have attached to individual slides using Slide Options> Sounds
- Save the show as a template (Show> Show Templates> Save as Template)

- When the file-removal reminder appears, click OK
- Give your template a name, add a description, then click Save
- The template appears as a new show in the Slide List, replacing your original show. Your original show remains safe. It is not altered by the steps you took to create the template.
- You can now go straight on to Export the template: Show > Show Templates > Export Template
- Locate the template in your available list and click Export.
- Choose a convenient location to export it to, for instance the Desktop or perhaps a folder you've created just for this purpose.
- Click Save, and you will receive confirmation from Producer that the file has been exported.

- The exported template file is now safe in its exported location until you are ready zip it and upload it to the Forum or friends. The original template will remain in your list of available templates.

NOTE: You can use Producer's export feature any time you want. You don't need to have a show open; you just need to have the software itself open. You can even export a template while you're working on another show. It's a quick and simple process.

How to Make ProShow Enthusiasts Love You

Following is the process for creating and exporting a template along with accompanying images and soundtracks. The process is more detailed and methodical, but your fellow Enthusiasts will love

you for it. Just make sure you don't break any copyright laws while doing so.

1. Create or open a full show on which to base the template.
2. For each layer/image that you wish to retain, open "Slide Options> Layers" and uncheck the Templates box in the Show Template Settings section.
3. Save and name your template.
4. The template immediately appears in the Slide List as a new show. It will be displaying only the specific images you opted to retain along with any music or sounds attached to the original show.
5. Save this bare-bones version of the show: Yes, that's right. Saving it at this point is necessary to the next stage, which involves collecting the files it contains. Click the Save icon or go to "File > Save" and save it anywhere you like—it can be deleted once the template has been exported successfully.
6. To isolate the files needed to successfully open/display the template on a 2nd

machine, you should go to "File > Collect Show Files" and collect the files to a convenient location. To aid the collection and export process further, create a folder clearly labelled with the name of the template where the resulting audio, image, and video folders from the collection process can go.

7. Go to "Show > Show Templates > Export Template," and select the template from the available list, and then export it to the folder you created in the previous step.

8. The template and all its necessary accompanying files are now in one place and ready for you to upload to the forum or send to another machine. On opening the template on a new machine, Producer just needs to be pointed to the relevant, accompanying folder location to extract everything it needs.

Last word: If you've built a show as if it were a template—a pattern you can use again and again—you're best off saving it as a template if for no other reason than your habit of saving often as you work. It's the easiest thing in the world to mistakenly save over your file, altering what you never intended to alter.

Insert Part/All of Template in Show

If you while creating a show you want to add a template sequence (or sequences) you either created yourself or downloaded from the forum, bear in mind that Producer can display only one show at a time unless you're working in a Project, so to make cutting and pasting between templates and your show easier, you should work in project mode. To do this:

1. Open the show into which you want to insert one or more templates (or parts of templates).
2. Go to Project > Save Project.
3. The "Create Project" dialogue box appears.
4. Click "Create Project."
5. The "Save Project" file dialogue box appears.
6. Choose a name and location for the project and click Save.
7. Now go to Show > Show Templates > Open Template.
8. Select the template you want to use and click Load.
9. The template is now visible as a 2nd show in your project.
10. Open further templates in the same way if required.

(Your original show and any template you have open will have individually named tabs. If you can't see the tabs, right-click on the toolbar or on the title area of any panes visible in the workspace and select Show > Show info.)

To insert the template or templates into your show:

1. Select the required template tab so the template show is visible in the Slide List.

2. Right-click on any slide and choose Select All if you intend to use the entire template, or if you want to lift out just a particular sequence in a template, select the first slide in the sequence, hold down the Shift key and select the last slide in the sequence.

3. To add to a selection, press and hold Ctrl as you select further slides.

4. With the correct number of slides selected, right-click one of the selected slides and choose Copy.

5. Click on the tab for your current show to bring it into view on the Slide List.

6. Determine where you want to paste the template. For example, if you want the template sequence to begin at slide position #5, you must right-click on the slide already in position #5 and then choose Paste.

When you've finished working with a particular template, you can remove it by right-clicking on the named tab and select Remove Show. A box will appear prompting you to save the show. Since you haven't altered the template by copying slides from it, it's safe to choose No.

Once you've inserted a template or templates into your show, you can put your own pictures into the placeholders, using whatever method you prefer.

A Template of Templates

If you've created effects you'd like to reuse, build a single show that includes each of the effects, separating the effects by inserting an odd-colored slide or an introductory slide describing or explaining the effect. Save it as a template, and then when you start a new show, create a Project, bringing in the template and then creating the new show. You'll have two tabs, one being the template and the other your show. You'll now be able to copy and paste parts of the template into your show.

Templates for Gold

1. Use an actual show as a template by choosing “Save As” to save it under a new name.

2. Open the newly named show and substitute the pictures with new ones.

Section IX

Output

Menus

Create Plain Background Inside ProShow

1. Choose a menu background pattern.
2. Select a menu background color.
3. Reduce the opacity of the background layer to 0 so only the background color shows.
4. For a little texture in the plain background, increase opacity.

Save Custom Menu Layouts

1. When creating output, choose Menus, and then choose the layout closest to what you want.
2. Click “Customize Menu.”
3. In “Shows,” add your shows.

4. You’ll be prompted to create a project. Do so.

5. Drag the thumbnails to where you want them.

6. Using the zoom slider, you can change the thumbnail size.

7. Go to “Captions” where you can change the title and thumbnail captions’ font, color, size, opacity, and position.

8. If there’s any default text you don’t want to appear, uncheck the box next to it at the top of the screen or delete it.

9. When everything is precisely as you want it, choose “Save Layout.”

10. Name the new layout and click “Save.” It will be saved to the Menu folder within the ProShow program folder and will appear in the list of layouts along with the default layouts.

DVD Creation

The Screens

Menus is where you design your menu (see *Figure 01*). Choose a background from the thumbnails at the top of the screen, select the format (4:3 or 16:9), pick the number of thumbnails and their layout for a single show or multiple shows, and replace the default title (“Photodex ProShow”) with your own. If you click “Customize Menu,” you’re presented with a further series of sub-screens.



Figure 01.

Pages is where you can change the default title to a descriptive one, choose whether to loop all shows, change the background color and image, and pick from “Fit to frame,” “Fill frame,” or “Stretch to frame” for the background. At the bottom of the screen are buttons to save the complete design as a Theme or just the placement of items as a Layout (see *Figure 02*).

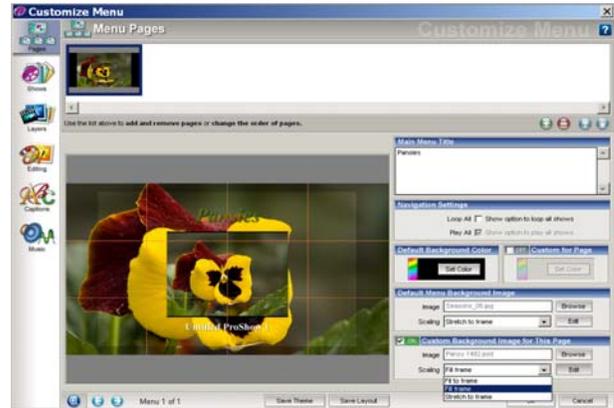


Figure 02

Shows is where you can add more shows to the menu, change the titles and thumbnails for the shows, and alter the position and size of the thumbnails. You can change thumbnail behavior, too, but take note that this applies only to .exe (computer) and .px (Web) shows. For these last two, you can change the Highlight Colors or even eliminate them entirely. As on the “Pages” screen, the “Shows” screen gives you the opportunity to save both theme and layout (see *Figure 03*).

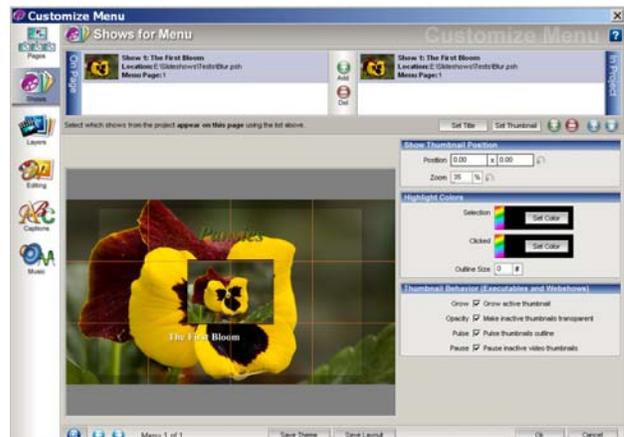


Figure 03.

Layers is where you can alter the position and zoom of backgrounds and thumbnails. You can also select replacement images for any of the layers. If there's a video clip, you can trim it and change the volume if sound accompanies the clip. For DVD's, your only options in the Destination drop-down box are shows (see *Figure 04*).



Figure 04.

Editing is for altering the appearance of each of the layers by using sliders for opacity, brightness, contrast, etc. You can create outlines for the layers as well as “colorize” images by clicking on Colorize, then choosing a color to replace all the blacks and grays in the image. Additionally, you can add a drop shadow to an image, including a show's thumbnail (see *Figure 05*).

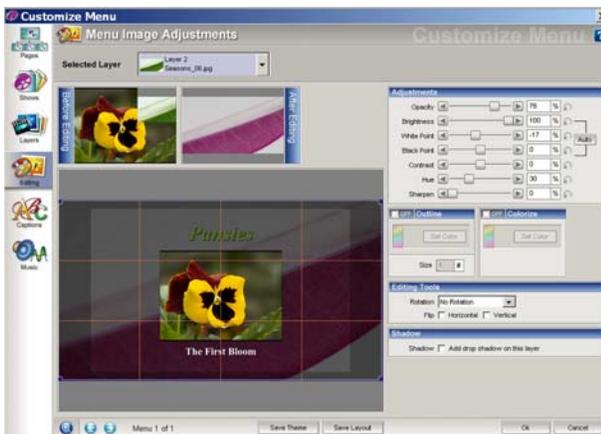


Figure 05.

Captions allows you to change the font, font style, color, opacity, size, alignment, and position of any of the captions. Additionally, you can add a drop shadow and an outline to the letters (see *Figure 06*).



Figure 06.

Music is for adding a soundtrack that plays only while the menu is onscreen. Use the Fade In/Out sliders to control the volume at the beginning and end of the clip. “Custom Music for This Page” allows you to choose a separate music file for a second menu page (see *Figure 07*).

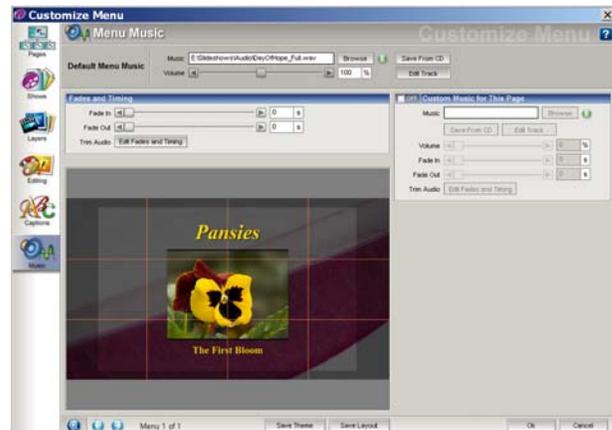


Figure 07.

If you're using part of a longer piece of music and you want more control, click on “Edit Fades and Timing” to bring up the sound-editing screen where you can choose what portion of the music

you want to play along with adding fades. The Zoom slider enlarges the waveform so you can fine-tune cuts and fades (see *Figure 08*).



Figure 08.

Once you're done with menu design, click OK to go back to the "Create DVD Disc" menu.

Output Options is the more technical side (see *Figure 09*):

- The two recommended DVD types are HQ Maximum and HQ Safe. The other settings are there to accommodate the rare show that's a bit too large to fit on a DVD.
- In "TV System," choose either NTSC and PAL. The U.S. uses NTSC while much of Europe uses PAL. To know for sure which system your country uses, look it up in the ProShow manual.
- In audio type, choose PCM.
- "Anti-Flicker" is used to help reduce the sparkling effect that happens at its worst during diagonal motion across the screen. Choosing this will reduce flicker, but it also applies a slight blur indiscriminately throughout the images. Another way to handle flicker is to choose those areas that

are causing flicker and add a slight blur to those areas in an image editor.

- "Desaturation" is there to prevent the garish colors that can result when a TV is not properly adjusted. You're better off getting people to adjust their sets because, if this option is chosen, all images appear washed out on properly tuned sets.
- Encoding Quality refers to the quality of the final video image. Choose "High Quality" unless you have problems with file size.

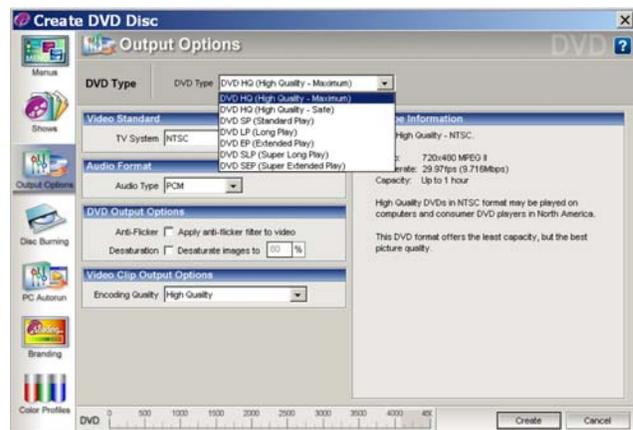


Figure 09.

Color Profiles allows you to accept ProShow's default color profile or another profile that's on your computer. Pay attention to the "NOTE" toward the bottom of the screen and the explanation given about selecting color profiles (see *Figure 10*).

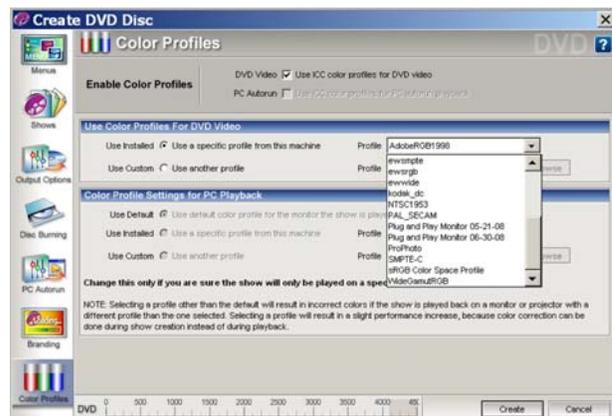


Figure 10.

PC Autorun directs ProShow to build a separate executable file that will run automatically when inserted in a computer's DVD drive. By default, this option is turned on, but if you're creating the disc purely for playback on TV, you can turn off this option. The various settings are a match to those where you're creating a straight executable for computer viewing only (see *Figure 11*).

Branding options are exclusive to PC Autorun where there's always a progress bar showing how much of the slide show has been loaded. You can select a background image, type in text that you want to appear while the progress bar is active, change the title that shows up on the Window bar when the show is playing, change the Photodex icon to a custom icon, create an "About Show" that can

be accessed during PC playback via a right-click, and when you're all done with the above, you can save your branding settings (see *Figure 12*).

Disc Burning is where you choose to burn the disc directly from within ProShow or to create an ISO image file, which can be used to burn the DVD with separate, dedicated disc-burning software. If you choose to burn from within ProShow, don't choose "Max" speed. The recommended burning speed is 8X. Leave "Simulate" unchecked—it's only for when you've chosen the CD (MiniDVD) disc type. The option to "Include original files on DVD" allows you to add the original image files as extra content on the disc. "Include Additional Content" allows you to browse for a folder containing even more files to include on the disc (see *Figure 13*).

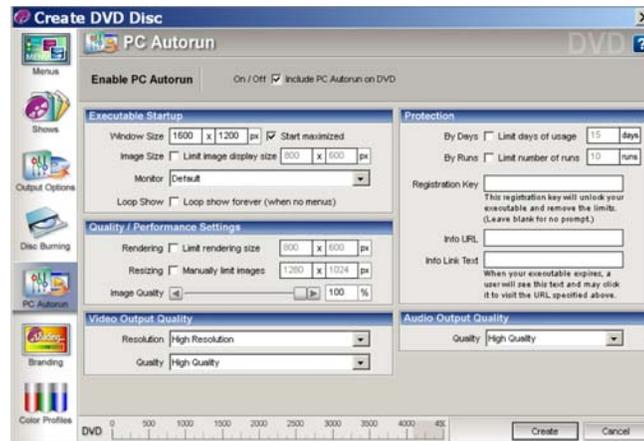


Figure 11.



Figure 12.

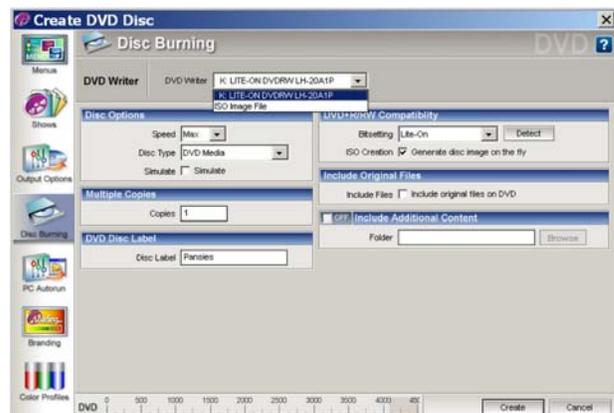


Figure 13.

Etcetera

Sound

Leave at PCM, which is the standard. MPEG2 isn't compatible with 100% of the DVD players.

Rendering Speed of Previously Burned Shows

When you render a show, a folder is created that's called <NameOfShow>_psdata, which contains the files necessary to burn the DVD. If you make no changes after burning a DVD, ProShow will re-use the data in that folder. The show won't have to be re-rendered, thus reducing the time required to burn a second DVD. If, however, you make changes, the show will have to be rendered all over again before burning.

True Size of a Widescreen

To check, measure the width of the picture on your screen and divide by the height. If the answer is 1.7777, it is 16:9. If it's 1.5555 it is 14:9.

ISO

To create an ISO image, on ProShow's burn menu where you select your drive, one of the options is for the "ISO burner" or words to that effect. Select this, and when prompted, enter a location and file name of your choice. Once the ISO has been built, you can use a number of different third-party programs to do the actual burning to DVD. Many on the forum use ImgBurn (free), but if you have Nero or Roxio, these will work too. Just make sure you choose to burn the DVD from the ISO. Don't

make the common mistake of trying to burn the ISO to a data DVD, which won't play in a DVD player.

Add Extra Content to DVD

In output options, click on the Disc Burning tab and place a checkmark in the box to "Include Original Files on DVD." You can then either burn the DVD in ProShow or create an ISO to burn with a third-party application. Photos used in the show will be inside a folder on the DVD.

Media

Type—There's no single answer to which brand and type of DVD to use, though there's a consensus of forum opinion that points to -R, not +R.

Brand—It's worth spending extra for reliable brand names rather than going the cheaper route of brandless or house-brand DVD's. Two in particular are highly rated amongst members, one being Taiyo Yuden (online purchase) and Verbatim (online and at computer and stationery stores).

Speed—No matter the type or brand, it's best to burn at a slower rate, most people recommending 8X.

Labeling—There've been reports that adhesive labeling causes problems. The best way to avoid this possibility is to use other methods, which include...

- LightScribe (requires special disks plus a LightScribe burner)
- Printable disks (requires white-surfaced disks plus an inkjet capable of printing on them)

- Thermal printing (requires a dedicated thermal disk printer plus blank disks designed for this type of printing)

- Professional duplication, which is more expensive but is an excellent option if you need a large number of copies

.EXE Settings

Playback: Display

The size of the window when playback is on your computer.

Window Size is the size of the window that the show opens in. For example, if your monitor is 1680x1050 and you set the Window Size to 640x480, your EXE show will open within a 640x480 window. If you choose **Start Maximized**, the show will open full-screen.

Playback: Image Size

Maximum image dimensions. If you set this to 320 x 240, the pictures will be tiny; if set to your monitor's resolution, the screen will be filled.

Image Size should be set to the monitor's resolution. For example, if the monitor is 1600 x 1200, set it to that; if it's 1680x1050, set it to that.)

Rendering/Limit Rendering Size should be set equal to your monitor's native resolution so that, even if you watch it in windowed mode, if you go full-screen mode, it will still look good.

Quality

Rendering

The lower you make these numbers, the lower the quality of the show. Best left unchecked.

Resizing

As with rendering, the lower you make these numbers, the lower the quality of the show. Best left unchecked.

If you have high resolution and like to view full-screen, Playback: Image Size should be set to your screen's maximum. The same is true for Quality > Resizing and Rendering settings, either leaving it unchecked or set to the highest resolution you anticipate a user might have, keeping in mind that monitors are getting larger and resolutions higher these days. Unless you have good reason not to, it should be set high.

Progressive vs. Interlaced: Choose Progressive.

Build Flash Files in Producer

by Dave Fitzpatrick

The instructions that follow are from my own experiences building Flash videos inside Producer.

General Procedure

After loading a show and adjusting the durations, motions, and transitions to your liking (suggestions for this to come later), choose Create > Flash Show and select the settings for your flash show.

Producer will build the show and, optionally, create an HTML page to host it. Even if you plan to host it on a different page, I find it convenient to let Producer build the page since it's then easy to copy the HTML code from here and then paste into another HTML document.

If you plan to use the HTML page Producer creates, you might want to change the page title and the footer link that Producer generates. Rather than having it boast that the page was "Created with ProShow Producer from Photodex Corporation" and link to the Photodex main page, you can change the text and the link tag so it links your viewers to a page of your choice. Also, you may wish to include a "Back" or "Home" link to return your viewers to an appropriate page. These changes to the HTML code can be made in an HTML editor (Dreamweaver, FrontPage, or any other editor of your choice). You can also make these changes in NotePad or WordPad.

To get your video on the Internet for viewing, you need a domain and a web host to provide the storage and Internet bandwidth for video stream download by your viewers. Often, your ISP will provide limited storage and transfer bandwidth as part of their service. If you will be doing a lot of Flash videos for Web distribution, you might want

to purchase your own domain name and secure Web hosting services through any of the many Web hosts who provide virtually unlimited storage and bandwidth for just a few dollars a month.

When Producer builds a Flash video, it creates 4 separate files:

```
<YourFlashName>.html  
<YourFlashName>.swf  
<YourFlashName>-intro.flv  
<YourFlashName>-show0.flv
```

To give people access to your Flash video, all you need to do is upload these files to your Web host and link your viewers to the file:

```
<YourFlashName>.html
```

Settings in Producer

In general, single pass, constant bit rate Flash videos such as Producer creates don't like a lot of motion. In broad terms, all video compression schemes write a "key frame" at a specified interval and fill in the missing frames with difference frames. That is, they only store those areas of the frame that are different from the key frame, copying those that aren't from the key frame to the new frame. (It's actually much more complex than that, but in general this is what's going on.)

If there are large differences between the key frames and the in-between frames, the video needs a very high bit rate to store the differences to keep from irrecoverably losing resolution.

So, the trick to getting good Flash videos in Producer is to limit the frame-to-frame differences as much as possible.

In my experience, cuts work better than other transitions. A 2- or 3- second crossfade, for example, even if it's a fade to black, shows a lot of compression artifacts. Zooms and rotations don't work well either. I find that step zooms (a sequence of slides, each tightening in on the subject) with a duration of 0.3 sec or so with cut transitions works better than a continuous zoom, which often shows a continuous parade of very noticeable artifacts for the 2 or 3 seconds of the zoom duration.

Finally, there is the video format size. Any flash videos above a 480 X 360 are virtually useless unless there is very little motion. The only place I've ever found 640 X 480 Flash videos to be useful is in screen-capture tutorials where the only motion is a mouse pointer moving around the screen. For a

typical show, however, the compression artifacts are so severe as to render a show unwatchable. The best results from Producer are achieved with a format size of 320 X 240. At this size, however, the image is too small to showcase photographic excellence, animations, and transitions.

Superior Flash video results can be achieved using 3rd party compression methods such as On2 VP6 or the H.264 video standard. To employ these, you must build your video uncompressed from within Producer and then compress it via a third-party commercial package.

A short Flash video that features a number of different transitions, zooms, pans, etc for comparisons of the resulting quality of each can be found at the link below:

http://www.visisketchpro.com/FlashVidExample/FlashExample4_480X360_30fps.html

Flash Settings Used by a Forum Member

Type: Custom

Format: Flash Video

Compression: Video for 768k Broadband

Resolution: 420 x 280

Framerate: 23.98

Audio: Include Audio checked

Aspect Ratio: 16:9

Encoding: High Quality

Desaturation: unchecked

Anti-Flicker: checked

The above is used only with simple panning and zooming plus the A/B transition.

The first Producer product demo was set to 800 x 600 output and was 135 MB. They changed the output dimensions to 510 x 410, bringing its weight down to 44 MB.

Increasing the Bit Rate

Increasing the bit rate can increase the quality. Try 16000 kBit, being aware that this will also increase file size. For a web show, this isn't such a good idea.

Flash with No Menus

After selecting Flash as your output, click the Menus icon on the left side of the window. At the top are all the choices available. Move the slider all the way to the left where you'll find "No Menus." Select it and then create the Flash show.

Playback Controls

When outputting as Flash show, you must validate the option "Show playback controls" in Output Options to have access to the play/stop/pause buttons when the show plays.

Flash File Won't Run on Site

Make sure you have the .SWF and.FLV files in the same folder.

iPod

1. Load desired show.
2. Click on “Create” and scroll down to select “Video For Device”
3. A pop-up window for device output will appear, and to the left under “Media Player” select “Apple”
4. Highlight your iPod device from the list provided
5. The pop-up window features “Save Location” and “Profile.” Possibly, the only option available under “Save Location” will be “Choose A Specific Location...”
6. The “Profile” option lists High, Normal, and Low Quality. Select High.
7. When you’re finished with the pop-up window, click “Create”
8. Another pop-up window will appear where you select the location for your iPod movie file. Create a folder specifically for iPod files.
9. Once the video is created, close Producer and open iTunes.
10. Launch iTunes.
11. Drag and drop the video file into the iTunes playlist.
12. Right-click on the video in the playlist and select Convert Selection for iPod.
13. Connect the iPod to the computer and drag the converted video to it.

YouTube

(thanks to Debbie Green)

Though YouTube quality is still not great, they've increased the accepted maximum size to 1 gigabyte, which helps. Here's my method:

Create > Video File

Video format preset type: Custom

Format settings: mpeg2, mpeg video, 640x480, 30 fps

Encoding: High Quality

Aspect ratio: 4:3

Register at YouTube and upload the video.

You can force it to play in higher instead of standard quality by adding this to the end of the URL when you send the link to someone: **&fmt=18**

Quicktime

1. Select Create > Video File.
2. From the Type drop-down menu, choose Custom.
3. In Format Settings, choose Quicktime from the Format drop-down menu.
4. Choose Apple MPEG4 Compressor from the Compression drop-down menu.
5. For the Internet, change the resolution to 320x240. Otherwise, leave it at 640x480.
6. Set the frame rate to 30.00.
7. Check the "Include Audio" box to include any audio in the show.
8. Click Create.

Custom Video File

First, choose “Custom” from the drop-down list (see *Figure 14*):

In “Format,” choose the type of video file (see *Figure 15*):

If compression is required, choose a codec (see *Figure 16*):

Figure 14.



Figure 15.



Figure 16.



A Few Standard Video Codecs

Cinepak: Early codec used by Apple QuickTime.

Huffyuv: Very fast, lossless Win32 video codec.

Intel Indeo Video: Older codecs.

Intel IYUV codec: (found no info on this one)

Lagarith: More up-to-date form of Huffyuv. Runs slower than Huffu but compresses a bit more.

Microsoft Video 1: Really old codec

MPEG-1 Part 2: Used for Video CD's and sometimes for online video. If the source video quality is good and the bit rate is high enough, VCD can look slightly better than VHS.

MPEG-2 Part 2: Used for DVD, SVCD, and in most digital video broadcasting and cable systems. On DVD, it offers good picture quality. Supports widescreen. Used for SVCD, it's not as good as with DVD, but's still better than VCD.

MPEG-2: Old codec, but still used a lot.

MPEG-4 Part 10: (Often called AVC) A new standard containing significant advances. Used by XBOX 360, PlayStation Portable, iPod, iPhone, the Nero Digital product suite, Mac OS X v10.4, and HD DVD/Blu-ray Disc.

MPEG-4 Part 2: Used for Internet, broadcast, and storage media. Offers improved quality relative to MPEG-2. Supports both progressive and interlaced. **DivX, Xvid, FFmpeg MPEG-4, and 3ivx** are implementations of MPEG-4 Part 2.

WMV: (Windows Media Video) Microsoft's family of video codecs which includes **WMV 7, WMV 8** and **WMV 9:** It can do anything from low-resolution video for dial-up Internet users to HDTV.

Choose the resolution. Shown below is a rather low resolution. You might want to increase it to 720 x 480 for standard TV (4:3) or 800 x 450 for widescreen (16:9). (See *Figure 17.*)

Leave the **“Framerate”** as is.

Assuming you have audio in the show, keep **“Include Audio”** checked.

“Encoding” should be kept high unless for reasons of size and space, you have to reduce the quality of the video.

Choosing **“Desaturation”** works only for devices set to overly high saturation, so be cautious with this one. If the neighbor's TV picture makes your eyes tear after a while, and if the show is for that neighbor, choose desaturation...or teach your neighbor to properly adjust his set.

If your show has a lot of moving elements that are likely to cause flicker, you have the choice of choosing **“Anti-Flicker,”** which applies a slight blur to all photos, or you can take the much more time-consuming route of editing individual photos in an image editor, applying blur only to those parts that are prone to flickering such as hard, straight lines.

The safest **Color Profile** to use is the basic sRGB profile, though if you know the precise color space of the device where the video will be played, you can choose that instead.

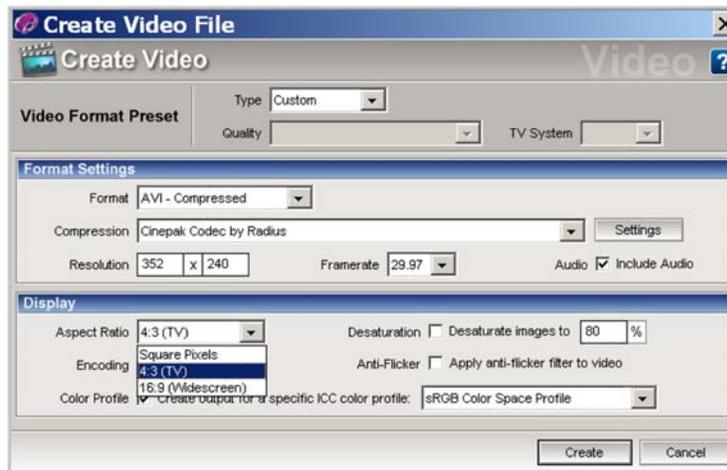


Figure 17.

Play Photodex Show From Own Web Site

by Mike Gregg

If you want to play your slideshows on your own web site but don't have the storage space to actually host the show, here's a solution. The following instructions allow you to upload your show to Photodex and then link to it from within your own web site to play the show.

Note: this looks more complicated than it actually is. Once you've done it, you'll realize that it's a quick process.

First, copy the code below and place it in your web site code.

```
<script language="javascript" src="http://www.photodex.com/presenter.js"></script>  
<script>PhotodexObject("ProShow","objectname","http://www.photodex.com/shows/  
59110_20050129021109.px",640,480); PresenterControls("objectname",640);</script>
```

At Photodex's sharing site, click on on the show you want to be displayed on your own web page. Click on "**View Page Source.**" (It might be slightly different, depending on the browser you use, but it's usually under the "View" menu at the top.) This will display the HTML code for the page. Look down near the bottom third of the page for a line that looks like the one below:

```
<script>PhotodexObject("ProShow","ashow","http://www.photodex.com/shows/  
59110_20050501185241.html","580","435");</script>
```

Note the HTML file that's a series of numbers: **59110_20050501185241.html**. This is your slideshow's file location.

Next, copy just that the long-numbered HTML name, and paste it over the section of HTML code in your web page shown in bold below.

Example:

Paste over the code highlighted below...

```
<script language="javascript" src="http://www.photodex.com/presenter.js"></script>  
<script>PhotodexObject("ProShow","objectname","http://www.photodex.com/shows/  
59110_20050129021109.px",640,480); PresenterControls("objectname",640);</script>
```

It should now look like this:

```
<script language="javascript" src="http://www.photodex.com/presenter.js"></script>  
<script>PhotodexObject("ProShow","objectname","http://www.photodex.com/shows/  
59110_20050501185241.html",640,480); PresenterControls("objectname",640);</script>
```

Change the HTML extension to PX. It should look like this:

```
<script language="javascript" src="http://www.photodex.com/presenter.js"></script>  
<script>PhotodexObject("ProShow","objectname","http://www.photodex.com/shows/  
59110_20050501185241.px",640,480); PresenterControls("objectname",640);</script>
```

Save your page and upload it to your server. The slide show should work flawlessly.

Each time you create a new show, just follow the same instructions for each show, getting the file location from the Photodex site.

Host a Show on Your Web Site

Creating the Web show

1. Select Create > Web Show.
2. Configure output settings and menu.
3. Click Output Options on the left and check the box next to Create Web Page.
4. Click Create.
5. Enter a file name and a location to save the file to. This is the actual file you will need to upload to your web site.

When you checkmark the Create Web Page box as described above, it generates a basic web page that is saved in the same location where you saved your web show file. You'll recognize it immediately because it'll have the same file name.

You can edit the web page yourself by leaving the box unchecked and clicking the View HTML button next to Create at the bottom. This creates the necessary code, which you can copy and paste into your Web page editor.

When uploading to your site, make sure both files are uploaded to the same directory. For example, if you've uploaded "greatshow.px" and "greatshow.html" to www.MySite.com, placing everything in the top-level directory, typing in the URL "http://www.MySite.com/greatshow.html" will run the show.

Image Size

There's no final answer, no chart to look at to find the correct size for an image, but enough people have tested the options to come to a consensus:

Minimum for an EXE

Minimum size would be that of the computer monitor. If the show will never be seen on any monitor other than what you currently own, then use your screen's dimensions. For instance, if your monitor set at 1024 x 768 resolution, then your images should be no narrower than 1024 if they're in landscape mode and their height should be a minimum of 768. If your screen is 1600 x 1200, then use those figures.

However, things change in the digital world, and a bit of forward thinking is in order. Best bet? Keep the original size of the images, or at the very least, reduce them to no smaller than several times the screen resolution. This might cover future contingencies where you replace your monitor or you want your friend to watch the show on his or her higher screen resolution.

"Several times the screen resolution" is certainly a vague statement, but it depends on if you're going to zoom in on an image. If you use 200%, the image has to be at least two times the size of your screen. If the zoom is 400%, the image needs to be at least four times the screen size.

Minimum for a DVD

Video has much lower resolution than our computer monitors, and the absolute bare minimum would be to match the resolution of the television, assuming you do no zooming or cropping. If you zoom in on a photo by 200%, you'll need at least twice the resolution of the TV for your picture size. If the video is 720 x 480, then your minimum will be 1480 x 960.

The Bottom Line

It's better to err on the side of too much than too little. That said, when a photo weighs in at, say, 50 MB, you might want to reduce its size to keep ProShow from bogging down beneath the collective weight of such big boys. Also, a lot of such weighty images in an EXE can sometimes lead to jerky motion (depending on the speed of the computer).

Start with images at full size unless that size is consistently huge. When a show is rendered as video for a DVD, it's all going to get reduced anyway. When it comes to EXE files, you should assume it may one be displayed on a much higher resolution monitor.

The Bottom of the Bottom Line

Don't reduce size unless the picture is a photographic Godzilla.

Miscellaneous

Create Intro Show

1. Build an extremely short show that includes your logo and any other introductory material along with a soundtrack.
2. Save this show and all associated files in a single, easily found folder.
3. When setting up a full show for output, click on Shows.
4. On the right-hand side is a box that you can check for “Include Intro Show.”
5. Browse for the intro show you saved, select it, and it will be included in the rendering.

For audio, you can use your sound editor to pull a small part from a song, or you can download sound effects from the Internet. You can even produce your own sound effects from within a sound editor. Several movie production companies begin their films with their logo in motion but with no soundtrack, and it works well, so you might consider this too.

Full-screen Viewing Controls

When viewing a show in Presenter, there are controls below the screen that allow you to move backwards and forward through the show. In full-screen mode these controls are unavailable unless you right-click, but you can also use the Page Up key to go back a slide and the Page Down key to go to the next slide. The space bar pauses and resumes the show.

Two Ways to Upload to Photodex

Click on the “Share Show Online” option in “Create.” The .PX file will be created and uploaded to your account.

Click on the “Web Show” option in “Create.” The .PX file will be created and placed on your hard drive. Log into your Photodex account and then upload the show from there.

Section X

Mechanics

Apply a Setting to Multiple Slides

Right-click on any setting on the slide options screen and select Apply to All Slides.

Copy Layer From One Slide to All Slides

1. Right-click the layer you want added to all slides
2. Select “Copy to All Slides”
3. Because the added layer will automatically be layer 1 on all the slides, if you want it in a different position, you’ll have to go into each slide individually to change this.

Maximum Preview Rendering Resolution

This setting controls only the previewing of shows from within ProShow. It does not affect the size at which a show is rendered for final output.

In “Edit > Preferences > Miscellaneous > Max Preview Rendering Resolution,” set the value to your monitor’s native resolution. For example, if it’s 1024 to 768, set it to that; if it’s 1680 x 1050, set it to that.

List All Files Used in Show

Extract a list of image, font, and sound files recorded in any .PSH file. (This assumes you use MS Word.)
To download the macro that Vernon built, go here:

<http://www.proshowenthusiasts.com/viewtopic.php?f=15&t=8118>

Make sure to open “ProShow PSH Reader.doc” for the instructions.

If Word’s security settings are too high, the program won’t run. To lower the settings without compromising security do the following:

1. In Word, go to Tools > Macro > Security.
2. Set the security level to MEDIUM.
3. Close the Word file and reopen it.
4. Word will issue a “Security Warning” about macros.
5. Click the “Enable Macros” button.
6. Now you’ll be able to run the self-explanatory macro.

Screenshots

Press the Print Screen key (PrntScr, PrtSc, etc.) to place an image of the entire screen on the Clipboard, then open a blank canvas in your image editor and use Paste or Ctr+V to insert the image. It’ll be a layer, which you’ll eventually want to flatten. The resolution will be the typically low resolution of the monitor, usually 72 pixels per inch.

Hold down the Alt key while pressing Print Screen to copy only the active window to the Clipboard.

Save Shared Show to Your Hard Drive

First, you need to be able to see the **Local Settings** folder, which is a hidden folder by default. It’s found **C:\Documents and Settings\YourName\Local Settings\Temp**, but if you can’t see it, go to **Tools>Folder Options>View>Show Hidden Files**, and make sure it’s selected with a dot in a circle. Also under the same options, make sure that **Hide extensions to known file types** is unselected because, otherwise, you won’t be able to see the file extensions, **.tmp** and **.px**, which you must be able to see to do this.

When you click on a shared show, Presenter begins to download the show using a temporary name to the following directory: **C:\Documents and Settings\YourName\Local Settings\Temp**

If you look in that directory and sort by size, most often the shared shows will be near the bottom because they tend to be large. You don't need to actually play the show to get it downloaded, but it's important to understand that when you exit Presenter, the temporary copy of the show will be deleted.

You must allow Presenter to download the entire show. The show will have a name like **psg???.tmp** where the "???" will be 2 or 3 letters or numbers and will end up roughly the same size as what is shown near the bottom of the page where you view the show. If, say, it says the show is 10 megs, that's the final size you'll be looking for on your temporary copy on your hard drive.

To tell if a show has finished downloading, do the following: Looking at the size of the temporary file, make sure it's close to the size you took note of at the Photodex sharing site. Use "**View -> Refresh**" to see if the size is still the same after refreshing. If it is, the download is done. Also, until the download is complete, don't touch anything. When downloading has finished, the displayed size will suddenly jump to the final value.

Saving the File after Downloading

Now that the file is done downloading, **DO NOT EXIT PRESENTER**. Right-click the file that

was downloaded to the temp directory and select "Copy." (You must use Copy. You can't move the file because Presenter is still "using" it). Now go to the directory where you want to save the file and select "Paste." Rename it to something descriptive and set the file type to **.px**. You can now safely exit Presenter by clicking out of the online show.

Note: You can't rename the temp show while it's still in the temp directory because Presenter is controlling it while it's there.

Save Shared Show in Vista

The temporary show file will be downloaded to: **C:\Users\YourName\AppData\Local\Temp**

To see this folder, you have to:

1. Turn OFF UAC. (User Account Controls.)
2. Reboot.
3. In Folder options, go to Tools>Folder Options>View>Show Hidden Files, and make sure it is selected (dot in a circle). Also under the same options, make sure that "Hide extensions to known file types" is unselected; otherwise, you won't see the the.tmp and .px file extensions.

Keyboard Shortcuts

MAIN MENUS

File Menu: **ALT+F**
Edit Menu: **ALT+E**
Create Project: **ALT+P**
Show Menu: **ALT+S**
Slide Menu: **ALT+L**
Audio Menu: **ALT+O**
Create Menu: **ALT+C**
Window Menu: **ALT+W**
Help Menu: **ALT+H**

WORKING WITH SHOW FILES

New Show: **CTRL+N**
Open Show: **CTRL+O**
Save Show: **CTRL+S**
Save Show As...: **CTRL+SHIFT+S**
Close Show: **CTRL+W**

WORKING WITH SLIDES

Undo Last Change: **CTRL+Z**
Redo Last Undo: **CTRL+Y**
Cut: **CTRL+X**
Copy: **CTRL+C**
Paste: **CTRL+V**
Select All Slides: **CTRL+A**
Select None: **CTRL+ALT+A**
Select Inverse: **CTRL+I**

Slide Options: **CTRL+L** (or press enter w/
slide selected)

Move Slide: **Left >**

Move Slide: **Right <**

Go To Slide #: **CTRL+G**

Insert Blank Slide: **ALT+I**

Fill Frame: **CTRL+SHIFT+F**

Fit to Frame: **CTRL+SHIFT+T**

Fill Safe Zone: **CTRL+SHIFT+N**

Fit to Safe Zone: **CTRL+ALT+N**

Stretch to Frame: **CTRL+SHIFT+R**

Delete Slide: **DEL**

Slide List/Timeline Toggle: **TAB**

Change Layer (1 - 10): **CTRL+1 - CTRL+O**

WORKING WITH AUDIO

Show Options: **CTRL+H**

Sync Selected Slides: **CTRL+SHIFT+Y**

Sync Selected Slides to Track:

CTRL+ALT+Y

Sync Show: **ALT+Y**

Record Slide Timing: **CTRL+ALT+R**

Move soundtrack manually (in Slide Timeline
view): **CTRL+CLICK & DRAG**

PREVIEW AND PLAYBACK

Resume and Pause: **ENTER** or **SPACEBAR**

Play: **CTRL+P** or **SPACEBAR**

Stop: **CTRL+T** or **ESC**

Full Screen Playback: **ALT + ENTER**

CREATING OUTPUT

Create DVD: **CTRL+D**
Create Video CD: **ALT+V**
Create Video File: **ALT+M**
Share Show: **ALT+U**
Create Web Show: **ALT+N**
Email Show: **CTRL+E**
Create Autorun CD: **ALT+D**
Create Executable: **ALT+T**
Create Screen Saver: **ALT+R**
Create Flash Video: **CTR+F**

USER INTERFACE

Help: **F1**
Preferences: **F3**
Default Window Layout:
CTRL+SHIFT+ALT+O
Save Window Layout: **CTRL+SHIFT+ALT+S**
Apply Window Layout:
CTRL+SHIFT+ALT+L
Thumbnail File List View: **ALT+5**
Detail File List View: **ALT+1**
Hide/Show Favorites: **F4**
Hide/Show Menu Bar: **F5**
Hide/Show Preview: **F6**
Hide/Show Project Pane: **F7**
Hide/Show Task Monitor: **F8**

Hide/Show Toolbar: **F9**
Hide/Show Lightbox View: **F11**
Hide/Show Slide List: **F12**
Exit: **ALT+X**

FILE LIST (Input Focus must be in File List)

Jump to File: **1st Letter of Filename**
Rename File: **F2**
Select All: **CTRL+A**
Select None: **CTRL+ALT+A**
Select Inverse: **CTRL+I**
Properties: **ALT+ENTER**

EXECUTABLE PLAYBACK

Select Show From Menu: **# of Show**
Return to Menu: **ESC** (from playback w/
menu)
Exit: **ESC** (from menu or playback w/o menu)
Toggle Full Screen Playback: **ALT+ENTER**
Next Slide: **PAGE DOWN**
Previous Slide: **PAGE UP**
Pause/Resume: **PAUSE**

KEY FRAMES

Move key frames in unison: **ALT+CLICK &
DRAG**
Move key frames proportionately:
CTRL+CLICK & DRAG

Section XI

Troubleshooting

ProShow Files

by Dick Knisely

All files associated with your show (here called “showname”) will have the name of that show as part of the file name.

showname.PSH

That’s your show. Do **not** delete it unless you’re really sure of what you’re doing. You can open it in Notepad because it’s just a text file with instructions to ProShow on where to find the show content and what to do with that content. This is where all those hours of work go: it’s the actual slide show that can be loaded, edited, and output in several different forms.

showname.BAK

showname.Bnn (nn = 2 digit number)

These are backup files for your show. You can delete them, but it’s better to keep them around in case of disaster. As with the PSH file, these can be opened with Notepad.

showname.PXC

This is a cache of show resources. It’s safe to delete because it’ll be recreated the next time you open the show for editing.

File folder: *showname_psdata*

This is a file folder (often quite large) containing temporary files created while rendering a video output. It’s safe to delete because it’ll be recreated if you render the video again.

showname.ISO

This is a file containing the DVD “image” of your show. Make sure to keep it if you want to make more DVDs without rendering again. It’s safe to delete, but it’s also handy to have.

showname.EXE

showname.AVI (etc)

Like the ISO, these are outputs from ProShow—each type has a corresponding file type. Safe to delete if you don’t need it, but be sure you won’t want it again.

Troubleshooting How-to

by Dick Knisely

I have problems running ProShow. What can I do?

Occasionally you ProShow won't run at all or it crashes when attempting to load a show. (If the issue is with only one show, skip down to the next question.) Many problems can be fixed with this simple process:

1. Close ProShow.
2. Click on Start > Search > For Files and Folders.
3. Click on "All files and folders."
4. In the top box that says "All or part of the file name," type in: "CPIC.OPT" and click "Search."
5. The search results will display this file located in the C:\Program Files folders. Click on the file and delete it.
6. Next, search for a file called "DEF.PHD" and delete this file as well.
7. The next time you open ProShow it will recreate these two files automatically.

Try deleting only DEF.PHD and then run the program to see if that takes care of the issue. All your preferences that you've set for ProShow will be left intact. If removing DEF.PHD doesn't fix the issue, then delete CPIC.OPT also. Deleting one or both these files will fix many issues. If all else fails, then the best approach is to uninstall the software and then reinstall it.

NOTE: Once you've learned the location of these two files, it's easier to just navigate directly to them in Windows Explorer.

I have a show that won't open. What do I do?

Sometimes ProShow software works fine, but there's suddenly a show that won't open. When this happens, it's normally fixed easily with one of the following steps. Try them one at a time:

- Delete *showname.PXC* (cache file) and then see if it will open.
- Try deleting DEF.PHD and CPIC.OPT in Programs\Photodex\ProShowProducer (or ProShowGold).
- Try opening one of the show's backup files (*showname.BAK* or *showname.Bnn*). Do this by going to the File menu and choosing "Revert to Backup."
- If the show opens partially but crashes while loading, there's a possibility that one of the audio files (.WAV or .MP3) is corrupt, or at least ProShow thinks so. See below.

Corrupt Audio File

Occasionally, ProShow will crash when you attempt to use a particular MP3 audio file, or it may crash while later attempting to load or play the show. If you suspect this and you know which audio file is the culprit, the fix is to either use a different MP3 or to use an audio editor to recreate the MP3 by loading it and resaving it with another name. If you don't know which file is the culprit, move all the audio files somewhere so ProShow will do the "locate files" dialogue, but choose to have ProShow continue without the missing audio files. If the show

loads and previews, this confirms the show is intact and it's the audio causing the problem. Save the show under a new name so you will at least retain the video portion. Now, either manually add back in each of the audio files one at a time to pinpoint

the bad one, or instead, go back through the "locate files" process to locate each audio file in turn. Sometimes you can recreate the audio file, and sometimes there's nothing for it but to replace it in order to fix the problem.

Crash When Opening PSH File

Right-click the .PSH file in Windows Explorer and choose to open it in notepad. Find the “Sounds entry,” and if it has a –number, not a +number, change it to a + sign.

Files Not Found

The PSH file is a text file containing, among other things, instructions for where ProShow can find each file you’ve used. If you move a file, the new location won’t be recorded in the PSH file, which means ProShow won’t know where it’s gone.

As long as you know what you’ve done with those missing files, when ProShow comes up telling you they’re missing, just answer “Yes” to its question of whether or not you want to search for the missing files. If even you don’t know where those files went, first do a Windows search for them. Then, after pointing out the files to ProShow, it can update the PSH file to reflect the new file locations.

To keep this bit of annoyance from happening, it’s best to keep all of a show’s files in a single location.

Image Previews Not Completely Shown

If when clicking on images in the folder list, the preview loads only partially, it may be a sign that your hard drive is overly full and needs defragging. Preview images need hard drive space to be stored, and if there isn’t enough space, bad behavior results.

If the above doesn’t solve the problem, try this: In Windows XP, click Start > Settings > Control Panel > Display > Settings > Troubleshoot. Then slide the hardware acceleration selection back. Test in ProShow Gold/Producer for each decrease in acceleration because it may require several positions

backward before you see results...assuming this is the problem.

Laptop Playback Stutters

If in Windows XP power management, the CPU defaults to “Adaptive,” speed problems can occur. This is a power efficient mode where the CPU clock speed is reduced during periods of low CPU activity and speeds up as CPU activity increases. This can cause stuttering in USB audio playback, and it can also cause frame loss in video streaming. Furthermore, it can affect crossfades in ProShow.

Solution: Install a freeware utility called SpeedswitchXP, which enables you to change the CPU dynamic switching setting to “Max Performance,” thus forcing the CPU to run at its highest speed. (Windows XP hides the CPU setting so that you cannot see it in the control panel power options.)

On Sony laptops and possibly others, you may find an installed utility where you can choose pre-set performance modes or set them manually.

Soundtrack Won’t Stop Playing

If you’re watching a shared show at Photodex and stop a show before it’s finished but the soundtrack continues playing, press Ctrl+Alt+Del to bring up the Task Manager. Select pxplay.exe and choose to End Task, assuring Windows this is what you want to do. Silence will return.

In a Copy Operation, the Program Crashes

(This is a bug in the software.) To solve, when in the Motion Menu, turn on “Show Layer Outlines” in the right-click menu.

Section XII

Copyright

The Legal Side: Copyright

By Barbara Coultrey

What Can Be Copyrighted

For our purposes, this includes original compositions, arrangements of public and non-public domain works, video recordings, and audio recordings.

What Can't Be Copyrighted

An idea, method, title, or short phrase.

Copyright Specifics

- **Created in 1922 or before**—It's in the public domain. (The *composition* is in the public domain, *not* a performance of it.)
- **Created between Jan. 1, 1923 and Dec. 31, 1977**—Protection is based on renewal dates as opposed to the creator's death. For instance, the creator may die, but the family can renew the copyright.
- **Created between Jan. 1, 1964 and Dec. 31, 1977**—Protected for 95 years from the date of creation.
- **Unpublished works created before Jan. 1, 1978**—Protected for the life of the author plus 70 years, or until Dec. 31, 2002, whichever is later.
- **Published on or after Jan. 1, 1978**—Protected for 70 years after the creator's death. For joint works, it's 70 years after the last surviving author's death.

- **Published by a corporation (think "Disney")**—Protected for 95 years from publication or 120 years from the date of creation.

(**Note:** If you can work it out from the above information, all the more power to you.)

Fair Use

You are allowed to make copies of small portions for criticism, commentary, news reporting, research, or teaching. The rule of thumb is not more than 10% of the original. As you can see, it's unlikely that anything we do could be construed as falling under the heading of "fair use." Even if the show is being used for teaching, it may fall outside the bounds. Give a copy of the show to students or parents, and you've broken the law.

Not True

When you purchase a CD, you've purchased the music.

Because the CD is no longer for sale, it's free to be copied.

It's legal to make your own arrangement of copyrighted music.

Because you don't plan on selling the show, you're within the law.

Very Important Point

Compositions in the public domain can be copyrighted. If you have an arrangement of a Mozart piece on CD, be assured that the arrangement is protected. You can't legally copy it without permission.

A Way to Look at Copyright

If you park your car on a public street in view of everyone who passes by, do any of those passersby have the right to climb into your car and drive off with it? It's no more complicated than that. You may be able to hear the music, but this doesn't mean you own it.

Something to Think About

Artists need to eat, to keep warm, and to provide for their families. Regardless of how it may seem, most artists are either scraping up a living or they're producing their art while working elsewhere. If an artist grows rich from his talent, this doesn't mean it's fine to steal from him. Whether you steal from the rich or the poor, you're still a thief.

If we don't support the arts, they will die.

Section XIII

Links

Free Resources

by Diana Lang

DISCLAIMER: Simply because a piece of software (or graphic/audio/video clip) is free, does not necessarily mean it is “free for the taking” to use any way you want. Though full, unrestricted usage may be granted for personal use, there may be restrictions against its use in commercial applications under any circumstances (where you are selling your production). It is the responsibility of the end-user to Terms of Usage or the Creative Commons Licensing Agreement to determine if the software is legal to use in your production or the creation of the production. If in doubt, always contact the copyright owner.

AUDIO

Free sound editors, converters, recorders, sounds and music

Sound Tools and Editors

Atmosphere Lite - <http://www.vectormediasoftware.com/atmdeluxedown.htm> Create your own background atmospheric music (scroll down to download)

Audacity - <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/> Sound editor (used by & highly recommended by many forum members)

Audiograbber - <http://www.audiograbber.com-us.net/> Grab digital audio from your audio CDs

Besweet - <http://dspguru.doom9.net/> Audio transcoding tool supporting MP3, AC3, WAV, MP2, Ogg Vorbis & others

DBpoweramp - <http://www.dbpoweramp.com/> Audio CD Ripper and converter

Freebyte Music Zone - <http://www.freebyte.com/music/> Links to free music software, midi files, sheet music

Free codecs - <http://free-codecs.com/> Free audio (and video) codecs

Freecorder Toolbar - <http://applian.com/freecorder3/index.php> A free audio recorder that works right within your browser. Make MP3's from anything you can hear on your PC, including sound tracks from videos, music, and more

Lame MP3 Encoder - <http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/faq?s=install&item=lame-mp3> Audacity (link above) needs this installed to export to MP3

MediaInfo - <http://mediainfo.sourceforge.net/en> Supplies technical and tag information about a video or audio file

Mp3tag - <http://www.mp3tag.de/en/> Tag editor - Rename files based on the tag information, replace characters or words from tags and filenames, import/export tag information, create playlists, and more. It supports online “freedb” database lookups for selected files, allowing you to automatically gather proper tag information for select files or CDs.

MusikCube - <http://www.musikcube.com/page/main/download> Music/Sound Organizer

Switch - <http://nch.com.au/switch/index.html> Convert audio files from many different file formats into MP3, WAV or WMA

TrakAx - <http://www.trakax.com/software> Create your own music

Sounds & Loops

A1 Free Sound Effects - <http://www.a1freesoundeffects.com/>

Absolute Sound Effects Archive - <http://www.grsites.com/sounds/>

Accoustica Free Sound Effects - <http://www.acoustica.com/sounds.htm>

FindSounds - <http://www.findsounds.com/>

The Free Sound Project - <http://www.freesound.org/index.php>

Less Clicks - http://www.lessclicks.com/free_sounds.html

The Recordist - <http://www.therecordist.com/pages/downloads.html>

Sound Snap - <http://www.soundsnap.com/>

Taylor Hayward - <http://taylorhayward.org/>

Movie Sounds Central - <http://www.moviesoundscentral.com/>

Moviewavs - <http://www.moviewavs.com/>

Music For Video - <http://music-for-video.com/free-sound-effects-for-video-makers.html>

Music

Classical Music Archive - <http://www.classicalarchives.com/> subscription site, but also has free stuff

Derek R. Audette - <http://derekaudette.ottawaarts.com/index2.php>

Free Christmas MP3s - <http://christmasmpfree.com/>

Free Kid's Music - <http://freekidsmusic.com/>

Free Solo Guitar - <http://freesologuitar.com/>

Free Solo Piano - <http://freesolopiano.com/>

Free Music Directory - <http://thefreemusicdirectory.com/>

Freeplay Music - <http://www.freeplaymusic.com/>

Ghost Notes - <http://ghostnotes.blogspot.com/>

Great Songs Free - <http://greatsongsfree.com/free-MP3-music-downloads.html>

ILoveWavs - <http://greatsongsfree.com/free-MP3-music-downloads.html>

Internet Audio Guy - <http://www.internetaudioguy.com/iag/freemusic/mp3downloads.htm>

Jamendo - <http://www.jamendo.com/en/>

Kevin MacLeod - <http://www.incompetech.com/>

MFiles - <http://www.mfiles.co.uk/index.htm>

MobyGratis - <http://www.mobygratis.com/film-music.html> no commercial use; must apply for license (and be approved) prior to being able to download

Music Download.com - <http://music.download.com/>

Sonnyboo - <http://www.sonnyboo.com/music/music.htm>

The Free Music Directory - <http://thefreemusicdirectory.com/>

WikiProject Free Music - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Sound/list>

Wolfgang's Vault - <http://www.wolfgangsvault.com/>

Graphics

Free graphic editors, utilities, and tools for graphic creation, photo correction, and photo manipulation

Graphic Tools and Editors

About.comGraphics - <http://thefreemusicdirectory.com/> Tutorials and resources for the most popular graphic editors

Andrea Mosaic - <http://www.andreaplanet.com/andreamosaic/> Create your own photo mosaics made with your own pictures

AxiomX PicSizer - <http://www.axiomx.com/picsizer.htm>

Blender - <http://www.blender.org/> 3D creation graphics tool

Cooltext - <http://cooltext.com/> Free online graphics generator plus 1200+ font archive

CreaToon - <http://www.creatoon.com/> Free 2D animation software

FreeSerif - <http://www.freeserifsoftware.com/> Edit and enhance your digital images and photos for print, email, and the web

Imagegrab - http://paul.glagla.free.fr/imagegrab_en.htm Grab a 'still' image from video

Irfanview - <http://www.irfanview.com/> Image & Video Viewer

FastStone Image Viewer - <http://www.faststone.org/FSViewerDetail.htm> An image browser, converter, and editor that supports all major graphic formats

FastStone Image Resizer - <http://www.faststone.org/FSResizerDetail.htm> Convert, rename, resize, crop, rotate, and add text and watermarks in a quick & easy batch mode.

Gimp - <http://www.gimp.org/> Photo retouching, image composition, and image authoring

GimpShop - <http://www.gimpshop.com/> A modification of GIMP, intended to replicate the feel of Adobe Photoshop

Movie Clapper Board Generator - http://www.fodey.com/generators/movie/clapper_board.asp Generate/ personalize a scene-opening clapper board

Paintnet - <http://www.getpaint.net/download.html> Image and photo editing software

Photoscape - <http://www.photoscape.org/ps/main/index.php> Easy photo editing software to fix and enhance photos

Picasa - <http://picasa.google.com/> Google's imaging editing software

Pixort - <http://www.pixort.com/> Image review and sorting

PhotoShape Classic - <http://bobyte.com/> Easily give 3D perspective to your images by rotating them three-dimensionally with only your mouse.

Sqirlz Water Reflections - <http://www.xiberpix.net/SqirlzReflect.html>

Stoik Image 4.0 - <http://www.stoik.com/imagifree/index.html> Easily import, organize, and automatically enhance your photos

Winmorph - <http://www.debugmode.com/winmorph> Morph one picture into another

XiberPix - <http://www.xiberpix.net/index.html> Warp, bend, and loop text and images; morph two or more images; rippling water reflections

Free Photos/Backgrounds/Etc

<http://www.cgtextures.com/> - Textures/backgrounds

<http://www.free-graphics.com/> - Mostly clipart

<http://creativity103.com/>

http://graphicssoft.about.com/od/freedownloads/1/blframes_t01.htm - Masks/edge frames

<http://morguefile.com/>

http://www.dreamstime.com/free-images_pg1

<http://www.everystockphoto.com/>

<http://www.freefoto.com/index.jsp>

http://www.flickr.com/photos/library_of_congress - Historic photos from US Library of Congress

<http://flickr.com/photos/smithsonian>

<http://www.fontplay.com/freephotos/>

<http://www.freerangestock.com/>

<http://www.freephotos.se/>

<http://www.free-photographs.net/>

<http://www.free-stockphotos.com/>

<http://www.freephotobank.org/main.php>

<http://www.grsites.com/textures/> - Textures/backgrounds

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/clipart/default.aspx?lc=en-us> – Must have a Microsoft program that uses the Microsoft Clipart Gallery

<http://www.reelworship.com> - Christian backgrounds & video clips

<http://www.shorpy.com/>

<http://www.vecteezy.com/> - Free vector graphics

Free Photoshop/Elements Add-ons

About.com -

http://graphicssoft.about.com/od/photoshopsactionsFree_Adobe_Photoshop_Actions_and_Scripts_to_Download.htm

Action Central - <http://www.atncentral.com/download.htm>

Add-on/Tools for Photoshop Elements -

http://graphicssoft.about.com/od/pselementsaddons/Addons_and_Tools_for_Photoshop_Elements.htm

Adobe Exchange -

http://www.adobe.com/cfusion/exchange/index.cfm?event=productHome&exc=16&loc=en_us

Deviant Art - <http://browse.deviantart.com/resources/applications/psactions/?order=9&alltime=yes>

Elated - <http://www.elated.com/actionkits/>

Finesse FX - <http://finessefx.com/actions.php>

Liknes - <http://www.liknes.no/Photoshop/index.asp>

Media Chance - <http://mediachance.com/>

Paint Engine -

<http://fantasticmachines.com/store/index.php?cPath=24&osCsid=7455d27614b3cc803c9d85559aa04744>

Panos FX -

http://www.panosfx.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=category§ionid=4&id=13&Itemid=27

PhotographyBB - <http://photographybb.com/forum/index.php>

The Plugin Site - <http://www.thepluginsite.com/resources/freeps.htm>

ReynsPhoto - http://www.reynsphoto.com/articles/Post_Processing/extra/70_Photoshop_Actions_app.php

Using Actions in Photoshop Elements - <http://graphicssoft.about.com/od/pselements/qt/actions.htm>

Virtual Photographer - <http://www.optikvervelabs.com/default.asp>

Visual Blast - <http://www.visual-blast.com/>

Fonts

<http://eknp.com/>

<http://www.1001freefonts.com/>

<http://www.acidfonts.com/>

<http://www.bvfonts.com/fonts/fonts.php?show=free&by=date>

<http://www.chank.com/freefonts.php>

<http://www.dingbats-uk.org.uk/download/index.html>

<http://www.drybohnz.com/dryheavesfonts2004/fonts.html>

<http://www.flashfonts.com/flashsite/fontspage.htm>

<http://www.fonts101.com/>

http://www.fontbros.com/free_fonts.php

<http://www.fontdiner.com/main.html>

<http://www.fontfiles.com/>

<http://www.fontframe.com/topenter.html>

<http://www.fontfreak.com/main.htm>

<http://www.fontgarden.com/>

<http://fonthead.com/freeware.php>

<http://www.fontmagic.com/>

<http://www.fontmaniac.com/>

<http://www.fontsearchengine.com/>

<http://www.highfonts.com/>

<http://www.houseoflime.com/fonts.html>

<http://www.jabroo.com/>

<http://www.misprintedtype.com/v3/fonts.php>

<http://www.urbanfonts.com/>

Font Viewers

Aksoft – <http://www.aksoft.net/progs/akfontviewer/index.html> View samples of all your installed fonts in Windows

FontLoader - <http://www.aaafreebies.com/programs/fontloaderprogram.htm> FontLoader offers a shell context menu extension that lets you load and install fonts by right-clicking on a font file or a folder containing fonts.

FontViewer - <http://www.ampsoft.net/utilities/FontViewer.php> View, install and uninstall fonts, and organize them in categories

Free and Easy Font Viewer - http://www.styopkin.com/details_free_and_easy_fonts_viewer.html View all your installed fonts simultaneously

VIDEO

Free video editors, converters, screen recording, codec tools, and motion backgrounds

Video Tools and Editor

Applian FLV Player - <http://applian.com/flvplayer/> View FLV videos at 1x, 2x or full screen. Plays URLs, streams, and local files.

Avidemux - <http://fixounet.free.fr/avidemux/> Designed for simple cutting, filtering, and encoding tasks

Avidemux Tutorial – <http://www.mythtv.org/wiki/index.php/Avidemux> Tutorial for the above program

AviScreen - <http://www.bobyte.com/> An application for capturing screen activity (ScreenCast) in the form of AVI video or images.

Avisplitter - <http://bobyte.com/> AVI video splitter, video joiner. Many free tools here.

AviTricks Video Editor - <http://www.bobyte.com/> Non-linear, non-destructive AVI video editor with real-time preview. It makes cutting and joining footage easy.

CamStudio 2.0 - <http://sourceforge.net/projects/camstudio/> Darn close to the commercial screen capturing program, Camtasia. Output as AVI or SWF

FFDShow - http://www.free-codecs.com/FFDShow_download.htm MPEG-4 video decoder

Free codecs - <http://free-codecs.com/> Free audio and video codecs

Gspot - <http://www.headbands.com/gspot/> Full information on video (codec used, diagnostic, repair, etc.)

HuffyUV - http://www.free-codecs.com/HuffYUV_download.htm AVI compression codec – great for Proshow. Excellent way to reduce huge, uncompressed AVIs without quality loss!

Imagegrab - http://paul.glagla.free.fr/imagegrab_en.htm Grab a 'still' image from video

K-Lite Codec Pack - http://www.free-codecs.com/HuffYUV_download.htm Call Photodex support on a codec issue and chances are they'll recommend this all-in-one codec pack.

Lagarith - http://www.free-codecs.com/download/Lagarith_Lossless_Video_Codec.htm Another lossless AVI compression codec – runs a little slower, but compresses to even smaller files than HuffyUV.

MediaInfo - <http://mediainfo.sourceforge.net/en> Supplies technical and tag information about a video or audio file

MPEG StreamClip - <http://www.squared5.com/> A powerful free video converter, player, and editor. Cut, trim and join movies. Download videos from YouTube and Google by entering the page URL. Great tool to retrieve your work from your DVD (VOB files) and into AVI or MPEG when you have lost your ProShow files.

MWSnap - <http://www.snapfiles.com/get/mwsnap.html><http://www.snapfiles.com/get/mwsnap.html> Static screen capture utility in BMP, PNG, JPG, GIF, TIFF

Rad Video tools - <http://www.radgametools.com/bnkdown.htm> Various video tools – VERY easy to use video conversion utility

Sherlock - <http://www.radgametools.com/bnkdown.htm> Detect and find codecs on your system and see if they are broken.

Stoik Video Converter - <http://www.stoik.com/products/svc/index.html> Convert AVI, WMV, and DV files in all possible combinations

Super - <http://www.erightssoft.com/SUPER.html> Converts movie files, including VOB

SyncView - http://software.sdecnet.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=18 Sync your AVI, MPEG audio to the video

Ulead DV converter - <http://www.ulead.com/download/dvconverter/download.htm> Changes DV Type I format video to DV Type II

Virtualdub - <http://www.virtualdub.org/> Converts just about anything to anything (PAL to NTSC, removes audio, etc.)

VirtualDubMod - http://sourceforge.net/project/showfiles.php?group_id=65889&package_id=63653
Convert VOB files to AVI

Video Inspector - <http://www.kcsoftwares.com/index.php?download> With VideoInspector you'll know why your video has no sound or refuses to play correctly.

VLC media player - <http://www.videolan.org/vlc/> Multimedia player for various audio and video formats

WinDV - <http://windv.mourek.cz/> Captures video from DV device into AVI; records AVI into a DV device via FireWire interface

Wink - <http://www.debugmode.com/wink/> A tutorial and presentation creation software. Using Wink, you can capture screenshots, add explanations boxes, titles, etc.

Wax - <http://www.debugmode.com/wax/> High performance and flexible video compositing and special effects software

Xmpeg - <http://www.xmpeg.net/DownloadMoreinfos.asp?ID=1> Convert VOB to AVI, MPEG, etc.

Motion/Animated Backgrounds

Internet Archive - <http://www.archive.org/details/movies> library of free movies, films, and videos

Classic Movie Sounds – <http://www.classicmovies.org/soundcartoons.htm> Assorted cartoons and animated films

MovieTools-<http://www.classicmovies.org/soundcartoons.htm>

MovieWavs – http://www.moviewavs.com/Movies/Production_Companies.html Download wavs of the major production companies

Royalty Free Stock Video - http://royaltyfreestockvideofootage.com/rfvf_store/index.php?cPath=31
Lots of free ones – just look!

Studio Trailers Movie Digest - http://www.digital-digest.com/movies/movie_index.php?type=studio

Stock Footage for Free - <http://stockfootageforfree.com/> Commercial use allowed

MISCELLANEOUS

A little of this and a little of that - other handy utilities/tools to have in your arsenal

Tools and Utilities

Advanced Renamer - <http://aren.hulubulu.net/> Great utility for organizing digital pictures for both professionals and beginners. Thumbnail mode lets you display thumbnails directly in the file list, giving you maximum control of the renaming process. MP3 files often have messed-up names and contain weird characters. Change the names of your favorite music files to more suitable names using the built-in ID3 functions.

Creative Commons Search Engine - <http://search.creativecommons.org/> Look for photos, music, text, books, and other content that's free to share or modify for your own purposes. The Creative Commons search engine can help you find tons of (legally) free stuff on the web.

DVD Shrink - <http://www.dvdshrink.org/> Shrink your DVD output to fit on a standard DVD disc

IESpell - <http://www.iespell.com/> A spell checker for Internet Explorer—good for forum spell checking

ImgBurn - <http://www.imgburn.com/> Free ISO burning software

FileHippo - <http://filehippo.com/> Lots of freeware

FlashKit - <http://www.flashkit.com/> Flash animations, fonts, graphics

The Freebie Directory - <http://www.freebiedirectory.com/> The name pretty much says it all

The Internet Archive - <http://www.archive.org/index.php> The Internet Archive is a digital library of Internet sites and other cultural artifacts in digital form.

JAlbum - <http://jalbum.net/> Album software & free web hosting. With Jalbum, it's easy to create your own photo album site.

Jasp -

http://www.freedownloadcenter.com/Utilities/File_Splitting_Utilities/JASP___Just_Another_File_Split_Program.html

You can use this utility to split large files (up to 4G) into smaller parts

KarensPowerTools - <http://www.karenware.com/powertools/ptdirprn.asp> Handy computer utilities for experienced computer users

Magnifixer - <http://www.blacksunsoftware.com/lensview.html> Screen magnifier

Newspaper Headline - <http://www.fodey.com/generators/newspaper/snippet.asp> Create a fake newspaper clipping with your own headline

OpenOffice - <http://www.openoffice.org/> If it looks like Microsoft Office, is fully compatible with Microsoft Office, then it must be Microsoft Office. But it isn't! You can also open/edit Adobe PDF files. Microsoft Works (compliments of Microsoft) is included in the OpenOffice download.

PDF Creator- <http://sourceforge.net/projects/pdfcreator/>

Rename Master - <http://www.joejoesoft.com/cms/showpage.php?cid=108> Rename large groups of files (i.e., photos!) with a few clicks

Scanning Tips - <http://www.scantips.com/> Scanning Basics 101

Smartclose - <http://bmproductions.fixnum.org/> Close down all running background apps - Wizard interface. One click closes all but required OS processes and makes a backup to enable turning everything back on when needed. Great for shutting everything down when you want to give as much computer resources as possible to Proshow.

Storyboard Pro - <http://movies.atomiclearning.com/k12/storyboardpro> Make a storyboard for your next project

Unlocker - <http://ccollomb.free.fr/unlocker/> For when you get “ERROR - CANNOT DELETE THIS FILE. IT’S BEING USED BY ANOTHER PERSON OR PROGRAM”

Photography

Alex Nolan Digital Tricks - http://www.alexnolan.net/articles/digital_photography.htm

CambridgeInColor- <http://www.cambridgeincolour.com/tutorials/digital-camera-pixel.htm>

Camera Hobby- <http://www.camerahobby.com/EBook-TOC.htm>

Digital Camera Resource- <http://www.dcresource.com/>

Digital Photography Tips- http://www.dslrtips.com/workshops/DSLR_%20...%20tips.shtml

DSLR Tips-<http://www.dslrtips.com/>

Imaging Resource-<http://www.dslrtips.com/>

Ken Rockwell-<http://www.kenrockwell.com/tech.htm>

PBase Magazine- <http://www.pbase.com/magazine>

Photo Answers -<http://www.photoanswers.co.uk/> includes some Photoshop video tutorials

PhotographyBB Magazine- <http://www.photographybb.com/magazine/>

PhotonHead- <http://www.photographybb.com/magazine/>

The Digital Podcast- <http://www.thedigitalstory.com/podcast/>

Web File Storage

4 Shared- <http://www.4shared.com/>

FileFactory-<http://www.filefactory.com/>

MediaFire- <http://www.mediafire.com/>

YouSendIt – <http://www.yousendit.com/> only the LITE version is free

XDrive -<http://www.yousendit.com/>