

Larry's Final Cut Pro Newsletter

*Editor: Larry Jordan
Issue #20 - Nov. 2005*

Welcome to the latest edition of my monthly Final Cut Pro newsletter!

The goal of this newsletter is to provide information helpful to the professional user of Final Cut Pro. This newsletter publishes each month. Past issues are not archived, however, key articles are posted to my website for your future reference. All software references are to Final Cut Pro 5 unless otherwise noted.

Please invite your friends to visit my web site -- www.larryjordan.biz. We are working to make it a great Final Cut resource!

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Supercharge Final Cut Seminar

I'm writing this from the road, as we've started our "Supercharge Your Productivity with Final Cut Pro" fall tour.

First, I want to thank the members of the Chicago Final Cut Pro User Group for their generous welcome at their monthly meeting -- especially since that was the night Chicago clinched the World Series. It was great to see so many die-hard editors in the room.

Also, our first Final Cut seminar in Chicago was great! The room was packed, for which I am grateful. Based on your surveys, the four most popular sessions were:

1. Working with OS X Tiger
2. Organizing your files and computer system for Final Cut
3. Using Soundtrack Pro to repair bad audio
4. Editing Power Tips

Based on the comments from the Chicago seminar, I've expanded these sessions for the rest of our seminars:

- Washington, DC - Nov. 3 (Thursday)
- Atlanta, GA - Nov. 5 (Saturday)
- Denver, CO - Nov. 10 (Thursday)
- Seattle, WA - Nov. 12 (Saturday)
- Los Angeles, CA - Nov. 14 (Monday)

Also, thanks to the generosity of Tascam, we have an FW-1082 mixer/control surface to demo how both Final Cut Pro 5 and Soundtrack Pro work with external control surfaces. We'll cover both setup and operation during the afternoon of the seminar. If you want to learn more about audio in Final Cut-- our seminars are the place to be!

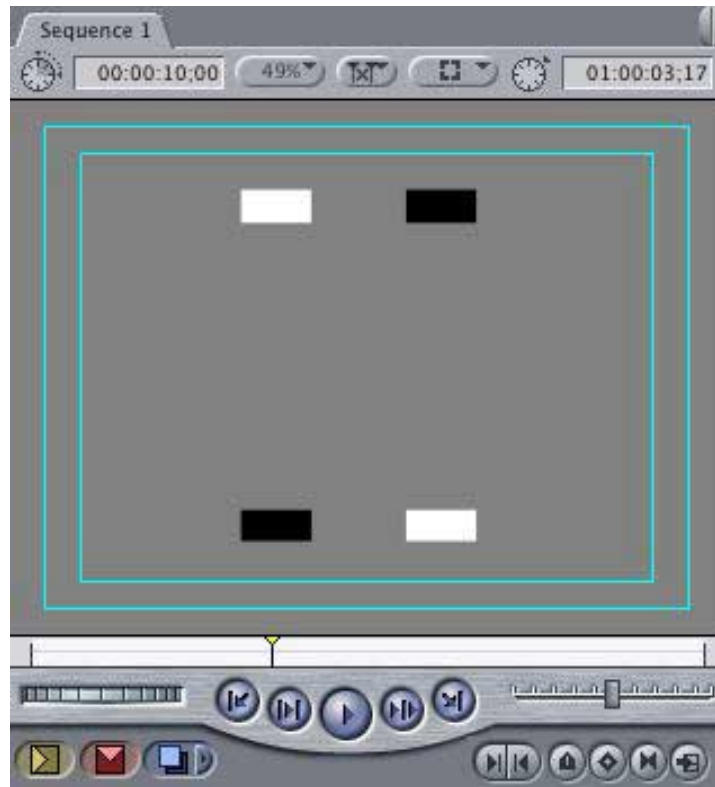
If you haven't already signed up to attend, please click here to register: www.larryjordan.biz/seminars.

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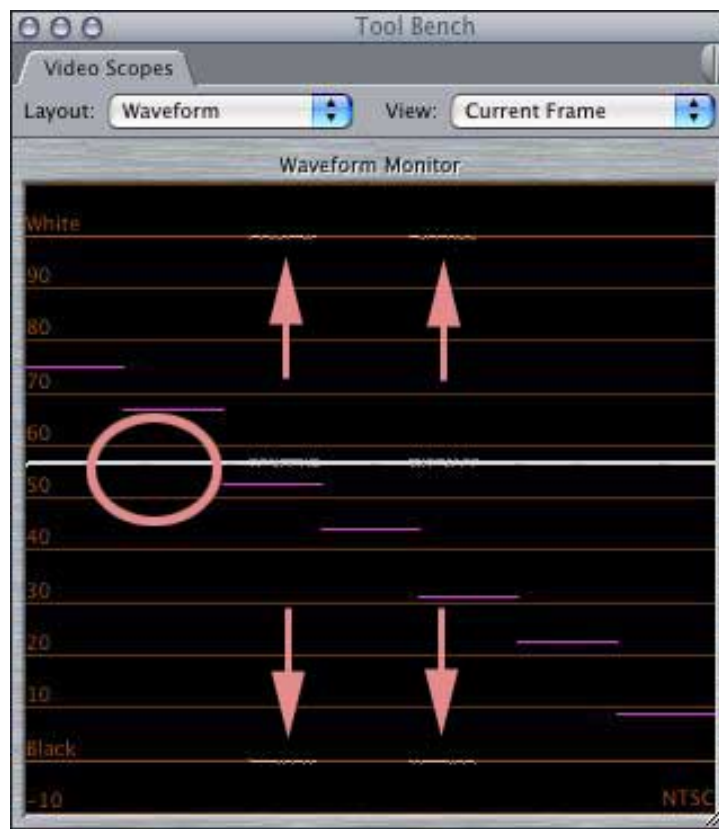
Andrew Balis brought this to my attention via the Apple Trainer mailing list.

In brief, the Waveform monitor video scope inside Final Cut does not display the entire screen, it only displays the image roughly contained by the Title Safe rectangle.

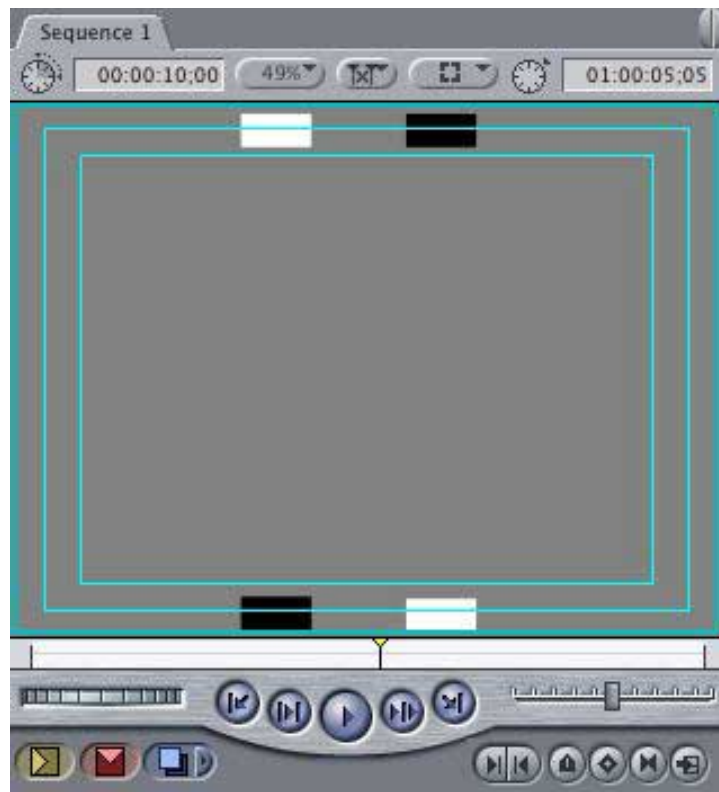
This is true for all versions of Final Cut, starting with version 4.0.



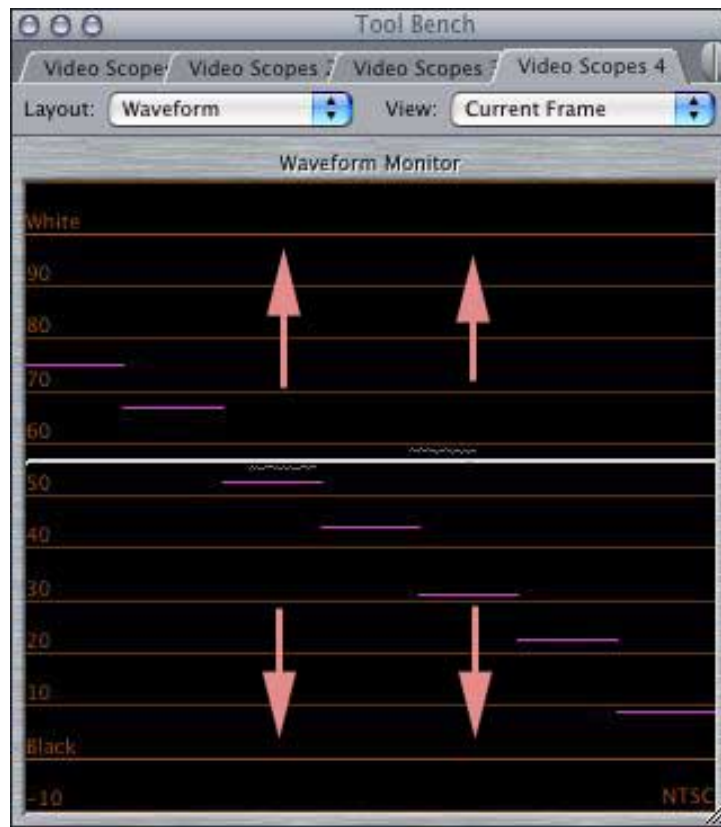
Here is an example. I created a test shape (720 x 540 x 72) using 50% gray, except for four blocks of pure white and pure black. It looks like this in the Canvas -- note that all blocks are inside Title Safe.



The Waveform monitor shows both the mid-tone gray and the four blocks of pure white and black (indicated by arrows).



However, when the white and black blocks are moved outside Title Safe, as they are here, they disappear from the scope!



Frankly, I was stunned to discover this! A scope should show the ENTIRE picture, not just a portion of it.

When I was in Chicago, I mentioned this to **Gary Adcock**, of CHIFCPUG, who sent the following email:

This [scope problem] has been an issue since day one. While FCP scopes are accurate for what they show, and nearly useable for DV they are seriously flawed by the lack of information that is shown to the user. Apple touted scopes in FCP 3 as a major upgrade and highly accurate, but then cobbled their use in a true pro environment by failing to even make them equal to other software-based scopes such as the one from evological.com.

I have seen as much as a 35% difference in the signal on my Leader scope vs the Waveform and Vectorscopes in FCP 5. Yet Avid, Final Touch, and Synthetic Aperture all have software-based scopes that are nearly identical in use and reliability of the hardware-based ones.

And to offer something else up -- [FCP's scopes] are even farther off in the uncompressed HD world, where they appear to only sample one in every 24 scan-lines on 4:4:4 1080 content. I have seen what appears to be only sampling in the 4:3 center of an uncompressed 16x9 image DL video file.

In essence, the scopes sample HD at about 1/2 of the overall image based on a 4:3 weighted area in the center.

Larry again: You can test this for yourself. [Here's a JPEG of my test image.](#) Load it into Final Cut and look at in the Waveform monitor.

I'm **very** disappointed that FCP's scopes are this inaccurate -- especially when the only way to do color correction is by using a scope.

It is my hope that if we complain about this loudly enough, Apple will add it to the list of "Things To Be Fixed."

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More HDV Tips

I was at a party recently and met a couple of editor friends. Naturally, we went off to a corner and started talking Final Cut.

They are currently working on a major HDV project for a Hollywood studio for a DVD scheduled to be released in the spring of next year. After reading last month's issue about HDV tips, they had a few more to add, based on their experience.

1. Only use high-quality HDV tape stock. They had a LOT of capture issues, especially with supposedly "broken" timecode that went away when they upgraded to a higher-quality tape.
2. Don't try to use HDV in an off-line/on-line environment. The timecode from both the HDV camera and deck are nowhere near accurate enough to accurately recapture the same material frame-accurately. Working with HDV is best in native, high-quality mode.
3. Renders take much, MUCH longer -- because this is an HD picture, so there are many more pixels to render than DV.
4. Final Cut automatically capture HDV video into separate clips, based

upon when the record button was pressed. However, you can turn that behavior off by UNchecking the "Create new clip on Start/Stop" in the Clip Settings tab of the HDV Log & Capture window.

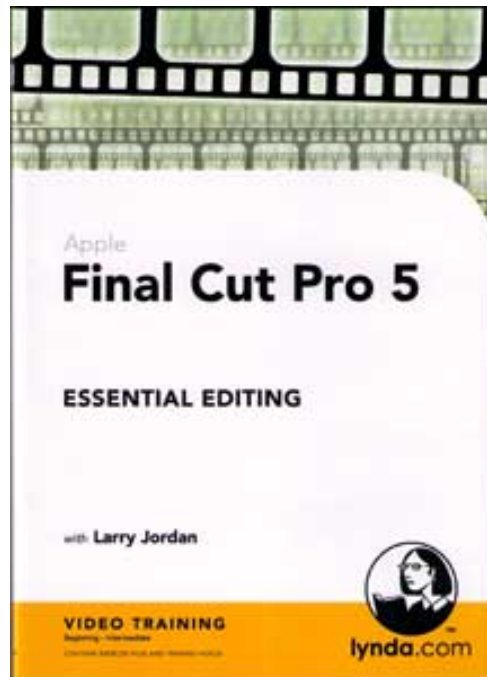
5. You must export your entire sequence as a self-contained QuickTime movie to rebuild the MPEG-2 GOP structure.
6. Down-converting to DV then capturing via FireWire has its own set of problems. Working with HDV in native format is always best.

Let me know what HDV tips you've discovered, and I'll share them in the next issue.

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Announcing: Final Cut Pro 5 - Essential Editing Training DVD

[Lynda.com](#) and I have just released our latest DVD-based training: *Final Cut Pro 5 - Essential Editing*.



Containing over 8 hours of narrated tutorials, this title covers all the essentials of editing. This is the first in a three-part series of training DVDs, the next one covers effects and the final one presents an advanced look at Final Cut Pro 5.

The key topics in the Editing title include:

1. How to organize your system
2. Learning the Final Cut interface
3. Viewing and marking clips
4. Organizing clips on the Timeline
5. Trimming
6. Editing and mixing audio
7. Importing and exporting files
8. Capturing
9. Outputting

[Click here](#) to view a one-page detailed outline of the contents of the DVD.

The DVD is available now for \$99.00 and includes all exercise files.

[Click here to buy it.](#)

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Creating an Organic Picture-in-Picture Gradient Transition

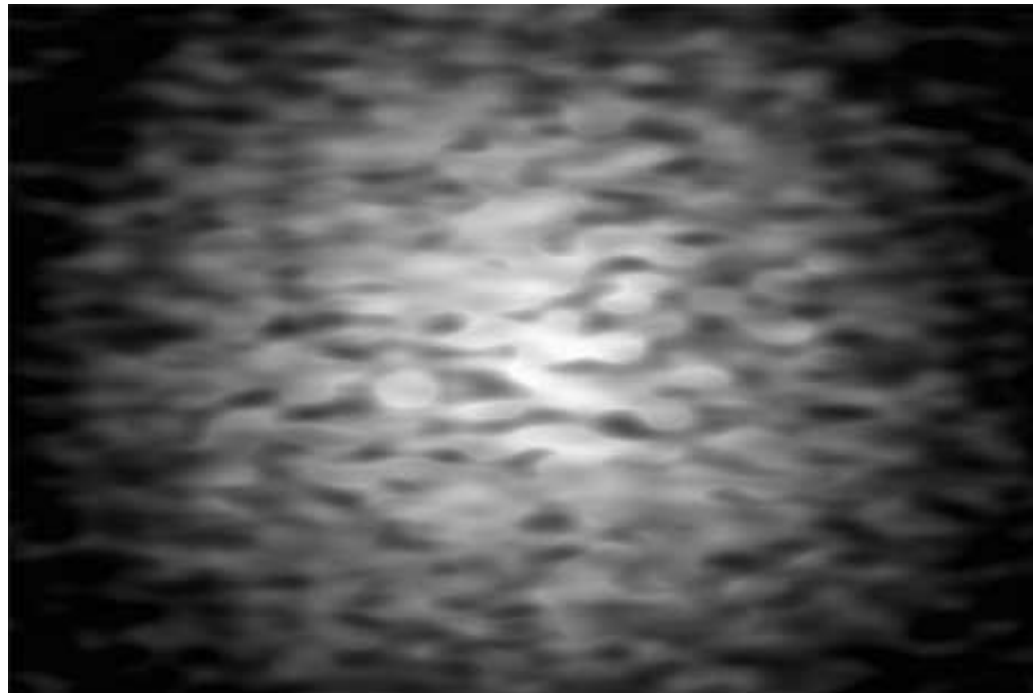
by Bryan Woodard

I've been thinking about how to create a gradient wipe into a picture in picture, where the smaller picture wipes in in a more "organic" fashion.

Here are the steps, along with a sample PNG file you can use to experiment with on your own.

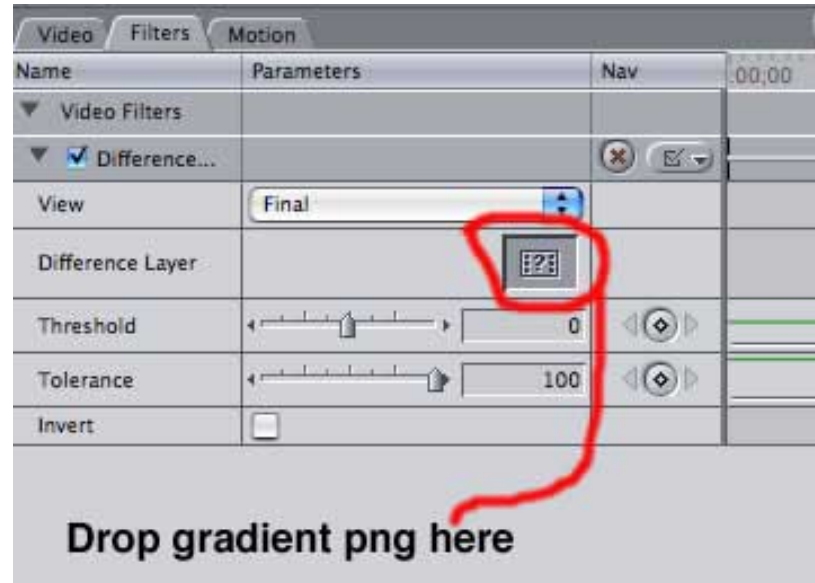


1. Place the clip on the **Timeline** and resize it to your purpose. In this example a 10 second clip of a photograph is placed on track V2 with an animated background on track V1.
2. Click on the **Effects** tab in the **Browser** to make it active, then open the Video Filters Folder and locate the Key Folder. Inside the Key folder locate the **Difference matte** filter and drag it onto the clip on **V2** in the Timeline.
3. Double click on the clip on V2 in the **Timeline** to load it into the viewer.

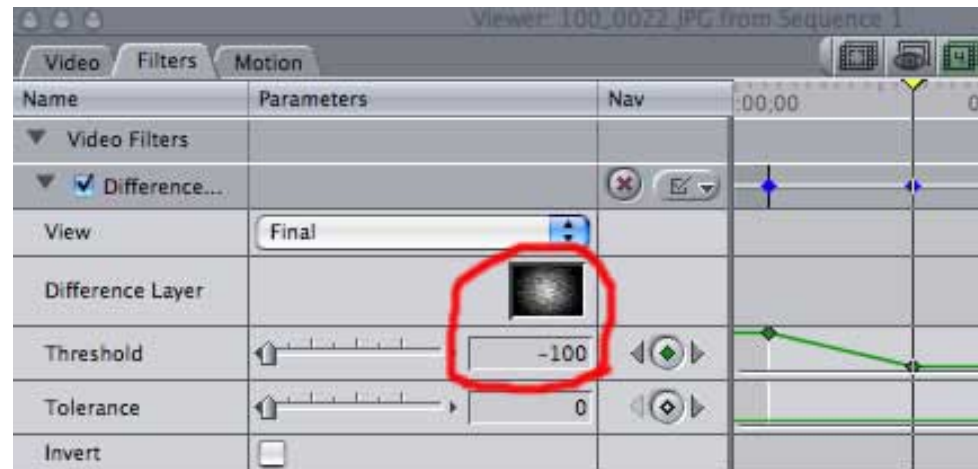


4. If you haven't yet, select or build a gradient PNG to provide the transition matte and import it into your project. I have included a

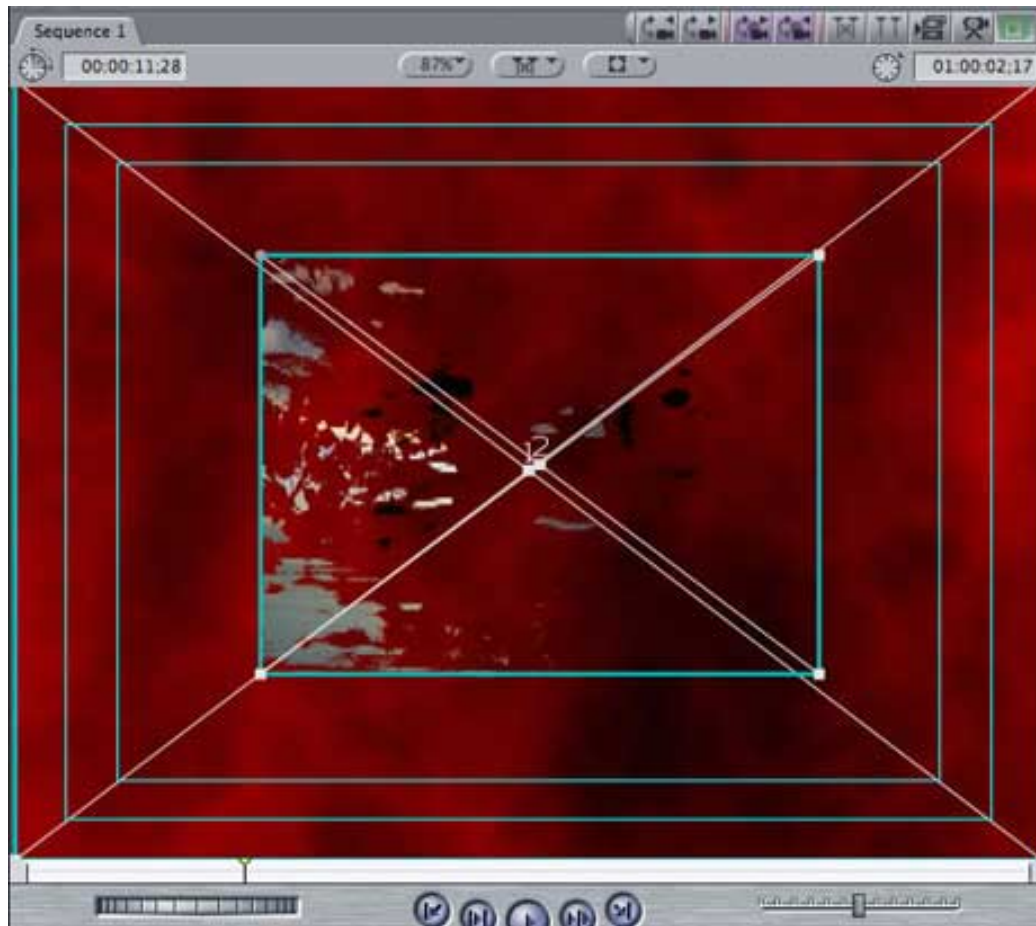
sample png but you can build your own custom gradient in Photo Shop or Macromedia Fireworks.



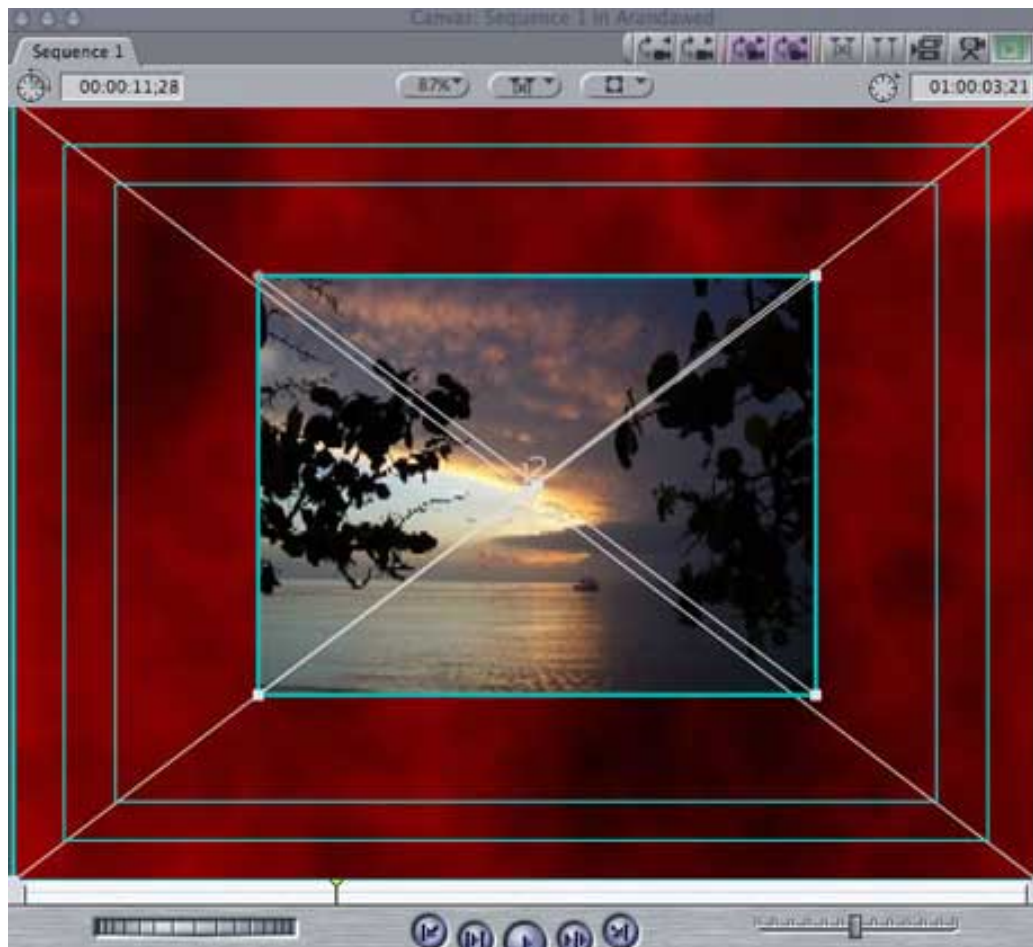
5. Drag and drop the gradient.png onto the Difference layer well.



6. Set key frames for the threshold parameter at the beginning and end of the transition.



7. Be creative..... experiment.



[Click here](#) to download the PNG file used for this example -- 876K ZIP file.

Larry replies: Thanks, Bryan, for writing this article!

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Sound Effects Pro DVD

Thinking of new, or relatively new, products, James Christopher of Sprocket Development International, recently released a DVD containing hundreds of different sound effects.

Ranging from doors and body-falls to roller-coasters and squeaks.

If you are interested in adding to your sound effects library, learn more about it at <http://www.soundefx.com>.

Announcing: *Edit Well Newsletter*

One of the problems about writing a free newsletter is that I can't hire writers to provide additional, and more detailed, content. And, what I've also discovered is that the trade press, while doing a good job covering Final Cut for the general user, does not do a good job providing Final Cut information for the experienced editor.

So, I created *Edit Well -- the Newsletter for the Professional Editor*.

This is a 24-page printed newsletter that premieres in January, 2006. It's subscription-based, which allows me to hire writers, experts in Final Cut, as contributors. And, it's printed on paper, which means you can archive it and refer to it time and again. Best of all, all past issues will be archived.

I'm delighted to announce that the Premiere Issue features outstanding Final Cut experts such as **Philip Hodgetts, Tom Wolsky, Noah Kadner, Kevin Monahan, Bruce Nazarian** and myself. People who REALLY know Final Cut, and know how to explain it in clear, concise writing.

I'd like to invite you to get a free, 4-page Preview Issue as a sample of the real thing. ([Click here to download the Preview.](#))

Plus, I want to send you the Premiere issue FREE -- when it releases in January. All I need is your mailing address.

I am very excited about *Edit Well* -- and hope you take a few minutes to look the Preview issue over.

[Click here](#) to download the Preview Issue (1MB PDF)

Redux: Square vs. Rectangular Pixels

Per Ottesen, writes:

I'll try to put my thoughts into this email, hoping that you perhaps could clear the whole stuff.

When working in 4:3, where we change the picture in PhotoShop FROM 768x576 TO 720x576 (PAL), it will also be necessary to do this when working with wide screen (16:9), where the changes are from 1024x576 to 720x576. Is that correct?

If you do so, the picture will look perfect in PhotoShop when aspect ratio are set to wide screen. The picture doesn't look proper in the video editing system, when it are imported into a wide screen project, but the reason for that could be that the non-linear system only shows square pixels, and You therefore HAVE to trust, that the picture will look perfect when it's exported to tape.

Why is it, that when a single frame are exported from a HDV/16:9 project, then are the picture "only" 720x576 pixels i PhotoShop, and it's looks distorted, and first when I set aspect ratio to wide screen it looks okay ? Are the reason "hidden" in the answer from before ?

When this picture are re-imported in the editing system (still into a wide screen project), it remains the 720x576 size, and doesn't go to the edges, although the original sequence, where the still frame came from, ARE wide screen, and fill the frame to the edges ?

Larry replies: There are several issues here as you convert between square and rectangular pixels in these two formats and dealing with multiple layer PhotoShop documents and single layer documents.

The basic problem is that computers use square pixels and video uses rectangular pixels. PAL video has an aspect ration of 1.06:1 -- in other words, the video pixel is somewhat short and fat.

This means that for PAL, while your video image is: 720 x 576, the computer image is 768x576. This means that all single layer graphics need to be created at this ratio in order to be imported with all geometry correct.

However, Final Cut, in an effort to be helpful, automatically compensates for the differences between square and rectangular pixels when importing a multi-layer PhotoShop document. So, here, you would create a PAL image at 720 x 576.

When exporting a still frame, stills will export at 720 x 576, which is the default size of a PAL image. However, they need to be converted back to a square pixel format to look correct on the computer.

With 16:9, the same rules hold true, but the pixel counts change. For a single layer 16:9 PAL image, create your source file at 1024 x 576 for single layers and 720 x 576 for multiple layers.

Final Cut uses a 16:15 ratio for DV PAL and 64:45 ration for 16:9 PAL.

Per replies:

I wasn't aware of the difference between single and multilayer PhotoShop files, because I've always been created the graphic at 768x576, and as the last commands changed the image size to 720x576, so the perfect circle was squeezed to an oval, and in FCP changed again to a perfect circle, but You say that shouldn't be done if it's a single layer graphic file.

So if I do the same changes in the image size in PhotoShop, the end results in FCP will be different if the PhotoShop file is a single layer file instead of a multi layer file. Strange !!!

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Kit Laughlin, from Australia, follows up with a PAL question:

I still work in FCP 4.5, but will upgrade this month (down time). I enjoyed the article about preparing still for FCP 5 - but I assume that the dimensions you came up with were for NTSC.

What would the corresponding pixel dimensions be for PAL?

Larry replies: The PAL pixel and the NTSC pixel are different shapes -- NTSC is tall and thin, PAL is short and fat. Thus, the ratios are different.

The PAL aspect ratio is 1:1.06, and these numbers take that into account. When creating an image to move around in, try 1536 x 1152 x 72 dpi.

Synching audio to video in real-time.

by Russ Coffman

[While you can Option-Slip an audio clip,] here's my tip for synching audio real-time as used by LAFCPUG's Tip of the Week on a few weeks ago:

1. Select the audio clip (or video, depending on which is "dominant" or already in place.)
2. Slip tool (**S**).
3. Mark an in-out range in the Timeline that includes a good sync point, one where lips are visible, for instance.
4. Turn on **Loop Playback** if not already on (**Control+L**).
5. **Play In to Out** (Shift-\). The selected range will now loop while you adjust without having to start-stop-adjust. This is MUCH faster.
6. Type < and > until the audio is in sync. **Shift +<** or **Shift + >** slips 5 frames (you can set the increment in User Preferences)

You have to have enough extra media between the audio clip's **In** and **Out** points and the media start/end, of course.




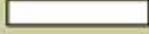
If you want to just move the audio left and right, leave the Selection (arrow) tool active and the clip will move left or right, like doing a Slide (and you can choose the Slide tool too). In that case, you can't have other clips in the way of the movement.

Larry replies: Thanks, Russ, and thank you, also, LAFCPUG.





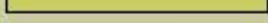


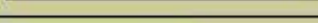





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Last month's Survey on Hourly Rates and Billing

Last month I wanted to learn how you charged for your time and what the average hourly rate for editing is. Here are the results.

How do you bill for your services?			
		Percent	Votes
I'm on staff and don't bill		10%	26
Flat rate per project		37%	89
Flat rate per video		6%	15
Hourly		35%	86
Other		10%	24
Total Votes			240

When I asked how you billed, the results were evenly divided between flat rates and hourly rates; though about 5% of respondents said they billed on a daily basis.

Average editing hourly billing rate (in US \$).			
		Percent	Votes
\$5 - 10		0%	1
\$11 - 15		1%	3
\$16 - 20		3%	10
\$21 - 25		6%	18
\$26 - 30		8%	23
\$31 - 35		10%	27
\$36 - 40		6%	17
\$41 - 45		4%	11
\$46 - 50		12%	33
\$51 - 55		7%	20
\$56 - 60		5%	14
\$61 - 75		12%	34
\$76 - 100		11%	29
\$101+		8%	22
Total Votes			262

When I asked what your hourly billing rates were (or could be converted to), the range was much wider. Keep in mind while looking this table over that answers came in from all over the world, and not all economies can support high hourly rates.

Still, 31% of editors charged more than \$61 per hour, while over 75% charged more than \$31 per hour.

This month's survey - How long have you been editing?

This month, I'd like to learn how long you've been editing either video or film -- not

just with Final Cut, but any video or film editing.

As always, all answers are confidential and I'll report the results next month.

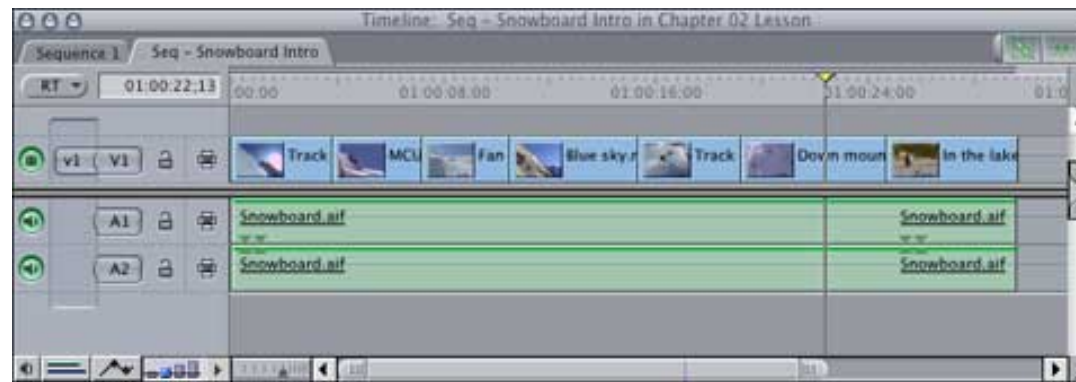
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Technique: Apply Multiple Transitions at Once in One Track

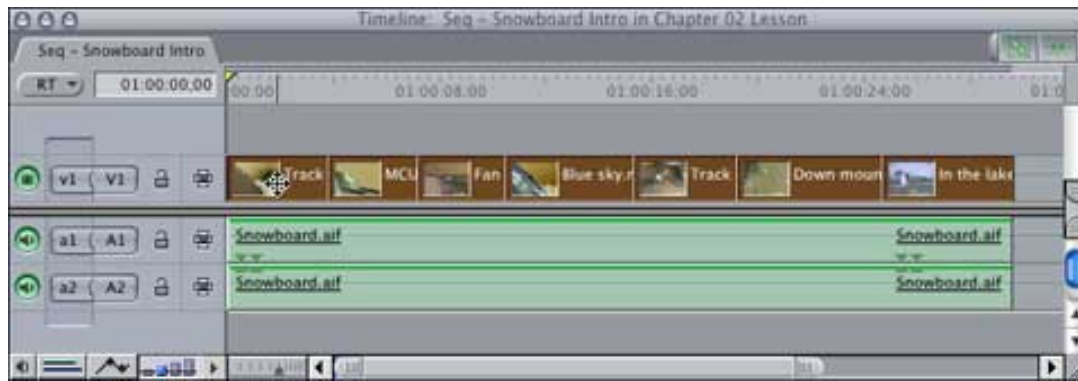
A couple of month's ago, a reader wrote in asking how to apply multiple transitions at the same time. I told them that the way Final Cut works, it only allows one transition to be selected per track.

While true, it did not, um, PRECISELY answer their question -- because there IS a way to apply the default transition to multiple clips at the same time.

This is very cool -- and you can use it to impress your friends at parties. Here's how it works:



1. Build a sequence in the Timeline making sure all your clips have handles.
2. Move your Playhead to the beginning of the sequence



3. Select all the clips to which you want to add the default transition



4. Drag all the clips up to the Canvas and drop them on the red "Overwrite with Transition" overlay.



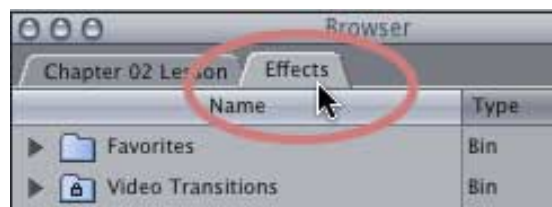
5. POOF! All your clips are immediately edited back to the Timeline with the default transition (normally a 30-frame cross-dissolve) applied between each clip.

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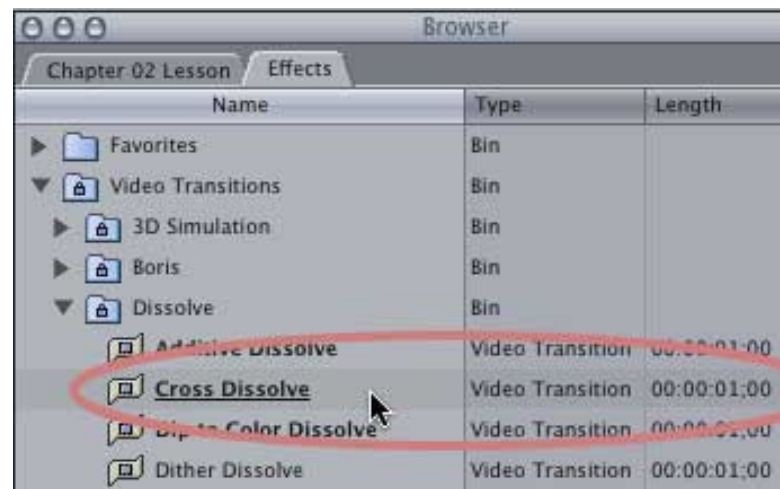
Technique: Changing the Default Transition

So, you are not happy with the default 30-frame cross-dissolve video transition? Well, I must confess, I don't like it either. My personal default transition is a 20-frame cross-dissolve.

Here's how to change it:



1. Click the **Effects** tab in the **Browser**



2. Twirl down **Video Transitions**
3. Find the transition you want to make the default.



4. If you want to change the length, double-click the numbers in the length column, then change them to what you want
5. Select the transition you want to make the default
6. Select **Effects > Video Transitions > Set Default**



7. The underline indicates that transition is now your default transition.

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Reader mail

Upgrading

Beau Leland writes:

A while back you had written an article giving your advice on upgrading a system to FCP 5 with a list of different factors. Well, I didn't have any problems with upgrading since I was running a brand new G5 with Tiger

and QT 7.

But now, I'm trying to find that article because I'm wanting to upgrade my G4 which is running Panther, FCP HD, and QT6. I can't remember if I should upgrade my OS and QT in addition to FCP for things to run smoothly.

If you have any advice, or have a link to that article, I'd really appreciate it. Thanks, and thank you for your website and help.

Larry replies: Beau, as OS X matures, my opinions change. My current recommendations are to run FCP 5 on OS X Tiger (nothing earlier than 10.4.2) and QuickTime 7.0.2. QuickTime 7.0.3 looks OK, but it's still new.

If you are running FCP HD, my recommendation is to run it on OS X 10.3.9 and QuickTime 6.5.2.

And, by the way, with the recent release of OS X 10.4.3, what I'm reading about the upgrade looks very positive. Upgrading to this version of the OS probably makes sense -- be sure to download it from Apple's web site, don't use Software upgrade.

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Converting to 16:9

Brian Brooks offered this suggestion:

I'm trying to create 16:9 video from 4:3 source so that the final QuickTime movie, which get posted to the web is 16:9 without any black bars.

In researching this, I found the following link that you might want to share with your readers:

http://blog.johnjosephbachir.org/?page_id=162

Larry replies: Brian, thanks for the link. My feeling is that it is better to shoot 16:9, rather than convert 4:3 to 16:9 in post -- which agrees with Mr. Bachir's blog.

You avoid the black bars at the top and bottom of the screen when you export a 16:9 sequence as a 16:9 movie. Black letter boxing is only used when you are outputting a 16:9 image contained in a 4:3 frame.

Video Noise

Uli Plank, writes in from Germany:

[Regarding last month's article about noise in a picture,] here are my two cents:

When contrast gets very low, like in fades, systems with any kind of compression tend to expose such behavior, since they try to compress by averaging colors with values very close to each other into a single value.

Areas most affected are soft transitions of color, like in the lightly tinted sunrise sky, where it was most obvious to him.

It's true, this will get exaggerated in MPEG-2 compression for DVD, but it's already there in DV or JPEG. A high-end system without compression and 10 bits of color would avoid this – until we go to DVD, that is.

There are two ways to cure the problem:

- Use BitVice as the MPEG-2 encoder, it offers a dithering option.
- Add a mild amount of grain (or noise) to the scene, preferably something looking quite natural like from a good film effects package.

Graeme Nattress' filters come to my mind, Joe's Filters should also be fine. After Effects 6.5 owners can give the new noise filter (formerly known as Grain Surgery) a try.

Yes, we all know that severe noise is poison for an MPEG-2 encoder, but a very mild grain can help you to suppress any regular (and therefore very obvious) patterns in such low contrast areas.

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Audio editing

Dilesh Korya offers some additional follow-up to a reader comment about audio editing last month:

Charlie Watson from CBS Washington wrote in: '... and the audio rubber banding tool for audio levels. I have been add-edit splitting and adding dissolves to audio transitions for years, and the rubber banding keyframe method is much faster.'

I use AVID 70% of the time and rubber band all the time rather than split edit. FCP audio editing is far, far superior. You can also rubber band in FCP.

Press the 'wiggly-black-line' button at the bottom left hand corner of the timeline. Now this switches rubber banding option in the timeline. Now move your cursor to the audio track and hold down the Option key. Bingo! You will see a key frame there. Now you can move this up or down depending what level you want. To delete it, just **option+click** the keyframe.

Like AVID, you can also expand the timeline height by pressing **Shift+T**, or like in AVID move cursor just under the line of the audio track you want to expand, hold mouse button down and move mouse to expand to reduce. Also you can have the waveform pattern up permanently, without FCP having to re-draw every time you change the size of the timeline.

The neatest trick I use is the paste attributes. Have you on AVID done all your rubber banding- elegantly moved things up and down, then later have to replace the whole audio- but you need to redo all the rubber banding again. Well, in FCP before you delete the audio, highlight it, then copy it (press apple-C). Replace the audio, then press option-V (paste attributes). A new window appears, look at the audio section, tick the 'levels' box and press OK. Now the new audio track will have exactly the same keyframes as before in exactly the same places. (There is an option in the window which you click if your new clip is of a different length, the FCP will accordingly stretch the positioning of the keyframes).

Finally if you require a very detailed audio edit- then double click the audio

clip, you will see it appear in the viewer window- with waveform pattern. Using the option click method you can add the keyframes. Then expand that timeline to its maximum. You can shift the keyframe within one frame length- in fact allegedly down to 100th of a frame (needs proving though)- but more accurate than AVID.

Larry replies: Thanks!

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24 fps vs. 30 fps

Zia Basith writes:

Question: I am getting ready to shoot a music video with my XL2 at the settings of 16:9, 24p Advanced pulldown 2:3:3:2 which will be aired on cable TV network. The cable TV networks are obviously NTSC format 30fps but if I edit my FCP timeline in 24p in the XL2's native format and "Print to Video" on minidv or betacam, will the TV networks be able to play the minidv or betacam tapes on there NTSC systems or PAL (if converted to PAL at post house).

Larry replies: Generally, you want to edit in the same format you plan to distribute. Since you are going to broadcast, shoot in 24 fps to get the look you want, then capture at 29.97 fps for editing and final output.

Moving clips with the keyboard

Laszlo Fesus, from Hungary, writes:

How can I move the sound on timeline reverse or forward frame-by-frame with keyboard. If not, have you another idea?

Larry replies: If your audio and video are linked, hold the **Option** key to select just the audio clip. Otherwise, select the audio clip you want to move. Then, press the **comma** key to move the audio to the left -- or the **period** key to move the audio to

the right.

FCP plug-in

David Coffin writes:

I've discovered an FCP plug-in that converts Illustrator files to FCP projects. Thought you'd like to see it:

<http://www.ampede.com/layerlink/>

Larry replies: Very cool, thanks!

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Screen Saver Settings

Martin Weiss writes:

I've been a keen subscriber of your newsletter for a couple of months now (full of useful tips also for those of us who do not edit full-time). But only now did I come across an article on the Boston FCP user group's site, where you describe methods for troubleshooting, and minimizing chances of trouble happening.

On the section "Optimize your system Preferences" you say in step 2 that the "Screen Effects" should be set to "never". Trouble is, when I launch the Sys Prefs, there is no "Screen Effects" tab; I've also tried the new search in the System Preferences, but to no avail. I'm using OS X.4.2 (and am eagerly awaiting the .3 update, which is supposed to deliver more than 500 bug fixes). Any hint on how to get that option?

Larry replies: Screen saver settings are changed by selecting:

Blue Apple > System Preferences > Desktop/Screen Saver and clicking the Screen Saver tab.

My recommendation is to set the screen saver delay to be slightly longer than the longest program you usually output.

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Capture Now

Uli Plank writes in, again, with comments on preventing audio and video sync issues:

I'm pretty sure that **Capture Now** can be the reason for sync issues not only with the notorious Canon camcorders, but also with minor defects on tapes.

Regarding images there is a lot of 'covering up' going on in DV until a dropout really shows, but sound samples can get lost easily from minor dropouts. Whenever I've seen a sync issue after a "capture now", the soundtrack was always a little bit shorter than the video. If you use batch capture, FCP will readjust the sample rates to match video and audio to the known TC and even cure those pesky Canon clips, as we all know.

Larry replies: As many of you know, I am not a fan of **Capture Now**. However, I had not considered the impact of drop-outs on audio sync. This just points to spending a few extra dollars and buying high-quality video tape to start with. Given the cost of production, saving a few dollars on tape stock is a fool's economy.

Image size

Dirk van Sloten, of the UW, Milwaukee, Film Department, writes:

I enjoyed your [Lynda.com title for DVD Studio Pro](#) (still am enjoying it, actually).

I have a question though, wondering if you're running into the same thing.

When I use compressor with the MPEG2 encoder, it spits things out

seemingly fine. But when I open it up in Quicktime (7, on Tiger) it tells me the resolution of the .m2v file is 640x480. Yet in DSP3 it tells me it's 720x480 for the same file.

Not sure if that's a Quicktime Bug, or if compressor is actually doing something wrong.

Another thing I sometimes run into if when exporting from FCP and unchecking the 'self contained' option, it STILL spits out a self contained giant file. Even though I didn't change any default settings... :(I suppose I could try and trash my FCP prefs etc... but really, do you have any clue what this could be?

Larry replies: Dirk, thanks for writing -- I went to the UW, Madison, so it's nice to hear a voice from home.

Video uses rectangular pixels to create a 4:3 image. If you do the math, you'll discover that 720 x 480 is not 4:3 -- however, 640 x 480 is. Internally, video is 640 x 480. When we display it on a computer, which uses square pixels, things get converted to 720 x 480 to make the pixel math work.

As for exporting, if FCP has not yet created render files for your transitions and effects, those files will be rendered and included in the final QuickTime movie; whether it is self-contained or not. If rendering is done prior to exporting, the render files will be pointed to, rather than included in the movie.

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DVD Studio Pro

Ron Wheeler writes (either from Austria or Australia, I can't tell):

Firstly, thanks for a great book (Final Cut Pro HD). It took me a while to get through, but, boy, have I learnt heaps. Your guidance not only provided me with excellent editing tips but it gave me such enthusiasm for what I want to do.

I came to the point where I needed to transfer the movie to DVD. I

followed your tips & compressed the movie through "Compressor." I then tried to copy to DVD (I recently purchased a LaCie DVD burner that came with Toast Lite 6.0.9 Lite) but no go. Toast doesn't recognize MPEG-2 files.

MMmmmm what does Larry say..... "import it into DVD Studio Pro" oh, aahh I don't have that program. No worries, I buy it on the net. That's where I got confused.

What version of DVD studio pro would you recommend ? Version 3 or version 4?

I have a G4 dual 1.25 GHz with 1.75 GB RAM. I can't see myself going to HDV for a long time, but I have read a few reviews saying version 3 is unstable & version 4 is a big improvement & is a "must buy". Others say, that if your not working with HD current users of version 3 need not upgrade.

What should I do?

Larry replies: The current DVD Studio Pro is version 4. For what you are trying to do, and your current system, while both versions will work fine, I'd recommend version 3.

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Markers

Herb Isaacs writes in with a DVD reminder:

You probably have covered this long ago, but I rediscovered a problem I had some time ago when I did my first DVD with chapter markers. Neither iDVD nor DVD Studio Pro would recognize my chapters when I followed the Final Cut Pro Help file instruction:

"Open a sequence clip in the Viewer"

I learned then that I needed to place the markers in the Timeline instead. Well, it was at least a year till the next one, and last week I did another DVD with chapters, and voilá! I made the same "mistake" by following the

Help file. Perhaps I can now remember this the next time.

Yours for gray hair and foggy memory...

Larry replies: Don't let the gray hair get you down. We've earned every one of them... Thanks.

Portrait images

Michael Mulrooney writes:

Just a curious question. In your article "prepping still images for Video" you mention how to make landscape type photos look good, but you do not mention if there is any technique or anything you can do for a portrait picture. I do a lot of amateur video for children's sports teams my kids are on and one of the things I like to do is put portrait pictures of each child at the beginning of the video so the parents can see who is on the team. The problem is that when I do this it puts a black border on either side of the photo to take up the space that is not filled with a photo. Any suggestions you can make to make to enhance my video projects would be appreciated. Thank you for your suggestions.

Larry replies: Video is, by definition, a horizontal, landscape image. So, you need to create images that fill a 720 x 540 frame. This means vertical pictures either need to be zoomed in enough to fit or you need to add some sort of artsy border around a vertical picture to fill the horizontal space.

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AGP vs PCI Express

Torrey Loomis, of Silverado Systems, sends out this alert:

This came to me from Mike at [Blackmagic Design](#).

Final Cut Pro 4 through Final Cut Pro HD 4.5 require a computer with an

AGP video card for installation. PowerMac G5 (Late 2005) models (released October 19, 2005) feature newer PCI Express video cards.

Because of this, you can't install Final Cut Pro 4.x on these computers.

Final Cut Pro 3.x and earlier do not work in Mac OS X 10.4 Tiger. Because Power Mac G5 (Late 2005) require Mac OS X 10.4.2 or later, you can't install Final Cut Pro 3.x or earlier versions on these computers.

To use Final Cut Pro on Power Mac G5 (Late 2005) you should upgrade to Final Cut Pro 5.

Larry replies: Thanks for the heads-up.

Backing up media

Brian Brooks, of the Anaheim City School District, writes:

[In reference to backing up a project,] After we finish a project and dump it back to miniDV, we select everything in the bin (unedited) and drag it to the timeline. Then we copy the unedited clips to miniDV so we have one backup tape next to the CD of the project sequence, instead of 18 tapes - who knows where. The only thing we would ever need to worry about is reconnecting the media. We would still have all the media on the other tapes if the original was ever needed but since it's DV there's little quality loss between all the copying. It seems like a clever way to save an entire project if you ever need to go back to it and I thought you might be interested.

Larry replies: Brian, the only problem I see with this is that the timecode of your source clips won't match the timecode of your newly output sequence. This means that you'll have a hard time doing a recapture, should that be necessary.

However, this system does make consolidating all your clips into a single tape, or two, much easier.

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DPI for Video

Bryan Edwards writes in:

I'm having a problem with a director on the doc I am working on. We are working in HDV and he is insisting that we use still images at 300 dpi. We're having banding issues (especially with black and white hand drawn old pictures) and I'm pretty sure its because we're using 300 dpi. Is the dpi of HDV the standard video resolution of 72? If not what is it?

Larry replies: All video -- everywhere, all the time, in all formats, around the world, now and all times past -- is a fixed resolution, which we describe as 72 dpi.

Filters and Keyframes

Tony Liuzzi wraps up this edition of *Reader Mail* with a question:

Two questions:

1. Am I right saying that if you added 3 filters to a clip you can't save it as its own key frame effect for future use? What I have done is create a new project called "efx" with a bin for audio and one for video.

I just copy the clip that has the three filters on it and give it a new name. Do you see any pitfalls to this?

This effects project would stay open - as a tool box of effects that were created in previous projects, along with the current project that I am working on.

2. Is there an easy way to move a keyframe in the motion tab? Say I wanted to move a key frame 15 frames later -can you right click or something and put in .15+????

Larry replies: Regardless of the number of filters you add to a clip, you can always create a favorite filter, or filter pack. These favorites are stored in **Browser > Effects > Favorites** folder. You can add them to other clips by dragging. Once a set of filters is added to a clip, it is permanently remembered by Final Cut.

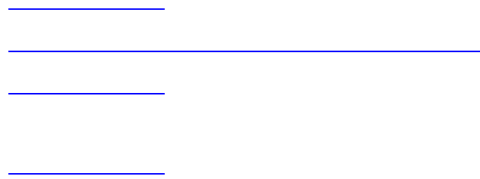
However, all favorites are stored in preference files. This means that any special favorites that have not been applied to a clip are lost when preferences are deleted.

The benefit to using favorites is that it is much faster than your system and automatically gets shared between projects. The benefit to your system is that you are not dependent on the reliability of your preference files.

And, no, there is no way to select and move a keyframe a specific number of frames.

Wrap up

Well, that's it for this issue of the newsletter. Thanks for spending the time to read it -- and for sharing your comments!



As always, let me know what you think about this issue and tell your friends to subscribe. I love reading your comments and sharing them with others.

Or, even better, send in some tips of your own. I'm happy to publish everyone's ideas. That way, we all learn!

Thanks -- and edit well!

Larry

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