

## *Larry's Final Cut Pro Newsletter*

*Editor: Larry Jordan*  
*Issue #21 — December, 2005*

Welcome to the latest edition of my monthly Final Cut Pro newsletter -- and the last for 2005!

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 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](http://www.larryjordan.biz). We are working to make this a great Final Cut resource!

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## **"Discover the Power in Final Cut Pro" -- Tour Dates Announced!**

Our recent "Supercharge Your Productivity Tour" was a wonderful success -- we had great turn-outs in virtually every city. Thanks for your interest!

Still, in reading over the attendee surveys, I realized that we needed to do more -- both for beginning editors and advanced editors. So, we've created a new tour with all new content! And this time, its traveling to 10 cities throughout the US!

### **Seminar 1 - Supercharge your Editing with Final Cut Pro**

Everything you need to know to get better organized, edit faster, and output better in one 4-hour session. If you are a self-taught or beginning Final Cut editor, or want a refresher course in power editing tools, this seminar is for you.  
\$89 registration fee, \$99 after 12/31/05.

### **Seminar 2 - The High-End of Final Cut Pro 5: HD, HDV, 24-frames and Soundtrack Pro.**

If you are an editor looking to jump into HD, or are currently drowning in HDV, this 8-hour seminar gives you the knowledge you need to make it work right. Plus, you'll get valuable, real-world advice on what equipment to buy, or avoid.  
\$199 registration fee, \$225 after 12/31/05.

The tour starts January 18, 2006, and travels to:

- Austin, TX
- Chicago, IL
- Los Angeles, CA

- Minneapolis, MN
- New York, NY
- Nashville, TN
- Orlando, FL
- San Francisco, CA
- Seattle, WA
- Washington, DC

We are *very* excited about the tour -- with some very special partners and surprises that I can't tell you about until after the first of the year.

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Register now -- seats are very limited in some cities.

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### **Technique: Replace Ambient Noise in Soundtrack Pro**

During my recent seminar tour, I had a lot of fun showing how to take advantage of the audio clean-up power in Soundtrack Pro. (In fact, I've discovered even more power secrets, which I'll showcase in my next seminar series.)

Still, here's a good one to get you started.

Many times, in editing, there's a problem with the audio, either a gap or a cough, or some other sound than what we want. It would be great if we could get rid of it. However, if we just kill the audio, the dead silence leaves a glaring gap that just seems to scream: "bad edit!!!"

Soundtrack Pro, which is bundled with Final Cut Studio, has a whole suite of audio clean-up utilities. In fact, there's one called "Replace with Ambient Noise" that's just perfect for solving this problem.

Here's how it works.



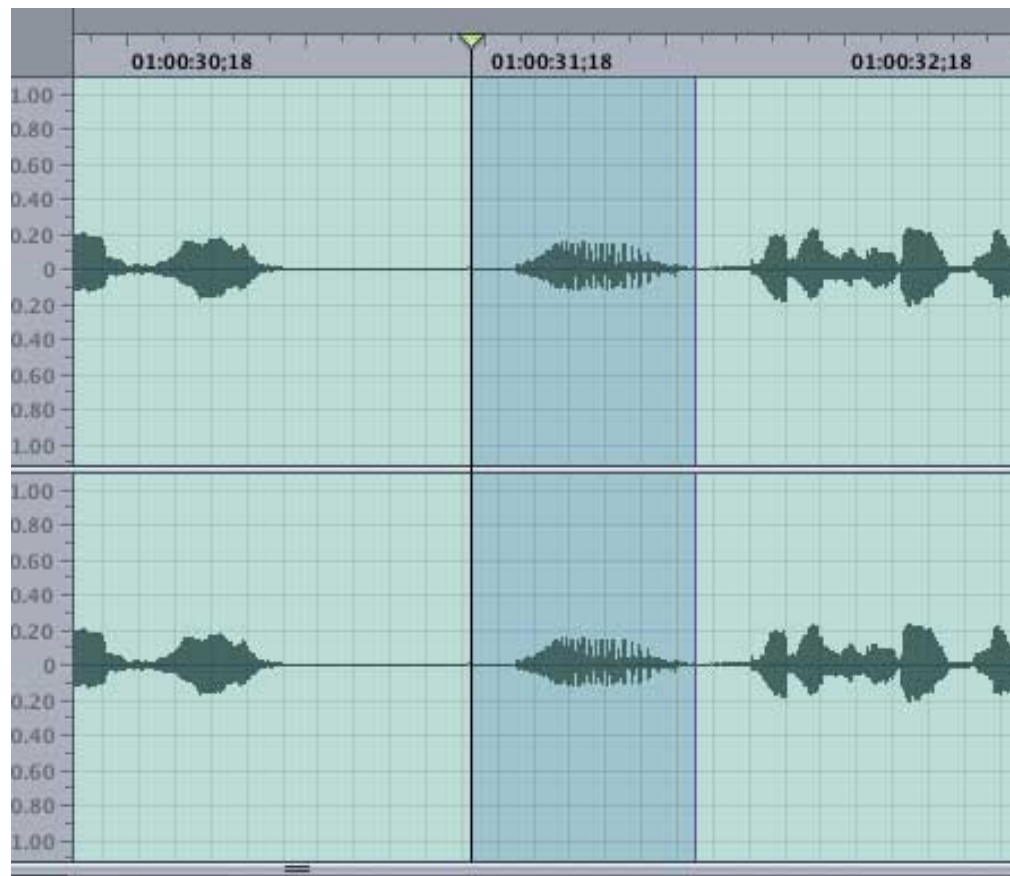
1. Open Soundtrack Pro. From the Browser tab in the Media windows on the left side of your monitor, navigate to the audio file you want to repair.



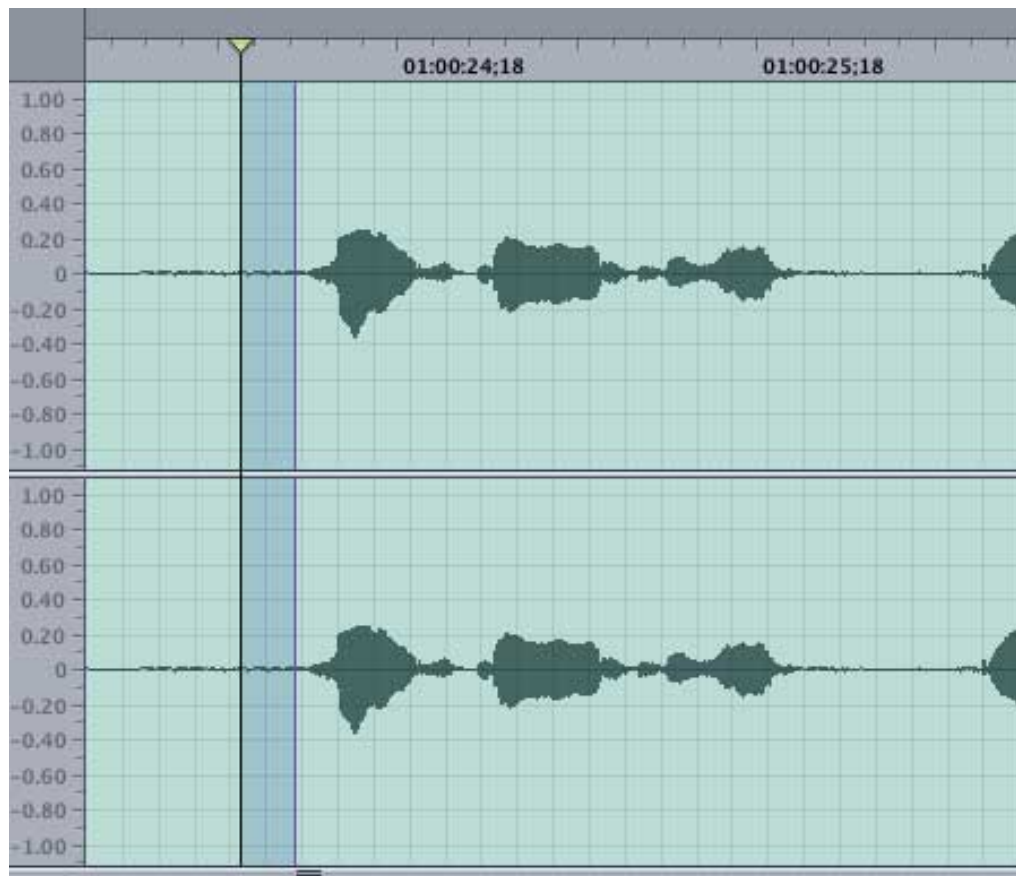
2. Double-click the file to open it into a new Audio Project. Soundtrack will ask to create a temporary file. Give it a name and location -- I tend to store these files in my FCP Projects folder, if I plan to reuse them, or on my second drive, if they are only temporary.



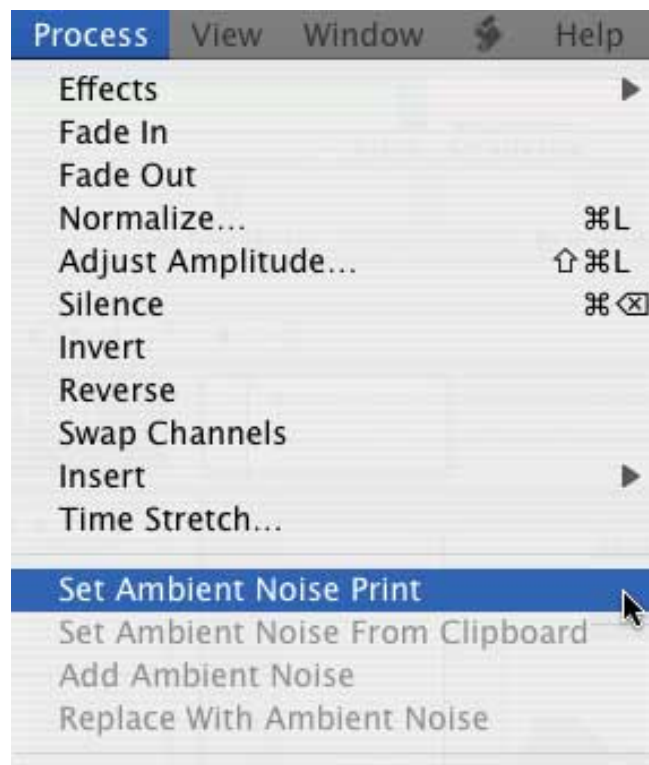
3. The file opens in the Project window. An Audio Project is always just one clip and only two tracks. Audio Projects are used to edit an audio clip. Multitrack projects are used for music and mixing.



4. Here's the problem -- there's a HUGE "uhhhh" in the middle of a great speech. (I've highlighted it here.) I need to replace it with some innocuous room tone; what Apple calls "ambience." However, the space just before it is filled with a giant, gasping breath. Sigh... I need to get rid of this, too.

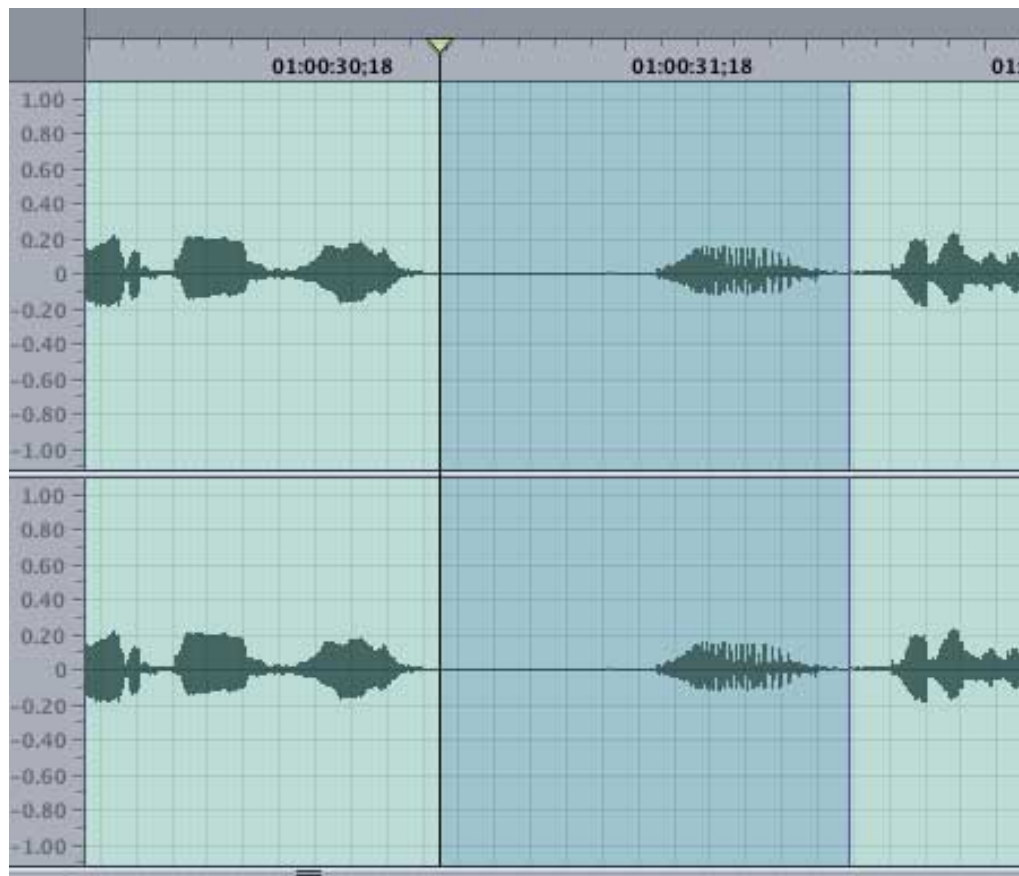


5. However, at the very beginning of this clip, there's an itty, bitty space of perfect room tone. But it is far, far shorter than the space I need to fill. (It's highlighted here.) So, here's what we do.



6. Highlight the room tone/ambience that you want to use, regardless of how long it is; however, longer passages are better than shorter ones. Go to **Process > Set Ambient Noise Print**. Soundtrack samples the selected noise and stores it in a special clipboard reserved for ambient noise samples.

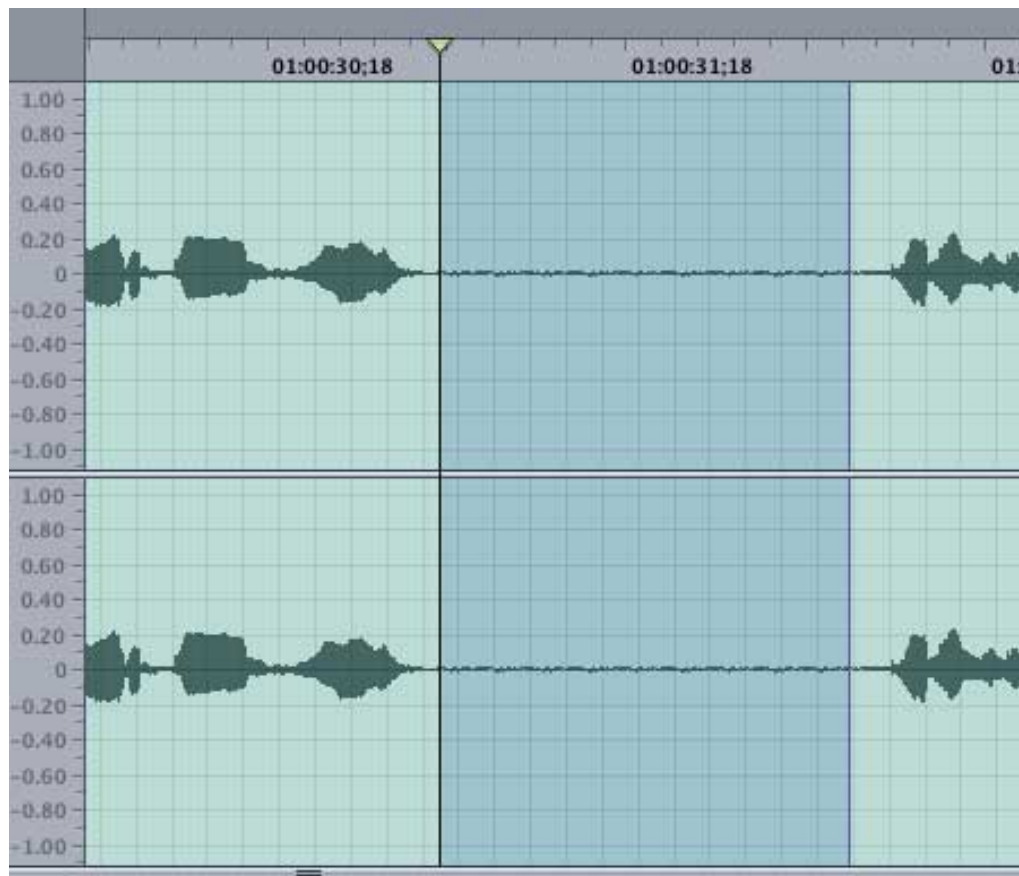




7. Select the portion of the audio clip you want to replace with the clean ambience. Notice that here, the area to be replaced is far larger than the small sample we just took.



8. Go to **Process > Replace with Ambient Noise**.



9. Voilà, all the bad sound is replaced by good sound! Soundtrack automatically looped and blended the sample to make is sound seamless.

This very cool technique can save your posterior when you are surrounded by stuttering idiots and you need to make them sound great!

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### Soundtrack Pro Tips

Here are some quick Soundtrack tips:

1. You can slip the audio in a Soundtrack clip by **Option + Cmd + drag** the clip.
2. When you **Send** a clip to a Soundtrack Pro script, the actions will

vary depending upon the length of the clip. For instance, if you create a two second fade up on a ten second clip, then Send a five second clip, the fade up will only take one second. This is similar to the way Final Cut scales keyframe locations by default in Paste Attributes. The only problem is, there's no way to turn this scaling off in Soundtrack.

3. You can improve video playback by checking **Preferences > Video Out > use quarter-sized frames to ON**.
4. Send a file to Soundtrack via a script creates a destructive edit. In other words, you are permanently changing the audio in your master media file.

I'll have more Soundtrack tips in future issues -- let me know if there's something specific you'd like to learn.

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### **Tascam FW-1082 follow-up**

On our recent seminar tour, I brought along a Tascam FW-1082 mixer/control surface to illustrate how to use the new control surface capabilities in both Final Cut Pro 5 and Soundtrack Pro.

This mixer sparked a lot of interest and discussion. Derrell Newman attended our Atlanta Final Cut seminar and sent along additional information that I thought everyone would find interesting.

**Derrell Newman** writes:

Here's a follow-up to our discussion regarding the Tascam FW-1082. This device, and others in it's category, are dual-purpose components. They are (1) an Audio Interface for computer-based recording and (2) a post-production Control Surface for multi-track computer audio.

As an Audio Interface, the device allows multiple inputs (mics, instruments, players, etc) to connect to a computer via firewire. The number of inputs is not only limited by the

device, but by the software and the computer's capabilities. In theory, if the device has 10 inputs, and the software will address all of them, then a 10-track recording of audio could be created. Again, the computer must have a fast processor and enough RAM to support the load.

As a Control Surface, the device (as demonstrated) provides the ability to adjust and keyframe multiple tracks in real time. I like this idea for a primary reason. The Audio Mixer in FCP4.5 allows the same key-framing of mono or stereo pairs in real time, however, you are limited to one track at a time (with the mouse). Now, since most of us have ten fingers, the Control Surface will allow movement of multiple tracks simultaneously. To me, this enhances productivity by eliminating the need to repeat sequence audio and make adjustments track-by-track.

For Weddings and/or Music Video recordings, I'm considering the feasibility of using a Powerbook G5 with Soundtrack Pro to capture the live audio (roughly 4 to 8 tracks simultaneously), then in the Studio, import the mixed STP audio into the FCP project, sync the two, and poof, another masterpiece. Any thoughts on this?

Regarding [the brand of surface-controls], Tascam has been around for a long time, but I've always thought of them as high-end consumer grade, but low-end Pro grade (also they don't rate well in Customer Support). Personally, I like the Mackie products. Also, I've seen a few Mac studios that use the Digidesign 002.

These new audio features alone have me wanting to upgrade to FCP5 & STP.

*Larry replies:* Derrell, thanks for the additional information.

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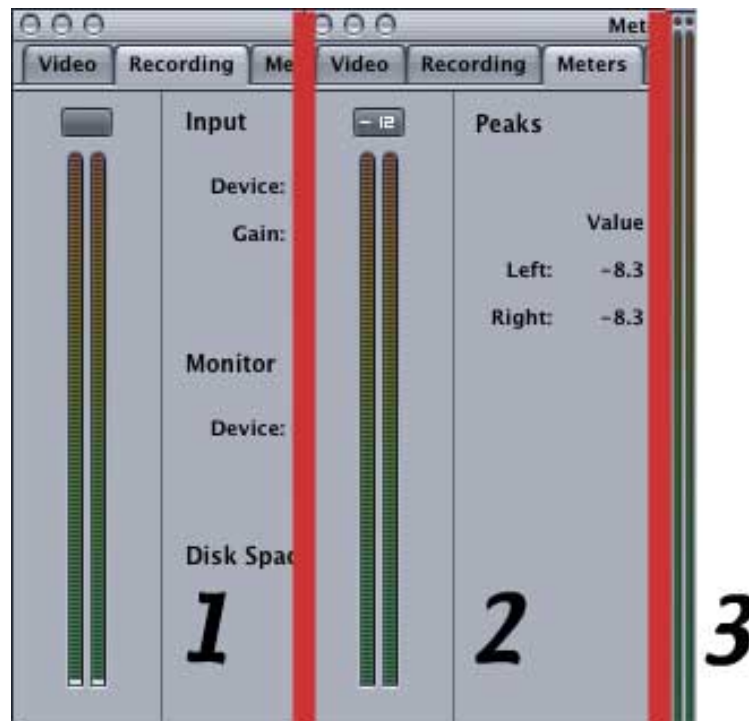
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**Commentary: Things About Soundtrack Pro that Drive Me Nuts!**

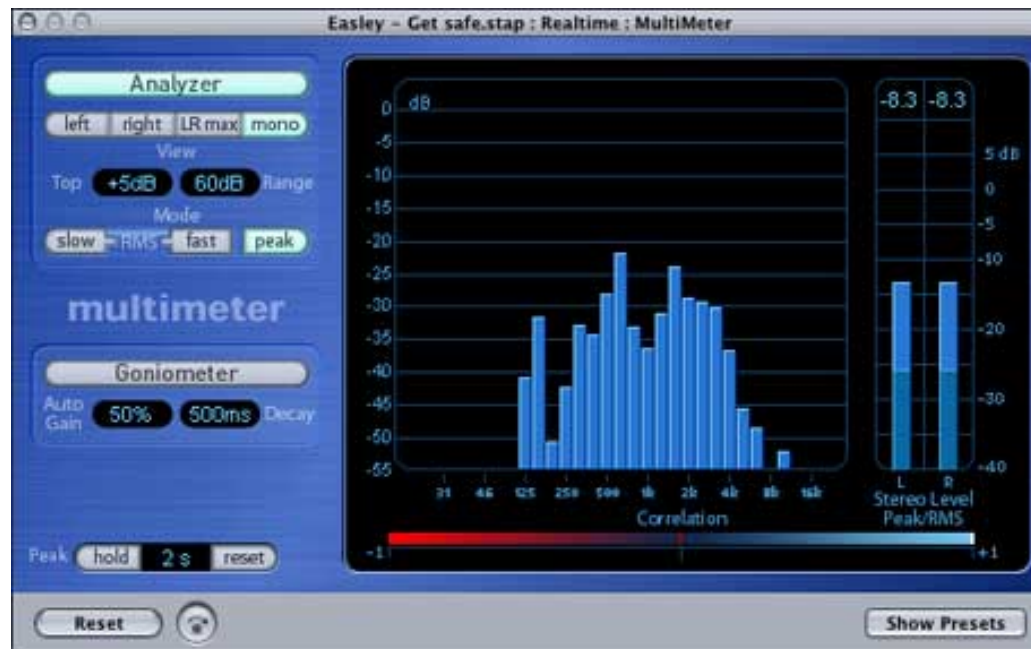
When I first saw Soundtrack, I was blown away by some of power features, like audio repair and non-destructive editing. I'm still very impressed with it, now that I've spent time working with it.

But the more I got into it, the more I realized that there are some obvious missing features that absolutely drive me nuts. So I wanted to take a minute to sound off -- in hopes these can get fixed really, really soon.

**Nuts factor 1:** You can only load whole clips into Soundtrack Audio Projects. You can't select a clip range to process. Even when you send a clip from Final Cut to STP, the whole media file is imported, not just from the In to the Out in the sequence. Most of my captures are short, so I can work around this. But, if you traditionally capture whole hours at a time, this will drive you around the bend.



**Nuts factor 2:** Not one audio meter is labeled with a db scale. As far as I can tell, there are three different audio meters in Soundtrack. Not ONE has a db scale. This is RIDICULOUS! And you can quote me.



**Nuts factor 3:** Thinking quickly, I realized that there's a Multimeter filter, which has all kinds of great monitoring, and labels, built into it. However, the Multimeter is PRE-fader, which means that it shows the levels of your source audio, not the results of your mix.

Sigh... it would be nice to see what levels my audio is riding at. Nice, but currently impossible.

OK. I'm done now.

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### **This Month's Poll: What Features in Soundtrack Pro Appeal to You?**

Notwithstanding my disenchantment with unlabeled audio meters, Soundtrack is still a great program. Not yet up to ProTools standards, but a significant powerhouse all on it's own.

I'm interested in learning what features in it appeal to you. So I've created this month's poll to find out.

All the features in the poll exist in the current version of the program. Pick your top three or four. As usual, I'll share the results next month.

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You can view the results after you vote. The results of last month's poll are covered [a little later in this issue](#).

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### **Get a FREE issue of *Edit Well* — the Newsletter for the Professional Editor**

I am pleased to announce *Edit Well* -- a printed newsletter for the professional Final Cut editor.

I love writing my free monthly newsletter and I am grateful for your comments and readership. However, the problem with writing a free newsletter is that I can't hire other writers to contribute their knowledge.

So, I created *Edit Well* -- a monthly, subscription-based newsletter filled with tips and techniques for the professional editor. Because it is subscription based, I can afford to hire some of the best Final Cut writers in the world.

To launch this newsletter, I want to send you the Premiere issue -- TOTALLY FREE!

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In it, you'll read **Noah Kadner** showing the best ways to work with 24-frame video, **Phil Hodgetts'** article on creating LiveFonts, **Kevin Monahan's** extended article on creating powerhouse effects in FCP, **Tom Wolsky** with specific techniques to quickly move clips between Apple's professional applications, **Bruce Nazarian** on GPRM partitioning in DVD Studio Pro, plus, a new article from me, and dozens of tips, sidebars and other cool information.



24-pages printed in full color. This won't be available on my website, only by subscription. And best of all, you can keep all the back issues for instant reference!

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We will mail issues anywhere in the world -- so send Srithip your address.

And, for those who have asked, this free newsletter will continue after the *Edit Well* launch. However, it will change slightly in that we will introduce articles in *Edit Well*, then use this newsletter as a way to provide additional commentary and reader feedback.

Hurry, we are planning our press run now -- order your copy today!

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## **Technique: How to Use Vertical Images in Video**

by Wendell Davis

**Wendell Davis** sent me this article in response to last month's question from **Michael Mulrooney**. I thought he had some interesting thoughts, so I'm including it here to give you some fresh ideas on how to handle vertical images.

Suggestions on using vertical images in video: Reply to Michael Mulrooney's question.

Once upon a recent time I spent 14 years in a 7.5 year time period working for a museum. 98% of the paintings/portraits are vertical. So what do you do with them in a 4x3 or 16x9 video format?

I did a lot of pulls, pushes, tilt ups and tilt downs in the video camera or on a motorized camera bed. BUT no matter how

well you plan, I was never thrilled with the move, time duration, the feeling, you know just how it felt in the final edit. Then I started using Boris Red. (All this editing was done on an Avid MC 3D system... But now have gone to FCP5 and do everything in 16X9.)

### **Boris Red Process**

I made two versions of each still image shot digitally on a Nikon D1X edited/adjusted in Photoshop. One in 72 dpi and the other in 300-dpi. WHY? The 72-dpi was used as place holder in the timeline- small easy for the system. The 300-dpi photo was used by Boris Red for the moves. The quality was/is fantastic... takes awhile to render I was even asked a number of times how it was done. Some photos where the moves lasted a long time I made the file size even larger... gave plenty of play-room. Later on depending on the need, and the project, I would do builds with multiple photos.

### **Example**

Take Michael's sports team. Make a photo build with the team over a photo of a wide sports scene background - the field for instance. The team sits on the right or left - possibly at an angle, the title is a lower third, then bring in each person's photo on the right and their name. You can do this in FCP, however the for me the fastest way is to do the build in Photoshop.

1. Make the background setting - i.e.; the team & field. Save it as background. As a motorcycle safety advocate I'll use some motorcycle stills from video as examples.

### **BACKGROUND SHOT**



2. Size and place a team member's photo in place. Save it with the background as team member 1, then 2, etc.... NO alpha channels needed.



3. Continue with each person, or start with the team and then add members.



4. Import all the stills into your edit system, place them on time line and dissolve between.

With a group added and person's name:



The background is always the same, and all that appears to the eye is that the person and name are dissolving. Fancy it up by making two photos for each person, their photo and then their title, dissolve between them.

**OR**

5. Want to move the individual's picture in, keep the background in place and move each person in - fly, slide, wipe, etc... But you need to make the persons photo and title with an alpha channel.

Nice thing about doing it the Photoshop way, you can use guide lines to make all the heads the same size, easily add as much or as little drop shadow as you want, inner or outer glows, etc. Also makes it real simple for a dissolve. And you don't have to worry about the alpha channels.

There are all kinds of variations but hopefully you get the idea.

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## Tips from the Classroom

Here are two Final Cut tips from recent students regarding more ways you can use the **Trim Edit** window.

To open the Trim Edit window, double-click on any edit point. You can use the window to do real-time ripple or roll trims.

**Matthew:** I've discovered that you can set the In or the Out on the fly by pressing the "**I**" or "**O**" key.

**Hugh:** I've discovered that you can also set the In or the Out on the fly by pressing the **Mark In** or **Mark Out** buttons.

**Larry:** In a hurry to get the duration of a clip? Select the clip and type **Control+D**. The duration is displayed in the pop-up dialog box.

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## The Missing QuickTime MPEG Encoder

I've gotten a lot of questions from folks asking what happened to the Quicktime MPEG encoder. So, here's the word from the Final Cut manual:

An MPEG-2 encoder doesn't come with the standard Quicktime installation of Final Cut Pro. If you have DVD Studio Pro or Compressor installed, an MPEG-2 encoder will appear in the list of QuickTime codecs when you export. You can also install and use a third-party MPEG-2 encoder. (page IV-225)

**Tom Wolsky** sent in an update to this statement:

This isn't right I don't think. If you install FCP you'll almost certainly install Compressor, but if you're running Tiger and QT7 an MPEG-2 export still does not appear in QuickTime Conversion. You really are required to use

Compressor or third party MPEG-2 encoders that will appear there.

*Larry replies:* Tom, you could be right. I only use Compressor to create my MPEG's, I just wanted to pass along what I read in the manual.

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### **Technique: Converting a 16:9 sequence into a 4:3 video**

This technique grew out of two simultaneous events: a request from a client and a letter from a reader. I'll let the letter set the stage.

**Tom Porett**, from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, writes:

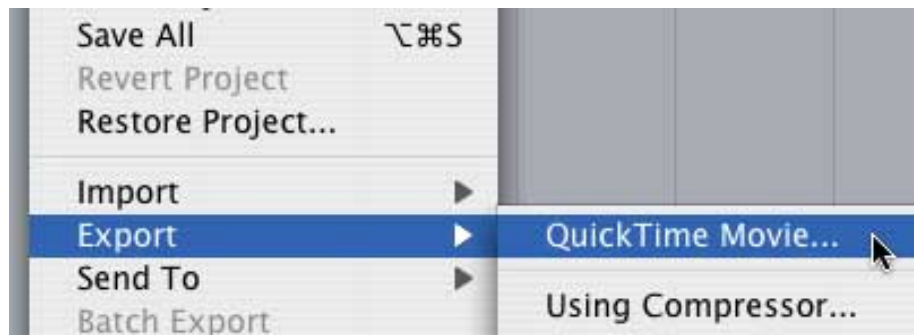
I enjoy your newsletter greatly - thanks very much.

I have a question about converting a 16:9 format to 4:3 in letterbox format (with bars). If there is an issue of the newsletter that has that info I'd appreciate it.

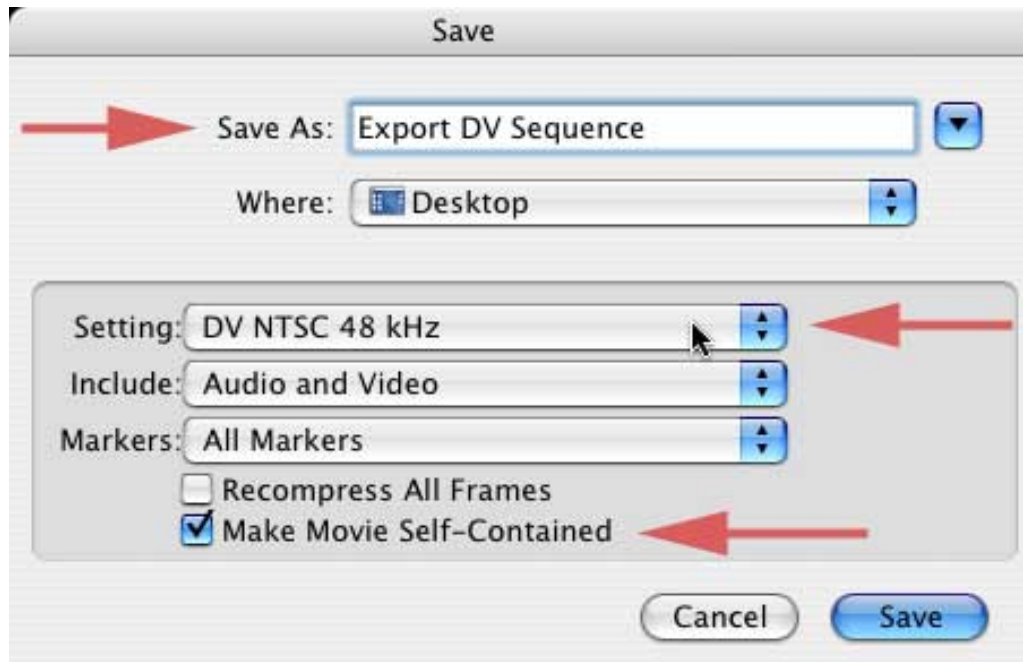
I am uploading work to Google video and they require 4:3 format only.

*Larry replies:* Yup, it can be done. In fact, I had a client this morning that needed to convert a DVCPPro-50 16:9 sequence into a DV 4:3 video. Here's how to do it.

1) Open the sequence you want to convert into the Timeline.



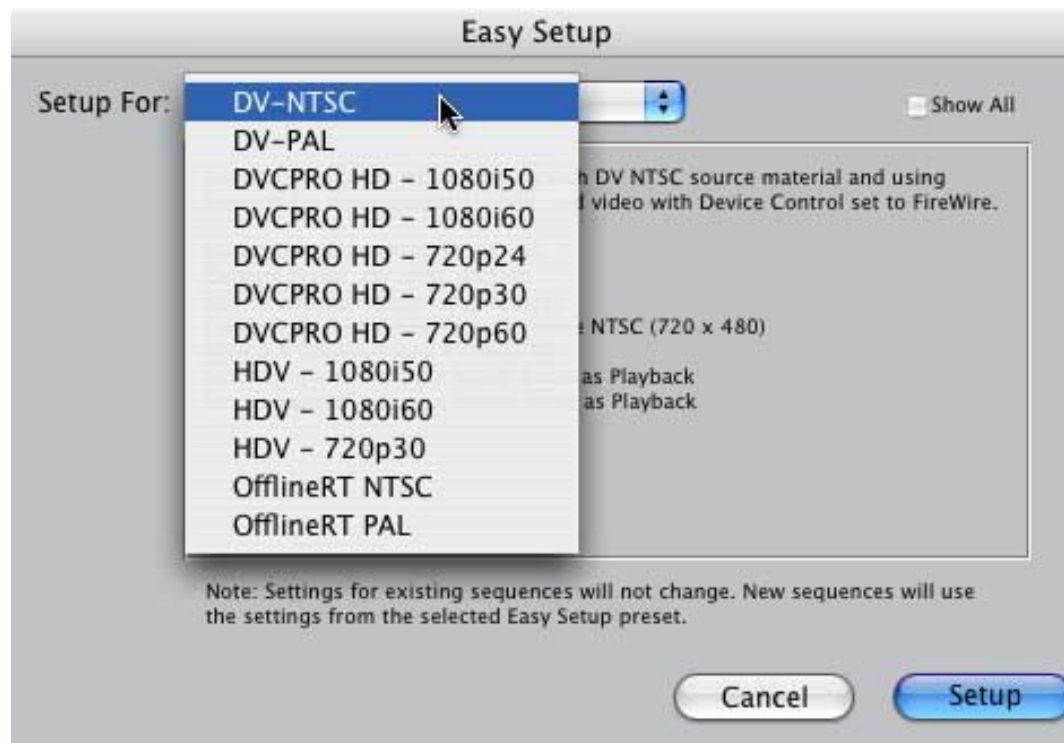
2) Choose **File > Export > Quicktime movie**.



3) In the **Save As** dialog, change **Current Settings** to "DV NTSC 48K" -- if you are working with PAL video, you would select "DV PAL 48K". Then, make sure that **Make movie self-contained**. is CHECKED.

4) The movie will export -- and will take a while to do so, depending upon the length of the sequence you are exporting. Use this to rediscover the outdoors and sunshine. Look out a window, or something.





5) When the export is complete, change your **Easy Setup** to "DV NTSC" (or "DV PAL" depending upon where in the world you live).

6) Create a new project and import your newly exported QuickTime movie. Then, edit it to the Timeline.

Ta-DAH! Your 16:9 image format is retained, but Final Cut has now added black letter-boxing at the top and bottom of the image. You are now ready to output as a standard DV file.

The best part about this process is that no additional rendering is necessary; your file is ready to output as soon as you get it edited into a new sequence.

Fast and easy.

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## **New XML2Text Version Announced**

**Andreas Kiel**, the developer of the XML2Text utility for Final Cut, has announced a new version.

Andreas writes:

The new version is available as an early beta to all registered users.

If there are other people who are seriously interested in beta testing (and give some feedback), I'd love to include them.

Below is a brief description of the new version. The new features include:

Support for FCP5, XML version 1.0, XML version 1.x, XML version 2 compatible.

The application is still oriented to work with sequences, clips are a new feature.

Working with clips does allow to use the app as a logger for those "long" or "capture now" clips as well as long clips with many markers, like the documentary people love. You also can use the FCP "start/stop-markers" and use these to create subclips without the hassle of the FCP naming convention. Additionally those subclips can be saved to bins easily to make a project more clearly laid out.

### **Read/Write to the original XML**

You can rename markers, clips, scene etc. more easily than in FCP. This sounds quite stupid or useless at the first glimpse, but makes life much easier if you want to clean up some stuff in a sequence - much less clicks.

### **Markers (with Read/Write to the original XML)**

Can be added or removed, can be repositioned in any

direction, can be changed in any way markers allow. This can be done with any selection of markers.

Markers are also a nice feature for spotting subtitles - you can add a basic subtitle to a clip as a marker in FCP. Now with every new version of your edit the "subtitle-marker" will stay at the right position of the clip, so they will stay at the right time within the sequence/timeline - if you're done, just export them as STL (or convert them from STL to FCP generators with TitleExchange).

Markers also can be imported from text files into the XML(FCP).

### **Filters (with Read/Write to the original XML)**

Can be removed, disabled and hopefully added.

Can be "equalized", this means that all filter settings of a selected one are transferred to all filters with the same ID.

The final version will allow to scan for filter settings:

If a filter is found (only those which have an effect id) whose settings already occurred earlier, it will be replaced with a reference to the first found filter with that settings. This allows to make variations of a sequence within a few seconds after the XML has been processed, since a value always only has to be changed at occurrence 1.

### **Find**

Allows to find markers or clips based on their "sub-values" like in, out, name, comment, scene, take etc. and to modify many of the values of the markers/clips (or to modify the text export)

The find command also can be used in several steps, so you can do a search in the complete database first and than in the found results and than ... refine your search.

### **Quick Tools**

- Allow to fill up gaps in video track 1 with slugs, this does make EDLs more compatible with other systems
- Disable all filters, this creates a version of a sequence XML where all filters are disabled - so just a preview of the cut without any need to render
- Clear empty tracks, this does remove all empty tracks in any XML (project, bin, sequence, clip)
- Enable all clips - I often use the disable clip, so I don't lose the rendering file, or I do use it for title generators, but with long programs it sometimes happens I forget some to enable again.
- Remove empty tracks (in every kind of FCP XML)
- Maybe hopefully - this is my favorite - un-nest sequences for final output! All this film guys - like me - would be happy, if that would work to an unlimited amount of levels of nested items. Currently it works fine for 1 level.

### **Import Text**

You can import tab delimited text or chapter lists into the XML as sequence marker.

### **Tree Viewer**



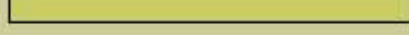


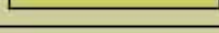


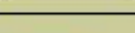

You can import any kind of FCP XML and the "Tree Viewer" will show you the structure. Even though this could take a while, this feature can be quite handy, if want to take out a part of this XML to edit it with XML2Text without reopen FCP (or not having FCP at all on your machine).

Hope this gave you a better survey of what will happen with the next version.

*Larry replies:* You can learn more about this utility, or contact Andreas, at: <http://www.spherico.com>.

## Last Month's Poll

Last month's poll asked how long you had been editing.

How long have you been editing?			
		Percent	Votes
Brand new		4%	14
1-2 years		11%	38
<b>3-5 years</b>		<b>19%</b>	<b>63</b>
5-7 years		16%	52
8-10 years		8%	28
11-15 years		10%	32
16-20 years		8%	27
21-25 years		9%	29
26-30 years		6%	22
Since the beginning of time		4%	14
<b>Total Votes</b>			<b>319</b>

As expected, there were a whole range of answers, but exactly half (50%) of the readers that answered the survey have been editing for seven years or less. And almost two-thirds have been editing for less time than computerized editing has been around.

Interesting.

Plus, a tip of my hat to all 14 of those editors who have been editing

"since the beginning of time." I can identify with that...

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## **Larry's Final Cut Pro 5 Book Makes Amazon's Top 100 Computer Books List!**

In a shameless plug to get you to buy my *Final Cut Pro 5* book for all your friends and relatives for Christmas, I got an email from my publishers, PeachPit Press and Lynda.com, that my book, *Hands-On Training for Final Cut Pro 5*, made Amazon's Top 100 computer books list over Thanksgiving Weekend.

Wow! With over 800 bajillion books on Amazon.com, I was really impressed!

However, if you don't yet have your very own copy, now's the time to hustle over to our store and stock up.

Here's what's available:

### **Books**

- [Hands-on Training for Final Cut Pro 5](#)
- [Hands-on Training for Final Cut Pro HD](#)

### **DVDs - Narrated Quicktime Training**

- [Final Cut Pro 5 - Essential Editing](#)
- [Final Cut Pro 5 - Essential Effects](#)
- [Final Cut Pro 5 - Beyond the Basics \(ships 12/10\)](#)
- [Learning DVD Studio Pro 3](#)
- [Principles of Digital Video](#)

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## Technique: Converting HDV for DVD

by Bill Koepnick

**Bill Koepnick** sent in this great technique to answer questions about how to get HDV into your DVD. Bill writes:

I purchased a Sony HDR-FX1 shortly after they hit the stores hoping to shoot HDV and simply down-convert to SD for DVD distribution until a HD DVD format became available. Final Cut 4 wasn't yet ready for HDV, so I used the camera to perform the down-conversion to SD DV, and had no problems using a standard DV workflow. The HDV tapes went back on the shelf. I had read about the alternate methods of using Lumiere and other codecs to allow use of HDV, but they all seemed too complex and more hardware intensive than my equipment could comfortably handle.

Months passed. I made the upgrade to the Final Cut Studio bundle as soon as it became available, and was not disappointed in the HDV implementation. With a 2GHz dual-processor G5, 1.5 GB of RAM, and two internal 250GB SATA drives I had no trouble making the HDV projects work nearly as smoothly as the DV jobs. Rendering was considerably slower, but the increased pixel count made that pretty obvious.

The big snag finally hit when I wanted to down-convert a finished HDV project to and burn a SD DVD. The discussion boards were full of people crying the same sad song - there apparently were NO good options for this. Apple certainly didn't offer any helpful workflow suggestions despite touting the possibility. I spent endless hours trying to get a satisfactory conversion in Compressor, Quicktime, iDVD, and DVD SP with consistently dismal results - or impossibly long conversion times. The only sane option was to use Print to Video back to the FX1 in HDV, and then re-capture the sequence into a SD DV project.

After finishing a wedding video with roughly an hour's worth of final footage, I again tried to find a better way, and FINALLY came across the magic combination of settings in Compressor 2 that will yield better results than a round-trip to the camera and back to FCP.

I shot all the footage in HDV on a pair FX1s. All footage was captured into FCP5 using the Easy Setups for HDV in the Capture, Sequence, Device

Control, and A/V Device Presets. I did use a Kona 2 card to view 16:9 output while editing, but other than a color correction reference it doesn't affect the process. All the stock settings - no tricks here.

After finishing the edit, I output the five individual sequences I created by doing an Export to Quicktime. The settings in the Export dialog were... Setting: Current Settings, Include: Audio and Video, Markers: Chapter (because I had set some Chapter Markers), Recompress All Frames was NOT checked, and Make Movie Self-Contained WAS checked. Since the sequences had all been fully rendered the Export was not terribly long - a bit less than running time.

The big step is encoding in Compressor, and where I discovered the key to this process. I dragged the Self-Contained Quicktime movies into the Batch window and assigned the conversion Setting to DVD Best Quality 90 min 16:9. The stock setting will NOT perform well, however, because the Field Dominance defaults to Top First - which results in horrible motion displacement. The Automatic setting fails to set Field Dominance correctly as well - you must select the conversion setting and use the Video Format Tab in the Inspector to MANUALLY SET FIELD DOMINANCE TO "BOTTOM FIRST". The remainder of the default settings will result in a final m2v that is visibly superior to the round-trip to the FX1 for conversion. If you have the time to spare, you can try to increase some of the default Quality settings in the Inspector, but get ready for some absurd render times (like weeks!). The hour's worth of footage I submitted to the Batch took over 22 hours to encode, but the result is a cleaner picture (fewer blocky compression artifacts) and less wear and tear on the FX1. You do need an accommodating deadline and patience.

So -- that's my tale. I am just so relieved to have finally gotten this to work that I couldn't help but share the revelation. Perhaps the more seasoned Video Pros know all about this process, but I hadn't found anyone who had taken the time to document it. I still want a way to preserve all the clarity of the HDV master, and hope that the High-Definition DVD wars are settled VERY soon.

*Larry replies:* Thanks, Bill, for a very helpful technique.

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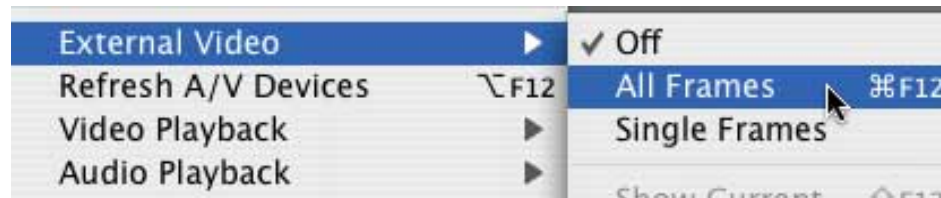
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## Technique: Examining the View Menu Playback Controls

I've seen a lot of confusion about how the View menu playback controls work, so I wanted to take a few minutes and explain them so you have a better understanding of your playback options.

### View > External Video



This tells FCP whether you want it to feed video to an external device like a camera, deck or monitor. If you don't have capture card, camera, or deck attached to your computer (or it isn't turned on) set this to Off. However, it MUST be ON if you want to feed video to an external device. This includes Printing to Video and Editing to Tape.

### View > Refresh A/V Devices



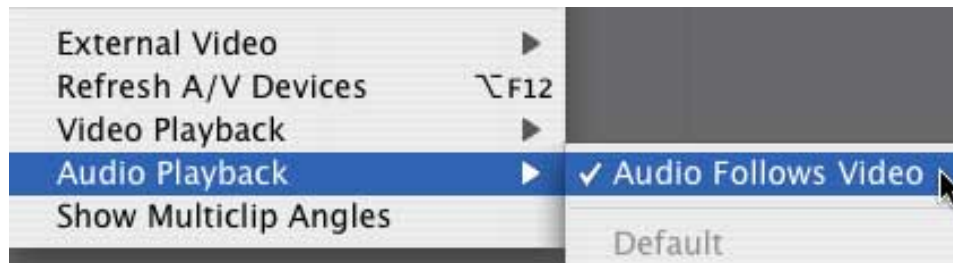
If you turn on your camera or deck after Final Cut starts, you need to tell FCP that a device has been added. FCP then polls your Firewire ports to figure out what you've done and say hello to it. While it is often easier to turn on a Firewire camera or deck before starting FCP, it isn't necessary. However, what IS necessary is refreshing your devices -- telling FCP to check its ports -- if you turn a device on after FCP is already running.

### View > Video Playback



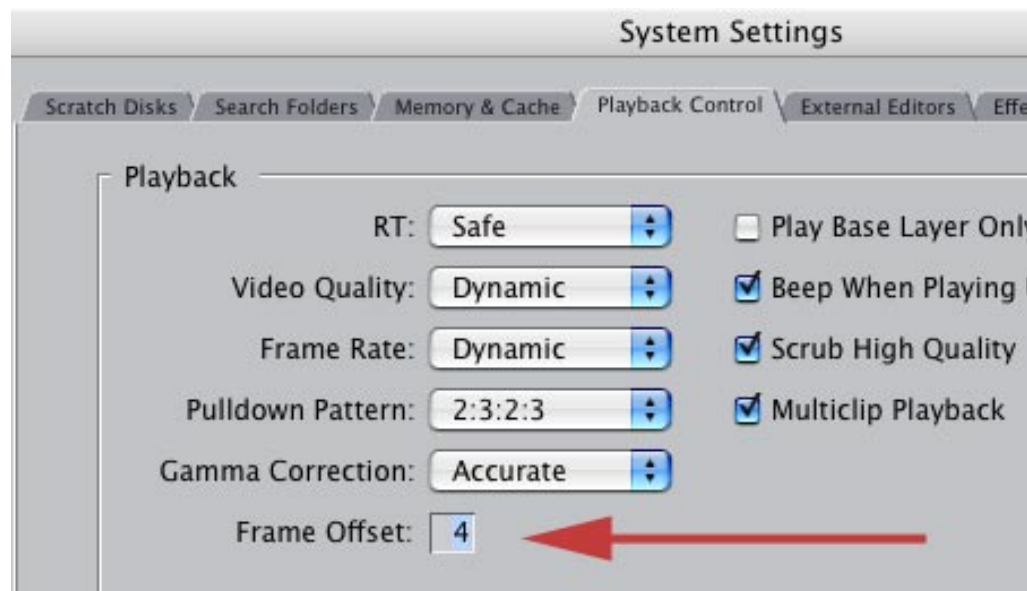
This tells FCP what kind of device you have attached. If no deck is selected, use Digital Cinema Desktop Preview. This turns your computer monitor into a video monitor. To watch videos full-screen, press **Cmd+F12**. To exit back to FCP, press **ESC**.

### View > Audio Playback



This tells FCP where to play audio. It is CRITICAL that you monitor audio and video at the same point. If you are watching video on a FireWire device, you must listen to audio on the same device. Watching video on a video monitor while listening to audio coming from your computer is a recipe for disaster -- because there's a built-in 3-9 frame delay in sending signals to a FireWire device. This means that things will sound out of sync, when they really aren't.

However, **Tom Wolsky** reminds me that: "There is a playback offset to match the computer audio with a delay to the digital/analog conversion path. This does add a delay in the response time for playback start/stop."



You can find it in **Final Cut Pro > System Settings > Playback control** tab, by adjusting the Frame Offset. The default setting is **4**.

To prevent driving yourself to distraction, make sure audio follows video and that you are always watching and listening at the same place.

My procedure, when turning on a deck, is to:

- 1) Refresh A/V devices
- 2) Set View > External Video to **ON**
- 3) Set Video Playback to **NTSC Firewire**
- 4) Set Audio Playback to **Audio follows video**
- 5) Then, open the Log and capture window to make sure the **VTR OK** message appears.

When that process is complete, I'm good to go.

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**Reader mail**

**Still frames don't match video**

**Mike Krause**, over at Technicolor Creative Services, writes:

Here's the sitch:

FCP 4.5, QT6, Kona board, using Blackmagic 10 bit codec, timeline renders in RGB. From digitized SD video, using Quicktime conversion export an uncompressed TIFF. Import that static back into the project, it matches the video it was exported from.

FCP 5, QT7, tried Kona, Kona2 and Decklink boards, tried Blackmagic 10 bit, Blackmagic 10 bit RGB and Uncompressed 10 bit codecs. Tried timeline renders in both RGB and YUV. Again, from digitized SD video, using QT conversion export an uncompressed TIFF. Import that static back into project - matches, right?

On two of our FCP 5 systems, the static and the video match, but only within the system the static was exported from. When checked on another system the static and video don't match. On the third system, the static and video don't match at all.

Well, when that static is imported into our FCP 4.5 system, it does NOT match, no matter what. On the static, the black levels tend to be quite a bit higher (about 50mv) than the video.

For our workflow, it is essential that these frame exports match the video. We've been forced to roll back to FCP 4.5 for the time being, and our two largest clients have asked their vendors all to roll back to FCP 4.5 until this issue gets sorted out - so it's more than just us having this problem.

I know there are YUV vs RGB issues going on, but we can't quite nail down where the issue is - QT 7 or the Blackmagic codecs in FCP5 seem the most likely candidates, at least from the tests we've been doing.

[In a second email, Mike provides additional follow-up.]

Well... seems to be a Quicktime 7 issue. Apple released a rollback to QT 7.0.1 not long after issuing the 7.0.3 update (for ipod video security), but we continue to have the same issues with exported stills not matching up to the video it was pulled from regardless of which QT 7.x.x we use. Again, we've tried multiple codecs, effects handling codecs, rendering (YUV, RGB, etc) and cards (Kona, Kona 2, and Decklink) all with similar results.

I hear down the grapevine that other users have been reporting to Apple similar issues using FCP5 and QT7; I haven't yet heard of any resolution.

I've started researching this from a different angle, looking to how Photoshop handles gamma correction between RGB and YUV sources. If I can at least come up with a script-able Photoshop action to correct the exported statics, we could use the improved functionality of FCP 5 with a workaround in Photoshop until Apple issues a fix for QT 7. Unfortunately, it's not as simple as just going into the gamma correction tools in Photoshop and adjusting (0 to 255) to (16 to 235) or vice versa, otherwise we'd be set. There seems to be something else going on with the Quicktime conversion export process - not just affecting the gamma / color space.

*Larry replies:* Mike, I don't have an answer, but let me send this out to everyone and see if someone else can give us some guidance. The stills SHOULD match. I'm interested to learn why they don't.

- - -

### **Improving FCP OMF Export**

**José Luis Diaz**, from Argentina, writes:

I'm not an image editor, neither a FCP user. I'm a sound editor that co-owns a small post production company in Argentina, mainly devoted to feature film (but also to TV episodes and commercials). You can see our web page at: <http://www.abbate-diaz.com.ar>

So, being a sound person, why I was interested in reading a newsletter about FCP?

Because we receive many, many projects edited in FCP (as time pass, more and more) and because, some times, the image editor lacks knowledge about how to interact with us.

In the case of Avid editors, we developed a technique in which we export OMF Embedded production sound to them and after they're done editing they export OMF Composition Only. Then we relink their edit decisions in our audio workstations. We are very happy with this method.

But as you know, FCP doesn't support OMF import (Embedded or Composition Only) or, for export, OMF Composition Only.

Automatic Duck's Pro Export FCP only exports Embedded not Composition Only.

Automatic Duck's Pro Import FCP doesn't support OMFs generated in Digidesign's ProTools (our DAWs).

Gallery's XMLPro export and XML file but it's workflow is very, very restricted.

It is thought for very big Hollywood size production where original sound production is recorded on Deva, Cantar, etc. In my country that task is still done on DAT's.

So, when a project is edited in FCP, we are working in ways we don't like.

Maybe, you have some influence over Apple or other developers related with FCP. If this is the case, could you, please, make the suggestion to make FCP imports OMF Embedded sound and export OMF Composition Only?

Thanks, Larry and congratulations about your Newsletter. While I'm a sound person it interests me a lot.

*Larry replies:* Thanks for writing. These seem to be good ideas, and I'm happy to pass them along.

- - -

### **Thinking about the competition**

**Dilesh Korya**, from the UK, writes:

Just a quick note, you may be interested. The BBC have made changes in their Features and Documentary Section (making non-natural history documentaries) are now moving over to using FCP and ditching AVID. All other departments are switching to 50% AVID, 50% FCP. Big changes, huh?

Some of us here in Bristol, where I am based, have been disappointed with the last release of FCP and Tiger. I think we need AVID to keep Apple on its toes and give us the developments we want.

*Larry replies:* I truly believe competition is a good thing... um, as long as they are competing with someone other than me. Thanks for your comments!

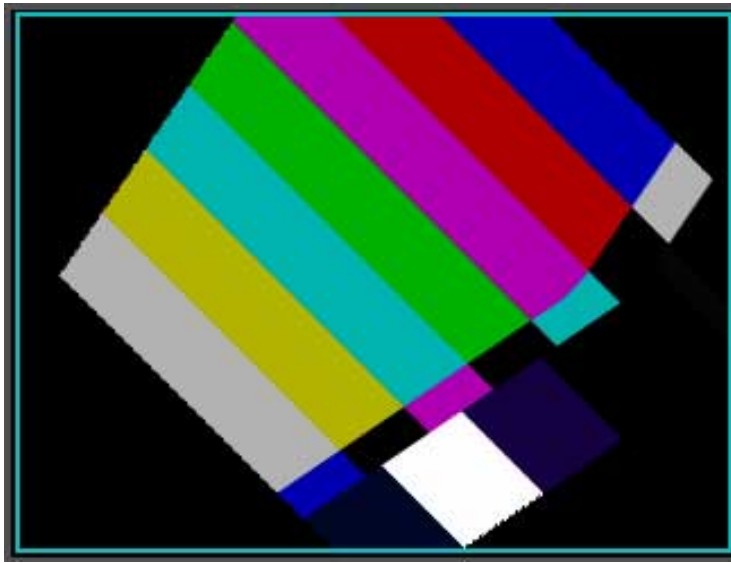
- - -

### **Killing the Jaggies**

**Rich** writes:

Just a question about the basic 3d filter in FCP... When we use the basic 3d filter in perspective tab we get anti-aliased lines on the edges of the picture. We can clean it up a little by adding a black border but if the picture is over anything other than black then that won't work... any ideas, or is that all you get with this effect.... remember I am rotating the image on the Y axis and that's when you see the jaggies.

*Larry replies:* Some jaggies are inevitable on any slanted line due to the low-resolution nature of video, compounded by interlacing.



Here's an example of bars rotated on the Y and Z axis. (And I have NO idea why this image seems to turn a corner, but it does.) Notice the jaggies along the diagonal lines. Much of this is due to the nature of video, made worse by selecting an angle that exaggerates the jaggedness.

However, for something that may help, be sure that in the **Sequence > Settings > Video Processing tab** Motion Filtering Quality is set to **High**. (This feature is only in FCP 5.) That may make a difference in your final render quality. This setting **ONLY** affects rotation and scaling, but it's still worth trying.

- - -

### **Editing in HDV**

**Wendell Davis** writes:

Larry: I look forward to your new Edit Well publication. Shifting from AVID to FCP5 - still not used to it. I could edit much faster on the AVID but there are more interesting things to try on FCP. Also spent a fortune on AVID. Since I only work for non-profits and receive little or no money from them, FCP is more affordable. FYI now shoot **ONLY** in HDV Sony. Even for my granddaughter... Found no problem editing in Apple HDV



going through Compressor to DVD SD.

Larry replies: Thanks for your comment. Clearly, there is value in shooting HDV -- the key is to know its strengths and weaknesses, then select it when it can help you get your job done.

- - -

### **Creating great looking slates**

**Steve Smith** writes:

Got a question for you. I edit in an office where I need to make slates for SMT's & VNR's, feeds etc. "QUICKLY" and the limitations of the FCP text editor drive me crazy!!!

Is there any way to be able to use multiple fonts and sizes in "one" text layer? The other NLE's I've used always had this ability but FCP doesn't.

*Larry replies:* No and yes. The text clips in FCP only allow a single font at a single size in a single color. However, the Boris titler allows multiple fonts, sizes and colors. Versions of this software have been bundled with FCP since version 2 - as **Tom Wolsky** and othesr have reminded me. You can find it at the bottom of the Generator tab in the Viewer -- the little pop-up menu in the lower right corner with the letter A.

You can also create your slates in PhotoShop and import them into FCP. Remember to create all single layer graphics at 720 x 540 x 72 prior to importing.

- - -

### **Getting the Shimmer Out**

**Billy Miller** writes:

I emailed you before about image size for panning an imported photo. Much to my astonishment you responded in your September newsletter -- 1800 x 1350 pixels. :)

Now I'm curious about getting rid of the shimmering effect when zooming in or out with this larger image.

I add .5 gaussian blur which works great close up but when I zoom out I get the shimmer. If I add, say, 2.0 gaussian blur the image looks bad up close.

Any thoughts?

*Larry replies:* Try key-framing your blur so that the blur decreases as you zoom into the image. Or, in FCP 5, change the video render settings to Best (**Sequence > Settings > Video processing tab**).

- - -

**Where's the money?**

**Eddie Young** writes:

My partner and I have started a multi media and animation company. (I've been an illustrator for 21 years and I've had to branch out in an effort to stay afloat during the Bush years)

We've got several video production jobs under our belt now, but bidding jobs is still a mystery. Do you know of a "pricing guideline" for video production that covers day rates for camera work, editing, DVD production etc.?

**Walter Schupp** continues along the same lines:

The results of your last poll were very interesting, but what I really want to know is how much are people charging per hour for an FCP edit suite. I know it will depend on whether it is a DV only system or an HD system. Maybe that could be part of the poll. I'd love to see sample rates for DV only, Betacam/ Digibeta, and HD suites. If you want to go a step further, you could ask if people charge different rates for digitizing, motion graphics, and audio sweetening using the same room and system.

*Larry replies:* These are great questions, but almost impossible to answer. My newsletter is read around the world, so when it comes to pricing, answers vary widely due to currency differences, variations in income by country, as well as the skills of each individual editor.

For the same reason, trying to determine a common pricing pattern for post-production is a major challenge for publications with much larger budgets who are focused on just a local region.

As a work-around, do what everyone else does - pose as a customer and contact your competition; or post-production facilities in a nearby city. Ask to see their rate card. After calling a few places, you'll start to see where prices group, so you can decide where to set your own prices.

And, after all, when you think about it, that's just what your customers are likely to do, too. They'll call a few vendors and go with the one that provides the best service for the best price. Mostly.

- - -

### **Running FCP HD on a PowerMac G-5 Quad**

**Mark Joseph** writes:

Following up on the question about running FCP HD on a new Quad G-5, it may be possible to run the FCP 4 on the new PCI Express G5, here are two methods users have pointed to:

**Control+Click** on the Final Cut Pro application and select **show package contents**.

Open the contents folder and open info.plist.

Search for **AGP** replace it with **PCI**.

Save and close the file.

Open FCP4, and voilà it works.

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Another method as used to unofficially install on G3s:

[http://www.xlr8yourmac.com/feedback/final\\_cut\\_pro\\_on\\_old\\_macs.html](http://www.xlr8yourmac.com/feedback/final_cut_pro_on_old_macs.html)

*Larry replies:* Mark, thanks for the info. Please remember that changing the package contents of Final Cut can create serious problems. Do this ONLY if you can remember how to restore everything the way it was, in case things don't work as you expect.

- - -

### **Looking for an SDI DV deck**

**Gene Lebrock** writes:

Enjoy your newsletter and have a question for you. I'm in the process of buying a pro dv deck and I need SDI capability. I'm looking at the DSR 1600a... do have any thoughts on this deck or other suggestions?

*Larry replies:* I have several clients who use the DSR-1600 deck. While I've only used it when I'm working on their systems, it seems to work well. If any readers have other recommendations, send them in. I'm happy to pass them along.

- - -

### **Working with reference movies, part 1**

**John Warner**, from Asheville, NC, writes:

First, thanks for a great seminar in Atlanta, I really enjoyed it!

Second, I'm trying to follow your advice to create a reference QuickTime movie when exporting a project from Final Cut to convert into a DVD.

What happens, however, when the real footage which those reference movies point to gets deleted? The reference movie is no longer valid, correct, since the actual movies and rendered

sequences have been deleted?

I understand that one should not delete their FCP files until after the DVD has been created and completed. So assume that I follow the workflow of: 1.) FCP full edit and export reference movie. 2.) Create DVD using that reference movie. 3.) Deliver DVD which client O.K.'s. 4.) Archive FCP project folder and delete that project's capture and render folders. 5.) Archive the DVD with the menus, tracks and slides folders.

What happens several months later when the same client wants some tweaks to the DVD? Wouldn't I have to first reload the FCP project (from my backup DVD-RAM), re render all sequences then export a sequence file just to get the archived DVD project to work correctly?

Sorry to be so dense on this but I am actually making some drastic changes to my workflow because of your fine workshop and I wish to get it right.

*Larry replies:* John, you are correct. A reference movie points to the source media files which are stored on your system. If those files get deleted, then the reference movie won't play.

However, a reference movie does NOT point to any Final Cut project files, only to the media, or render files. So, if a client needs tweaks to an edit, you would need to go back into Final Cut and reedit to make the changes, then output a new reference movie to burn to a DVD. If they need tweaks to the DVD, that don't involve reediting the video, then you would need access to your DVD project files and it's associated media files.

- - -

### **Working with reference movies, part 2**

Following up on this reference movie discussion, **Ryan Downer** writes:

I use FCP 5 and Compressor 2 all up to date on 10.4.3. I shoot DV with a PD150 NTSC and my end products are DVDs. My question is two-fold. First, if I export a same-as-timeline, not

self contained QT file for Compressor am I going to get the same results if I had just exported to compressor from FCP? I know the latter choice takes about 300 times longer. (example: 12 min timeline took about 8 hours and with a QT export about 1 hour). So will my results be the same?

Secondly. I understand with DVD-R you shouldn't go over a 7.3 as a max bit rate while using AC3 audio, right? So with a 12 min timeline or a 40 min timeline will I be using the same exact bit rates (example: 6.3 min bit rate and a 7.3 max bit rate)???? Can I ever go over 7.3 and be safe with all DVD players? ON THE OTHER HAND, would a pressed DVD from a glass master differ? Could I go over a 7.3 max bit rate using that kind of media? Or is it simply a DVD streaming issue?

I do a bunch of shorter videos. Where can I find settings for these lengths? Or what sort of equation can I use...? Pondering. I just feel I use the 6.3 and 7.3 bit rate setting for everything and I feel that is wrong....

I REALLY appreciate your input. Thanks.

*Larry replies:* Ryan, my favorite way to get a movie out of Final Cut into Compressor is to export it as a reference movie (File > Export > QuickTime movie -- with "Make Self-Contained Movie" NOT checked.)

Then, drag it into Compressor and process as normal. The image quality will be the same. I've discovered that whether you export to Compressor or as a QuickTime movie, all the compression markers that Final Cut inserts are in both versions.

My recommendation is to set the average data rate to 5.5 and the max data rate to 7.2 -- regardless of whether you are burning or replicating (i. e. going to a glass master). There's no advantage to going much higher and there are significant problems with data rates that are too high.

- - -

**Problems with Speed-Changed Clips**

**Tim Wilson** writes:

I've noticed a problem when, using Media Manager to save a trimmed project and delete unused media, I open the new (copied and archived) project file. Any clips in the new project's timeline that are not normal speed (i.e. 100%) come out erratically, usually too fast. I have taken to re-marking the clips, re-setting the desired (usually slomo) speed, and re-assigning them to the timeline. Is there a quicker way around this? And has this problem been addressed in FCP version 5?

*Larry replies:* Media Manager has problems with speed-changed clips to the point where it drives all of us nuts. Your workaround is as good as any. And, no, this has not been fixed in FCP 5.

- - -

### **Problems with Scrolling**

Not daunted by getting this first answer, **Tim** tried again:

May I push my luck and ask you one more thing that I've not been able to find an answer to, either in your book or in FCP's manual? (I was going to put this to Uli Plank, a friendly name that I notice has cropped up on your list). I am trying to do a relatively simple scrolling end-title sequence for a project. I want the titles to scroll from bottom up, but stop before the title has completely rolled off the top of the screen. It's not a question of masking, but of stopping, the scroll, before the time indicated for end of the titling clip.

I've tried locating the point where the final screen is as I want it -- last line of credit at the bottom, not top, of the screen, marking that, finding the same frame in the viewer and trying to make that a freeze-frame. No dice. I've also tried double-clicking on the rolling text clip in the timeline, then inserting motion keyframes at that point for "center" and "anchor point", but this, too, fails to stop the continued scrolling upwards.

*Larry replies:* Sigh... two for two. There is no way, without first exporting

the text clip to convert it to video, to pause or stop scrolling text inside FCP.

Except... **Chi-Ho Lee** writes in with the following update

If you use Boris Title Crawl, you can achieve what he wants to do - stopping a scrolling in it's motion. You have to check the "Use Percentage Completion" box and then keyframe the "percentage complete" parameter. This will allow you to manually keyframe how the Roll will move from the bottom to the top or vice versa.

This is a little known secret!

Then, **Grant Benatar** wrote in with another solution:

I create all of my scrolls and rolls in Photoshop then import them as still images into FCP. I can then key frame the motion any way I want! All you have to do is increase the verticle size of the image in photoshop to suit your needs. It can sometimes take some tinkering, but it has never failed me.

- - -

### **Moving Markers**

**Markus Wernig** writes:

Is there any way you can think of that would allow us to transfer markers from one master clip to an identical second one?

This came up in our company since many editors like to use markers on long master clips. When these master clips get corrupted (as 2 did in our case), you can simply reimport the clip, but you lose all markers. We are a movie trailer shop and work with full-length features which are usually captured in 2 one-hour clips. Losing markers can be a big deal for us.

*Larry replies:* Nope. Since you can't select markers, there's no way to



copy or move them.

- - -

### **Issues on Archiving to Tape**

**Greg Kolar** writes to re-ignite an old debate:

I use miniDV. When I first started archiving weddings on miniDV tape, I was giddy with expectations of wonderful digital footage maintains for years to come. In less than 6 months, the tapes had audio drop-outs bursting my bubble.

I only like the idea of archiving weddings on hard drives because it removes the fear of miniDV's gone bad. As wonderful a camera the PD-150 is, I can say that mini-DV tapes are a BIG disappointment to me.

*Larry replies:* I understand your frustration -- dropouts are not good. However, I am DEFINITELY not a fan of archiving on hard disk. Technology goes out of style every four years. Suddenly, cables, connectors, or drivers don't work with new computer gear. You have a perfectly fine hard disk and no way to connect it. It can't be accessed, or the OS changed. Using a hard disk for short- to medium-term archiving is fine. But anything longer than a couple of years, I believe, your best media is tape.

Always make sure you are buying the highest quality tape stock from a reputable manufacturer.

- - -

### **Wrap-up**

Well, that's it for another issue. Thanks for your time and attention.

A few last-minute reminders:

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2) Please [visit our store](#) and buy something. Christmas is coming and my cat wants a present.

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As always, let me know what you think about this issue and tell your friends to subscribe. I love reading your questions and 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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