

Larry's Final Cut Pro Newsletter[Home](#)**Editor: Larry Jordan
Issue 23A - February/March, 2006**

Welcome to the February/March edition of my monthly Final Cut Pro newsletter. This contains some new techniques, Reader Mail, and several tips that I didn't have time to fit in the first February issue.

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 We now have over 100 tutorials - all free - to help you get the most out of Final Cut!

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This is sort of like two newsletters in three parts. While I really enjoy presenting my seminars, they take a LOT of time, which makes it hard to write. Still, we have plenty to talk about, so let's get started.

If you want to read the first half of this newsletter, [click here](#). The last part will be out the third week in March.

Register NOW for Larry's *Discover the Power* Seminars Only 2 cities left!

If you haven't already registered to attend one of our "Discover the Power" seminars, there are only two cities left – Orlando, FL, and Seattle, WA.

We've created two seminars: one for beginning and self-taught editors and one for intermediate to advanced editors.

If you are looking to polish your skills, organize your system, edit and trim faster and improve outputting, the "Supercharge Your Editing" seminar is for you.

If you are looking for ways to use the latest technology to gain a competitive advantage – from HDV and HD to LiveType 2 to Soundtrack Pro – "The High-End of Final Cut Pro" seminar is designed for you.

Click here to learn more: www.larryjordan.biz/seminars

As one of the attendees to our Chicago, Illinois, seminar wrote:

If you use Final Cut Pro and don't attend this seminar, whatever you did, you wasted your day!

I would enjoy the chance to meet you. [Click here to register](#).

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Larry's Seminar Tour Comes to Australia!

After a very successful seminar series here in the US, Young Australia Productions has invited me to bring our Final Cut Pro seminar tour to Australia. This four-hour seminar will be at the Mercury Cinema in Adelaide, April 7, 2006. Tickets are \$275 (AUS) and seats are limited.

At this seminar you will discover productivity secrets and techniques you never knew existed in Final Cut -- how to optimize your system settings, how to organize your files, how to edit faster, trim faster and improve your output. The same subjects that have helped editors across the US improve their productivity!

In addition to this seminar, Larry has reserved three extra days for private staff training. If you are interested in customized training -- specifically tailored for your staff -- this training is perfect. We will be in Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide.

To learn more, reserve your seat, or sign up for training, please contact Young Australia Productions Pty. Ltd. for more information:

- Phone: (+618) 8244 7880
- Fax: (+618) 8244 7870
- Email: info@youngaustralia.com.au
- Website: <http://www.youngaustralia.com.au>

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Technique: Creating Text Favorites

This technique grew out of a conversation with **Gloria Messer**, of New York City, who started it by writing:

Your latest newsletter is fabulous, as usual. The fact that I could not change colors, fonts or sizes in a scroll in FCP has always been a source of frustration. I am thrilled by your solution. Now, why didn't I think of that???

Is it possible to center a name on a line under a lower-third title? Would you just skip a line on the 2nd scroll on V-2, or would you use the asterisk and how?

Larry replies: Gloria, your question gave me an incentive to relook at the text tool. And I discovered two features that I

didn't know existed.

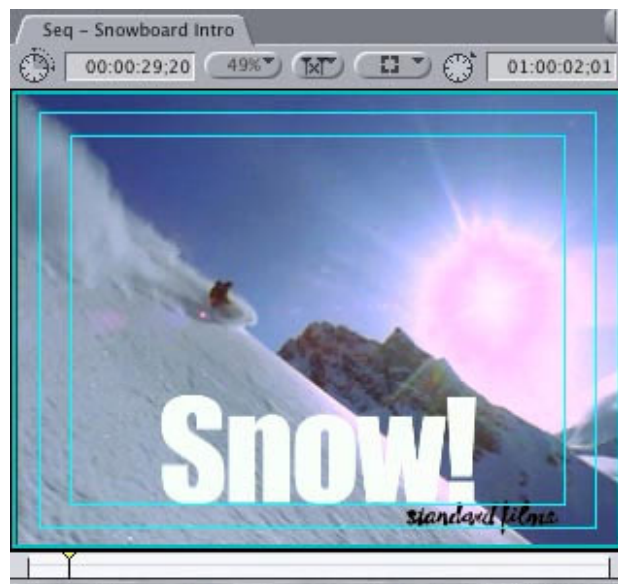
First, though, to answer your question, the text generator in Final Cut has been generously described as "limited." While all scrolling titles are centered, lower-third supers are only flush-left, for no rational reason that I can understand.

However, here's the cool part. Did you know you can create Text and Drop-shadow favorites? Neither did I. But, if you have a lot of text titles, or drop shadows that you want to add, using Favorites is a very convenient way to do it.

Here's how.

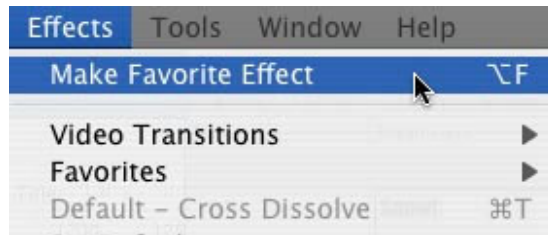


1. Create a text clip, click the **Controls** tab in the Viewer and style it however you want.

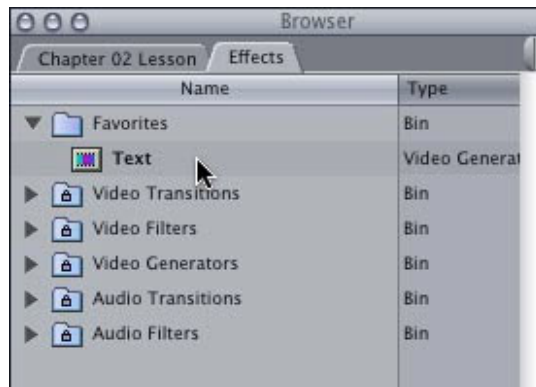




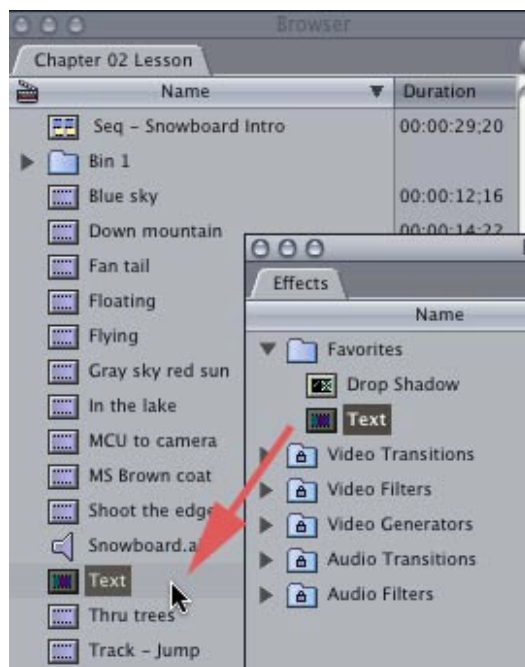
In this case, I'm using **80 point Impact** as a full-screen title to a Snowboard sequence.



2. With the text clip still in the Viewer and the Viewer selected, select **Effects > Make Favorite Effect**.



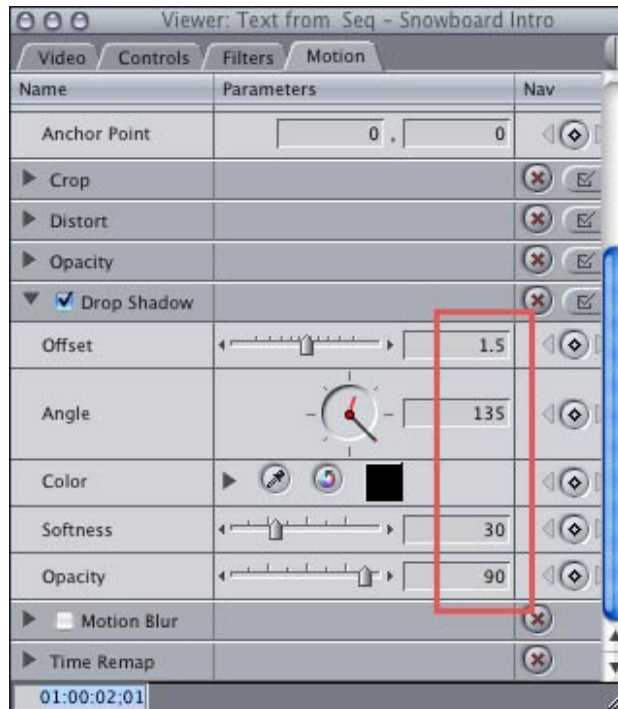
3. In the **Browser > Effects tab > Favorites** folder, a new item shows up which is the text favorite you just created.



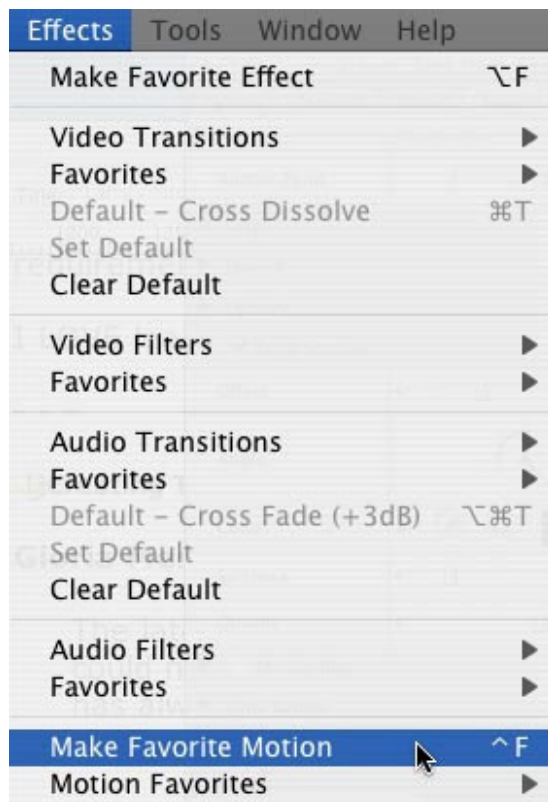
4. Drag it from the Favorites folder into the Browser. You can now use this just like any other clip -- except your text settings are now preset. You can rename it, if you wish.
5. Put your playhead in the middle of the clip in the Timeline over which you want to superimpose the title

you just created.

6. Edit the text clip to the Timeline by dragging it to the Canvas and dropping it on top of the **Superimpose** overlay menu.
7. Double-click the text clip to load it back into the Viewer.

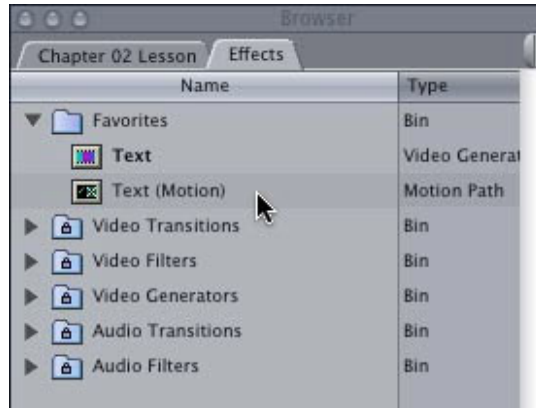


8. Select the Motion tab and click the checkbox next to **Drop Shadow** to turn it on. Modify your drop shadow settings -- I recommend using an **Offset** of 1.5, a **Softness** of 30 and an **Opacity** of 90.

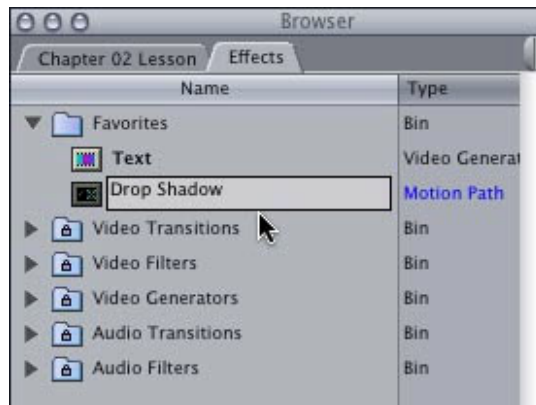


9. When your shadow settings are set, select **Effects >**

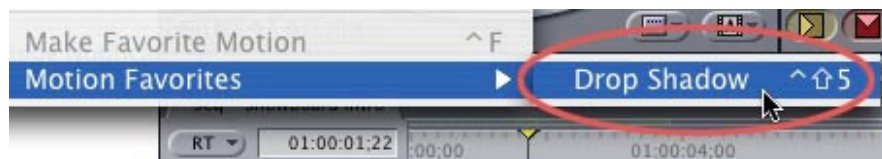
Make Favorite Motion.



10. Notice that a second clip appears in the **Browser > Effects tab > Favorites** folder. It's called "Text (Motion)." These are the drop shadow settings you just created.



11. To help you remember, double-click the name of the favorite settings and change the name to "Drop Shadow."
12. Now, whenever you want to create a text title, simply edit the text clip from the Browser to the Timeline using the Superimpose menu in the Canvas and change the text in the Controls tab.



13. And, to apply a drop shadow, select the text clip you to which you want to apply the settings and chose **Effects > Favorite Effects > Drop Shadow** (or whatever you named the clip.)

As a note, you will need to restart Final Cut for the Effects menu to recognize the changed name of the drop shadow favorite.

As someone who as grumbled countless times about not being able to save drop shadow settings, this is a wonderful timesaver!

Final Cut Goes Intel - some words of caution

Currently, Final Cut Pro does not support any of the Intel Macs. Apple has announced that they will be making Universal binaries available for the entire Final Cut Pro suite of products no later than the end of March.

Universal binaries are special software that run on both current and Intel/Macintosh systems.

However, Paul Saccone, Apple's Product Manager for Final Cut Studio, recently told Digital Media News that these universal binaries are a straight conversion from the existing software. There are no new features and no bug fixes.

His comments suggest that there is NO reason to "cross-grade" to this version UNLESS you currently own an Intel/Mac. As of this writing, there are only two Intel/Mac computers available: the iMac and the MacBook Pro. While both are fine machines, neither is my first choice for running Final Cut.

For this reason, my recommendation is to wait on cross-grading or purchasing Intel/Macs until later this year as we get a better picture of how the Macintosh product line, and Final Cut Pro, fit into the conversion to Intel processors.

For more information on Apple's cross-grade program, click here: <http://www.apple.com/universal/crossgrade/>

This Month's Poll: What do you want to learn about FCP?

Just a reminder that this is part 2 of our February newsletter. So, we are still looking for feedback on our current poll. I'm trying to discover what subjects you are interested in learning about so I can add these topics to future books, DVDs and on-line materials.

You can take the poll here: <http://www.pollmonkey.com/p.asp?U=5079126756>

And you will see the results as soon as you vote.

I'm grateful so many of you have already voiced your opinion. It really helps me determine what this website covers and I appreciate your opinions.

Reader Mail

LiveType Workflow

Rudy Picardo, from Florida, writes:

I've got a work flow question for you in which I was hoping you could give a suggestion. I'm working on a video with a few sections that are very similar to MS PowerPoint slides. I'm creating the text with animations using LiveType. I also have a voice-over narrator reading the lines corresponding to the text.

I'm having trouble timing the live-type and narration exactly.

Is there a work flow solution where I can put the audio track in LiveType and sync up the animations? I have the full Final Cut Studio Suite, so if you can think of a better work flow solution, I would welcome it.

As always I love your advice. I keep your HOT for FCP in my office and ran into your section on using Markers with DV detection. I just used it to import a large capture and saved me some time! One of my supervisors boasted that I'm a fantastic editor (even though I'm one of two editors in our small group). Regardless, I know that your materials have made me a better editor.

Larry replies: Rudy, LiveType does not support audio. However, Motion does. Since you have Final Cut Pro Studio, you can use Motion to create your sequences, then import them into Final Cut.

Or, you can lay the audio into FCP, enter Timeline markers to show where you want the animation to start vis a vis the narration. Export the timeline, with markers, to Livetype (**File > Export > for LiveType**) and build your animation using the markers as sync points.

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Reader Tip: Saving Favorite Effects Between Projects

Andreas Kiel, our favorite XML wizard, writes:

Within [After Effects] you can save sets of filters in

a way which reflects the order of the filters, with FCP you can only save favorites, which [if you are not careful, are easy to get out of order.] The result might be a long list of favorites with no real relation or explanation.

But it is quite simple to change that. As I'm a master of XML here is the XML workaround and a standard workaround:

If you have a "favorite filter setting" for a clip, select the clip and press "cmd-C", create a new slug [from the Video Generators pop-up menu in the lower right corner of the Viewer] within a new sequence and Edit > Paste attributes > Filters.

[This copies all your filter settings into the new clip.] Then give a descriptive name to the clip and drag it into the Browser directly or into a new bin in the Browser. If you want, you can add a descriptive name to the bin. To add comments to a bin or a clip, press "Cmd+9".

[This creates a favorite which won't disappear when you trash preferences and it works fine for other clips in this project.]

[However, if you want to move these favorites between projects,] export either the bin or selected slugs as XML and give a descriptive name to the export. When you create a new project import this XML file, then select a slug containing the effects you want to apply to a new clip, press "Cmd+C", then select a clip or clips and paste attributes.

Larry replies: I've known about storing effects in clips for a long while. However, using XML to move selected clips or bins between projects is very cool. Thanks!

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Sending to Soundtrack Pro

Lou Dullen, from LA, writes:

I'm having a problem sending audio clips to Soundtrack Pro in order to do noise reduction. I've watched and downloaded the QuickTime tour of Soundtrack Pro that demonstrates how to do this, off of the apple site. The only problem is, when I control click on the audio clip, my only option for

sending it to Soundtrack Pro is: "Send to soundtrack pro multi-track."

I can't figure out why I can't send to Soundtrack Pro audio file. I think this is the reason I'm not getting the same results as in the QuickTime tour. HELP!

Larry replies: Lou, a Soundtrack Pro audio file project can only contain ONE audio file at a time. Because you are selecting more than one audio clip, Final Cut is forced to send it to a Mutlitrack project.

Either send one file at a time or create a Soundtrack Pro script and send the files to the script. (I'll be writing about Soundtrack Pro scripts in next month's issue.)

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Is MiniDV digital?

Max Tromba writes:

I was having an argument with a buddy the other day whether MiniDV is stored as digital data onto the MiniDV tape? By the way, I really enjoy your Lynda.com training classes.

Larry replies: Whoever said it is stored digitally wins.

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Exporting to H.264

John Thomas writes:

I have really enjoyed your tutorials on Lynda.com and your newsletters. I'm fairly new to FCP (about 1 year). I was wondering what would be the best settings to export a movie using QT H264?

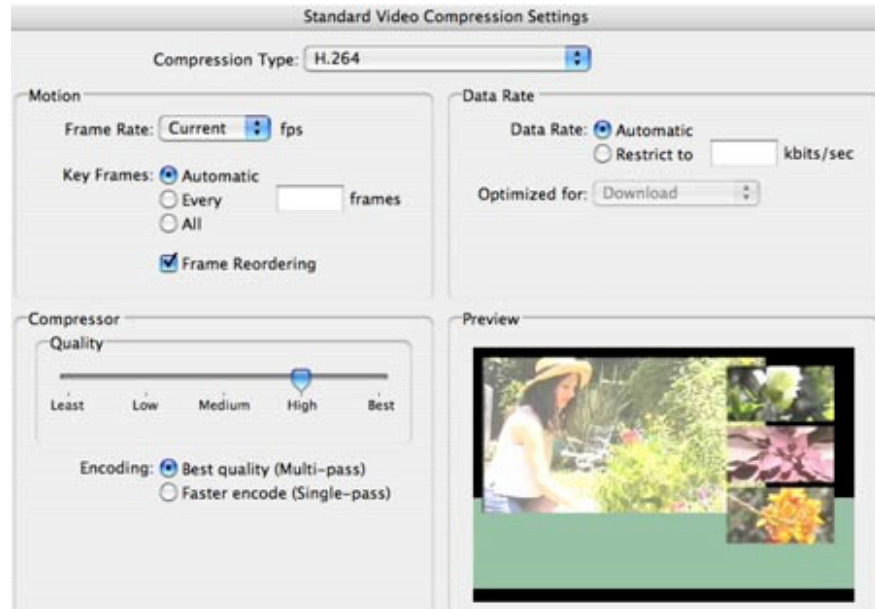
Larry replies: This whole business of determining the best settings to use for video compression is a complete morass. Probably my most asked question is to provide a one-paragraph answer on the best compression settings for the web. Unfortunately, it isn't that easy.

Ben Waggoner has written two excellent books covering video compression: *Compression for Great Digital Video* and *Sorenson Squeeze 4*. Both are available on Amazon.com, as well as local book stores.

However, in the interest of providing some initial help, here are the settings I used to create a simple H.264 movie of a 30

second commercial created by one of my students (David Bacon). These converted a 30 second DV movie at 115 MB into an H.264 movie at 4.3 MB.

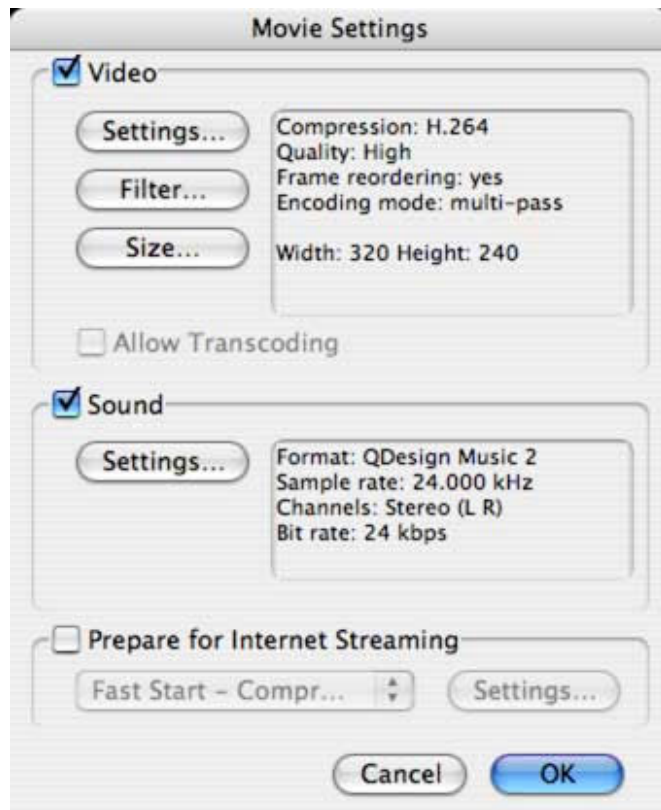
First, remember that creating H.264 requires Quicktime 7, with the Pro version installed. You get the Pro version automatically when you install Final Cut. I loaded the movie into QuickTime Pro and selected **File > Export**.



I then clicked on the **Options** button and set the Video options as you see on this screen here. (Notice that I didn't change the frame rate, with H.264 there is not a significant reduction in file size by decreasing the frame rate.)



Then, I clicked the audio options. As this was principally music, I used the QDesign Music 2 codec. I set the sample rate to 1/2 the sample rate of the timeline: **24,000**.



As this video was for the web, I reduced the frame size to **320 x 240**, which helps reduce the file size. I generally don't add filters when using H.264.

While you will have more control using Compressor, this is a fast way to convert a video into an H.264 movie. On my G-4 PowerBook, it took about three minutes to convert the 30 second movie into an H.264 movie.

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Setting Scratch Disks

Joel Wycoff writes:

I FINALLY got around to implementing your technique as described in "[Archiving and Organizing your FCP Project](#)."

I came up with one question, when I "set" the scratch disks, it's done with System Settings. So if we work with more than one project, we take the chance of dumping into the wrong folder. Because system settings take precedence over projects. True?

For example, we start a new project for the youth group JSM_001_Feb, then later that afternoon, we

go back to work on V&R_Wedding, the system setting are still point to JSM_001_Feb. So any rendering, etc, takes place over there.

So I need to establish process guidelines for my team? When they go to work on project A, first make sure sys setting are pointing to proj A , before they do ANYTHING.

Am I on track here?

Larry replies: You are close, but not on track. While it is true that Scratch Disks are system-, rather than project-, based, here's how scratch disks work.

- Create a folder on your second drive, the one you use to store media, and call it "Final Cut Pro Documents."
- Point your scratch disks to that folder and NEVER change it.
- Final Cut ALWAYS stores media in a folder named after your current project. So, when you capture media, Final Cut puts it in a folder named after the active project in your Browser. (The active project has a light gray tab and is in front of any other open projects).
- When you switch projects, either by opening a project file, or clicking on a tab in the Browser, Final Cut recognizes this change and now stores any new capture files in the project file in your capture scratch folder that is named after your now current project.

In other words, you don't need to do anything -- the files are stored correctly by project in your capture scratch and render folders.

This procedure is also true for render files. All render files (both video and audio) are stored in folders named after your project. So, whenever you change projects, your render files switch to the appropriate folders for that project.

However, one thing you must do BEFORE capturing any media for a new project is to save the project and give it a name. That way, Final Cut knows what to name the folder it will use to store media in your Capture Scratch, and render file, folder. If you don't give your project a name, Final Cut will name it for you -- by calling it "Untitled Project #."

Finally, keep in mind that Final Cut stores the complete path name to all your media files in the Browser. So, once a file has been captured, Final Cut knows exactly where it is stored, regardless of what the folders are named. This means that you don't need to change the scratch disks in order for FCP to find files. It already knows where they are.

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Video Offset problems

Paul Devlin writes:

Just want to point out what seems to be an inaccuracy on this page:

http://www.larryjordan.biz/articles/lj_view_menu.html

What I've observed is that the Frame Offset does not affect audio at all. Instead, it delays the video on the Canvas by that number of frames in order to synch up with the delayed video signal on the external monitor.

The result, unfortunately, is that the Canvas video is now out of synch with the Built-In audio. As a result, this feature is essentially useless in my opinion, since who wants to edit with out of synch built in audio.

It would be much more useful if the audio were delayed, as you erroneously describe, but unfortunately this is not the case as far as I can tell.

Avid is able to delay audio in this way to synch up with the external monitor. It would be nice if FCP could do the same.

Larry replies: Paul, the FCP manual is somewhat murky on this subject (page 220). My understanding was that this delay affected only the external video, not the video displayed in the Canvas. As I am on the road at present, I don't have the ability to test this, but am publishing your comments as a heads-up for other readers.

If anyone has additional information, please let me know.

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Flickering Images

Inaki Vizarra writes:

I currently run FCP 5.0.4 and I have an annoying problem that it seems I cannot trouble shoot. When I make freeze frames, sometimes but not always,

there is a flickering in parts of the image; i.e. a hand holding a folder flickers left and right. You can see this in your external monitor but not in the viewer nor the canvas, but it gets recorded into tape. It looks like white spots of video signal flicker inside the frozen frame, like the luma is too high. I have tried color correction in various ways, color correction "broadcast safe" but I can't solve the problem. Is something that you have heard of before?

Larry replies: What you are seeing are interlace artifacts, caused by the fact that NTSC and PAL video are both interlaced. That is, they display first all the even lines of an image, then the odd lines; rather than displaying all the lines in order from top to bottom.

Your computer monitor displays all lines in order, which is called "progressive" display, as opposed to your TV monitor, which shows the lines in an "interlaced" display. That's why you don't see the problem on your computer monitor. Interlacing is only an issue on a TV.

This is why I stress to all my students that they MUST look at their sequences on a video monitor, which shows interlacing, before making any final output to tape. (And, by the way, why I object so strenuously to manufacturers who are trying to convince us to buy LCD-based video monitors. An LCD monitor will never show interlacing, which means I can not use it for making final quality decisions on my projects.)

Anyway, to fix this problem for still frames, you can apply a deinterlace filter, which removes half the lines from your image (either even or odd) which has the affect of removing the flicker. Or, you can use a flicker filter which also kills the interlace effect. You will find both in Effects > Video Filters > Video.

Try them both and see which one makes your image look the best - remember, you must view these on a video monitor, not your computer screen, to see the final effect.

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Deinterlacing video

Mike Reeves, from Auckland, New Zealand, writes:

I want to run the deinterlace filter on a [PAL] project I have so that it can be viewed on a Quicktime movie put to CD - eg view it on a monitor

without the jagged lines.

I know Pal DV is interlaced and lower field dominant. My question is does the Deinterlace filter in FCP remove the field it is set to so that if I run the filter with upper set in FCP does this remove the upper field or does it keep the Upper field. I have searched high and low and have found various solutions which contradict each other. One person says run the filter with "upper" set and the other says run it with "lower" set. I also read an article about the "Joe's interlacer" which says that FCP fields are the opposite to the Joe's filter. Apple of course won't commit themselves, they just say run it - OK I will run it - but do I set the Upper or lower option in FCP?

Larry replies: Mike, the deinterlace filter just deletes every other line in your video image. What you are doing is selecting which set of lines you want it to delete. Pick the one that looks the best -- I generally select ODD (or upper), but the choice is yours.

Also, if all you are doing is outputting video to compress for the web, if you are compressing your PAL DV movie into a 320 x 240 (NTSC) or 320 x 288 (PAL) version, you don't need to deinterlace. The process of compressing to that small an image size will automatically throw away every other video line.

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Reader Tip: Sharpening your video

While I don't, as a rule, sharpen video because it makes the edges too harsh in my opinion, there might be situations where you want to add a bit of "snap" to a still image. Mike Reeves recommends using the Unsharp filter (**Effects > Video Filters > Sharpen > Unsharp Mask**) with settings of **Amount = 100**, **Radius = 0.5**, and **Threshold = 0**.

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Consumed by Guilt Department

Last September, Jon Kagi, of [Kagi Media](#), sent me a DVD to review called "Mix it Like A Record." It wasn't until this week that I actually had time to sit down and look at it.

If you are into creating music, you'll find this DVD an invaluable aid to improving the quality of your mixes. While it focuses on using ProTools, especially the high-end version -- ProTools TDM, its overall message can be useful to anyone

creating music.

The DVD is hosted by Grammy-winning mixer Charles Dye as he walks you thru the history, theory, and techniques of mixing music.

While this title is overkill for many video projects, there's still plenty to learn. While I found the video images and editing to be a bit over the top, the narrative pacing is slow enough to allow time to really comprehend his message. This title does a great job of conveying the importance of emotion and subtlety in the audio mix and a much greater understanding of the audio tools that are out there.

The retail price is \$149. To learn more about this DVD, visit: <http://kagimedia.com>.

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Rendering in LiveType

Skip Hall, from Suffolk, VA, writes:

I have a one-minute LiveType creation that is taking over an hour to render. I started with a LiveType template, then added a number of tracks, each with effects. Then stretched the time to fit the spot I had for the credits on the timeline. I "played" the timeline in LiveType and got a green bar. I saved the piece, then imported it into FCP5. When applied to the timeline, the bar was orange ("unlimited") over the LiveType piece.

It has been rendering for over an hour now in FCP5, is showing no progress at all on the timeline (orange bar is still fully orange), despite the fact that the render progress window says 39%, the estimated time is still reading "about an hour." There is no way this G5 should be choking up like this unless I am doing something seriously wrong.

Larry replies: Skip, there could be a number of things going wrong here. The key phrase is that after an hour of rendering nothing is showing up in the progress window.

It COULD be that your effect is so humongous that FCP is simply overwhelmed with the enormity of your creative prowess. On the other hand, here is a quick fix and a workaround.

First, make sure that the Project Settings of your LiveType

project match the settings of your Final Cut sequence. (**LiveType > Edit > Project Properties**). Make sure that the pop-up menu says **DV NTSC 3:2** for DV footage, or **CCIR 601** for Betacam (or whatever is the appropriate setting for your sequence.) Generally, these are not set correctly during install.

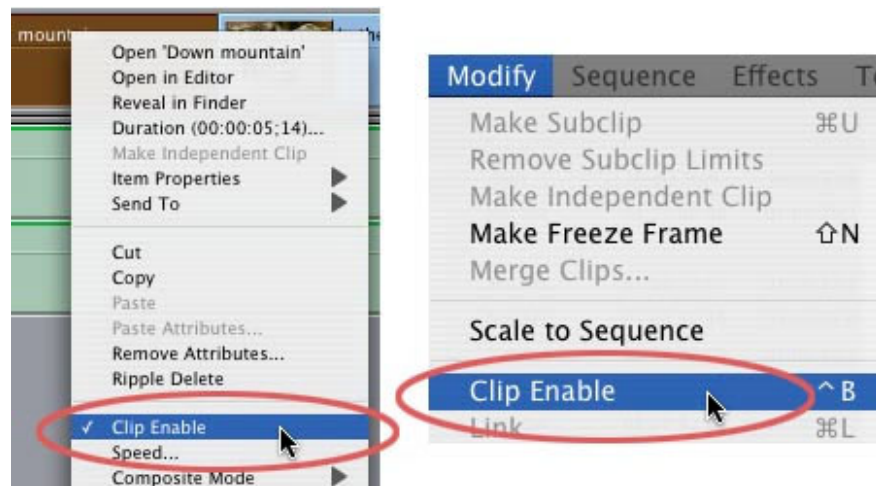
Second, for a quick fix within Final Cut, try trashing your preference files. Here's an article that describes how to do it: http://www.larryjordan.biz/articles/lj_trouble.html

Third, if the first two solutions don't fix anything, export and render your movie in Livetype then import the resulting movie into Final Cut. (**LiveType > File > Render movie**). If you are keying your Livetype animation over video in Final Cut, you will still need to render it, but that process should be much faster than what you are seeing now.

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Reader Tip: Soloing a clip

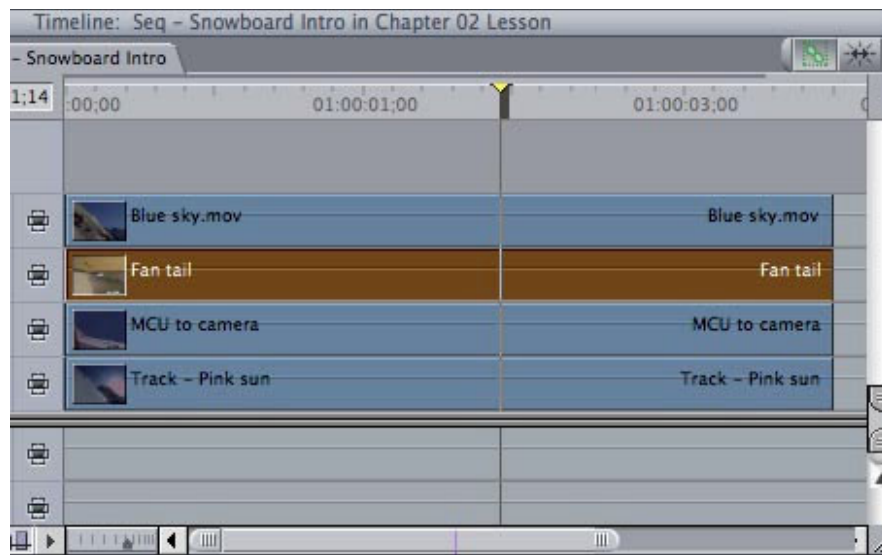
Dave Hardy writes:



You mention that you can make a clip invisible by control clicking it [turning off **Clip Enable**] from the contextual menu, but you can also do this by selecting the clip & pressing **Cntrl+B** which will toggle clip visibility on & off.

Likewise **Cntrl+S** toggles Solo for that clip -- turning everything else off or on. I'm sure you already know this but being short on time to get this months newsletter out decided not to mention it.

Larry replies: Dave, I did not know this trick so thanks for sharing it.



What **Ctrl+S** does is turn off Clip Visibility for *all* video or audio clips stacked above or below the selected clip on all tracks *EXCEPT* the clip you click on. This makes it easy to see what's under a particular clip.

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Color Correction

Rudy Picardo, from Miami, writes:

First, I wanted to say thanks again for your newsletters. I'm already planning to use your article on multi-colored text scrolls on a project I'm working on.

I've got a color correction question, as I'm still new to this. I've used techniques which I've done my best to follow based on your two articles on color correction and match hue on your site.





Here's a file which contains the master shot (color corrected slightly) and the a shot from a secondary camera, which I've attempted to color match with the master shot. In the secondary camera, I'm getting an "ok" match with the blue blazer she is wearing, but the rest of the shot seems off.

I'm having problems and was told that I may have to use Secondary Color correction, which I've never heard of. Is there such thing as Secondary Color correction, and if so, is this discussed in any of your training materials?

Larry replies: Rudy, before you worry about secondary color correction you have a bigger problem.

Look at the color of her skin in the close-up camera. It is blue trending magenta -- you are getting a significant amount of daylight spill from what appears to be a nearby window. Her shirt collar is also quite blue, and the exposure on her face is not the same. The **most** important thing in color correction is getting skin tones to look right, not clothing.

Try doing a color correction using the white collar of her shirt as your reference. I think you'll find that using the automatic white sampler eyedropper in the **Color Corrector 3-way** filter will make her skin tone in these shots match fairly closely.

Here's the article that describes what to do: http://www.larryjordan.biz/articles/lj_color.html

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Color Correction Workflow

Victor Spangler, from Starke, Florida, writes:

I wrote you a question a couple of months ago and you didn't have a working response to my problem. The problem was this. I had some clips that I wanted to send to Motion from Final Cut and they had already been color-corrected. When I imported them into Motion I would lose the color correction. (You told me to color correct after coming back out of Motion)

However, when you correct after coming out of Motion your lower third title shifts colors as well.

Well, I have come up with a way around this problem. First, I copy the clip that I want to send to Motion. Next, I paste it in position directly above the original clip in the Final Cut timeline...then I send the copied clip to Motion. I use the copied clip for a reference in Motion and build my graphics, then when I am finished I "UN-check" the box for the copied clip in Motion to be seen.

The reference video goes away on the screen. This will produce an alpha channel with the graphics which I save and then go back into Final Cut. The copied clip now has the graphics with the alpha channel and the original color corrected clip is below and it looks great. Of course you have to render the two together BUT, I now have a color corrected clip with graphics that haven't shifted colors.

Larry replies: Victor, this is a great tip. You can use this same technique to create titles in LiveType as well by going to **Edit > Project Properties** and either *checking* (to include) or *unchecking* (to exclude) the background video.

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RAM Questions

Todd Burns writes:

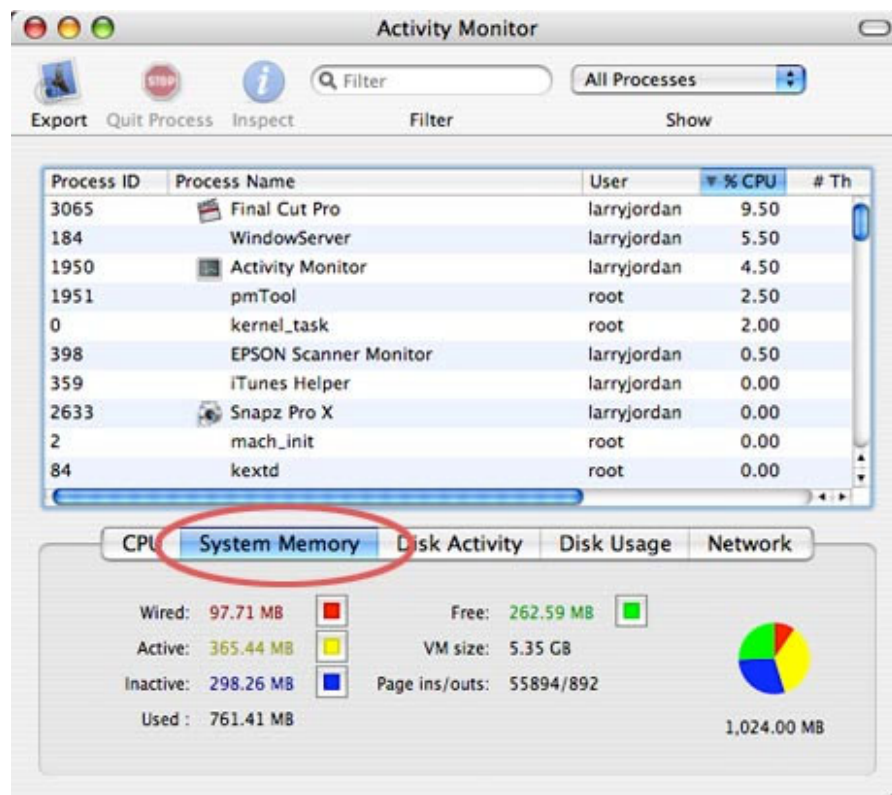
I'm a former student of yours (Santa Monica 2004) I just installed another 2 total gigs of RAM to my system (Mac G5 Dual Processor) which gives me a total of 4 Gigs DDR-SDRAM. I recently Installed Tiger & Final Cut 5...My CPU Speed is 2GHz, Bus Speed 1GHz.

Can you explain exactly what Inactive RAM is? Right now my Inactive Ram is 2.8 Gigs & my Active RAM is only 700Mgs. and the only thing open is Final Cut 5. Does it slow the machine down if there's a large percentage of the ram that's inactive? Is there any way to make more of the ram Active & less Inactive or does the system just do all of that on it's own? My machine is running faster since adding the extra ram but it still seems slower than it used to be when I had Jaguar & Final Cut 4.

Larry replies: This is so cool -- I just learned what all this means myself and it's a great tip.

First, an important note. While OS X 10.4 supports more than 4 GB of RAM on a system, Final Cut Pro does NOT support more than 4 GB of RAM. I have a number of clients who have installed more RAM and they are having problems. My recommendation is to remove all RAM in excess of 4 GB until Final Cut is able to support the additional memory.

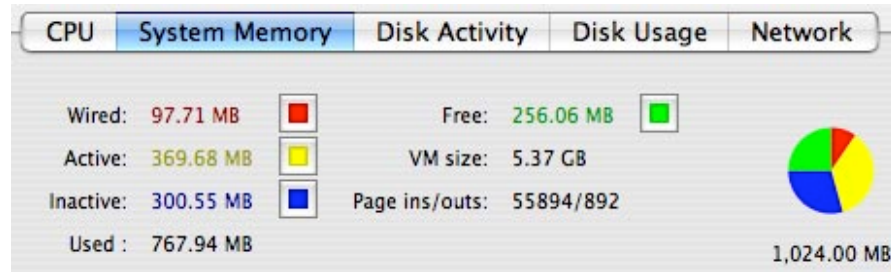
Also, G-5's are notorious for being finicky about RAM. Make sure you buy from a reputable vendor, and don't buy on price.



Next, I have a new best friend... It used to be Disk Utility, but now it's Activity Monitor. Run it by going to **Utilities folder > Activity Monitor**.

The top portion displays a list of all currently running processes -- which changes every few seconds. While très

cool, this is not the focus of our interest at the moment.



Instead, click on the System Memory tab. The lower portion of the display shows four memory states. Here's what they mean:

- *Wired* is that portion of memory which is assigned to active RAM and can not be paged out to disk. Most often this is assigned by the operating system.
- *Active* is that portion of memory assigned to currently running programs that is currently busy meeting the memory needs of those programs.
- *Inactive* is memory which is assigned to a program, or process, but which is not busy at the moment. Think of this as memory in reserve.
- *Free* is memory which isn't assigned to anything and is available for general use.

What I've started to do is to run Activity Monitor along with my other applications to see how much memory my applications are currently using. This has been an eye-opening experience.

Here's an easy way to interpret the graph. If your memory graph is predominantly red and yellow, you need to add more memory. Your system is maxing out and you are probably taking a performance hit.

If the graph is mostly blue and green, you have sufficient memory for the tasks you are running and you probably won't see any performance benefit by adding new memory.

For instance, when I am editing DV, my memory allocations are modest. As soon as I start editing HDV, the memory requirements go through the roof.

I LOVE learning stuff like this!!

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Using Frame Offset

Paul Devlin writes:

Just want to point out what seems to be an inaccuracy on this page:

http://www.larryjordan.biz/articles/lj_view_menu.html

What I've observed is that the Frame Offset does not affect audio at all. Instead, it delays the video on the Canvas by that number of frames in order to synch up with the delayed video signal on the external monitor.

The result, unfortunately, is that the Canvas video is now out of synch with the Built-In audio. As a result, this feature is essentially useless in my opinion, since who wants to edit with out of synch built in audio.

It would be much more useful if the audio were delayed, as you erroneously describe, but unfortunately this is not the case as far as I can tell.

Avid is able to delay audio in this way to synch up with the external monitor. It would be nice if FCP could do the same.

Larry replies: Paul, my understanding was that the frame offset actually did delay the video output. Clearly, we can't both be right, so if any reader has additional information, I'd like to know about it so I can update the article.

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Help needed in syncing audio and video files

Fabián Oliver, from Uruguay, writes:

I'm sound mixer , i work with a Fostex PD6 recorder that records T/C BWF files.

I use a time code slate when we shoot film. Here in my country we sync audio and telecine in NLE (not in the telecine process, so transfers come MOS), most of it are Final cuts.

My question is: what's the fast method to synchronize audio and video using the T/C slate and files converted with Sebsky tools in FCP?. I know that Avid has the autosync feature that save lot's of time.

Can you give me a tip that I can translate to the

editors??

Larry replies: Fabián, I don't know. But let me ask our readers to see if someone has a suggestion. And, you might check out the next comment from Andreas Kiel.

- - -

Convert Broadcast Wave files for FCP

Andreas Kiel, author of an [excellent series of XML utilities](#) for Final Cut, recently sent me an announcement of a product which converts BWF (Broadcast Wave files) for use in Final Cut. He writes:

BWF2XML is the reliable, fast and simple way to convert Broadcast Wave Files into a format that allows Final Cut Pro to work effectively with those BWF audio files.

By leveraging the power of the Final Cut Pro XML format, BWF2XML allows Final Cut Pro to seamlessly import the complete metadata set as well as the original timecode stamp. Dependent on the system setup polyphonic BWFs and merging of discrete mono BWFs are handled.

The new version matches the timecode settings of all major audio HDRs and allows a smooth match between those HDR settings and the Final Cut Pro timecode options. A "Target Project" option has been added as well, this allows to streamline the workflow even better than previous versions.

These new features do extend BWF2XML's currently unique feature set - like "Metadata Mapping" and "Non Destructive Premix" - which makes this application the most advanced application for handling professional BWF audio in a Final Cut Pro editing environment.

BWF2XML just makes complex procedures appear simple and easy to use.

For more information about the product and system requirement please visit the products homepage: <http://www.spherico.de/filmtools/BWF2XML/>

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Problems with Cinewave

Luis Marrou writes:

Hope you can help me. I am trying to capture video YUV Balance and it won't let me. It captures DV50, no problem. I am capturing from a beta sp source, have a G5 Dual, Cinewave 4.7. FCP 4.5. Any ideas.

Larry replies: Sadly, Luis, the Cinewave card is not supported in current versions of the Mac OS. The problems you are having is that you updated to an OS version that Cinewave does not support. Pinnacle, the maker of the Cinewave card, stopped updating their drivers around OS X 10.3.7.

My recommendation is to switch to either an [AJA](#) or [Blackmagic Design](#) capture card.

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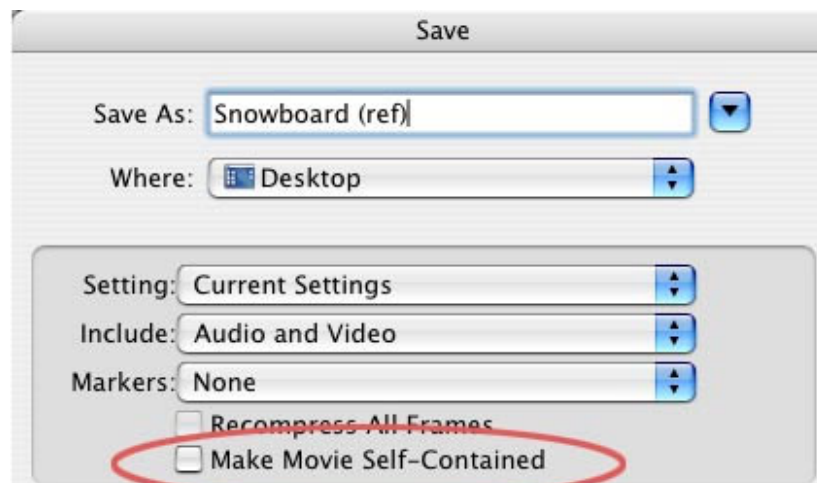
Audio Sync Issue

Barry Drennan writes:

I have an audio sync problem on music videos made in DVD Studio Pro 3. The duration of my movies are often an hour or longer and I use Compressor to compress them in the MPEG 2 high quality preset. Unfortunately the audio always lags on the final product although it's perfect on the computer in simulation mode. I have a G5 with 1.5 GB of memory running Tiger. If I export from FCP in quicktime movie mode then there is no audio problem but I generally can't use this mode as the files are too big to fit on the DVD.

Your comments and advice would be gratefully appreciated.

Larry replies: Barry, this audio sync drift is a known problem when exporting to Compressor directly from Final Cut HD.





A much better workflow is to export your sequence as a QuickTime Reference movie (**File > Export > QuickTime Movie** and UNcheck "Make Movie Self-Contained."

This creates a very small file on your system that you can then *drag* into Compressor and compress into an MPEG-2 file using your standard presets.

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Converting 30 fps to 24 fps video

The following dialog clarified for me when to use Cinema Tools and when to use a filter.

Wayne Johnson writes:

I want to convert my 29.97 footage to 23.98 footage using Cinema Tools. However, I keep getting a jerky image whenever the camera pans and so on. Could some one point me in the direction for this process.

Larry replies: Wayne, I've forwarded your question to **Noah Kadner**, who knows more about this than I do.

Noah replies:

This helped me out in learning Cinema Tools: http://www.lafcpug.org/pana_cinertools.html

Wayne wrote back:

This is helpful, but my footage is 29.97, I want to make it 23.98 then bring it back to 29.97.

The goal is to capture the most data possible and do the conversion in post for the "film look" I could be crazy but, I think the point of the camera is to capture the highest quality data possible with no conversion. 30i or 60i. Then edit your project, add effects, color correction and so on. then if you want the look of film adjust the frame rate.

Noah responded:

I got the impression you were asking how to resolve the pulldown out of footage from a 24p camera.

But it sounds like you're actually asking how does one make footage from a 60i/29.97 camera look like 24p visually. In that case Cinema Tools is not what you would use. It's purpose is for the former and is not intended for the latter.

You need a "film look" plugin. This is applied at the very end of your edit because it's very processor intensive and time-consuming. Here's a couple to look at in order of my personal preference:

[Graeme Nattress' Film Effects](#)

<http://www.redgiantsoftware.com/mbforeditors.html>

Hope that helps!

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Removing Pulldown from PAL video

Pat Berning, from Bel Air, France, writes:

Thanks for the first issue of *Edit Well* which, with it's reader-friendly format and interesting articles, is just as great as your newsletter.

A quick question re the article on 24p. It's obviously geared for NTSC so what differences are there for the PAL format?

Larry replies: Pat, I'm sending your question to Noah, who wrote the article for *Edit Well*.

Noah Kadner replies:

The differences [between NTSC and PAL] are pretty huge actually. Since 25p divides exactly 1:1 into 50i PAL there is no pulldown to remove and no advanced mode.

The DVX100 PAL model shoots 25p and 50i, period.

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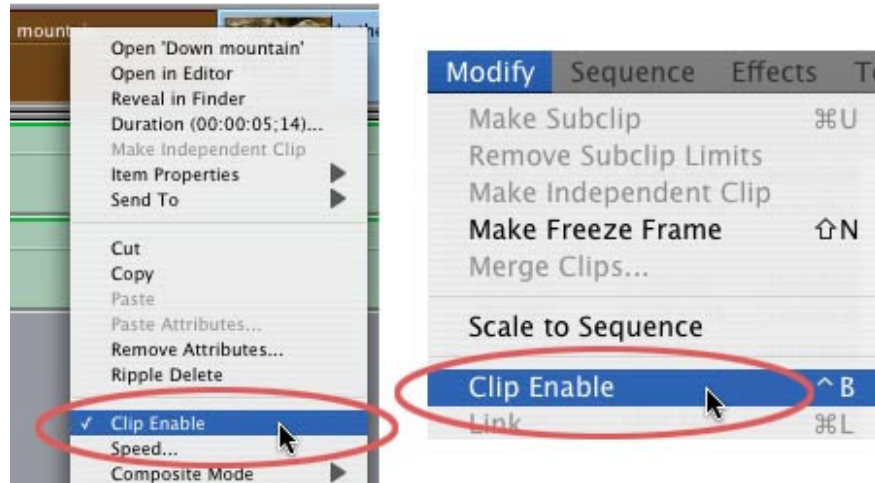
Nesting Sequences in Other Sequences

Kathleen McNamara writes:

Could you answer a question about copying sequences in the timeline. On page 407 of your Final Cut Pro 5 book, you describe editing in separate

sequences and then combining them for final output (which I'm proud to say I was already doing).

The picture shows the new sequences copied as single clips, instead of as many individual clips. The first time I did this it worked fine, just like your picture, but now when I copy the sequence it's identical to the edited sequence, a bunch of clips. Does it have something to do with "Clip enable" in the modify pulldown menu?? I'm baffled.



Larry replies: It has nothing to do with Clip Enable. Clip enable simply makes a clip visible or invisible.

If you drag a sequence into another sequence, it will appear as a single clip.

If, however, you drag the sequence from the Browser into another sequence, then press the **Command** key before letting go of the mouse, the sequence will automatically deconstruct into its individual component clips. This is a very fast way to unnest a group of clips.

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Soundtrack Pro Filters

Reid Kramer writes:

Larry, does SoundTrack Pro have a Time Compression/Expansion filter, and does it have a Pitch shift filter?

Larry replies: Yes. Soundtrack Pro has a filter called "Pitch Shifter," and it has a time compression/expansion tool in the toolbar which allows you to adjust whatever word, phrase, sentence or clip you have selected.

By the way, here's a heads up from **Jacob Hodgman** from the South Australia Police Audio Visual Unit:

By the way, the Vocal Transformer effect in STP is absolutely BRILLIANT for disguising voices (bad guys/anonymous informants etc) - only small adjustments to the settings provide fantastic changes that disguise while still keeping voice quality.

Larry, again: I thought that was just too cool a tip from a decidedly "official" source for me to resist!

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Problems with Compressor 2

There have been reports of compression problems using Compressor 2 that I want to bring to your attention. Based on this, my current recommendation for Compressor 2 is to not use any of the *Best* settings, but to use *Better* instead.

Here are the relevant quotes from a recent discussion between several Apple trainers.

Ben Balsler:

I've gotten a few questions lately about Compressor 2. Specifically bad quality MPEG-2 encodes and pixelation on transitions. Personally I haven't had any problems. But a few users have approached me with this problem. Wondering if anyone knows what's up with this?

Chris Roberts:

I have noticed this problem with compressor 2 - but only when using the High Quality (2 pass) presets. Apparently I heard on the Digital Production Buzz podcast that this was a bug with the encoding using the 2 pass process in Compressor 2 and the advice was to stick with a constant bit rate which I have been doing. Has anyone else heard this and if so has it been fixed as I was asked about it myself only yesterday?

Noah Kadner:

I can confirm this as well. Just did a 4:3 NTSC DV project on the Two-Pass HQ preset that showed tons of artifacting on transitions. Knocking it down to a 7.0 Manual CBR looked perfect.

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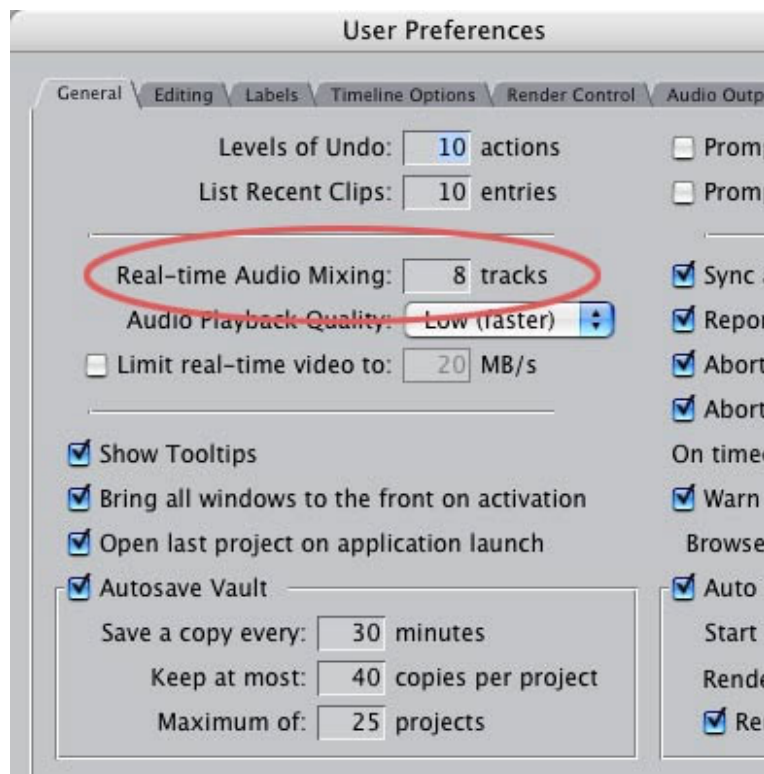
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Audio Beeps

Gerard Blitz writes:

Sorry to bother you again but when i play my clip all I get is beeps for the audio with the graphs blinking. I removed the original audio and inserted a new one but I can't hear it. Any ideas?

Larry replies: Gerard, audio beeps simply mean that your audio files need to be rendered. This can be caused by one of two things: 1) you have added an audio filter which is too complex to be played in real time, or 2) the number of audio tracks in your timeline exceed the number of real-time tracks you have specified in preferences.



In **Final Cut Pro > User Preferences** you can set the number of real-time audio tracks, the default is **8**. Keep in mind that the more real-time audio tracks you set, the fewer real-time video effects are available, as you only have one computer with finite resources.

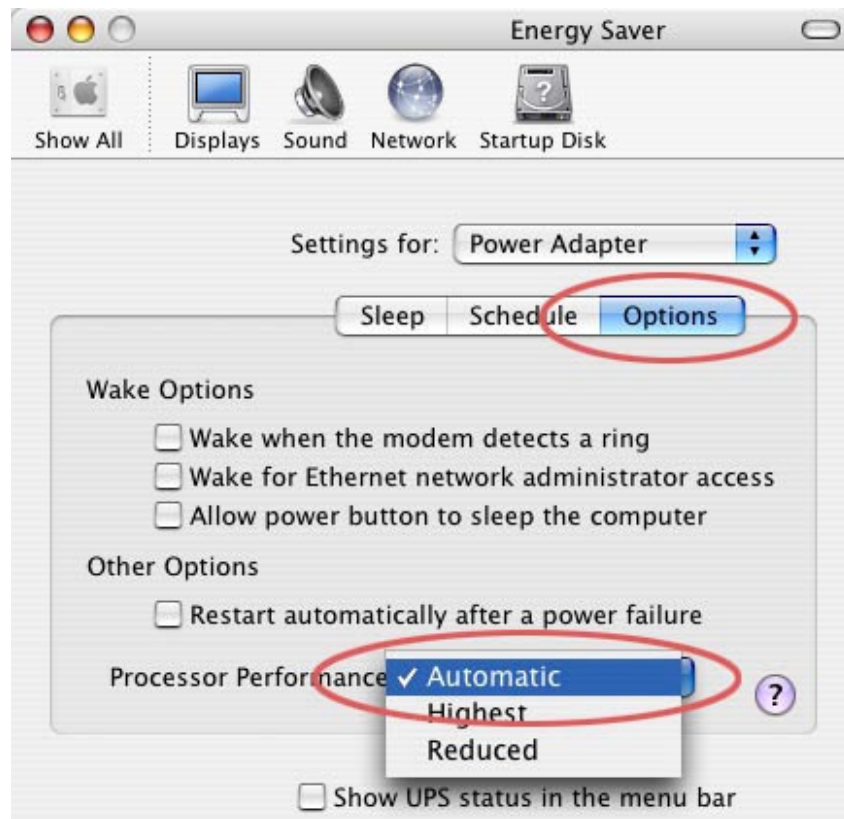
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Optimizing your Processor

Andrew Ficklin writes:

I was reading the "Optimizing your Final Cut Pro System" book, the Apple Pro Training Series. In the section for optimizing Mac OS X for Final Cut it stated that we should set the CPU setting to High as opposed to Automatic. Do you suggest this?

Larry replies: I agree, sort of.



You set processor performance in the **Energy Saver** System Preference pane, by clicking the **Options** tab.

My recommendation is to set it to **Automatic** if you have a G-5, and set it to **Highest** if you have a G-4.

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Convert DV to HD footage

John Reed writes:

Is there a way of 'interpolating' DV footage to HD size in FCP? I think this could be done frame by frame in Photoshop using GF PrintPro, but my copy of Photoshop won't batch process more than 1000 frames.

Larry replies: Sure -- but it's easier than this. Just edit your DV footage into your HD timeline. FCP will render it into an HD

format. You won't get any better quality, but you don't need to convert it before loading it into FCP.

Wrap-up

Well, that wraps it up for the second half of the February newsletter. I'm already working on the March issue, which will be out by mid-month. We've got some exciting stuff planned for the next few months and I'm looking forward to telling you about it.

Please consider [registering for one of our last two seminars](#) in Orlando and Seattle. You can learn more about them here -- the response has been fantastic and it will be months before we start traveling again.

Or, join us for our Australian tour in April. [Contact Young Australia Productions](#) to learn times and schedules.

Also remember that our monthly poll is still open. Please share your opinions on this month's poll. I'm trying to figure out what you want to learn and your answers help.

Click here for the poll: <http://www.pollmonkey.com/p.asp?U=5079126756>

Finally, I'm grateful for all your comments and questions. I love hearing from you and when you share your ideas and suggestions, we all learn.

Thanks and edit well.

Larry

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