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Larry Jordan's Monthly Newsletter

Editor: Larry Jordan

Issue #46 — June, 2008

Welcome to the latest edition of my monthly Final Cut Studio newsletter for June, 2008.

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 archived at the end of each year with key articles posted on my website for your reference. All software references are to Final Cut Studio 2 unless otherwise noted.

Please invite your friends to visit my website -- www.larryjordan.biz. There you'll find daily tips, latest industry news, over 350 articles, and tutorials to help you get the most out of Final Cut!

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WRAP UP

Welcome!

It's been a busy month so, before I launch into "what's new," I wanted to bring you up-to-date on "what's been happening."

First, we are getting ready for the first stop in our [Fall PowerUp Tour -- Santa Barbara](#). We will be showcasing some very cool stuff -- and I'll be talking about that later in this issue.

Also, as I mentioned last month, we now have a video podcast - [Digital Production BuZZ](#) - hosted by [GIMP/TV](#). Focused on the broader industry of digital production and post-production, it's goal is to help people who are new get a better understanding of how this work and how to choose the right gear. I'm pleased to report our video podcast is getting tens of thousands of downloads each week. However, it is getting **HUNDREDS of thousands** of downloads every week from iPhone users.

This just shocks me! For every web download, I get twenty iPhone downloads!!

I mention this because this forced me to rethink how I'm presenting information on our websites. (And you might want to give this some thought to how mobile phones with access to the Internet might affect your projects as well.) When I was designing these programs, I specifically shot them in HD for posting to the web, but designed the graphics so they would be readable on a 320 x 240 screen. I never realized how important that decision would prove to be.

Second, I've asked our web team to rethink our websites to provide greater access for mobile devices. While this web design is on-going and I'm not yet ready to formally announce it, I realized that we need to pay **much** more attention to providing improved access to mobile users. You'll hear more about this later this year.

Finally, less than two months ago, we launched a new "[Final Cut Tip of the Day](#)" on our [home page](#). I'm delighted to report that these tips now appear on over 30 websites around the world, with tens of thousands of viewers each week. If you'd like to add these tips to your website - they are **absolutely free** - [please contact me](#) and we'll show you how to set this up.

There's some very cool stuff happening - often in ways we don't expect. I'm looking forward to sharing it with you.

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Bonus Tip

In celebration of our new **Daily Tip**, **Shane Ross** sent in the following:



First, I have your Daily FCP tips posted to my site and I now find myself visiting my OWN SITE to see the tip of the day. That is so cool. THANKS!

Second, here's a tip that I'm sure you know.

Let's say you have a source file with 8 tracks of audio, and you mapped a1 and a2 to A7 and A8 on the timeline, and a5 is next to A6...the track assignments are ALL over the place. And to get them back to the proper order takes like 15 clicks...TIME CONSUMING. Well, if you simply RIGHT-CLICK in the gray area below the audio tracks, there is an option to RESET PANEL...click that and everything pops back into order, and everything is connected.



Larry replies: Thanks, Shane! Good tips are hard to find and always worth sharing.

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Caution on QuickTime 7.5

Last week, Apple released QuickTime 7.5.



It was less than 24 hours later that I got an email from an editor who upgraded to the latest version of QuickTime and started experiencing problems.

According to MacFixit - <http://www.macfixit.com/> - there are reports of choppy playback, degraded audio/video quality, loss of audio sync. There are also reported issues of problems with iTunes and Safari.

The MacFixit website provides more details and workarounds.

Apple's release notes indicate about a half-dozen security fixes in the new upgrade. Generally, however, those would not be enough to cause a significant change in the version number; it would be more likely to be called 7.4.6, rather than 7.5. I find the version number puzzling.

This update, and its attendant problems, gives me a chance to restate some general cautions regarding updating:

1. If your system is working, **don't** upgrade
2. **Never** upgrade in the middle of a project
3. Upgrading QuickTime does **not** provide any new features inside Final Cut
4. Upgrading the operating system does **not** provide any new features inside Final Cut
5. **Never** upgrade QuickTime without upgrading Final Cut at the same time.

Final Cut Pro is, at it's heart, a QuickTime editor. To change one, without changing the other, will generally cause problems.

Whenever a new software version comes out, you **MUST** ask yourself the following question: "Which is more important, keeping my system running smoothly or the features in this new upgrade?"

Systems which already have the operating system and QuickTime installed, to which you are installing a fresh copy of Final Cut Studio, have the least problems.

Systems which are being upgraded from an earlier OS to the latest OS, along with upgrading QuickTime and Final Cut, have the most problems.

The best way, though not the fastest, to upgrade to the latest operating system is to **totally** erase your hard disk and start clean. Apple calls this a "Clean Install." Yes, it takes a long time. Yes, it's a pain to reinstall all those applications. But this is a **WHOLE** lot easier than trying to fix what went wrong after upgrading the operating system without first erasing your hard disk.

I'm always torn with how to balance upgrading to the latest software with system reliability. So, here's the upgrade rules I follow:

Larry's Upgrade Rule

On systems on which I can afford to have problems, I upgrade immediately. This allows me to learn what's good and bad about the latest software.

On systems which I can **not** afford to go down, I use the following schedule:

- Dot release upgrades to current software -- wait a minimum of **30 days** after release to make sure the release does no harm.
- Releases of major software - wait a minimum of **90 days**, ideally until a dot one update is released.
- Releases of operating system software - wait a minimum of a **year** after release

Key question: When was the last time a client came to you waving a checkbook and demanding that you edit their project using the latest version of anything?

PowerUP with Final Cut Studio Seminars Begin In Santa Barbara July 15

July 15 in Santa Barbara marks the start of our latest PowerUP Seminars and i'd love to see you there!



While the main tour starts in September, this first seminar allows me to test out a lot of new material to see what works best and how much we can cram into the time we have together. The Santa Barbara event always has way to much in it - and the feedback we get here determines the structure of all the other seminars on the tour.

I just finished writing the workbook for **Succeeding in the New World of Tapelss and HD Video** seminar. This helps you understand the different HD video formats out there - and there are dozens and dozens to choose from - how to set up and trouble-shoot your system, and helping you pick the right gear for your project. Just the workbook will help smooth your transition into HD.

Our second seminar, **Integrating Adobe Products into a Final Cut Workflow**, is filled with great techniques you can put to work today. How to edit individual frames of video in Photoshop. How to compress video Blu-ray discs in Compressor, but author them in Encore. How to move projects between After Effects and Final Cut using Automatic Duck. Every time I think the workbook is complete, I discover something else that is so cool, it needs to be included.



Our third seminar, **Discover the Hidden Power in Final Cut Studio**, takes a detailed look at audio and video compression. In past seminars, we would skim the surface. This time, we are diving right in. How do you do surround mixing in Soundtrack? How to you transcode video for SD, HD, DVD and the web? Why is mixing in Soundtrack Pro better and faster than mixing in Final Cut? Plus, we've added a surprise session at the end of the day which I'll be able to tell you about next month.

Our industry is changing at an incredible rate and, sometimes, what you don't know can cost you tens of thousands of dollars. These seminars can save you from making those mistakes.



If you haven't signed up yet, our **early registration deadline ends June 30**. **Save 15%** by registering now -- enter **PREREG** as the registration code.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

[Click here to register.](#)

I'm also very pleased that **Adobe Systems**, **Blackmagic Design**, and **Automatic Duck** are sponsors of our PowerUP Tour. Hosting seminars around North America is not inexpensive. Not only do these companies have some great products, their sponsorship allow us to keep our costs down.



Santa Barbara is going to be great! I'd love to see you there.

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Self-Serving Follow-up

David Hackney writes:

I attended all three of your PowerUP sessions in Leeds, UK, earlier this year.

They were a great success for me personally, I had literally hundreds of pages of notes and scribbles by the end, a good 75% of which I was able to put into immediate daily use.

Larry replies: David, thanks for the kind words.

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Strengths and Weaknesses of Final Cut Server



of the software available.

I spent several days this last week in Cupertino getting trained on Final Cut Server. It was Train-the-Trainer training, so we went into a lot of depth on the software.

This is an amazing product, but it is not yet for everyone. What I want to do here is outline some of its strengths and weaknesses so you can make a more informed decision on whether you want to make the plunge now, or wait.

Final Cut Server has the potential to be significantly helpful. But, right now, it is still in its version 1.0 state. There are some obvious, and less obvious, limitations.

Note: I'm not able to include screen shots from the product, because Apple has not made review copies

BACKGROUND

Final Cut Server is a database, a library, that stores media; stills, audio, video, plus any other documents you want to track. While it can be used by a single editor, its real power comes when you have many people that need to access the same media.

Final Cut Server is a server-based application which allows users on both Macintosh and Windows computers to access this shared pool of media to find what they need from a library that could include hundreds of thousands of clips, view it, add annotations and other metadata,

then use automation to speed routine tasks; such as publishing to the web, sharing with other users, project approvals, and so on.

I was also struck that it has an interface more closely related to Color than the white background of most Mac applications, or the medium-gray of the Final Cut Studio apps. While interesting, it makes screen shots harder to read or print.

WHAT'S GOOD

Final Cut Server is dead-easy to use.

I could teach a group of end-users everything they need to know to successfully use the program in less than a day, and that includes the time spent installing the software.

Final Cut Server runs identically on both Mac and Windows systems.

Because Server is a Java-application, the interface and operation of the software is the same on both platforms.

Installation is easy.

Both the Server and Client versions are simple to install.

Final Cut Server is scalable.

There's no real limit to how many clips it can track; from the hundreds of thousands to the millions.

Adding Media is as easy as drag-and-drop.

There are many different ways to get media into Server:

- Drag-and-drop individual files
- Scanning a Watch folder
- Sending files from Final Cut Pro
- Scanning an entire disk, or set of disks.

Once the media is stored into the Final Cut Server database, it is relatively easy to add keywords and other metadata (data that describes each file) to each clip to simplify finding the right clip later through searches.

It can be extensively customized and automated.

As you'll see below, this is both a strength and a weakness.

Final Cut Server smoothly integrates with Final Cut Pro projects.

As long as all your media is properly linked inside your Final Cut Pro project, dragging the project into Server will automatically add all related project media. This is very cool. However, this integration is not true for Motion, DVD Studio Pro, LiveType, or Soundtrack Pro projects (see below).

Final Cut Server supports check-in / checkout and version control for clips and projects.

Check-in/checkout means that when one person is revising a file, no one else can change it. Others can look at it, but checkout prevents two people working on the same file at the same time, thereby erasing each other's work.

Version control means that Server will automatically make a backup copy of a file so that if you need to revert back to an earlier version, you can easily do so. As long as everyone remembers to use check-in/checkout, and doesn't try to subvert the system, this works great.

Final Cut Server allows collaboration both inside and outside the company.

This is true, but a bit simplistic. Collaboration, and outside access, is determined by how the system is set up. I will have more to say on that later. Also, outside collaboration requires a VPN.

Final Cut Server seamlessly delivers clips in multiple formats.

Also true, but also a bit, shall we say, over-simplified. Final Cut Server will do what ever it is set up to do. And getting it setup is where the rubber meets the road.

You can learn more about Final Cut Server at: <http://www.apple.com/finalcutserver/>

SEPARATING THE REALITY FROM THE MARKETING

My class was taught by Matt Geller, which was a delight in itself.

Matt Geller has written an outstanding book called Getting Started with Final Cut Server, published by Peachpit Press. Before investing in this software, I strongly recommend you leaf through this, because if you're getting more and more interested in what you're reading, you'll probably do fine with Final Cut Server. But, if your eyes start glazing over before you get to Chapter 3, then Final Cut Server may not be a good option at this time.

That's because, at its core, Final Cut Server is a database. People who will be successful implementing Final Cut Server are those individuals that understand how databases work and get excited about creating scripts, what Server calls "automations."

For me, this was the key break-through in my understanding - before end-users can use it, Server needs to be implemented. Final Cut Server won't help me with my editing, nor does it provide multi-user editing capabilities. What it does is allow multiple people to upload, find, annotate, and process media files.

Again, remember, that Server is a database. The person running it needs to think like a database, not an editor. This person, called the Admin, needs to have very strong database skills, strong IT/networking skills, with only a limited knowledge of media.

Final Cut Server runs best on an Xsan, but does not require it. However, it does require at least the following to run well:

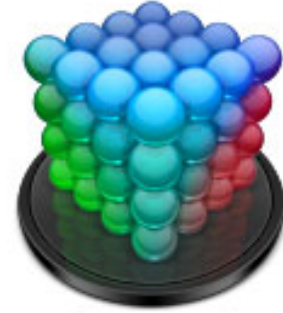
- An Intel/Mac computer with lots of speed and processors. Either a MacPro or XServe. This needs to be a separate device, not shared on another servers.
- Very fast attached storage, either an Xsan volume, or a RAID
- Separate attached storage for archives
- Lots of RAM
- High-speed network connections to all users on the system - Gigabit Ethernet is strongly recommended.
- A VPN for users outside the system

While this list is not exhaustive, it does indicate one thing - if you are thinking of adding Final Cut Server, you need to also plan to add a significant amount of other gear to support it.

WHAT'S NOT SO GOOD

Final Cut Servers don't talk to other Final Cut Servers.

If you are thinking of implementing a home office / branch office strategy, Final Cut Server doesn't think that way. You will be better off having all offices contribute to a single database on a single Server system.



Final Cut Server does not automatically import media from Motion, LiveType, DVD Studio Pro, or Soundtrack Pro projects.

All the applications in Final Cut Studio use what's called "linked" media. This means that the media is not inside the project, the project simply points to it. In the case of Final Cut Pro, all this "pointed-to" media is automatically imported into Server. However, for all these other programs, you will need to find and upload all related files manually. This is both time-consuming and error-prone.

Server Automations can not be saved or shared.

An automation consists of two parts: a trigger and a response. Triggers cause the automation to start, and responses tell it what to do. Triggers are fairly easy to write, responses can be simple or complex. However, none of these can be saved to disk as a separate entity, saved to a template, or reused. Many can not be duplicated within the program.

This means that the process of creating a Server database can not build on a pre-existing library of tested automations. Instead, each needs to be created from scratch.

Archiving isn't really archiving.

When a file is archived, it is copied to the archive device and removed from the server. However, Server assumes that all archives are stored on a single volume always attached to the network. It doesn't know anything about removable media. It doesn't track which tape, or disc, a file is stored on. It doesn't know to ask if the proper disc is attached.

If it can't find an archived file, it just returns an error.

Worse, when a file is restored from the archive, it is erased from the archive. This is just plain wrong. Archived files should not be removed, only copied.

Movie annotations can not be exported.

Say a producer is watching a movie, jotting down timecode, and indicating what she would like at that point in time. There is no way to collect those annotations into an email - or any other document - and send them to someone else. The only way to view them is inside Final Cut Server, by looking at the same clip and clicking the Annotation tab.

You can not do a rough-cut of a series of clips and have that rough-cut show up in a Final Cut project.

At this point, you can't have producers pre-cutting materials. Reviewing, yes. Suggesting edits, either in text or by setting edit points, no.

To really harness the automated workflow and integration of Server, you need to write automations.

This is analogous to FileMaker. FileMaker is a really powerful database, but out of the box it doesn't do much until you start designing tables, fields, reports, and scripts to control everything. Server is similar, you need to customize it to really use its power.

The power of Final Cut Server rests with the ability of the Admin.

If you have a system administrator who can devote the time to understanding and administering Final Cut Server, who has a solid background in databases, you will have a much more successful implementation than if the Admin is someone who is a strong editor, but new to networks and databases.

CONCLUSION

When Apple announced Final Cut Server in 2007, they showed it in use at Channel 2 in Los Angeles. Currently, I'm aware of two installations at large organizations in Boston and New York. There are, I'm sure, many others.

For companies that have the resources to hire an installation consultant or have a strong IT department, plus many users that need to review the same media, Final Cut Server can significantly help manage your video assets.

However, for smaller shops, especially given the lack of support for integrating other Final Cut Studio projects and the inability to do much with clip annotations, you might want to consider waiting for Final Cut Server to mature a bit more.

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Review: Matrox TripleHead2Go

Matrox does magic with the DVI ports on your computer.

My first exposure to this came last year with the MXO - a way to monitor HD video to a computer monitor.



Recently, **Lisa Barbieri** of Matrox product marketing suggested I take a look at their TripleHead2Go product. (Well, that isn't totally true. I was walking past the Matrox booth when she grabbed me by the lapels and refused to stop shaking until I looked at her product.) And, boy, am I glad I did.



Here's the problem. On a laptop, we only have one external monitor port - generally a DVI connection. The problem is that as editors, we can get a lot more done if we could hook up at least one, and ideally, two more monitors.



That's where the magic comes in.

You connect the TripleHead2Go to the DVI port of your Mac. Then, you install the drivers from the CD that ships with the box, and update them as necessary from the Matrox website.

Then, you attach up to three monitors to your laptop. Wow! Three monitors on a laptop with no need for a different graphics card.

The package contains a box wherein the magic occurs, the cables necessary for connecting the box to your computer (either DVI or VGA), and a USB cable, which is how the box and the computer exchange instructions.

That's it. Simply plug your monitors into the box and you're ready to go.

What it's doing is fooling the computer into thinking it's attached to a single monitor that's 3840 x 1080. The box divvies up that monitor signal and splits it to the attached monitors.

Let's say you're a traveling editor. Rather than carrying your laptop and lugging boxes of external monitors around -- believe me, I've done it and it ISN'T fun -- you can carry your laptop and this small device. Rent the monitors you need on location and start editing.

This is a whole lot cheaper and easier than renting an entire editing system on location.

I only tried this with two monitors and had no significant problems. If you need more monitors, especially using a laptop, definitely check into this. Be sure to read the release notes that come with the product to fix a potential problem with incompatible scan rates.



At a street price of less than \$300, this can be a whole lot of fun to play with. [Here's a link to learn more.](#)

(By the way, when I was talking to Lisa about this product she felt the TripleHead2Go was better

for Mac users, while the DoubleHead2Go was a better choice for PC users.)

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Digital Production BuZZ Official Podcast of DV Expo



The folks at Creative Planet have asked us to be the **Official Media Partner of DV Expo** - Nov. 4-6 at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

We'll be originating two hours of live coverage every day of the three day event.

We'll have more on this as we get closer. But, if you can free up a day in your calendar, come on over to the show and say "Hi!" We'd love to see you.

[Click here to learn more.](#)

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Snow Leopard and Multiple Processors

Brian Seegmiller writes:

I have a quad 2.0 GHz Intel mac. I wanted to see if all the processors are being used when I render a project. When I looked at the activity monitor it seemed they were not all being used as I thought they would. I have always wondered why this was when rendering in FCP 5. Is there a way to use more of the processors when rendering.

Larry replies: Brian, you have discovered one of the dirty little secrets of OS X: more processors do not mean faster speed from the *same* application.

The reason is that almost all software does not know how to divvy up data and computation instructions to take advantage of more than about two processors. Applications have to be specifically re-written to support multiple processors, which, for example, Compressor 3 has. Multiple processors are the greatest help when running multiple applications at the same time.

This is what the recent announcement of the next version of OS X seeks to fix. In Snow Leopard (or version 10.6), Apple will be adding operating system support to make it easier for applications to access multiple processor cores efficiently.

However, there's a down-side to this as well. According to initial reports, Snow Leopard will only support Intel/Mac computers. This is because to make the operating system smaller and faster, it is reported that Snow Leopard will not support programming libraries (called "Carbon" libraries) which are used by older systems and software. This is truly a two-edged sword. Systems that run 10.6 should be much, much faster. But, older computers will not be supported. Older applications

that rely on those Carbon libraries, like Final Cut Pro and many others, will need to be massively rewritten to support the new operating system.

Here I get to take out my crystal ball. No one has told me anything. I did not attend the developers conference; but, IF all this is true, that tells me that we will not see any significant releases of Final Cut this year. Instead, Apple is probably concentrating all its development efforts on getting Final Cut Pro to work in the new operating system environment.

Snow Leopard requires Apple to rewrite FCP in a big way - this is just as major effort as getting Final Cut to work on Intel/Mac's in the first place; probably bigger. This kind of major rewrite in a program's life comes along only rarely. With luck, Apple will use it for more than just achieving compatibility.

It is my hope that Apple will use this opportunity to fix a lot of the long-standing bugs and weirdness in the program, as well as finally turn some attention to improving the interface.

A Snow Leopard release of Final Cut could be AMAZING - with opportunities for Apple to improve it's speed, reliability, and interface. Apple says the new version of the OS will be out in "about a year."

I can't wait.

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This Month in Edit Well

The current issue of Edit Well is amazing.

One of the issues we all face in the industry's shift to tapeless media, is how we are going to archive all of it. This month, **Bryan Peel** writes an article describing how his production studio backs up their data; including listing specific products and a step-by-step process to backing up and restoring their data.



If you are shooting tapeless and you are not backing up your data, you are courting disaster. Take a look at this issue and start to protect yourself.

Then, amidst all the hubbub of Blu-ray DVDs, **Brian Gary** provides a step-by-step process you can use to create Blu-ray discs. There's no easy answer, but it IS possible and this article shows you how.

We also have articles from **Tom Wolksy**, **Alexis Van Hurkman**, and **Kevin Shea**; along with audio interviews with **Paul Kelleher**, **Connie Simmons**, and **Bonnie Ernst**.

Plus I created a video tutorial showing how to take advantage of the 3D space available in Motion 3, without actually knowing anything about 3D space.

[Click here](#) to see the table of contents (PDF - 508KB).

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Edit Well Interview Guests Needed

Are you doing something interesting with Final Cut Studio? If so, I'd like to know about it.

Between **Digital Production BuZZ** and **Edit Well**, we interview a lot of folks each month and, frankly, my list of interesting people to interview is getting pretty darn short.

Send me an email and let me know what you are doing. I'd love to help you tell your story to the world!

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Blu-ray DVD Question

Thinking of Brian Gary's article for Edit Well reminds me that **Philip Fass** sent in this question:

I suggest that you address the current status of Blu-Ray authoring for us FCP/Mac users.



Roxio Toast offers an extra-cost plug-in, but they only mention AVC-HD footage. Is FCP/HDV-AVCHD-BR a viable workflow? Any other affordable solutions available or coming soon?

Larry replies: Philip, here's the short answer: Final Cut Studio does not create Blu-ray DVDs and Apple has not announced when it will.

Adobe Encore and Roxio Toast both can create Blu-ray DVDs - but in different ways and with different capabilities. Brian's article in Edit Well explains the differences and what you can do in Final Cut Studio to improve your results with both Adobe and Roxio.

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Converting 50i 4:3 PAL to 16:9 Anamorphic NTSC for DVD

Daniel Rain, of Adama Films, sent the following:

Here's how I converted my 50i 4:3 footage to a 16:9 anamorphic NTSC 29.976

progressive DVD (with somewhat satisfactory results!)

Since some of my clips are shot 16:9 anamorphic and some shot 4:3 full frame, I decided to go with a 16:9 anamorphic DVD--that way the DVD is compatible with both HDTV and regular (full frame) TV users.

Here's how I did it:

1. In FCP create a DV PAL Anamorphic Timeline from the Easy Presets. Then in the Timeline Settings (hit: apple+0) set Compressor to ProRes 422 10-bit UC.
2. Transfer all the edited clips and graphics from my 4:3 PAL 50i FCP timeline to a PAL 50i anamorphic 16:9 timeline. This way I can use the "action safe" and "text safe" parameters to resize the 4:3 footage. Some of the 4:3 footage I left pillar-boxed, some I stretched out (to 133.33%) to fill the wide screen frame -- you can really do anything you want! For example I stretched out all the interviews for consistency and pillar-boxed all the 4:3 aspect ratio film clips.

What's great about FCP 6 is that all you have to do is drop the clip into the timeline and it will automatically size it to fit.

Some of the clips I had to bump up to 102% so I wouldn't get dead pixel distortion at the top and bottom of the frame. This "dead pixel distortion" can also apply to footage shot on 16:9 anamorphic because when played back on a full screen 4:3 TV, with black bars at the top and bottom, the dead pixels can vibrate or look really ugly! So check your clips because not all of them have that issue!

3. Export your QT PAL 50i Pro Res Movie. My 40 minute doc was about 12GB.
4. Your next objective is to create a QT NTSC 25P Apple ProRes 422 Movie --Open your new PAL 50i QT Movie in Compressor. Create an asset that is Apple ProRes 422/Current Frame Rate. Set "Frame Controls" to ON. Set Everything to "Best" and "Output Fields" to Progressive.
--In "Geometry" set frame size to 720 x 480 and "Pixel Aspect" to NTSC CCIR 601 DV (16:9)

Now export project.

4. In FCP create a DV NTSC Anamorphic timeline from the Easy Presets. Then in the timeline setting (apple+0) set the compressor settings to ProRes 422, frame rate to 59.94, below the frame rate control set "output fields" to NONE and then to 10-bit UC in the next tab.

Place your new QT NTSC 25P Apple ProRes 422 Movie on the timeline and export that to your hard drive.

Be aware that the 59.94 frame rate is going to multiply x 2 your project file size. However, I find that this is the KEY to a successful PAL to NTSC transcode that does not a) soften the image quality and b) create all sorts of nasty ghosting affects and jittery affects due to new frames being introduced. After all these tests, I was shocked to find that FCP itself did the best conversion.

5. Open your new NTSC 59.94 16:9 ProRes Movie in Compressor. Then, apply your MPEG2 and AC3 assets on the clip and export. Make sure that the video format is NTSC, Frame rate is set to 29.976, Aspect Ration set to 16:9 and Field Dominance set to Progressive. A good average bit rate for multiple DVD players is 5.5 and Maximum Bit Rate set to 7.2. Of course 2 Pass VBR is good and set Motion Estimation to "Best."

Rock and Roll!

Larry replies: Thanks, Daniel, for this procedure.

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Another Cool Tip

Adam Connell sent this in:

I was just wondering, have you explored how useful the Cover Flow tool in leopard is for finding a missing shot?



In FCP6, I am currently working on a long project with around 500 takes, and the cinematographer had only supplied one take of a particular cutaway to an object on a table. Trying to find that specific clip without the continuity notes easily at hand was a pain, and using FCP's thumbnail view was slow.

However, opening folders with footage from the XDCAM, and selecting 'Cover Flow mode,' made it so easy to flash past all the hundreds of (quite large) thumbnails, and we found the shot in minutes. I've gotten into the habit of finding my missing shots in finder this way. Try it, next time your trying to find that elusive shot.

Larry replies: A very cool tip. Thanks!

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Review Follow-up: Zoom H2

I got a number of comments on last month's review of the Zoom H2 audio recorder, which I'm aggregating here.

Russ Stiggants, of Adelaide, Australia, writes:

I read your article on the Zoom H2 audio recorder - and while I have not used it, I can see its shortcomings as you have described. The H2 model may be great for high-end note-taking, but if you're after something that suits Podcasting or audio which can be



massaged into FCP productions, take a look at the H2's big brother, the H4 - which I have found it to be an amazing little recorder. Unlike its smaller brother (and what I like most about it), the H4 takes 2 XLR inputs - so I can use all my pro mikes, from hand-held 'journos' mikes, through 'neck' mikes, to serious shot-guns. I love it!



The H4 comes with inbuilt mikes (set in stereo configuration) which are drop-dead excellent. Until I purchased the H4, for voice-overs (in the absence of hiring a studio) I would use my Betacam SP to record VO's using a 'pro' mike, then would transfer that to DV for upload to FCP. That worked fine, but it was a fiddle and time-consuming.

Now with the H4, I can record my VO's to the unit and upload them as computer files direct to my Apple - bliss! I don't have to get out the cumbersome camera or do the DV 'work-round'. I can still plug my pro mikes into the H4 - but a little while back, in a hurry, I recorded a VO using the (what I considered then to be inferior) built-in mikes. I was amazed at the quality! Now I use the H4 as my 'studio' mike for VO's all the time. It's quick, it's quality, and it saves oodles of time. It even comes with a little foam ball to place over the mikes which acts as a 'pop' filter. (They also say it's great as a wind filter, but I pass on that. Nevertheless, I'm looking at cheap 'fluffy dogs' which I can adapt as a true wind-blocker).

Now I know the pro audio guys will groan at the above, but I find the H4 excellent. While I have not tried it, I understand the H4 be made to 'model' certain microphone types within its extensive menu options - and for the purists, that may be an option worth exploring. For me however, I have not found the need to do so. The H4 also records to SD card, which fits into an ingenious slot within the battery compartment - and by the way, the H4 also works off of mains power. It also comes with a cradle - which I mount on a cheap tripod - to give adjustable hands-free recording.

Are there any downsides? Yep, but if you work within the shortcomings, the H4 is terrific. The toggle interface for example feels fragile at best and I don't know how it would stand up to rigorous field work, but treated with respect, it's fine. The foam filter slips off too easily but some well-placed velcro solves that problem.

When last I checked, the H4 was about double the price of the H2 (which still makes it VERY affordable for what it does) and more affordable, with more features, than its few rivals. Interestingly, after I purchased my H4, our friends at Sony come out with something almost identical (which made me wonder whether Sony had thrown money at the H4's manufacturer) - but the Sony model was significantly more expensive (i.e.: a few thousand dollars opposed to few hundred). While I have not seen the Sony equivalent in the flesh, on paper it certainly seemed more 'rugged-ized' with greater ease-of-use functions - but unless I was going into Iraq to do combat interviews, I couldn't see the value.

Anyway, check out the H4 - I think you will be impressed.

Neil Klemek, of Berea, Kentucky, added:

I read your review of the Zoom H2 in the current issue of your monthly newsletter.

I wanted to ask you if you did not inadvertently "compare apples with oranges". With the H2, you used their internal mics and with the Marantz you used a Shure SM-58, rather than the Marantz's own internal mics. How did the H2 compare and the Marantz subtracting the SM-58 from the picture? The SM-58 is a UNI-directional mic, which would naturally do better in a noisy room, while the internal mics of the H2 and Marantz may be OMNI-directional. What do you think?

Larry replies: Comparing the mikes I used with the Marantz WOULD make it an unfair comparison. Essentially, the Marantz with external mikes would be the same as the H4 with external mikes. The H2 does not support external mikes, something I knew when I took the unit for review. The Marantz has no mikes at all - it is simply a digital recorder.

What surprised me about the H2 was the extreme low levels and poor audio recording quality - even allowing for using the built-in mikes. It is marketed as a device where speed, ease-of-use, portability, and quality are important. I found it exceptional in all these categories - except quality.

Thanks to both Russell and Neil for sharing their comments.

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READER MAIL

ANOTHER COOL TIP

Adam Lloyd Connell writes:

This is probably one that a lot of people know about, but: In projects such as the one I'm working on now, with a repetitive transition effect, I am finding it so useful to drop the effect between clips (at the edit point), set its attributes, and then drag it off the sequence (FCP will keep it there) and copy it into a Bin in the Browser.



FCP retains the attributes of the effect in the Bin, ready for me to just drag it on the edit point of the next two clips. For example, in this project (multimedia education video) with lots of edge wipes from different angles, I have four edge wipes I have copied into the bin, each called, wide 90 degrees, 180 deg. 270 deg, and 360 deg.

Larry replies: Thanks! One of the problems I have when creating favorite effects is that all favorite effects are stored in the preference files, which means that they get lost when preferences get trashed.

Dragging an effect to the Browser (I create an Effects Bin to store them in) allows me to both save effects and quickly reuse them.

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ROUND-TRIP BETWEEN LOGIC AND FCP

Chad Kirkendall writes:

I am getting into surround sound mixing and I found that I prefer using Logic

instead of Soundtrack Pro for my audio mixing.

I found that I can export an XML file from Final Cut that Logic reads completely fine. It brings in all of the tracks separately from Final Cut into Logic nicely. When I'm through editing my audio and mixing it, that's where I get stuck.

Do I export out of Logic a XML which reimport back into final cut and then send everything on over to compressor? Or if I export out of logic my whole project as a aiff file, will that file still contain all my surround sound mixing that I have done and sending it to compressor or DVD studio pro for DVD?

Larry replies: Chad, you need to export six separate AIF files from Logic - one for each channel. Then, either import them into Final Cut, placing each channel on its own track, or compress them into a 5.1 surround mix using Compressor.

What I would probably do is bring them all into Final Cut, turn off the green visibility track lights for all non-surround tracks, export everything as a multi-channel QuickTime file and then compress it in Compressor.

Here's an article that discusses how to [export more than two tracks from Final Cut](#).

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CONVERTING 4:3 TO 16:9

Arthur Pritz writes:

Larry, a while back you showed how to convert a 4:3 sequence to a 16:9 sequence. I followed your instructions and was able to make the conversion to 16:9 but the final video looks a bit squished and stretched in appearance sort of like watching your a 4:3 video on your HDTV in the "wide zoom" mode. Is this normal? Is there a way to lop off the top and bottom 10% of the picture, make the picture 16:9 and keep it from having that stretched out look?

Larry replies: Arthur, thanks for writing.

To make 4:3 look like 16:9 you have three options:

- Add black bars to each side (i.e. pillar-boxing)
- Crop about 12% off the top and bottom - this makes the image truly 16:9, but you lose pixels
- Apply the Wide screen matte filter. This keeps the image 4:3, but masks the top and bottom so it appears to be 16:9. The benefit to using this filter is that you can adjust which portion of the image is cropped by moving it vertically behind the black bars.

In all three cases, the image won't be stretched. If it were me doing the work, I'd pick option 3.

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CREATING AN EDL PULL-LIST

Recently, I participated in a discussion between **Joe Huggins** and **Alexis Van Hurkman** regarding EDL list processing. For those of you using EDLs, I thought you'd be interested in reading this, too.

Joe Huggins writes:

We need to create a consolidated 'neg pull list' from a CMX offline of features – so we can transfer via telecine the selected shots to drive for a DI in Color. We had DaVinci upgrade their system to take source reel INS and OUTS from a list. Only we'd like to delete overlapped or repeated TC events, and consolidate gaps where two segments are used from the same 'take', make it just one event (like a flash to flash of that shot). Like an old '409' program.

Alexis Van Hurkman replies:

You already have a program to do this—Cinema Tools. So long as you go through the process of creating a Cinema Tools database via a FLEx or ALE file (p.69, Cinema Tools documentation) which is linked to the edited Final Cut Pro project, you can generate Pull Lists (with a variety of options for their generation, including omitting dupe shots, see p.166, Cinema Tools documentation).

Joe continues:

Can a 'watch folder' program be created for Color, that allows changes made to one reel, and new changes to another reel, be started overnight after one finishes. We often make changes from the previous day, that need to be rendered overnight with the new day's corrections. Now I can only start one reel per night to render when we leave. Make sense?

Alexis replies:

This makes total sense, but unfortunately no, you can't set this up. Right now when I go through a pre-corrected reel in Color to make changes, I make sure that I clear out the Render Queue first, then as I go through the timeline and make my adjustments, I manually select and add each individual shot that I change to the Render Queue, saving as I go. Once I've finished tweaking, all the shots I've modified are queued up, and I save the project and render whenever convenient.

I understand this isn't the most automated of workflows, but that's how I'm handling things at the moment.

Larry adds: Thanks to both of you for allowing me to share this information.

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RECORDING VOICE-OVERS

Simon Hustings writes:

I just wanted to highlight something related to Voice-overs and Capture Scratch. In your Lynda.com videos on organization of FCP, you suggest the two folder method. One for all timecode-based material on an external HD set within Final Cut Pro Documents/Capture Scratch folder and all non-timecode based material in the projects folder based elsewhere on your system; so when the project is complete, all you have to do is back up the projects folder, and trash the Capture

Scratch folder. This is a great system, one I also follow, except that if you just trash your capture scratch without reviewing it first, then any voice over work you do from within FCP's Voice Over Utility, will also get trashed, and often times you really need to keep a back up of that too.

As of yet, I am unaware of any method of setting FCP's Voice Over Utility to save its files anywhere other than the Capture Scratch Folder related to that project.

It is an easy enough workaround, just review your capture scratch before trashing it, and make a copy of any files name Voice Over 1, Voice Over 2 etc, but it would be nice if you could set FCP to save this non timecode based material to another location!

Any thoughts?

Larry replies: Simon, thanks for writing. You make a good point.

The Capture Scratch folder is where FCP saves all media. So reviewing it prior to trashing it is a good idea.

You can't change where FCP stores voice-over recordings; it stores them in the project folder inside the Capture Scratch folder. However, with the release of Soundtrack Pro, I tend to use it for all my recordings as part of the final audio mix. And STP allows you to save files wherever you want.

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SOUNDTRACK PRO QUESTIONS

Rudy Picardo writes:

I have two questions regarding Soundtrack Pro (version 1.0.3).

1. Importing an audio track, applying filters, then exporting. I realize Soundtrack is an excellent mixer. Sometimes only have a single track work with and clean up the sound. Usually I'll open up a track (*.aif or *.wav format) and adjust the various filter settings. However, when I choose to export the file (File ->Export), I can't do it. I'm sure there's a step I'm missing, so I'd appreciate the advice.
2. Automating filters to apply the same filter to different audio files. Suppose I'm given a set of 100 audio files that I need to clean up. If I found a filter or set of filters that I can use to clean up the single audio file. Is there a way to automate process to apply those filter(s) to the other 99 files? Again, I realize I only have version 1.0.3, so it may not be possible.

Larry replies: Rudy, thanks for the questions.

If you opened the file as a Soundtrack Pro Audio File project, you only need to save the file. At that point, you can import it back into Final Cut as though it were a regular audio file.

If you opened the file as a Soundtrack Pro Multi-track project, you need to use File > Export. To make sure it isn't grayed out, be sure the Timeline is selected first.

As for automation, you have the ability to create Soundtrack Pro Scripts (you can find them in the on-line help manual). The good thing about scripts is that they are designed for repetitive work and very, very fast.

The bad thing is that scripts change the audio in the master file saved on disk. You can not undo these changes. They are permanent.

Note: With Soundtrack Pro 2, Apple now displays a dialog warning you these changes will happen. In the earlier version of Soundtrack Pro, which you have, it changes your files without warning.

Also, with your version of Soundtrack, if you have an effect that only occurs for a portion of a clip - a fade in is a good example -- the duration of the fade is will change depending upon the duration of the source clip creating the effect and the duration of the destination clip. If all your effects run the entire length of a clip and you want to change the audio permanently on your hard disk, STP Scripts are the way to go.

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TRAVELING WATERMARK

Joe Hackett send in the following:

Just thought you'd like to know that Compressor 3 is a bit faulty in setting watermarks. They move around on the screen a bit.

Larry replies: Thanks. I've also discovered that where the watermark is positioned in the source Photoshop document has a significant impact on where the watermark can be positioned inside Compressor.

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SPOTTING A FILTER

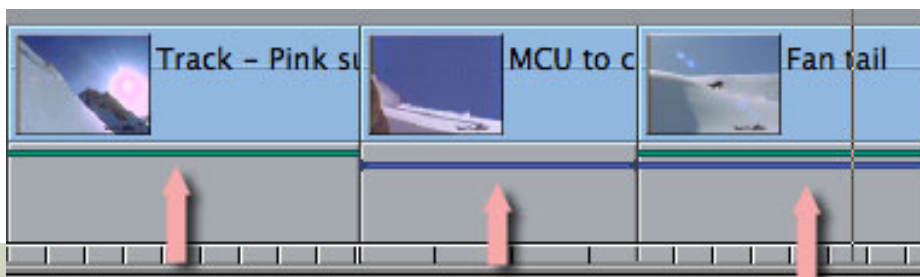
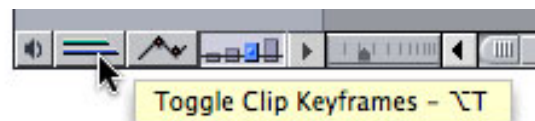
Reid Kramer writes:

I was wondering if you know how to tell if there is a filter on a clip by looking at the clip in the timeline.


In an Avid, if you apply a filter to a clip, it will have an filter icon on the middle of the clip.

Larry replies: Yup.

Click the "Toggle Clip Keyframes" button in the lower left corner of the Timeline.



Any clip with a green line under it has a filter applied. Any clip with a blue line under it has a motion effect applied.



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REDUCE FLICKERING

Jan Armor sent this in:

I got into this multimedia stuff sideways, via still photography and there is still (pun) a soft spot somewhere in my heart for immovable photos. I have been importing 720 x 480 x 72 images into FCP but I am noticing a very objectionable flicker when I keyframe magnification, into them a la Ken Burns effects. When I was a newby, using FC EXpress, this didn't seem to be as much of a problem as it is now. I read somewhere that 720 by 534 is a better size, and I often did use that size rather than 720 x 480 when using FCX, BTW, my settings are for DV NTSC, exporting QT movies, Anyway, I just read your newsletter tutorial on Improving Type Visibility hoping it would shed light on my flicker problems, and I guess it sorta kinda didn't. And deinterlacing seems to soften the images up too much for my taste. Can you give me any suggestions on how to fix or minimize "My Friendly Flicker." It's driving me nuts!

[So, he did some homework and discovered the solution.]

I went on Apple support site and got this from Studio X:

The flickering you see is an artifact of the interlaced nature of video. It is a result of either very thin (often horizontal) elements that exist on one scan line as is common in text/ titling or scanned images with a great deal of detail in high contrast. (Note: It does no good to import images hugely larger than the necessary pixel dimensions of the video sequence. All it does is force FCP to work harder at interpolation.)

As the alternate fields play, the offending element is essentially being turned on/off creating the impression of a flicker. The basic strategy is to get the element to exist over two scan lines so it is refreshed every time the field plays and/or to reduce the amount of contrast so the difference between ON and OFF is not noticeable.

Things to try (In increasing order of image degradation)

- (in FCP) field order>none
- (in FCP or Photoshop) reduce whites by 10% - reduces overly bright areas
- (in FCP) flicker filter - minimum
- (in Photoshop) motion blur>vertical> .2 - .5 pixels - blurs vertically only
- (In FCP or Photoshop) Gaussian blur> .2 - .5 pixels -blurs both horizontally as well as vertically
- (in FCP or Photoshop) deinterlace - throws away half the image and is generally not appropriate on scanned or still images.

One neat trick is to use the selection tool to limit area you apply the vertical and/or gaussian blur to only the troublesome part rather than indiscriminately soften the entire thing.

Remember: Unless you are viewing your work in the appropriate external NTSC/ PAL monitor, you are playing blind. The computer monitor only shows you a proxy

image.

Larry replies: Jan, thanks for sending this in.

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CASING THE JOINT

Trevor Hughes writes:

After returning from the USA last week with footage on a LaCie drive all was fine. It was when we went to do a back up of the footage that a testing time started. It mounted and would not copy the files over.

At this stage no worries as I was positive disk warrior will fix it, it did and it came back FCP open and all was there for a while and then as played the time line the clip stop show video. Now it's not mounting dead as dead can be, of to the doctor for recovery as this is going to a TV show it was important to recover it from the dead.

This was a new deal for me trying to recover a HD, while searching for a company to take the drive to I was reading there web site and on most they were talking about don't use Disk Warrior as it makes matter worse or other product like it. This confuses me as I have used and trusted DW for the last few years ,the program they recommend was let us do it and while there I saw that they were using Date Rescue II and recommended Drive Genius, so I would very much like to here your views.

The next interesting thing was that where I have been led to believe that keep all your drives the same, when then the shell was open It had Maxtor HD in it so I knew nothing about Lacie thought they had there own brand and that was why the are a bit on the pricey side, well after try to recover and with no luck it was then work backward how about the casing configuration, So that was the next step we exchange casing and who what inside seagate drives, another drive is also open and yes what did we find Western Hard drive, so I am confused. to this idea of keeping all your drives the same, Look forward to what you say about it all..

To finish the story after the drives where put in to a different casing from a LaCie it mounted again So I thought that you might like to pass the word along to others that the drives might be OK but the casing might be at fault, it frighten me that many editors or filmmakers overlook this and start re-shooting at great cost.

Larry replies: Trevor, thanks for writing. I would not have thought that changing the drive housing would make a difference. Thanks for giving us something else to consider when solving a hard disk problem.

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4D AUDIO

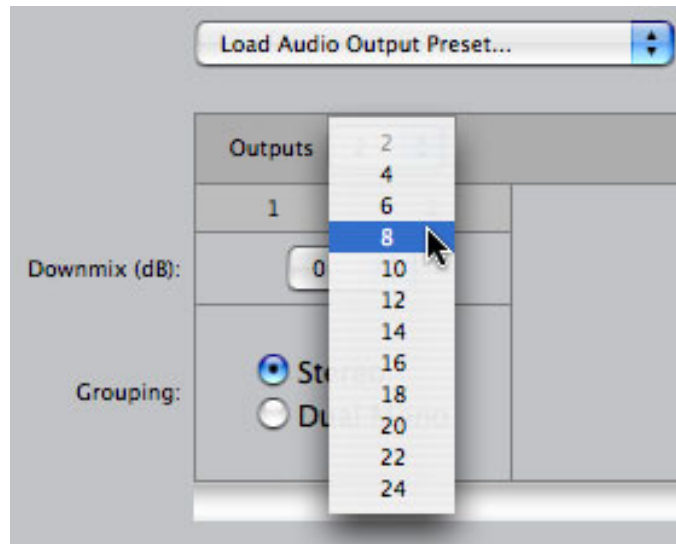
Steve MacDonald brought this to my attention - 3D audio on two speakers. See the demo for yourself and decide:

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MULTI-TRACK AUDIO

Charlie Wilson writes:

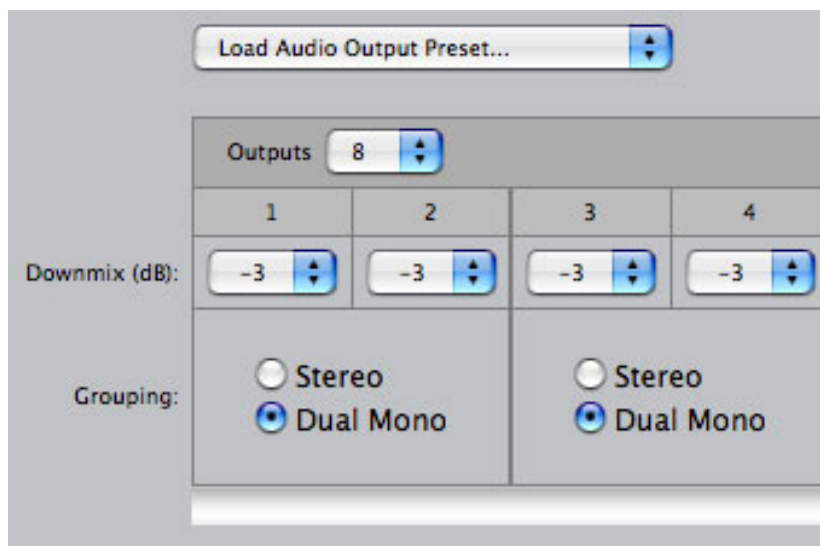
I have received an edict from on high that all pieces are to be split track instead of stereo mix as I have been doing. In Avid, you can make your tracks auto ping pong 1/3/5/7 Left and 2/4/6/8 Right on the stereo output. I can't figure out how to set that up in FCP so that I don't have to pan right or left for each clip as I edit. Is there a way?



Larry replies: Sure.

Go to **Sequence > Settings > Audio output.**

From the Outputs pop-up menu, select the number of audio channels you need. In this case, I'm selecting eight.



Set each track to **Dual Mono**, which pans both tracks center, as opposed to the default setting of **Stereo**. (By the way, the gain reduction on each track of -3 dB is appropriate and should be left alone.)

This changes the current sequence. You can make this a permanent setting for all new sequences in **Final Cut Pro > User Preferences > Audio Outputs.**

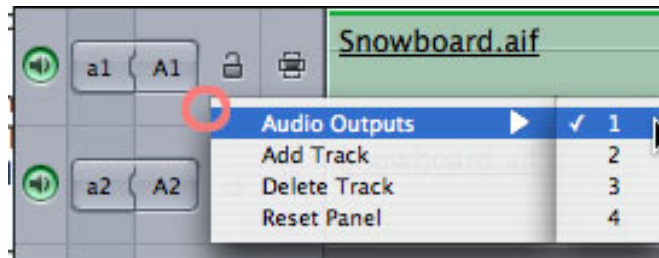
MORE MULTI-TRACK QUESTIONS

Steffie Prietzsch, from London, writes:

We are working for european broadcasters from London and are using a different method to split audio tracks.

In the timeline, go to sequence settings (**Cmd+0**), select **Audio Outputs** tab, Grouping: **Dual Mono**.

Then **control click** the audio select pane of the timeline and select to send audio to CH1 or 2.



To make things more complicated, I make a duplicate the sequence which I change to Dual Mono in the sequence settings.

Export the mixed nat sounds/music/voice over to AIFF, as well as a version without voice over.

I then import these AIFF files and bring them into the Dual Mono sequence, select left/ right in the audio panel in the timeline.

This way it all is a bit more tidy when I edit to tape.

Seems to work for us.

Larry replies: Thanks!

A FINAL CUT PUZZLE

Thinking of audio, **Peter Koeleman** sent this in:

The problem we are having is that you can't hear the audio on the even tracks (2,4,6, etc.). It does this regardless of the camera we use. We consulted with an Apple genius desk and their solution was to uninstall and reinstall FCP. Fairly logical. We went a step further and re-imaged the hard drive and then reinstalled FCP. Same problem.

[Then a bit later, Peter sent in the answer.]

Actually after a day of pulling hair out and using the Apple forum, we figured out.

It was simply a setting: **Sequence>Setting>Audio Settings>set to Stereo.**

Voila! It worked.

Larry replies: Another view of the same window. Thanks.

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DVD IMAGE SIZES IN PAL

Ludger Brenninkmeyer writes:

One thing that I'm not sure of though is, when working with DVD Studio Pro you say that a still image or image background needs to be 720 x 534 px. Is that just for NTSC or does that include PAL as well? Also what are the measurements for the title safe and action safe areas for DVD production on PAL? I would like to make some designs for my own menus and backgrounds for my DVD productions without using templates. Thank you in advance, and keep up the great work on Lynda.com!

Larry replies: Thanks for writing!

PAL is not the same image size as NTSC. Try the following sizes:

- 4:3 = 768 x 576
- 16:9 - 1024 x 576

These should work fine.

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BETTER VIDEO COMPRESSION

Brett writes:

What is the best way to convert video from your FCP timeline into an email friendly format? I have recently emailed a one minute cut down to a client in Dubai and used MPEG 4 – but the quality was still pretty shoddy. The size, at 2.8M, wasn't half bad but the quality was not great at all. Is there any other way to do this with better quality results from within FCP?

Larry replies: Brett, you are between a rock and a hard place.

Most email systems only allow attachments to be 5 MB or less. So, you have two choices:

1. Reduce your compression data rate until the size fits. However, reducing data rates will ALWAYS reduce image quality.
2. Keep the data rates high and send the file via FTP. FTP can transfer files

that are several gigabytes, but they require special software. (I'm a fan of Transmit, by Panic, Inc.)

The best codec to use today for squeezing files is H.264 - which can be accessed in Compressor and many other programs. Keep in mind, though, that file size and image quality are inversely related.

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ORGANIZING SOUNDS

Pieter van der Wal, from The Netherlands, writes:

I have a lot of sound effects collected and the big trouble is How to get them organized and find quickly the sound I need. Do you know OSX programs what will do the job? Soundtrack Pro is nice but not friendly to organize a lot of new sounds How do the big movie company's do this? Big sound library and quickly find the right sound effects?

Larry replies: The simple answer is they use a database.

For something simple and free, consider iTunes. [Final Cut Server](#) is also designed to provide this. There are other packages as well. I'd be interested in other reader's opinions on what database they would recommend for tracking audio files.

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PROBLEMS WITH FIREWIRE OUTPUT TO PANASONIC'S AJ-HD1400 DECK

Billy Graham, from Las Vegas, writes:

I wanted to see if you could shed any light on a particular issue we recently ran into wherein we were doing HD transfers from a Final Cut system (Duo-Core) to a Panasonic AJ-HD1400 Recorder using the FireWire for the transfer (Digital to Digital). . . . Upon completion of the transfers, When we playback from the VTR we notice what is best described as "static" in the audio track. . . .

The only way we can get a clean transfer is to output an HD/SDI signal direct into the 1400. . . .

Larry replies: Billy, Panasonic has had problems with some of their high-end decks not liking FireWire input. A couple years ago, there was a lot of finger-pointing about whether this was an Apple or Panasonic issue. The net result was that it remained an issue.

The best answer is to use HD-SDI whenever possible. Higher quality, Better machine control. Fewer problems.

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PROBLEMS WITH RED FOOTAGE AND LACIE DRIVES

Martin Nowak sent this in:

There's some rumors and personal experience that LaCie drives and R3D files don't mix. I had a 50 second clip on my Lacie External HD and the Log and transfer window went insane, constantly searching for that shot but never loaded. Weird....

Larry replies: Thanks. I had not heard this.

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PROBLEMS WITH RENDERING PRORES 422 FROM HDV

Daniel Weber sent this in:

I want to bring to your attention a bug that I have found in Final Cut Pro.

In the latest newsletter you refer to setting Sequence settings to render in ProRes when working with HDV files.

I have been doing this for the past 6 months or so and it has worked fine. About 2 months ago my new MacPro Octo 2.8 machine started to crash on renders.

The only thing I found that stopped the crashes was to change the render settings back to HDV.

This only happens with HDV footage. I have edited sequences shot with my EX1 in HQ 35 Mbps mode and there is no problem with those projects.

The crashes only happen when editing in HDV and having the sequence set to render in ProRes.

The last crash I had I was able to copy the crash log. I called a buddy who works in OS QC at Apple and read parts of the crash log to him. It looks like the crash happened when the ProRes codec was utilized.

The good thing is that the new MacPro is very fast when rendering HDV. Much better than my old G5.

Hopefully Apple will be able to correct this soon.

Larry replies: Thanks. I asked Daniel whether this continued to happen after he trashes his FCP preferences and he said yes. I have not noticed this myself, but mention it here in case it is causing you problems.

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PROBLEMS WITH JVC CAMERAS

Mike sent in the following:

I'm making my new feature film NIGHTBEATS shooting with the JVC GY HD110U in HDV 720 24p, editing on iMac in FCP 6. Since starting the project last August everything has been perfect. But with the recent release of FCP 6.03 there is a software glitch and it no longer recognizes capture footage from the JVC. You get a message during the capture process saying "Searching for media".

I've reloaded FCP Studio 2, dragged all the elements over to an external hard drive and must open FCP 6 from that drive in order to capture. Then exit and return to the FCP 6.03 on my computer drive to import the new footage and edit in the film project that was saved in 6.03 after the automatic update.

This has been going on for about a month now since the release of 6.03. I've searched JVC user forums and everybody is experiencing the same thing. We'd all thought it was a flaw in our cameras or some sort of corrupting of FCP. It's finally been narrowed down to the 6.03 upgrade.

Have sent notes to Apple with no responses back.

Are you familiar with this issue?

Larry replies: Yes, Mike. I'm familiar with this problem. It is, apparently, a glitch inside FCP 6.0.3. I don't have a solution.

So, then, **Mike** sent in this workaround.

Here's my band-aid solution:

- 1 Reinstalled Final Cut Studio 2
- 2 Dragged all the Final Cut Studio Applications onto a separate external hard drive
- 3 Detached external hard drive
- 4 Opened project from Final Cut Studio 2 on internal hard drive
- 5 Updated Final Cut Studio 2 from FCP 6 to FCP 6.0.3
- 6 Work/Edit project

Then, in order to capture new footage:

- 1 Exit project and close out FCP 6.0.3 completely
- 2 Attach external hard drive with Final Cut Studio 2 & FCP 6
- 3 Attach camera [JVC GY HD 110U]
- 4 Open FCP 6 on the external drive

NOTE: Will only open if all the Final Cut Studio 2 applications still in the original versions

- 5 Capture new footage to a folder
- 6 Finished, exit FCP 6
- 7 Detached external hard drive
- 8 Open project from FCP 6.03 on main hard drive
- 9 Import new footage into project

Know this sounds a bit complicated, but at least it works.

Larry replies: Thanks, Mike, for the workaround.

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A VERY COOL ASPECT RATIO CALCULATOR

As a way to end things on a cheerful note, here's a very cool aspect ratio calculator.

<http://www.producenewmedia.com/ar/aspectRatio.html>

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WRAP-UP

Well, that's about it for this month.

For current news on what's happening in our industry, be sure to listen to the [Digital Production BuZZ](#) podcast every week.

- **Save 15% and register now** for our [PowerUP seminar tour](#). Enter **PREREG** as the registration code.
- [And please visit our store for our latest training titles](#) - like **HD Workflows**.

In the meantime, please continue [sending me your comments](#) and questions. I love hearing from you and enjoy the conversations that develop around these stories.

Until next month, take care, and edit well.

Larry

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