

WISDOM

from Avid-L v4.0

The Avid FAQ

a.k.a. Wisdom from Avid-L
Version 4.0

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1.00 Introduction	5
2.00 Macintosh Hardware and Ergonomics	6
2.01 Alternatives for user input	6
2.02 Wrist Pain Advice	6
2.03 Media Composer Ergonomics	6
2.04 Avid Security	7
2.05 Making Macros Using External Programs	7
2.06 Quickeys Tips	7
2.07 Shortcuts for the Macintosh Impaired	8
2.08 Mac Manuals	8
2.09 Dead Mac Battery	8
2.10 Mac Error Codes (Mac Error 36)	9
2.11 Mac Error Codes (Mac Error 42)	9
3.00 TIPS, SHORTCUTS AND BUGS (Oh My!)	10
3.01 Keyboard Shortcuts Documented and Undocumented	10
3.02 Crashing During Digitizing	10
3.03 Making Preread compatible EDL's	10
3.04 Bugs and Errors	10
3.04.1 Overwritten User Settings	10
3.04.2 P_GLUE Error	11
3.04.3 Exception: JPEG_CONS_AV_SYNC_ERROR	11
3.04.4 DVR_DECOMP_TIMEOUT_ERR	11
3.04.5 ERROR: CRUMB_WRONG_PARENT	11
3.04.6 ERROR: RRRLE Alpha too big	11
3.05 How to determine which clips have been used in a sequence.	12
3.06 Console Commands	12
3.06.01 Check Decks	12
3.06.02 Playlength	12
3.06.03 Rename Media Files	12
3.06.04 Set Import Slide Length	13
3.06.05 Motion Effect Rendering	13
3.06.06 Quick Time Export	13
3.06.07 Field Dominance	13
3.06.08 Loading Precomputes	13
3.06.09 Display Even/Odd Fields	13
3.07 Finding the total duration of all the clips in a bin.	14
3.08 Improving Avid Performance for long projects	14
3.09 Identifying Media Files	15
3.10 Avid Codec Explained	15
3.11 Exporting Computer Screen Shots to Tape	16
3.13 Effect Dot Colors	17
3.14 Subsequence Inside a Nest	17
3.15 New things 6.5.1	17
3.16 Opening 6.5 project in previous version 5.x	18
3.17 Batch Digitize Mixed Res Sequence	18
3.18 Crashing to Macsbug	18

3.19	Creating Files	18
3.20	Keyboard Customizing	19
3.21	Tips and Tecniques (v6.5x)	22
3.23	Title Tool Tips	25
3.24	Rebuilding Media Databases	26
3.25	Linking an Imported EDL to Existing Media	26
3.26	Learning Film Composer	27
3.27	Print Headframes	28
3.28	CG - Read On Text	28
4.00	<i>VIDEO</i>	29
4.01	Getting a Freeze Frame from a sequence (in the source monitor)	29
4.02	Rendering Notes	29
4.03	Motion Effects Tips	30
4.04	Video Underruns caused by Freeze Frames	30
4.05	Video Underrun Checklist	30
4.06	Motion Effects Re-Render at Different Setting?	31
4.07	Film Look	31
4.08	Old Film Look	32
4.09	Media File vs Slide	32
4.10	Black and White Chroma Key	32
4.12	Keying Problem	33
4.13	Disable 3D	34
4.14	Dropout Repair	34
4.15	Flash Effect	34
5.00	<i>AUDIO</i>	35
5.01	Redigitizing Audio that was digitized too hot	35
5.01.1	Technique 1	35
5.01.2	Technique 2	35
5.01.3	Technique #3	35
5.01.4	Avid Audio Note (Important!)	36
5.02	Shortcut for adding audio handles.	36
5.03	Audio Scrub	36
5.04	Avid to Protools	37
5.05	Media Composer to Macintosh Alert Sound	37
5.06	Converting CD Audio for Avid Importing	37
5.07	Matching Audio Levels	38
5.08	Converting WAV's to AIFF From: Wes Plate wes@gocougs.wsu.edu	39
5.09	Audio Metering	39
5.10	Scrubbing Audio	40
5.11	Soloing Audio	40
6.00	<i>GRAPHICS</i>	41
6.01	Hints for Successful Avid Graphics	41
6.02	Transferring a Photoshop title for use as a key	41
6.03	Relink PICT files After Batch ReDigitizing	41
6.04	Converting Dos Graphics to Apple Graphics	42
6.05	Graphics Importing / Sizes	42
6.06	Importing Pict Files	42

6.07 QuickTime Tips	43
6.08 Using Photoshop for Titles	44
6.09 3rd Party Plug-Ins	44
6.10 Black and White Chromakey	45
6.11 Page Turn Titles	45
6.12 Color Banding in Photoshop Graphic	45
6.13 Import from Infnit!	45
6.14 Photoshop Settings	46
6.15 Photoshop Safe Title Template	46
6.16 Pict Sequence to QT Moovie	46
7.00 MEDIA STORAGE	47
7.01 Troubleshooting Avid Disk Drives	47
7.02 Drive Optimizing	47
7.03 DLT	47
7.03.1 DLT Information	47
7.03.2 DLT Not Mounting	48
7.03.3 DLT (Data Recovery)	48
7.04 Whacking Hard Drives	49
7.05 Full Media Drives	49
7.06 Changing the Project Name of a Clip	50
7.07 Disappearing Media	50
7.08 Modifying Clips (RELINK)	50
7.09 Video Resolutions	51
8.00 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	52
8.01 Additional Book for Media Composer	52
8.02 Instructional Videotape	52
8.03 EDL-Max	52
8.04 Avid Internet Resources	52
8.05 After Effects List	53
8.06 Adding ram to a Quadra	53
8.07 Photoshop Hints on the Web	54
8.08 Sources for Mac Fonts	54
8.09 Font Conversion	54
8.10 Avid Keyboard Cables	54
8.11 Monitor Shielding - Mu Metal	55
8.12 Assistant Editors Book	56
8.13 Avid Handbook	56
8.14 After Effects to Avid	56
8.15 Dropframe Time Code	57
8.16 Online Copyright Tutorial	57
8.17 MPAA Rating Graphic	57
8.18 Test Patterns	57
8.19 Photoshop Resource	57
8.20 Photoshop Title Tip	58
8.21 Norton Utilities	58

1.00 Introduction

This document is a collection of wisdom from the avid-l mailing list on the internet. I compiled this document as a learning tool for myself. If I found something on Avid-L that I thought was important, I copied it into my document. Over time, it grew to it's present form. I thought I would share it with the subscribers of the list, in case it will benefit some one else. AVID-L is an email list for users of Avid Technology's non-linear video editors (primarily the MCXpress and Media Composer lines). Topics include troubleshooting, feature/bug questions, news about Avid, wish lists for future products, compatible hardware, compatible software, additional video editing applications that are particularly helpful, and whatever else might concern a user. The Complete FAQ is available at: <http://www.calvin.edu/av/cvp/video/avid.htm> If anyone has any ideas of shortcut and problem solving ideas or this document contains erroneous information, please write me at: andy@iepost.com This document will be updated as needed, on an irregular basis. This document is copyright (c) 1995-2000, Andrew Birkhead. All rights reserved. Note: I don't guarantee any information is this document, use it at your own risk.

Revision History

- 1.01 Personal Use Only
- 1.02 Added material and reorganized the document. This release was sent for inclusion in the official Avid FAQ maintained by Colin McKay.
- 1.13 Added new material and a slight reorganization. Also added the contributors name and Email address.
- 1.14 Added new material. Major reorganization. Deleted old information valid for v5.2. First release to the avid-l mailing list. Released, May 1997
- 1.15 Added new material. Removed Editing-L information and created separate FAQ. Released, Feb 1998
- 1.16 Added and Deleted Material. Released, Jan 2000

2.00 Macintosh Hardware and Ergonomics

2.01 Alternatives for user input

The Kensington "Thinking Mouse" allows you to do click & holds, double clicks, etc with one mouse click. It also seems to require a lighter touch than the standard Apple mouse. Doesn't seem like much, but it adds up over the course of the day. Try a 6x9 Calcomp tablet. It's the same basically as the Wacom, but has *two* mappable buttons on the pen, is pressure sensitive, and has 18 (single key) macros accessible as "buttons" on the tablet. Remember: no one ever got carpal tunnel from a pen.

2.02 Wrist Pain Advice

From: Steve Cohen, Steve_Cohen@earthlink.net

I've been using the small Wacom tablet instead of a mouse, because of persistent wrist and forearm pain (not carpal tunnel, but painful anyway). I love the Wacom, but I have a trick thumb which finally gave out, so the Wacom stopped helping. I've recently switched to the Kensington two button mouse, and this thing has really made a big difference. The trick is making the right mouse button do a double click. This has completely gotten rid of the pain that I had in my forearm.

From: Greg Staten, greg_staten@avid.com

To echo Steve, I also have problems with tendonitis/carpal (I now wear special gloves whenever I use the system). Instead of switching to the two button Kensington mouse, I went for the four button mouse. One benefit of the four button mouse is that I use one of the extra buttons as a click-lock. This way I don't have to hold the mouse button down as I drag things around the system. There are still many things that have to be done by dragging (saving an effect template, applying a portion of an effect template, segment move, patching, etc. By having a button that locks, I've really saved on the wrist pain. And it leaves a fourth button you can use for other things. Mine is usually set to control-click-lock to make it easier to reorder segments vertically without blowing sync. One other benefit is the "chord" function. By pushing the two upper buttons at once you get an additional function. I have mine set to display a pop-up menu that lists a lot of commonly used command key shortcuts in composer (such as opening the effect palette, selecting the project window, etc.) I've found that a lot of command-something typing was really causing pain.

2.03 Media Composer Ergonomics

From: Hugh Chaloner, divaco@indigo.ie

Monitor height should be set so that the middle of the monitor is level with the eye. Spend a lot of money on a good chair, well worth it in the long run. Break for 5 minutes every hour, doing stretching exercises and eye exercises (focus on a distant object and a close object alternately). Reduce nicotine and caffeine intake. Start early, leave early.

From: Steve Cohen@lamg.com (Steve Cohen)

This is a very important topic and deserves as much attention as people want to give to it. I'm glad to see so many responses. Many, many of my friends are having all kinds of physical problems, and I am, too. Eye, hand, back, neck and shoulder problems. Keep reflections off the screens. This is absolutely essential for your eyes and is usually one of the easiest things you can do. Get an ergonomic keyboard or a mouse replacement or both. I use the Adesso keyboard, which is the only one available for the Mac and I use a Wacom digitizing tablet. I know other people like trackballs. You have to experiment

to find the thing you like. One very common hand complaint comes from too much double clicking, which the MC encourages, since you double click to get things into the monitors. Any mouse replacement that allows you to map a double click onto a single click of another button is a good thing (any two or more button anything will usually allow this). Move. Get up and move as often as possible. Sit back from the monitors. If they are emitting EMFs (hotly debated), sitting back significantly reduces the exposure. Try working standing up. Walter Murch (one of the greatest editors ever) now works standing up all the time. All it took was a \$90 drafting table and a tall chair. He can stand and sit and move around and keep working. Expensive furniture may or may not be needed (except for the chair, where I would spend whatever it took to get a good one). I've had my monitors up on blocks of wood on two shows--price, about \$12 at the lumber yard. Experiment before spending big bucks. I have a handout that summarizes this and other ergonomic issues that I send out with the Avid Tips book I publish. I'll send you a copy if you send me your address.

2.04 Avid Security

From: DougAbel@aol.com

Q: We are wondering if there is a password protection program that will lock Media Composer so the Application won't start up with out a password or just not let the mac even start up with out a password! A: Folderbolt should do the trick--it's available from all the major Mac catalogs. You can also use ResEdit or the shareware "Big Secret" to make the Avid folders invisible, which would prevent uninformed people from starting the software. There are shareware password protection schemes, but most are easy to bypass by holding down shift when starting up.

2.05 Making Macros Using External Programs

I was using HotKeys (an updated version of MacroMaker) but it is not compatible with PowerMac. Now, I use KeyQuencer. Shareware, only takes 60k RAM. Keyquencer

From: Tod.todhop@erols.com

Keyquencer is shareware made by Binary Software. Go to <http://www.binarysoft.com/> Good software and good people. The "lite" version has most of what the average Avid editor might want. Be aware that this is really a macro language, not a "recorder." However, the included macros (for the Mac OS) are worth the price even if you never write your own.

2.06 Quickeys Tips

From: Alain Dessauvage alaind@skynet.be

Never record mouse actions in a macro, as it will give you problems. For the above example, you don't even need a macro. You can use the 'Cycle tracks' button to cycle between audio or video tracks. I use QuicKeys for some time now, and I found out it's a rather quick and easy way to perform repetitive tasks. Great thing is that it can record your actions, so you don't actually spend more time writing a macro than to manually perform the task. Here's a very useful macro. The director used MediaLog to do the logging in advance, but he still wants you to digitize all rushes, just in case. Now, a big problem shows up: you can't relink the logged clips to the digitized clips because they don't share the same in/out TC. This is a very annoying feature, but there a way around this. If you make a subclip from every logged clip, you can then relink the subclips to the digitized master clips. Of course, this is a rather tedious task, especially if you have 400 clips to convert. With QuicKeys, it's easily done.

From: Arnoud Kwant, AKwant@compuserve.com

Some examples of how I've used Quickeys:

1. Command-3 (on the numeric keypad) opens the Console and types playlength 3
2. Command-0 (on the numeric keypad) opens the Console and types playlength 0
3. Command,Option-C opens the Console and types checkdecks twice I've also used Quickeys to cut in picture for a clip from which I've used only audio. That is, I go to the head of the audio only segment within my sequence, then run the macro. It marks the clip, goes to the head, matches frame, switches tracks to V1 only and cuts in the corresponding picture.

2.07 Shortcuts for the Macintosh Impaired

From: Andy Birkhead, andy@iepost.com

These are a few Mac shortcuts that I have picked up along the way. Close all windows at once: Option/Apple W
Open Destination window while closing the source window: Option/double click.
Open source window: Option/click window's title.
Silence empty trash dialog: Option/empty trash.
Silence empty trash dialog permanently: Click trash can.
"Get Info" from files menu.
Hiding all windows except the current task: Choose "hide others" from the application menu.
Make an instant file copy: Option/drag the file to a new location.

2.08 Mac Manuals

From: lcongleton@earthlink.net

I really like Macintosh SECRETS published by IDG (they do MacWorld magazine). It's by Pogue and Schorr. It explains all about the Mac OS, several Mac applications (not the Avid), and a little about each Mac computer. It's a great all-in-one reference.

From: Stephen J. Hullfish@partners.avid.com (Stephen J. Hullfish)

I like Voodoo Mac (Venture Press, maybe?). It has tons of very cool stuff that really helped me manage my Avid on a desktop level. It's more of a tips thing than a comprehensive book, though.

From: LUCKYDOGD@aol.com

The Little Mac Book, by Robin Williams, is great.

From: Rob Lawson, rlawson@panix.com

QUE publishes a book called "Repairing & Upgrading the MAC" which has more info than you could want about Macs. It covers pretty much every model and goes into great detail, hardware-wise.

2.09 Dead Mac Battery

From: AvidMixer@aol.com

The Mac will always revert to August 1956 (with a couple of machine-specific exceptions) when this happens. Go to your friendly local Radio Shack and ask for a 3.6 volt lithium battery, RS part #23-026. The price is \$9.99. Replacing the battery is almost as easy as buying it. You might want to leave the CPU plugged into a switchable power strip, with the power OFF. This keeps the motherboard at ground potential and keeps you from frying anything by way of static discharge. (If you're really anal you can use a static wrist strap.) For more info, go here: <http://www.academ.com/info/macintosh/>

Once you've installed the new battery and powered up, reset the Date & Time, and check your control panel settings... especially Memory settings. All those settings get cleared out when you zap the pram or change the pram battery.

2.10 Mac Error Codes (Mac Error 36)

From: AvidMixer@aol.com

I went through this for a week or so last year... very frustrating. Turned out to be a bent pin (!) in one of the Avid Drive cables. The system had worked flawlessly prior to this. I have no idea what triggered the -36 error, but I sure was glad to find the problem. I basically followed the same methodologies that you have... and foolishly ASSUMED that the hardware was OK since no one... to my knowledge... had messed with it. Try different SCSI cables, reseal the ones you have... and get a good strong light and maybe some reading glasses (if you're over 35 or 40) and look REALLY CLOSELY. I'll bet you'll find the problem!

2.11 Mac Error Codes (Mac Error 42)

From: lcongleton@earthlink.net

I had this problem last winter. It seems the Macintosh has a file limit and once it's reached, any programs you are running will be affected. The Macintosh counts many things as open files, including extensions, control panels and most of all fonts! Also, every item on the desktop (each icon for a drive partition, the Macintosh drive icon, and any other aliases you have sitting on the desktop) also count as open files. Does the system on which you are seeing this message have many more of these items than your other setups? If so, try to remove as many as you can (those you absolutely don't need). I think I fixed the error by removing some inits (we didn't have many fonts on our system). However, formatting your Avid drives so they have only one or two partitions (rather than five) is a big help. There's a console command you can type that will show you what the Avid/Macintosh is recognizing as open files. This will give you a really good starting place. In all *lowercase* letters, type PRFCB into the console and hit return. This abbreviation stands for PRINT FILE CONTROL BLOCKS. This will show a list of all the open files on your Macintosh. According to the notes I made at the time, the maximum number of open files allowed is approximately 340. The Mac O/S occupies about 40 open files. Each partition (including the Macintosh hard drive) occupies 4 open files. Each font occupies one open file. For example: Three Avid Towers (7 nine gig drives per tower, each formatted into 3 partitions) would occupy 21 (drives) x 3 (partitions) x 4 (files per partition), or 252 open files. Then you have to add 40 for the Mac O/S and 4 for the Macintosh hard drive and you're already up to 296. You can see why lots of fonts and other items could suddenly overload your system.

3.00 TIPS, SHORTCUTS AND BUGS (Oh My!)

3.01 Keyboard Shortcuts Documented and Undocumented

Q: Is there a keyboard equivalent of the pencil icon when logging with the digitize tool?

A: Yes! Use the "B" key after logging the IN and OUT numbers. Also invokes Digitize IN to OUT if Digitizing is enabled. Use the "E" and "R" keys to mark IN and OUT. Then "B" to log. Also, keys like "G" will erase all marks, "D" clears an IN, etc. Use "Q" to recue the tape deck to an in point. Option-M: After this keystroke, you'll get an icon that allows you to mouse drag on the time line. That part of the Time line will fill the screen. This with the "/" gets you in and out on the time line in a very expedient manner. If you hold down on the mouse button on the top group of buttons in the program box, you'll see that each of these buttons is assignable and there are right angle arrow icons for moving left and right to tab marks in those assignable choices. If you check the menu under the flag at the lower right corner of the time line or under time line under the command line menus. You'll see the keystrokes that enable you to zoom the time line in and out, center it on the cursor position, etc.

3.02 Crashing During Digitizing

A corrupt database is a common problem after crashing. Just drag the old one to the trash and the Avid will rebuild it. Usually the program detects a bad file and rebuilds it without having to do that. Don't forget that if you crash while rendering video or doing a video mix down, you may lose your mixed sequence but you CAN retrieve effects rendered up to the crash from the Media tool and insert them into a copy of your sequence "by hand." This could save a couple of "re-rendering" hours. The real ugly problem is when you have a corrupted media file. I hate having to hunt that down. Often it will be identified in playback with a warning box. Corrupted project files or bin files are not unknown problems and the only solution is to make a new project, or to retrieve a .bak bin from the attic. Also remember that if you bomb during digitization, you may end up with a corrupted Media File title "Creating" that will inconveniently take up all of the space left on the last volume used. (I presume this is an action that allows Avid to reserve the space left on the volume in question for digitization.) The Digitization window will show the volume as full, even though you may have only digitized a few small clips. Just trash the "Creating" clip. The Media Database will rebuild when you re-launch the program.

3.03 Making Preread compatible EDL's

Go to the console & type in all lower case: "edlsetpreread true" Please be aware this is undocumented, unsupported feature of the Media Composer. The command was installed as part of Beta test program to test PreRead in EDLs. The preferred method of generating EDLs with PreRead is by using the stand alone EDL Manager. This is only necessary using older Avids. The newer ones support this feature.

3.04 Bugs and Errors

3.04.1 Overwritten User Settings

Q: Has anyone else had their user settings overwritten randomly? Several editors at my facility have had it happen & we can't find a pattern.

A: This is a known and reported bug. Here's the pattern: Open a Project with Editor A settings. While STILL IN THAT PROJECT, change Editor Settings to Editor B. Save All or File Quit, and the Editor B settings selected overwrite Editor A.

3.04.2 P_GLUE Error

P_GLUE work around:

Overwrite ANY video into the offending (gray frame) area at the end of the time line, then lift the video out. This will solve the problem.

3.04.3 Exception: JPEG_CONS_AV_SYNC_ERROR

From: Huipro@aol.com

Troubleshooting this error:

1. You could try trashing Digisetup and reinstalling with Protocols but I doubtit's the problem.
2. Check for proper sync to your deck and the Composer.
3. Check all cables and look for a composite video feedback loop.
4. Take the Avid off any network
5. Make sure appletalk is NOT active.
6. Check the audio tool's sync settings
7. Redigitize the offending clip(s) if it can be isolated. Play them separately
8. or load them in a new sequence to check them.

3.04.4 DVR_DECOMP_TIMEOUT_ERR

Q: I've been getting some pretty persistent error messages from an MC8000. It is: DVR_DECOMP_TIMEROUT_ERR. Then the edit windows lose picture and go white. I wonder if anyone knows what this means and is aware of any solutions.

From: Daine Pearson Daine@compuserve.com

As a guess, it sounds like corrupted media or a JPEG card problem. Can you force it to repeat?, if so, try re-digitizing that clip and try it again. To test the card, create some titles over black and look at them pre-rendered, then render the titles and look for changes or problems. If there is a difference between the un-rendered (realtime) title and the rendered you have a JPEG card problem.

From: Ajscms@aol.com

I had a problem similar to yours a few months ago...in my case it turned out that I had digitized using the "M" resolutions (multicamera). The solution was to go in the Console and disable the 3-D effects box (python 0). Apparently the 3-D box whacks out the Avid with the "M" AVR and has to be shut off.

3.04.5 ERROR: CRUMB_WRONG_PARENT

From: Greg Cameron canetree@ix.netcom.com

1. Take the media off-line. 2. Put a copy of the seq. in a bin by itself. 3. Decompose the seq. 4. Delete all the Master & subclips created by the decompose 5. Bring the media back online and relink the seq. This has worked quite a bit. The error is caused by a corruption in the media pointers within the sequence. This deletes and re-establishes them.

3.04.6 ERROR: RRRLE Alpha too big

From: "Critical Mass Productions, L.L.C."

Unfortunately, this error means what it says: it simply can't deal with compressing your alpha channel because it would exceed the data rate for the AVR you've selected. Here is a workaround: Remove the alpha anywhere outside safe title or safe action, effectively making the alpha 10 - 20% smaller. I'd go with AVR 77, as this will allow the least amount of defacement to your graphic before it actually allows you to import.

3.05 How to determine which clips have been used in a sequence.

Highlight the sequence you're working on, and from the bin menu (or is it the clip menu?) use "select media relatives". This will highlight all the clips that have been used in that sequence. If you then "reverse selection" and "sift selected items", the bin will show you all the clips you haven't used. In version 5.2 there is a feature called "dupe detection" (it's located under the "hamburger" menu below and to the left of the time line). With this on you will immediately be able to tell if you've repeated a shot - by a strip of color that will appear over the repeated shots in the time line.

3.06 Console Commands

3.06.01 Check Decks

'check decks' will reinitialize the remote control to your VTR if you had the machine off when you booted up the Avid software. Use this when you see 'NO VTR!' in the digitize panel where the time code would normally be. You can avoid this error by turning everything on first- in fact the deck (in most suites) should be left on when editing because the Avid takes video sync from it for the edit monitor in zoomed mode (lack of sync is an error like JPEG_SYNC_BLAH_BLAH).

3.06.02 Playlength

There is a console command which allows you to specify a play duration. Limiting the play duration will also limit the delay from the time you press the button to when play actually starts. This will be most noticeable for sequences that are complex either in length, number of edits, or number of effects. To limit play duration type "Playlength " in the console where is a positive number. Since you may go backwards or forwards the amount of footage that can be played is centered around the position being played from. For example, if a user enters "Playlength 1" at the console, the range that will be playable is 30 seconds before their current position to 30 seconds after the current position. After issuing this command pipes will no longer be built after each edit. Instead, they are built when the user presses play (or engages mui, steenbeck, mouse play, three button...). The sequence will only be able to play a total of worth of footage. To cancel the effect of the "Playlength" console command type "Playlength 0" in the console. You will have to experiment with the minutes argument to settle on the correct balance between delay after pressing play and length of play. Play In/Out will force the pipes to be built from the In-mark to the Out-mark and all the material in-between will be played; this may result in a longer wait after pressing play. If the user is shuttling or jogging, they will only be able to play up to the "Playlength" limit from the location where they entered jog/shuttle. To continue past that limit they will have to press a button that takes them out of jog/shuttle e.g. "Stop". Simply pressing pause or centering a Mui or Steenbeck will not do the trick. "Playlength" is not one of the commands that will be hazardous to your health. When working with large sequences, there can be a significant delay for the system to respond to a Play command. The Playlength function gives you a way to reduce that delay by telling the MC that you don't need the whole sequence to be able to play back at one time (when, say, a minute or two is sufficient). The very worst thing that might happen is that playback of a sequence would stop prematurely (say, during a digital cut or client screening) if you forget to turn it off first.

3.06.03 Rename Media Files

From: SHullfish@aol.com

Renamemedifiles - renames all of your mediafiles to more closely match your clip names instead of the cryptic names Avid defaults to. This will take several minutes. Can also create "creating" files in your media folders. Delete them if they occur.

3.06.04 Set Import Slide Length

From: SHullfish@aol.com

SetImportSlideLength ### - changes the number of frames that PICT imports and Titles default to instead of the old 2 minute default. This has been made slightly obsolete by the new import tool. if this doesn't work, try typing cmd_first.

3.06.05 Motion Effect Rendering

From: SHullfish@aol.com

MotionFXRenderType # - with the # being 1 for both fields, 2 for duplicated fields and 3 for interpolated fields. This is good if you did an off-line with duplicated fields for speed and now are re-batching and want your high AVR to have nicer motion effects.

3.06.06 Quick Time Export

From: SHullfish@aol.com

SpecialQTEExport ### ## - export QT movies at smaller sizes and different frame rates. The first ### is horizontal size in pixels, second ## is vertical and the last ## is frame rate. So SpecialQTEExport 240 180 15 gets you a 240x180 frame at 15 fps. This is fairly old, I don't know if it still works.

3.06.07 Field Dominance

From: SHullfish@aol.com

setcapturefield 1 (or 2) - changes the field dominance of the MC. If you work at a house where the rest of the suites are a certain dominance, this can make your life easier. I don't know if this is permanent or must be reset each time you turn off your MC.

3.06.08 Loading Precomputes

From: steveh@delhall.com (Steve Hullfish)

There is a hidden console command which will allow a precompute to be loaded into the source monitor and cut into a sequence. Simply type the following in the console: subsys monpane debug Now (until you quit Composer) you will be able to double click on a precompute and load it into the source monitor. How about them apples?

Basil Pappas posts: I've used this many times over the years, but beware that there are implications with consolidate and batch digitize down the line. If however the effects are already high rez, this can be a lifesaver.

3.06.09 Display Even/Odd Fields

The one console command I've found helpful, for my situation, is displayeven 0, 1 - when parked on a frame of video, will change which field you are seeing.(correct?) BUT - I always put it back to default 0...

Yes, "displayeven 1" will show you the even field when parked or jogging, "displayeven 0" sets things back to standard. I believe this resets at each launch. 7.0 makes this a bit easier - just hold the controlKey while jogging and you'll be jogging by fields (you can tell where you are by watching the timecode display). Whatever field you're on when you release the controlKey is the field you'll continue to see when jogging by frames or when playback is stopped. To change field display again just hold the controlKey and hit a jog button once.

3.07 Finding the total duration of all the clips in a bin.

Try Shift-selecting, or lassoing, the applicable clips in the bin (or Command-A to Select All), then select File/Get Info. The info is then displayed in the Console (under Tools menu, or Command-6). OR Select the clips you want the total durations of and with the bin active, hit command-I, then open the console. Total duration will be displayed there.

3.08 Improving Avid Performance for long projects

From: Wolfram_Hedewig@qm.avid.com

1. Check your number of media objects (MOBs). You can find it, if you click at the info-button in the project window. After that click at the memory-button that will appear. The top line of the memory window will tell you the number of objects. If you have only 32 MB RAM for example, but more than 50,000 objects you should increase your memory or reduce the number of media objects. This could be done by closing currently not used bins, reducing the number of clips in the open bins, unmounting drives that are currently out of use by dragging the drive's icon to the trash (but don't trash the folder called "5.x MediaFiles" alone!).
2. Split the sequence into two or more parts. Most times you won't work with the whole 30 minutes at the same time.
3. Reduce the playback time by opening the console window (command + 6) and typing PlayLength 5 for example to limit the playback time to 5 minutes. After 5 minutes the Media Composer stops playing, but if you click the play-button again it will continue playing the next 5 minutes. If you want to play the whole sequence again, type PlayLength 0.

From: JumpCut@aol.com

The thing that has helped me the most with computer response speed is to do a restart every 4 or 5 hours (more often if I'm doing a lot of RAM intensive activity: like building multilayered effects). Restarting refreshes the RAM. Since starting this practice of frequent restarts (after lunch and then again around 4 or 5 pm), I have found that I almost never crash (knock wood) and that my computer seems to run optimally.

From: Sean Lander seanus@nwamiga.apana.org.au

* Make sure you've given the Media Composer as much Ram as possible, at least 30-35. * If the show you're working on is going to have Ad breaks in it then Edit the various segments separately. If there are to be no Ad breaks, just look for theme/Scene changes and create separate segments. You will find this speeds things up greatly, plus if you have to make changes to any particular segment it is much easier to locate and fix. Join all the Segment together for a final viewing or play to Tape. * If you can stand it, work at a fairly low res and bump up to High Res once you finished the edit. (i.e. Batch digitize the sequence) * Make sure that NONE of your drives are too full! This includes the internal hard drive. I usually try and keep about 40 meg free on that, and about 100 meg on the media drives. * If you have lots of Disks (or even Partitions) that are holding media for other projects, or sequences you've already finished, Trash them! Don't worry nothing will be deleted, it's just that the Media Composer upon Start-up loads the Database of all media drives into it's brain as it launches. (WARNING always trash media drives with the media composer NOT running)

From: Michael Grenadier grenprod@inch.com

Make sure you have the maximum possible ram assigned to the MC program. You may need to add additional ram to your computer, but it is money well worth spending. We had lots of problems, not just sluggish response that were solved when we upgraded our systems to 40 megs of ram. If you don't already know, from

the finder, find your MC program Icon, hilight it, go to the file menu and Get Info (or command- I) and increase the memory assigned to the program to the maximum possible. Also make sure you are running 5.2 or later software. I found a great improvement when we upgraded. Another note, rendering effects sometimes doesn't release ram, so a restart can help

From: Rob Lawson rlawson@panix.com

1. 1.Editing with the audio scrub on (Caps Lock) eats up memory. Don't use it if you don't need to.
2. 2.Apparently, opening the time-code calculator in the Tools Menu in Media Composer will clear the Undo list. Keeping that list around also eats up available memory.

From: Rainer Standke 100343.1757@compuserve.com

You are not incidentally disconnected from the tape deck's remote?. If that was so, typing "checkdecks" into the console would help. That keeps the machine looking for a lost connection at the serial interface... Apart from that you could try closing all the bins you don't need anymore. Check on how many audio and video tracks you actually have in your sequence - are they hidden in your current timeline view? are you using a lot of real time effects?

3.09 Identifying Media Files

From: TBlack@aol.com

Q: So how do you figure out what's what when you want to backup your files? Many carry part of the name you give them, but some don't. How does one know what is safe to delete and what you want to backup?

A: I wrote a simple utility to do exactly what you are trying, it is called MediaMover and scans all of the media files on your system for the project names they were created under. It creates a list of online project names from which you can choose to move their media files into separate folders. Its quick and painless and, unlike the MediaTool, will find absolutely every piece of media digitized for a project. It costs \$75 and can be ordered from me at 202-466-7678. Its been out for a year now and Avid has licensed it for sale with their DLT drive. It is, however, only compatible with the Media Composer line, including MC1000.

3.10 Avid Codec Explained

From: Greg Staten@avid.com

There's been a lot of discussion about the Avid Codec for Media Composer this weekend and I thought I'd take a moment to clear up some misconceptions and confusion about what the codec is designed for and what it isn't designed for. (Note: I have an article in the next Avid Answers (which should be mailing soon) that goes into detail on the codec. This post will be a much abbreviated version) The codec's primary function is to allow an editor to quickly and easily export or import video/graphics/animation/etc. When you export with the codec you get a QuickTime movie that contains inside it an Avid Media File with the exported video. These embedded (encapsulated) MediaFiles are at the AVR the media was at the time of export. Thus, the size of the QuickTime file will match the expected size for a given AVR. Once the file has been exported out of the Composer, the resulting QuickTime movie can be imported into a QuickTime-compatible program and manipulated in one way or another. IMPORTANT NOTE: Because our codec is emulating the Media Composer compression boardset in software, you may have to increase the RAM allocated to a given program in order for it to correctly interpret and use the QuickTime movie. Nearly all of the problems I've seen with various programs not being able to read "Media Composer" QuickTime files have been fixed by allocating more RAM to the program in question. Try giving the program seven or eight more megs. It may not need that much, but it never hurts go give a program lots of RAM to play in.

Note that the goal of the codec was not to allow the users to PLAY "Media Composer" QuickTime movies outside of the Media Composer. Trying to play will give you a very low frame rate with lots of drop outs or not function at all, depending on the program being used. The reason is that the Mac is just not fast enough to emulate the compression chips we use in the Composer. When you export/save a QuickTime movie in another program as a "Media Composer" QT file, you choose the AVR at that time. Therefore it is critical to let the animator/video artist you are working with know EXACTLY what AVR you need. If they create a movie at AVR 3 then that is what it will be when you bring it into the Media Composer REGARDLESS OF YOUR COMPRESSION SETTING. Finally, it is important to note that the current codec on the Media Composer is VERY different in functionality from the codec on the Media Suite Pro. Hope this helps clear up some confusion. Again, watch for the next Avid Answers for a more complete discussion on the codec.

3.11 Exporting Computer Screen Shots to Tape

From: TBlack@aol.com

Run your NuVista Setup program and load the interlaced video driver. After you reboot, the NuVista monitor will be in NTSC video mode and anything, including your friend's screen output, will be output in videoform. Just patch the Avid video out into a tape deck and record. You'll have to reverse the process to return things to normal. This time select the non-interlaced video driver in the NuVista setup and reboot. This, BTW, is good for printing to tape from most aps that do full screen output (PhotoShop, MacroMind Director, etc.). Good luck.

From: dmok@ns2.hk.linkage.net

Use the Macintosh screen capture function "Shift-Command 3". That captures the screen and saves it as a pict file in your internal HD. Then crop it to the right size/content in Photoshop and import it into your Composer. If you need to record moving screen images then you can either buy a piece of software called "MovieMan" (I think) or manually sync the NuVista card to video frequency and record to deck straight from there.

3.12 Changing the Project of a Clip

From: 960Basil09@aol.com

Make a new bin in your current misnamed project. Drag ALL of your clips out of the existing bins into the new bin. Save Bin; close misnamed Project. Create/Open New Correctly Named Project. Open the new bin that you created in the old misnamed project. Select Bin View that shows Source and Project Name. You should see your old misnamed projects. Sort by Source. Select groups of clips with a common source and choose Modify under the Clip Menu. Modify the Source name to the exact same name. Notice that the Tape Name dialog is empty! Create "new" source. If old source was 001, make "new" source 001. This will preserve any number schemes you may have created for EDL purposes. Also, your old sequences will relink. After creation, select "OK" to the next 3 warning dialogs. Watch as the project name in your bin changes to the new correct project name. Open the bin(s) that contain your sequences from the old project. They will remain relinked. Finally, create new bins in your new project and segregate your clips as you did in the old project. You're done. The only thing that's left to deal with is the effect media that has been rendered. It will retain the old misnamed project name. Live with it. Or delete the effects and rerender. Any new effect media created will have the new project name. Get yourself a copy of Tony Black's MediaMover and manage your media more effectively.

3.13 Effect Dot Colors

From: Greg Staten <gstaten@newavid.avid.com>

Here's a rundown on what the colors mean:

orange dot: real-time effect
green dot: conditionally real-time effect
blue dot: non-real-time effect

Now... for more information on that green dot. A conditionally real-time effect is an effect that can be real time, but isn't currently. One place you see them are on 2D systems. Those systems have an effect setting you use to make either the keys or wipes effect subsets real time. The other subset is colored green. Example: You set the effects setting to wipes. If you apply a chroma key to the timeline, it's dot will be green. That means that it won't play as a real-time effect. However, it will fast render. Both real-time and conditional real-time effects fast render, regardless of effects settings. Another instance where you might see green dots is on consecutive 3D Warps that use shapes. Basically, we have to download the next shape to the Pinnacle while the sequence is playing. To do that takes a few seconds so a green dot will appear on a 3D Warp if the system feels that the space between it and the prior 3D Warp that used a different shape is not long enough to fully download the shape. Your options are to render one of the effects, or adjust their positions.

Note that the instant the shape is downloaded it will appear. If you have two 3D Warps close together, you might notice the shape suddenly pop in on the second one when you play the sequence (this is assuming you had a shape enabled). That's the moment the download finished.

3.14 Subsequence Inside a Nest

From: Stephen Bayes <partners.avid.com> (Stephen Bayes)

There is a way to create a subsequence while inside a nest! I figured it out during the User Conference so I don't think it has made it into the documentation yet. Option-clipboard! Then drag the clipboard material from the source window to your bin. Use this to "uncollapse" as well as to make multitrack templates.

3.15 New things 6.5.1

From: Steve Bayes <avid.com>

The ctl-double click on titles in the bin is actually 6.5 and -is even in the manual! But I didn't discover it myself until a few weeks ago (thanks to a student) proving the value of RTFM. But the coolest thing about it is that now you can do "save as" on modified titles. Titles were "reclassified" as effects with source (the title fill) so they don't act like regular effects anymore in 6.5. Try this with the titles: Mark I/O on the area you want the title to go. Click on the red segment mode arrow and go directly to the bin with the title. Drag the title directly to the timeline and go in between the I/O marks. Hold down the command key. The title snaps to the length of the I/O marks. Combine this with suppressing the 4 screen display in the segment mode and this is pretty fast. And it works on everything not just titles.

From: "Critical Mass Productions, L.L.C." <cmp@flash.net>

Control-double-clicking on a title in the bin opens the title tool for that title. Option-step-in is a neat way to see nested effects.

3.16 Opening 6.5 project in previous version 5.x

From: "Raoul Rosenberg" raoul@leonardo.net

Question: A client edited a project on my MC version 6.5 and wants to continue editing at his school where they only have version 5.something on a nubus Mac.
Answer: Transferring projects downwards is actually quite simple. You need first to make a copy of your project on the 6.5 machine and rename it. Then open up a program called "BIN CONVERTER." That you should find in your System/Utilities folder. From within Bin Converter open up each of the bins in the (renamed and copied) project that you want to transfer to the 5.x machine. Then Save each of these opened bins (using "Save As"). I simply saved them to the desktop for simple transfer to disk (using Compact Pro if you need). The bins should now be readable by a 5.x Composer. Now AVID used to say that theoretically the Bin Converter only converts down to 5.6 and not to 5.51 or below. But that's not the case. It works fine with 5.51

3.17 Batch Digitize Mixed Res Sequence

From: Basil96009@aol.com

Method for separating AVR12 clips from a mixed resolution sequence for batch digitizing. Since the advent of mixed resolution sequences, editors may have AVR12 video mixed with AVR77, and need a way to batch digitize just the AVR12 clips using the Decompose feature. Since Decompose cannot differentiate AVR (yet), you may have been forced into redigitizing all clips unnecessarily.

Here's a way around that:

1. Subclip separate V and A portions of mixed AVR sequence to be onlined.
2. Open mediatool of all clips and sort by AVR.
3. Select V portion of sequence subclip and get media relatives.
4. Drag all AVR12 clips now highlighted in the mediatool to a new bin.
5. UNLINK the AVR12 clips. This is the key!
6. Decompose the mixed AVR sequence (V portion only) selecting the media unavailable option.
7. Now, you have all of the AVR12.new clips isolated. Make sure you've set the Compression Tool to AVR75/77 before the decomposition.
7. Batch digitize decomposed V clips. Finished sequence is now all AVR75/77
8. Overwrite onlined V sequence over A sequence subclip made in step 1. Audio is still offline.
9. RELINK original AVR12 master clips in bin that were unlinked in steps 4/5.
10. Original audio reappears in sequence, with finished video. You're done.

Now, you've onlined the missing AVR12 media (V only), and you still have all of the original audio plus your original AVR12 clips intact. Try out a test first, as I've not used the method extensively, but all of my initial tests are successful.

3.18 Crashing to Macsbug

From: James_Burke@avid.com

After crashing to Macsbug type in "g" to get back to where you were (this will only work on very minor crashes) or "es" to drop out of the application and on to the finder. If needed "cmd-esc" will drop you into macsbug if you need to.

3.19 Creating Files

From: Alan Stewart Alan_Stewart@avid.com

"Creating" files are generated by the Media Composer when you start to digitize to a partition. A file is created that fills the partition as you select it. That is how the systems estimates the free space. If you have a crash, or some

other problem while digitizing, these files will not be auto-deleted. They can cause a lot of problems. Search on once a week and trash any you find.

3.20 Keyboard Customizing

From: Benny Christensen bennyc@flash.net

F1- Add New Video Track
F2- Add New Audio Track
F3-Title Tool
F4- Add Edit
F5- Source/Record Mode
F6- Trim Mode
F7- Effect Mode
F8- Overwrite Segment (I don't use it much though)
F9- Motion Effect
F10- Mute Audio
F11- Fast Render
F12- Remove Effect
F13- Match Frame
F14- Find Bin
F15- Find Frame
~`-Add Locator
Home- Fast Menu
End- Find Script
Page Up- Add Key Frame
Page Down- Add Script Mark

From: Kerry Soloway ksoloway@nji.com

This is my keyboard list. The ^ carat denotes a Shifted function.

F1 -Add edit
^F1 -Remove edits in to out
F2 -Source/Record flip-flop (I don't recall what its really called)
F3 -Remove effect
F4 -Render effects
^F4 -Render in to out
F5 -Subclip
F6 -Go to previous edit
F7 -Go to next edit
F8 -Find clip
^F8 -Find bin
F9 -Q1 \
F10 -Q2 \ for multi-
F11 -Q3 / camera
F12 -Q4 /

From: lcongleton@earthlink.net

F1 - Play to Out
F2 - Render Effect
F3 - Remove Effect (I should probably put this under Shift F2, but I use it too much)
F4 - Extend
F5 - Add Edit (Shift F5 = Remove Match Frame Edits)
F6 - Match Frame (Shift F6 = Find Bin)
F7 - Headings
F8 - Custom Sift
F9 - Select Offline
F10- Reverse Selection
F11- Sift Selected

F12- Show Unsifted

From: "Knut A. Helgeland" kahel@mediadesign.no

I haven't mapped all of the shifted keys, but I have mapped several. I use them to call up frequently used commands from easy to remember keys:

shift-R : Render (from the menu - both In/Out and at Position)
shift-I : Import
shift-E : Export
shift-F : Enable/Disable Render on the Fly
shift-A : Audio Mix
shift-\ : Remove Effect (opposite of Add Dissolve)
shift-F : Add Filler

From: Rob Chatlin robc@primestar.com

F1 - Red Overwrite Arrow
F2 - Audio Mixer
F3 -Video Mixdown
F4 - Audio Mixdown
F5-Add Edit
F6-Hamburger Menu
F7-add Locator
F8-Display Waveform
F9-Remove Waveform
F10-Matchframe
F11-Safe Title
F12-Title Fade
`/~ - Remove effect
Tab- effect palette
Esc. - Toggle timeline source/record

From: Greg Staten greg_staten@avid.com

shift-R : Render (from the menu - both In/Out and at Position)
shift-I : Import
shift-E : Export
shift-F : Enable/Disable Render on the Fly
shift-A : Audio Mix
shift-\ : Remove Effect (opposite of Add Dissolve)

From: Matt Richman@partners.avid.com (Matt Richman)

F1-Effect Mode
F2-Fade Title
F3-Add Locator
F4-Match Frame
F5-Rewind
F6-Fast Forward
F7-Effect Icons (menu pick from timeline)
F8-Add Edit
Also, I mapped the Render button right next to Return on the keyboard, because after pressing Render you always have to hit Return anyway. This way it's two quick hits.
Shift-A-Audio Tool
Shift-S-Save As (very helpful in the 6.5 Title Tool)
Shift-F-Add Filler at Start (something I use everyday, believe it or not)
Shift-R-Remove Match Frame Edits
Shift-H-Headings

Shift-M-Audio Mix
Shift-T-New Title
Shift-#5-Add Keyframe

From: Jeff Cook jcook@his.com

F1- Extend Edit (easy to get to)
F2- Add Edit ("cut in two")
F3- Remove Effect (one step earlier than my F4)
F4- Render Effect (button, not menu)
F5- Match Frame (F5 & F9 are at the head of the 4-pair block)
F6- Rewind (used for Locators only)
F7- Fast Forward (used for Locators only)
F8- Add Locator (I debated putting this on F3 since it has to be there while digitizing)
F9- Find Bin (F5 & F9 are at the head of the 4-pair block)
F10- Fade Title (T for Ten)
F11- Safe Title (the "11" helps remind me of the lines)
F12- Go to Capture Mode (menu selection)
and if you have a newer system...
F13- [I forgot what I have here...I guess I should change it!]
F14- Find Frame (to cue up tapes, or find tape number)
F15- Add Keyframe (since I reset the Quote key to Full Frame to remain consistent among all the machines I use)

From: Stephen J. Hullfish@partners.avid.com (Stephen J. Hullfish)

Menu commands that I have mapped are:

Render in/out on the 4 key
Render on the fly on the r key
Sync Point editing on the y key
EQ Tool on the F10 key
Audio Tool on the F11 key
Audio Mix on the F12 key.
Save Title As is on F6.

Although it would take a while to explain my complete remapping of the keyboard, here are the keys that fall directly under my fingers as I'm working:

The "JKL" combo for rev/pause/play are mapped to the ,./ keys. This way if I move my hand away from them, I can find them without looking down by finding the end of the space key and moving up a row. Basil Pappas and Steve Cohen suggest using the JKL position because the Apple keyboard has a small bump on the K key to help find it. I used to scrub audio using mouse scrub, but have almost totally gone to scrubbing audio by holding down pause and play or pause and reverse play.

Directly above ,./ is L; for mark in and mark out. I have recently mapped remove in and remove out to the shifted keys that correspond. In addition, option-mark in and option-mark out give you go to in and go to out, so that I have all six of these important functions "nested" together on only two keys (with the shift and option keys so close by I easily shift between marking, clearing and going to marks.) I outlined this technique for the Chicago Avid Users Group Meeting last month.

Just to the right of mark in and out, under the " key I placed extend edit. I like extend edit for quick, gross "trims" and L-cuts. And with the easy marking and clearing of in and outs immediately adjacent to it, I can trim extremely quickly.

Extract, lift, overwrite, splice and replace are directly above my mark in/out keys at I, O, P, { and }. Segment editing arrows are mapped to the corresponding shifted keys P and {. Also I left the default quick dissolve on the key above the return key with Fade Title mapped to the same key, shifted.

Mark Clip is mapped to M. and Clear Mark Clip is mapped to shift-M.

For trimming, I tend to use the JKL combo (,./ for me.) to find the proper frame and switch from trimming ins, outs or both by placing the trim sides commands on z, x and c. I also have Play transition mapped to the K key for quick reviews of trims. I have mapped Source record mode, Trim mode and Effects mode to F13, F14 and F15, but I find myself "lassoing" transitions usually to go in to trim mode. Finally, before you map any keys to your keyboard: The play key that resides on the default keyboard setting on the tilde key and the 5 key works differently from the play key in at JKL. And to my knowledge (and I could easily be wrong) cannot be accessed from the command palette. The tilde or 5 Play key (which I have heard called Special Play) *toggles* between play and stop, where the JKL play and the play in the command palette doubles in speed every time you hit it. Recognizing this I map the special play key to the space bar, thus having it serve as a quick and commonly recognized way to ALL STOP (for us old on-line guys) as well as to easily go into play mode.

The only other keys I use a lot are:

Tab and Shift-Tab give me fast-forward and rewind (which I use to go to locators)

The little block of arrow buttons between the QWERTY and numeric pads are important. Just as the default keys, I use the left and right arrows to go forward/back one frame while shifting those keys gives me ten frame increments. The down key is mapped as a locator and the up key is mapped as the keyframe button for special effects and rubberbanding of audio. Render effect and remove effect are dangerously close to one another at 5 and 6.

3.21 Tips and Techniques (v6.5x)

[From: Basil96009@aol.com](mailto:Basil96009@aol.com)

Basil has a cool tips and techniques book available. Contact him for more information. Here are a basket of tips he is willing to share:

Here's some 6.5/6.5.1 feature sets and keyboard shortcuts.

Solo Track function (Command-Click the speaker/monitor icon) Press the Control key while selecting a Bin view to open the Headings window for that view. Hold the key then click on the channel select to get at all 4 channels in the audio punch in tool.

Long menus are now the default for new projects You can now enlarge or reduce the energy plot in the timeline by pressing apple-option-L or apple-option-K. Title effect templates saved without sources now preserve key frames title moves. When working in effect mode, the effect parameter sliders update the image in real time. If you do not want to update the image in real time, turn off Render On The Fly. The undo stack now shows the number of frames moved when undoing edits made by segment dragging. Redundant Mark IN/OUT operations have been removed from the undo stack. You can now map your keyboard to let you monitor and enable video and audio tracks greater than V2 and A2. To enable track monitoring for these (higher) tracks, map the control as well as the option keys to the track monitoring button on your keyboard. To enable track enabling for these tracks, map the control key to the track enabling button on your keyboard. Then all you have to do is hit the key on your keyboard, and enter the numerical value for the track you want to enable/monitor on your numeric keypad and hit enter. That track (for example V5) will toggle between being enabled/disabled or monitored/turned off. Composer Window Click the zoombox in the upper right of the E&A window to collapse it into a minicomposer for huge timeline real-estate for mixing, effects, etc. Shift-click any hamburger and you get the full command palette... Lock Items in Bin The ability to lock items from being deleted: Select a clip or sequence, and go to the Clip Menu to Lock. These files cannot be deleted through the Bin, Media Tool or even at the desktop level without unlocking the files. BTW, sequence deletion checkbox ON is no longer the default. Digitize Drag and drop clip from Bin into TC IN and Out Boxes to reload TC numbers. Command-A to enable all tracks. Option click on the disk icon to change from single clip duration to total duration available on disk.

Effects FFWD RWD buttons GOTO keyframe in effects mode The Trim/Slip buttons on the keyboard move the selected keyframe Holding the Control key while Corner Pinning enables QUICK PIN. Get an expanded view of a nest by Option-clicking the Step In button. Or, Activate Segment Mode and double-click on an effect segment. The nest will expand vertically for editing. Alternatively, select option-step in/out to expand or collapse a segment effect into layers. Click on effect type first, then goto effects mode and lasso other effects. Will render only chosen effect type. Interpolated motion effects are much closer in quality to DT slow motion video from a VTR. Try 30fps motion effect with 0 or 1 frame strobe to simulate film look.

Rubber Band Command click on rubber band node snaps to db Command drag snaps blue bar to keyframes Control moves all KeyFrames from in to out, keeping relative adjustments. Dragging the Cursor over a key frame turns the pointer to a hand, hitting the DELETE key deletes the KeyFrame. TimeLine Command click on Video or Audio Monitor solos that track. Option-select a channel selector on the keyboard to activate the monitor for that channel. Get an expanded view of a nest by Option-clicking the Step In button. This way you can bypass the Segment editing button. Activate Segment Mode and double-click on an effect segment. The nest will expand vertically for editing. Alternatively, select option-step in/out to expand or collapse a segment effect into layers. Cut/Copy/Paste Basic Macintosh Cut/Copy/Paste functions can be used directly in the timeline for duplicating or removing segments. The segment mode you are in when you paste (red or yellow arrow) determines whether the paste is an overwrite or a splice. When working with many video and audio tracks, separating video and audio with the Timecode track can help visually, as well as keep the Timecode track within view over greater numbers of scrolled video and audio tracks. (Thanks, Jimmy) Title Tool Option clicking on title toggles between Pointer and Text tool Up and Down arrows work for Text Size, Kerning, leading and drop shadows. when the boxes are selected. Option arrow is now used for Kerning selected text Option-click title to change from text tool to position tool. Control-double click title to open it for editing directly from a bin. Control key toggles between pointer and text tool. Two features added to systems with 3D modules are Corner Pinning and Stamp/Clear

Corner Pinning: Corner Pinning allows the user to grab a corner of a frame and position it anywhere on the screen. This is typically used for pinning an image within a TV screen or some other frame boundary. Additionally it can be used for drastic perspective distortion. Stamp/Clear The Stamp/Clear feature allows the user to create multi layered still image composites in real-time down stream of any effect. This is great for real time title builds or PIP montages or even logos which need to stay up for the entire show.

Improved Nesting 6.5 has the ability to show nested tracks while seeing all additional video tracks and monitoring the audio tracks. Kind of like an "expand" view instead of step in/out. Get an expanded view of a nest by Option-clicking the Step In button. This way you can bypass the Segment editing button. Activate Segment Mode and double-click on an effect segment. The nest will expand vertically for editing. Alternatively, select option-step in/out to expand or collapse a segment effect into layers.

Locator Window Most NLE applications have locators but Media Composer's locator window adds additional benefits to this common feature. Color labeling can be added at any time for better differentiating between locators, global deleting of locators, go to locators by double clicking in the locator window, ability to work in timecode and feet + frames. The window shows locators for both the source and records window. There's even a new setting in Composer settings for cutting the locators in with the Source to the Sequence. (Thanks, Dion)

Script mode Use page up / page down keys on keyboard while playing to navigate script. tab key cycles through takes assigned to a clip. Select script lines, takes and press play in script window to cycle through (play) the selected material) Apple-drag script marks between lines to move them (sync point stays the same) or use new button on command palette to move sync point for the selected line of script Use Find Script button on command palette with option key to find script line for the frame parked on in record Use control key to splice selected lines of script into record Single Point Edit (Go To Composer Settings) The ability to have the blue bar always behave as an out point in the

source monitor. This setting introduces a simplified editing model by eliminating the redundant action of adding and out point before making an edit.

Useful Console Commands MotionFXRenderType # with the # being 1, 2 or 3 which corresponds to both, duplicate or interpolated. Type MotionFXRenderType 3 to rerender the motion effects to interpolated after batch digitizing a sequence. (Thanks, Steve Bayes) Turn off the 3D effects board. Type "Disable3D" in the console menu, quit and restart MC. (Use "Enable3D" later to restore).

Playlength There is a console command which allows you to specify a play duration. Limiting the play duration will also limit the delay from the time you press the button to when play actually starts. This will be most noticeable for sequences that are complex either in length, number of edits, or number of effects. To limit play duration type "PlayLength " in the console where is a positive number. Since you may go backwards or forwards the amount of footage that can be played is centered around the position being played from. For example, if a user enters "PlayLength 1" at the console, the range that will be playable is 30 seconds before their current position to 30 seconds after the current position. After issuing this command pipes will no longer be built after each edit. Instead, they are built when the user presses play (or engages mui, steenbeck, mouse play, three button...). The sequence will only be able to play a total of worth of footage. To cancel the effect of the "PlayLength" console command type "PlayLength 0" in the console. You will have to experiment with the argument to settle on the correct balance between delay after pressing play and length of play. Play In/Out will force the pipes to be built from the In-mark to the Out-mark and all the material in-between will be played; this may result in a longer wait after pressing play. If the user is shuttling or jogging, they will only be able to play up to the "PlayLength" limit from the location where they entered jog/shuttle. To continue past that limit they will have to press a button that takes them out of jog/shuttle e.g. "Stop". Simply pressing pause or centering a Mui or Steenbeck will not do the trick. (Thanks, Brian) Adding Filler To End Add a track of video. At the very end of the sequence, cut onto that track any random clip of the duration you want the black filler to be. Then delete the track and the filler underneath stays in place. Miscellaneous FF/REW keys jump to next/prev keyframe in effect mode Command-Arrow Up to add dissolve (held over from 5.2) Lasso an add-edit and hit delete to remove it in trim mode Option mark from the keyboard means go to mark. Invisible phantom marks are available by hitting Q or W when IN/OUT marks are available in an adjacent monitor. Option-render renders to the last disk selected, avoiding the dialog box 3D Titles and imported RT matte keys with alpha are now able to save their moves without saving the alpha. This means you can now apply the move to other titles and RT matte keys. To do this, when you save the initial title move- hold the option key down when dragging it to the bin. When it is saved to the bin it will say "without source". Then you will be able to apply just the parameters to future titles. (Thanks, Dion) The 3D buttons are on the Command Palette so you can assign them to the keyboard. Attempts at direct manipulation not at the selected keyframe will create one at that point Attempts at parameter slider manipulation not at the selected keyframe will change the highlighted keyframe AND show the changes to the image AT THE CURRENT POSITION Option click on the enable button to restore the default slider positions of a closed category. Hitting the locator button during play in FX mode inserts a keyframe on the fly Option double clicking on a closed 3D parameter pane opens ALL panes Option double clicking on an open 3D parameter pane closes ALL panes SHIFT Key with direct manipulation adjusts in ten digit increments Option click direct manipulation causes the frame to update with real picture as you move it. To get nice antialiased edges try leaving the border softness control on and give it a value of 22 to 24. The border still appears to be hard but the edges will be cleaner during motion and in off axis positions. To get acceleration/deceleration (similar to smooth motion in an ADO) go to spline and set the tension control to +100 for any two keyframes. Here are some additional features in 6.0 you should try out. Control-Mark Clip measures durations between locators. Suppressing 4-frame display in segment mode: Since the 4 frame incoming/outgoing display can slow down segment editing, you can suppress this by holding down the shift key before dragging your segment (after hitting the red or yellow arrow button on the bottom of the TL). Enlarging/Reducing tracks: The control key combined with

the Enlarge Track (apple-L) or Reduce track (apple-K) command quickly changes the height of all tracks, regardless of track selection. You can use this as a toggle to quickly enlarge or reduce tracks to look at waveforms, tight spots in a sequence etc. and then go back. Relinking to different AVRs - If you batch digitize a sequence at a higher AVR, you can relink to either new or old resolution. If you put all the clips (both AVR levels) in one bin with the sequence, and select the sequence with one set of AVR masters, you can option-relink to that AVR. Or, highlight the other AVR set of master clips and the sequence, and option-relink to THAT level of resolution. Some older techniques... 2D PIP with drop shadow:

1. Create 3 video tracks. Put background on V1. Put foreground on V3
2. Apply PIP to V3
3. In Effects Mode, adjust keyframe parameters of the V3 PIP, and save effect to a bin.
4. Apply saved PIP to V2 (filler)
5. In Effects mode, adjust keyframe parameters of the V2 PIP as follows: Increase border width (dramatically), and softness, if a blurred shadow is desired. While monitoring V3, adjust vertical and horizontal position of V2 PIP. Watch your PIP with drop shadow appear! Adjust border color if desired.
6. Render V2. You're done. 3.22 Chooser

From: Eric.Peters@avid.com

You definitely want to keep the Chooser closed. It pings your network, looking for configuration changes, as long as it is open, and these pings can cause problems, including digitize errors, overruns, and underruns during playback. Keep the Chooser closed while you are editing, digitizing, or making digital cuts.

3.23 Title Tool Tips

From: "Liane Rozzell (PIO)" lrozzell@Census.GOV

Control-double-click on the title in the bin. It opens right up in title tool and you can make whatever changes you like. Then you can save or save as back to the bin. There are two downsides to this process: 1) If you just save it, it saves it back in the bin with the exact same name, but doesn't delete the old one. Be sure to rename or delete the old one if you want to avoid confusion later. (If your bin is in text view, the new one will plunk right on top when you save.) 2) The title opens over black, so if you need to adjust its placement over picture you must still edit it in.

From: steveh@delhall.com (Steve Hullfish)

In Title Tool: It is better to use duplicate (cmd-D) rather than copy (cmd-c) if you are copying and pasting objects or words inside Title Tool, because with cmd-d, the object is slightly off-set from the original. Not much of a difference, but nice. I needed to change the color of a large number of Titles (arrows created in Title Tool actually) that had already been created and edited in. I was trying to figure out a way to change all those Titles to a color that was consistent from Title to Title. There are several strategies, of course. The one I found that was fastest and easiest was to create a Style Sheet for a font with the color I wanted. I found that if I then selected the arrow and called up the Style Sheet, the arrow would turn the color that was selected in the Style Sheet. I thought this was interesting because even though the style included font info, only the attributes that could transfer (color and shadow) applied to the arrow.

3.24 Rebuilding Media Databases

From: Liane Gay Rozzell

When: as a troubleshooting measure when you have problems that indicate that the media database is not up to date. For example, you have media digitized, but for some reason it's not linked properly to a clip. Or you try to load a clip that you *know* is online, and you get a media offline error or a black screen with a little message in the bottom (can't remember the message; it's something like "media object not found"). Why?: so the media files on the partition(s) can be re-catalogued in a way that MC can "see" them. How: throw away the media database file(s). In 7.x, look for two mdm or msm files (I'm not in front of a system right now) in the omf mediafiles folder. In 6.x and below, look for a file called "media database" in the 6.x mediafiles folder. "Throw away" means put them in the trash and empty the trash. For best results, quit and re-launch MC. MC will re-build the databases upon re-launching

3.25 Linking an Imported EDL to Existing Media

From: Doug Abel

I grabbed the following from Alan Stewart's nifty web page. Perhaps this will help--it mentions the 24-hour clip issue. Linking an Imported EDL to Existing Media

By Steve Bayes, Avid Senior Instructor

Use the following procedure to avoid redigitizing source material after importing an EDL. In order for this process to work properly, it's important that you know the name of the project that your existing media is linked to and that the media is online. You can find the project name by looking at the Project column in your bins or in the Media tool.

1. Import the EDL into EDL Manager version 1.7.3 or higher. Make sure the format of your list matches the format selected in EDL Manager. For example, if you are importing a PAL CMX 3600 list, make sure that EDL Manager is set to accept this type of list. Otherwise, you'll receive errors while trying to import. For version 1.9 of EDL Manager, you only need to indicate whether the list is NTSC or PAL. If you don't know the format of the list, guess until you're able to import without errors.
2. Change the Dupe Reel setting to None and update the list. This will remove any dupe reels from the list and prevent Media Composer from looking for tapes that don't exist. (For example, tape001B will be changed to tape 001.) This assumes that the dupe material was created using the "multiple dupe" option. If you created your dupes using the "one dupe reel, new timecode" option, this method will not work for shots on your dupe reel, as the timecode will not refer back to your original source material. Steps 3 and 4 are not necessary when working with EDL Manager versions 1.9 and greater. Use the arrow icon to move the EDL into Media Composer.
3. Save the EDL as an OMFI file.
4. Import the OMFI file into an empty bin. The OMFI file will import into your bin as a sequence and master clips.
5. Highlight the first master clip. Note that it will be almost 24 hours long.
6. Choose Modify from the Clip menu.
7. Choose Set Source from the Modify submenu.
8. Deselect "Only show this project's tapes."
9. Select the tape name that corresponds to the original project name and tape name. It will be in the format Project Name:Tape Name.
[Tape Name Dialog Box] You may see several projects associated with

a tape name. If you don't select the correct one, the media will not link up. It's also possible you'll see more than one entry for a particular project/tape name combination. If this occurs, you'll have to try each choice in turn.

10. Highlight the sequence and choose Relink from the Clip menu. Do not select any of the options in the Relink dialog box. Click OK.
11. Repeat steps 5-10 for each master clip. The sequence should now be linked to your existing media.
12. Delete the new master clips (the ones created from the EDL). The new master clips will never relink -- they're used as intermediaries. You have actually relinked the sequence to the original master clips. You can now use Match Frame and Find Bin to refer back to your original source material.
13. Highlight the sequence and choose Decompose from the Clip menu. This is a way of checking if any of the sequence didn't link. In the Decompose window, select the "Decompose only those clips for which media is unavailable" option. Master clips will be created for those parts of the sequence that didn't relink. You can batch digitize them. If no master clips are created then your entire sequence relinked properly.

One possible reason that some decomposed shots may not appear is that the EDL was altered in online such that a shot was made longer than its original master clip. You will need to redigitize these changed shots to reflect the changes in the sequence.

3.26 Learning Film Composer

From: Jeff Granzow

It's not so much learning film composer that's important as it is making sure you're getting back up to speed on the basics of logging film and then learning all the logistics of how it matches to video. I could be mistaken, but I think most of the editing functions are pretty much the same on both machines. It's the bin stuff (i.e. the stuff you'll be concerned about) that's a bit different. Make sure you are familiar with your different options as far as telecine is concerned as this determines just how stuff is going to get into the Avid and logged (you can email me directly if you want more specifics on this). You should also play with things like pull lists and change lists so that you'll be able to order opticals from pulled negatives, facilitate revisions in the workprint, etc. Mostly though, I think it's a matter of making sure you can handle timecode/edgecode/keycode relationships comfortably so that after all the hustle and bustle that goes on in your editing room you can match back to a workprint and ultimately a negative with 100% accuracy. So, like I said, it's not so much learning a new system that will be the problem, so I don't think you need to worry about taking a class if you're already familiar with Media Composer. Rather, it's a matter of learning a whole new game. After you do that, you'll come to realize that Film Composer is a great tool for making your transition into that game easier.

3.27 Print Headframes

From: Basil96009@aol.com

Q: Is there a way to print out a frame of every shot I am using in a sequence.

A: This method is for Film Composer: Output an A-Roll assemble list and display headframes. This will be sorted in sequence order; like an A MODE EDL. Print this list. This method is for Media Composer: Output an Assemble Cutlist, and select Frame Images in Global Options. This will be sorted in sequence order; like an A MODE EDL. Print this list.

3.28 CG - Read On Text

From: "Fleming, Dave (Phoenix)" Dave.Fleming@cox.com

Just get the "Path Text" plugin from the Adobe site, read the .pdf about how to use it, and you'll be doing it very easily!

4.00 VIDEO

4.01 Getting a Freeze Frame from a sequence (in the source monitor)

Try to make a copy of the sequence and put it into a new bin. Then "Decompose" it to make clips out of each element in the sequence. If the sequence isn't too long this works.

4.02 Rendering Notes

From: Bruce Rees newegg@inforamp.net

1. General things to keep in mind:
1. Real-time chroma and luma keying can be turned on at risk of causing other effects to be rendered. A judgment call.
2. A rendered top submaster layer is tricky to work with. If changes have to be made the submaster will become unrendered. Rendering everything via submaster means you might be rendering effects that can be run real-time.
3. Wherever possible try to have the top most effect be real-time with the layer directly below rendered. Usually the top is a title. Rendering titles and matte keys are the slowest of all effects and should be avoided.
2. 4.Cheat wherever possible. If a few layers are still (as in no moving video) then export the resulting still frame as a PICT and re-import it and cut it into the sequence replacing the stilled layers. Do this for titles that are on still backgrounds that are effected! There is a quality loss of exporting and
3. importing a frame (usually the edges on titles), but often acceptable.
4. Photoshop is a deadly weapon. Once again, when working with stilled video, use Photoshop instead of picture-in-picture or keying. A frame will scale cleaner with Photoshop than with p-in-p.
5. The obvious- Never never render upward on the time line (ie: V1 then V2). Always render the top layer. A submaster layer is ok, but rendering the 'nesting' layer is the same thing and same speed.
6. When working with lots of layers turn off 'render on the fly' or get used to turning off the monitor track when moving about on the time line.

From: Jeff Cook jcook@his.com

The SUBMASTER effect (in the effects palette) is basically a dummy effect that has no parameters, makes no changes. First (everybody say "A-HAAH!!")...you only have to render the TOP track of ANY effects build. Could be 24 layers with nests, keys, titles and PIP's affecting every frame, but you still only need to render the top track. When you ask any track to render, it figures out every effect below it (on any particular frame position) and creates a complete render of the stack. (See NOTE #1 below).

Now, you'll find that many of your layered effect stacks don't have one big effect on top that covers the effects below it. This is what SUBMASTER is for...it's like an umbrella that lives on top of the whole mess. When you've built your whole effects mess, create another track that's just for submasters (let's say track 8). Then look through your timeline for any section that needs rendering, and edit or place the submaster over those sections. With tracks 8 containing nothings but submasters, just mark the head & tail of the show, and select CLIP / RENDER IN-OUT and go to lunch. (See NOTE #2 below).

NOTES:

1. You might want to put titles ABOVE the submaster, because they are the most likely thing to be changed, and they are real time effects (on most systems).
2. Faster strategy would be to just drag a submaster effect over the entire track 8, then just delete the segments you don't need to render. If,

however, you need to render the entire show, consider chopping up that one long submaster using ADD EDITs. That way a lockup half way through will preserve the small segments already rendered.

4.03 Motion Effects Tips

From ssi@neosoft.com

I like to use the interpolated field for the Motion Effect because it gives a smoother effect. It also takes longer to render but it's worth it. "Interpolating" looks at the frame before and the frame after and then interpolates between them. It is like a dissolve between the frames to make the change between frames less jerky.

I use duplicated fields when I need a Freeze Frame while the subject is in motion. Using both fields will cause a "flashing" that will look ugly because of the alternating between fields. But it will also look a little jaggit around the edges. But better than the other option. Which is both fields. This works great for freeze frames with no motions and really great for FF of animations. I used to pull in the last pict of a sequential pict sequence because I could never get a good FF. Always looked bad with jaggit edges. Like when you are playing a imported pict and you stop it (playing full screen).

4.04 Video Underruns caused by Freeze Frames

From DKutzen@aol.com

There are three ways to fix the underrun.

- 1) Consolidate the freeze over to another drive. Be careful if you have other type of storage on your scsi chain (like a syquest drive, etc.), you can easily have it render freeze frames, titles, picts over to a drive that will show you the picture as a still, but can't possible play fast enough to do the sequence.
- 2) Sometimes FF's can just get corrupted; you'll also see this sometimes with motion effects, particularly reverses. Remake the effect and edit it back in.
- 3) Rebuilding your desktop helps a lot. I know its a stock answer from Avid, but it really does work.

4.05 Video Underrun Checklist

Some of the solutions I tried last time I was on the receiving end of debilitating video underruns

1. Render all effects
2. Appletalk off
3. Restart
4. Remove unused precomputes with media tool
5. eliminate some white flashes created using the title tool instead of
1. fade from color(which is useless in the edl)
6. cause avid to rebuild media databases
7. assess whether avid was getting enough ram
8. rebuild desktop
9. shutdown, powerdown, wait five minutes, calm down, then start again
10. try reducing playlength in console

Checking or doing some of the above was enough to solve my underrun problems. It is the basic checklist Avid is going to go through.

4.06 Motion Effects Re-Render at Different Setting?

Q: When I re-digitize a sequence for online purposes, is there a way to make all the motion effects render at the "interpolated" setting, even though they may have been created with "both" or "duplicated" in offline?

A:

From: Basil96009@aol.com

There is a console command for this: MotionFXRenderType # with the # being 1, 2 or 3 which corresponds to 1=duplicated 2=both and 3=interpolated. So you would type MotionFXRenderType 3 and then rerender the motion effects to change everything to interpolated.

Note, the override will only be used/remembered if the effect is rendered after entering the console command. If you restart Media Composer you will have to re-enter the console command if you wish to override other motion effects. One last note, the 2-field motion effect functionality will not work with un-rendered real-time motion effects. The effect must first be rendered in order to take advantage of the new functionality.

Thanks to Steve Bayes and Brian Williams for this info.

4.07 Film Look

From: Frank Capria fcapria@tiac.net

I've played around with a few tricks and here's what I've found...

- 1) Crush the blacks a bit.
- 2) Use 3:2 pulldown in AE. In my experience it doesn't matter which fields get repeated.
- 3) Vary the "grain" I actually don't like most of the film grain filters. What works best for me is duplicating the layer in AE. Turn the top layer monochrome (TINT black and white 100%) and add noise using the old KPT 2.1 Noise Minimum filter (or Medium for that 8mm look). In transfer control set this layer to Darken Only, then play around with the transparency percentage.
- 4) Precompose those two layers and add the Glow filter - very subtly - to the pre-comp.
- 5) Want to go over the top? Throw a 16:9 film mask on it when you get back in to the Composer.

Bear in mind -- this really doesn't look like film when shown against real telecined material, but it does lose that video edge.

From: McQ@McQPro.com (Lon McQuillin)

Having followed a recent discussion over on the Media 100 list over the past few days on achieving a "film look", I decided to beef up the Film Effects function in MovieTools. The result is an update, verions 1.5d. With QT files that have a frame rate of either 30 or 29.97 FPS, MovieTools can now create an output file with the look of material that originated on film and was transferred to video, complete with 3/2 pull-down of "B" and "C" frames. "A" and "D" frames are field interpolated. The result is that, temporally, the output movie will have a total film feel. In our testing, selecting the Add Film Grain option with a setting of from 10 - 20 and checking the 'Create 24 FPS "3/2 Pull-Down"' option gives the feel of 35 mm film transfers (at a grain setting of 10) or pushed 16mm (at a grain setting of 20).

From: Lon McQuillin McQ@McQPro.com

Regarding the discussion on achieving a film look from video, the latest version of MovieTools has a "3/2 pull-down"effect, an enhanced film grain effect, and offers complete gain/gamma/black level control.

From: Basil96009@aol.com

As much as I dislike the process called Filmlook, there are many who attempt to emulate it on a Media Composer by applying a zero or one frame 30fps strobe to 2 field media. It's a look that I've seen many directors get wrapped up in. If this happens to you, and you end up having to apply this to an entire sequence, do a video mixdown of the sequence, load it into the source monitor, make the motion effect, and cut it onto your highest V channel, so that you can get back to the original if necessary. Copied below is a document I found on someone's website regarding this subject... sorry, I don't remember the author's name.

From: Karl Husson karlh@MerwinCreative.com

There's a plug-in from Gallery Effects called "grain" (not "film grain") that does a good, highly customizable job of ragging out the video for a film look. It usually comes out looking like super 16, but you can even grain it out to 8mm. Just pop the plug-in into the 3rd Party folder and you're set.

From: "G. Robin Gilmore" Robin@vecvideo.com

Try this. It takes about 5 seconds.

1. 30 fps video to 25 fps.
2. Paste it into a new timeline.
3. Do a "Video Mixdown" of this slow-mo footage.
4. Make this new clip 36 fps.
5. Paste it into a new timeline.
6. Add audio track for PERFECT lip-sync.

4.08 Old Film Look

From: Dan Prochazka danp@digieffects.com

I'd suggest CineLook's FilmDamage plug-in, or Aurorix 2's AgedFilm plug-in if you do not need as much control. Both are available for After Effects currently and will be available as Avid AVX. Right now DigiEffects is offering a special price on Aurorix 2 & Berserk for After Effects. Normally they are \$289 per package, but for a limited time, you can get both for \$395. Below is a list of resellers who have the product in stock in North America. If you are outside of the US and would like to take advantage of this offer, we can either refer you to someone locally, or offer this to you directly.

4.09 Media File vs Slide

From: PeteGould@aol.com

Importing as a media file takes far longer and consumes more space than importing a slide, but is far less likely to cause video underruns than importing as a slide, particularly on slower (<150MHz) Macs. This is due to the fact that Avid systems are optimized for playing media files, while slides are played from the Mac's RAM and have to be repeatedly fetched from there over and over again while the slide is up; this works the Mac pretty hard. While we still had a Daystar-equipped Quadra 950, slides were generally a problem; on our current 9500-200 they're not.

4.10 Black and White Chroma Key

From: Quinatwork@aol.com

Q: I'm just wondering if it's possible to create a b/w version of a color key. Here's the set up.

V1 A character is having a memory of his dead wife.

V2 green screen of dead wife.

How do I key wife over husband then make only her b/w so she seems more like a memory? I tried stepping in to the key and making her b/w. No key as the green turned grey. I put the color effect on top and it turns both husband and wife B/w. What am I missing? How do I control the color effect? Or is this possible?

A: You're going to make a Matte Key out of your Chroma Key.

1. Create a sequence with the green screen on track 2 and a frame of white on track 1.
2. Apply Chroma Key to track 1. Adjust so you have a clean key. (You may wish to adjust the Key over the footage of the husband then replace the husband with the white track.)
3. Reverse the key so you have white where the wife is and green everywhere else.
4. Do a video mixdown.
5. Create a new sequence with 3 video tracks.
6. Place the video mixdown in track 3, The wife in track 2 and the husband in track 1.
7. Drag the Matte Key onto track 3. Then reverse it to bring the wife to the top.
8. Set into track 3 and apply a color effect to track 3.
9. Adjust the contrast and saturation until you have a black and white image.
10. Set out of track 3.
11. Apply a color effect to track 2. Desaturate to your heart's content.
12. Render and go to lunch/dinner/a movie/home depending on how long the sequence is.

4.11 ChromaKey

From: "Mark Crenshaw" prod212@llano.net

Before we move on to the After Effects solution, try this in the Avid. With your clip in a sequence drop on the YUV Chroma Key. In effects mode, set the softness to maximum (fully to the right). This will bring back your BG. Grab the eyedropper and select a shade of blue in your clip as far from the Lilac as possible. Maybe in a shadow. The keyer will suggest a color for the key when you drop it onto the clip but it rarely is optimum for the filter to do it's best. Now with the filter color properly set back off the softness a click at a time and the BG will fade out. It usually only takes 2 - 3 clicks to remove it. This is the best way to use this filter that I have found. There may be better but give it a try. Let us know how it works and if need be I will post an AE Pro Bundle solution that is just about bullet proof but adds some time to the problem.

4.12 Keying Problem

From: steveh@delhall.com (Steve Hullfish)

Q: Today I was trying to key a graphic on black over another video clip. The black area keyed out fine. Then I promoted it to 3D to keyframe it's position and scale. When I scaled it back, the area around it was grey. Kind of a half transparent grey. The key remained perfect within the scaled down box area of the overlaying graphic.

Answer: This is not a 7.x problem. I have had this problem off and on with my Pinnacle box. If you had quit out of MC and relaunched (preferably a complete system shutdown, but sometimes a simple relaunch works) your grey crud would have gone away without any of the workarounds you described. I don't really know what the exact problem is, but rebooting always solves this same problem for me.

4.13 Disable 3D

From: "GMC" s0uxie@bigfoot.com

Just hold down F & X keys as you launch MC it will give you the option of disabling your effects top (2 or 3 D)

4.14 Dropout Repair

From: Basil96009 Basil96009@aol.com

displayeven 1 entered into the console allows F2 view at pause. displayeven 0 returns to normal F1 view at pause. Use these commands to isolate a F1/F2 dropout.

To repair a dropout using PIP:

1. Locate frame with dropout; mark in/out on this frame.
2. Matchframe. Errant frame appears in source monitor.
3. Retard/advance source by 1 frame to find a clean frame.
4. Mark in; patch V1 to V2 and overwrite.
5. Using segment arrow; select V2 frame. Apply PIP.
6. Goto Effect Mode, size PIP to 100%
7. Select Crop from 'burger; then set border width to 2.
8. Move top/bottom/left/right borders to carefully isolate the dropout.
9. Toggle V2 /V1 monitor (option-7/option-8); make crop as tight as possible.
10. Set border width back to zero, and render.

You're done. With practice this can be done in under a minute. Fix is seamless, unless there is broad movement between frames. If so, then adjustments of horizontal position of the PIP may help.

v 7.0 offers intraframe cloning and field by field advance;very handy. However, I have found the PIP method reliable 99% of the time. Available since 5.0...and far more invisible than cutting in a freeze frame.

4.15 Flash Effect

From: "Michael Radeck" michael.radeck@transnet.de

You get a more natural look, when you use the colour-effect (make two add edits in the clip, 2-3 fr long for it) then put up the gamma correction up to maximum and make two dissolve 2fr center on add edits. this looks like a real flash by photocamera or like the opening of the iris by video/filmcamera (often seen in music-videos) you don't get a full white, but you don't need, try out other functions of colour-effect and you will get also any full colour if you need!! this needs many more rendering-time (also dip to colour) then using white pict and normal dissolves!!

5.00 AUDIO

5.01 Redigitizing Audio that was digitized too hot

5.01.1 Technique 1

Make a duplicate of the sequence, and remove the video tracks. Then highlight the audio-only sequence in the bin that it's in and select "batch digitize". It will create new audio clips for the finished sequence and digitize those. Then edit the newly redigitized audio sequence back into your original sequence.

5.01.2 Technique 2

Just consolidate the cut and redigitize audio-only the consolidation.

5.01.3 Technique #3

Yep, you can Batch Digitize any portion of a sequence. The explanation may be a bit lengthy (the step-by-step approach), but it's actually quite easy to do. The FIRST thing you want to do is make a Duplicate of your final cut, create a New Bin, and drag that Duplicate sequence into it. You want to always work on a *copy* of your sequence so you can go back to the original (which retains the links to the original digitized media) in case something screws up (or if you eventually decide to redo all your original master clips). The New Bin is just a matter of convenience and general organization. Now - a good way to redigitize ONLY the audio portion of the sequence is to Delete all the Video tracks in the sequence copy and Decompose / Batch Digitize the remaining Audio Tracks.

Here we go...

Load the COPY you made of your sequence into the Time line. Turn all the sequence (record side) Video tracks ON, and all the sequence (record side) Audio tracks OFF. Smash the key. You should get a confirmation dialogue asking "Delete the selected track(s)?" Say "OK", and they will be hosed. (It's undoable, so don't worry).

Next, go back to that New Bin with this now modified sequence (you DID do this to the COPY, didn't you?); highlight that sequence in the Bin, and select Decompose... in the Clip menu. This will break your "audio only" sequence down into all the little ".new" Master Clips that are created after you Batch Digitize anything. The reason to Decompose the cut BEFORE you Batch Digitize is so you can organize you batch digitize session better... in this case so you can set your audio levels properly on a per-tape, or even a per-clip basis. Now, you can enter Digitize mode, load your source material - set your levels, highlight a range of clips for that tape, and go nuts. Be certain to check your Batch Digitize settings before you roll. Highlight the Digitize tool, select Digitize Settings from the Settings Menu, and check the appropriate boxes. (Digitize Logged tracks" ON, etc.) Oh yeah make sure you're tossing this stuff to an appropriate drive as well (like a drive that is physically separate from drives containing your Video media). It'll make sequence playback a less hateful thing. After you've cruised through this little bit of Batch Digitize Heaven, you're (hopefully) ready to but everything back together. Go back to your ORIGINAL sequence, and make another Duplicate of that (but this time keep it in the same Bin as your original). Call it "MyFinal.NewAudio" or something. Load this cut into the Record monitor, and the sequence you Batch Digitized into the source monitor. Mark the Head and Tail of both sides, patch and activate the AUDIO tracks ONLY, and clobber the Overwrite button. The only thing I can't recall is how existing audio dissolves will be treated. In theory - the dissolves in your newly constructed sequence should show up as un-rendered. You may have to re-render or remake the dissolves. I usually use the Media Tool to select and hose all the AUDIO precomputes to make sure they're off line, then do a Render In to Out on just the Audio Tracks to make absolutely sure. Obviously, if you've done any Audio Mixdowns you'll have to deal with those as well. It's an extra couple of steps, but audio stuff renders fast and I then KNOW my fades are correct.

Anyway - after you're all done - you've retained your original cut and it's links; and with the "new" sequence, you can go back and redo just a single ".new" clip if it's a still little out of whack. Now - get to work and watch those levels! If you've got an SA-4 rig, peaks between -11 to -7 are recommended. With an AudioMedia card it should be the same (although I remember years ago when it was better to get as close to "0" as possible on those.)

5.01.4 Avid Audio Note (Important!)

The audio tool has what I would call one rather notable design flaw: namely, the "speaker" (i.e., monitor output) sliders ALSO affect the levels seen on the meters WHILE DIGITIZING. This is a really bad idea, as anyone who designs audio gear would tell you, but what it means is that you can easily be pegging and over modulating while inputting, all without realizing it. (Try messing with the Playback levels on your Beta deck as you're Recording on it; they shouldn't affect a thing -- i.e., the meters should remain at unity gain, giving you a proper indication of Record levels regardless). This little quirk has needlessly messed up a lot of people (not to mention audio), but until it's addressed there are only two things you can do:

1. Make sure that the Audio Tool's speaker sliders are both at "0" whenever digitizing.
2. Always be on the listen for distorted audio, even if those meters seem OK. It's entirely possible (and not uncommon) for one of the other gain stages in your signal chain to be overloaded (i.e., playing back on the deck, within the mixer itself, going into the Pro Tools, etc.). The system should ideally be calibrated so that intermediate adjustments (e.g., channel and output faders on the mixer, etc.) can be set at or near unity gain -- for faders on Mackie 1604's, for example, this means being at the "detent" position. Otherwise, it's very easy to be distorting (or adding undue noise, or both) as you're transferring into the Avid.
3. [Did I say two things?] You can also let the folks at Avid know the obvious, namely that the Audio Tool's meters should display accurate input levels when digitizing, regardless of what that output stage is doing. (Maybe it would help to chant that sacred audio mantra, "Unity Gain ...") This sort of thing never used to be that big a concern for off line set-ups, but obviously now more and more work is being on lined this way (and even when picture is assembled else-where, it's still often vastly more efficient to output your edited sound direct).

5.02 Shortcut for adding audio handles.

Q: Is there any shortcut for adding, say 30-60 frames on either end of all my audio edits, (or selected edits) or must I do it tediously by hand?

A: If you have a macro program like QuickKeys or the shareware KeyQuencer it wouldn't be that hard to make two macros: one that extends head, another that extends the tail. Maybe you can make another macro that loops the either one ten or twenty times.

5.03 Audio Scrub

From: Basil Pappas

For editors who are tired of option-clicking on tiny speaker icons to activate a particular channel for audio scrubbing (blip audio with shift key), try option-clicking on the HOLLOW icon, making it solid. Now, all 4 channels will have full-time scrub, defaulting to any existing track when other tracks cut to fill. Especially useful for 2-channel dialog or other stereo tracks, because you can hear both channels scrub simultaneously.

5.04 Avid to Protools

From: "Wes Plate" Wes.Plate@sierra.com

Copy the sequence to a bin that I call for example "Sweetening Tape 07" and add a fake timecode burn-in since I don't have the media reader. I digital cut typically about 50 sequences to a 60 minute 3/4SP tape, so I also change the start times of each sequences in this bin so I can put them all on the same tape. Then I copy these copies to another bin, for example "Sweetening Tape 07 (audio)" and delete the video tracks, leaving only audio (keep in mind these sequences carry the newly modified start timecode). These sequences I consolidate (150 frame handles) to a 2.0GB drive that I use to move data to my ProTools guy. Then I select all the sequences I just consolidated and select "Export..." from the file menu. From the export dialog box I choose "OMFI compositions only" making sure the SDII box is also checked. Then its only a matter of hitting return 50-some times as it exports each sequence. THEN, I quit the Media Composer, and open up the OMF Tool from DigiDesign (version 1.1b2). Here, select "convert from OMFI to ProTools" and follow the dialog boxes. Unfortunately this is not batchable, so it can be irritating you have a lot to do. But if you only have one sequence, or a few, no worries. I copy the resulting ProTools sessions and their folders to my transfer drive and I'm off to sweetening. The reverse process through the OMF Tool has proved less than successful for me. So I leave out the step of using OMF Tool to convert from a ProTools session back to OMF. No, I just import the Sound Designer II files directly into the Media Composer from the audio files folder associated with each session.

5.05 Media Composer to Macintosh Alert Sound

From: Greg Ludington realvr@ludpod.com

The easiest way to do this is through MoviePlayer.

1. Create your sound it in Media Composer, and mix it down to one track.
2. Export the soundtrack as a Quicktime file. (QT Audio only or Video and Audio.)
3. Open the QT movie in Movieplayer
4. Choose File->Export, and select Audio to System 7 Sound
5. Close all applications, and drag this new sound file to your system folder
6. In your sound (or monitors and sound, depending on your OS) control panel, select your new sound in the Alert Sounds.

Presto! A custom Alert Sound. One word of advice, however; cut your sound as short as possible, and trim every possible fraction off the edges. There may only be a few things more annoying than an error message and beep close to a deadline, but one of them must be an error message and a *long sound* close to a deadline.

5.06 Converting CD Audio for Avid Importing

From: eros@on-it.net (Eros S. Peterson)

The way I import audio into the Avid is with a simple Apple utility that comes with any Mac on the market: Simple Sound. Odd? Not really. just make sure you have plenty of space on the Mac hard drive before you do this because audio can take up a helluva lot of space especially if it's either long or multiple tracks you require. I recommend you use your Media Drives for Avid media files only because you can do all this with your Mac. When you start up Simple Sound, you simply do the following:

1. Insert your audio CD into the CD drive of your Mac.
2. Under the menubar, go File->Open (command-O) and choose your track. Once you select your track, the highlighted "Open" command should change to "Convert". Before you convert the file, select "Options" and choose "16 bit", "Stereo", and 44100 (44.1) kHz. You can also choose the length of your track you wish to bring in via the start/end preview option you will see in the dialog box. Click "OK" name your file, click on "Convert" or simply press "Enter". ***I make sure that
3. I always make a separate folder for these types of files which I will later trash en masse. Makes for easier file management...
4. You should now have what appears to be a QT audio track in front of you. Choose File ->Export, and then choose "Quicktime to AIFF" name your file with the extension ".aif" to ensure you won't get it mixed up with any previous files you created. You now have an AIFF file which your Avid will easily recognize.
5. Import your AIFF file as you would any other and trash your original files on your Mac hard drive to free up space.
6. (optional) Output your recently imported audio files to a blank, timecode striped Beta SP tape and then re-digitize so you have TC'd audio.

From: Jeff Cook jcook@his.com

Read the audio file off the music CD into Simpletext, then hit OPTIONS (I think it is). Set to 44K, 16 bit, Stereo OR Mono, then there's a little IN/OUT tool to select a portion of the music (doesn't sense Indexes, but you can find them with the tool). Then just tell it to save or convert (or whatever it says). BIG SECRET: Simpletext automatically saves audiofiles as AIFF! Then just import the AIFF files into a bin. Instant music.

5.07 Matching Audio Levels

Q: When I go to output my sequences to tape, I can't get the VU meters in the Audio Tool and on my PVW-2800 on the same sheet of music.

Answers: From: Eric Peters@avid.com

I noticed the same thing on a project I finished recently. The difference is meter dynamics. The MC is reading digital peak values, which are what you need to know to avoid digital clipping. The beta deck is reading VU, which is a weighted display of energy over time, appropriate for analog recording. The frequency response of the deck doesn't have much to do with it. Here's the evidence: Notice whenever there's a sustained tone of any kind--the 1 kHz tone will do--then the two readings agree very closely. When the sound has dynamics, as in voice and most music, the analog meter is always lower than the digital. They differ less when the sound is more continuous (maybe organ music), and they differ more when the sound is "peaky" (perhaps a drum solo). Peak meters are used with digital recording because digital clipping is so horrible. In many digital recorders, positive peaks clip to a maximum negative value and vice-versa, and it ends up sounding to me like a sparking trolley on a streetcar. People with good sound monitors cringe when they hear it, because this clipping contains so much energy it will destroy speakers. New skill is required for reading digital meters and setting levels for digital recordings, and in some ways it contradicts years of experience with analog recording.

From: PeteGould@aol.com

The Avid meters are peak readers. The meters on your deck are true VU meters, which have a more weighted (averaging) response. The Avid meters will indicate every tiny transient in your audio; the deck meters will not. VU meters will always read below peak readers on material with transients (essentially everything except tone). On BVW series Beta decks, you can change a dip switch

which will cause the deck meters to become peak readers, at which point they will match up with the Avid meters pretty closely.

From: martinb@anglepark.com (Martin Baumgaertner)

The 2800 is notorious for painfully slow ballistics. A well-set dialog track peaks at something like minus 5 dB on the meters. Absolutely don't trust them for anything besides calibration with stable, continuous tone. In fact, the location audio engineer I shoot with most often tapes over 2800 meters after he's calibrated them so they won't freak him out while tape is rolling. This is a guy with four Nagras, five or six DAT's, a host of custom built mixers, and a credit list longer than many phone books, and it still spooks him every time.

From: Tony Lazzerini tony@lazzerini.co.uk

Buy a set of good PPM meters. Buy a set of test tapes, with known good 4PPM (-18DB) tone on them. Put the tape in the deck, press play, and observe the output of the deck on the PPM meters. Follow whatever adjustment procedure is required so that the PPM meters show a reading of 4. Don't touch the output controls of the deck ever again, other than to recalibrate. Set the reference tone on the avid to -18DB, ignore the VU scale as that can be changed to anything you like (but 0VU = -14DB by default) Play the reference tone into the PPM meters. Use whatever adjustment is available to adjust the output of the avid until it shows 4 on the PPM meters. (On the Protools card its done with pots) Disconnect your mixer. Play the Avid into the deck in EE mode (i.e. no tape in the deck). Hang the PPMs on the output of the deck. Adjust the input of the deck till the PPMs read 4 again. Ignore anything the meters on the deck say, as they can also be set to anything you like. Play the test tape into the Avid, adjust whatever input gain is available (again pots on the Protools board), till it reads -18 on the Avid meters. Hang the PPMs on the output of the Avid and check they say 4PPM still. If not, then you need to recalibrate the Avid meters - there's a menu option for this. The last check is to record some Avid tone onto a tape. The PPMs if hung off the output of the deck will show 4PPM (if you did everything above correctly). Now play the tape into the PPMs. It should still read 4PPM. If it doesn't, then you might want to have the deck set up professionally, as there are also internal adjustments for record and playback levels separate from the EE adjustments. Basically, if you want to use your Avid for broadcast work, then you should invest in one set of good meters, believe those, and ignore everything else, especially the meters on decks.

5.08 Converting WAV's to AIFF From: Wes Plate wes@gocougs.wsu.edu

SoundApp, its great and free!

Get it on the web at <http://www-cs-students.stanford.edu/~franke/SoundApp/>

5.09 Audio Metering

From: Rich Ford rich@ohp.com

Meters are just a tool...so are your ears! Use them and experiment with the recording levels on the 1800 to get the cleanest sound. There is a phenomenon called apparent loudness, where two different sounds (voices for example) can have the same approximate meter readings but one *sounds* quite a bit louder than the other. So when mixing, the ear is the final arbiter of levels. About meters: they are useful tools. Some of the confusion occurs because the meters on the 1800 are VU (or averaging) and the Avid Audio Tool and others (such as on our Soundcraft mixer and on our Sony S-VHS deck) are peak meters. The 1800's meters are slower in attack, so they don't show actual audio peaks. So if the 1800's meters are indicating in the red, the peaks are quite a bit higher and you are almost guaranteed distortion. With voice content (which can have sharp peaks) and assuming the audio chain is calibrated, I try to keep the highest readings on the 1800's VU meter between minus 2 and minus 5, maybe with it

hitting zero on occasion. If the material has been run through a audio compressor/limiter, the peaks will be closer to the average, and you can get away with higher VU readings. Properly done this can sound fine. Poorly done, and it is just another form of unpleasant distortion. In my experience, the 1800 doesn't have much headroom and is unforgiving with well recorded voice that has little or no audio compression. A lot of people make the mistake of trying to cram as much level onto the tape as possible, which inevitably leads to distortion. Distortion is very fatiguing to listen to, and given a choice I think most people would rather hear a little tape hiss (due to lower levels on tape) than **any** amount of distortion.

5.10 Scrubbing Audio

From: Jeff Cook jcook@his.com

The screwy rule for scrubbing multiple audio tracks is this:

If all speaker icons are filled in black, they will all scrub. If, however, one speaker icon is hollow, only that track will scrub. You can either scrub one, or all tracks. You can make a speaker icon hollow, or black by OPTION-clicking. Unfortunately the above rule prevents you from scrubbing only 3 of 4 tracks, etc., which sucks.

5.11 Soloing Audio

From: steveh@delhall.com (Steve Hullfish)

Solo track monitoring provides several advantages: You can overcome slowed playback and cuing when working with a complex sequence by isolating tracks for monitoring. You can quickly isolate an individual audio track without having to click several times in the monitor column to deselect all other tracks. You can monitor the upper layers of a composited effect apart from the lower layers. To select a track for solo monitoring: Press the Command key and click in the monitor column on the Track Selector panel, for the chosen video or audio track. The monitor icon is highlighted in green to indicate solo monitoring. To de-select solo monitoring: Press the Command key and click again in the monitor column. The monitor icons return to normal functionality.

6.00 GRAPHICS

6.01 Hints for Successful Avid Graphics

Martin Baumgartner's "Guide to Avid Graphics"

This extensive and well written article is located at
<http://www.anglepark.com/AvidFAQ/AvidFAQ.html>

6.02 Transferring a Photoshop title for use as a key

In Photoshop create a new image at 640x480 RGB, 72 dpi. Create a new alpha channel and proceed to set, position, and kern your type in the alpha channel (make sure your type is white and not black). Load that channel into your main RGB channel. Save the file as a PICT file...32 bit...no compression Run Media Composer Open a bin, or create a new one for the graphic Import the file into that bin...be sure to check the option that say something along the lines of "Invert Existing Alpha Channel" Click on "DONE" in the file import dialog box.... Word of caution....this is now a Matte Key...and under 5.21 MC software, Matte keys, as you may know, need to be rendered and will not play in real time.

6.03 Relink PICT files After Batch ReDigitizing

From: Steve Bayes@avid.com

After the sequence has been batch digitized but before any rerendering you should re-import PICT files and link them to the PICT files already in the sequence at low AVR. If you have used many PICT files and have combined them with effects, this method will save you lots of time compared to just replacing them by hand. Determine the PICT files needed in the finished sequence and isolate them in a bin. This could be done by opening all the bins with graphics, selecting the sequence and use "Find Media Relatives" in the bin fast menu. The graphics used will be highlighted and dragged into a new bin to isolate them. Click on the name of the first graphic (not the icon) and copy the name into the Macintosh clipboard cmd-C). Click on the icon of the graphic to highlight it and go to Clip->Modify->Source and paste the name of the clip as the new source. You will be limited to 32 characters and no punctuation, but it's a start and the idea is to make the name simple and obvious. Hit OK at all the little lectures about how terrible this is and you will probably die penniless, etc. Do this for all the graphics you will need to relink. Actually modifying master clips is pretty serious and should not be done unless part of a specific process. Import the necessary graphics one more time at the higher AVR. Modify their sources as well and this time, when you go to modify source, you will see the choices already in the "Choose Other Tapename" window. Just double click on the obvious names that match the name of the graphic. The simple procedure now is to delete all the low AVR graphic media in the Media Tool and relink the sequence. Make sure none of the boxes are checked in the relink dialogue. All your graphics in the sequence will be relinked to the higher AVR media and all of your effects will be intact (although unrendered). You can now render if you need to (don't forget to Recreate Title Media first!).

The more complex procedure is drag the sequence into a bin with just the high avr imported graphics and select all. Relink the sequence with "Relink to Selected". This will allow you to keep all the low AVR on the drives and linked to other versions of the sequence.

6.04 Converting Dos Graphics to Apple Graphics

From: Rob Lawson rlawson@panix.com

There's a nifty shareware program called GraphicConverter that will translate a bunch of different graphic file formats. You can get it from the Avid BBS. It will make Photoshop files into PICT files, and it'll deal with DOS & Windows files.

6.05 Graphics Importing / Sizes

From: Greg Staten greg_staten@avid.com

720 x 486 is the native (NTSC) frame size for the ABVB. All still graphics and animations should be imported at this size. Remember though that this size uses non-square pixels (to comply with CCIR 601 - often called D1 pixels). Currently the only Mac programs that have shipping versions that natively support CCIR 601 pixels are Adobe After Effects 3.0 and Electric Image Animation System. If you are using another animation program you cannot directly save to 720 x 486 as these programs work with square pixels natively, not non-square. Instead you should use one of the following two resolutions: 720 x 540 or 648 x 486. Each of these is a square pixel resolution that maintains either the full width detail (720 x 540) or the video fields (648 x 486). If you are creating a still graphic or an animation that is not field rendered* then you should use 720 x 540. If you are creating a field rendered animation then you should use 648 x 486. (720 x 540 should never be used for field rendered animation). Once you have created your animation you should resize it to exactly 720 x 486. This way the animation is at the native frame size of the Media Composer. This is critical for the fastest import with the Media Composer codec. I usually use DeBabelizer or After Effects to do the resize. After Effects might seem like overkill to do this, but it has the best safe color filtering I've found and use it to make sure the animation is legal both in luminance and chrominance (DeBabelizer only corrects for chrominance). As far as the second part of your question, I like to bring animations in using the Media Composer codec. That way the animation pours into the system as fast as possible. With version 2.2 I've found no significant difference in image quality between it and the Animation codec. The only disadvantage of the Media Composer codec is that it doesn't support alpha channels. For alpha channel importing I use, again, either After Effects or DeBabelizer (usually AE) and split the alpha channel out to its own movie. After Effects is particularly good and fast at this.

* Field rendering is a rendering process that renders separate information into each video field of every frame. This results in much smoother motion in the animation - not all programs can field render though.

PAL Information:

PAL is in some ways a little easier. The native frame size is 720 x 576. If the program being used can't support CCIR 601 pixels natively, use 768 x 576. Then, resize to 720 x 576.

6.06 Importing Pict Files

Importing pict-files is different, since it is not a native media file format. It imports exactly the same because it has the correct aspect ratio (3x4), and the Avid is removing the extra horizontal lines. The result is always a bit cruder than resizing first.

The import check boxes "force fit to screen" and "maintain aspect ratio" can easily be misunderstood- they both refer to square pixel ratios (640x480=3x4), not D1 pixels. A pict made in 720x540 will import in correct ratio whichever box you check, a pict made in 720x486 needs to be forced to screen.

From PGLUE2000@aol.com

If you have the "maintain aspect ratio" option selected, the dpi will matter. I always build my graphics at 72 dpi, or higher, in Photoshop at EXACTLY 720x540 pixel ratio. Then I resize it to 720x486 before saving the last time. On importing, I select "force to fit screen" so I don't have to worry about the dpi. If you are working at 72 dpi it won't matter which you have selected ("maintain aspect ratio" or "force to fit screen"), either way it works out the same.

What really matters is the aspect ratio (expressed W:H). If the original was created at a 1.33:1 in Photoshop (720/540) aspect ratio it will be resized by Media Composer to 1.48:1 (720/486) to meet the CCIR601 spec, unless you have resized it already. In terms of size, position, shape and object relationships you can import the graphic at 720x540 or 720x486 and the result will be the same, but Photoshop does a much cleaner resize than MediaComposer, so it is better to do it in that application first. (if yo don't believe it, do a test with a diagonal line across the screen)

The last chapter in the tale is to answer to this question: "why do we have to do all this resizing anyway?". You create a graphic that looks just right at 720x540, resize it to 720x486 and it looks squashed, import it into MC and it stays 720x486 but looks like the 720x540, version which is what you wanted in the first place. NTSC pixels are taller than the square pixels in Photoshop, so you mash the image a little going in, so it looks right coming back out as video.

6.07 QuickTime Tips

From: martinb@anglepark.com (Martin Baumgaertner)

I'm in the midst of converting about a half hour (approx. fifty different clips) of Avid media into QT MooV's for a intranet training application. The Composer does actually work pretty well for this, but you do have to use the Composer QT codec as an intermediate step. Using the native Composer codec, export is something like three or four times real-time; it's pretty quick. We use it to offload the clips to another machine for compression.

Rather than exporting directly to your final resolution/size/compression settings from the Avid, it's best to export a full bandwidth Composer codec (at whatever AVR you're working at) MooV which is portable to any other machine that has the codec installed. This is nice, because compressing the Avid exported MooV's can take a bit of time. At my particular settings (about 200k per second, 15 frames, Indeo codec) my 7100/80 has been churning them out at just under an hour per single minute of finished MooV. Yes, that does mean about 30 hours of compressing for a half hour of clips. But... I've been using Terran Interactive's MovieCleaner Pro (<http://www.terran-int.com/>) (This link was checked on 12/27/99) to downward compress the high-resolution Avid MooV's. It's batchable, it gives you a ton of configurable settings, and will invariably give you better output than direct output from the Composer. In addition to the standard program, they now also have a wmv MooV plug-in that adds features like "fast start," embedded HTML, and QT 2.5 compliance. I purchased the program via e-mail, and was working with it an hour after I first called them. Plus, unlike the CD-ROM movie tool in Adobe Premiere, MovieCleaner has yet to crash the Avid codec. This REALLY impressed me. It's missing several minor features (like settings for the audio block size) but has a lot of nice additions (like audio and video fade-ins and fade-outs) you wouldn't expect.

In a recent "Avid Answers" newsletter, either Greg Staten or Mark Geffen (I remember recognizing the name) wrote a detailed article about using MovieCleaner with Avids. It's very thorough, and you should track it down. Oh yeah - one more thing. To get decent audio, be sure to really crank your levels when digitizing. It's really your only practical way of getting a decent level into your QT MooV's without a lot of work later. Get as close to zero on

the digital meter that you can, without clipping. I use a slight limiting in line to get a few more dBs of headroom. This will really help the apparent

loudness of your clips when they play out of those terrible built-in computer speakers. I've even been known to let a few odd samples clip now and then... who'll hear it in 8 bit 11 kHz?

6.08 Using Photoshop for Titles

From: Greg Staten greg_staten@avid.com

Two things you can do to make them look better. The first would be to make sure the text is anti-aliased in Photoshop. But the second is equally important. You need to make sure the files are properly sized for import. It is critical that the files be sized to the native file size of the Media Composer prior to import. The Media Composer does a quick and dirty resize and will introduce what can appear to be aliasing in the graphic. Here are the steps for creating a graphic for PAL. If you follow these rules you will have excellent results:

1. Create a file at 768 x 576 in Photoshop.
2. Create your title and key. Be sure to anti-alias the text.
3. (PAL ABVB) Resize (using the Image -> Image Size command) the file to a size of 720 x 576. The image will now be optically distorted within Photoshop. This is normal.
4. Save the file and import into the Media Composer.

Step 3 is the critical step. The sizes I listed to resize to (720 x 576 and 640 x 576) are the native frame sizes for PAL images in the Composer. If the file being imported is not at the native frame size, the Composer resizes it. The gotcha is that Composer uses a quick-and-dirty resize. You will always have better results if you do the resize prior to importing and import it at the native size. This is particularly true for PAL NuVista, as the Composer is resizing from a width of 768 to a width of 640. BTW: For the benefit of those on the list in NTSC land, here are the steps for NTSC:

NTSC NuVista:

1. Create a file at 640 x 480 in Photoshop.
2. Create your title and key. Be sure to anti-alias the text.
3. Save the file and import into the Media Composer.

NTSC ABVB:

1. Create a file at 720 x 540 in Photoshop.
2. Create your title and key. Be sure to anti-alias the text.
3. Resize (using the Image -> Image Size command) the file to a size of 720 x 486. The image will now be optically distorted within Photoshop. This is normal.
4. Save the file and import into the Media Composer.

6.09 3rd Party Plug-Ins

From: "Knut A. Helgeland" kahel@mediadesign.no

Quick Renders:

KPT 2.1 Gaussian Electrify (Vaseline on the lens)

KPT 2.1 Gaussian Glow (Blurs everything except for black)

KPT 2.1 Gaussian Weave (Star Filter)

Deep Devices Retroscan (Adds TV scanlines) *Nice for accentuating bad Vhs-stuff... not PPC though...

Some Adobe Gallery Effects can be used with caution.. (all taking forever to render):

GE Grain

GE Film Grain

GE Dark Strokes

GE Diffuse Glow

GE Glowing Edges

GE Plastic Wrap

6.10 Black and White Chromakey

From: James_Burke@avid.com

If you have the 3D option, create a hi-con matte first you sacrifice real-time renders but it gives you the flexibility to control the color of the foreground of your key.

Use the 3D chromakey on your green screen shot as you normally would, but in the parameters, turn on background color (set to black), and crank highlight up with the following settings:

```
0      Soft
100 Intensity
100 Radius
0      Angle
100 Aspct
0      X
0      Y
```

This will give you a B&W hi-con of your chromakey clip that you can place a matte key effect on (the matte key will need to be inverted, since we look for white as the background). Place the green screen master clip under this matte key, then place a color effect on this clip, you can now strip the color without affecting the key or the background.

6.11 Page Turn Titles

From: "Mitch Pierce" mitchp@ix6.ix.netcom.com

Q: I was playing with a title in the Pinnacle/DVE and trying to do a page turn and could not get the back of it to appear. That is when it would turn it would vanish and reappear when the front side turned completely around.

A:

1. Create your page turn on V2
2. Chose "Show Front Only" from the Fast Menu (default is "Tuck Over")
3. Save the effect with source by Option-Click dragging the 3D icon to a bin.
4. Place the saved effect in the Source Monitor
5. Edit the saved effect in sync onto V3 and change "Show Front Only" to "Show back Only"

6.12 Color Banding in Photoshop Graphic

From: Gary Pearce gary.pearce@mms.net

Q: I'm having a problem with banding in a full-screen, blue gradient-sweep background behind a client's logo.....

A: You should try adding a little *Noise* to the blue background in Photoshop. FILTER>NOISE>ADD NOISE> 1-?

6.13 Import from Infnit!

From: Curtis Nichols curtisn@airmail.net

I've recently discovered a very easy way to bring in Chyron Infnit RGBa files one at a time. Your patience and time will dictate how many pages you feel are worthy of this method. Using Fetch, connect to the Infnit. Go to the "Remote" menu, and pull down to "Get Directories & Files" Type in the directory and file: C/INFINIT/TIFA/.1000. C is the drive, INFINIT is the message directory, TIFA is the command to convert to a TIFF file with alpha, and .1000 is the message number. Fetch will ask for a place to save the file, and it will give you the opportunity to save it with type and creator codes. SAve it anywhere, and don't specify type or creator. The conversion takes 15-20 seconds per page. You will then have that Infnit RGBa message on your Mac as a TIFF file. Start up Photoshop, and use Open. In the Open dialogue box, specify "Show all

Files", and the format as TIFF. The file will open, and is ready to be saved out to the format of your choice. I don't know that MC will open the TIFF file without going through P'shop. Haven't tried that yet.

6.14 Photoshop Settings

From: Frank Capria fcapria@earthlink.net

For those of you who have Photoshop 5.0 be aware that its handling of RGB color has changed significantly. Leaving Photoshop's default color settings can cause images exported from and imported into the Composer to shift in color. Be sure to set your color settings as follows:

FILE > COLOR SETTINGS > RGB -- Apple RGB and uncheck display using monitor compensation

FILE > COLOR SETTINGS > PROFILE SETUP -- Assumed Profile = Apple RGB, Profile mismatch = ignore.

If anybody wants my Avid-friendly Photoshop 5 prefs for the Mac email me directly and I'll send them on. Make sure you save your actions before replacing the prefs!

6.15 Photoshop Safe Title Template

From: Jaime Fowler jaime.fowler@dmec.com

For those with web access, both NuVista and ABVB versions of a Photoshop safe title template can be downloaded from our website at <http://www.dmec.com> . Go to the "Tools" page then download directly. Thanks to James Burke, multimedia guru at Avid for creating these templates. They are free.

6.16 Pict Sequence to QT Moovie

From: "Critical Mass Productions, L.L.C." cmp@flash.net

A good tool for turning a pict sequence into a QT movie is a shareware title called "MooVer" - it can run in the background (!) and use the Avid codec for the QT compression, so it can really save time for you. No more long imports that waste your time - simply run the conversion in the background & then import quickly when complete. There are a few tricks to making MooVer work - but read the dox & you should be fine. Until Avid supports QT with alpha, though, you lose the alpha channel with this method.

7.00 MEDIA STORAGE

7.01 Troubleshooting Avid Disk Drives

From: Tracey_Gonynor@partners.avid.com (Tracey Gonynor)

These steps are outlined by avid tech support for failing disk drives:

1. recabling scsi connections
2. reseating scsi accelerator boards
3. Isolating the drive on scsi chain, take others off
4. Cabling with different scsi connections
5. Running Norton Disk Doctor on Drives--yes, version 3.2 is supported for striped drives.
6. Run Disk First Aid
7. Run Drive updater
8. Run SE4 updater with drives disconnected.
9. Repartitioning the drives-(you will lose media)
10. Running a Read Data Test in Avid Drive Utility--very thorough, reassigning defects.
11. Redigitizing Media
12. Reinstalling extensions such as avid init or avid stripe--taking out other extensions known to conflict.
13. If you are having underrun problems--are all effects rendered ? Have you tried submasters over the problem areas ? Is the media on an appropriate drive for it's resolution ?
14. Are there Non-Avid drives on the Scsi chain ? Are there any other devices---syquest drives, CD roms, Scanners on the SCSI Chain.
15. Does each device have a separate scsi id ?
16. Try connecting drive to native scsi port.
17. Zap the Pram
18. Rebuild the desktop

7.02 Drive Optimizing

From: Steve_Bayes@avid.com

Avid does not recommend reformatting for clearing drives off. The best way to do it quickly and safely is to use the Aviddrive Utility to erase the drives. This is very different from formatting because

1. it takes *a lot* less time and
2. reformatting, if interrupted for any reason, will force you to send the drive back to Avid to be replaced.

Reformatting should be a last resort to save a crashed drive and not a standard procedure. It is available in the Aviddrive Utility but you need to hold down the option and command keys simultaneously to get "erase" to change to "format". There is a reason it is hidden. Reformatting also keeps Avid from diagnosing what caused your drive to have problems if you need to send it back since the evidence has been wiped.

7.03 DLT

7.03.1 DLT Information

From: newegg@inforamp.net

Avid sells a bunch of DLT machines, their most common is the DLT20 which is a Quantum machine (known as DLT4000). This is a single DLT loader which can use a 20gig and smaller tapes. Avid's DLTs come with Cheyenne's Arcserve utility for backup and restoring. I like Arcserve although it took a little while to get used to. Other users have reported using Dantz's Retrospect utility with good success. Also another newer utility called Mezzo Media Archiver from Grey Matter

Response has been growing in popularity because its ease-of-use. Using a DLT20 and Arcserve to restore a 30GB project would take approximately 5 1/2 to 6 hours. But you'd need to do a tape switch after the first 20gigs. There are multiple tape loaders to automate this however. There's a mac utility called StorageCalc (or StorageTool?) that will help calculate approximate transfer speeds with different systems (ATM, DLT, 28.8 modem..)

Cheyenne: <http://www.cheyenne.com/>

Dantz: <http://www.dantz.com/>

Mezzo: <http://www.mezzogmr.com/>

7.03.2 DLT Not Mounting

From: iwilson@c032.aone.net.au

When a DLT fails to mount you are denied access to utilities that can enable to recover the data. The tape just searches to the end of the tape then winds back to the head and repeats this loop. We have discovered a way to force the DLT to mount. and in most cases allowing you to recover the data. When the tape gets into this loop we turn the DLT power of and on with around half a second pause in between. This appears to trick the computer into thinking it has the right tape and the tape Icon with the correct tape number appears in the software. Allow the tape then to spool back to the head and park. If it fails to do this and goes back in the loop repeat the turn off procedure. When the tape is parked. select scan tape from tape utilities which is under UTILITIES pulldown. This scans all sessions on the tape and places them in RAM. This is a slow process and takes around 15 minutes per GB to complete. When this is done the tape will park again. You should then be able to write a new session with a small trash file which we believe forces some sort of end of data marker that the tape has to see to prevent it going into its loop. If it successfully does this it will mount OK. Some caviets. In SCSI parlance this is a major no no, you would only do this if the data cannot be recovered in any other way. I am sure it does not do the hardware much good. Somebody at there may wish to comment on that possibility. This company does not suggest you do this and by this statement absolves it self of any culpability. So why are these tapes starting to do this when we have had 12 months of no problems. One suggestion is that as we are running an inline terminator as we were running a Quadra 950 and are now running a 8100/100 (they are supposed to have smart terminatio), this should come out. We have found in the past the lack of such a termination gave us problems with both the DLT and the 3D option. Never the less we have now taken it out and we will see what happens.

7.03.3 DLT (Data Recovery)

From: info@caplight.com (Captured Light Studio, Inc.)

The company we had recover our DLT is:

Ovation Data Services, Inc.
10650 Haddington Dr
Houston, TX 77043
(713)464-1300
Attn Greg

It's expensive (\$1,400) and NOT guaranteed. We found that the tape they "recovered" for us still had bad header info and much of the tape was still useless. They, in turn, directed us to another company who would repair the header info and guarantee the tape. Cost was over \$10k. We punted and re-built/reshot a fair amount of the program.

7.04 Whacking Hard Drives

From: Eric.Peters@avid.com

As a last resort before giving up on a drive which won't start, turn it on and give it a "firm" whack on the side with your fist, and you will often get it started. The problem with the disk is called "stiction," a combination of "sticking" and "friction." It is where the heads bond to the disk platters, and the drive motor does not have enough torque to get started. Your "jolt" overcomes the problem, and the motor starts turning. In my experience, about half the time the problem will not recur, but the other half of the time, the problem will reappear the next time the drive is stopped. The reason it sometimes fixes itself is that spinning may redistribute the lubricant and so prevent the problem from happening again. Stiction seems to occur most often on disks which are seldom if ever shut down. When they are finally stopped, either deliberately, or because of a power failure, the problem appears. A theory is over time the lubricant may acquire "thin spots" which, when the disk stops, allow the head to stick. If a disk is shut down and restarted regularly, it tends to redistribute its lubricant, often avoiding the problem. The whack should be quite firm--perhaps enough to knock a baseball across the room (but not out of the park! ;-). Dropping the drive on the floor might actually be counterproductive, in that it may smash the heads even harder against the disk surface, increasing the bonding. I have done this process myself on more than half a dozen different disks, and it has >always< been successful for me; at least in getting the disk running "one last time." I usually aim my fist for the middle of the right side of the box. If it's really the end of the line for a drive, you can try hitting it several times, gradually increasing the force each time, until it either starts or your hand hurts too much! It's not a time to be gentle! Once you get it running, it is best to copy everything off the drive, as it may be your last chance. A final note: They used to issue our astronauts rubber mallets to take with them on space missions. The code was "Cycle the switch" on a particular piece of equipment, which meant "Hit it with the hammer, and see if you can get it going!" As a general technique with inanimate objects, whacking has an honorable history, and it seems to apply to a wide range of high tech gear (but it's definitely NOT recommended for living things!).

7.05 Full Media Drives

From: Jeff.Cook jcook@his.com

Q: Today I was editing along and minding my own business when suddenly the system said that THE VOLUME IS FULL--what is this? Then the system started acting strange and finally I tried to shut it down and it would not let me close out the bins.

A: Sounds like you have an absolutely full hard drive somewhere, which is a bad thing but easily fixable. First understand that your system works in RAM memory and occasionally writes stuff to the hard drive. This might be things like saving a new version of a bin (like it wants to when you quit out), updating the Media Database (directory), and even rendering effects and dissolves. You probably are getting a "Reconstructing Media Database" or similar warning quite often as well. You need to move a couple of big files off the full drive and onto a less full one, and you do this at the FINDER level. So quit out of Media Composer. Double click all hard drive icons on the desktop. Find the fullest one, click on SIZE to sort. Drag the biggest two or three files to the emptiest other drive. Now here's the confusion. It doesn't delete the old files from the full drive, so you have to do it yourself. Just drag those same files out of the full drive and into the trash. NOW EMPTY THE TRASH. That's it. When you fire up Media Composer again, it will sort out that mess by "Reconstructing Media Database" again, and you should be fine from then on. Other than watching your storage limits while digitizing, it might be a good idea NOT to let things render to the EFFECT SOURCE DISK like it so helpfully suggests. This is a darn good way to top off a drive and cause this problem all over again.

7.06 Changing the Project Name of a Clip

From: Basil96009@aol.com

1. Make a new bin in your current misnamed project.
2. Drag ALL of your clips out of the existing bins into the new bin.
3. Save Bin; close misnamed Project.
4. Create/Open New Correctly Named Project.
5. Open the new bin that you created in the old misnamed project.
6. Select Bin View that shows Source and Project Name. You should see your old misnamed projects.
7. Sort by Source. Select groups of clips with a common source and choose Modify under the Clip Menu.
8. Modify the Source name to the exact same name.
9. Create "new" source. If old source was 001, make "new" source 001. This will preserve any number schemes you may have created for EDL purposes. Also, your old sequences will relink.
10. After creation, select "OK" to the next 3 warning dialogs.
11. Watch as the project name in your bin changes to the new correct project name.
12. Open the bin(s) that contain your sequences from the old project. They will remain relinked.
13. Finally, create new bins in your new project and segregate your clips as you did in the old project. You're done. The only thing that's left to deal with is the effect media that has been rendered.
14. It will retain the old misnamed project name. Live with it. Or delete the effects and rerender.
15. Any new effect media created will have the new project name.
16. Get yourself a copy of Tony Black's MediaMover and manage your media more effectively.

7.07 Disappearing Media

From: lcongleton@earthlink.net

Before redigitizing any media that is offline, there are a few tricks you should try to locate the missing media.

1. Highlight a clip that is offline (or more than one clip) and choose RELINK from the Clip pulldown menu. When prompted, choose ALL AVAILABLE for the drives to search, and click the MASTER CLIPS box. Click OK. If it doesn't work, you'll see a message that NO CLIPS WERE RELINKED. If you don't see that message, it worked. Sometimes the missing media won't reappear in a sequence if you are parked on the clip. Just move forward and back a little and the media should reappear.
2. Go to the drive partitions and delete the MEDIA DATABASE files. Go back to Composer forcing these to rebuild.
3. If all the missing media is from the SAME drive or the SAME partition, run Norton's Disk Doctor on the drive. It could be there is something wrong with the drive, and you should definitely check it out.

7.08 Modifying Clips (RELINK)

Q: I inadvertently digitized some clips without A1 track. I tried to modify clip/add A1 but message said "cannot modify, must undigitize".

From: Basil96009@aol.com

A: You must unlink first.

1. Highlight clips, press Control-Shift and select Unlink command in Clip Menu.
2. Highlight clips; Modify tracks as desired.
3. Highlight clips; select Relink under Clip Menu. Check master clips box.
4. Batch digitize clips, selecting checkbox for media unavailable.

Composer will digitize only the tracks you've added. No need to use the mediatool for this procedure.

7.09 Video Resolutions

From: "Mitch Pierce" mitchp@ix21.ix.netcom.com

AVR 75 will USUALLY playback real time effects on a striped pair of narrow drives. Due to Avid's variable compression it cannot be guaranteed if you have two complex streams of video, therefore it is NOT supported. The same holds true when using AVR 77 on a striped pair of fast & wide drives. If AVR 77 is greyed out in the compression tool you can access it by unchecking the drive filtering box in the General Settings. If your system supports AVR 77 and it does not appear in the compression tool check the rev of the Janus board. You must have rev. C or later for for AVR 77 to appear.

The rules are:

- * Single stream AVR 75 = Striped narrow drives
- * Dual stream AVR 75 or Single stream AVR 77= Striped wide drives OR 4 way striped narrow drives.
- * Dual stream AVR 77 is NOT supported

Try to minimize the amount of work the drives have to do. When you can it is best to digitize your audio to a different set of drives than your video. If you only have one set of drives put the audio and video on the same partition.

8.00 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

8.01 Additional Book for Media Composer

Media Composer Techniques & Tips.

Over 100 illustrated and indexed pages full of the techniques, tricks, and hidden commands that you need to know to become real power user.

Contact Basil at: 960Basil09@aol.com

8.02 Instructional Videotape

Basic Skills for the Avid Media Composer is now available.

This 35 minute video tape teaches the essential skills for operating the media composer. It covers: 1) Starting a project, 2) Logging & Digitizing, 3) Editing, and 4) Outputting to EDL or video tape. Includes a 24 page video guide.

For more information contact:

Jeff Sielaff

Teacup Media

11728 Dorothy St.

Los Angeles, CA 90049

310-826-5660

8.03 EDL-Max

EDL Max is a EDL utility written by Brooks Harris. 73040.3530@compuserve.com

<http://www.edlmax.com/>

8.04 Avid Internet Resources

From: benjamin.grosser.grosser@delphi.beckman.uiuc.edu

Don't forget about my Avid Mailing-List Web Archive. Good place to go when you dropped off the list and missed a few, or if you just need to search old posts.

<http://vizlab.beckman.uiuc.edu/avid/mail-archive> This link was confirmed on: 12/27/99

From: LorMiller@aol.com

Anyone else who'd like the Avid Troubleshooter HyperCard stack can DL it right from my website, bottom, opening screen, as of now. It'll take a few minutes, it's around 1MB. Tell me if you find the stack useful. (It's helped me on three occasions, and I built it!)

<http://members.aol.com/NeoTron1>

From: Jaime Fowler

Just a note that Digital Media's "Tools" web page is back up again. No spam here, it's all free and includes Basil's 6.5.1 tips, downloadable demos of Trakker's Slingshot software, free 3D effects bins, timecode calculators, the 6.5 film correction mattes and more.

<http://www.filmcamp.com/index.html>

8.05 After Effects List

From: Wes Plate wes@gocougs.wsu.edu

Here's some example of the commands our maillist understands.

SUBSCRIBE AE-List operation_mode This command subscribes the author of the message to the mailing list AE-List in the operation_mode mode. The operation_mode can be either DIGEST or FEED. If the operation_mode keyword is omitted, the FEED mode is used. The command can be shortened to SUB: If the subscription succeeds, the Introduction message is sent to the user. subscribe AE-List feed sub AE-List digest UNSUBSCRIBE AE-List This command cancels the message author subscription to the mailing list AE-List. The command can be shortened to UNSUB:

unsub AE-List

CHECK or WHICH This command checks all mailing lists on this CommuniGate System and returns the names of all the lists the message author is subscribed to. INFO AE-List This command returns the text from the Introduction file of the specified list. INDEX AE-List This command returns the list of the archived Digest files for the specified list. GET AE-List file_name This command retrieves the specified Digest file. CONTENTS AE-List file_name This command retrieves the specified Digest file, but it sends the Table of Contents only. QUIT or END This command ends message processing with the ListServer. The rest of the message body text is ignored. Message processing also stops at the lines that start with "--" or ">>". HELP This command returns the description of the services provided with the Maillist server. Simplified Subscription To simplify the subscription process, an alternative subscribing method is supported: to subscribe to a mailing list one should send any message to the list_name-ON account. Example: AE-List-ON@softmotion.com To unsubscribe, any message should be sent to the list_name-Off account: Example: AE-List-Off@softmotion.com Posting Messages To post a message on a AE-List mailing list, it should be sent to the address: AE-List@softmotion.com

8.06 Adding ram to a Quadra

This is a very simple procedure actually. We upgraded once from 28 to 40Megs and had an installer do it. I watched and did the second one myself when we went from 40 to 52M. (I have since even upgraded the RAM in our SGI.) I would suggest getting 52M. This should cost about \$1200. Here's the deal. You have four banks of ram, each bank has slots for four SIMMS chips. Each bank must have the same size chip. Right now you probably have one bank with four 4Meg chips (totaling 16M) and the other three banks have all 1Meg chips (3X4X1= 12M) for a total of 28Megs. I have heard that 8Meg chips are unstable for some reason. This is probably not true, but it scared me. When we upgraded we could have taken out one bank of 1Meg chips (losing 4M of RAM) then replaced them with 16Meg chips (adding 16x4 or 64M for a net gain of 60M bringing our system to 16+64+4+4=88Megs. That seemed excessive. So we pulled out two banks of 1Meg chips (losing 8 Megs) and replaced them with 4Meg chips (4X4X2=32Megs) plus what was in the other two banks gave us 16+16+16+4=52 Megs. If you only want 40Megs of RAM, just replace one bank of 1Meg chips then you'll have 16+16+4+4=40Megs. Some places will buy back your old 1Meg chips, or you could try putting them in another Mac in the facility. Our Power PC and other Quadra both were incompatible because the number of pins on each chip varies in a couple of the models. The new models have 72 and the old ones have 32 or something like that. Anyway, it means we have 8 Megs of 1Meg chips sitting in a drawer. We can't put them in our other Avid either because all Avids are shipped with all the banks full of at least 1 Megchips.

Now for the installation. You open up your Mac. Locate the four banks of RAM. There is an order to the banks. The first bank should have the most RAM, the second bank should have the same as the first or less, and so on. As I said before, each bank must have only one size chip. Therefore, if you bought four 4Meg SIMMS chips, they need to go in the second bank (if you're upgrading from 28) otherwise start with the third bank. You must be wearing an Anti-static

bracelet on your arm with a cord attached to some metal on the computer. Pull out the old RAM chips by pivoting them forward until you hear a little click, then gently lifting them out. Once they're all out, the bigger RAM goes in their place by gently sliding them into place then tilting them back until they click into place. Put the old RAM chips in the anti-static packing that the new RAM was delivered in and store it safely or send it away if you found a place to sell them. Don't buy your RAM from Avid. It'll be cheaper and just as dependable from whatever cheap, local vendor you can find. Like I said, four 4 Meg chips should be about \$600. Probably even a little cheaper. If you don't want to do the install, we had a guy come to our facility and put it in for \$50 the first time.

8.07 Photoshop Hints on the Web

<http://the-tech.mit.edu/KPT/KPT.html> is the URL for Kai's web page. It's a Netscape 1.1 oriented page, but you should be able to get some info from any browser. All his Tips and Tricks files are archived at this site.

8.08 Sources for Mac Fonts

You might try the Berkeley Mac User Group (BMUG) Font ROM. It has over 1000 shareware and freeware fonts and includes TrueType and Postscript, and every Adobe screen font up to #289. I've seen it on sale from BMUG for \$15.00. They can be reached at.

1-800-776-BMUG.
BMUG, Inc.
1442A Walnut St. #62
Berkeley, CA 94709-1496
USA

You can also find shareware fonts (fee \$5-\$20) on America Online (in the DTP forum), and, I hear, on CompuServe. Also, I got the "Typecase" CD-ROM, with 230 fonts, at the local Egghead for \$30. Many of the cheap shareware CD-ROMs also contain fonts. For more money, try the Image Club catalog. Image Club is on the Web at <http://www.imageclub.com/> or call 800-387-9193 for a catalog. The catalog is fun because it has lots of design tips. Sometimes you can find good ideas, then find a shareware version of their fonts. For example, Image Club's Fajita (very popular right now, and a good one for certain videos) is the same as the shareware fonts Salsa or Taco Salad, both of which are available for slightly less on America Online. From: "Liane Rozzell (PIO)" lrozzell@Census.GOV If you have access to the World Wide Web, try these sites: Font Fairy Free Fonts <http://208.233.94.70/fontfairy/>

From: Joshua Schwarz postjosh@yahoo.com

Try checking the "Mac Fontaholics" site
<http://www.flash.net/~fontahol/>.

8.09 Font Conversion

From: "Helgi Thor" thor@baydenet.com.br

You can use a utility called TTConverter to convert PC true type fonts to Mac font.
You should be able to find it at <http://kemo.fontaddict.com/>

8.10 Avid Keyboard Cables

From: Alan Stewart alan_stewart@avid.com

Avid sells a heavy duty 25' ADB extension cable as a option on Airplay systems. Part number 0070-00145-01. \$65.00.
Call your telesales rep.

An alternate source for custom length heavy duty ADB cables is:

QVS Computer Supply
800-344-3371

QVS is a wholesaler but they will connect the customer with a dealer in his area for purchase.

For long runs (over 50') an active device is better. As Matthew Weiner mentioned, Gefen Systems is a good choice. This is in use at our CNN-HN server site in Atlanta. Gefen seems eager to work with Avid customers. Their TSE100 S/R allows a user to work up to 500 feet away from their computer. The system includes sending and receiving units and goes for \$495. The boxes contain standard DB-15 for UI video and 4 pin mini DIN for ADB. ADB data is extended via RJ-11 phone cable and connectors. UI video is extended via BNC connectors for RGB and sync. For more info:

Doug Perkins
800-545-6900
Gefen Systems
6261 Variel Ave. Suite C
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

Another choice is:

Cybex
4912 Research Dr.
Huntsville, AL 35805
205-430-4000

Their MacCompanion units are in use at our CNN-fn server site in New York City. It's similar in design to the Gefen unit but uses a custom length multi-conductor cable to connect between the send and receive units. I believe the price is similar to the Gefen unit.

For monitor only extensions, a good choice is:

Extron Electronics
13554 Larwin Circle
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
(310) 802-2741
(800) 633-9876

Extron makes adapters, extenders, switchers and distribution amplifiers (for clean multiple monitor feeds). They have a nice, fat, glossy catalog.

8.11 Monitor Shielding - Mu Metal

From: Eric.Peters@avid.com

Call Magnetic Shield Corporation at 708-766-7800 and ask for their magnetic shielding catalog. You can also purchase from Magnetic Shield Corporation a design kit with mumetal and steel sheets/foils for \$129 that includes a magnetic field probe (only \$79 without the probe).

Because this response was geared to my compass question, the foil and probe may or may not be serviceable for solving a monitor interference problem. But at least this company provides the Mu metal hunter with a toe-hold on his search.

8.12 Assistant Editors Book

From: AvidCuttr@aol.com

I have written a book called *The Digital Editing Room Handbook, An Assistant Editor's Guide To The Avid*.

The book is available from:

Hazeldean House Publishing P.O. Box 57831 Sherman Oaks, CA 91413

\$24.95 + \$3.00 shipping + handling

(CA residents add sales tax, 8.25%)

8.13 Avid Handbook

From: "Charles A. Johnson" edithous@flash.net

The book is available at amazon.com, the ISBN is 0-240-80347-7 or check out Focal Press web site at www.bh.com/focalpress.

8.14 After Effects to Avid

From: Wes.Plate wplate@pinnaclestudios.com

When exporting QuickTime from the Avid Media Composer, you can either export at 720x486 or 720x540. Which aspect ratio is used can be decided between the designer and the editor. Using 720x540 presents certain advantages to the designer in After Effects, and there is very little quality loss when exporting at this size. When exporting QuickTime from the Avid Media Composer, export at a frame rate of 29.97. When naming QuickTime movies, append your file name with codec/AVR information. Since its hard to know which codec a movie was created with, its helpful to have that information immediately available in the file name. Examples would be, a movie created at AVR77 (Media Composer codec) could be named "Movie_77", a movie using AVR6s could be named "Movie_6s", and a movie created using the animation codec could be "Movie_anim". Its very helpful from the editors end to know what the codec is, as well as what AVR setting was used. If creating movies in AE that will be composited in the Avid using alpha mattes, it is extremely beneficial NOT to save RGB+Alpha using the animation codec. Instead, create a second Output Module, and save out the RGB graphic fill (Movie_77) and alpha matte (Movie(alpha)_77) as separate movies using the Avid Codec. Then the matte key effect can be applied in the Avid. When rendering movies intended for the Avid, render at 720x486 D1. If you're working in 720x540, simply nest that comp inside a 720x486 D1 comp for rendering. As a rule (there can be exceptions), do NOT render at 720x540 and then stretch to 720x486 in your output module. Render from AE at a frame rate of 29.97. I've had a lot of problems in the past with the Avid choking while playing back complex sequences containing QuickTime movies. At playback, audio sync is lost and the message appears: "...Display Missed Frame Advance." This problem has been successfully dealt with by adding "pad" to the heads and tails of movies. An extra 10 or more frames added to the front and back of your render can really be helpful. You may consider giving these frames a look other than black, so the editor knows exactly a which frame your movie begins. When separating field in AE, movies from the Avid should be interpreted as Upper Field First. Same is true for field rendering.

From: Doug.Hall@crowne.com

It's mostly repeats the excellent information that Wes has already posted but Adobe also has a nice page explaining how to transfer AE files to and from an Avid. <http://www.adobe.com/supportservice/custsupport/SOLUTIONS/141b2.htm>

8.15 Dropframe Time Code

From: steveh@delhall.com (Steve Hullfish)

[This is the best explanation of DF code I have ever seen! -Andy] Drop frame time code is like a skyscraper. None of them have a 13th floor (check this out the next time you're in an elevator) but you KNOW they don't leave a big hole where the 13th floor should be. They just misname the 13th floor as the 14th floor, then misname every floor above it as well. Same with drop frame. The frame of motion isn't dropped or skipped, they just rename the frame so that by the time you have played through an hour of footage (starting at 01;00;00;00), you are looking at frame 02;00;00;00. (With NDF TC, this is not exactly true, since after an hour of NDF, you're on something like frame 02:00:03:00.) These three seconds are hardly crucial in the grand scheme of things, unless you are at the end of the final episode of Seinfeld and it's that \$750,000 Avid-cut American Express commercial that gets upcut by three seconds. That's why DF is usually reserved for broadcast while NDF is used in non-time crucial applications or where it's more important to be able to do seasy math to calculate frame positions.

8.16 Online Copyright Tutorial

From: philipmh@charisma.com.au (Philip Hodgetts)

An Educational Service of the Indiana University Copyright Management Center
Kenneth D. Crews, Director

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We hope to offer the tutorial again during fall 1998, probably starting in early September. Details about the schedule and offering will be available on the IU Copyright Management Center website by late summer. Visit the site at:
<http://www.iupui.edu/~copyinfo/home.html>

Please share this information with your colleagues and invite them to enroll.

8.17 MPAA Rating Graphic

From: "G. Robin Gilmore" Robin@VECvideo.com

Try <http://www.mpa.org/>

8.18 Test Patterns

From: [Brad Hagen brad@videoresources.com](mailto:Brad.Hagen@videoresources.com)

You can check out this web site for a very complete collection of US and European test patterns. Very cool.

<http://www.hats.stevens.com/pics/test.html>

8.19 Photoshop Resource

cooltype--A Resource for Adobe Photoshop Tips and Tricks

<http://www.cooltype.com/>

Cooltype provides an excellent, well organized collection of Adobe Photoshop tips and tricks from Nick Ustinov and others experienced in using Photoshop's features. Although maintained by Mr. Ustinov, the website is sponsored by Thunder Lizard Productions. The tips and tricks are all listed on the main page by type of effect, with the most recent additions being tagged with a gif entitled "new." Effects include glass, chrome, stone, oil, etc. Each technique for achieving a particular effect is detailed in a step-by-step fashion and is accompanied with graphical examples that facilitate learning.

8.20 Photoshop Title Tip

From: "Mark" prod212@llano.net

The "crappy" edges are caused by the way PS makes it's selections. When you select a layer by CTRL or CMD clicking it, PS includes the anti-aliased pixels as well. When this selection is used to make the alpha channel, the resulting channel is large enough to show these anti-aliased pixels when keyed in the Avid. Two solutions I have used... 1. After making your selection and channel, contract the selection by one pixel, invert and fill with the transparent color (depends on how you are saving alpha, inverted or not) then save your file. This builds a channel that is small enough to conceal some of the anti-aliased pixels. 2. This method is preferred. Make your selection and save the channel as usual. But, make sure to add a layer as a BG that is the same color as the pixels at the edge of the matted area. The inclination is to turn off the BG and PS saves a white BG that is revealed by the edges of the matte. When the image with the proper BG color is imported into the Avid it will key the same but the "crappy" pixels will be an appropriate color. It is seldom noticeable. A little planning saves a lot of grief too.

8.21 Norton Utilities

From: Neil Girardi ngirardi@digitalediting.com

There are several things to be mindful of when using Norton Utilities. If you will be running Disk Doctor on striped drives you must use version 3.2 or higher. To use Norton Utilities with OS8 you will need version 3.5. NEVER run Speed Disk on media drives as it will corrupt your media. It is a good idea however to run Speed Disk on your INTERNAL MAC hard drive about once a month to keep your system from getting slowed down by fragmentation of files. It is NOT recommended to use Volume Recover to recover accidentally deleted media files. While it may work some of the time, it often corrupts media and causes problems down the line. Also make sure you've installed Norton Utilities in accordance with Media Composer Release Notes as some parts of the package don't agree with Media Composer. (Choose custom install and don't install FileSaver, DiskLight, Norton CrashGuard, Fastback Scheduler, Backup Scheduler, or partition Extension). Also if your partition disappears and neither ADU nor Norton sees it, try running Disk First Aid. Sometimes that works and then running Disk Doctor afterwards may fix problems that Disk First Aid doesn't see.

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