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ROM is issued
six-times
a year to
members of the
Guildford PC
User Group
All Contributions
to the Editor
Tony Hawes
(details on page 2)

ROM

Newsletter of the Guildford PC User Group

Editor's Bit

Sorry for the short notice about the August meeting not taking place, but given that traditionally the August meetings because of holiday commitments etc are poorly attended and turn out to be fairly "dead" meetings it was agreed we should give the August meeting a miss in future.

However don't despair as we'll be back to normal in September with some interesting talks and demos lined up for the autumn season.

Secretary's Meetings Notes

Monday 11th June 2007 — Paint Shop Pro Tutorials. Tony played some of the Lynda.com tutorials that come with Paint Shop Pro XI Photo. They covered everything from the basics to the more complex of photo editing procedures. We saw how to rotate your image, adjust the levels to compensate for lack of flash, correct skin blemishes, whiten teeth, remove objects and crop images ready for printing. The woman doing the voice over had a strong American accent which took a while to get used to but she didn't use too many technical terms in her descriptions.

Some of the subtle changes were lost when viewing the files via the projector (as opposed to watching it on screen), but the techniques will be of tremendous help to those who use this cheaper alternative to the more expensive and complex Photoshop. An informative evening

Monday 9th July 2007 - Survey Results and DVD Home Moviemaking. The first part of the evening on Monday 9th July was devoted to a presentation by Laurence Fenn of his ROM Survey of how members use their PC's. The result of the Members Survey can be viewed on the Group Web site.

This was followed by a tutorial DVD presented by Tony Hawes on "DVD Home Moviemaking - A Beginners Guide". Tony explained that the DVD was applicable to all the main home moviemaking programs including Pinnacle Studio Plus, Ulead Video Studio and Adobe Premiere Elements. The tutorial covered the subject from basic concepts to a professional standard in episodes covering such subjects as, DVD standards, shooting your video, transferring home movies from a camcorder to PC, video editing, adding sound and special effects, adding stills, and burning to disc. I am sure that this introduction to the subject will encourage members to think seriously about acquiring a camcorder.

Defra

Having followed the correspondence in the papers about the recent outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease down the road from here, I was struck by some of the comments in the media of farmers who suffered (and those not afflicted) by the last outbreak in 2001. Those who had not been affected, i.e. those with disease-free

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ROM is now only available as a full-colour .pdf download from the Group web page at:
www.guildfordpcusergroup.co.uk

**NEXT MEETING — Monday
10th September 2007 at 7.45 p.m.**

Seagate & Maxtor External Hard Drives

Portable Hard Drives from Seagate and possibly Maxtor.

When you read the review of Symantec's Norton Ghost 12 on page 6 and if you have a Maxtor OneTouch external hard drive connected, you'll realise that Ghost 12 has a neat back-up touch up its sleeve. So finger's crossed we'll have a Maxtor OneTouch drive on demo to show how it well it works.

Spread the word and please bring a friend — coffee, tea & chocolate biscuits are free.

Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday
of each month at 7.45pm at the
Stoughton Youth Club and Community
Centre (opposite "The Royal" — Pub)
Worplesdon Road (A322), Guildford.

Forthcoming Meetings

Monday 8th October 2007 at 7.45 pm
Latest Printer / Scanners on demo.
Monday 12th November 2007 at 7.45 pm
In arrangement.
Monday 10th December 2007 at 7.45pm
Christmas Quiz

CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any queries or questions about the Guildford PC User Group and its activities please contact the following members of the committee:

Chairman
(Position Currently Vacant — contact Tony Hawes for info)

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(this site contains many of the reviews that have appeared in ROM)

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cattle, said almost without exception that they were envious of farmers with infected cattle who had had their herds slaughtered and received mega-bucks compensation. So I was amused by this letter that has been doing the rounds about the anomalies of agricultural compensation — read on.

Letter to Secretary of State

Copy of a letter sent by a friend to Hilary Benn MP, the newly appointed Secretary of State of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP
The Secretary of State.
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra),
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR
12th August 2007

Dear Secretary of State,

First may I congratulate you on being appointed as Secretary of State to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in the new prime minister's latest government re-shuffle.

I would be grateful for your advice. I have a friend, who is in farming at the moment, who recently received a cheque for £3,000 from the Rural Payments Agency for the laudable activity of not rearing pigs. Hearing how successful he is I consider I would be an ideal candidate for the 'not rearing pigs' business. My current profession is as a consultant underwater firefighter, but as you will doubtless know from government statistics, the UK's North Sea oil and gas wells are running dry, which means that the underwater fire-fighting business is in decline meaning there is consequent reduction in underwater fires — or at least not enough of them to keep me fully and gainfully employed. So the present is now an opportune time to think about a change in direction where my business activities will be of more benefit to our country.

To continue — the prime minister has obviously appointed you to the post of Secretary of State based on your expertise in your new departments' various functions, so given your undoubted knowledge as the top man in Defra, may I ask what in your opinion is the best kind of farm on what not to rear pigs and which is the best breed of pig not to rear? I want to be sure I approach this endeavour in keeping with all government policies as laid down by your department and as directed by the European Union under the Common Agricultural Policy. Personally I would prefer not to rear bacon pigs, but if this is the type you don't want not to be reared, please suggest an alternative. I also wonder whether there are any advantages in not rearing rare breeds such as Saddlebacks or Gloucester Old Spots, or are there too many people, such as conservationists, who have

already cornered the market in not raising rare breeds of pig?

As I see it, the hardest part of this programme will be keeping an accurate record of how many pigs I haven't reared. Are there any Government or Local Authority funded seminar's or courses of instruction that I could attend that would show me the skills and "best practices" to adopt when not rearing pigs?

My friend is very satisfied with this business. He has been rearing pigs for forty years or so, and the best he ever made on them was £1,422 in 1968. That is until this year, when he received a cheque for £3,000 for not rearing any at all. Knowing that I had an interest in farming and knowing that my underwater fire fighting skills were not needed so often, my friend thought it was an opportune time for me to diversify and suggested I write to you for advice.

My friend knows that although I like to call a spade a spade I'm not the sort of person who likes to get his hands' dirty and he considered that not raising pigs was an ideal introduction to modern-day farming methods thus avoiding the need to grubby one's hands or worse — the thought of having to wade daily through piles of pig excrement is something I just couldn't contemplate; the sight and smell is totally against my sensibilities, to which should be added the fact that my wife just hates me coming into the house with my boots on. Having watched the various Vet's programs on TV, I am only too well aware that as a traditional farmer when raising 'real' animals there is always the possibility that I would need to enter the house in an emergency with boots covered in pig's muck (to fetch pails of boiling water when the sows are farrowing being a perfect example if TV is to be believed), if this should happen to me, I feel sure such activities would cause a rift in my marriage. The opportunity therefore of not needing to get one's boots mucky when not rearing pigs is an appealing and attractive prospect, and in these circumstances and having discussed the matter with the wife, we are both of the opinion that I am ideally suited to a career in the new and exciting 'not raising pigs' sector of the farming industry, hence this enquiry to you for advice.

Taking my friend's circumstances as an example. If I should enter the farming industry and get £3,000 for not rearing 50 pigs, I assume that pro-rata I will get £6,000 for not rearing 100 pigs. £6,000 seems a fair commercial return, but before taking it further I'd like your confirmation that this is indeed the case? Initially I plan to operate on a small scale, restricting myself to not raising around 4,000 pigs in my first year of operation. By not raising 4,000 pigs my calculations show that I would be entitled to about £240,000 in the first year. Verification from your department that my figures are correct would also be welcomed.

As I gain the necessary skills and expertise in not rearing pigs, I plan to be more ambitious in future years, perhaps increasing to, say, not rearing 40,000 pigs in my second year, for which I should expect about £2.4 million from the department. Incidentally, I wonder if I would be eligible to receive tradable carbon credits for all these pigs as they will not be producing harmful and polluting methane gases.

Another point. The pigs that I plan not to rear will I calculate not need to eat 2,000 tonnes of cereal feed. I understand that you also pay farmers for not growing cereal crops. Will I qualify for payments for not growing cereals to not feed the pigs I don't rear? I am also considering the 'not milking cows' sector of the busi-

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ness, so please send any information you have on that too. Please could you also include the current Defra advice on set-aside fields? Can this be done on an e-commerce basis with virtual fields? Provided the financial rewards are worthwhile I am quite prepared to set aside several thousand hectares of virtual fields in order to meet departmental and EU Common Agricultural Policy targets when applied to set-aside schemes.

In view of the above you will realise that

I will be totally unemployed, and will therefore qualify for both unemployment and housing benefits, however I understand that unemployment benefits are the responsibility of another government department and housing benefit is the responsibility of my local authority and I will be pursuing these matters separately with them direct. But you will understand that claiming unemployment and housing benefit will be relatively small change when offset against the gain to the economy and country's wealth for not raising pigs.

Once again congratulations on your appointment and you should know that if you or your department should accept me into the 'not raising pigs' sector of the farming community, you can be assured that my wife and I will be voting for your party at the next general election.

I am sir

Yours faithfully [*****]

(Name obscured to protect his identity under data protection laws).

See you at the September meeting! — Ed.

Nuance's OmniPage 16 — OCR Software

Your Editor had an opportunity to see the latest version of Nuance's OmniPage Professional 16 at a recent briefing in London.

It has an impressive range of new features and whilst we await the review copy, read below the Press Release from Nuance.

OmniPage Professional 16

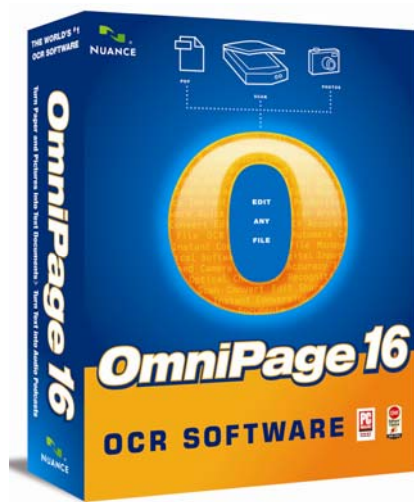
Nuance Unveils OmniPage Professional 16, Making Paper and PDF Conversion More Valuable to More People than Ever Before

World's Best Selling OCR and Document Conversion Software Delivers Unrivalled Accuracy, Ease-of-Use and Innovative Features – Using Your Scanner, MFP and Digital Camera

London, UK, July 31, 2007 – Nuance Communications, Inc. a leading provider of speech and imaging solutions, today introduced OmniPage Professional 16, the newest version of the world's best-selling and most accurate optical character recognition (OCR) and document conversion application for Microsoft Windows. With the best document conversion accuracy, breakthrough three-dimensional (3D) digital camera capture technology and amazing speed advances, OmniPage Professional 16 is the easiest way to edit, share and store paper, PDF and electronic documents.

Its high accuracy and patented innovations have made OmniPage Professional the world's best-selling desktop OCR application for years. The new release of OmniPage Professional strengthens the heart of OCR by delivering a 27 percent increase in document conversion accuracy and speed increases of up to 46 percent. Better still, Nuance has integrated its newest technology to take advantage of today's pervasive dual-core processors to deliver an amazing 97 percent speed improvement when comparing OmniPage 15 on a single core system – making OmniPage 16 up to 50 percent more accurate and more than 46 percent faster than alternatives.

OmniPage Professional 16 is also the first desktop OCR application to provide native support for the new open standard Ecma Open XML file formats used by the 2007



Microsoft Office system. Further, OmniPage Professional 16 is the first OCR application to provide input and export support for the XML Paper Specification, or XPS, an important new 'electronic paper' format for scanning, sharing, archiving and indexing documents for search applications.

"I think we've all recognized that paper documents are not going away anytime soon, and they continue to create significant business and productivity challenges when compared to electronic documents," said Ralph Gammon, editor and publisher, Document Imaging Report. "With OmniPage 16, Nuance shows that OCR and document conversion can be applied in new ways to overcome these challenges. Increased speed and accuracy, a simplified user interface, enhanced forms capabilities, XPS and Office 2007 support – all of these features cement Nuance's status as a leader in the document capture market. OmniPage continues to offer real value and time savings benefits to organizations of all sizes."

Because of its accuracy and ease of use, millions have selected OmniPage over alternatives to replace manual document conversion with an automated approach, saving time and overcoming the high costs associated with traditional paper processes. Organizations large and small turn to OmniPage to automate the paper-to-digital conversion and archiving of every kind of docu-

ment – including letters, contracts, spreadsheets, magazine articles, research reports, technical manuals and more.

"The new release of OmniPage delivers powerful document capture and conversion capabilities that are particularly valuable to users of Windows Vista, the 2007 Microsoft Office system and Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007," said Gray Knowlton, group product manager for the Office Group at Microsoft Corp. "Supporting the Ecma Open XML file formats and XPS will help users capture and exchange information in open formats – an important step forward in enabling interoperability."

Features and Capabilities

Most compelling in OmniPage 16 are the features and capabilities that extend the applications of OCR and document conversion to a broader set of everyday document tasks. Many of the enhancements and new features in OmniPage 16 are unique innovations not available in alternative solutions. These include:

Best OCR and Document Conversion Accuracy – OmniPage Professional 16 is 27 percent more accurate in overall document conversion than the previous release, with significant advances in providing "same as original" conversion to editable formats. Instead of relying on text boxes and other visual tricks to mimic the look of the original, OmniPage duplicates the original using the highest-level features within word processing and spreadsheet applications. This results in columns, tables, graphics and text that are eminently editable, and makes OmniPage 16 up to 50 percent more accurate than alternatives.

The Fastest Ever – OmniPage Professional 16 avoids the traditional trade-off of accuracy at the expense of speed. The new release is both more accurate and faster, delivering up to 46 percent speed improvements for document conversion. Nuance has implemented additional improvements that enable even better performance on Intel and AMD dual-core processing chips, which have become common for personal computers from vendors such as Dell and HP.

Innovative 3D Capture for Digital Cameras – A picture really can be worth a thou-

(Continued on page 4)

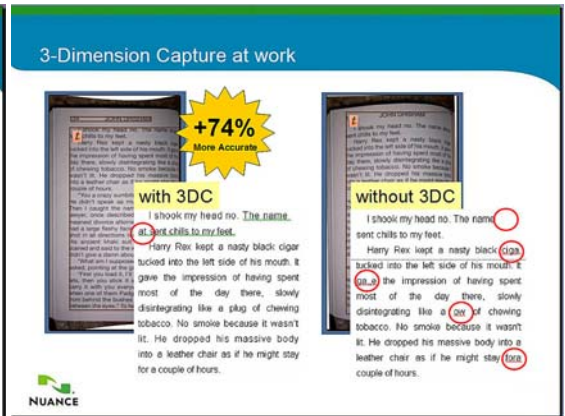
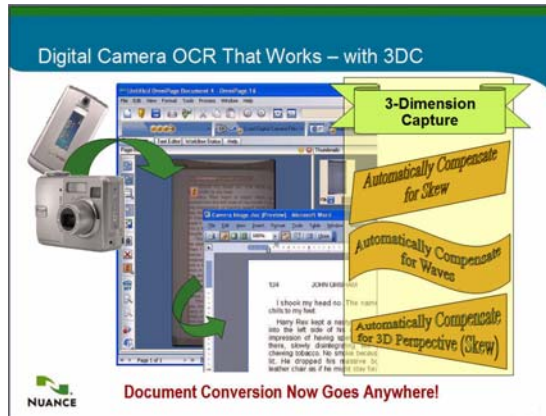
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sand words with OmniPage Professional 16. While others have tried to support converting documents captured using digital cameras, the accuracy and results have disappointed. Through the addition of 3DC, or 3D Capture, OmniPage automatically corrects for the distortion of the angle and rotation of the camera, as well as for the curve of the page in an open book – making OmniPage 16 a practical solution for digital camera capture and up to an astounding 74 percent more accurate than alternatives.

Unique “Scan-and-Redact” – Handling sensitive information is a serious concern for government and corporate organizations, as well as individuals concerned with names and email addresses, social security and phone numbers and other information that can be used by identity thieves. OmniPage Professional 16 is the first desktop OCR product to address this concern, making redaction – the removal of text from an image and PDF file – a core feature. It is also the first ever to make redaction a part of the scanning process. Users can set sensitive words or phrases as an attribute prior to scanning, and OmniPage Professional 16 will redact on the fly. Users can also select highlight-for-redaction, where candidate words are highlighted for review by the individual or others prior to the final redaction step. Nuance has submitted a patent application for the redaction capabilities delivered in OmniPage.

Easiest OCR to Use – OmniPage 16 proves once and for all that scanning and document conversion does not have to be complex. Its Quick Convert feature automates and simplifies turning paper and PDF into documents that you can edit, while its patented One-Button scanning makes it easy to associate specific tasks to buttons on your scanner – such as scan-to-Word or PDF, save as XPS and more. The new File-It Assistant feature even creates barcode coversheets that let you automatically scan documents directly into specific folders on your PC and network.

First OCR with Integrated Document Management – Scanning and OCR simply aren't enough for the millions of people using all-in-one and multifunction devices to turn paper into digital information that they can store and search. Nuance responds to this need by being the first to bundle document management capabilities with a desktop OCR application by adding PaperPort 11 to OmniPage Professional 16. Further, for existing users of PaperPort and PaperPort Professional, OmniPage Professional 16 includes enhanced “scan to” features that make using the two products



3DC (3-Dimension Capture) at work as it copies deep into the spine of open books etc.

more seamless and powerful than ever.

First OCR to Include Electronic and Paper Forms Processing – For organizations needing a better way to implement electronic and paper forms processes, scanning and OCR alone are not sufficient. While sending PDF forms is easy, the challenge is in processing completed forms into data – a challenge that is met with the new release of OmniPage Professional 16. Now users can complete PDF forms on their PC and submit them as either paper or PDF, where OmniPage Professional 16 will automate the data extraction into CSV files suitable for Microsoft Office Excel and database applications.

One-Button Workflow – In order to distill complex, multi-step tasks into a single click, OmniPage Professional 16 has made creating and using document workflows even easier – and has added native support for the ODMA content management standard and Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 in order to make storing your documents even easier.

First OCR to Support 2007 Microsoft Office System Files and XPS – Nuance and Microsoft have had a close relationship on OCR and document conversion for many years, including a collaboration that resulted in PDF Converter, the first-ever solution that accurately turned PDF into Microsoft Office Word documents. The collaboration has continued through the development of export filters for OmniPage that leverage the Ecma Open XML file formats used in 2007 Microsoft Office system applications, including Office Word (.docx), Office PowerPoint (.pptx) and Office Excel (.xlsx). Nuance has also added robust support for the XML Paper Specification, XPS, which enables document sharing and archiving with Windows Vista.

“With OmniPage Professional 16, Nuance has significantly improved the core features that matter most within OCR products – accuracy, speed and application support,” said Robert Weideman, senior vice president and general manager for Nuance Productivity Applications. “More impressive are the robust set of new features, such as 3D Capture for digital cameras and scan-to-redact capabilities, which make Omni-

Page more valuable to existing users – and more compelling to an even broader audience.”

3D Capture for Digital Cameras

One of the more innovative features of OmniPage 16 is the 3D Capture for Digital Cameras. Others such as Abbyy FineReader Pro support converting documents captured using digital cameras, however in certain circumstances the accuracy and results can be disappointing. OmniPage 16 through the addition of 3DC (3D Capture) automatically corrects for the distortion of the angle and rotation of the camera, as well as for the curve of the page in an open book – making OmniPage 16 a practical solution for digital camera capture and up to an astounding 74 percent more accurate than alternatives.

I regularly carry out research at the National Archives at Kew in London using a 5MP Acer camera mounted on one of the National Archives supplied camera stands to take photos of documents and later at home use the import photographic image process with Abbyy FineReader Pro 8 OCR to convert the photographic image into editable text in Word format. It will be interesting to see how OmniPage 16's 3-DC feature works, especially when it's necessary to copy documents, books or manuscripts with fat bindings that are often a copier's nightmare and result in text that is often unrecognised by the OCR software.

Nuance have promised to supply a review copy – it'll be interesting to see how it compares with Abbyy FineReader Pro 8 which essentially does the same job, albeit without the OmniPage 16's 3-DC facility – so watch this space.

Pricing and Availability

OmniPage 16 will be available in late August through Nuance's global network of reseller partners. OmniPage 16 Standard is £79.99 including VAT, while OmniPage 16 Professional is £249.00 excluding VAT for individual users, with volume discounts available. Upgrade pricing and support products are also available. For additional information on features, pricing and volume licensing programs, please visit www.nuance.co.uk.

Ulead VideoStudio 11 Plus

Reviewed by Laurence Fenn



Ulead was a strong brand in video editing, so Corel (who bought Jasc's Paint Shop Pro) have acquired them to add to their software group.

Their isn't much difference between this and the previous version 10, but if you don't have a video editing package, then this will certainly provide all the tools needed to turn a boring family video into a slick presentation with titles, effects, music and a finished DVD with fancy menus.

very different from version 10, has been tweaked. Most useful is the ability to increase the size of the timeline and reduce the Preview window. The Enlarge button fits all the tracks onscreen automatically, so you don't have to scroll around when using lots of overlays. You can also now add cue points to the timeline to help you find specific scenes in your edit. These can be used as chapter points when outputting the video to disc.

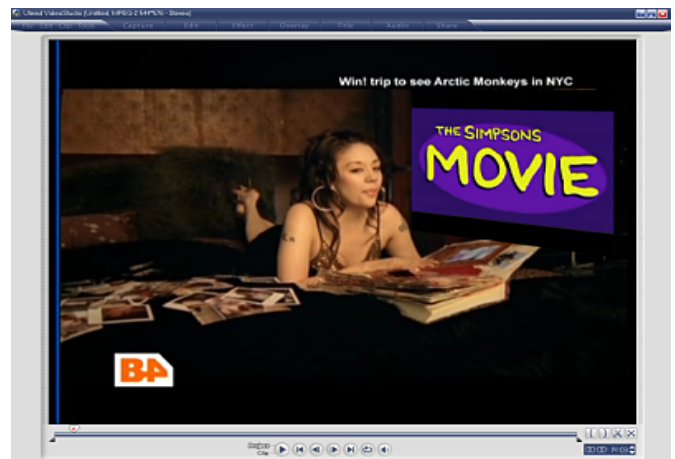
artefacts, didn't substantially improve the quality of the blocky clips I tested. I tried this with some poorly encoded VCD clips (the VCD frame size is a quarter of DVD) and some good VCD clips. Like with picture editing programs, there is only so much you can improve on. You cannot create a perfect clean video from a badly encoded original, just as you can't make a perfectly sharp image from a blurred photo.

Pause Button When Encoding Your Video

One major change that may seem subtle is the inclusion of a pause button when you are encoding your video. The software takes up all the resources of your PC when rendering the video, so you cannot do anything else. I found this most annoying on the previous versions, as there was not setting to allow it to render in the background, for instance. Other video encoders have this option, but don't have the ability to add titles and effects to the video. Now with the pause button it is possible to tell the program to wait whilst you do something else, like browse the web, check email, burn a disc, etc. If you have many effects added to your video it will take a while



The Splash Screen



Enlarged Preview

When you launch VideoStudio, the initial splash screen presents you with three simple options. The DV-to-DVD Wizard allows you to quickly grab video clips from a camcorder and burn them straight onto DVD. The Movie Wizard allows you to import a series of video clips and select a template that will automatically create an introductory sequence for you and then insert transitions between each clip. The Movie Wizard in version 11 has a few new templates that can create montage effects containing multiple video clips. If you're new to video-editing, you can use the Movie Wizard to quickly put together a project before moving onto the third option, which is the main Editor module.

VideoStudio interface

The VideoStudio interface, although not

The timeline has seven video tracks plus a title track, which should be plenty for most projects. Even though Premier Elements offers 99 tracks I doubt anyone uses that many. You can use a Picture-in-picture effect, resizing and distorting the picture. You can also resize footage if you only have the one video, but I found it a bit of a hit and miss affair, grabbing corners and pulling instead of specifying a particular frame size, like TMPGenc for example.

Colour-Correction

A new colour-correction feature performed well in auto mode, with convenient manual controls for gamma, contrast, brightness, saturation, and hue. A new DeSnow filter worked well on a noisy video shot in low light, but the new DeBlock filter, designed to clean up video with blocky compression

to produce the final output. The only time it will take a shorter time is if you are using the same type of file in your project as you want for the final video, and are only making small changes. The program will use Smart Rendering and only build the parts of the video that will change.

MPEG Optimiser

The MPEG Optimiser effectively double-checks your editing before you encode the footage and audio together. It is of course only of use if all the clips in your project are mpeg files, and is disabled if this is true. It is strangely hidden in the Create Video File option of the Share Video section.

There is support for high-definition content, so you can edit in HD as well as write to an

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HD DVD optical drives. As I don't have any high def equipment I was unable to test this. Another new feature is the ability to create HD DVD-compatible discs on legacy DVD-R/+R drives, but as I have stan-

dard DVD players and a standard television, I couldn't test this feature (I do have a DVD player with a HDMI output and a projector with an HDMI input, but I've never bothered to get the cable to connect

standard DVD resolution at the moment). If you don't want this feature, or the ability to encode to the H.264 MP4 format or export to an iPod, then you can get the standard version of the software.

Vista Support

There is Vista Support for the latest-generation systems and Intel Core 2 Duo support.

It is important to remember that all this talk of dual core processors in TV adverts and sales of computers only makes a difference to your PC system if the software is written to take advantage of them.

Conclusions

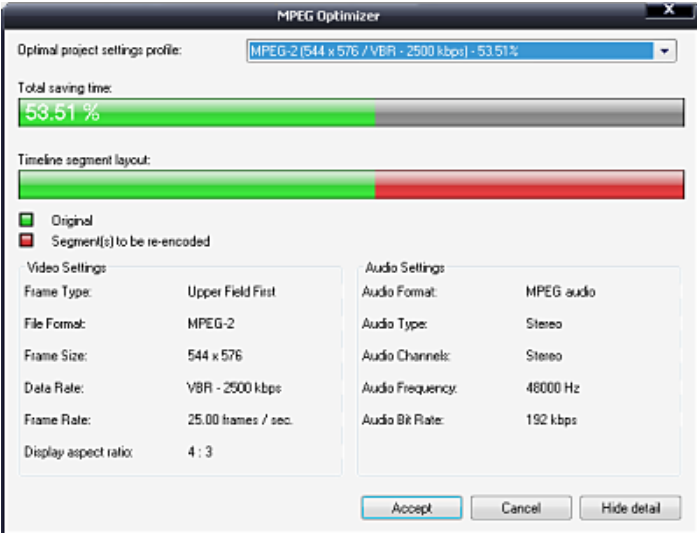
My main problem with VideoStudio 11 Plus is that while all the new additions are worthwhile and appreciated, it's hardly a quantum leap over the previous version. If you've already bought last year's VideoStudio 10 Plus, only the MPEG optimiser and Pause button will immediately leap out as genuine new features

Pricing & Availability

Online from Amazon.co.uk for £49.98 (Plus version) or £38.48 for the less well specified Standard Version.



Rendering Indicator with Pause Button



The MPEG Optimiser

the two, as I'm quite happy with

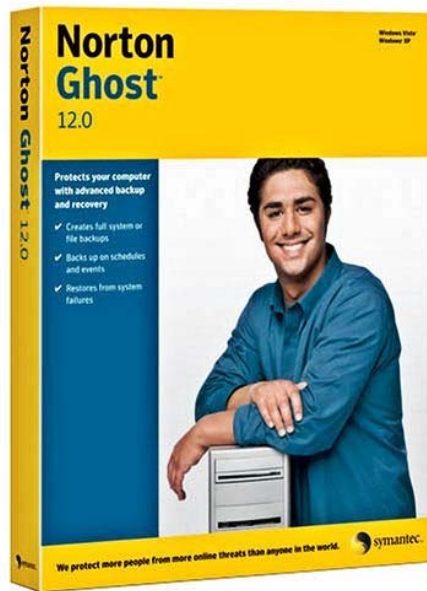
Norton Ghost 12

Reviewed by Tony Hawes

As we've mentioned in ROM so many times before no matter how new your PC is or how much you paid for it, there's a chance that at some stage it will go wrong. Your computer's hard disk stores your programs, all the files your PC needs to load Windows and any documents, pictures, music and other information you've saved. If it fails, you could lose it all.

Symantec have recently launched Norton Ghost 12 and Symantec say Ghost 12 takes data and system protection to the next level with powerful new features such as remote management, Google Desktop integration, and LightsOut Restore. Support for one-to-one remote management enables users to back up other Norton Ghost clients on the network. Integration with Google Desktop allows users to create searchable backup indexes to make recovering data even faster. LightsOut Restore enables users to restore their systems from a remote location via an on-disk software recovery environment, obviating the need to use a bootable CD. Norton Ghost 12 also includes a software recovery disk that allows users to start their computers, scan for viruses or hard disk errors, and launch the recovery process even if the operating system does not start.

In addition, with Norton Ghost 12, users can now choose to do full system backups or to back up only specific files and folders,



or both! Backups include encryption and error checking to keep data safe, while compression, incremental backups, and automatic backup file management minimizes storage space. Users can also use Norton Ghost to convert recovery points of a physical computer to a virtual disk. Additionally, users can leverage Norton Ghost for customisable, event-triggered backups that automatically protect systems when

specific events occur.

As a great believer in Sod's Law and the axiom "Anything that can go wrong, will", especially when applied to computers, I guarantee at some time your computer *will* go wrong, so it's essential that you back up your PC regularly. But backup software can be complicated and many people simply don't bother. You could safeguard just a few critical files by copying them to a CD or a flash memory drive, but you might miss something vital. Norton Ghost 12 is a disk-imaging program that lets you create a complete copy of your hard disk as an image. In the event of a problem, you can restore your PC and all its files to a complete working state. If you should ever have a major hard disk failure, this disk image is all you need to restore your copy of Windows, your applications, files and all your settings to what they were at the time you made the image.

Ghost 10 was the last version I looked at so I was keen to see what version 12 does that version 10 didn't. Essentially Ghost 12 still works in the same way but Symantec have made some changes to the user interface and the terminology it uses. As with Ghost 10, Ghost 12 backup images are called recovery points and whereas most other manufacture's backup programs retain the original terminology in calling backed-up images "images",

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Symantec are a big enough company to call their program features what they like, in use one soon gets used to the “recovery points” rather than “image” terminology.

In Use

Installation is easy. You can let the program use its default features or use the customise option if you want to be different and install it to another location or drive etc.

Following a reboot you are asked to activate the product, or you can leave it unactivated. If you do this you can use it for 30-days, after this it'll no longer work until activated.

Emergency Recovery CD

I wasn't supplied with a boxed review copy of the program but the downloadable version which incorporates the facility to create a Symantec Recovery Disk needed for a full system restore as a .ISO file. Once burnt to CD it acts as an emergency bootable recovery CD that loads a cut down Windows interface with a Ghost recovery application, from which you choose your preferred recovery point.

Choosing a Ghost 12 backup type

There are two types of Ghost 12 backups available:

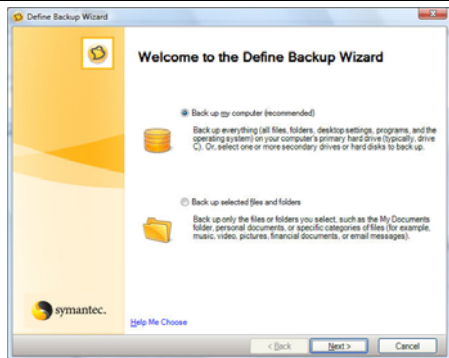
- Drive-based backup: Backs up an entire hard drive
- File and folder backup: Backs up only the files and folders that you select

Use the following guidelines to determine which type of backup to choose:

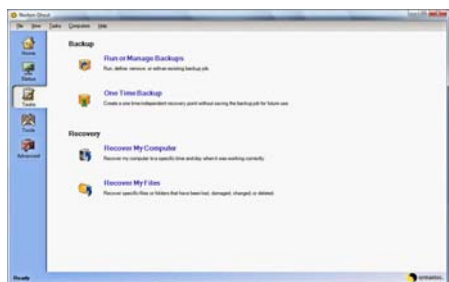
Drive-based backup	Use this backup type to do the following:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back up and recover your computer's system drive (typically, the C drive, which includes your operating system). • Back up and recover a specific hard drive, such as a secondary drive (which is a drive other than the system drive on which your operating system is installed). • Recover lost or damaged files or folders from a specific point in time.
File and folder backup	Use this backup type to do the following:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back up and recover specific files and folders, for example personal files that are stored in the My Documents folder. • Back up and recover files of a specific type, for example music (.mp3 or .wav) or photographs (.jpg or .bmp). • Recover a specific version of a file from a specific point in time.

As someone who regularly reviews software Ghost 12 is a useful application that allows me to make an image of my current system and then restore that to a previous state, at a later date. For instance I use my notebook with a drive dedicated solely for software reviews, some of these reviews are of beta versions of software that hook deeply into the operating system, with Ghost 12 I can backup my drive. Install the test software, test it, and at the end of the test quickly use Ghost 12 to revert back to a previous state, without having to bother sorting out and uninstalling the software from my system — a piece of cake!

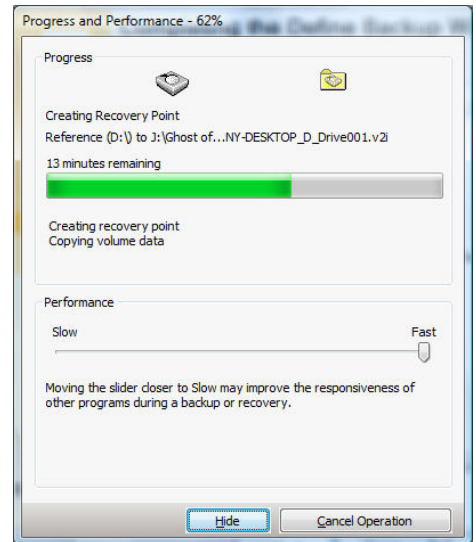
My usual method of backing up my computer is to use Ghost to back up the entire hard drive overwriting whatever was there before. Ghost can also backups individual files and folders without needing to back-up the whole drive which is a useful facility. After you've backed-up the whole drive its possible to restore individual files and folders without restoring the entire system. This is useful if you find for example a photo you've been working on has been deleted in error or an essential operating system file has become corrupted for one reason or another.



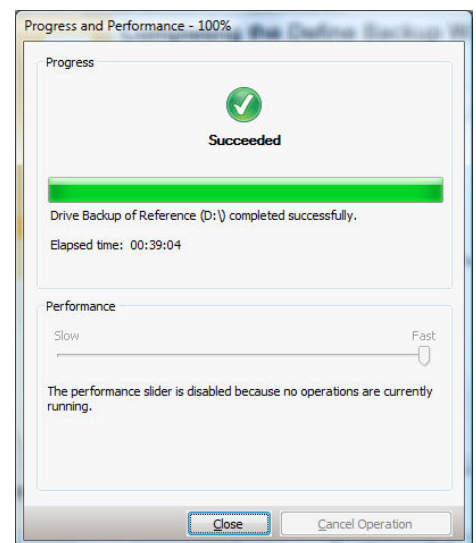
Initial Backup Screen



Decide what to do here



Backup in progress



All done!

Maxtor OneTouch External Drive

If you have a Maxtor OneTouch external hard drive Ghost has another neat touch up its sleeve. As the help file says:

Ghost 12 - Maxtor External Hard drives—Enabling Event-triggered Backups

Norton Ghost can detect certain events and run a backup when they occur.

For example, to protect your computer when you install new software, Norton Ghost can run a backup when it detects that new software is being installed. If a problem occurs that harms your computer, you can use this recovery point to restore your computer to its previous state.

You can configure Norton Ghost to automatically run a backup when the following events occur:

- A specified application is started
- Any application is installed
- Any user logs on to the computer

(Continued on page 8)

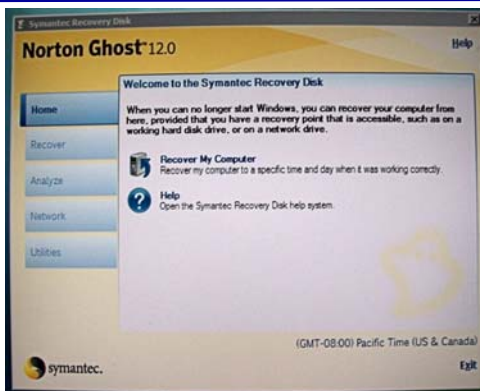
(Continued from page 7)

- Any user logs off of Windows
- The data added to a drive exceeds a specified number of megabytes. This option is unavailable for file and folder backups.
- The Maxtor OneTouch external hard drive button is pushed

Note: This feature only appears if you have a Maxtor OneTouch drive installed, and you are running a Windows XP 32-bit platform.

Symantec Recovery Disk

As mentioned earlier, when all else fails and you can't boot into Windows because of some catastrophic failure, Symantec has the tool to recover your computer to an earlier working state in that the Install disk acts as a recovery disk. Set your BIOS with your CD drive as the first bootable drive, insert the Symantec disk and boot from this. This loads a cut down Windows inter-



face with a Ghost recovery application, from which you choose your preferred recovery point. See screen shot above.

Conclusions

Ghost 12 works only with Vista or Windows XP. If you've an earlier Windows OS you'll need to use Ghost 10. Ghost 12 can back up to CDR/RW and DVD+-R/RW drives, USB and FireWire (IEEE 1394)

devices and Iomega Zip and Jazz drives, and of course if you've a spare IDE or SATA HD hanging about why not install that in your computer and keep it solely as the drive to which you direct your back-ups?

Overall Ghost 12 works well, the main controls are intuitive and easy to understand, even a beginner will find it simple and straightforward.

As I said at the beginning Sod's Law will strike your computer at some stage, so like the Boy Scout be prepared — Ghost 12 is an easy to use solution should disaster strike and should be part of your protection armoury.

The install CD which doubles up as a recovery disk is a vital tool allowing you to access your data or recover your whole disk when disaster strikes and all else fails.

Pricing and Availability

Full version £39.99 and upgrade version for £28.99 from Amazon.co.uk. Both prices include VAT free delivery.

News from Lexmark — Lexmark X4550 All in One

I attended a Lexmark Press Event in London recently where Lexmark had on show some of their latest printers and scanners. On show were devices for the busiest commercial offices costing thousands of pounds to humble inkjet printers at well under £30.

One particular product caught my eye their new Wireless All-In-One (AIO) Scanner & Printer, model X4550. When demoed the results of scanning, printing wirelessly and connected directly to the camera through the printer's built-in PictBridge port were impressive, colour photos just seemed to have that extra gloss. Scanning using the standard 600 dpi scanner with the 48-bit colour scan depth was equally impressive.

With luck I hope to have a review sample to show at our next meeting, but meanwhile here's what I managed to find out about it at the briefing.

Overview

In today's business climate where time is of the essence, the need for fast printing speeds and wireless capabilities has never been greater. Lexmark understands this need and strives to provide accessible business solutions to meet the productivity demands of today's busy professionals reliant on an all-in-one to maximize daily output. This is why Lexmark has introduced the new X4550 Wireless All-in-One (AIO).

According to a recent survey, the biggest impact of technology in the workplace today is connectivity. Professionals rely on having information at their fingertips whether they are working in the office or from home. The same survey found that

respondents want wireless printing capabilities in their workplace office, home and outdoors, among other locations. Users can now have that flexibility with the new Lexmark's new X4550 Wireless All-in-One (AIO). The printer features built-in wireless allowing users to work seamlessly from any location in their home or office.

The Lexmark X4550 offers fast printing speeds, affordable pricing, as well as a broad range of functions including copying, scanning and printing. The multi-functioning capabilities make the X4550 the perfect inkjet printer choice for the productivity-minded SOHO professional and users that often travel or work from home

Features

- Built-in wireless capabilities to enable printing from virtually any location in the home or office
- Fast print speeds to meet rising productivity demands – yielding up to 26 black pages per minute (ppm) and 18 colour ppm
- Sleek, compact design for easy storage and placement in a small office or home office
- Standalone one-touch colour copier that delivers quick, top-quality copies at 17 ppm black and 11 ppm colour

X4550 Highlights

- Lexmark Productivity Suite allows users to print and manage documents
- 48-bit flatbed colour scanner easily scans documents or photos, scan to email, USB Flash drive or print

- 150-page extra output with optional second paper tray
- PC-free printing from memory cards, PictBridge direct connection to cameras or USB Flash drive
- Create brilliant, 6-colour borderless photos at resolutions up to 4800 dpi on photo paper
- Lexmark Web Toolbar optimizes the printing of Web content
- Sleek, stylish design

Copy and Scan Specifications

One-touch copy: For copying photos, graphics and text documents at the touch of a button, without a PC

- Copy speeds: 17 ppm in black, 11 ppm in colour
- Optical scan resolution: 600 dpi
- Scan depth: 48-bit colour
- Technology type: CIS

Technical Specifications

- Inkjet technology
- Up to 4800 x 1200 dpi on photo paper
- Prints up to 26 ppm in black, up to 18 ppm in colour
- Borderless prints/photos: Hagaki, Letter, A4, 3.5"x5", 4"x6", 4"x8", 10x20 cm, 10x15 cm, 5"x7", 13x18 cm, L and 2L
- Paper types: Plain, envelopes, banners, heavyweight matte, photo/glossy, transparencies, iron-on transfers, card stocks and labels
- Paper sizes: Letter, legal, A4, A5, A6, B5, executive, statement, index, photo, Ha-

(Continued on page 9)



(Continued from page 8)

gaki, L, 2L, 4"x6", 10x20 cm, 10x15 cm, 5"x7", 13x18 cm, banner, custom and multiple envelope sizes

- Input capacity: Up to 100 pages; Output capacity: Up to 25 pages
- Unit weight: 12.5 lbs.
- Unit dimensions: 6.9"x 17.8"x 12.8" (trays retracted, HxWxD); 11.3"x 12.8"x 21" (trays extended, HxWxD)
- Compatible cartridges: Black (#23),

Colour (#24), Photo (#31), High Yield Black (#34), High Yield Colour (#35), Black (#23A) and Colour (#24A)

Network Specifications

- Built-in wireless 802.11 b/g
- Built-in Ethernet 10/100

System Requirements

- Windows 64/ Vista: 800MHz processor, 512MB of RAM, 800MB hard disk space
- Windows 2000 (Service Pack 3 and

above): Pentium II 300MHz processor, 256MB of RAM, 500MB hard disk space

- Windows XP: Pentium II 300MHz processor, 256MB of RAM, 500MB hard disk space
- Mac OS X 10.3.x thru 10.4.x (Power PC): G3 500 processor, 256MB of RAM, 500MB hard disk space
- Mac OS X 10.4.4 thru 10.4.x (Intel): Intel Core Solo 1500 processor, 512MB of RAM, 500MB hard disk space

Demo and Review to Follow — Ed

New Samsung Cameras

Samsung have launched a new range of cameras and the following is from their recent press releases.

Samsung NV Series Cameras

Samsung has launched three new premium compact cameras in the NV Series. Continuing the themes of innovative technology and user-friendly features, the new NV8, NV15 and NV20 also sport the stylish blue ring design which has become a trademark for Samsung quality and design in the digital camera market.

All three new models in the NV Series include Samsung's award winning Smart Touch User Interface which has now been further enhanced for easy and convenient control – a gentle touch is all it takes to navigate menu items, change the camera settings, or view your pictures.

Samsung's new NV models also include improved processing technology which allows faster operation of functions within the camera's ultra-thin stylish bodies. Improved functions include, faster processing of images and improved noise reduction.

Other developments include faster Advanced Shake Reduction (ASR) to 0.7 seconds, advanced noise reduction which supports up to ISO 3200 and a new local contrast control which enables the camera to compensate the brightness of a shadowed subject in backlit conditions for even better results.

"Samsung Cameras award winning NV Digital Camera range has set the benchmark for quality and innovation. With new

improved processing technology and enhanced features the NV8, NV15 and NV20 build upon this success. Quite simply our new NV cameras ensure photographers of all levels can enjoy taking high quality images they can be proud of" said Robert King, Commercial Director, Samsung Cameras UK.

NV20

The NV20 is Samsung's first 12 mega pixel compact camera featuring Samsung's improved processing technology combined with features such as a 3 x optical zoom lens, Advanced Shake Reduction (ASR) and Red-eye fix to deliver optimum image quality to all photographers. The sleek NV20 also offers additional functionality such as TV quality MPEG-4 VGA (640x480) 30 fps video recording and a photo gallery function for convenient picture viewing with the Smart Touch interface. The NV20 boasts a 2.5" LCD screen, a multi-charging system and it comes with a rechargeable battery.

NV15

With 10 mega pixels and a 2.5" wide-view LCD, the NV15 provides brighter, sharper, more detailed images. Coupled with Samsung's unique Advanced Shake Reduction (ASR) system, the NV15 enables you to take clearer pictures indoors or in lower light conditions. The NV10 also features TV quality MPEG-4 VGA (640x480) 30fps video recording. The NV15 comes complete with a rechargeable battery and can also be charged via USB.

NV8

Functioning as a high resolution 8 mega-pixel digital camera, the NV8 is a stylish yet practical device sure to attract the next generation of digital photographers. With both Advanced Shake Reduction (ASR) system and Red Eye Fix technology the NV8 will produce stunning results for photographers of all levels. The NV8 with 3 x optical zoom is encased in a thin body and boasts the stylish black design in keeping with the NV Series. It also has powerful movie capabilities and a 2.5" LCD screen.

The NV20 is priced at £249, NV15 at £229 and NV8 at £199 and will be available from leading high street and online retailers from September 2007. All Samsung cameras have a two year warranty.

Samsung i85 Digital Camera

Samsung Cameras has announced the release of the 8.1 mega pixel i85. The i85 is equipped with a 3.0" touch screen LCD, an integrated MP3 player and PMP (Portable Multimedia Player) function.

An inbuilt Tour Guide function provides instant access to travel information covering 2,600 regions in 30 countries, so you'll always know where the action is. Further information can also be downloaded directly from the internet, and with 173 MB of internal memory you won't need to worry about space for favourite travel tips.

The camera is equipped with the Samsung Advanced Shake Reduction (ASR) system and ISO 1600 high sensitivity support so that im-

(Continued on page 10)



New Samsung Cameras — Left to right: S85, i85 and NV20.



New Samsung Cameras — Left to right: S85, i85 and NV20 (we don't have page 3 girls in ROM, but these will do!)

(Continued from page 9)

ages remain crisp and detailed even without a flash.

The i85 also features Samsung's Intelligent Face Recognition Technology, which detects the subject's face, automatically adjusts auto focus and auto exposure to ensure better composition and image quality in portraits. The AF function instantaneously recognises the faces of subjects and accurately focuses on them before the AE function takes over, setting the appropriate exposure to ensure the highest image quality.

The stunning new Samsung i85 is a must-have camera packed with intelligently integrated multimedia features. The i85 will retail at £229 and will be available from leading high street and online retailers from the end of August 2007. Samsung Expands its Digital Range with the 8 Mega-Pixel S85

Samsung S85 Digital Camera

Samsung's S85 digital camera has been released featuring an 8.2 megapixel image sensor and a super-sharp 5x optical zoom lens, combined with other innovative features.

The S85 includes Samsung's Intelligent Face Recognition Technology, which detects the subject's face, automatically adjusts auto focus and auto

exposure to ensure better composition and image quality in portraits. The AF function instantaneously recognises the faces of subjects and accurately focuses on them. The AE function then takes over, setting the appropriate exposure to ensure the highest image quality.

Users will be able to take advantage of the S85's speed and resolution in any situation - from taking landscape photos at dusk to shooting fast action sports photography. Razor sharp images can be delivered using Samsung's ASR (Advanced Shake Reduction) system which helps to capture the best possible images in all shooting situations.

For maximum versatility, the S85 can be powered by an optional Samsung rechargeable Ni-MH battery system, as well as AA alkaline batteries, making it the perfect choice for travellers and power users alike.

Other features include:

- Shutter speeds of up to 1/2000 sec
- An ISO equivalent of 1600
- A bright 2.5" LCD display
- Effect hot key
- Full manual control is available

- 20 megabytes of internal memory, and can accept Secure Digital (SD, MML, SDHC) flash memory cards up to 4 gigabytes
- 13-scene modes including night, portrait, children, landscape, close-up, text, sunset, dawn, backlight, fireworks, beach & snow, café, food, self shot
- Colour effects include B/W, sepia, blue, green and red
- Continuous Shooting mode and Auto Exposure Bracketing (AEB), enabling the shooting of a series of images with varying exposures
- An Auto Macro function that automatically adjusts shooting distance and focus
- A built-in microphone allows a 10-second voice memo to be attached to any still image

The Samsung S85 will be available from the end of August 2007 at an RRP of £119.99

Customers requiring further information should call 00 800 12263727 or visit www.samsungcamera.co.uk

Pinnacle Studio Plus 11 Video Editing Software

Reviewed by Tony Hawes

At last I've had a chance to review Pinnacle Studio 11 Plus, the middle edition of Pinnacle's latest editions of their well known video editing program.

Its worth reminding ourselves of what's new in the Pinnacle Studio 11 line-up.

Pinnacle Studio 11

Designed to simplify video editing for entry level users or those who want to move beyond the capabilities of free solutions, Pinnacle Studio contains several automated and time-saving features that let customers archive their video memories or create entertaining movies in a few easy steps. The new one-click Web publishing feature enables users to quickly publish their videos to Yahoo! Video for public viewing.

Pinnacle Studio 11 Plus

Pinnacle Studio Plus includes all of the intuitive features of Pinnacle Studio, and adds a host of advanced editing, effects and authoring options. The extensive range of features includes a complete HD workflow, with native HDV and AVCHD editing, and HD DVD disc burning. Users can burn discs on a standard DVD burner using standard DVD discs, and depending on the format, can play them on the latest HD DVD players.

Pinnacle Studio 11 Ultimate

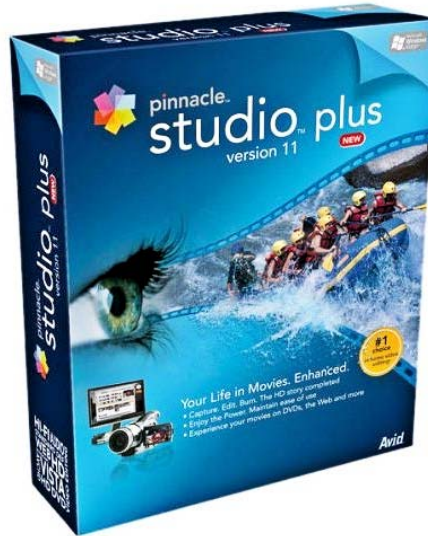
New to the Pinnacle Studio family, Pinnacle Studio Ultimate combines Pinnacle Studio Plus with a selection of fully integrated professional audio and video tools. Designed for the serious video enthusiasts who demand more control over the quality and look of their video creations, Pinnacle Studio Ultimate includes BIAS Inc.'s SoundSoap audio cleaning tools, dramatic lighting and 'film look' effects from ProDAD VitaScene, precision Panning and Zooming with StageTools MovingPicture, and a Chroma Key green screen backdrop for easy-to-achieve professional results.

Introduction

I looked at Pinnacle's Studio 10 last year so I won't go too deeply into the ins and outs of video editing (except superficially), but concentrate on what's new and show how easy it can be to create a simple home vide, complete with transitions, titles and music using solely the tools that come with the program.

Video Editing Techniques — What's Involved?

1. Capture the video. From a camcorder (digital video or analogue), via a Fire-Wire connection, which is the most common method. Or from a non-copy



- protected DVD, an external hard drive., or from a video on your hard disk.
2. Convert the video to a DVD / MPEG video.
3. Edit the video by adding and arranging clips, trimming and rearranging as necessary. Add transitions, still pictures, sounds and DVD menus.
4. Make Movie: Burn the authored video, usually directly after authoring in step 3.
5. Play the burnt video on your DVD Player.

Editing With Pinnacle Studio 11

Once you open the program the interface is simple with three tabs along the top:

1. Capture
2. Edit
3. Make Movie.

'Capture' is simple and is where you import your video footage from DV camera, DVD or file for editing.

'Edit' accesses the editing screen

'Make Movie' tab is the last and used once you've finished the edit and are ready to burn your project to DVD.

In the Capture mode when importing DV footage from your DV camera Studio automatically looks for the breaks where you pressed the record button on your video camera when shooting your video.

If importing from a DVD or a video on your hard disk scene detection allows your computer to automatically split the footage into individual scenes based on changes in colour or brightness in adjacent frames to determine where to split the video into usable clips.

The imported clips which Studio has automatically split using camera or scene

detection appear as thumbnails at the top left and centre of the Album screen; top right is the preview screen of the currently running clip and below is the Storyboard showing clips you've dragged down from the imported clips at the top.

The Album

Having imported your footage you're ready to start editing your work. You can see your imported clips in the Album, either as a storyboard with thumbnails of each clip, or alternatively as a 'timeline showing clips, audio tracks, either the original imported audio track or added audio such as narration, music etc.

The Album also contains the tools for transitions, titles, and menu-effects. The Album isn't a true bin or library, like those found in some programs that saves the imported assets in a project file, Studio's project file only records the file locations of the assets used and accesses these as necessary to compile your video. The Album simply displays the files available in the currently selected directory.

For my example I imported a very small two-minute long video, containing ten clips of my grandchildren shot around my pool and selected Studio 11 Plus's Create Smart Movie option. This sorts your imported clips into random order or you can leave it in its original chronological order. Having selected random order this then re-arranged and split my ten original clips into 38 individual clips, it then adds a title and closing credits (you can choose you own wording), suggests you add music from the ScoreFitter menu and once you've done this you can create your movie.

Overall I was quite impressed. From importing clips to an edited Smart Movie took minutes. However, the final result can be outstanding or rather 'cheesy', depending on your point of view. For a quick video this feature is excellent, but as soon as you have a longer and more comprehensive video project to edit, such as a wedding, family outing, holiday trip etc. the traditional (and longer) method of editing would be my choice.

Transitions, Video Effects & Titles

As with earlier versions of Studio, Studio comes with a wide variety of transitions (the effects placed between video clips to help smooth the transition from one scene to another). Two classes of video effects: curative effects, to fix underlying problems with the video and artistic effects, which modify or enhance the footage. Curative filters include brightness and colour adjustments, while among the many artistic enhancements are the options to convert your video to black and white, or sepia and slow-motion or fast-motion effects and more.

(Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11)

When it comes to Titles Studio's Title Editor can quickly and easily produce attractive titles to introduce the movie or new sections, or show final credits. Other title features let you create DVD menus and buttons and the menus needed to navigate through and around your DVD titles. The Title Editor can produce Overlay titles, positioned on the Title Overlay track, which display over your videos. These are useful for adding logos or descriptions to enhance the video.

Audio

Studio 11 offers three audio tracks: for original audio, sound effects and narration,

and background music. There is also a tool for ripping audio CD tracks and recording narration.

SmartSound a feature of earlier Studio versions is no longer supplied. The "themed" background music of any customisable length, is now supplied by ScoreFitter, but it offers very similar features. Also included is a large collection of special sound effects. And finally you can of course incorporate any ripped music files from your hard disk.

Creating Digital Files

When you click the Make Movie tab, Studio has four options for creating digital files of varying quality: from high-quality

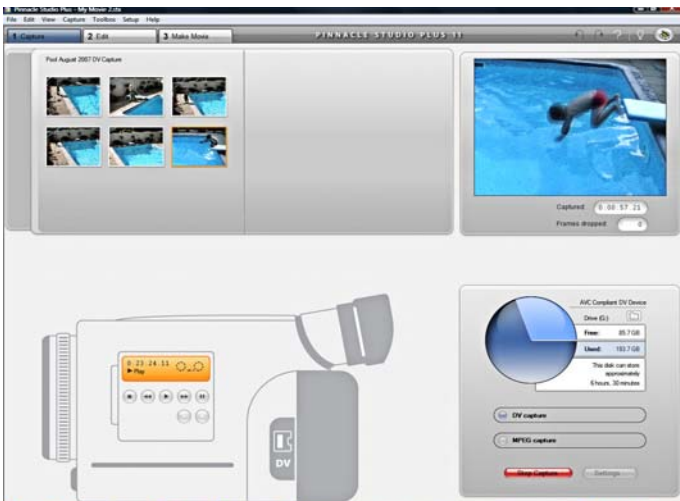
DVD files for burning, to a file on your hard disk, to VHS tape and finally relatively low quality files for uploading to the web, currently uploading can only be done to Yahoo! Video, there is no facility at present for uploading to YouTube.

Conclusions

Studio 11 Plus is a relatively easy to use video editing program with a host of features. It comes with a five page "Quick Install Guide" and a profusely illustrated 260-page manual.

Pricing and Availability

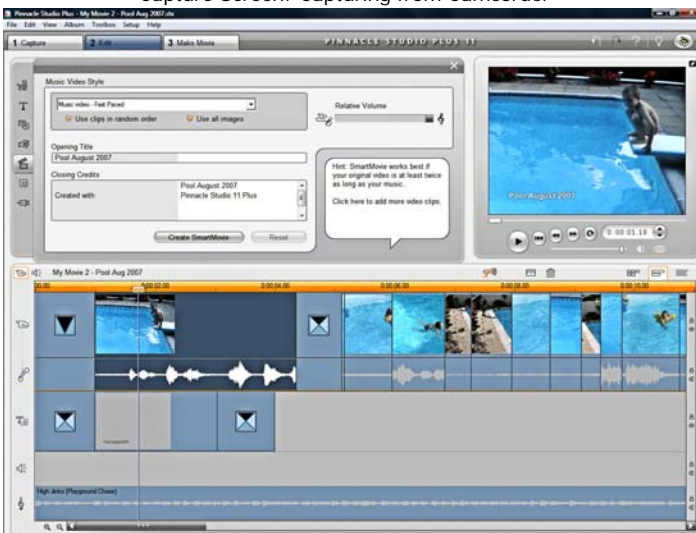
£46.98 inc VAT and postage from Amazon.co.uk



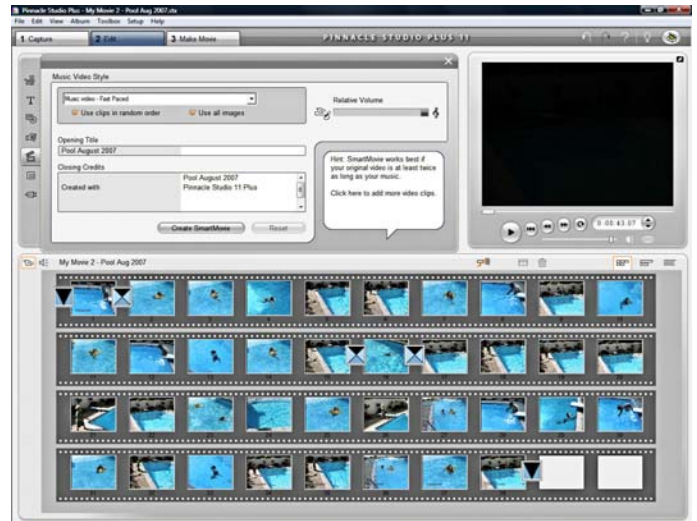
Capture Screen: Capturing from Camcorder



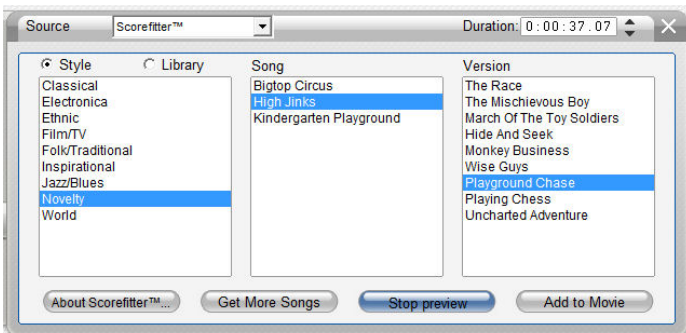
Album View. Detected clips top left and centre. Top Right: Currently playing clip. Bottom: Clips imported onto the Storyboard for editing.



Five Timelines — From the top: Video, Original Audio, Title Overlay, Sound Effects & Music



An automatically created 'SmartMovie' ready for burning to DVD complete with Opening Title, Closing Credits, split clips, transitions and [not visible] an appropriate ScoreFitter music theme



'ScoreFitter' music selection for adding to your movie