In this issue:

PDR16 Top 10 features

360 Editing	Audio Ducking
360 Stabilisation	Improved Performance
360 Object tracking	UI Improvement
Video Collage Designer	Added Formats
New Enhancement Functions	New Effects Pack

The Missing Issue

Alas, a lesson for us all.

I had anticipated publishing a lovely, hot off the press PDR16 Special Issue at the end of last month but events conspired against me - hence this pared down and late issue.

I got unexpectedly called away on overseas business for 10 days last month, but I always have my trusty i5 laptop and external HDDs, which have travelled to many parts of the world from temperate Europe, to hot and dry Egypt, to hot and humid Malapascua Island in the Philippines—never miss a blink—even running PDR up to v.15 perfectly fine.

Editing away on the ferry back to the UK, the new issue was going well. Packed up, got home, booted up and the external HDD has a corrupted MBR.

Bummer.

Managed to recover the drive but sadly lost the previous 24 hrs or so.

Obviously, I had not done a routine backup to the 128Gb stick I carry about, because I'm stupid, or the café opened, or I rushed off to photograph an oil rig at dusk, or whatever.

So apologies for the late (ish) issue and PDR16 has been out a month, so the element of surprise has been lost!

Lesson learnt—again!!

Ultra Wide Monitors

As usual, when your nearest and dearest suggests (an Ultrawide monitor, yay!!) what at first seems like a wonderful Xmas, birthday etc. present, it brings with it hidden pitfalls.

How big, what specs, what really do I want, HOW MUCH?? are all things that appear on the horizon!

So, how do we select that precious gift (if indeed we are allowed a hand in it!)

Firstly, do I want a single purpose monitor—purely for editing—or must I have a combination purpose, gaming, streaming live TV, massive spreadsheets or whatever.

If I am a gamer, perhaps the highest refresh rate possible is key.

If I have the luxury of a pure editing monitor—what am I looking for?

Size—bigger is better, sort of maybe, but how big is your desk/room? A lighthearted but salient viewpoint is here. [https://www.cnet.com/uk/news/why-ultra-hd-4k-tvs-are-still-stupid/]

Spectrum— sRGB is usual but not all monitors cover 100% of the spectrum. Adobe RGB can result in better clarity, colour correctness and subsequent quality. [http://www.eizo.com/library/basics/lcd_monitor_color_gamut/]

Calibration—colour is key to high quality, reproducable editing (still or video). Critical variable—you! Your eyesight is yours not mine so…. Is your green the same as mine. Maybe an independent calibration device is needed! [https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/how-to-calibrate-your-monitor/]

Bit Depth and LUT —10-bit is great, but whoops! DVI only supports 8-bit so bad luck, (more money needed?) 16-bit LUTs are good, so is hardware calibration so look out for them. [http://nativedigital.co.uk/site/2015/02/luts-and-luts-of-bits-look-up-tables-and-monitor-colour-depth-explained/]

So, when the question is asked, do your research before leaping about!

Further reading:

https://www.digitaltrends.com/computing/best-ultra-wide-monitors/

https://thedigitalcamera.net/best-monitor-for-photo-editing-and-photography/

https://filmora.wondershare.com/4k/best-4k-monitors-for-video-editing.html

https://www.scan.co.uk/3xs/info/pc-monitors-for-video-workstations

SVRT - Using it in practice

SVRT is often the subject of debate amongst editors as to when, or how, it should work and why it won't.

So, here is a quick run down on the broad outline, as I use it in practise.

My understanding of SVRT is that SVRT can either :

> *Suggest, based on your timeline content, the most appropriate output profile - preset or custom - to speed up rendering in production. Use ALT-s to show the SVRT track above the timeline.*
>
> *and/or*
>
> *Speed up rendering, if your timeline content matches your chosen production output.*

These two may sound similar, but in workflow terms they are very different.

One is suggesting a suitable output format for you to use, the other allows you to choose your output format and then avail of SVRT if your workflow is planned accordingly.

For example, I have just finished a wedding video, compiling a 3 day event into 34 mins, the content is from multiple sources and cameras, image and video, .mp3 and .wav audio. My workflow is to split the production into sections (11 in this case), compile and edit for each section, produce to MY CHOICE of output. This output choice will, of course, depend on several variables - such as content specs, audience type, playback facilities, streaming etc. etc.

SVRT is highly unilkely to be activated, or of any significant use, at this stage because of the multiple content types and amount of editing required.

However, when all the sections are completed, I can assemble them, do any minor transitions between sections etc. and then produce to my chosen output and SVRT will kick in and the final compiled render will be much, much quicker. Any glitch or change in any particular section at this stage, means only that section needs to be edited, re-produced (No SVRT) and inserted into the final compilation where the whole can be re-produced with SVRT.

The key to understanding the use of SVRT is probably here, although this is from an old PowerDirector FAQ :

> *"Intelligent SVRT can be applied to video clips in the MPEG-1, MPEG-2, H.264 (Ultra64 version only) and DV-AVI (Type I) formats. In the following conditions, clips (or portions of clips) do not require rendering during production, and SVRT can therefore be applied:*
> *The frame rate, frame size, and file format are the same as those of the destination production profile.*
> *The bitrate is similar to that of the destination production profile.*
> *The TV format is the same as that of the destination production profile.*
> *If all of the above conditions are met, SVRT can be used.*
> *Any clips that do not meet the above criteria are fully rendered without SVRT*

As you can see, the chances of a timeline content exactly meeting those criteria, in normal mixed shooting circumstances, is probably limited. But when it does, or when you can plan appropriately, it's wicked!

The place to come if you are new to PowerDirector, video making and editing.

Visit here to pick up some new and useful tips.

LET'S MAKE A FILM

Part 2:   Basic working and set up in PowerDirector

In the September issue of **PD News** the subjects of formats, containers and resolutions were discussed. It is now hoped that the reader will have an insight into this complex area of video work.

Housework

It was also previously explained that a .PDS file (a file created by PowerDirector) was only a text file that does not store any images, but simply directs PD where to look for those images on the PC. Consequently, any material used in a PD project must be made available from its original source. For example, if the video files from the camera were to be transferred to the PC using an SD card, that SD card must always be available for PD to use in a project. This certainly will not always be convenient. Trying to reopen a project with unavailable files (because the SD card is missing) will result in black frames on the timeline.

Consider then that a far better way to manage the files would be to create two new folders on the hard disc of the PC. Folder 1 could be the video file import folder and folder 2 a still image import folder. This procedure will ensure that the files are always available for PD to import. So before commencing with a project, transfer the files to the folders just created on the hard disc of the PC and load PD from there.

PowerDirector

For the purpose of this exercise it is assumed that the working files are 1920x1080p/25 MP4 with an aspect ratio of 16:9. Any variance from these settings can be made as found necessary by the user.

With the files already transferred to the hard disc, it is time to open PowerDirector. On opening PD a new workspace will be created. However, the default is to load some sample clips that, most likely, will not be required. To stop these clips loading each time PD is opened click on EDIT - PREFERENCES - PROJECT and then uncheck "automatically load sample clips when PD opens".

### Setting up PowerDirector

Aspect Ratio

Prior to commencing with a project, there are three important settings to be made. Firstly, ensure that PD is set to the aspect ratio that matches the project.
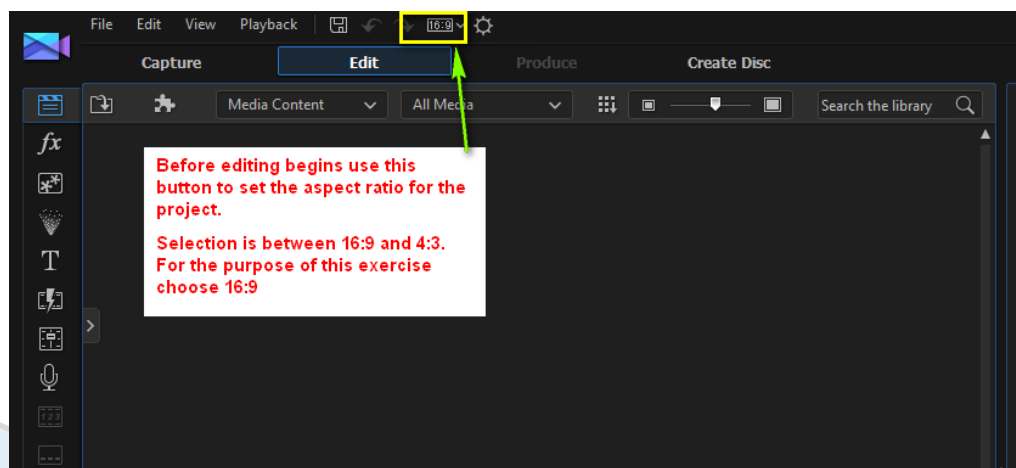
The second and third important settings are frame rate and area format selection. By selecting the correct frame rate, the correct area format will usually be automatically selected. Area formats are PAL and NTSC (a brief description of these was given in the September issue of PD News). The main fps settings for PAL are 25 and 50, whereas NTSC are 30 and 60 fps. For this exercise, select 25 fps but at the same time study the other options available.
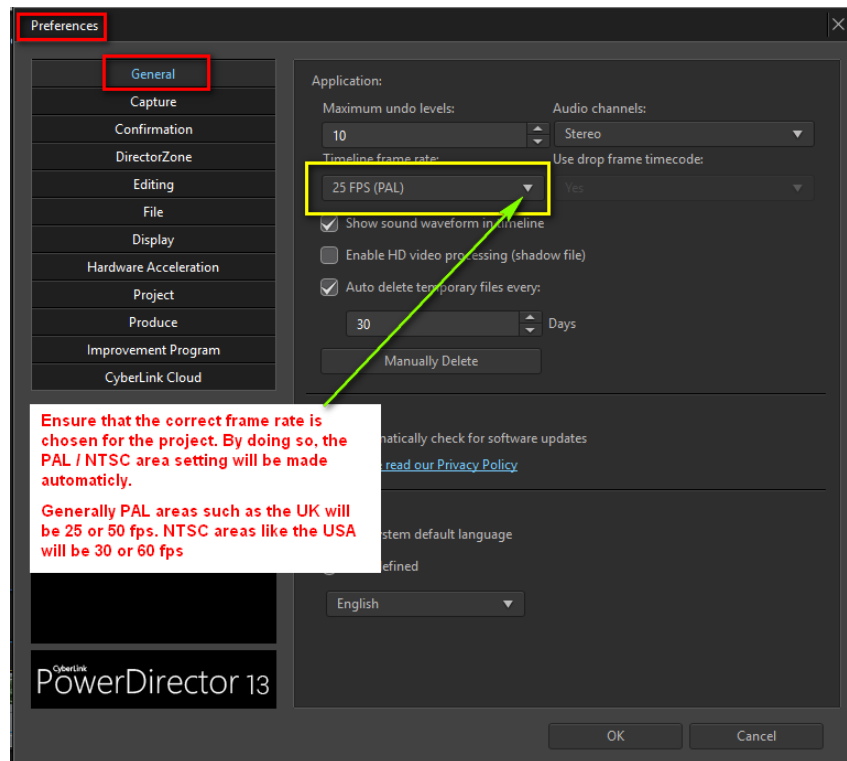

Loading Media

Before editing can begin, the editor must import into PD the media that has previously been transferred from the camera to the hard drive. Ensure that the Media Room is already selected. Click on the import media button and in the window that opens browse for the files that were placed on the hard drive earlier.
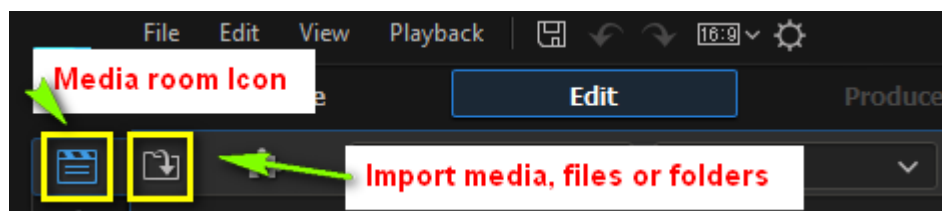
When the files have been loaded into the Media Room they will show as individual clips that can be highlighted and viewed in the preview screen. Once highlighted in the Media Room the media can be transferred to the timeline in two ways. It can be dragged down to the timeline with the mouse or the transfer button can be utilised.
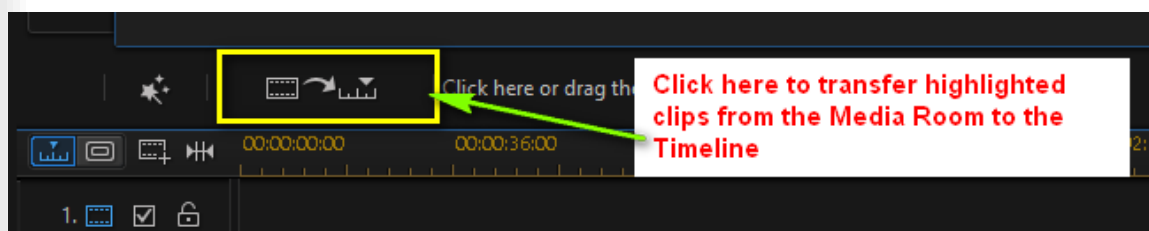
Once a clip has been transferred to the timeline the thumbnail in the Media Room will be given a green tick or check mark. This helps with easy identification of used material when there are many items in the Media Room.
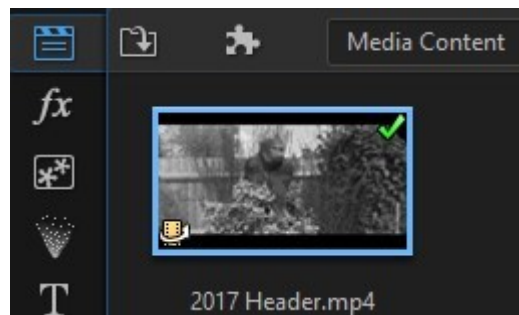

Shadow Files

Video editing is very power hungry, and sometimes PCs with a lower spec may struggle to cope. However, help is at hand. In EDIT - PREFERENCES - GENERAL it is possible to select "Enable HD Video Processing". If this option is selected, PD creates lower resolution copies of the material in the Media Room, and when the project is produced PD replaces the low resolution files with the originals.

When the Shadow Files option is used PD will place a small yellow flag in the bottom left side of the clip in the Media Room. When the clip is ready for use the flag will turn green.

It is, however, extremely important to wait for all the clips in the Media Room to have a green flag before editing commences. Failure to do this can cause numerous problems.

Editing The Project

Editing video is very personal, and every individual will require something different.

So once the material is on the timeline, experiment with it. Don't be afraid to "suck it and see". Generally, you can't do any harm, especially if the "save as" option is used often.

If you use the "save as" command and something goes awry, the previous "saves" can usually be retrieved from the PD Projects folder.

Production

When producing a project, a very important thing to consider is to use settings as close to the original material as possible. At the beginning of this article it was suggested that 1920x1080/25 MP4 would be used for this exercise.

Here's how to achieve the best results:

Click on PRODUCE at the top of the PowerDirector main screen. This will open the production room allowing the user to select the required profiles for best quality.

Here are the six steps leading to a successful production. Once production is complete the file can be found in the output folder selected previously.

Once the start button has been clicked the project will be slowly rendered. The time taken will depend on such things as the user's PC capability and the resolution of the material used in the project. Also a contributing factor to rendering speed is the complexity of the project. Such things as transitions and the use of Power Tools all ask more of the PC.

Be patient because the rewards will be worth waiting for, especially if care was taken from camera to completion.

Having completed the project, and if carried out as described, it should be of excellent quality and viewable on most media players and suitably equipped TVs.

This has been the most basic of tutorials, and it is only the beginning. PowerDirector offers a wealth of features that allow the user to achieve very professional video footage and help develop the creative skills required to turn those ordinary movies into great movies.

Enjoy!

Clip Audio Levels

In PDR 16 the audio elastic band now operates differently.

Grabbing and dragging it moves the overall clip level up and down. Selecting a group of clips (sequential or otherwise) allows the same to happen.

To apply keyframes to the audio line (as in previous versions), press and hold the Ctrl key and click to apply a keyframe.

Time line size

It's often forgotten that the size of individual timeline tracks can be temporarily altered.

Right clicking on the timeline track management section (far left) gives the traditional menu drop down to adjust track height, but any track height can be altered by placing the cursor on the horizontal track divider in the management section, left clicking and dragging the divider up or down.

This is particularly useful for a quiet audio track with a very small waveform—enlarge the track and the waveform becomes more visible and easier to work with, particularly useful when synching video to audio.

Shadow File resolution

PDR16 now has the useful ability to choose the resolution of Shadow Files.

Preferences>General>Enable Shadow Files

and select from :

- 720x480

- 1280x720

- 1920x1080

Request for sample video files

Barry The Crab's site has a wide selection of interest to editors, including sample files from many camera sources to trial or work with, donated by other members etc.

HE NEEDS MORE SAMPLES TO KEEP THE COLLECTION UP TO DATE!!

Please consider visiting and uploading samples that are not already available, it will help support a good service.

Places to visit

Colour correction

A nice introduction

https://blog.frame.io/2017/09/20/beginners-guide-to-curves/

Freebies from around the world

Fog Overlays

https://www.premiumbeat.com/blog/free-4k-fog-overlays/

Explosions:

https://www.premiumbeat.com/blog/free-explosion-sfx-vfx-elements/

Tutorials—inc. PDR16

Official CyberLink Tutorials

PD University

Hans van Kempen's Starter Course [for Dutch users]

Also many of PDtoots tutorials are useful to PD users.

Members Resources Websites

GodfreyZA's Templates:

http://oneclickmobi.com/powerdirector-templates/

Barry Gill's resource page:

http://www.bgillcyberstudio.com/barry_gill_cyber_studio_002.htm

Eric Matyas music page:

http://soundimage.org/

Useful Documents

Future Suggestions:

> Q2 2017 wishlist

> Q3 2017 wishlist

Guide to Good Posting

> Before Posting

Resources

DirectorZone

> Effects, particles etc.