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S A I N T M A R T I N ' S C O L L E G E

Pinnacle Studio 8: Capturing video from a VHS tape

Below is a brief introduction to capturing video from a VHS videocassette using the Pinnacle MovieBox DV analog-digital video converter and Pinnacle Studio 8 video editing software, both of which are available on the video editing workstation in media room M6. Please note that it is also possible to use Windows Movie Maker 2 with the Pinnacle MovieBox DV for capturing from a VHS tape. (See the handout Windows Movie Maker 2: Capturing video from a VHS tape.)

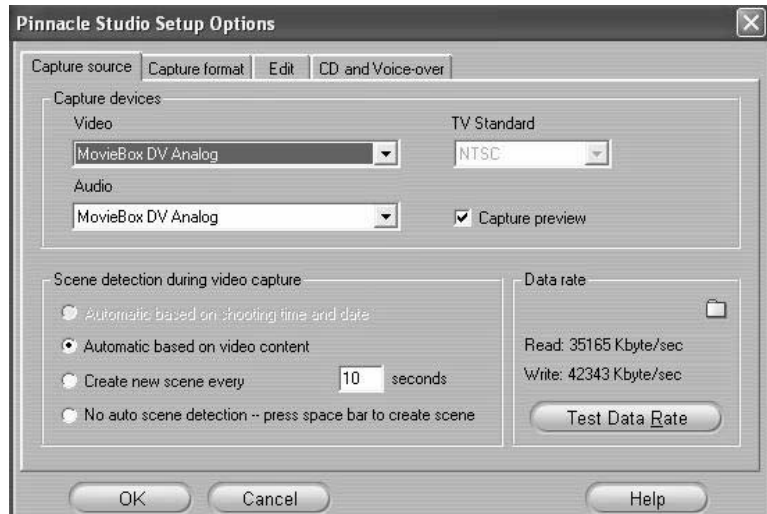
If you are new to video editing, start by editing a one or two minute video. Once you have completed a few short projects, you will be better able to predict how much production time on your part and processing time on the computer's is required to capture, edit, and render a video. Then break larger projects into manageable segments.

Capturing video from a VHS tape

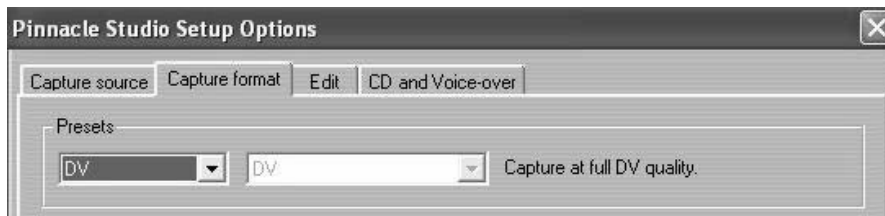
1. Check the cables on the VCR and computer.
 - AV composite cables (with yellow, white, and red connectors) should run from the VCR OUT jacks to the MovieBox IN jacks.
 - AV composite cables should run from the MovieBox's OUT jacks to the VCR IN jacks.
 - The black FireWire cable must be securely inserted in the MovieBox's OUT port and in one of the FireWire ports on the back of the PC. *This cable frequently comes loose on the MovieBox!*
 - A second FireWire cable should be inserted in the MovieBox's IN port; however, the other end will not be connected to anything when capturing from a VCR.
 - Use the `Select` button on the MovieBox to select the yellow video cable. If it is selected, a small light should appear above the `INPUT` jack. If not, hit the `Select` button until it does.
 - Contact the reference desk if there seems to be a problem with the cables.
2. Boot-up and logon to the computer.
 - Open My Computer and create the following folders (if this is your first time to use Pinnacle):
 - C:\video_development\username
 - C:\video_development\username\Pinnacle Studio
 - C:\video_development\username\Pinnacle Studio\Auxiliary Files
 - You need to save to the local C: drive for video production because the initial capture files will likely be too large for you H: drive.
 - Note that these folders are not private, and that anyone logging onto the computer can access them. Contact Ric Kube if you need to secure this folder.
3. Open Pinnacle Studio 8 using the desktop icon or the Start menu (Start→All Programs→Pinnacle Studio 8→Studio).

4. Check settings.

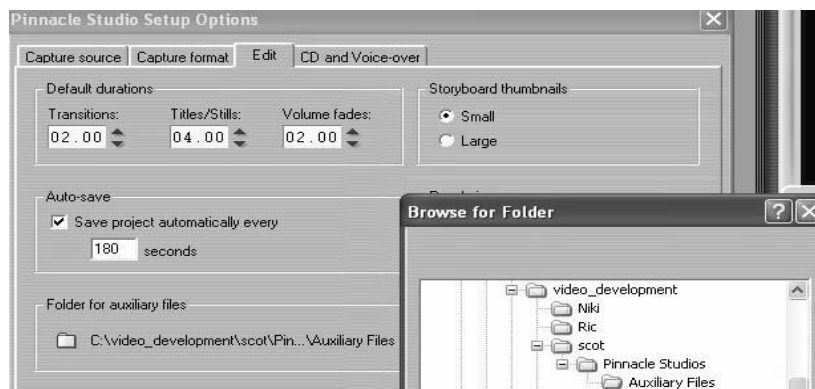
- Setup→Capture Source
 - Capture Device
 - Video: MovieBox DV Analog --VCR
 - Audio: MovieBox DV Analog
 - Capture Preview: checked
 - Scene Detection: automatic --breaks clips into scenes



- Setup→Capture Format
 - For output to VHS tape, select DV preset
 - Creates AVI working file (~200MB/minute of video)
 - For output to CD, select Low preset
 - For output to DVD, select High preset

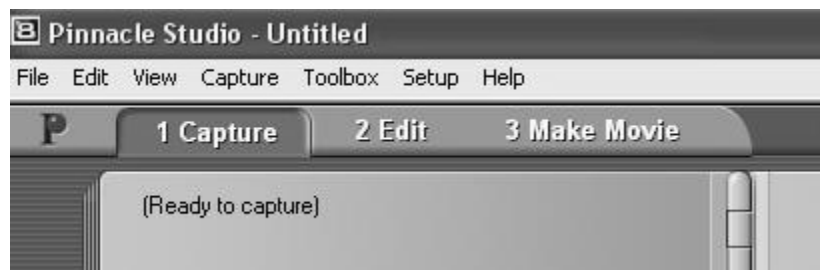


- Setup→Edit
 - Click on the Folder for Auxiliary Files icon and browse to select:
 - C:\video_development\username\Pinnacle Studio\Auxiliary Files



5. Confirm that you have video input
 - Turn on the VCR, insert your tape, and press play.
 - You should see the video playing in the Preview window
 - In not, double-check the settings above.
 - If you don't have sound from the speakers, check to see that 1) the speaker volume knob is turned on, 2) the volume setting (Windows task tray) is not muted, and 3) the green speaker plug is in the green (center) audio jack on the back of the PC.
 - Contact the reference desk if the problem continues (but be aware that assistance is seldom available evenings and weekends).

6. Capture the video.
 - On the VCR, rewind or fast-forward the tape to the desired starting point and then hit pause.
 - Select the Capture tab (Step 1). It should say "Ready to capture."



- Click the Start Capture button.



- You will be prompted to enter a name for the video and the number of minutes and seconds you want to capture. Hit the Start Capture at the bottom of that prompt and then Play on the VCR. The video should play in the Preview window, with a time counter.

- If you don't know how many minutes or seconds you want to capture, you can just enter a large number (500 minutes) and then hit Stop Capture or the Escape key when you reach your stopping point.

7. Save the project.

- When the Capturing is complete, select File→Save As... to save your project. Again, save your project to C:\video_development\username\Pinnacle Studio, *not* to your H: drive.

8. Edit the video.

- Unless your video was shot as a single scene, with no pauses, the capture process will have broken the video into clips. Select the Edit tab at the top to access the album.



- You can drag clips to the storyboard below; insert transitions, titles, still photos, or a sound track. To get started, see Help or the handout Pinnacle Studio 8: Video Editing.

9. Make the movie.

- Select the Make Movie tab.
- Then Select the kind of output desired: VHS tape, AVI file, MPEG, etc. If you want to burn the video to a CD or display it on a classroom projector, MPEG is a good choice. Select VideoCD (MPEG1 at 352x240 pixels). A one minute MPEG 1 file will be about 10MB in size. For comparison, a one minute MPEG 2 (DVD compatible) will be just under 50 MB, and an AVI about 200 MB.
- Click Create to start the rendering process. Pinnacle is fairly fast. Here are times for 1 minute videos in three formats:

- MPEG1: ~ 1 min
- MPEG2: ~2 min
- AVI: ~1 min

As a rule of thumb, figure that it takes 3 minutes to render each minute of video.

Times may vary depending on how much editing you have done and the video/audio content.

Support

- If you need immediate assistance troubleshooting a problem, go to the reference desk.
- Please be aware that video editing support is rarely available evenings and weekends without an appointment.
- To schedule training or a troubleshooting consultation, contact Ric Kube (rkube@stmartin.edu or 486-8811).