

Casablanca Tips & Tricks

Record Screen

Photo (Avio-w/AvioPro, Kron, Prestige, VideoCoach)

Particularly useful when building a photo montage. In the Record window click on Normal and then select Photo. Then select the length you want your still photos to end up. Click on the record button with a camera connected directly to your Casablanca and it will record the pic in just a few frames!

Edit Screen

Auto-Split (Avio-DV-Pro, Kron, Prestige, VideoCoach)

Using a DV/miniDV camera original tape recording into the Casablanca record a series of clips (raw footage videotape) into the Casablanca. Then go into the Edit Screen, click on the Split button and then left click on the AUTO-SPLIT. This will use the start/stop (index) pulses your camcorder recorded on the tape and automatically split your footage into the separate scenes... a HUGE time saver!

Zoom (all Casablanca II)

I find this particularly useful when working with 2-D images like photographs. In the spirit of Ken Burns, you can add life to still shots to bring them alive. Select the image in the clip bin, and then click on 'Special'. Scroll down to 'Zoom'. Click on 'Position/Size' and adjust the box to crop the frame of your scene - I recommend not cropping too much or you will get pixellation (no such thing as a free lunch in the physical universe). I use a size of about 555x380 and position it in the center. By clicking ok you are back in the special menu with the choice of Zoom In and/or Zoom Out. I use Zoom in for the odd numbered scenes, Zoom Out for the even numbered scenes. Remember in my example I then placed a 1-second crossfade between pics and wowie!

PowerKey and Photo Montages (all Casablanca II with PowerKey software)

I also pointed out how PowerKey can make creation of photo montages a much quicker process. Here are the commands for doing this (after you have built the clips with Zoom if you choose to use that effect - you should delete the originals without the Zoom effect). Select the first photo in your Scene Bin and then press the 'Control' "Storyboard' and "insert' keys on your keyboard.

This will add the first clip to the Storyboard while also selecting the next clip in the Scene Bin. You can then repeat this process by pressing 'Control' and 'r'. This brings up the Repeat menu, click on 'r' and select the number of scenes you wish to add to the storyboard (up to 999). Clicking on OK (or Return/Enter) will take just a few moments to add all those scenes to the Storyboard. You can then also do this in the Transitions screen, repeating the process of adding a Crossfade and then repeating the process. This very valuable repeat function in PowerKey is described on the bottom of page 13 of the PowerKey manual (<http://www.casablanca.tv/pdf/PowerKey-usa.pdf>).

Video Insert (all Casablanca)

A great technique for livening up a longer interview is to insert some cover video, something the subject is describing. You can do this effectively with the Insert function. First lay down what I call the Base scene, the interview. Then in the Scene Bin, click on the scene to be inserted and click on the 'Insert' button. If you click out you will have inserted this image directly on top of the Base scene at the beginning of the base scene. To move it into position, simply adjust the 'Position' and 'Start' buttons to slide the insert clip on to the proper place on the base scene. If you are inserting according to a 'cue' in the base scene audio, remember to have the audio scrub enabled so you can hear the audio (I showed how I prefer to use the keyboard cursor arrows to slide through the clip, releasing my finger when I get to the desired location).

Audio Record/Edit Screen

CD Import (Avio DVD, Prestige, Kron with SmartEdit software)

Open the DVD tray and insert a music CD. Then click on 'New Sample' and select CD Audio and click 'ok'. A new menu will pop up, click on 'Display CD Contents'. This will show you the contents of the music CD by clip # and length. With the box marked 'Play CD track' checked, you will hear the first :05 of each track you click on. This enables you to verify it is the track you wish to use. Once you have the track you want, click and it will digitize the music track in 1/12th real time! Then this audio sample will be available in your audio menus. Pop out the CD and use the track however you need.

Audio Mix Screen

VO Record (Prestige, Avio or Kron with SmartEdit software)

In SmartEdit you find a new record button in the left side, just under the audio tracks of the storyboard. This enables you to record a voiceover or narration that is synchronized to the video track. On Prestige, simply connect a mic into the front mic input - Avio/Kron connect a mic through a mixer (or use the mic on your camcorder) and take the line level audio outputs into the Avio/Kron (make sure in the Audio Record/Edit window you have the appropriate audio input selected).

Click on the Narration/Commentary track, which will highlight the icon and click so the scene you wish to narrate to is in the workbox of the Storyboard (or the scene preceding it for timing purposes). Then click on this special record button. The storyboard will playback on screen and record your narration - you even get a pair of peak LED meters to ensure you are recording appropriate volume levels.

Chromakeying on Casablanca (BlueBox) (all Casablanca II)

Chromakey is a process where a color (usually blue or green) is digitally subtracted from a video scene, allowing a second video scene to be inserted in its place. Let's walk through the process using the following two scenes Actor - a hypothetical scene of an actor in front of an evenly lit, uniformly colored background (blue and green with 50% color saturation work best). The 2nd scene, Jelly is a scene from an aquarium with Jelly swimming around in a tank. The desired effect is to have the Actor appear as if he is in the tank with the Jelly.

In the Edit Window:

- Trim the clip 'Actor' to 4 seconds duration.
- Trim the clip 'Jelly' to 4 seconds duration.

(This is important IF you wish your Chromakey (Bluebox) to be a combined shot during the entire effect).

- Place the clip 'Actor' on the storyboard.
- Then add the clip 'Jelly' to the storyboard (the clip you want to have as the 'base' scene).

Go to the Transitions Window:

- Select Bluebox and insert into the storyboard - making sure the two scenes above are in the Grey Workbox.
- Set the transition time by clicking on 'X s' set this to the entire length of the clips (easy to do, just slide all the way to the right), click OK.
- Click on xxx, then Color Choice..
- Click Size, then scroll trackball until the box is small. Click again to set.
- Click Position, and scroll trackball so that the box covers the area in the base scene you want to key out, and replace with the other scene. For my project, I selected the blue background in the Jelly tank (which was replaced by the scene of Gibbon beach). Click again to set. Click OK.
- You may also choose to set Include Area and/or Exclude Area. If you wish to have the effect on the whole scene, insure the Include Area has the whole scene included and the Exclude area has none of the scene selected.
- For this next part, I recommend the Full Size Preview function. Click on Full Size. You'll see a full screen representation of your effect with your menu as well.
- Then click on Color Range, setting value to 89%, click again (** See notes below)
- Click again. Experiment to set Color Range to a percentage that gives the best result. Click again. Repeat until you've found a value that gives a clean result, with no raggedness. Then click OK.
- You can also run a Preview to see motion.
- Then click on Create to render your Bluebox effect. You could also make a scene of the result. This would insure you have this available as a clip in your scene bin with the effect permanently complete.

**The most technical aspect of using the Blue Box effect is setting the Color Range slider. By adjusting this setting, you are determining the tolerance for the color that is being keyed out (which, in my example, is green). If the percentage is too low, you will see green shadows and edges around the Actor's body. (*continued on next page*)

Chromakeying on Casablanca (BlueBox) - continued

If the percentage is too high, parts of our Jellyfish will become transparent. There is no ideal number to set this at, though it's best to start testing the range around 85%. There really is no ideal or recommended setting for this option; you'll need to experiment with it on your own in order to become familiar with its range.

Using 'Scene > Sample' (all Casablanca)

Let us look at an application where you need to use background (or ambient - natural sound) audio over a still scene. For example, in a project about Hawaii with music running under a still shot of a beach where you also want to waves sound effects to continue. Here is how I would build that.

*First I determined the approximate length of the wave SFX (Sound Effect) I wanted. It was 4 seconds. I then went back to my Edit window and found a clip with beach waves. made a COPY of this scene and trimmed it down to 04:00. Then I clicked on the Special button and selected SCENE > SAMPLE. This takes the audio from a scene and sends it over to the Audio menus as an audio sample.

- Then I went back to Audio Mix and inserted this new audio sample under the still scenes of the beach. Voila! Sound effects beneath a freeze frame - more powerful than no ambient audio.

Using 'Sample > Scene' (all Casablanca)

Here is the reverse function of the above effect. In the Audio Record/Edit window, select clicked on a music track. Then select 'Sample > Scene' and the wonderful Casablanca creates a new scene with your selected sample as the audio striped with video black. The progress bar on-screen shows you when it's complete... then go to the Edit window and your new scene will be the one highlighted. Add this to the storyboard and you may INSERT clips onto it --- a fast and fun way to make music videos and montages!

Reorganizing the Clip Bin (All Casablanca)

This enables you to assemble all relevant scenes together in your scene bin - even if you have recorded them out of order.

- Select a scene in the clip bin.
- Delete the clip.
- Click on a different scene in the clip bin.
- Click undelete (icon to right of Delete) button.
- The deleted scene will appear immediately to the right of the scene selected.

(you have ten levels of undelete - 10 scenes you can do this with. Also - this delete 'memory' is cleared when your unit is powered down or change projects!).

Splitting a scene using Index 'on the fly' (Avio-DV-Pro, Kron, Prestige)

This enables you to split a video scene into separate scenes while it is playing back - this can be very useful to split a scene at the beat of music or an interview between sentences/paragraphs, etc.

For the first example, I will use an interview.

Select the scene in the scene bin you wish to split.

Then click on the Split button.

This brings up the Split menu - click the playback triangle in the Split Menu

You will notice as the scene plays it there is an Index button - click on the Index button each time you wish to split the scene playing back. For example, at the end of the first paragraph as the subject pauses momentarily I click the Index button.

Let the scene play out in its entirety whilst you click Index at the appropriate places.

When completely played out - the Scene menu will close and you will return to the Edit Screen and Casablanca will build a list of the newly split scenes. If you are happy with your work you can delete the original (or keep it) and work with the newly split scenes.

If you are unhappy with the locations of your split and wish to do it again - simply delete the newly split scenes (keeping the original) and go through the process again.

If you wish to do this with an audio sample (like music) - use the Sample>Scene button in Audio Record/Edit (see instructions above) to make a video scene from your audio sample. Then follow the above steps to split the music to the beat. You then have an accurate timing with which to insert visuals on these new scenes and have a precisely edited music video!

MACRO SYSTEM

Benefits of SmartEdit 3

SYSTEM SETTINGS SCREEN

Separate 'language' and 'key-map' settings

- Allows Producer to select character set from a foreign language keyboard character set/placement to prepare titles for a foreign language video while keeping interface in their native language (English language speaker can prepare titles for Spanish language audience).

Record Times

- The internal clock can be utilized with a camera or an external tuner feeding a video signal into the Casablanca II to record up to 3 hours of video content.
- Casablanca can even be programmed to power up and down at specified times

PROJECT SETTINGS SCREEN

Under 'Delete Project' button there is the new option to 'Delete Storyboard'.

- Allows Producer to clear storyboard with one click, yet retain footage in scene bin.

Projects with media are marked with an asterisk in the selection menu

- This denotes a project with media in it, even if the Producer has not yet named the project, enabling quick and thorough determination of status of your projects.

You have the choice of setting the audio in your project for either 32 or 48KHz.

You can select progressive video selection for the 4:3 or 16:9 modes

RECORD SCREEN

Peak LED Meter available

- Peak LED meter in video record screen allows Producer to monitor audio volume level during record of footage with the ability to ride the levels during recording - even while importing DV signal.

Increased stability in recording DV footage

- Short signal interruptions no longer stop recording from recording DV

EDIT SCREEN

Use of Inserted scenes in the storyboard is more flexible

- The Producer may now add a transition between two Inserts in the Storyboard.
- The Producer may delete the first and remaining portions of the Base scene without effecting the previous inserted scenes.

Benefits of SmartEdit 3

EDIT SCREEN (continued)

You can trim scenes already in the Storyboard.

- Using PowerKey, a time and step saving feature enables the Producer to trim a scene that was already added to the Storyboard ('Storyboard' + 'T' keys). PowerKey users can also now cut, copy and paste in the Storyboard!

'Scene from project>Clipboard' in the Clipboard

- Clicking on this button brings up the Project selection menu, then actually takes you into that project where you can select and import a scene from the Scene Bin of any of your projects onto the Clipboard.

Playback from any position in the Storyboard, not just beginning of a Scene

- Using the Range button, the Producer can scroll to any point in the Storyboard to review project in process complete with rendered effects, titles, etc. You can then playback from any portion of the storyboard - even in the middle of a scene.

Information button on the Storyboard

- Enables Producer to determine precise position in Storyboard with a display of entire length of Storyboard, length of preceding scenes, length of remaining scenes in Storyboard.

Information button in the Scene Bin

- Enables Producer read information about imported scenes including date and time of recording, format (4:3) and DV timedcode from footage tape.
- Additional text field available for Producer to add short notes on each scene.

Scenes as small as one-frame can now be used

- Enables Producer to create stop frame animation!

TITLING SCREEN

Under Box Options, 'Copy style to all lines' and ' Copy font to all lines'

- Enables Producer to copy a desired font/size and/or style to all other lines of a title screen (can still choose separate font and/or style for each line).

TRANSITION SCREEN, IMAGE PROCESSING SCREEN, TITLING SCREEN

Scene button creates instant composite scenes

- With rendered transitions, effects and titles in the storyboard a Scene can be created providing a composite instantly. This further facilitates multi-scene layering for incredibly creative video projects.
- When creating a Scene from two scenes (example PIP Studio) the Producer is given the choice to have Casablanca replace the two scenes and their effect/transition with the newly created one composite scene (saving considerable time)

Benefits of SmartEdit 3

TRANSITION SCREEN, IMAGE PROCESSING SCREEN, TITLING SCREEN

Full Size Preview option now provides real time display.

- Producer can scroll through a desired effect with a real time preview of the impact of the effect.

Menu enables Producer to determine which software to utilize in the menu

- Enables dealer to show and use only the 'Default' software to a prospect. Enables Producers to select all specials in a particular software product (example: show only Magic Lights options).

AUDIO RECORD/EDIT SCREEN

The CD Record button is now available next to the Record button

- Moved out from Special button for easier access.

AUDIO MIX SCREEN

Envelope capability (audio rubber banding)

- Displays the audio sample with a waveform giving Producer the ability to add points on the envelope (rubber band) and then adjust the volume (it even shows you the dB level of each button you adjust). You can then create and playback the modified volume directly in this 'Envelope' window.
- Envelope window also enables the selection of a block of audio for easier and more precise manipulation of audio sample (allows defining and muting of a single word or noise).

Audio Effects can now be added in the Audio Mix Screen

- Producer can add effects (mute or copy one channel) to a single sample OR to an entire track (composing multiple audio samples). This in addition to adding Effects in the Audio Record/Edit Screen

Timeline window provides additional capabilities of Envelope and Effects

- The Producer may review the arrangement of audio tracks close-up in the Timeline window and apply effects and/or engage audio envelope controls.

Transitions between scenes now display in the audio mix screen.

- This enables the Producer to place an audio sample at a precise point during a transition (example: at the end of a transition).

Additional choices available in the Audio Sample Fade menu

- Producer can now add preset fades of 1, 2, 5 and 10 seconds.