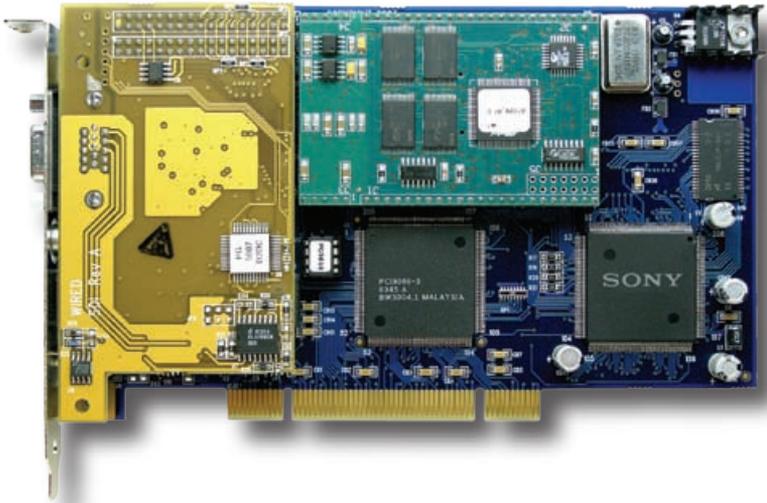




WIRED

# MediaPress

MPEG Encoders



## User Guide

*March 2005*

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## Introduction

This guide covers the basics of installing and setting up the **MediaPress X** or **MediaPress LE** MPEG encoders, and provides details about their use. The two encoders differ only in their complement of available video and audio inputs; operation is the same in all other respects.

**Note:** We assume that you are familiar with using a Macintosh and operating typical software applications. *If not, you better brush up on the basics; it will make your interaction with MediaPress a lot easier.*

We will try to cover the typical operations of the MediaPress, but like any sophisticated tool, it takes hands-on practice to get the most out of it.

## System Requirements

The MediaPress is a PCI card for Power Macintosh computers. Here are recommended minimum requirements for it to operate as intended:

- Power Mac G4 or G5, single 733 MHz or dual 500 MHz or higher.
- OS X version 10.3.x or higher.
- 512 MB of RAM per processor
- An available PCI slot for the Wired encoder card
- An Apple-supplied internal DVD playback drive; it does not have to be a recorder, but must be able to play DVDs using the Apple DVD Player software. (This is required to enable the built-in preview feature of MediaPress.)
- An available serial port for deck control with appropriate OS X drivers installed. We recommend either the **KeySpan USB-to-serial adapter** ([www.keyspan.com/products/usb/USA28x/](http://www.keyspan.com/products/usb/USA28x/)) or the **GeeThree Stealth port** ([www.geethree.com/stealth](http://www.geethree.com/stealth)).

## Getting Help

Wired provides free technical support by e-mail at **support@wiredinc.com**.

You can also find a variety of useful information in our online knowledge base and FAQ at **www.wiredinc.com**.

## What's In The Box

Before installation, make sure you've got all the right pieces:

- The Wired encoder PCI card itself
- The MediaPress software disc
- The Wired breakout cable (has a vga-type connector at one end, and several assorted connectors at the other end.)
- BUB Box balanced audio input adapter (not included with MediaPress LE)
- The beige Pipeline deck control cable (Mac serial at one end, standard DB9 at the other.)
- The MediaPress software Registration Key. If you got the software with a new MediaPress, the Key will be printed on a separate sheet of paper in the box. If you ordered the OS X upgrade online, the Key was sent to you in an e-mail.

## Installing Your MediaPress Card

In general, the MediaPress can be installed in any available PCI slot, however, if you have more than one PCI card in your Mac, it's a good idea to position the MediaPress so that its front surface (the side with most of the components) gets the most airflow. Also, because the graphics card in some Macs generate a lot of heat, try to avoid putting the MediaPress in the adjacent slot.



Be sure to tighten the retaining screw.

**Note:** It is very important that the card be firmly seated in the PCI slot and that the retaining screw is tightened. Damage to the board can result otherwise.

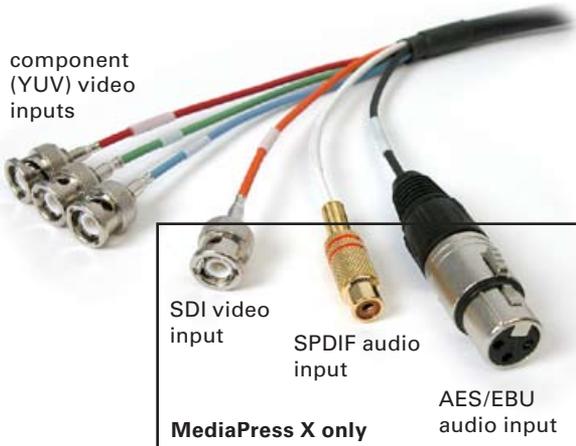
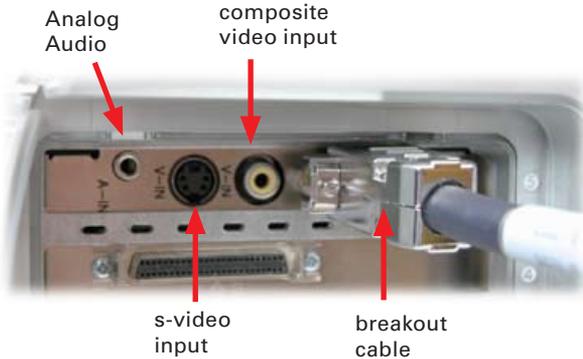
### About PCI Expansion Systems

The MediaPress can be used with expansion systems, such as those provided by Magma (see [www.mobl.com](http://www.mobl.com) for more information.)

This makes it possible to use the MediaPress with a PowerBook, for example.

## Connecting Your Inputs

Next, close the computer and attach the breakout cable and tighten its retaining screws. Then connect your sources to the MediaPress. *You may simultaneously connect different sources to all the inputs, except the SPDIF and AES/EBU digital audio inputs; only one of them should be connected at a time.*



**Note:** the SDI input is for video only; it will ignore any embedded audio.

### BUB Box

If your system included the BUB Box (balanced-unbalanced) adapter, it should be connected to the analog audio input of the MediaPress board. The level controls allow you to trim the input level for the XLR inputs.



## Deck Control Connections

If you will be using the deck control feature, connect the included Pipeline serial cable to your Mac's serial port, then connect the opposite end to the control port of your deck.

If your adapter has more than one serial port, you may use either one.

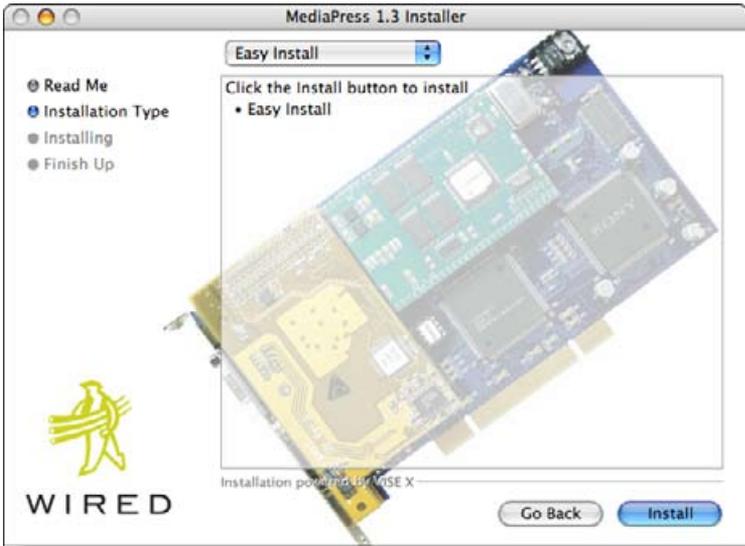


Some decks may require adapters, which can be obtained directly from Pipeline Digital, at [www.pipelinedigital.com](http://www.pipelinedigital.com).

**Note:** You must use the supplied serial cable if you want to use the MediaPress deck control feature. You can use extension cables if needed, but the Pipeline cable must be in the 'chain'.

# Installing the Software

You can now install the MediaPress software. Insert the installation CD into your drive and double-click the installer icon to begin.



Follow the on-screen instructions to install the software. You will be asked to authenticate by supplying your administrative password before installation can proceed.

Once the installer is finished, you will need to shut down your Mac and restart it.

## Activating

To complete the installation you will need to launch the MediaPress application and enter the registration key. The application is installed in the Applications folder, in a folder called MediaPress X. Double-click the MediaPress application or click its icon in the Dock to launch it. The Registration dialog box will appear.



Enter the 16-digit activation code that you received in the MediaPress box (or in your upgrade confirmation e-mail). Then click the 'Register' button.

The code is permanently stored on the MediaPress card, so you will not have to enter it again, even if you reinstall the software.

**Note:** The Registration Key is specific to each MediaPress card. If you have more than one MediaPress, you must use its corresponding code; they are not interchangeable.

# The MediaPress Application

After you've successfully entered the activation code, the MediaPress window will appear.



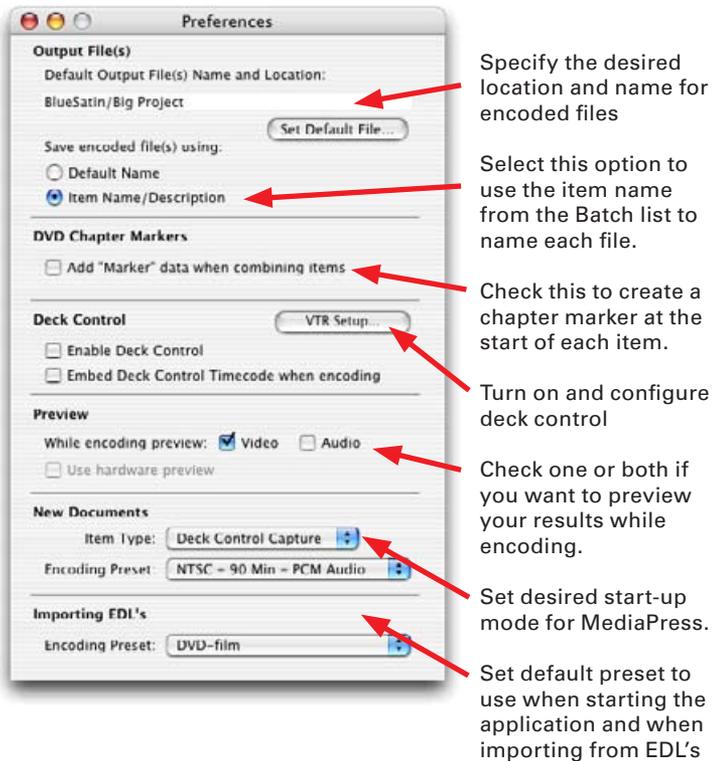
Before doing anything else, you should set your preferences.

## Setting Your Preferences

Click the Preferences button (located in the up-right portion of the MediaPress window) or select Preferences from the MediaPress menu. The Preferences panel contains settings for:

- The default name and location of the encoded files created by the MediaPress
- Activating the chapter marker feature, which inserts chapter markers in your finished MPEG streams. These markers are compatible with Apple's DVD Studio Pro.

- Enabling the deck control feature and configuring communication with your tape deck, as well as the option to embed the original tape timecode in the MPEG file (not available if using the chapter marker feature.)
- Enabling preview for video, audio or both during encoding.
- Setting the default mode that you want MediaPress to start in and the default preset for new batch items.



**Note:** Be sure the default location you specify for your files has adequate free space.

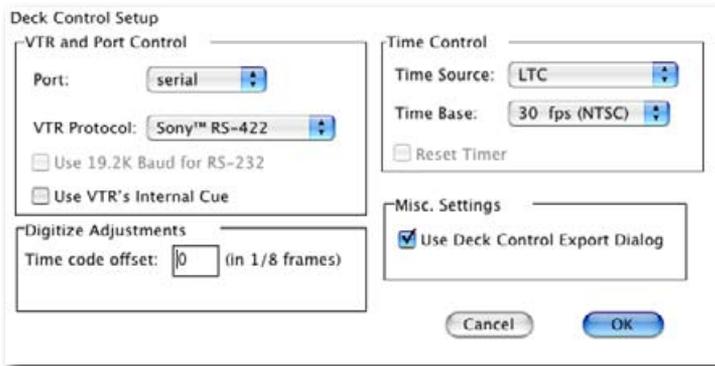
Chapter marker data is only added if you do a batch encode, and choose the "Combine" option in the main window.

## VTR Setup Window

Before setting up Deck Control, be sure the Pipeline cable is properly connected to your serial port, and set your deck to 'Remote' mode.

If you have more than one serial port, choose the correct port from the "Port" menu.

Choose the appropriate VTR protocol from the pop-up menu, and if necessary, adjust the Time Control settings (normally these will be set automatically). *See the Appendix for complete descriptions of the Protocol and Time Source settings.*



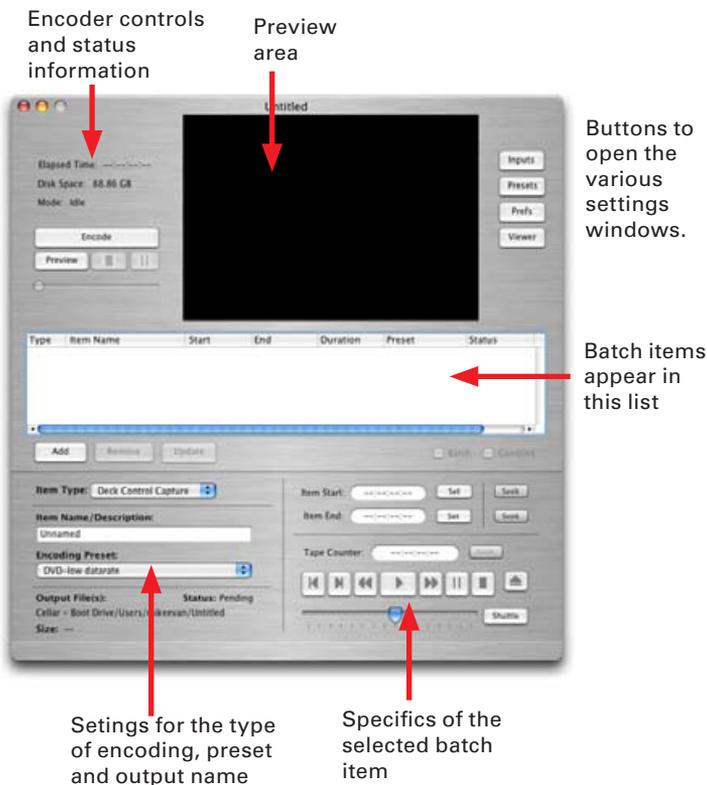
When you are satisfied with your VTR settings, click "OK". The deck control will initialize and you should see the Pipeline splash screen briefly.

Watch here for confirmation or any error messages. →



# Application Overview

MediaPress normally has just one window which is divided into three main sections. At the top are the encoder controls and preview area. The center is the batch list, where any items to be encoded will appear. The bottom part of the window is where you set up individual batch items and choose presets for encoding.



There are slide-out 'drawers' which contain the settings for inputs and encoding parameters. They are revealed by clicking the corresponding button on the main window.

## The Viewer Window

Click the button marked 'Viewer' to open the preview pane as its own window. The preview window can then be resized, zoomed to full screen, or moved to another monitor (assuming your Mac has more than one display.)



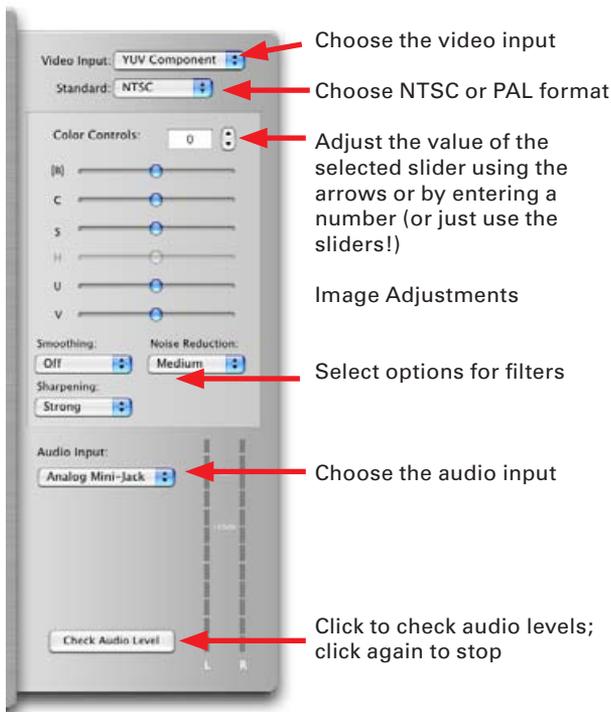
## The MediaPress Workflow

Before we get to the specifics of each feature and function, it's a good idea to go over the basics of the MediaPress workflow. To encode with MediaPress, follow these basic steps.

1. **Launch** the MediaPress application
2. Choose an encode **item type**
3. Choose your **input**
4. Choose an **encoding preset**
5. **Set up** your clip or time or QuickTime movie
5. **Add the item** to the batch
6. **Encode**

# Input Settings

The Inputs drawer is where you select which video and audio inputs you want to use, set your video standard, check your audio levels, make adjustments to the video's characteristics, and apply various filters.



**Note:** the MediaPress is not a standards converter; be sure the video standard you choose (NTSC or PAL) matches that of the source video.

## Image Adjustments

The available image controls vary depending on which video input is active. Changes take effect right away, so you can see the effect in the preview window.

## Audio Level Meters

The audio level meters can be used to check and setup the input level. Simply roll your source, then click the 'Check Audio Level' button to see the level on the meters. Click again to stop.

# Encoding Parameters

MediaPress gives you complete control over the various parameters for video and audio encoding. All the settings can be saved as 'presets' for later use. They are available in the pop-up Preset menu. MediaPress includes a variety of ready-made presets to get you started; they can be used as-is or modified to suit your needs.



**Note:** the presets which mention 'A.Pack' are actually set to capture PCM audio, assuming you'll use Apple's A.Pack later to compress the audio.

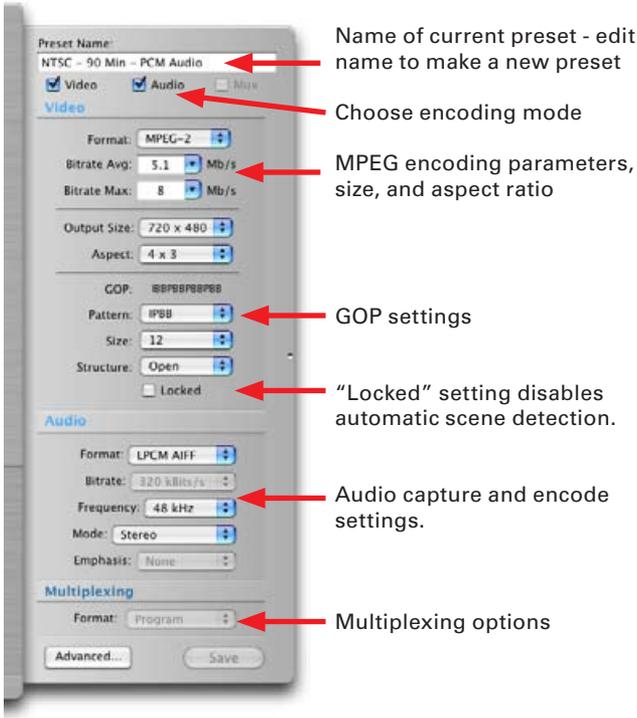
## Creating & Editing Presets

To modify a preset, simply select it from the pop-up menu, then click the 'Presets' button to open the settings drawer.

The settings drawer initially shows the Basic settings of the preset which is currently chosen in the 'Encoding Preset' menu in the main window. By clicking the 'Advanced' button at the bottom of the drawer, you can access some additional, seldom used settings. All the settings in the drawer (Basic and Advanced) are saved as part of the presets.

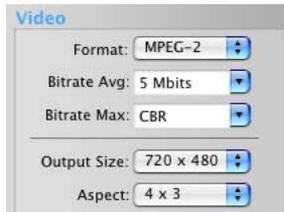
To make a new preset, start by choosing an existing preset from the 'Encoding Presets' menu. Then open the Presets

drawer. Change any of the settings you wish, then enter a name for the new preset and click the 'Save' button.



You will notice that there are two pop-up menus for setting the video encoding bitrate. The first specifies the average bitrate for the finished MPEG stream. Higher settings produce higher quality, and of course a larger output file.

The second pop-up sets the maximum or peak bitrate for the VBR encoding.



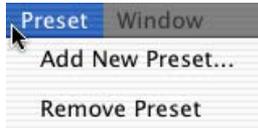
**Note:** you don't have to use the menus to set the encoding bitrates; you can also enter values directly in the bitrate

fields. Be sure to press the 'Enter' key after entering a value manually.

## Deleting Presets

When you create a custom preset, it is added to the Encoding Presets menu and can be assigned to any batch item in any encoding project. Presets are saved separately from your project.

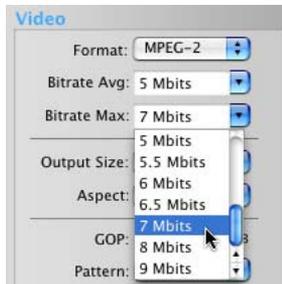
If you wish to remove a custom preset, choose 'Remove Preset' from the Preset menu.



**Note:** If you open a batch which uses a custom preset which has been removed, the default preset will be assigned to the affected batch items.

## VBR - Variable Bit Rate Encoding

If the 'Bitrate Max' menu is set to CBR, then MediaPress will produce a constant bitrate video stream, using the setting from the 'Bitrate Avg' menu. If you change the Max menu to one of the available settings, it will activate the VBR encoding feature of the encoder. Turning on VBR will not change the size of the stream; that is dictated by the Avg setting.



## About GOP Settings

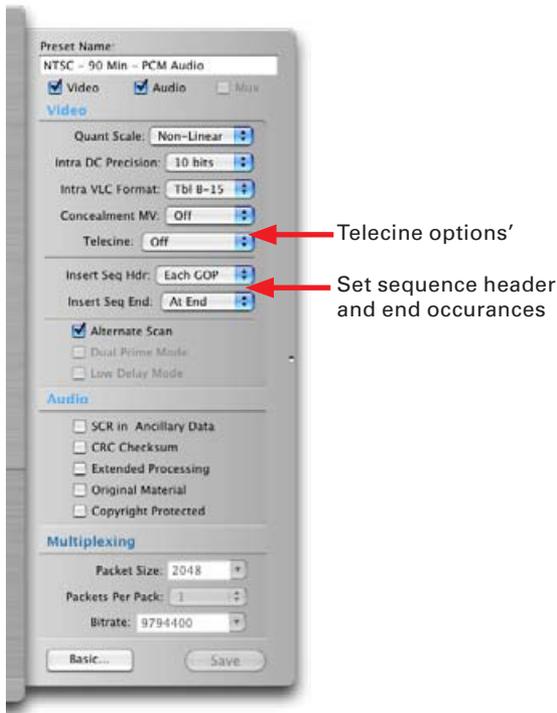
The GOP settings let you specify the frame pattern, length and open or closed property for each GOP (group of pictures).

## Scene Detection

The MediaPress encoder has sophisticated scene detection capabilities which can dynamically adjust the length of GOPs to accommodate rapidly changing images. However, if you plan to use your encoded streams as part of a multi-angle title on a DVD, you should turn this feature OFF by checking the 'Locked' checkbox.

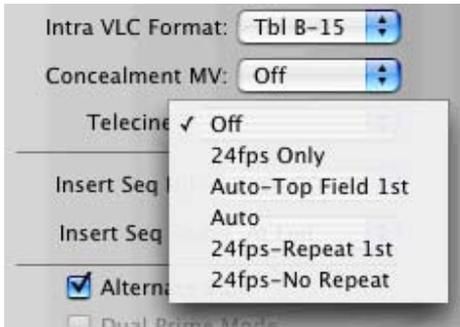
## Advanced Settings

In general, the items in the Advanced section of the Presets drawer are set to optimum settings. But advanced users may wish to change them for specific applications. Our old warning applies: if you don't know what it's for, you should not be changing it.



## Telecine Function

The MediaPress has inverse-telecine functionality which can improve encoding quality when part or all of your source video originated on film.



Normally the 'Auto' setting can detect the cadence of the source material and adjust accordingly. However, if your source has mixed or non-standard cadence, you should choose the appropriate option from the Telecine menu.

## Previewing

You can preview before beginning the actual encode by simply rolling your source, then clicking the 'Preview' button. The preview window will show the actual encoded results, using the current inputs and preset.

Click the 'Stop' button to end preview.



**Note:** To preview during encoding, turn on the preview options in the Preferences window.

# Encoding Modes

There are three encoding modes or types in MediaPress.

- **Timed Encoding** - this allows you to specify the start time, end time, and duration to be encoded. You can start a timed encode manually or automatically. Think of it like a VCR timer.
- **Deck Control Encoding** - lets you specify the starting and ending timecodes to be captured from a serially controlled tape deck.
- **QuickTime Transcoding** - this lets you select a QuickTime movie to be converted to MPEG.

In addition to the standard settings for Item name and Encoding Preset, each encode type has its own unique settings.

## Timed Encoding

In Timed Capture mode you specify how long you want to encode for (i.e. 1 hour and 15 minutes) and then can either start encoding manually, by clicking the encode button, or you can specify a date and time for it to start automatically.

User Starts/Stops encoding  
 Use timing information

---

Start Date: 12/02/03   
Start Time: 15:11:14

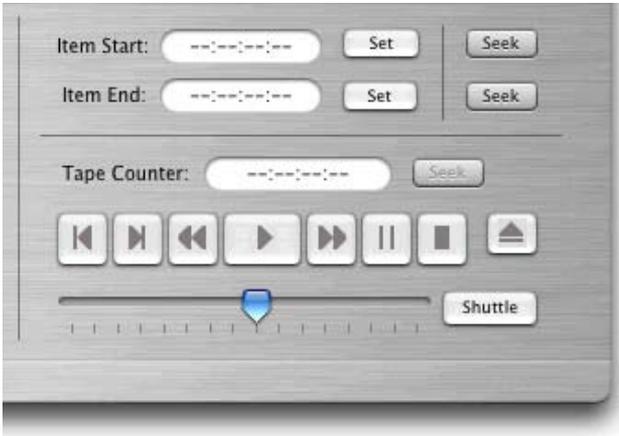
---

Duration: 00:01:00:00

**Note:** MediaPress must be running for the automatic encode function to work.

## Encoding From a Deck

Deck control encoding allows you to select a portion of a tape to be captured by specifying start and end timecodes.



You can use the integrated transport controls to operate your attached video deck. Click the shuttle button to switch the slider to Jog mode. Click again to go back to Shuttle mode.

You can set the in and out points by moving to the desired spot on the tape and then clicking the corresponding 'Set' button, or you can simply enter the desired timecode in the Start or End field.

To quickly move the tape to a specific timecode, enter the value in the field and click the 'Seek' button.

## QuickTime Transcoding

The MediaPress can transcode most QuickTime movies to MPEG format. Unlike encoding from external inputs, Transcoding is not realtime. Depending on the speed of your Mac, transcoding takes approximately 5 times as long as your source file (a 10 minute movie takes roughly 50 minutes to convert.)

Transcoding works with self-contained or reference movies, as long as all the referenced files are available on the system. If you can open and play the movie in the QuickTime player, it will probably work. MediaPress cannot accept files which are already in MPEG format, or some movies containing non-standard tracks.



Using the 'Fields' pop-up menu, you can choose to swap the field order of the source file while encoding.

The 'Height' pop-up menu allows you to choose between scaling and cropping your movie vertically to fit the specified output size. Cropping is especially useful if your source video is 720 x 486, as opposed to the MPEG standard 720 x 480.

**Note:** in most cases you should use 'Crop', as scaling will reduce quality.

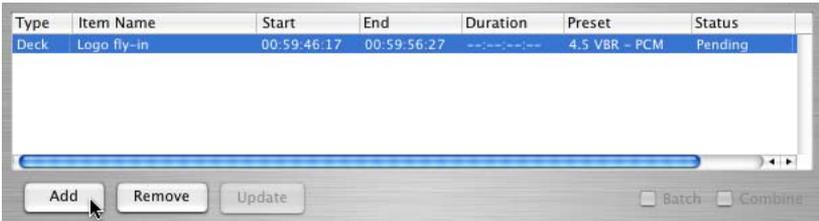
# Batch Encoding

The batch feature of MediaPress is a powerful tool for running multiple encoding items automatically in sequence. The result of a batch can be one large file containing all the items in the batch, or it can create separate files for each item.

You can specify encoding parameters separately for each item in a batch, if desired. This makes it possible, for example, to encode one long item with different bitrates for different sections.

## Creating a Batch Item

Creating a batch is very simple; you just set up an encoding item, and click the 'Add' button below the batch window. Repeat this for all desired items. You can rearrange the items in a batch by dragging them with the mouse.



When you add an item to a batch, its status will show as 'Pending'; once the batch has been run, it will change to 'Completed'. Completed items can be played within MediaPress.

Clicking on a item in a batch will cause its settings to be displayed below.

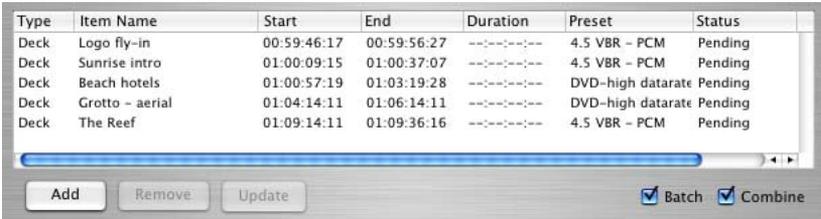
## Updating a Batch Item

If you make changes to any setting while a batch item is selected, the 'Update' button will become active. Click the button if you want to save your changes to that item.

## Running a Batch

Normally, if you click the 'Encode' button, MediaPress will encode just the selected item in the batch list. If you want to encode the entire batch, check the 'Batch' checkbox below the list.

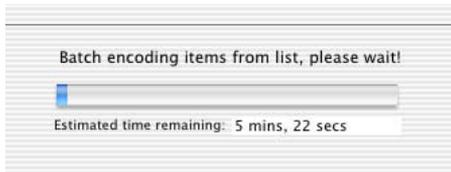
If you want all the items in the list to be combined to a single output file, also check the 'Combine' checkbox.



Type	Item Name	Start	End	Duration	Preset	Status
Deck	Logo fly-in	00:59:46:17	00:59:56:27	--:--:--:--	4.5 VBR - PCM	Pending
Deck	Sunrise intro	01:00:09:15	01:00:37:07	--:--:--:--	4.5 VBR - PCM	Pending
Deck	Beach hotels	01:00:57:19	01:03:19:28	--:--:--:--	DVD-high datarate	Pending
Deck	Grotto - aerial	01:04:14:11	01:06:14:11	--:--:--:--	DVD-high datarate	Pending
Deck	The Reef	01:09:14:11	01:09:36:16	--:--:--:--	4.5 VBR - PCM	Pending

Buttons: Add, Remove, Update. Checkboxes:  Batch,  Combine

With the checkboxes set appropriately, click 'Encode' to start the batch. The batch progress window will open, showing the estimated time and number of items remaining to encode.

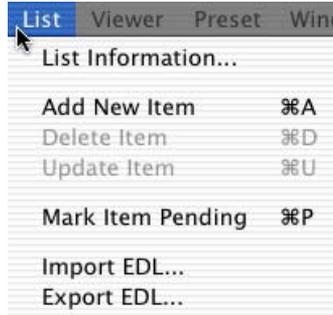


## Saving A Batch

Batches can be saved for later use. Choose 'Save' from the File menu and specify a name for the batch document.

## Creating Batches From EDLs, etc.

MediaPress can import a tab-delimited text file to create a batch list. You can also save a batch in text format in case you want to manipulate it with some other program.



Each item in the text file to be imported should be in the following format:

- Start Timecode (hours:minutes:seconds:frames)
- tab
- End Timecode (hours:minutes:seconds:frames)
- tab
- Item Name
- Return

Here's an example:



When the batch is imported, all items will be assigned the currently selected Encoding Preset. If you want different presets for some items, you can update them manually.

## Multiplexing

If you are encoding for DVD authoring, you will normally make 'elementary' streams, with one file for video and one for audio. However, some applications require the video and audio to be combined into a single file. This is called multiplexing, or **muxing** for short.

If you select set the 'mux' option when encoding, the audio compression and multiplexing happens after the actual capture. A progress dialog will show each step as it happens.

**Note:** muxing only works with MPEG audio; if you choose PCM audio, then the muxing option will be unavailable.

### Muxing Existing Files

This feature makes it easy to multiplex existing video and audio elementary streams. Just select 'Multiplex' from the 'File' menu, choose your source files and settings and click 'Mux'.

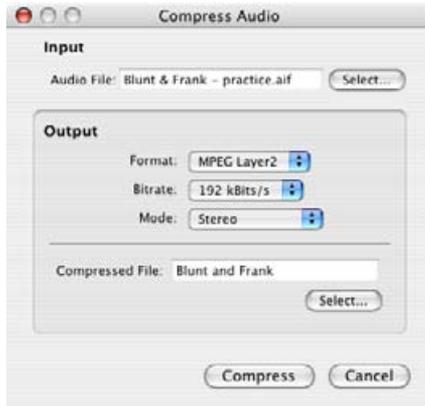


Be sure to choose 'System' for the Stream Format if you're video is in MPEG-1 format, and 'Program' if it's MPEG-2.

**Note:** The audio file must be in MPEG format; if you have PCM audio, you'll need to use the 'Compress Audio' feature to convert it before you can mux it.

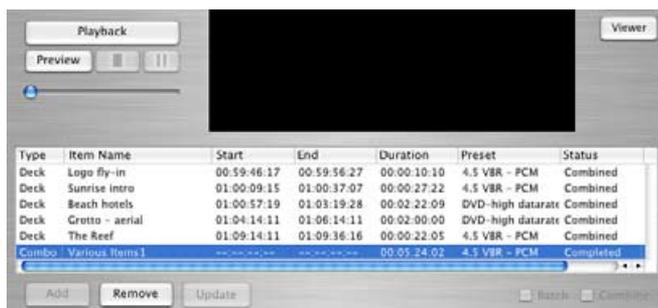
## Creating MPEG Audio from a PCM file

You can compress existing PCM audio files into MPEG Audio format. Simply choose 'Compress Audio...' from the file menu, select your source file, specify the destination file name and settings and click 'Compress'.

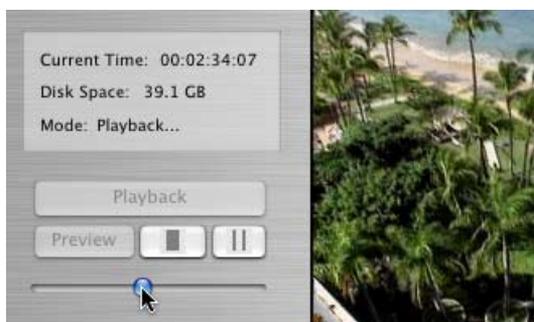


## Playing Your MPEG Files

After an item has been encoded, either as part of a batch or individually, you can play it back within the MediaPress application.



Select a completed item in the list and click the 'Playback' button. The video will play in the Preview window. You can use the scrub bar to move to other parts of the file.



## About QuickTime MPEG Playback

If you've installed Apple's MPEG playback option for QuickTime, you can use the QuickTime Player application to play MPEG encoded files.

If you play MPEG files with QuickTime, it will automatically adjust for the difference in the shape of pixels on a computer screen as opposed to how they display on a TV. As a result, if you look at the Info window in QuickTime, it will report an incorrect size for the movie. For example, a normal 720 x 480 NTSC movie is reported as 640 x 480, as shown below.



If you encoded your video as an elementary stream, QuickTime will normally play back only the video. However, it has an undocumented feature, where it will play back the audio together with the video under these conditions:

- The audio file is in PCM format
- The video is named in this format: xxxx.mpv
- The audio file has the same name, but with the suffix '.aif'
- The video and audio streams are in the same folder



## Using With DVD Studio Pro

The MPEG created by MediaPress are compatible with most DVD authoring applications which accept standard MPEG streams.

If you use Apple's DVD Studio Pro, you can use the chapter marker feature of MediaPress to automatically embed chapter marker information at the start of each batch item. When you import the file into DVD Studio Pro, it will create chapters automatically.



## Audio Format for DVD

MediaPress can create audio streams in either PCM (uncompressed) format, or MPEG audio format. While both formats will work with DVD, you should be aware that MPEG audio is not supported by all DVD players.

If your DVD project requires compressed audio, it is better to capture as PCM using the MediaPress, then use a Dolby encoder, such as Apple's A.Pack to convert the PCM file into Dolby AC-3 format. *See the DVD Studio Pro manual for more information.*

# Appendix

## Troubleshooting

Here are some common trouble spots and how to deal with them.

### **I've entered the Registration Key, but the MediaPress application just quits.**

You probably clicked the OK button, instead of the Register button. Try again.

### **The Deck Control feature won't work.**

Make sure you've correctly installed your serial port adapter, and installed the correct OS X software for the serial port.

You have to use the special serial cable supplied with the MediaPress card. Other serial cables will not work.

If your serial adapter has more than one port, verify that the correct port is selected in the MediaPress VTR Setup window.

### **I'm encoding from tape and the finished files are out of sync.**

First, make sure they are actually out of sync. Don't depend on QuickTime playback to judge A/V sync. You need to build a DVD in your authoring application and play it back from hard drive or DVD-R to check sync.

If you are capturing from an analog deck, especially lower quality formats like VHS or U-Matic, you should add a time base corrector between the deck and the encoder.

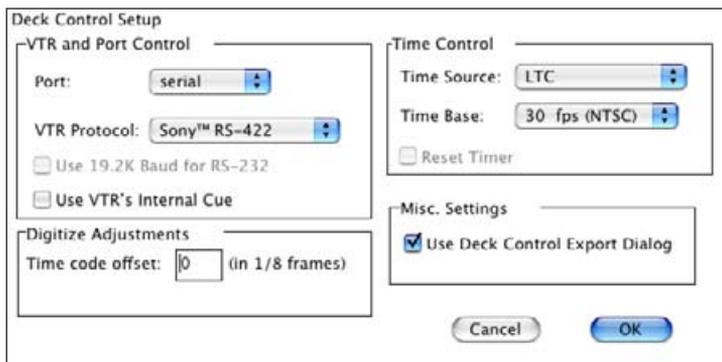
You may have breaks in timecode or video on your source tape. You cannot encode through a signal break on the tape.

For more frequently asked questions, see the Wired support pages at [www.wiredinc.com/support.php](http://www.wiredinc.com/support.php).

We also maintain an online list of bugs and other issues related to MediaPress at [www.wiredinc.com/bugs.php](http://www.wiredinc.com/bugs.php).

## Details of VTR Setup Options

MediaPress uses the Pipeline Digital deck control system. It supports nearly every professional and semi-pro deck. Below are the details of each setting from the VTR Setup dialog.



For more information on Pipeline and help with special adapters and troubleshooting, visit [www.pipelinedigital.com](http://www.pipelinedigital.com).

**VTR Protocols** - Specify which control protocol your deck requires. The choices are:

**Sony RS-422** (UVW-1800) - for any VTR that emulates this protocol

**Sony RS-232** (SV0-2100) - for any VTR that emulates this protocol

**Sony RS-232 UVW** (UVW-1400) - for any VTR that emulates this protocol

**Sony VISCA** (for Vdecks, or LANC machines hooked up to a Sony Vbox)

**Addenda RS/4L** (for LANC machines hooked up to the Addenda RS-422 to LANC interface)

**Panasonic RS-422** (AG-DS 850)

**Panasonic RS-232** (AG-7350 with AG-AI-232TC adapter) - for any VTR that emulates this protocol

**JVC RS-232** (SR-365U) - for any VTR that emulates this protocol

**Use 19.2K Baud for RS-232** - This feature, when selected, will use 19.2 KBaud instead of 9.6KBaud for Sony RS-232, or Sony UVW-232 decks. This is intended for VTRs that are capable of higher data rate communications, and will improve editing accuracy. Make sure you match the correct rate at your VTR. Most RS-232 VTRs default to 9.6K baud.

**Use VTR's Internal Cue** - Checking this box selects the VTR's internal cueing method. High end decks usually don't need to use this mode. It is primarily included for the benefit of those VISCA and RS-232 decks which sometimes struggle trying to locate a time code number. Depending on the VTR, this may leave the videotape on the VTR's video heads. You will see picture during the shuttle to your cue point, and it will take significantly longer to reach that point. Over a period of time, there is the chance for excessive tape and/or head wear. We recommend using this only if your deck is having difficulty searching for a time code number.

### **Digitize Adjustments**

This field is used to enter an offset when deck control capture does not start on the expected frame. You can enter positive or negative numbers, in 1/8 frames, to shift the starting point of your captures.

**Time Source** - Choose the source for the time data that best matches your setup.

**LTC** - This is the default. This will request interpolated LTC from the VTR.

**LTC + VITC** - LTC+VITC will pass a request for both LTC and VITC, letting the VTR decide which time source it can supply. This is a good choice for the Panasonic AG-7750 and DS-850. If the VTR supports VITC, then Corrected LTC (LTC + VITC) will be returned, or else LTC corrected by control track will be used. Beware: in some cases the VITC may be different from the LTC! If you have search problems, try another time source, like LTC-only.

**TIMER - Control Track.** This is for VTRs that do not have Time Code capabilities, or source tapes with no Time code. Control track accuracy varies from deck to deck, and may slip after prolonged shuttling or winding.

**DVTime** - While the Sony DV camcorders use LANC protocol, a Sony DV camcorder's time code is NOT the same as LANC/VISCA's "RC" time code: DVTime is

drop-frame. DVTime is only available when you select VISCA or ADDENDA protocol. Pipeline DeckControl's DVTime has been tested extensively with the Sony DCR-VX1000.

**PAL/EBU** - If you are using a PAL/EBU (European) VTR, check this box. A time base of 25 frames-per-second will be used. For NTSC VTRs, this should NOT be checked.



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MediaPress is designed and manufactured in Silicon Valley USA by Wired Inc. - 1040-155 Grant Road - Mountain View, California 94040