Vegas + DVD
Tips, Tricks, and Scripts

Learning and using Vegas and DVD Architect

Introducing - Excalibur 4

By Edward Troxel

Excalibur 4 is now available for use with Vegas 5.0b or newer. Building on the tools found in Excalibur 3, Tsunami 1, and Neon 1, this version is a major rewrite combining and expanding the tools found in all three products. By combining all three into a single tool, you no longer have to remember which product contains the tool you need.
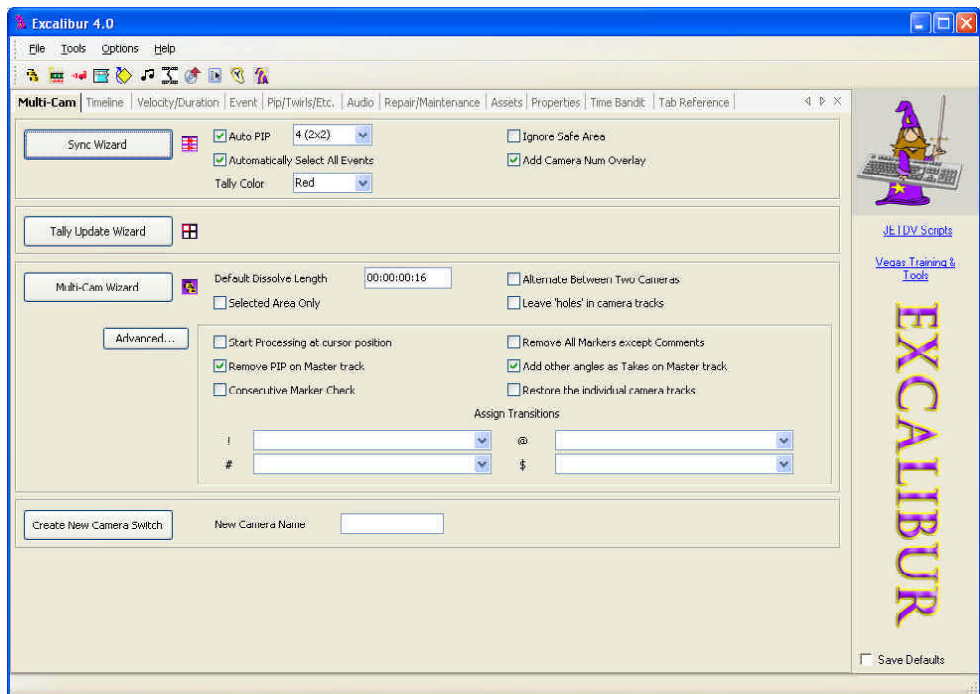
The new screen layout gives many different methods to find the tool you are seeking. Clicking on the various tabs allows quickly opening any tab. Tabs can also be accessed by clicking on the toolbar icon or choosing it from the tools menu.

Tabs may also be closed or reordered allowing personalized layouts to be created. If a tab has been closed, simply clicking on that tabs toolbar icon or choosing it from the tools menu reopens the tab.

Almost every tool can

also now be run directly without the need to activate the main Excalibur screen. Each tool can also be placed on the Vegas toolbar allowing easy access to the tools you use most. Also, each tool's icon appears on the main screen helping associate the icon to the tool.

The new Excalibur download will now automatically run in demo mode. Demo mode will now remain active


IN THIS ISSUE

for two weeks after it has first been used. After the demo period, it will simply expire. The Help - About screen will show the version number, the current status, and allow entry of the full release registration code. Once the full release code has been entered, simply clicking on "Save Registration Key" will fully unlock Excalibur.
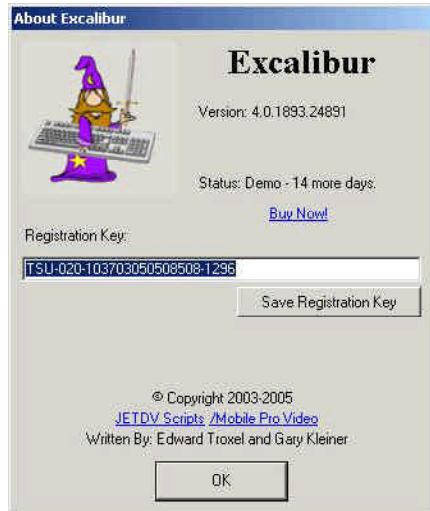
Besides combining Excalibur, Tsunami, and Neon into a single product, many new features and tools have also been added. Looking at the multi-cam tools, for example, the Tally system has been completely reworked allowing much more flexibility. It is now possible to pre-render your PIP'd version and still use the Tally system
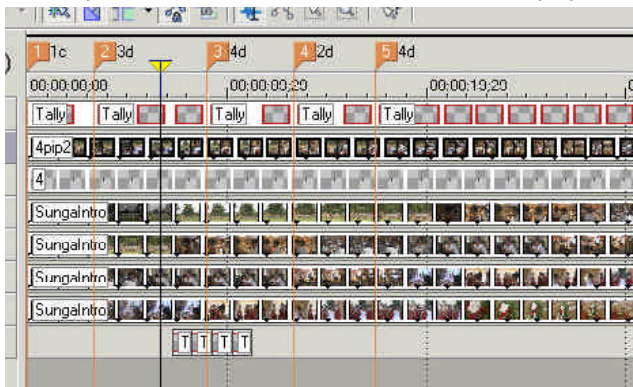
allowing much faster framerates. The new system requires a couple additional tracks but also has more flexibility such as the choice of colors for the Tally indicators. If you are adding dissolves, the tallys will also now dissolve from the previous camera to the new camera. This will give you a perfect indication as to when the dissolve begins and ends.
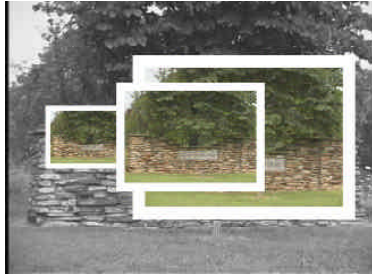
Here is a list of the major changes made to Excalibur's toolset:
1. Total reworking of the entire background processes in how the script works and better integration of ToolTips
2. Resizing of the screen - now requires 1024x768
3. Combined Excalibur, Tsunami, and Neon into a single program
4. Each tool can be run without a GUI using the saved default settings.
5. Each tab can be displayed or hidden allowing only the desired tabs to be seen.
6. Demo mode now runs for a set number of days and the demo can be unlocked to the full version.
7. Video Wall will now respect the Safe Area. Choosing "Ignore Safe Area" will make it operate as it did before.
8. Added ability for Video Wall to place all events on the same track in the same position allowing multiple events per track
9. Added ability for Extract Good Clips to modify the playback rate of the extracted clips.
10. Extract Good Clips can now either create sub-clips or simply copy as in Vegas 4.
11. PIP created by the Picture-In-Picture tool can now be entered as a percentage size.
12. Orphan Wizard will now return the missing item for all selected events on the same track.
13. Added note field to the Save Veg Wizard.
14. Added option for Fade Wizard to set the fade curve type.
15. Multi-Cam Takes will now rotate in the same order.
16. Tallys are now on a separate track allowing rendering of the PIP's to get a higher framerate.
17. Tally indicators now dissolve to indicate transitions.
18. Voice-Over Wizard track names are now selectable from a drop-down box
19. Voice-Over loud and soft volumes now selected via a slider with dB indicators.
20. Added ability for Gap Wizard to ignore the Command markers
21. Added ability for Gap Wizard to only process selected events
22. Added "Start At Cursor" option to the Marker Wizard.

23. Create New Camera Switch tool - allows the creation of personalized individual camera switches. For example, if you wanted a dedicated set of 3 second dissolve, they can now be easily created. (Icons NOT provided)

24. Match Aspect tool - applies the Pan/Crop "Match Output Aspect" setting to all selected events.

25. Multi-PIP effect tool - more effects created via multiple PIP's - currently three presets provided.

26. Newspaper Twirl tool - create a spin effect similar to the newspaper spinning in the old Batman TV series.

27. Playback Rate tool - adjust the playback rate of all selected events.

28. UnderSample Rate tool - adjust the undersample rate of all selected events.

29. Properties tool - adjust multiple properties of all selected events.

30. Logo Resize/Position tool - will take all selected images, apply the Match Output Aspect, resize them to their original size whether that is smaller than full screen or larger than full screen, and optionally reposition the logo to be in a specific location on the screen.

31. Stereo Split tool - takes the audio events on the first selected audio track, copies them to a new track, sets the original track to "Left Only" and sets the new track to "Right Only."

32. Stitch Wizard - aid in the assembly of the timeline in the event of a failed network render.

33. Regions to Command Markers tool - copy the region sub-title information into a series of Command Markers in preparation for WMV output.

34. Razor/Incite Import tool - Users of Razor or Incite can now easily add their clips to the Vegas timeline. This tool will import all video and associated audio files and adjust the Pan/Crop as needed.

The original multi-function/multi-cam add-on program is easier to use and more powerful than ever. Check out the new update - with a free 15 day demo - at http://www.vegastrainingandtools.com

# Beginner's Corner - Ways to Split Screen

By Edward Troxel

How to create a split screen effect is a frequently asked question. Fortunately with Vegas, there are many methods available. This article will discuss four methods that can be used to create this effect.

The split screen effect can be used in many different circumstances. For example, suppose you want someone talking to themself - just tape the sequence twice with the person in each half of the screen and then combine them using the split screen. Similarly, many other effects can be created such as someone running behind a tree but someone else running out the other side.

For the purposes of this article, I will use a red generated media and a green generated media to represent the two pieces. This will make it easy to identify the two pieces.

The first method will use the "Split Screen" generated media. Start a new project with three tracks. On the Media Generators tab select the "Checkerboard" style. Choose the "Split Screen" preset and add it to track 1. Next change to the "Solid Color" category and add the Red preset to track 2 and the
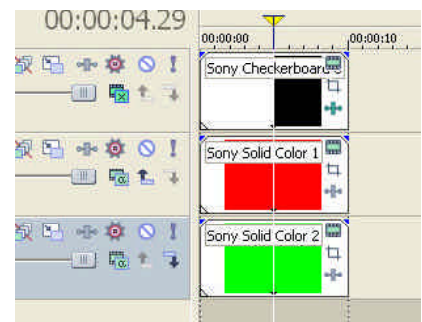
Green preset to track 2. At this point in time you should see white on the left and black on the right in the preview window.

Next, it is necessary to make track 2 a "*child*" of track 1 by clicking on the down arrow in the track header. Then click on the "*Compositing Mode*" button on track 1 and change it from *Source Alpha* to *Multiply (Mask)*. You should now see Red on the left and Black on the right.
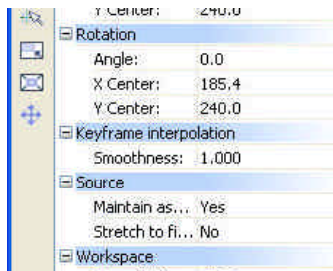
The final step is to click on the *Event FX* button on the split screen event on track 1 or the *Track FX* button on track 1. Either will achieve the same result - it's just a matter of whether you want it applied to the entire track or only to the mask event. In the dialog that appears, select the *Sony Mask Generator*. Once the Mask Generator effect has been added, you will now see the Red on the left and the Green on the right.
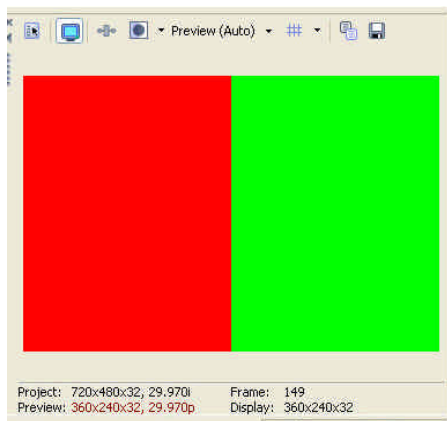
The second method that can be used to create a mask is via Pan/Crop. In this case only two tracks are needed. Place the Red generated media on track 1 and the Green generated media on track 2.

Open the Pan/Crop window for the Red event on track 1. Here you must change a few settings. First, turn OFF "Lock Aspect Ratio" on the left toolbar. Next turn OFF "Size About Center" on the left toolbar. And fi-nally, change "Stretch to fill frame" to No. Now it is time to adjust the size of crop. Just grab the resizing point on the right side and move it left. This will result in Red on the left half and Green on the right half just as before. One advantage of this method is that area taken by the red section can be easily adjusted. While the Generated Media can also be adjusted, it is easier to do so using Pan/Crop.
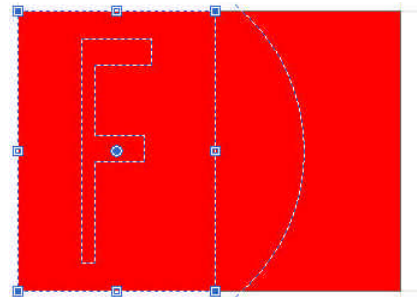
The third method uses the new Bezier Masking tool in Vegas 5. Once again, start out the same as the Pan/Crop method with Red on track 1, Green on track 2, and open the Pan/Crop window for the Red event. To the left of the timeline at the bottom of the Pan/Crop window is two lines - Position and Mask. Check the box beside Mask to turn on Bezier masking.
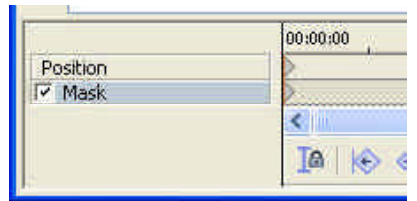
Now you need to create the mask itself. Outline the portion on the left side that should remain visible using the Anchor Creation Tool (which is selected by default.) Once all the points have been added, select the first point again to finalize the area. This will, once again, give you the Red area on the left and the Green area on the right.
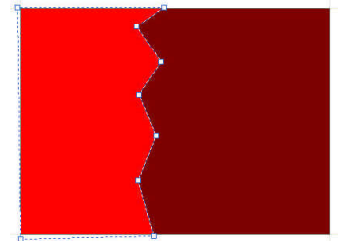
Bezier masking also has some advantages. For example, as shown here it can also create irregularly shaped areas. You can also easily create a feathering between the two areas and very easily change the mask area over time.
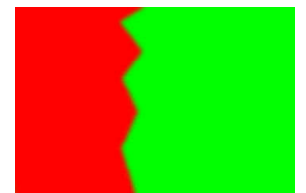
The fourth method is very easy to implement but

actually harder to begin and end. In this case you only need one track. Place the Red event on track 1 and then also put the Green event on track one. Now overlap the two events creating a crossfade. Make the crossfade as much of the event as possible without losing the crossfade. Unfortunately this means you must have at least one frame at the beginning of the Red clip and at least one from at the end of the Green clip. Because of this, you must be careful to not get a brief flash in your final project.

Now that the crossfade is created, add *Linear Wipe* transition with the *Right-Left, Hard Edge* preset. Next, right-click the transition and choose Insert/Remove Envelope which opens another menu from which you need to pick Transition Progress. This will add an enve-

lope starting at 0% and ending at 100%. Right-click the points on each end of the transition and change them both to 50%

Just like all other envelopes, multiple points can be added varying the progress. Similarly, different transitions can be used providing some interesting effects. Experiment to see what works well for your project.

As we have seen, creating split screens is a fairly easy process that can be made in a variety of ways. Simply pick the method that works best for any particular situation.
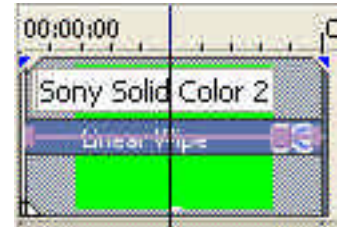
Vegas - FAQ's

By Edward Troxel

There are many topics and questions that are repeatedly asked about Vegas. Below are a few of those questions. These, and many more, can also be found in the FAQ section at http://www.jetdv.com.

Q: *How do I RESET Vegas back to Factory Defaults?*
A: Hold Down CTRL+shift and start vegas. This will reset all settings back to default. This includes the screen layout AND all preferences and options.

Q: *How do I change the speed of a clip?*
A: There are two ways to change the speed of a clip.
1) If you simply need a constant speed change, hold down the CTRL key and resize the clip. This will either speed-up the clip if you make it smaller or slow-down the clip if you make it larger. This method will also adjust the audio to match. (This is the same as right-clicking the event, choosing Properties, and changing the playback rate)
Limits of this method: .25x to 4x
2) Use a Velocity Envelope which will allow variable speed changes throughout the event. Add new points to the envelope as needed and set the desired speed for each point. This method will NOT adjust the audio.
Limits of this method: -100% (full speed reverse) through 0% (freeze frame) up to 300% (3x normal

speed)
NOTE: You can COMBINE these two methods to get additional speed changes. Combined you can get up to 12x in a single pass. If you need faster than 12x, render the 12x, add the new file to the timeline, and then apply speed changes again.
NOTE: Vegas 5 adds a new ability to simply reverse a clip. You can then apply speed changes as desired to the newly reversed clip. This will let you easily get 12x reverse speeds, for instance.

Q: *How do I split a clip (Where is the "Razor" tool?)*
A: Vegas does not require choosing a separate tool in order to split a clip into two pieces. Simply place the cursor at the location of the split and press "S".
NOTES:
1) What you have selected will determine WHAT gets split.
2) If you have no events or all events selected, everyting under the cursor will be split.
3) If you only have one event selected under the cursor, only that event will be split (other events grouped will also be split unless you either un-group or turn on "Ignore Event Grouping").
4) If an event is selected but is NOT under the cursor, nothing will be split.

Q: *When I add an effect, only half (or a small portion or none) of the preview changes*

A: Vegas 4 added a new feature called Split Screen Preview which allows, among other things, viewing before and after by showing both on the preview screen. In other cases, you may have set it to only show the before version or changed the area so that only a small portion of the screen shows the effect (it is resizable by clicking and dragging on the preview screen). There are many abilities with this feature. To get back to normal, simply turn OFF the Split Screen Preview.

Q: *MPEG Custom button does not work*

A: Look in your registry, and make sure it only has these entries, and nothing else.
[HKEY_LOCAL_MACHINESOFTWARESonyMC MPEG Plug-In1.0License]
"CurrentKey"= "XX-XXXXXX-XXXXXX-XXXXXX"
"InstFlags"=dword:00000010
(you shoud see letters and digits instead of the Xs here...)

If it is not "CurrentKey" or "InstFlags", get rid of it.

Request

I realize there has been a large delay between issues lately. One major contributing factor has been Excalibur 4 but there are many others as well. If anyone would like to assist in writing some articles, I would gladly accept a wide variety of topics. If anyone is interested in writing such an article, just send a note to **editdv@jetdv.com**.

I will continue to write articles but would appreciate any help. Your help will allow the newsletter to continue being released in a timely manner.

Contact Information

Send your tips, tricks, article ideas, script ideas, questions, or articles to:

editdv@jetdv.com

To register on the web to receive this newsletter, browse to: **www.jetdv.com**

Thank you, Edward Troxel